FAMILY COMMUNICATION POLICY

Family participation is an important part of making the service a true part of the community. We believe in creating an environment that is welcoming and inclusive and supports a sense of belonging for children, families, and educators.

Partnerships are based on the foundations of respecting each other's perspectives, expectations, and values, and building on the strength of each other' knowledge and skills. Learning Outcomes are most likely to be achieved when educators work in partnership with children, families, other professionals, and communities, including schools. EYLF. V2.0, 2022. p.14

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 6: COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS		
6.1	Supportive relationships with families	Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role.
6.1.1	Engagement with the service	Families are supported from enrolment to be involved in their service and contribute to service decisions.
6.1.2	Parent views are respected	The expertise, culture, values and beliefs of families are respected, and families share in decision-making about their child's learning and wellbeing.
6.1.3	Families are supported	Current information is available to families about the service and relevant community services and resources to support parenting and family wellbeing.
6.2	Collaborative partnerships	Collaborative partnerships enhance children's inclusion, learning and wellbeing.
6.2.1	Transitions	Continuity of learning and transitions for each child are supported by sharing information and clarifying responsibilities.
6.2.2	Access and participation	Effective partnerships support children's access, inclusion and participation in the program.
6.2.3	Community and engagement	The service builds relationships and engages with its community.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL LAW AND NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
S. 2A	Paramount consideration—safety, rights and best interests of children
86	Notification to parents of incident, injury, trauma and illness
87	Incident, injury, trauma and illness record
111	Administrative space
157	Access for parents
160	Child enrolment records to be kept by approved provider and family day care educator
161	Authorisations to be kept in enrolment record

162	Health information to be kept in enrolment record
168	Education and care Service must have policies and procedures
172	Notification of change to policies or procedures
181	Confidentiality of records kept by approved provider

ADVENTIST IDENTITY EARLY CHILDHOOD STANDARDS		
6.3	Emulate the mission and ethos of an Adventist Early Learning Service.	Support children in developing an understanding of family, culture, community, and service to others in accordance with the mission and ethos of an Adventist Early Learning Service.
		Develop and maintain a strong mission ethos through service-focused activities at a family, cultural, and community level.
7.3	Develop a Christian virtue of professional excellence.	Develop and implement a statement of philosophy that guides the mission and ethos of an Adventist Early Learning Service.

RELATED POLICIES

Anti-Bias and Inclusion Policy Child Safe Environment Policy Dealing with Complaints Policy Educational Program Policy Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy	Interactions with Children, Family and Staff Policy Managing an Aggressive Parent or Visitor Policy Open Door Policy Privacy and Confidentiality Policy Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments

PURPOSE

Our Service values respectful, collaborative partnerships with families. We aim to ensure open communication through the enrolment and orientation process, policy and statement of philosophy review, feedback forms, family committee, daily program, documentation, formal and informal meetings, emails, and conversations. The safety, rights and best interests of the child are the paramount consideration in all communication and decision-making within the Service.

SCOPE

This policy applies to educators, families, staff, management, approved provider, nominated supervisor, students, volunteers, and visitors of the Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

We acknowledge the primary and critical influence families have in their children's lives and understand that effective relationships between educators and families are fundamental to achieving quality outcomes for children. Community partnerships that focus on active communication, consultation, and collaboration also contribute to children's learning and wellbeing. Positive relationships with families help to build collaborative partnerships, as together we share a common objective and responsibility for reaching quality outcomes and goals for children.

We will provide regular information about the Service as well as ongoing opportunities for families to contribute to our curriculum. All staff will communicate with families in a positive and supportive manner that encourages respectful and trusting relationships.

The Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor/Management will ensure:

- educators, staff, students, and volunteers know of and adhere to this policy
- all families are welcomed and respected at our Service
- information communicated with families is reliable and accurate, especially if it involves the health and safety of children, employees, and visitors to the Service. (e.g., Department of Health, Public Health Units)
- the use of digital technologies, electronic devices and communication platforms will be managed in accordance with Service policies to ensure children's safety, privacy and professional conduct
- families are encouraged to ask questions and raise concerns, including any complaints about the handling of CCS. All concerns will be responded to respectfully and in a timely manner [see: *Dealing with Complaints Policy*]
- families are informed they can contact the regulatory authority if concerns are not resolved at the Service level
- families are provided with a copy of our *Family Communication Policy,* our *Open Door Policy and Family Handbook* during the enrolment and orientation process
- the enrolment and orientation process provides families with information about the statement of philosophy, policies, and practices of the Service
- educators provide information to families regarding the content and operation of the educational program concerning their child, and a copy of the educational program is available for viewing at the education and care service
- families have access to their child's developmental records outlining developmental progress against the approved learning framework, as well as their strengths, developmental needs, and interests
- families are informed about healthy food options, lunch box ideas, or meals if they are provided
- families are notified of any incident, injury, trauma, or illness that affects their child whilst at the Service, either immediately after the incident or when they collect their child, depending on the severity of the incident. Notification must be made within **24 hours** of the occurrence
- the early childhood environment has an administrative space that is adequate for consulting with parents and for conducting private conversations and meetings
- families are invited to attend parent information meetings and assist with projects in keeping with our *Open Door Policy*
- respect, confidentiality, and sensitivity are key elements of effective communication with families
- processes are in place to communicate with families for whom literacy is an issue, or for whom English is not a first language
- fact sheets and brochures are printed in required languages and are readily available for families to access
- an interpreter service will be sought if needed to ensure communication with parents and families is not hindered due to language barriers

- families are notified of changes to Service policies at least 14 days before making changes to a policy or procedure that may have a significant impact on
  - the service's provision of education and care to any child enrolled in the service or
  - the family's ability to utilise the service
  - changes to the way fees are charged and collected
- families are notified of any changes to the Education and Care Services National Regulations, and a copy of the current National Regulations is available for parents to access
- families are encouraged to complete surveys to contribute and share ideas about their child, provide suggestions about the program, or give feedback

Educators will:

- establish respectful and collaborative partnerships with families, recognising them as children's first and most influential educators
- provide families with regular opportunities to share information about their child's wellbeing, development, interests and cultural background
- be available for families on arrival and pick up to communicate about their child's day through informal discussions
- share insights and perspectives about each child with families (EYLF V2.0)
- only use Service- issued electronic devices to capture, store or transmit images or information related to children
- acknowledge the diversity of families and their aspirations for their children (EYLF V2.0)
- engage in shared decision-making to support children's learning development and wellbeing (EYLF V2.0)
- encourage families to be involved in the curriculum, providing feedback, visiting the Service, bringing in items from the home environment, and giving feedback on children's emerging interests and developmental concerns
- create a welcoming and safe environment where children and families are respected regardless of background, ethnicity, languages spoken, religion, family makeup or gender (EYLF V2.0)
- encourage ongoing open and direct two-way communication with families to develop trust and a collaborative relationship
- encourage families to contribute to the continuous quality improvement progression within the Service through their involvement in the self-assessment and QIP review
- provide families with a range of communication methods which may include the use of online platforms, emails, verbal communication, newsletters, *Individual Daily Report*, sign-in sheets, Notice Board and notes sent home
- use a communication book/ app with families as required (for example, behaviour guidance and inclusion support plans).

Families will:

- provide accurate information during the enrolment process about their child's health, wellbeing and authorised arrangements
- engage in respectful, open and collaborative communication with educators about their child's learning, development and wellbeing
- notify the Service promptly of any changes that may affect their child's safety, wellbeing or participation
- participate in shared decision-making processes regarding their child's goals and educational program
- contribute to the Service's continuous improvement processes, including feedback, surveys and Quality Improvement Plan consultation
- raise concerns or complaints in accordance with the *Dealing with Complaints Policy*
- support a safe, inclusive and respectful environment for all children, families and staff
- report any behaviour or circumstance that may compromise the safety or wellbeing of children
- be encouraged to attend children's excursions to support their children's knowledge of and engagement in their community.

EXPECTED STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

To ensure safety, wellbeing and dignity of all children, staff and visitors, families are expected to:

- treat all children, educators, staff and visitors with respect and dignity
- refrain from bullying, harassment, discrimination or inappropriate behaviour
- not attend the Service premises under the influence of alcohol or illegal substances
- comply with a smoke and vape free legislation and refrain from smoking on Service premises, including the car park
- avoid the use of abusive, offensive or threatening language
- comply with Service policies and procedures while on the premises
- ensure children are collected and signed in/out in accordance with Service requirements

The Service maintains zero tolerance for behaviour that compromises the safety, wellbeing or rights of children or staff. Concerns will be managed in accordance with the *Child Safe Environment Policy and Managing an Aggressive Parent or Visitor Policy.*

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/REFLECTION

The *Family Communication Policy* will be evaluated and reviewed on an annual basis or earlier if there are changes to legislation, ACECQA guidance or any incident related to our policy. Feedback will be requested from children, families, staff, educators and management, and notification of any change to policies will be made to families within **14 days.**

RELATED RESOURCES

Building Relationships with Families Audit	Family Input
Complaints Grievance Form	Family Handbook
Storypark	General Satisfaction Survey

Connecting and Communicating with Families Guide Family Conduct Guidelines	Weekly News Assessments for Learning

SOURCE

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2026). *Guide to the National Quality Framework*
Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2018). *Quality Area 6: Building Partnerships with Families Information Sheet* (with link: QA6 Building partnerships with families.pdf)
Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2018). *Quality Area 6: Enrolment and Orientation Information Sheet* (with link: QA6 Enrolment and orientation.pdf)
Australian Government Department of Education. (2022). *Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia. V2.0.*
Early Childhood Australia (2016). *Code of Ethics.*
Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
Raising Children Network Australia. (2024). *Effective communication with parents for professionals*
Yorganop Indigenous Professional Support Unit (2024). *A Welcoming Yarn Engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and their Families in Education and Care Settings.*

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED BY	KAREN PETRIE	POSITION	PROJECT OFFICER EARLY CHILDHOOD
POLICY REVIEWED	APRIL 2026	NEXT REVIEW DATE	APRIL 2027
VERSION NUMBER	V12.04.26		
MODIFICATIONS	• annual policy review • *Families Will/Will Not* sections rewritten to condense dot points and remove any sections that may appear adversarial rather than collaborate. Some points are already covered in Family Conduct Guidelines • paramount consideration of children's safety added throughout policy • sources updated as required		
POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS		NEXT REVIEW DATE
APRIL 2025	• annual policy maintenance • additional information added to *Families will* section (as per Code of Conduct) • new section added: *Families will not* • sources checked and updated as required		APRIL 2026