

Collaborative Partnerships with Families & Communities

# Family Communication Policy.

## Our Vision.

To give every child **the best start in life.**

## Our Mission.

To deliver high quality childcare and exciting learning opportunities for every child, giving them a head start as they prepare for school.

## Our Values.

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|----------------|--|
| <b>Care</b>    | We take care of the children entrusted to us and our dedicated staff. All are appreciated and diversity is valued. |
| <b>Quality</b> | We maintain the highest standards in care and safety and provide exceptional early years education.                |
| <b>Service</b> | We provide exceptional service and are integral to supporting parents bringing up children.                        |
| <b>Value</b>   | We provide outstanding value for our families.   |



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 employees.

Everyone has the right to be treated equally and with respect. By helping children to appreciate and accept differences and similarities, we can help prepare them to contribute positively to our multicultural society. Busy Bees ensures inclusive practices which recognize and value the backgrounds and cultures of all children, employees, and families. We strive to provide additional support to children and families for whom English is an additional language or dialect to ensure equitable learning outcomes.

### NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARDS (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 4 – Staffing Arrangements	
4.2 – Professionalism	4.2.1 – Professional Collaboration
QUALITY AREA 7 – Governance and Leadership	
7.1 – Governance	7.1.2 – Management Systems

### EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL LAW AND REGULATIONS

Part 6	Operating an Education and Care Service (Law - 162A, 168)
Part 4.2	Children's Health and Safety (Reg - 84)
Part 4.5	Relationships with Children (Reg - 155, 156, 157)
Part 4.7	Governance and Leadership (Reg - 168, 170, 175, 176)

### RELATED POLICIES

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy	Confidentiality and Privacy Policy
Child Safe Environment Policy	Delivery and Collection of Children
Complaints Policy	Respectful Relationships with Children

## PURPOSE

We encourage family participation and open communication within our Service. Families are invited to attend parent information meetings and assist with projects in keeping with our open-door policy.

We aim to ensure open communication through the enrolment and orientation process, policy and statement of philosophy review, feedback forms, daily program, documentation, formal and informal meetings, emails, and conversations.

We aim to provide and promote a Service where children can realise their full potential regardless of gender, race and cultural background. We believe in honouring diversity, striving to engage in respectful interactions with children, educators and families. This will be reflected in our relationships with children and their families and in the resources we provide for the children.

The aim of the Family Conduct Guidelines is to provide information to support families and employees develop clear and effective methods of communication to support the building of genuine partnerships and adopt appropriate and expected behaviour for families and all Busy Bees employees. This includes acting as an advocate for individual children and discussing more complex and challenging issues that call for astute attention and respect.

## SCOPE

Management, Employees, Families, Children, Students, Volunteers and Visitors.

## POLICY

We acknowledge the primary and critical influence families have in their children's lives and understand that effective relationships between employees and families are fundamental to achieve 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 and ongoing opportunities for families to contribute in our curriculum. All staff will communicate with families in a positive and supportive manner that encourages respectful and trusting relationships.

It is anticipated that all stakeholders within Busy Bees will adopt the following qualities during their interactions:

- Honesty
- Integrity
- Inclusivity
- Democracy
- Respect
- Confidentiality

## Communication

It is expected that Families will collaborate with their child's educator/s, working together to support their child's learning and development. Our educators understand that Families are busy and often eager to find ways to strengthen the connection between home and our Service. We have a range of methods to promote effective communication with Families and encourage your interaction. Effective communication builds mutual respect, understanding and trust. For educators working with Families, building a positive partnership includes sharing knowledge and experiences to understand your child.

We appreciate when Families share information with our employees about the child. This may include informing the educator when your child has a restless night, sharing something your child has disclosed, or even talking about an activity or experience your child would like to do or share with others.

This helps us support your child throughout the day.

Communication is vital within our Service, ensuring children's needs are being met. We ask that Families nominate their preferred method of communication which will be adapted where possible, so we can do our best to be open and responsive.

## Languages other than English

Busy Bees recognises the cultural diversity of our community and implements strategies and programs to promote anti-racism, develop intercultural understanding and develop positive relationships between families, children, and employees from all cultural backgrounds. We acknowledge that children from language backgrounds other than English, may require additional support to ensure their successful integration to our Service.

We will ensure translated copies of our Family Handbook and key documents to help explain our policies and procedures are provided where required. If any family of a child enrolled at the Service is not fluent with the English language, policies and other Service information will be provided to that family in a language that is readily understood by the family.

An interpreting service may be engaged to ensure clear communication between the Service and family.

### **Meeting with Educators or Management**

It is not always possible or effective to discuss issues 'on the spot'. Usually, most communication between Families and employees occurs at child drop-off and pick-up times. This transition time typically is not conducive to meaningful exchanges. Families can be rushed, educators are understandably focused on children's transitions, and in the case of full-day programs, educators who spend the largest amount of time with your child may not be available or not rostered on that day.

We encourage Families to arrange a time away from the learning environment, where the educator can give families their full attention and make decisions that have been given careful consideration.

### **Respecting our Educators**

We request that all stakeholders involved with the Service are respected. This includes respect for our educators and all employees, respect for the children and respect for the Families. If we work to share information, contribute ideas and together, reflect on practices we will have a network for your child that not only supports their time here at Busy Bees, but will also see them thrive.

**We all have a common goal:** What's best for your child. With that in mind, this journey will be rewarding for all.

### **Complaints or Grievances**

If there is an incident that has occurred that Families are concerned with, we always want to hear and discuss the issue. We ask Families to be mindful about discussing or talking about sensitive issues in front of others, including children. Where possible, ask your child's educator or relevant educator for a suitable time to discuss your complaint.

Families are encouraged to document their concerns outlining the incident or concern and submit this to the Approved Provider or Service Manager. Management will acknowledge your complaint and endeavour to achieve an outcome that supports the best interests and wellbeing of everyone involved. We encourage all parents, carers, and Family members to work cooperatively with the person managing the complaint.

Inappropriate behaviour will not be tolerated, and a meeting may be terminated.

Management will adhere to privacy and confidentiality laws however if the complaint is a notifiable incident (related to child protection or fraud), we are required to notify relevant authorities immediately.

Should you wish to raise concerns regarding the management of Child Care Subsidy, please speak to the Service Manager as soon as possible.

### **Confidentiality**

Confidentiality is something we will not waiver on and expect the same from everyone involved, employees and Families alike. If you do have concerns regarding your child, please see your child's educator to arrange a time to meet. The meeting will be in a private area within the Service. If issues are still unresolved, then contact the Service Manager and reschedule a second meeting.



## **Policies and Procedures**

Our policies and procedures are reviewed periodically, when a change of legislation occurs, upon critical reflection, or modifications are required. We ask families to contribute and provide feedback to our policies and procedures to ensure child safety and wellbeing remains our priority. We aim to provide an environment that promotes and enables children's participation and is welcoming and culturally safe and inclusive for all children and families. We request that your feedback and contribution to policy review is through relevant communication channels and not derogatory in any way to Busy Bees.

## **Mobile Devices and Photographs/Recording**

Families, Visitors, Contractors and National Support Centre employees who visit Services may with permission from the person in charge, use their mobile phones to take relevant photographs. No photographs of children should be taken unless permission from the family.

## **When entering a Busy Bees premise, we ask that all families and visitors adhere to the following Conduct Guidelines:**

- Be a positive role model
- Respect and understand the important and valuable role our employees play in supporting the positive and healthy development of children in our care
- Refrain from impolite, abusive, or offensive behaviour or language towards employees or other Families, including threats and inappropriate comments. Swearing is not acceptable
- Under no circumstances should a child, Family member or employee be approached in a confrontational manner. If this does occur, you may be asked to leave the premises
- Respect cultural differences of other Families and employees
- Maintain a professional relationship with employees, ensuring social media and babysitting guidelines are adhered to
- Refrain from making negative comments about Busy Bees online. Please approach management with any concerns
- Follow Busy Bees policies and procedures, and the Family Handbook
- Raise concerns, issues, and problems in accordance with Grievance policies
- It is not permitted to discipline verbally, or in any other way, the children of other Families. Should you have an issue or concern regarding the conduct of another child, the appropriate grievance procedure is to be followed.
- Physical conduct with children other than your own is not permitted unless directed by staff or if the safety of a child is compromised.
- Do not enter the premises under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- Do not smoke (in any form) in the premises or carpark
- Use the carpark appropriately and follow all signs as marked
- Do not leave any child unattended in the car/carpark
- Do not bring any food into the Service that goes against allergy aware guidance as we may have children with severe life-threatening allergies in attendance
- Refrain from asking questions about other children. Employees will not answer due to our confidentiality policies

**Breach of Family Conduct Guidelines (Code of Conduct)**

The Family Conduct Guidelines work in conjunction with our policies, Family Handbook, and the Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. The Family Conduct Guidelines are in place to emphasize the commitment and ethical responsibilities each family adopts when enrolling their child/ren.

If Family members are in breach of these guidelines, and following an evaluation by the Manager and/or the Approved Provider, any related enrolment/s may be at risk of being terminated.

**SOURCES**

[ACECQA](#)

[National Quality Standard](#)

[Education and Care services National Regulations](#)

[Education and Care Service National Law Act 2010](#)

[Early Childhood Australia - Code of Ethics](#)

[United Nations - Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)

**VERSION CONTROL**

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years and/or in line with legislation and organisation requirements.

Version	Date	Owner	Responsibility	Change Description
1	01/10/2023	Chief Operating Officer	Policy Development Officer	Replace all previous versions
2	14/12/2023	Chief Operating Officer	Policy Development Officer	Inclusion of mobile phones and photo guidelines

This document is uncontrolled when printed and may be varied, replaced, or terminated without notice.