

## **ORIENTATION POLICY**

### **PURPOSE:**

Elder Street Early Childhood prides itself on its personal approach to all aspects of childcare. We therefore believe that the orientation process should be carried out on an individual basis with each family unit rather than at a combined meeting for all new enrolments.

### **IMPLEMENTATION:**

#### **Families New to the Centre**

Orientation is to be directed not only at children but also at parents. It is extremely important that parents feel comfortable with the centre, staff, policies and established routines.

On enrolment, parents are given a copy of the Centre Handbook that contains all relevant information about the centre and some of our important policies; Behaviour Management, Nutrition, Sleep, Sun Protection, Fees, Grievance or Complaints, Child Protection, Health and Medical. Parents are asked to read this Handbook thoroughly and if necessary, discuss with the Director any concerns they may have, before signing the statement on the enrolment form where they agree to abide by these policies.

Once the enrolment documentation has been completed, parents are encouraged to bring their children to the centre for at least two mornings, in order to become familiar with routines and to become acquainted with the staff. It is preferred that only one family attends for orientation on any given morning to allow the parent adequate opportunity to discuss their child's personality and preferences with staff and to plan the most effective method of settling their child into the centre. During this time staff will read through and discuss the child's routine information form to enable them to become familiar with their individual needs and get to know the parents a little better.

After 8 weeks attendance at the centre, a "Settling In Questionnaire" is given to parents to complete. This allows parents to comment on areas they may need assistance with or that their child is not coping with. This information ensures that there is an opportunity for ongoing communication and concludes the orientation process and furthers the partnership with parents and staff.

#### **Children moving groups within the centre**

Often in long day care if a vacancy is created the opportunity arises for a child to move to the next age group. This can happen at any time during the year for one or two children and also happens in large numbers at the beginning of each year. We will always communicate with all parents involved before any changes are made. If all parties are in agreement for the child to move groups we will begin some orientation. As our centre practices family

grouping quite often, (ie, all age groups spending time with each other) the orientation period for this type of change is not usually more than a few hours a day leading up to the permanent move. This is of course dependant on each child and family's individual needs and we aim to make the transition a positive and fun experience. For this reason although we acknowledge the importance of routines within a childcare centre there will always be consideration made for children's individual needs and the necessity for flexibility in order to meet those needs.

Reviewed: 10 June 2005

Reviewed: 25 May 2006 by M Duffy-Fagan

Source: Putting Children First – National Child Care Accreditation Council

Quality Practices Guide – National Child Care Accreditation Council

Prime Times – Jim Greenman & Anne Stonehouse

Supporting Policy: Separation Policy