Open Door Policy

POLICY STATEMENT

Lake Mac Newy OOSH values genuine partnership with families and recognises families as a child's first teachers. Family involvement in the Service supports children's sense of belonging, wellbeing and connection to their learning.

The Service maintains an open-door approach: families are welcomed to be part of the program and to visit the Service, consistent with the collaborative partnerships expected of an education and care service and with the safety of children and staff. This policy is communicated to families, and educators, students and volunteers are made aware of it and are expected to adhere to it.

Where a decision under this policy could be made against a child's interests — including a decision to decline or limit a person's entry to the Service — the safety, welfare and wellbeing of the child is paramount.

"Children and young people thrive when families, approved providers, educators and teachers in schools, other professionals and the wider community work together in partnerships to support children and young people's wellbeing, learning and development." (*My Time, Our Place* Framework for School Age Care in Australia, V2.0, 2023, p. 9).

PROCEDURE

Access to the Service

- Under Regulation 157 of the Education and Care Services National Regulations, a parent of a child being educated and cared for by the Service may enter the Service's premises at any time that child is being educated and cared for by the Service.
- Entry may be declined where permitting it would;
  - pose a risk to the safety of the children or staff of the Service;
  - conflict with a duty of the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor or an educator under the National Law; or
  - contravene a court order — consistent with Regulation 157(4).
- Families notify management promptly of any change to a child's current court orders or parenting orders, so decisions about a person's access to the Service can take proper account of them.
- Families are always welcome to spend time in the Service and share moments with their children, and other family members and visitors are welcomed on the same open-door basis, subject to any direction of the Public Health Unit or another government authority restricting entry to education and care premises — for example, during an outbreak of infectious disease.
- Families and other visitors follow the Service's sign in and screening arrangements on arrival, including providing evidence of a current Working with Children Check where their involvement in the program amounts to volunteering, consistent with the *Participation of Volunteers and Students* policy. Staff assess the suitability of a visitor's continued presence in line with the *Child Protection Policy*.
- Families are expected to comply with the *Parent Code of Conduct* while at the Service or participating in the program, and do not photograph, film or record any child, in accordance with the Safe Use of *Digital Technologies and Online Environments* policy.

Family participation

- The Service encourages families to contribute their skills, culture and time to the program — for example, sharing a story, a cultural tradition or a cooking experience — and offers a variety of activities at different times of the day and week so that as many families as possible can take part.
- Families are given information about any upcoming opportunities to participate in special days and events, such as Mother's Day, Father's Day, Grandparents Day and cultural celebrations, and are welcome to attend events and celebrations held at the Service.
- The Service respects and celebrates the diverse cultural backgrounds of families and sources translated materials or interpreter support where required.
- Families may make an appointment with management to discuss their child, donate recyclable material for use in the program, and share feedback on the Service's policies and procedures.
- Families are encouraged to discuss any significant change in a child's life — for example, a change in family circumstances or a bereavement — so educators can support the child appropriately.
- Families remain informed about what is happening within the Service through discussions, newsletters, emails and the Service's other family communication channels.

CONSIDERATIONS

Education and Care Services National Law & Regulations	National Quality Standard & Child Safe Standards	Links to other Service Policies	Other Documentation / Evidence
Regulations 157, 170	Standards 6.1, 6.2 Elements 6.1.1–6.1.3, 6.2.2, 6.2.3 Child Safe Standards 1, 3, 4, 10	– Providing a Child Safe Environment – Parent Code of Conduct – Complaints and Grievance Handling – Enrolment and Orientation – Communication with Families – Interactions with Children – Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments – Child Protection Policy – Participation of Volunteers and Students	My Time, Our Place – Version 2 Centre newsletters National Quality Standards Visitor sign in records

ENDORSEMENT BY THE SERVICE

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