



# CHILDREN'S SERVICES Transition Policy

Version Number: 1.0

Version Date: October 2019

Next Review: October 2021

## 1. Introduction

Growth, development and learning are an ongoing process. Transitions and change occur at many times in a person's life and can be times of stress for individuals. We recognise that for some children, even the smallest transitions can cause stress and concern. Educators offer a supporting role and aim to lessen the negative impact of transitions, turning them into positive, learning experiences for children and families.

We believe that calm and predictable transitions should:

- Support and assist in the development of our children's sense of self and emotional well-being
- Build partnerships with families to learn about the child and support the transitions process
- Create continuity that involves building on children's prior and current experiences to help them feel secure, confident and connected with people, places, events, and routines.
- Ensure children have an active role in preparing for transitions by valuing and respecting the child's, and families, input into the learning process;
- See the child's needs as central to the decision making surrounding the transition;
- Ensure that the transitions practiced reflect each Service's unique philosophies.
- Assist children negotiate changes in status or identity, especially during the school transition phase
- Understand that all children are different and respect each child's reactions to transitions
- For children with additional needs, families will ensure that all relevant information is shared so that a smooth transition can be achieved for all parties.

Significant transitions that may be a part of a child's life within our Services may include:

1. Starting in a new Child Care Service
2. Transitioning from home to Child Care Service
3. Moving from one planned or informal activity to another or preparing to take part in scheduled routine times
4. Early Childhood Service to School transitions,
5. Moving between OSHC Service and School,
6. Moving between OSHC Service and home environment,
7. Moving to and from Vacation Care and off site locations

## 2. Scope

This Policy applies to all Children's Services operated by Coast Services Group Limited (a wholly owned subsidiary of Coast Community Connections LTD) and our employees. This applies to Early Childhood Programs, Occasional Care, Out Of School Hours Care and Vacation Care programs and services.

## 3. Policy

This policy outlines the Children Services Team and Families responsibilities in regard to meeting the needs of all children at the Service during the transition process.

## **4. Procedures and Implementation**

### **4.1 Starting in a new Child Care service**

To ensure new children and their families are supported during the settling in period, the Centre facilitates the following strategies;

- 4.1.1 Families are offered a flexible orientation process.
- 4.1.2 Families are encouraged to bring their children to the Service prior to starting the child so they can be shown around the Centre and introduced to the staff. Both parent/guardians and child are encouraged to stay if they wish to observe and participate in the daily program.
- 4.1.3 Families are invited to bring the child to the Service for as many pre-enrolment visits, as they feel comfortable with to give the parent and child time to adjust to the new setting.
- 4.1.4 Educators will also discuss with families any special comfort items the child may need and how best to help the child settle into the centre.

### **4.2 Transitioning from home to Child Care Service**

Families are encouraged to always say goodbye before leaving their child. Educators will support the child during this transition period. Educators will assist families to develop and maintain a routine for saying goodbye to their child.

- 4.2.1 If the child remains distressed over a period of time Educators will contact the family.
- 4.2.2 Families will be kept informed about how their child is coping with the transition from home to the Service.
- 4.2.3 Other children at the centre are buddied up with new children to help them feel comfortable and settled into the centres routines and develop positive relationships.
- 4.2.4 Educators will regularly share information with families about the child's wellbeing.
- 4.2.5 Families are encouraged to stay with their child for as long as needed during the settling-in period, but sometimes it is easier for the Educators to settle the child. Parents/guardians are encouraged to come earlier on collection to spend time with their child at the Centre.
- 4.2.6 Families are encouraged to contact the Centre at any time to reassure themselves about how their child is settling in.
- 4.2.7 Children who are distressed at separating from their family will be comforted, closely observed and offered reassurance
- 4.2.8 Educators will reassure families that if the child remains distressed over a period of time, that Educators will contact them.
- 4.2.9 Educators are aware that some children respond to new experiences faster than others and will adapt to the situation differently and will provide appropriate support for the child and family.
- 4.2.10 Educators are aware that children who arrive at the Service very early in the morning need time and space to wake up and prepare themselves for the day

### **4.3. Moving from one planned or informal activity to another or preparing to take part in scheduled routine times**

To ensure children are actively assisted to participate in Centre transitions with an intention to build self-help skills and confidence

- 4.3.1 Educators plan transitional routines to ensure that children are able to move from one activity to another individually or in groups.

- 4.3.2 Educators talk to the children to prepare them for each new transition or routine, to give advance warning of what is going to happen next.
- 4.3.3 Educators communicate with families to gather relevant and current information about the child's needs.
- 4.3.4 Routines and transitions are flexible, incorporating request and suggestions from the children, families and other Educators/Staff.
- 4.3.5 Educators will make use of information about the children that is familiar to them, including favourite songs, rhymes, and games. Making use of these times as valuable and meaningful learning opportunities.
- 4.3.6 Educators will ensure that Centre transitions are age appropriate and achievable for all children

#### **4.4.1 Transitions from Early Childhood Service to School**

The age at which children can start school in NSW varies between 4 years, 6 months up to 6 years. The range of individual differences that are likely to be encountered when children start school is therefore significant. With age comes increased maturity and control. Experience also contributes to a child's social development. The Early Childhood Educators at our Early Childhood Services recognise these differences and plan appropriately.

As a significant episode in the life of young children, starting school may be both an exciting and worrying time. There are many differences between home and school environments, or between school and childcare centre environments. To help children make the transition to this new environment and to the set of expectations that school may have, the Educators within the centres will:

- 4.4.1 Provide a range of activities to encourage the development of school readiness skills that encompasses all learning opportunities and reflects continuous development for each child.
- 4.4.2 Encourage liaison between schools, families and other early childhood services
- 4.4.3 Focus on a child's strengths and use this as a basis for learning.
- 4.4.4 Identify areas that children avoid and encourage participation.
- 4.4.5 Use a child's interests to encourage and support learning across all curriculum areas
- 4.4.6 Ensure a positive learning environment that helps to continue children's innate desire to seek knowledge.
- 4.4.7 Provide a balance of child and adult initiated experiences which promotes positive attitudes to learning in all areas.
- 4.4.8 Allow time for repeated practice of self help skills such as toileting, hand washing, shoes on and off, opening lunch boxes and lunch box foods.
- 4.4.9 Work most closely on children's wellbeing, their social and emotional skills in order that the children are best prepared to face their next challenges.
- 4.4.10 Provide support and information to families in their decision-making about the time to transition their child to school
- 4.4.11 For children with additional needs, families will ensure that all relevant information is shared so the children can get access to the relevant support when they start school
- 4.4.12 Undertake a summative assessment for each child transitioning to school as required by the NSW Department of Education using the Transition to School Statement to communicate this assessment information with families and primary schools.
- 4.4.13 Encourage families to be active participants in School orientation activities transition to school programs.
- 4.4.14 We will provide a range of information regarding school readiness and the transition to school via newsletter and noticeboard.

#### **4.5 Moving between OSHC Services and School,**

- 4.5.1 Children are roll called on departure from the service in the mornings and on arrival at the service in the afternoon.
- 4.5.2 Educators are aware that children may require a quiet place to relax as they embrace the day.
- 4.5.3 Educators are aware that children need a period of changeover between school and the service.
- 4.5.4 Children are encouraged to wash hands on arrival. Between October and April they are also encouraged to apply sunscreen.

#### **4.6 Moving to and from Vacation Care and off-site locations**

- 4.6.1 Roll calls and head counts occur regularly before, after and throughout the experience and at each transition.
- 4.6.2 Reminders and explanations are implemented by Educators at the start of each day during roll call around Safety, appropriate behaviours, routines and activities for excursions. Educators will continue these discussions throughout the day prior to transitioning to the next environment.
- 4.6.3 Children are gathered into groups with their friends where possible.
- 4.6.4 Two Educators are assigned to each group and the children remain with the group throughout the experience.
- 4.6.5 Children who are nervous or unsure are supported by Educators

### **Other related policies and procedures**

Children's Services – Enrolment and Orientation of Child Policy

Children's Services – Arrival and Departure of Children Policy

### **Forms and Records**

- Enrolment Form
- Family Orientation Form
- NSW Department of Education - Transition to School Statement

#### **Policy Source Acknowledgements:**

- [http://www.rch.org.au/emplibrary/ecconnections/CCH\\_P\\_Mar2009\\_English\\_p2.pdf](http://www.rch.org.au/emplibrary/ecconnections/CCH_P_Mar2009_English_p2.pdf)
- <http://www.aifs.gov.au/cafca/pubs/sheets/rs/rs5.html>
- <http://www.childcarelounge.com/articles/smooth-transitions.php>
- [https://www.kidsmatter.edu.au/sites/default/.../KMP20130228\\_TransitionMatters](https://www.kidsmatter.edu.au/sites/default/.../KMP20130228_TransitionMatters)
- Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA). (2011). Guide to the National Quality Standard. Sydney: ACECQA. Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR). (2009).
- Belonging, Being and Becoming—the National Early Years Learning Framework. Canberra: DEEWR.