

POLICY & PROCEDURAL STATEMENTS

Topic: Early Learning – Enrolment

Scope: **Relevant Legislation and Standards:**

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2018* (Cth) Regulations 102, 160-162.
- *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010* (Cth) Sections 172 and 175.
- *Children Services Act 1996* (Vic).
- *Children Services Regulations 2020* (Vic) Regulations 108 to 110.
- *No Jab, No Play Legislation 2016* (Vic).

Policy: Avenue Neighbourhood House @ Eley Inc. (ANH@E) Early Learning Centre will only allow a child to commence care if all appropriate enrolment forms have been fully completed. These include an immunisation history statement from the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register (or an Immunisation Status Certificate from a doctor or local council immunisation service) that shows the child's immunisations are up to date for their age, and any required anaphylaxis/asthma plans and lawful authority orders.

While priority for early learning places is given to participants of House activities, enrolment in a course does not necessarily guarantee a place. It is essential that social and recreation participants or students studying courses speak with early learning staff to book a place prior to enrolling in their course.

Definition: *Authorised Nominee:* is a person who must be over the age of 18-years, and who has been given permission by a parent or family member to collect their child from the service. The Authorised Nominee may remain on the service's premises while children are being cared for and educated, and their details must be kept on the child's enrolment record.

Enrolment Information Required

1. Culturally safe environment

ANH@E promotes a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of children are respected and valued. To ensure the needs of children are being met, the *Children Services Regulations 2020* (Vic) require all Centres to keep information on the cultural background of the child and, if applicable, the child's parents. Information on any cultural or religious considerations is also required.

2. Child Safety and Authorised Nominee(s)

ANH@E is committed to promoting and protecting the interests and safety of children. We have zero tolerance for child abuse. Everyone working at ANH@E is responsible for the care and protection of children and reporting information about child abuse (refer to Child Safety Code of Conduct, Child Safety and Wellbeing policy and Child Safe Standards policy).

The *Children Services Regulations 2020* (Vic) require all Centres to keep accurate and detailed records for children. At the time of enrolment, parents/guardians will be asked to fill in an enrolment form. This form includes questions required under the *Children Services Regulations 2020* (Vic) to ensure the safety and protection of the child.

Authorised Nominee

An Authorised Nominee section is on the enrolment form for parents/guardians to provide permission for another person or persons to collect their child from the service.

Early Learning staff will not permit a child to leave the Centre without the appropriate written authorisation from the parent/guardian. Persons unknown to staff will be questioned on their arrival, and the child's enrolment form checked for authorised nominee(s). If the person collecting the child is not listed, he or she will be unable to leave the Centre with the child, and ANH@E will notify the parent/guardian by phone. We request that all families ensure Authorised Nominee contact details and arrangements are kept up-to-date and provided to the Director of Early Learning.

3. Information about court and parenting orders

To ensure the safety of the child at all times, at the time of enrolment or if a court order arises, parents/guardians must provide the detailed information below to the Director of Early Learning:

1. Details of any court or tribunal orders, parenting orders, or parenting plans relating to powers, duties, responsibilities, or authorities of any person in relation to the child or access to the child.
2. Details of any other court or tribunal orders relating to the child's residence or the child's contact with a parent or other person.
3. Photo identification of a person or persons not authorised to collect or have access to the child due to court orders, family violence-related orders, child protection orders, and bail orders.

Court orders must be copied and kept in the relevant child's records so steps can be taken to ensure compliance. As court orders can be varied, revoked, or extended from time to time, parents/guardians are required to ensure this information and a revised copy of the order is provided to the Director of Early Learning for the relevant child's records.

4. Health information

Accurate records on a child's health are essential to ensure parents/guardians can be contacted quickly in the case of an emergency, treatment can be provided in respect to a specific healthcare need, medical condition or allergy and health risks to a child can be minimised.

At the time of enrolment, the following health related information must be provided on the enrolment form and copies, or relevant medical management plans, provided to the Director of Early Learning:

1. The child's Medicare number.
2. Authorisation for transportation of the child by an ambulance service
3. Dietary requirements or food intolerances.
4. The child's asthma management plan, anaphylaxis medical management plan, or risk minimisation plan.

On occasion a parent or authorised person may attend to collect a child while presenting in such a manner as to suggest his or her ability to safely collect a child is impaired (e.g., under the influence of a drug or alcohol), Early Learning staff have a duty of care to the children in their care and to ensure their safety is paramount, must comply with their obligations under state or territory child safety laws. In circumstances where the collection of a child poses a potential risk to a child's safety that cannot be addressed by alternative means, the Director of Early Learning and/or Approved Provider Responsible Person will contact police or Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) Child Protection and advice sought as to how to proceed.

5. Immunisation

In accordance with "No Jab, No Play" legislation, families must provide evidence that the child they are enrolling is fully immunised for their age, on a vaccination catch-up program or unable to be fully immunised for medical reasons. To comply with the legislation, families must provide an approved immunisation certificate before care can commence.

An Immunisations History Statement from the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register can be used. An Immunisation Status Certificate from a medical doctor or a local council immunisation service can also be used if it meets requirements. Our Director of Early Learning will assist parents/guardians with the process to obtain the required documentation and assess it once it has been received to ensure immunisations are up to date before care can commence.

6. Privacy and Confidentiality

Privacy and confidentiality are of paramount importance in our Early Learning Centre. All the information provided to us by the parent/guardian, such as addresses, phone numbers, and custody information, is seen and recorded only by our Director of Early Learning and the staff directly responsible for the care of the child. At no time will information be given out without parental/guardian consent, and any individual meetings that take place

between the parent/guardian and our staff will be undertaken with the highest degree of professionalism. We are required to comply with the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth) and *The Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* (Vic)

7. Record Keeping

The Centre maintains all information provided by a family on computer and on file. Parents/guardians are required to ensure their child's records are kept up to date by communicating any changes to their child's pertinent information to our Director of Early Learning.

If there are changes in any of the following please notify ANH@E:

- Child's diet.
- Allergies/asthma/anaphylaxis.
- Change of address, phone number, or email.
- Immunisations (please provide updated approved Immunisation History Statement).
- Change of work/study address/phone number.
- Change to emergency contacts.

Parents/guardians must keep us informed of *any* changes to the above details so we know the child's needs and are able to contact the parent/guardian throughout the day if the need arises.

Enrolment Procedure

When enrolling a child into the Centre the following will be followed:

- Our Director of Early Learning will determine vacancies.
- An appointment will be made for the applicant family to look through the Centre.
- Applicants will receive a Handbook with information on policies and procedures at the Centre.
- Applicants will be asked to complete the enrolment form and to also supply all required documents such as Immunisation History Statement/Court orders/Asthma and Anaphylaxis plans etc.
- Each child must have a separate enrolment form completed.
- **All** sections of the enrolment form **must** be completed prior to enrolment.
- A start date will be discussed and set for the child to begin care.

Daily Communication

At ANH@E we recognise that effective communication is a vital factor in providing care that is personal and individualised. We recognise that when it comes to the child, the parents/guardians are the expert. The staff rely on parents/guardians to share with them their knowledge of the child each day, in order to provide care that is consistent with the child's home environment, and to develop a program that reflects an understanding of the child's changing needs throughout their growth and development.

Our staff, in turn welcome the opportunity to share with parents/guardians their professional expertise in child development, and to share with them their

knowledge and growing understanding of their child. We see both parents and staff as a resource to each other, and therefore, as active partners in the care and education of children. Daily communication between parents/guardians and their child’s caregivers is an essential element of a quality early childhood program.

We look forward to many conversations and opportunities for exchanging information and getting to know parents/guardians and their child personally during their time at our Centre.

General Communication

The Centre, and the people within it, is not unlike a small community, and as such, there are always activities taking place and information to share with others. The children are central to the Centre community’s very existence, and we actively use every medium at our disposal to communicate to parents/guardians the importance of the work we do each day with their children, and to encourage their involvement in the program and its’ ongoing development.

General information, items of interest, and news relating to the Centre, are communicated to parents/guardians through noticeboards displays and our website. In all manner of ways, communication is the key to the provision of a high-quality early learning service. At ANH@E, communication in its many forms is an integral part of our work. It has an important place and is actively encouraged to deepen our shared understanding of children, and to foster the development of mutually respectful relationships between parents/guardians and staff.

This policy was reviewed in October 2021 and will be reviewed again in October 2023.
This policy will be reviewed every two (2) years unless there are any regulatory or legislative requirements and/or any feedback from staff, parents, and the community.

Signed..... CoM Meeting.....