

Communication Policy

Quality Area 6: Collaborative partnerships with families and communities

Standard 6.1: Respectful relationships are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting roles.

Element 6.1.1: Families are supported from environment to be involved in the service and contribute to service decisions.

Element 6.1.3: Current information is available to families about the service and relevant community services and resources to support parenting and family wellbeing.

Element 6.2.2: Effective partnerships support children's access, inclusion and participation in the program.

Element 6.2.3: The service builds relationships and engages with its community.

POLICY STATEMENT

Arabadoo is committed to open, ethical, and cooperative communication between staff and families. Clear and respectful communication is essential to providing high quality care. Communication eases the children's transitions between home and OSHC and allows our staff to meet each child's individual needs.

RATIONALE

'Partnerships are based on effective communication which builds the foundations of understanding about each other's expectations and attitudes and build on the strength of each other's knowledge.'

– My Time Our Place p11

The Education and Care Services National Quality Standard requires collaborative partnerships between Services, families, and communities. Respectful relationships with families and the community are maintained using the communication guidelines in this policy.

Both Privacy and Child Protection legislation require childcare services to protect the interests of individuals and their personal information and respect an individual's right to control how that information is used and for what purpose.

This policy outlines the roles of the Parent Management Committee (PMC), educators, and other staff regarding communication to families.

This policy covers all forms of communication, including but not limited to:

- Face to face,
- Email,
- Telephone,
- Text message,
- Programming application,
- Noticeboards, and
- Newsletters.

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CONSIDERATIONS:

Education and Care Services National Law & Regulations	National Quality Standard	Other Service policies/documentation	Other
Education and Care Services National Law (NSW): 3(3)(e), 301(3) Education and Care Services National Regulations (NSW): 86, 87, 90, 92, 157, 160, 161, 162, 168, 172, 181	4.2.2, 6.1, 6.1.1, 6.1.2, 6.1.3, 6.2, 6.2.1, 6.2.2, 6.2.3, 7.1, 7.2, 7.1.1, 7.2.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confidentiality Policy Interactions with Children Appropriate Workplace Behaviour Emergency and Evacuation 	My Time, Our Place

ENDORSEMENT BY THE SERVICE:

Approval date: Sept 2024

Date for Review: Sept 2026

Policy History

Version 1.0

December 2005, May 2006, March 2007, May 2007, February 2009, August 2010, May 2011, March 2012.

Version 2.0

Overhaul of policies following regulatory changes in 2012. Drafted from the Network template and using the Current Arabanoo Policy Handbook by Sarah Evans. Reviewed by Michael Scheepers, May 2013.

Version 3.0

Reviewed by Kate Sellick, May 2014

Version	Date reviewed	Who by	Area changed	Changes made	Authorisation
4.0	12 August 2015	Amanda Chapman and Constandina Shackleton	Various	Changed some of the wording Deleted information that was in the policy twice	Kerry Sinclair
5.0	17 August 2016 26 July 2017	Eloise Campbell and Craig Dent Rowan Friend and Belinda Edmunds	How families, educators and other parties are communicated with. Policy statement Policy statement	Communication methods added Added and removed lines of communication Separated policy from procedure	Belinda Edmunds July 2017
6.0	1 May 2019	Rowan Friend and Kate Sellick	Standards	Updated to the new NQS	Kate Sellick - 8 May 2019
7.0	May 2024	KW OSHC Consulting	Rationale	Added to Explains why the policy is needed with	Rowan Friend – 3 Sept 2024

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				evidence in legislation, MTOP and NQS	
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IMPLEMENTATION

At Arabanoo, staff must adhere to this policy in conjunction with the other policies outlined in the section above.

Staff will communicate respectfully and openly with families to ensure mutual trust between both parties. Children's routines and habits can be communicated properly in this manner, so that a positive and smooth transition from home and OSHC each day is achieved. Regular information will be provided to families about our program and families will be given opportunities to contribute to and participate in our activities.

PROCEDURE

Communication with families

The Parent Management Committee (PMC), will ensure the following:

- Create a comfortable and supportive environment for families with open communication and good relations.
- Treat families and staff with respect, courtesy and understanding.
- Always maintain appropriate language.
- No judgements made towards families and will respect their need for childcare.
- Accept family's individual and cultural differences in raising their children.
- Maintain regular, open communication with families.
- Ensure information communicated to families is reliable and accurate.
- Respond to suggestions from families.
- Ensure families are fully aware of all lines of communication and confirm these are followed.
- Ensure families are provided with the Service's educational program and that it is available to view at the Service.
- Notify families when they need to update their child's Medical Management Plan (annually).
- Ensure families are notified of any changes to the National Law and Regulations.
- Ensure families are notified of any changes to Arabanoo's policies and procedures.
- Ensure confidentiality is always maintained, including confidentiality of records.
- Ensure families have access to their child's records including their progress, strengths, skills, and behaviours.
- Communication with families will be maintained in a variety of ways, including:
 - Newsletters
 - Face to face
 - Notice board
 - Parent Handbook
 - Family events
 - Information from management
 - Annual General Meeting
 - Special general meetings
 - PMC meetings
 - Emails
 - Phone Calls

The above communication methods are accessible to all families and will be provided in the required languages.
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Communication Procedure

Educators and staff will ensure the following:

- Create a comfortable and supportive environment for families with open communication and good relations.
- Families are welcomed at the Service.
- No judgements made towards families and will respect their need to use childcare.
- Accept family's individual and cultural differences in raising their children.
- Ensure families are greeted and farewelled.
- Maintain regular, open communication with families (see box below).

Educators will inform families regularly about anything relating to their children.

This could be praise about the child's day or activities, any problems the child might have had in the day that may have been a concern.

The easiest times to communicate with families about their children is during drop offs and picks ups at the Service.

- Ensure information communicated to families is reliable and accurate.
- Regularly talking to families about the child's interests or activities and respond to suggestions regarding these from the families.
- Regularly talk to families about the child's cultural needs and celebrations and respond to these, accordingly, including reasonably incorporating these in the programming.
- Ensure families are fully aware of all lines of communication and confirm these are followed.
- Be aware of limitations in relation to family's problems and ensure they are referred to the appropriate people when required.
- Ensure confidentiality is always maintained, including confidentiality of records.
- Ensure posts and messages through the CCMS program to families is professional, constructive, inclusive, and positive.

'Educators demonstrate high level communication skills with all stakeholders to ensure the environment supports children's wellbeing, development and enriched experiences.' – My Time Our Place p16

Families will communicate with Arabanoo staff in the following ways:

- Provide accurate and up to date information in the enrolment process about their child, including medical information and dietary requirements.

Parents/guardians must provide a Medical Management Plan (developed and approved by a medical practitioner) for their child upon enrolment.

The Plan must contain the following information:

- Details about the condition, symptoms, treatment, and medication required.
- Is updated annually or when changes occur.
- Medication (in date) for their child must be left at OSHC to be administered by staff if necessary.

- Notify educators as soon as practicable when any information about their child changes, including medical information, parental orders etc.
- Share their child's routines at home, cultural practice, language, and beliefs with educators if they would like these elements of their child's life to be incorporated at the Service.

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- Engage in informal discussions with educators about their child's routines, development, behaviours, and activities at the Service.
- Participate in the programming of activities and excursions and offer feedback if they would like to.
- Assist with a smooth transition for their child when starting at the Service.
- Families are able to communicate with educators and management through the CCMS program, such as commenting on posts, completing surveys and polls and filling in forms.

Communication with staff

The PMC may communicate with educators in the following ways:

- In person conversations
- Notice boards
- Staff Handbook
- Newsletters
- Information from management
- Emails
- Phone calls
- Staff briefings
- Appraisals
- Facebook group
- Deputy roster
- Training
- CCMS program

Educators may communicate with other educators in the following ways:

- In person conversations
- Notice boards
- Staff Handbook
- Emails
- Phone calls
- Staff briefings
- Facebook group
- Deputy roster
- CCMS program

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Procedure History

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6.0	1 May 2019	Rowan Friend and Kate Sellick	Communication Standards	Added Kinderloop, Facebook and Deputy Roster Updated to the new NQS	Kate Sellick - 8 May 2019
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