

FIELD RESOURCE

Selling with Kids in the House

Practical logistics for family vendors

Daniel Gierach

RAY WHITE COLLECTIVE

[DANIELGIERACH.COM](https://danielgierach.com)

Selling a family home with kids still living in it is logistically harder than selling an empty house, but it is the situation most Brisbane vendors are actually in. The campaign runs for four to six weeks, inspections happen on school days and weekends, and your kids still need to eat, sleep, do homework, and feel like home is home. This handout is the practical version of how families in Bulimba, Hawthorne, Morningside, and Cannon Hill make it work.

Setting expectations with kids honestly

Kids pick up on stress faster than adults realise. The campaign goes more smoothly when they know what is happening, in age-appropriate language, before the photographer arrives.

- Tell them the house is being sold, when, and where you are likely to move. Vague answers create more anxiety than honest ones.

- For younger children, frame the campaign in terms of the small visible changes: people will come and look at our house, the toys go in the cupboard before they arrive, we tidy up together.

- For school-age children, explain inspections happen on specific days and most weekends for a few weeks, then it is over.

- For teens, give them the calendar and treat them like adults. They will cope better with information than with a feeling that things are happening around them.

- Acknowledge that the next house will be different and that some things they like (a particular tree, the spot on the deck, the room layout) will not come with them. Do not pretend the move is purely a gain.

- Avoid promising a specific new house, suburb, or school until contracts are signed. Kids remember promises.

School-day inspections by appointment

Most weekday inspections are booked for a 30 to 45 minute window. With school drop-off, pick-up, and after-school activities, the day-of logistics are usually the trickiest part of selling.

- Ask your agent for as much notice as possible on weekday inspections. 24 hours is the standard request, and most buyers will accept it.

- Set a default presentation state each morning before school: beds made, benches clear, blinds open, dishwasher running. A 10 minute reset is much easier than a 90 minute scramble.

- Aim for inspections to land between 9.30am and 2.30pm where possible. The house is empty, lunchboxes are gone, and you are not racing the school run.

- Have a go-bag near the door with your laptop, phone charger, and anything you need to work from a cafe for an hour.

- For after-school inspections, take the kids straight from school to a park, the library, or grandparents. Coming home first defeats the purpose.

- Tell the agent your hard no-go windows in writing at the start of the campaign: school pick-up, dinner, bath, bed. Most agents will work around them if they know.

Weekend opens: where to go and what to take

A Saturday open is usually 30 minutes, sometimes back-to-back with a second on Sunday. The whole family clears out. Plan the morning so leaving the house is not a battle.

- Pick a weekend routine you can repeat for the length of the campaign. New Farm Park, the river walk, the Powerhouse markets, Whites Hill Reserve, or a regular cafe all work.
- For toddlers, somewhere with a playground and a coffee in walking distance is the only requirement.
- For school-age kids, build in a small reward for cooperating: a hot chocolate, the bookshop, a kick of the footy at the park.
- For teens, drop them at a friend's house or the shopping centre. They do not need to come with you.
- Pack the night before: nappies, snacks, water, a change of clothes, sunscreen, a book or device, and the dog's lead if the dog is coming too.
- Leave 15 minutes earlier than you think you need to. Arriving back to a buyer still in your driveway is awkward and undermines the campaign.

Toy and clutter strategy

Buyers are looking for space. Toys, school art, and the daily debris of family life make rooms feel smaller than they are. The fix is not to pretend kids do not live there. The fix is to reduce the volume.

- Cull before you stage. Donate or store anything that has not been touched in three months. Half the toys you own are not in active use.

- Use lidded baskets or ottomans in the living room so the daily tidy is one motion: lid off, toys in, lid on.

- Keep one shelf or basket per child of the toys they actually use. Everything else goes into a cupboard or off-site storage for the campaign.

- In bedrooms, keep the bed, one bedside item, one piece of art, and clear floors. Stuffed animals can stay if they live on the bed in a tidy arrangement.

- School art and certificates come off the fridge for photos. They go back up between inspections if you want.

- Create a single "campaign cupboard" in the laundry, garage, or under a bed for the things that need to disappear in 10 minutes before an inspection: laundry baskets, the spare highchair, the booster seat, the pram.

Photographing kids' rooms

Photos run for the entire campaign. The question is whether to depersonalise children's rooms entirely or photograph them as lived-in family spaces. The answer depends on the room and the buyer pool.

- For a family home in Bulimba, Hawthorne, or Morningside, the buyer is usually another family. A well-styled child's room signals "this works for kids" and can be a positive.

- Remove anything with the child's full name visible: name plaques, monogrammed pillows, school bags, certificates. Privacy is the priority.

- A nursery or toddler room photographs well with a cot, a fitted sheet in a neutral colour, one piece of wall art, and a small selection of styled toys. Less is more.

- A school-age child's room benefits from a made bed, clear floor, a single styled bookshelf, and personal items removed.

- A teen's room is often the hardest to style. Strip it back: bed, bedside table, lamp, desk if it fits, and one neutral piece of art. Negotiate with the teen ahead of time so they know what is happening.

- If a room is genuinely too cluttered to photograph well, talk to your agent about whether to skip it in the photo set rather than publish a poor image.

Keeping rituals normal

A four to six week campaign is long enough that your kids' routines need to survive it. The campaign is the disruption. The rest of life should not be.

- Keep mealtimes, bedtimes, and bath times the same. These are the anchors kids hold onto when other things are changing.

- Pick one room (often a bedroom or the family room) as the "this stays normal" zone. Tidy it for inspections, but do not strip it of personality.

- Keep the dog's walk, the Friday pizza night, the Saturday swimming lesson. The campaign should not cancel the things that mark the week.

- Build in a small family treat for after a weekend of opens. Sunday afternoon at the river, an ice cream, a movie. The kids see the effort and the campaign feels finite.

- If the campaign is dragging into a holiday or a birthday, talk to your agent about pausing inspections for a few days. Most agents will agree.

- Tell the kids when the campaign ends. Mark the date on the fridge. The end being visible makes the middle easier.

Communicating with the agent

Your agent cannot work around your family if they do not know what your week looks like. The more specific you are at the start, the smoother the campaign runs.

- Send your agent a one-page summary in week one: school hours, naps, after-school activities, weekend commitments, and any non-negotiable times.

- Confirm how you want inspection requests handled: text, call, or email. Pick one and stick to it.

- Set a minimum notice window in writing. 24 hours for weekday inspections is standard. If a buyer needs same-day access, the agent should ask, not assume.

- Tell your agent which family members are home during the day. A baby napping at 11 am is useful information for booking inspections.

- If a particular day each week is impossible (regular medical appointments, a parent working from home with calls, a child who needs quiet), block it on the agent's calendar from day one.

- Update the agent the day a child gets sick. A vomiting toddler trumps a buyer inspection every time, and a good agent will rebook without complaint.

Looking after yourself

Selling with kids in the house is exhausting in a way that selling an empty house is not. You are running a campaign and a household at the same time. Plan accordingly.

- Accept help. If a grandparent, sibling, or friend offers to take the kids for a Saturday open, say yes.
- Do not expect the house to look perfect every day. Aim for "ready in 20 minutes" rather than "always ready".
- Build in one night a week where the rule is takeaway and a quiet house. The campaign should not eat your weeks.
- Track inspections, feedback, and offers in one place so you are not piecing the campaign together from text messages at 10pm.
- Talk to your partner about who handles what. One person manages the agent, the other manages the kids on inspection days. Whatever works, agree on it early.
- Remember the campaign is finite. Most Brisbane inner east family homes sell within four to six weeks of going to market. The harder days are temporary.

A family home that still feels like a family home, presented well and run on a clear schedule, sells better than a house that has been stripped of every sign that children live there. Buyers in the inner east are families. They want to see that a family thrives in this house.

Daniel Gierach

RAY WHITE COLLECTIVE

0412 523 821

daniel.gierach@raywhite.com

danielgierach.com