

# Enrolment and Orientation Policy / Procedure



## QA6 – Collaborative Partnerships

***EMERGE promotes a commitment to child safety, wellbeing, participation, empowerment, cultural safety, and awareness including children with a disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and/or communities and children from cultural and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds.***

***EEYS has a zero tolerance of child abuse and a duty of care to prevent and manage child abuse risks including physical and online environments.***

### PURPOSE

This policy will outline:

- The criteria for enrolment at services managed by EEYS.
- The process to be followed when enrolling a child at services managed by EEYS and the basis on which places within the programs will be allocated.
- Procedures for the orientation of new families and children into services managed by EEYS.
- Processes to ensure compliance with legislative and DET funding requirements and Child care subsidy (CCS) in relation to the enrolment of children in early childhood education and care services.

### VALUES

EEYS is committed to:

- Equal access for all children.
- Meeting the needs of the local community.
- Complying with DET funding requirements and CCS requirements relating to the enrolment of children in government-funded kindergarten places or Child Care.
- Maintaining confidentiality in relation to all information provided on enrolment forms.
- Ensuring all families are welcomed and receive an effective orientation into the service.

### SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, educators, staff and parents or guardians who wish to enrol or have already enrolled their child at services managed by EEYS.

### BACKGROUND

The *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011* require approved services to have a policy and procedures in place in relation to enrolment and orientation (Regulation 168(2)(k)).

It is intended that all eligible children (refer to *Definitions*) will have access to two years of kindergarten before commencing school. However a shortage of places in some areas can limit choices for parents/guardians. Where demand is higher than availability a priority system for access must be determined by the Approved Provider in order to allocate the available places. The criteria used to determine the allocation of places will follow the Department of Education's priority of access for child childhood education. The Victorian Government requires funded organisations to ensure that their policies and procedures promote equal opportunity for all children. Criteria for access and inclusion are outlined in the *Kindergarten Funding Guide procedures and funding criteria* (refer to *Sources*). Services participating in central enrolment schemes are required to comply with the enrolment procedures of that scheme.

Childcare services providing approved care (refer to *Definitions*) must abide by the Family Assistance Law (refer to *Legislation and standards*) and the Commonwealth Government's *Priority for allocating places in child care services* (refer to *Sources*).

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Immunisations are an effective means of reducing the risk of vaccine preventable diseases. Early childhood education and care services which are regulated under the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010* have legislative responsibilities under the *Public Health and wellbeing Act 2008* to only offer confirmed place in their programs to children with acceptable immunisation documentation (refer to definitions)

### LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999
- A New Tax System (family Assistance (Administration) Act 1999
- Family Assistance Legislation (jobs for Families Child Care Package) Act 2017
- Child Care Subsidy Minister's Rules 2017
- Child Care Subsidy Secretary's Rules 2017
- Child Care Subsidy Minister's Rule 2018
- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic), as amended 2011
- Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic), as amended 2011
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic), as amended 2012
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: Regulations 160, 161, 162, 177, 183
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)
- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 6: Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities
  - Standard 6.1: Respectful and supportive relationships with families are developed and maintained
    - Element 6.1.1: There is an effective enrolment and orientation process for families
- Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 (Vic)
- Public Health and Wellbeing Amendment (No Jab, No Play) Regulations 2015 (Vic)
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984

The most current amendments to listed legislation can be found at:

- Victorian Legislation – [Victorian Law Today](#)
- Commonwealth Legislation – [Federal Register of Legislation](#)

### DEFINITIONS

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy. For commonly used terms e.g. Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Regulatory Authority etc. refer to the General Definitions section of this manual.

**Acceptable immunisation documentation:** documentation as defined by the *immunisation enrolment toolkit for early childhood education and care services* as acceptable evidence that a child is fully vaccinated for their age, or is on a recognised catch-up schedule if their child has fallen behind their vaccinations; or has a medical reason not to be vaccinated; or has been assessed as being eligible for a 16 week grace period. (refer sources)

**Approved care:** Care given by a service provider that has been approved by the Family Assistance Office to receive Child Care Subsidy payments on behalf of eligible families. Most long day care, family day care, before-and-after school care, vacation care, some occasional care and some in-home care childcare services are approved providers. Details are available at [Department of Human Services](#)

**Authorised Nominee:** (in relation to this policy) is a person who has been given written authority by the parent/guardians of a child to collect that child from the education and care service. These details

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will be on the child's enrolment form.

The National Law and National Regulations do not specify a minimum age limit for an authorised nominee. Each service will need to consider a risk assessment on an individual basis to determine if a person under the age of 18 is able to be an authorised nominee and, if so, what constitutes the minimum acceptable age at the service.

**Child Care Subsidy (CCS):** A Commonwealth Government payment to help families who use either approved or registered childcare services. All eligible families can receive some Child Care Subsidy. Details are available at [Department of Human Services](#)

**Children with additional needs:** Children whose development or physical condition requires specialist support or children who may need additional support due to language, cultural or economic circumstances (refer to *Inclusion and Equity Policy*).

**Deferral:** When a child does not attend in the year when they are eligible for a funded kindergarten place or officially withdraws from a service prior to the April data collection. DET considers that this child has not accessed a year of funded kindergarten and is therefore eligible for DET funding in the following year. (it does not mean the child has a kindergarten position held for the following year)

**Eligible child:** A child attending an early childhood education and care service as described in the *immunisation enrolment toolkit for early childhood education and care services* or a child in a kindergarten program who meets the requirements of both *The Kindergarten Guide* and the *immunisation enrolment toolkit for early education and care services*.

**Enrolment application form:** A form to apply for a place at the service.

**Enrolment application fee:** A payment to cover administrative costs associated with the processing of a child's enrolment application for a place in a program at the service.

**Enrolment form:** A form that collects contact details and personal and medical information from parents or guardians about their child. This is completed after a place has been offered by the service and accepted by the applicant. The information on this form is placed on the child's enrolment record (see below) and is kept confidential by the service.

**Enrolment record:** The collection of documents which contain information on each child as required under the National Regulations (Regulations 160, 161, 162) including contact details, names of authorised nominees (refer to *Definitions*), names of persons authorised to consent to medical treatment or to authorise administration of medication, names of persons authorised to take the child outside the service, details of any court orders, personal and health information including specific healthcare needs, medical management plans and dietary restrictions, and immunisation documentation as specified in the *immunisation enrolment toolkit for early childhood education and care services*. This information is kept confidential by the service.

**Fees:** A charge for a place within a program at the service.

**Priority of Access:** Department of Education criteria that must be used by service providers when prioritising enrolments.

**Pre-prep:** Four-Year-Old Kindergarten is becoming Pre-Prep

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### SOURCES

- [Australian Childhood Immunisation Register:](#)
- *Child Care Benefit (Eligibility of Child Care Services for Approval and Continued Approval) Determination 2000* included in the [www.legislation.gov.au/Series/F2006B01541](http://www.legislation.gov.au/Series/F2006B01541)
- *Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011* at [www.acecqa.gov.au/](http://www.acecqa.gov.au/)
- *Guide to the National Quality Standards* at [www.acecqa.gov.au/](http://www.acecqa.gov.au/)
- [Priority for allocating places in child care services](#)
- [The Kindergarten Guide](#) (Department of Education and Training):
- [Immunisation enrolment toolkit for early childhood education and care services 2016:](#)
- [Victorian Department of Health:](#)
- [Priority of access for early childhood education | vic.gov.au](#)
- [Four-Year-Old Kindergarten is becoming Pre-Prep | vic.gov.au](#)
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### SERVICE POLICIES

- *Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations Policy*
- *Complaints and Grievances Policy*
- *Dealing with Infectious Disease Policy*
- *Fees Policy*
- *Inclusion and Equity Policy*
- *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*

### PROCEDURES

#### The Approved Provider (EEYS) is responsible for:

- Determining the criteria for priority of access to programs at services administered by EEYS based on funding requirements (refer also to Attachment 1- General enrolment procedures)
- Considering any barriers to access that may exist, developing procedures that ensure all eligible families are aware of, and are able to access, an early childhood program
- Complying with the *Inclusion and Equity Policy* and *Priority of Access*
- Appointing a person to be responsible for the enrolment process and the day-to-day implementation of this policy (refer also to Attachment 1- General enrolment procedures)
- Providing opportunities (in consultation with the Nominated Supervisor and educators) for interested families to attend the service during operational hours to observe the program and become familiar with the service prior to their child commencing in the program.
- providing parents/guardians with information about the requirements of the law for enrolment, locating and accessing immunisation services and obtaining acceptable immunisation documentation required for enrolment
- ensuring parents/guardians are only offered a tentative place until the child's immunisation documentation is assessed as being acceptable
- assessing the child's immunisation documentation **prior to enrolment** to determine if the child's vaccination status complies with requirements or whether the child is eligible for the 16 week grace period
- ensuring that only children who have acceptable immunisation documentation have a confirmed place in the program
- advising parents/guardians who do not have acceptable immunisation documentation that their children are not able to attend the service and referring them to immunisation services (see Attachment 3 – Letter for parents/guardians without acceptable immunisation documentation)
- taking reasonable steps to obtain acceptable immunisation documentation from a parent/guardian of a child enrolled under a grace period within the 16 weeks from when the

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child begins attending (Note: the child can continue to attend the service if acceptable immunisation documentation is not obtained).

- Ensuring that enrolment forms (refer to *Definitions*) comply with the requirements of Regulations 160, 161, 162 and that it effectively meets the management requirements of the service
- Reviewing the enrolment form to determine its effectiveness in meeting the regulatory and management requirements of the service.
- Ensuring that enrolment records (refer to *Definitions*) are stored in a safe and secure place and kept for three years after the last date on which the child was educated and cared for by the service (Regulation 183).
- Ensuring that the orientation program and plans meet the individual needs of children and families and comply with DET funding criteria.
- Reviewing the orientation processes for new families and children to ensure the objectives of this policy are met.
- Ensuring that parents or guardians of a child attending the service can enter the service premises at any time that the child is being educated and cared for except where this may pose a risk to the safety of children or staff, or conflict with any duty of the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor or educators under the Law (Regulation 157).
- **Note:** EEYS operates a central enrolment scheme for all member kindergartens. An enrolment officer is employed to administer this scheme and to oversee the enrolment and fee policies.

**The person responsible for the enrolment process (EEYS enrolment officer) is accountable for the following:**

- Providing enrolment application forms (refer to *Attachment 2 – Sample Enrolment Application Form*).
- Collating enrolments.
- Maintaining a waiting list.
- Collecting, receipting and banking enrolment fees.
- Offering places in line with this policy and criteria for priority access and providing relevant paperwork to families in accordance with this policy.
- Providing a monthly report to the Board of Management regarding the status of enrolments and any difficulties encountered.
- Storing completed enrolment application forms located at EEYS sites and office in a lockable file (refer to *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*) as soon as is practicable.
- Complying with the *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy* of the service.
- Complying with the *Inclusion and Equity Policy* and *Priority of Access*
- Providing access to a copy of the *Enrolment and Orientation Policy* with the enrolment application form.

**The Nominated Supervisor and other educators are responsible for:**

- Responding to enrolment enquiries on a day-to-day basis and referring people to the person responsible for the enrolment process, as required.
- Reviewing enrolment applications to identify children with additional needs (refer to the *Inclusion and Equity Policy*).
- Responding to parent or guardian enquiries regarding their child's readiness for the program that they are considering enrolling their child in.
- Ensuring that enrolment forms are completed prior to the child's commencement at the service
- Ensuring that parents or guardians of a child attending the service can enter the service premises at any time that the child is being educated and cared for except where this may pose a risk to the safety of children or staff, or conflict with any duty of the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor or educators under the Law (Regulation 157).
- Developing strategies to assist new families to:
  - feel welcomed into the service
  - become familiar with service policies and procedures
  - share information about their family beliefs, values and culture



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- share their understanding of their child's strengths, interests, abilities and needs
- discuss the values and expectations they hold in relation to their child's learning.
- Discussing the individual child's needs with parents or guardians and developing an orientation program to assist them to settle into the program.
- Encouraging parents or guardians to:
  - stay with their child as long as required during the settling in period
  - make contact with educators and carers at the service when required.
- Assisting parents or guardians to develop and maintain a routine for saying goodbye to their child.
- Providing comfort and reassurance to children who are showing signs of distress when separating from family members
- Sharing information with parents or guardians regarding their child's progress with regard to settling in to the service.
- Discussing support services for children with parents or guardians where required.
- Complying with the EEYS's *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy* in relation to the collection and management of a child's enrolment information.

### **Parents or guardians are responsible for:**

- Reading and complying with this *Enrolment and Orientation Policy*.
- Completing enrolment forms prior to their child's commencement at the service and providing acceptable immunisation documentation of their child's immunisation status and return to EEYS.
- where a child is on an immunisation catch-up schedule, ensuring that the child's immunisations are updated in line with the schedule and providing acceptable immunisation documentation to the service
- Ensuring that all required information is provided to the service.
- Updating information by notifying the service of any changes as they occur.

**Volunteers and students are responsible for following this policy and its procedures while at the service**

## **ATTACHMENTS**

- Attachment 1: General enrolment procedures
- Attachment 2: Sample Enrolment Application Form
- Attachment 3: Letter for parents/guardians without acceptable immunisation documentation
- **Related documents**
  - Enrolment registration form
  - Change of details/preference form
  - Enrolment application form

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### ATTACHMENT 1- GENERAL ENROLMENT PROCEDURES

#### 1. Application for a place

- Enrolment registrations will be accepted any time after the child's birth.
- Enrolment registration forms are available from the EEYS office or on the [EEYS website](#) together with information about the requirements of the law for enrolment, locating and accessing immunisation services, obtaining acceptable immunisation documentation and a copy of the *Enrolment and Orientation Policy*
- EEYS will determine the date(s) by which applications must be received for offer of places in the funded three-year old and funded 4yo (pre-prep) kindergarten program.
- A separate registration form must be completed for each child.
- In the August prior to the child's proposed year of attendance families will be contacted to offer places at their preferred kindergarten.
- Once a place has been accepted an enrolment application form must be completed and returned to EEYS with a deposit to secure the place.
- An enrolment application must be completed for each child and for each proposed year of attendance at the service.
- To facilitate the inclusion of all children into the program, enrolment applications should clearly identify any additional or specific needs of the child (refer to *Inclusion and Equity Policy*).
- The organisation will follow the priority of access guidelines when allocating spaces
- Parents or guardians of children applying for a second year of funded kindergarten or currently attending a funded three-year-old program must also submit an enrolment application form for the following year.
- A copy of the child's birth certificate must be provided to the individual service prior to enrolment.
- Completed enrolment application forms are to be forwarded to the EEYS Enrolment Officer at the EEYS office 22 Lachlan Street Horsham 3400
- Access to completed enrolment application forms will be restricted to the person responsible for the enrolment process, the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor and educators at the service, unless otherwise specified by the Approved Provider.
- Applications will be entered on the waiting list using the priority of access criteria.

#### 2. Closing dates for enrolment applications

- Applications for attendance at the funded kindergarten program and for the funded three-year-old kindergarten program are accepted whenever the child is eligible to attend.
- To be included in first round offers applications need to be received at the EEYS office by the end of July in the year prior to attendance.

#### 3. Procedure for a late application for enrolment

- Applications received after the closing date will be considered after all other applicants have been offered a place in line with the eligibility and priority of access criteria of EEYS.

#### 4. Allocation within groups

- Where the service provides more than one funded kindergarten program or funded three-year-old program, places within the programs will be allocated by the service in line with the eligibility and priority of access criteria.

#### 5. Offer of places

- Places will be allocated to applicants in accordance with the eligibility and priority of access criteria of the service making it clear that conformation of places is not final until immunisation documentation has been received, assessed and found acceptable.
- EEYS requires parents/guardians who have been offered a tentative place to provide acceptable immunisation documentation for assessment two months prior to the child first attending the service in order that a confirmed place can be offered.
- The documentation is assessed as outlined in the Immunisation enrolment toolkit for early childhood education and care services by the person responsible for the enrolment process on

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behalf of the Approved Provider. The Key Dates work form in the Immunisation enrolment toolkit for early childhood education and care services is used to determine the date at which immunisations must be up to date. The toolkit also provides guidance on assessing immunisation documentation to determine if a child is up to date or qualifies for an exemption. The following documents and resources can be accessed from the Health.Vic website:

- The [Immunisation enrolment toolkit](#) for early childhood education and care services
- The [Key Dates work form](#)
- Hard copies of the [immunisation resources](#)
- The acceptable outcomes of the assessment for offering a confirmed place are:
  - That the next due vaccine for the child on the ACIR Immunisation History Statement or the Immunisation Status certificate is within the acceptable timeframe for an enrolment, or;
  - That the child is on a recognised catch-up schedule if they have fallen behind with their vaccinations, or;
  - That the child has a medical reason not to be vaccinated, or,
  - That the child has been assessed by EEYS as being eligible for a 16 week grace period
- The person responsible for the enrolment process advises the parent/guardian in writing whether a confirmed place is offered and the enrolment can proceed.
- Parents/guardians who do not have acceptable immunisation documentation cannot be offered a place and are referred to Australian Childhood Immunisation Register or to an immunisation provider (refer to Appendix 3 – Letter for parents/guardians who do not have acceptable immunisation documentation).
- Offer of places in the funded three-year-old program(s) and the funded 4yo (preprep)kindergarten program will be made at the same time.
- Applicants who are successful will be notified in writing of a confirmed place.
- Parents or guardians who do not wish to accept the offer of a tentative place or intend to withdraw their enrolment are requested to notify the EEYS Enrolment Officer as soon as possible.
- Second-round offers will be made two weeks after first-round offers. Third-round offers will be made two weeks after second-round offers.
- An enrolment form and other relevant information will be provided after the place is accepted and the deposit has been paid.
- **Note:** In long day care: *Places will not be allocated to children until any substantial debt owed to the service by the family is paid, or a payment plan is agreed to between the family and the service (refer to Fees Policy).*

### 6. Eligibility and priority of access criteria for the funded 3yo & 4yo kindergarten programs

#### DE's Priority of Access criteria

| High priority children                                                              | Criteria and processes for verifying need(s)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Children at risk of abuse or neglect, including children in Out-of-Home Care</b> | <p>The child is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• eligible for ESK or AEL, and/or</li> <li>• family, carer or legal guardian identifies the child as known to Child Protection or in out-of-home care, and/or</li> <li>• referred by one of the following:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Child Protection</li> <li>○ Child and family services (family services referral and support</li> <li>○ team, Child FIRST/integrated family services/Services Connect case</li> <li>○ worker)</li> <li>○ Maternal and Child Health nurse</li> <li>○ out-of-home care provider.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |



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|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | As part of the enrolment process, service providers must respectfully ask families 'is your child Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander?' and record this information in Arrival                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Asylum seeker and refugee children</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <p>Child or family holds a visa or supporting documentation and information, including an ImmiCard, identifying the child and/or parents, carers or legal guardians as a refugee or asylum seeker and/or</p> <p>Referred as a refugee or asylum seeker by a CALD outreach worker.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <p>From 2026 across the state, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from a refugee or asylum seeker background, and children who have had contact with Child Protection services can access to up to 25 hours of Pre-Prep a week, increasing to up to 30 hours a week from 2028. Children from this priority cohort can be enrolled in more than 1 group at a single service (including 4-year-old, mixed age, and 3-year-old groups). In addition, any child who was supported by the Access to Early Learning program as a 3-year-old is eligible for these same hours of Pre-Prep as a 4-year-old from 2026.</p> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Children eligible for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <p>A child or parent holds a Commonwealth Health Care Card, Pensioner Concession Card, Veteran's Affairs Card, or</p> <p>The child is identified on their birth certificate as one of a set of triplets, quadruplets or more.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>High priority children</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <b>Process that could be used to verify need(s)</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <p><b>Children with additional needs, defined as children who:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>with an identified specific disability or developmental delay</li> <li>who require additional assistance to fully participate in the</li> <li>kindergarten program</li> <li>who require a combination of services which are individually planned</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>holds a Child Disability Health Care Card, and/or</li> <li>has previously been approved for Kindergarten Inclusion Support (KIS) program, and/or</li> <li>has been referred by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the National Disability Insurance Scheme</li> <li>Early Childhood Intervention Services</li> <li>Kindergarten Field Officer</li> <li>Maternal and Child Health nurse, or</li> </ul> </li> <li>is assessed as having delays in 2 or more areas and is declared eligible for a second year of funded Four-Year-Old Kindergarten.</li> </ul> |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Examples to consider for second priority</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>children who turn four years of age by 30 April in the year they will attend kindergarten; or</li> <li>children who turn three years of age* by 30 April in the year they will attend kindergarten</li> <li>children turning six years of age at kindergarten who have been granted an exemption from school-entry age requirements by the regional office of DE</li> </ul> |

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- children who have a sibling that has previously attended the same kindergarten as their first preference
- home address falls within the same suburb as the kindergarten
- family lives, works, studies or attends child care in [LGA]

### Examples to consider for third priority

- service for transient families e.g. RAAF, seasonal workers and tourism workers
- attending 3yo kindergarten
- date of application

**Note:** DE's PoA guidelines are to ensure that kindergarten programs are available to those children who stand to benefit the most from attending early education. In mixed age groups, PoA guideline will equally prioritise three and four-year-old children that are considered high priority. Where programs for three- and four-year old children are provided separately, the PoA criteria will be applied separately for each age cohort.

### \* Early Start Kindergarten and Three-Year-Old Kindergarten

During the roll-out of Three-Year-Old Kindergarten, Early Start Kindergarten (ESK) (*refer to Definitions*) will continue to provide 15 hours a week of funded kindergarten for all eligible children up until 2029, when three-year-old children across the state will have access to 15 hours

It is important to continue to enrol eligible children in ESK, even if a Three-Year-Old Kindergarten is available at the service. This guarantees that ESK eligible children can continue to access 15-hour kindergarten programs and allows the correct calculation of the service's SRF entitlement.

The Kindergarten Funding Guide 2023 states for ESK funding, service providers should:

- provide up to 15 hours in a kindergarten program free of charge and maximise access to 15 hours of kindergarten (children accessing ESK can be enrolled in a 3-year-old group, a 4-year-old group, a mixed age group or a combination of groups in order to access the full 15 hours per week)

This guarantees that children experiencing vulnerability will continue to be enrolled in the full 15 hours of kindergarten in all service settings, including long day care. It also ensures that service providers can continue to receive all funding entitlements.

Service providers are expected to continue to provide the full 15 hours funded through Early Start Kindergarten, even in instances where three-year-old groups are being offered fewer than 15 hours.

ESK is available to children who turn three years of age by 30 April in the year of enrolment and who:

- are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
- have had contact with Child Protection
- have a refugee or asylum seeker background\*

\*Children/families without a current refugee visa or ImmiCard who have a recent refugee experience may be eligible by exception for Early Start Kindergarten, for more information contact your local Department of Education and office.

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Refer to the Department of Education's website for up-to-date information:  
[www.education.vic.gov.au](http://www.education.vic.gov.au)

When demand exceeds availability the Approved Provider (EEYS) will refer to the service's values, philosophy and *Inclusion and Equity Policy* to determine the priority of access. This will include:

- Priority of access criteria as outlined above and in the [The Kindergarten Guide](#)
- children who are entitled to attend under the Early Start to Kindergarten program
- children who have a diagnosed developmental delay or disability
- children who have had a sibling previously attending at a service
- children attending 3yo kindergarten
- children who have received funding for a second year of kindergarten
- children who were eligible to attend in the previous year but deferred or withdrew from the service on or before the last day of Term 1.
- date of registration.

If participating in a central enrolment scheme the priority of access for that scheme will be implemented. Childcare services providing approved care (refer to *Definitions*) must abide by the *Family Assistance Legislation Amendment (Child Care Rebate) Act 2011* (refer to *Legislation and standards*) and the Commonwealth Government's *Priority for allocating places in child care services* (refer to *Sources*).

### **7. Eligibility and access criteria for funded three-year-old kindergarten**

Children are eligible for attendance in the funded three-year-old program provided they have turned three prior to commencement. Children must turn three years of age by 30 April in the year they will attend kindergarten.

Children may be able to attend a second year of funded three-year-old kindergarten after consideration by EEYS and on the recommendation of the teacher or specialist.

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### Enrolment timeline

| Date Due                                                      | Activity                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Person Responsible                                                 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Last Friday of the mid year holidays (usually in July)        | Advertisement in Wimmera Mail Times                                                                                                                                                                                | EEYS Enrolment Officer                                             |
| Week 1 Term 3                                                 | Advertisement in Weekly Advertiser                                                                                                                                                                                 | EEYS Enrolment Officer                                             |
| Friday Week 1 Term 3                                          | Second advertisement in Wimmera Mail Times                                                                                                                                                                         | EEYS Enrolment Officer                                             |
| Week 2 Term 3                                                 | Open week for prospective parents                                                                                                                                                                                  | EEYS Executive Officer, EEYS Board Members, Site Committees, staff |
| Friday Week 3 Term 3                                          | All contact and site preference forms for the following year's enrolments are required to have been received. If contact details have changed parents or guardians should ensure they are up to date by this time. | Parents or guardians                                               |
| Friday Week 4 Term 3                                          | First round offers sent out with letter and Enrolment Application Forms.                                                                                                                                           | EEYS Enrolment Officer                                             |
| Friday Week 5 Term 3                                          | Letters to families unsuccessful in receiving first round offer of kindergarten places.                                                                                                                            | EEYS Enrolment Officer                                             |
| Friday Week 6 Term 3                                          | First round offers to be accepted by returning the completed Application Forms and deposit paid at EEYS to secure their place.                                                                                     | Parents or guardians                                               |
| Friday Week 7 Term 3                                          | Second round offers sent out.                                                                                                                                                                                      | EEYS Enrolment Officer                                             |
| Friday Week 8 Term 3                                          | Second round offers to be accepted.                                                                                                                                                                                | Parents/Guardians                                                  |
| Friday Week 9 Term 3                                          | Letters to families unsuccessful in receiving an offer at any kindergarten site                                                                                                                                    | EEYS Enrolment Officer                                             |
| Friday Week 10 Term 3                                         | Confirmation of place and session times to be conveyed to parents/guardians by EEYS                                                                                                                                | EEYS Enrolment Officer                                             |
| October                                                       | Enrolment Package and Fee payment Information to be mailed to families.                                                                                                                                            | EEYS Enrolment Officer                                             |
| November                                                      | Enrolment forms to be returned to kindergarten sites at the Annual General Meeting.                                                                                                                                | Site Staff and Committees                                          |
| Orientation Day (usually 2 <sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of December) | Direct Debit Request (DDR) Forms and Fee Agreements to be completed and returned to EEYS by Orientation Day.                                                                                                       | Parents or guardians                                               |

# Enrolment and Orientation Policy / Procedure



## QA6 – Collaborative Partnerships

### ATTACHMENT 2 -SAMPLE ENROLMENT APPLICATION FORM

|                                                                          |              |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| <b>[Service]</b>                                                         | <b>Name]</b> |
| <b>[indicate whether this is for a funded or three-year-old program]</b> |              |

Complete this enrolment application form and:

- enclose a copy of the child's birth certificate or suitable evidence of the child's birth date
- enclose proof of address (eg copy of drivers licence, rates notice or electricity, gas or water bill)
- enclose the **[insert amount]** enrolment application fee, which is not refundable and covers administrative costs
- forward the completed enrolment application form with attachments to **[insert name and address]**
- notify the service of any changes to your address or other relevant information by contacting **[insert telephone number]**.

#### Enrolment and immunisations

The Government's No Jab No Play laws require all children to be age-appropriately immunised before enrolment can be confirmed.

Parents/guardians offered tentative places will be asked to provide immunisation documentation to **[Service Name]** by **[insert date]** that shows that their child's immunisations are up to date for their age or that an exemption applies.

Confirmation of places is finalised after the documentation has been assessed that the child is up to date or that the child is on a recognised catch-up schedule if they have fallen behind with their vaccinations, or that the child has a medical reason not to be vaccinated or that the child has been assessed as being eligible for a 16 week grace period.

Further information on immunisation requirements for enrolment in early childhood services is available on the State Government's [Better Health Channel](#)

-----  
This application is for my child to attend **[Service Name]** in **[insert year]** .

This application is for a second year of funded kindergarten ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please attach a copy of the relevant paperwork.

**[Delete this question if the application is for a three-year-old program]**

Child's family name: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's given names: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

☐ Male ☐ Female ☐

Parents'/guardians' names: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number: (Home) \_\_\_\_\_ (Business) \_\_\_\_\_ (Mob) \_\_\_\_\_

Language/s spoken at home: \_\_\_\_\_



# Enrolment and Orientation Policy / Procedure



## QA6 – Collaborative Partnerships

### Kindergarten fee subsidy

DET provides a fee subsidy for eligible families. Please indicate if you are eligible for one of the following concessions, or meet one of the following criteria:

- ☐ Health Care Card
- ☐ Pensioner Concession Card
- ☐ DVA Gold Card
- ☐ Bridging Visas A–F
- ☐ Temporary Protection/Humanitarian Visas 447, 451, 785 or 786
- ☐ Resolution of Status Visa (RoS) Visa Class CD, Subclass 851 Refugee and Special Humanitarian Visas 200–217
- ☐ Triplets or Quadruplets
- ☐ Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander

Supporting documentation will need to be sighted on commencement at [Service Name] by the [insert name of person responsible for the enrolment process].

**Note: the eligibility of concessions may vary from time-to-time. Up-to-date information can be found on the [Department of Education and Training](#) website**

### Children with additional needs

Does your child have additional needs? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

You are encouraged to discuss your child's needs with the educator when your child's place is confirmed.

Is your child registered with a specific support service/agency? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Name of support service/agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of parent/guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Enrolment and Orientation Policy / Procedure



## QA6 – Collaborative Partnerships

### ATTACHMENT 3: - LETTER FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS WITHOUT ACCEPTABLE IMMUNISATION DOCUMENTATION

[Service Name]

[Address]

[Insert date]

Dear [insert name]

Re: Enrolment at [Service Name] for [insert year]

I am contacting you regarding your tentative place for [insert child's name] at [Service Name] in the [insert 3 year old or 4 year old program] in [insert year].

Under the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* early childhood education and care services cannot enrol a child unless the parent/guardian has provided acceptable immunisation documentation.

Acceptable immunisation documentation includes evidence that your child:

- is fully vaccinated for their age
- is on a recognised catch-up schedule
- has a medical reason not to be vaccinated
- has been assessed by our service as being eligible for a 16 week grace period.

As we have not received acceptable immunisation documentation for [insert name of child] by the due date, we are unable to confirm a place at our service for [insert year] and your child's name has been removed from our list.

Immunisation programs are effective in reducing the risk of vaccine preventable diseases. Immunisation from an early age helps protect your child against serious childhood infections. Further information about immunisations for your child is available from:

- your doctor
- [insert details of local government immunisation service]
- National Immunisation Information Line Tel. 1800 671 811
- Australian Childhood Immunisation Register Tel 1800 653 809
- [Better Health Channel](#) website

Should you wish to re-apply for a place for [insert child's name], we are happy to accept a new enrolment application accompanied by acceptable immunisation documentation. The new application would be considered in line with [Service Name]'s Enrolment and Orientation policy.

Yours sincerely

[Insert name]

[Insert title]

[Service Name]