

# BROOKVILLE KINDERGARTEN ENROLMENT AND ORIENTATION POLICY



---

Mandatory – Quality Area 6

## PURPOSE

This policy will outline:

- the criteria for enrolment at Brookville Kindergarten
- the process to be followed when enrolling a child at Brookville Kindergarten, and the basis on which places within the programs will be allocated
- procedures for the orientation of new families and children into Brookville Kindergarten.

## POLICY STATEMENT

### 1. VALUES

Brookville Kindergarten is committed to:

- equal access for all children
- meeting the needs of the local community
- complying with DEECD funding requirements relating to the enrolment of children in government-funded kindergarten places
- maintaining confidentiality in relation to all information provided on enrolment forms
- ensuring all families are welcomed and receive an effective orientation into the service.

### 2. SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Certified Supervisor, educators, staff and parents/guardians who wish to enrol or have already enrolled their child at Brookville Kindergarten.

### 3. BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION

#### 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 one year 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 vary from service to service, but is generally based on a service's philosophy, values and beliefs, and the provisions of the *Equal Opportunity Act 2012*. 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 *Victorian kindergarten policy, 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 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*).

## Legislation and standards

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- *A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999*
- *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* (Cth)
- *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)
- *Family Assistance Legislation Amendment (Child Care Rebate) Act 2011*
- *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
- *Sex Discrimination Act 1984* (Cth)

## 4. 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.

**Approved care:** Care given by a service provider that has been approved by the Family Assistance Office to receive Child Care Benefit 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 [www.familyassist.gov.au/payments/family-assistance-payments/child-care-benefit/](http://www.familyassist.gov.au/payments/family-assistance-payments/child-care-benefit/)

**Child Care Benefit (CCB):** A Commonwealth Government payment to help families who use either approved or registered childcare services. All eligible families can receive some Child Care Benefit. Details are available at [www.familyassist.gov.au/payments/family-assistance-payments/child-care-benefit/](http://www.familyassist.gov.au/payments/family-assistance-payments/child-care-benefit/)

**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 end of Term 2. DEECD considers that this child has not accessed a year of funded kindergarten and is therefore eligible for DEECD funding in the following year.

**Eligible child:** A child who meets the criteria outlined in the *Victorian kindergarten policy, procedures and funding criteria*.

**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/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:** Contains information on each child, as required under the National Regulations, 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 etc. (Regulations 160, 161, 162). This information is kept confidential by the service.

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

## 5. SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES

### Sources

- *Child Care Benefit (Eligibility of Child Care Services for Approval and Continued Approval) Determination 2000*, included in the *Legislative Extracts*:  
[www.deewr.gov.au/EarlyChildhood/Programs/ChildCareforServices/Operation/Pages/InstructionSheets.aspx](http://www.deewr.gov.au/EarlyChildhood/Programs/ChildCareforServices/Operation/Pages/InstructionSheets.aspx)
- *Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*:  
[www.acecqa.gov.au/links-and-resources/national-quality-framework-resources/](http://www.acecqa.gov.au/links-and-resources/national-quality-framework-resources/)
- *Guide to the National Quality Standard*:  
[www.acecqa.gov.au/links-and-resources/national-quality-framework-resources/](http://www.acecqa.gov.au/links-and-resources/national-quality-framework-resources/)
- *Priority for allocating places in child care services*:  
[www.deewr.gov.au/Earlychildhood/Programs/ChildCareforServices/Operation/Pages/Priorityforallocatingplacesinchildcareservices.aspx](http://www.deewr.gov.au/Earlychildhood/Programs/ChildCareforServices/Operation/Pages/Priorityforallocatingplacesinchildcareservices.aspx)
- *Victorian kindergarten policy, procedures and funding criteria*:  
[www.education.vic.gov.au/ecprofessionals/kindergarten/](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/ecprofessionals/kindergarten/)

### Service policies

- *Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations Policy*
- *Complaints and Grievances Policy*
- *Fees Policy*
- *Inclusion and Equity Policy*
- *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*

## PROCEDURES

### The Approved Provider is responsible for:

- determining the criteria for priority of access to programs at Brookville Kindergarten, based on funding requirements and the service's philosophy
- developing procedures that ensure all eligible families are aware of, and are able to access, an early childhood program, and considering any barriers to access that may exist
- complying with the *Inclusion and Equity Policy*
- appointing a person to be responsible for the enrolment process and the day-to-day implementation of this policy
- 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

- ensuring that enrolment forms (refer to *Definitions*) comply with the requirements of Regulations 160, 161, 162
- 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 DEECD funding criteria
- reviewing the orientation processes for new families and children to ensure the objectives of this policy are met
- ensuring that parents/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).

**The person/s responsible for the enrolment process 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 Approved Provider regarding the status of enrolments and any difficulties encountered
- storing completed enrolment application forms 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
- providing a copy of the *Enrolment and Orientation Policy* with the enrolment application form or otherwise ensuring this is accessible to all families.

**The Nominated Supervisor, Certified 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/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/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
  - 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/guardians and developing an orientation program to assist them to settle into the program
- encouraging parents/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/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/guardians regarding their child's progress with regard to settling in to the service
- discussing support services for children with parents/guardians, where required
- complying with the service's *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy* in relation to the collection and management of a child's enrolment information.

**Parents/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
- ensuring all allergy and anaphylaxis forms are completed and signed by a Medical Practitioner prior to commencement at the service (where applicable)
- 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, while at the service, are responsible for following this policy and its procedures.**

## EVALUATION

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the Approved Provider will:

- regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness
- monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy
- keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice
- revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required
- notify parents/guardians at least 14 days before making any changes to this policy or its procedures.

## ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1: General enrolment procedures
- Attachment 2: Enrolment Application Form

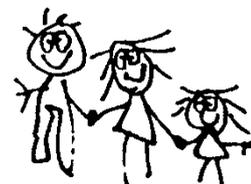
## AUTHORISATION

This policy was adopted by the Approved Provider of Brookville Kindergarten on 1 June 2013.

**REVIEW DATE:** 1 JUNE 2014.

# BROOKVILLE KINDERGARTEN - ATTACHMENT 1

## General enrolment procedures



### 1. Application for Enrolment

- Application for Enrolment will be accepted any time after the child has turned two years of age. Applications for Enrolment forms are available from the service, or downloadable via the kindergarten's website.
- Children enrolled in the 3 year old program must be 3 years old by the 31 January in the year of their attendance.
- Children enrolled in the 4 year old program must be 4 years old by the 30 April in the year of their attendance.
- A separate Application for Enrolment form must be completed for each child.
- All Applications for Enrolment forms must be accompanied with an application fee of \$50.00 per child. This fee is to cover administrative costs associated with the processing of a child's enrolment application and is non-refundable and non-transferable.
- Completed Application for Enrolment forms are to be forwarded to the Enrolment's Officer, Brookville Kindergarten, P. O. Box 232, Toorak. Vic. 3142.
- Application for Enrolments will be entered on the waiting list using the eligibility and priority of access criteria.
- To facilitate the inclusion of all children into the program, enrolment applications and enrolment forms should clearly identify any additional or specific needs of the child (refer to *Inclusion and Equity Policy*).
- Access to completed Application for Enrolment forms and the actual Enrolment Forms will be restricted to the person responsible for the enrolment process, the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor and educators at the service, and as necessary restricted to personnel within the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.
- A copy of the child's birth certificate must be submitted with the Enrolment Form applications.
- An unfunded applicant who has already completed a funded preschool year and who requests a second year of kindergarten goes to the bottom of the waiting list.
- An applicant who defers a 3 year old kindergarten place on or before the last day of Term One goes to the top of the waiting list for the following year. Fees, full or pro-rata will not be refunded.
- An applicant who defers a 4 year old kindergarten place on or before the last day of Term One goes to the top of the waiting list for the following year. Fees, full or pro-rata will not be refunded.
- Brookville Kindergarten adopts a one-program policy for each child per year. For example: a child enrolled in the Ecole Française de Melbourne program will not be eligible for enrolment in another kindergarten program and likewise a child enrolled in a three year old program will not be eligible for enrolment in the alternate 3 year old program and vice versa. Adopting a one-program policy ensures that the broader community has fair and equitable access to a kindergarten year.

### 2. Maximum Number of Enrolment Applications

Brookville Kindergarten reserves the right to restrict the waiting list for both the 3 and 4 year old programs. As such the kindergarten will ensure a maximum number of applications are entered and maintained on the respective waiting lists of both the 3 and 4 year old programs.

- 4 year-old funded kindergarten program – retain a maximum number of 30 applications.
- 3 year old kindergarten program – retain a maximum number of 80 applications

### 3. Offer of places

- Places will be allocated to applicants in accordance with the eligibility and priority of access criteria of the service.
- Offer of places in the three-year-old program/s and the funded kindergarten program will be made at the same time.
- Applicants who are successful will be notified in writing of a confirmed place.
- If notification is not received by the due date, the service reserves the right to delete this application from the waiting list and subsequent enrolment possibility.
- Parents/guardians who do not wish to accept the offer of a place, or intend to withdraw their enrolment, are requested to notify the Approved Provider, or the person responsible for managing the enrolment process at the service, in writing as soon as possible. Second-round offers will be made three weeks after first-round offers. Third-round offers will be made three weeks after second-round offers. Offers will be forwarded on an ongoing basis until maximum enrolment is achieved.
- A confirmation fee of \$250.00 must be paid within 10 days of accepting an enrolment place in order to hold the place for the following year. This fee is separate, and additional to the term fees. This fee is non-refundable and non-transferable.
- An enrolment form and other relevant information will be provided after the place is accepted and after the confirmation fee has been paid.

Note: 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*).

### 4. Allocation within groups

- Where the service provides more than one funded kindergarten program or three-year-old program, places within the programs will be allocated by the service in accordance with the eligibility and priority of access criteria. See below.
- Unless otherwise recommended by the Kindergarten Director and Teacher regarding the child's overall development, there will be no changing of selected class / group permitted after the first two weeks of Term One.

### 5. Eligibility and priority of access criteria for the funded kindergarten program (four year old program)

The following children are eligible for attendance in the funded kindergarten program:

- children who have been granted approval to receive funding for a second year of kindergarten in accordance with the *Victorian kindergarten policy, procedures and funding criteria* (available at [www.education.vic.gov.au/ecprofessionals/kindergarten/](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/ecprofessionals/kindergarten/))
- children who were eligible to attend in the previous year, but:
  - deferred
  - withdrew from the service on or before the last day of Term One and have completed the *Kindergarten withdrawal and deferment form* (available from the service)
- children who turn four years of age by 30 April in the year they will attend the 4 year old kindergarten program with priority given to children enrolled in the kindergarten's 3 year old program
- children turning six years of age at kindergarten who have been granted an exemption from school-entry age requirements by the regional office of DEECD (refer to *Victorian kindergarten policy, procedures and funding criteria*, available at [www.education.vic.gov.au/ecprofessionals/kindergarten/](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/ecprofessionals/kindergarten/))

- children who are younger than the eligible age, but whose parents/guardians have submitted an early age entry request for their child to attend school the following year. This written request is to be directed to the regional office of DEECD, or the non-government school the child will be attending. A copy of the approval must be attached to the kindergarten application. Parents/guardians should note that very few requests are approved by DEECD. If the child attends kindergarten early, but does not proceed to school in the following year, they will be unable to access a second year of kindergarten unless they are deemed eligible by DEECD for having recognised developmental needs
- three-year-old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, and children known to Child Protection may be eligible for the Early Start Kindergarten program. This scheme provides funding to enable children to attend a kindergarten program that is planned and delivered by an early childhood teacher for a specific number of hours. Details are available at [www.education.vic.gov.au/ecsmanagement/careankinder/earlystart/](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/ecsmanagement/careankinder/earlystart/)

When demand exceeds availability, the Approved Provider will refer to the service's values, philosophy and *Inclusion and Equity Policy* to determine the priority of access. The selection criteria to be used, if there are more applications than places available, are:

1. Children who have received funding for a second year of four year old kindergarten.
2. Children who were eligible to attend in the previous year but deferred or withdrew from a service on or before the last day of term one.
3. Children of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent and children known to Child Protection who may be eligible for the Early Start Kindergarten program.
3. Children who are currently enrolled in the 3 year old program (*see additional selection criteria below*).
4. Eligible children who have had a sibling attend previously.
5. Families who reside, work or study in the City of Stonnington.
6. Date of receipt of enrolment application.

**Additional Selection Criteria** (*notably for children entering the funded program from the two 3 year old programs of the service*)

In determining the selection criteria for allocation of specific programs, that is, allocation of children between the Blue and Yellow Room program, where possible parents will be allocated their preferred choice. However where demand exceeds the nominated places of any program, the Enrolment Officer, in conjunction and in discussion with the Kindergarten Director and respective Teachers, reserves the right to base the selection criteria on the following considerations:

- the developmental and/or special needs of the child and/or the anticipation of a second funded pre-school year
- the circumstances and/or the particular sensitivities of families
- the group dynamics and friendships of children
- the maintenance of a gender balance between programs
- an equitable 'first preference' split between the two three year old groups

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*).

## **6. Eligibility and access criteria for three-year-old children**

As from 2014, children are eligible for attendance in the three-year-old program provided they have turned three prior to commencement and by the 31 January in the year in which they are enrolled. Special consideration of enrolment beyond this date will be considered and reserved by the Approved Provider should places be available. The cut-off date for special consideration requirements will be extended to the 30 April.

Children will only be able to attend a second year of three-year-old kindergarten in exceptional circumstances (after consideration by the Approved Provider) or when all eligible children on the waiting list have been offered a place. The Approved Provider must determine eligibility and access criteria applicable to the service. The selection criteria to be used, if there are more applications than places available, are:

1. children who were eligible to attend in the previous year but deferred or withdrew from a service on or before the last day of Term One.
2. children recommended by an educator for an additional year in the three-year-old program
3. eligible children who have had a sibling attending previously
4. families who reside, work or study in the City of Stonnington
5. date of receipt of Application of Enrolment Form
6. places allocated by the service for transient families e.g. RAAF, seasonal workers and tourism workers

Children must turn three years old before commencement into the program. Full term fees will apply regardless of the child's commencement date. This secures the child's enrolment place. Pro-rata fees will not apply.

## **7. Orientation Procedures**

- Prior to commencement at Brookville Kindergarten, it is suggested that families participate in a tour of the kindergarten to familiarise themselves with the service philosophy and program structure.
- Upon return of the enrolment confirmation fee, parents will be sent an enrolment pack – complete with Enrolment Forms and Fee Payment Consent Form, Privacy Policy and Confirmation of Program Allocation. It is required that these be returned by the date on the letter.
- This will then be followed with an invitation to attend the Annual General Meeting in November of every year and an Orientation Pack – complete with Parent Handbook and commencement dates for the year ahead.
- Brookville Kindergarten believe in ensuring all children transition into the kindergarten year smoothly. An introduction orientation session will be set so that parent/s and child can attend the kindergarten together for a short kindergarten session. For the three year old program, the kindergarten aims to further support this orientation by implementing shorter kindergarten sessions, with split groups for a two-week period on commencement of the year. The shorter sessions will also be achieved by the four year old groups for a period of one week.
- Parents will be encouraged to settle their child on arrival before saying good-bye to their child.
- Where a child takes longer to settle into the kindergarten environment, individual transitional plans will be proposed by the teacher and developed in partnership with families.

It is requested that children be fully toilet trained before commencement.