**Enrolment and Orientation Policy**

**PURPOSE**

This policy outlines:

• the criteria for enrolment at North West Brunswick Kindergarten

• the process to be followed when enrolling a child at North West Brunswick Kindergarten

• the basis on which places within the programs will be allocated

• procedures for the orientation of new families and children into North West Brunswick Kindergarten

• processes to ensure compliance with legislative and DET funding requirements in relation to the

enrolment of children in early childhood education and care services.

**POLICY STATEMENT**

**1. VALUES**

 North West Brunswick Kindergarten is committed to:

• equal access for all eligible children

• meeting the needs of the local community

• supporting families to meet the requirements for enrolment through the provision of information

• maintaining confidentiality in relation to all information provided for enrolment

• ensuring all families are welcomed and receive an effective orientation into the service.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Persons with Management and Control, Nominated

Supervisor, early childhood teachers, Persons in Day-to-Day Charge, educators, staff and

parents/guardians who wish to enrol or have already enrolled their child at North West Brunswick 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.

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, Approved Provider’s must adhere to their eligibility and priority of access criteria (refer to Definitions and Attachment 1) policy in order to allocate the available places. The criteria used to determine the allocation of places takes account of the requirements set out in The Kindergarten Guide (refer to Sources), the 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. Services participating in central enrolment schemes are required to comply with the enrolment procedures of that scheme.

Childcare services providing approved childcare (refer to Definitions) must abide by the Family

Assistance Legislation Amendment (Jobs for families childcare package) Act 2017(refer to Legislation

and standards) and the Commonwealth Government’s Priority for allocating places in child care

services (refer to Sources).

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 a 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

• Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)

• Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)

• Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)

• Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)

• Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010

• Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: Regulations 160, 161, 162, 168, 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

• Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 (Vic)

• Public Health and Wellbeing Amendment (No Jab, No Play) Regulations 2015 (Vic)

• Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)

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

• Victorian Legislation – Victorian Law Today: <http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/>

• Commonwealth Legislation – Federal Register of Legislation:

**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.

**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.

**Approved childcare:** Approved childcare services are services that have Australian Government

approved to receive Child Care Subsidy (refer to Definitions) on behalf of eligible parents. Approved

childcare includes centre based day care, including long day care and occasional care, family day care, outside school hours care and in-home care.

**Authorised nominee:** (In relation to this policy) is a person who has been given written authority by the parents/guardians of a child to collect that child from the education and care service. These details will be on the child’s enrolment form.

**Child Care Subsidy (CCS):** A Commonwealth Government means tested subsidy to assist eligible

families with the cost of child care. Payments are paid directly to approved child care providers. Further information can be found at: <https://www.education.gov.au/child-care-subsidy-0>

**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 Additional Needs Policy).

**Deferral:** When a child does not attend in the year when they are eligible for a funded kindergarten

place, or is officially withdrawn 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.

**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 childhood education and care services.

**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. 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 contains information on each child as required under the National Regulations (Regulations 160, 161, 162) including the enrolment form; details of any court orders; and immunisation documentation as specified in the Immunisation Enrolment Toolkit for early childhood education and care services. Enrolment records are stored securely in the service due to their confidential nature.

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

**Priority of access:** in instances where more eligible children apply for a place at a service than there

are places available, the service must allocate spaces using the criteria outlined in The Kindergarten

Guide (refer to Sources), or if in receipt of the CCS, comply with the Commonwealth Government’s

policy for allocating places.

**5. SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES**

**Sources**

• Australian Childhood Immunisation Register:

[www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/medicare/australian-childhood-immunisation-register](http://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/medicare/australian-childhood-immunisation-register)

• The Family Assistance Law as the basis for Commonwealth child care fee assistance including the

Child Care Subsidy (CCS) and Additional Child Care Subsidy (ACCS):

<https://www.dese.gov.au/family-assistance-law>

• Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services

National Regulations 2011: <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/national-law-regulations>

• Guide to the National Quality Standard: <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/national-quality-standard>

• The Kindergarten Guide (Department of Education and Training):

[www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/funding/Pages/kinderfundingcriteria.aspx](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/funding/Pages/kinderfundingcriteria.aspx)

• Department of Health and Human Services, Immunisation enrolment toolkit for early childhood

education and care service: <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/immunisation/vaccination-children/no-jab-no-play/immunisation-enrolment-toolkit>

• Victorian Department of Health: <https://www.vic.gov.au/department-health>

Service policies

• Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations Policy

• Parental Interactions and Involvement Policy

• Infectious Diseases Policy

• Kindergarten Fees Policy

• Additional Needs Policy

• Privacy and Confidentiality Policy

**PROCEDURES**

The Approved Provider or Persons with Management and Control is responsible for:

• determining the criteria for priority of access to programs at North West Brunswick Kindergarten, based on funding requirements and the service’s philosophy (refer also to Attachment 1 – Eligibility and priority of access criteria)

• 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

• 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

• 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 as defined by the Immunisation Enrolment Toolkit for early childhood education and care services 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 4 – 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 child begins attending

(Note: the child can continue to attend the service if acceptable immunisation documentation is not

obtained).

• ensuring that the enrolment form (refer to Definitions) complies with the requirements of The Education and Care Services National Regulations and that it effectively meets the 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

• 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/guardians of a child attending the service can enter the service premises at

any time whilst 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.

**The Nominated Supervisor, Persons in Day to Day Charge and early childhood teachers are**

**responsible for:**

• reviewing enrolment applications to identify children with additional needs

• responding to parent/guardian enquiries regarding their child’s readiness for the program that they are considering enrolling their child in

• 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

• sharing information with parents/guardians concerning their child’s progress with regard to settling in to the service

• discussing support services for children with parents/guardians, where required.

**All 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

• 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

• 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

• providing comfort and reassurance to children who are showing signs of distress when separating

from family members

• 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 the enrolment application form and the enrolment form prior to their child’s

commencement at the service and providing acceptable immunisation documentation of their child’s immunisation status

• 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 other 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 effectivenes

• 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.

**AUTHORISATION**

This policy was adopted by the Approved Provider of North West Brunswick Kindergarten

REVIEW DATE: December 2021

**ATTACHMENT 1**

**Eligibility and priority of access criteria**

**1. Eligibility and priority of access criteria for the funded kindergarten 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 Kindergarten Guide available at:

[www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/funding/Pages/kinderfundingcriteria.aspx](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/funding/Pages/kinderfundingcriteria.aspx)

• children who were eligible to attend in the previous year, but:

- deferred

- withdrew from the service prior to the April data collection

• children who turn four years of age by 30 April in the year they will attend kindergarten

• children turning six years of age at kindergarten who have been granted an exemption from school-entry age requirements by the regional office of DET (refer to The Kindergarten Guide, available at:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/funding/Pages/default.aspx>

• 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 DET, 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 DET. 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 DET 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:

[Early Start Kindergarten (education.vic.gov.au)](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/parents/child-care-kindergarten/Pages/early-start-kindergarten.aspx)

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. This will include:

• 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 prior to the April data collection.

• priority of access criteria as outlined in The Kindergarten Guide available at:

[www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/funding/Pages/kinderfundingcriteria.aspx](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/funding/Pages/kinderfundingcriteria.aspx)

Other considerations may include date of application, siblings already enrolled at the service, attendance in the three-year-old program and local community zoning.

North West Brunswick Kindergarten participates in Moreland City Council central enrolment scheme, the priority of access for that scheme will be implemented.

Childcare services providing approved child 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).

**General enrolment procedures**

North West Brunswick Kindergarten is part of Moreland City Council Central Enrolment

<https://archive.moreland.vic.gov.au/community-health/children-and-families/kindergartens/four-year-old-kindergarten/>

Once a place is confirmed and email will be sent to families confirming enrolment and a link to the online enrolment form via EnrolNow.