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Enrolment and Orientation Policy

Purpose

This policy outlines:

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

Values

Ewing 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 kindergarten.
- families feeling respected, safe and supported during the enrolment process.
- ensuring families who may experience barriers to accessing kindergarten are proactively engaged.
- being flexible and catering for unique family circumstances and needs
- being transparent in the process and allocation of places through consistent communication and information sharing
- ensuring the registration, allocation and enrolment process is simple to understand, follow and implement.
- promoting fair and equitable access to kindergarten programs, including those who face barriers to participation.
- enrolling Early Start Kindergarten (refer to Definitions) eligible children into the full 15 hours of a kindergarten program.

Scope

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, early childhood teachers, educators, staff and parents/guardians who wish to enrol or have already enrolled their child at Ewing Kindergarten

Background and Legislative Requirements and Guiding Documents

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 by 2022 that all eligible Victorian children (*refer to Definitions*) will have access to two years of kindergarten before commencing school. Where demand is higher than availability, approved providers must adhere to their eligibility and DE's Priority of Access criteria (*refer to Definitions and Attachment 1*) in order to allocate the available places. The criteria used to determine the allocation of places takes account of the requirements set out in DE's Kindergarten Funding Guide (*refer to Sources*), the service's philosophy, values and beliefs, and the provisions of the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*. 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 Guide (*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 and Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011* have legislative responsibilities under the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* to only offer a confirmed place in their programs to children with an Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) Immunisation History Statement (*refer to Definitions*).

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*).

Legislative Requirements

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
 - 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 (Cth)

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

- Victorian Legislation – Victorian Law Today: www.legislation.vic.gov.au
- Commonwealth Legislation – Federal Register of Legislation: www.legislation.gov.au

Strategies for Policy Implementation/ Procedures

The Approved Provider is responsible for:

- Following the Priority of Access criteria to funded programs at Ewing Kindergarten as described in Department of Education's [DE] The Kindergarten Funding Guide (refer to Attachment 1)
- 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 (refer also to Attachment 2 – General enrolment procedures)
- Responding to enrolment enquiries on a day-to-day basis and referring people to the person responsible for the enrolment process as required.
- Providing opportunities (in consultation with the Nominated Supervisor and educators) for interested families to attend the kindergarten 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 the AIR Immunisation History Statement (refer to Definitions) required for enrolment.
- Ensuring parents/guardians are only offered a tentative place until the AIR Immunisation History Statement (refer to Definitions) has been assessed as being acceptable or the child has been assessed as eligible for the grace period.
- 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 (refer to Definitions)
- Ensuring that only children whose AIR Immunisation History Statement (refer to Definitions) has been assessed as being acceptable or who are eligible for the grace period (refer to Definitions) have a confirmed place in the program.
- Advising parents/guardians who do not have an AIR Immunisation History Statement (refer to Definitions) and who are not eligible for the grace period 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 an AIR Immunisation History Statement 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 kindergarten if acceptable immunisation documentation is not obtained).
- Taking reasonable steps to obtain an up to date AIR Immunisation History Statement (refer to Definitions) from all parents/guardians after enrolment, timing reminders to comply with the maximum seven-month interval (Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2019 107, Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 Section 143E)

- Ensuring that the enrolment form (refer to Definitions) complies with the requirements of Regulations 160, 161, 162 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 kindergarten (Regulation 183)
- Discussing the individual child’s needs with parents/guardians and developing an orientation program to assist them to settle into the service. The service should take into consideration barriers parents/guardians may have in disclosing sensitive information including communication and information barriers and the development of trusting relationships.
- 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 kindergarten can enter the kindergarten 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).
- Taking reasonable steps to contact non-attending families prior to the cancellation of their enrolment (refer to Attachment 5)
- Reviewing enrolment applications to identify children with additional needs (refer to Definitions and the Inclusion and Equity Policy)
- Encouraging parents/guardians to:
 - stay with their child as long as required during the settling in period
 - make contact with educators 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 into the service
- Discussing support services for children with parents/guardians, where required such as Pre School Field Officer, Early Intervention Programs, and Maternal Health Services
- Providing a funded kindergarten program to children who turn four years of age by 30 April in the year they will attending, that is delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher, and offering at least:
 - 15 hours per week for 40 weeks of the year, or
 - 600 hours per year
- Providing a funded kindergarten program to children who turn three years of age by 30 April in the year they will attending, that is delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher and offering a minimum of 5 hours and up to 15 hours per week
- Communicating to families the days and times the service will operate, planned closures (including public holidays and child-free days), details of any planned alternative sessions, and unplanned teacher absences or emergency situations
- Communicating and providing advice to families regarding the best time to commence kindergarten for children born between January and April
- Supporting inclusion and access through specific funding stream (for eligible families):
 - Kindergarten Fee Subsidy (refer to Definitions)
 - Early Start Kindergarten (refer to Definitions)
 - Early Start Kindergarten extension grants (refer to Definitions)
 - Access to Early Learning (refer to Definitions)
 - Second year of funded four-year-old kindergarten (refer to Definitions)

- Supporting families whose children may be eligible for early entry to kindergarten or late entry to kindergarten and school exemption (refer to Attachment 2)
- Providing communication to families explaining how they can only access one funded kindergarten program per child, per year.
- Receiving written confirmation from families confirming they are attending one funded kindergarten program per child, per year.
- Considering any barriers to access that may exist, developing procedures that ensure all eligible families are aware of, and are able to access a kindergarten program.
- Working with the child's family or carer to obtain an alternate form of identification if a birth certificate or other official documentation is not available.
- Ensuring the collection of accurate, consistent and timely kindergarten data, to monitor and proactively manage capacity, utilisation of services and to meet School Readiness Funding requirements .
- Ensuring families have access to:
 - Parent handbook
 - Child Safe Environment and Wellbeing Policy and/or Statement of Commitment to Child Safety
 - Fees Policy
 - Privacy Statement
 - Code of Conduct Policy
- [Where applicable] Considering access and inclusion for vulnerable children in the allocation of places at the service (refer to Attachment 1 and 2)
- Where applicable, providing families with consistent and transparent communication on waitlist management processes (refer to Attachment 2)
- Complying with the service's Privacy and Confidentiality Policy in relation to the collection and management of a child's enrolment information.
- 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 and feel culturally safe.
 - share their understanding of their child's strengths, interests, abilities and needs.
 - value the voice of the child, ensuring they have opportunity to articulate their individual interests 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.
- Reading and complying with this Enrolment and Orientation Policy.

The Nominated Supervisor and early childhood teachers are responsible for:

- reviewing enrolment applications to identify children with additional needs (refer to Definitions and 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
- 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 kindergarten, when required.
- assisting parents/guardians to develop and maintain a routine for saying goodbye to their child.

- sharing information with parents/guardians regarding their child’s progress with regard to settling in to the kindergarten
- Discussing the individual child’s needs with parents/guardians and developing an orientation program to assist them to settle into the service. The service should take into consideration barriers parents/guardians may have in disclosing sensitive information including communication and information barriers and the development of trusting relationships.
- discussing support services for children with parents/guardians, where required.
- Taking reasonable steps to contact non-attending families prior to the cancellation of their enrolment (refer to Attachment 5)
- Reviewing enrolment applications to identify children with additional needs (refer to Definitions and the Inclusion and Equity Policy)
- Encouraging parents/guardians to:
 - stay with their child as long as required during the settling in period.
 - make contact with educators at the service, when required.
- Discussing support services for children with parents/guardians, where required such as Pre School Field Officer, Early Intervention Programs, and Maternal Health Services
- Providing a funded kindergarten program to children who turn four years of age by 30 April in the year they will attending, that is delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher, and offering at least:
 - 15 hours per week for 40 weeks of the year, or
 - 600 hours per year
- Providing a funded kindergarten program to children who turn three years of age by 30 April in the year they will attending, that is delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher and offering a minimum of 5 hours and up to 15 hours per week
- Communicating to families the days and times the service will operate, planned closures (including public holidays and child-free days), details of any planned alternative sessions, and unplanned teacher absences or emergency situations
- Communicating and providing advice to families regarding the best time to commence kindergarten for children born between January and April
- Supporting inclusion and access through specific funding stream (for eligible families):
 - Kindergarten Fee Subsidy (refer to Definitions)
 - Early Start Kindergarten (refer to Definitions)
 - Early Start Kindergarten extension grants (refer to Definitions)
 - Access to Early Learning (refer to Definitions)
 - Second year of funded four-year-old kindergarten (refer to Definitions)
- Supporting families whose children may be eligible for early entry to kindergarten or late entry to kindergarten and school exemption (refer to Attachment 2)
- Providing communication to families explaining how they can only access one funded kindergarten program per child, per year.
- Receiving written confirmation from families confirming they are attending one funded kindergarten program per child, per year.
- Considering any barriers to access that may exist, developing procedures that ensure all eligible families are aware of, and are able to access a kindergarten program.
- Working with the child’s family or carer to obtain an alternate form of identification if a birth certificate or other official documentation is not available.
- Ensuring the collection of accurate, consistent and timely kindergarten data, to monitor and proactively manage capacity, utilisation of services and to meet School Readiness Funding requirements .
- Ensuring families have access to:

- Parent handbook
- Child Safe Environment and Wellbeing Policy and/or Statement of Commitment to Child Safety
- Fees Policy
- Privacy Statement
- Code of Conduct Policy
- [Where applicable] Considering access and inclusion for vulnerable children in the allocation of places at the service (refer to Attachment 1 and 2)
- Where applicable, providing families with consistent and transparent communication on waitlist management processes (refer to Attachment 2)
- Complying with the service's Privacy and Confidentiality Policy in relation to the collection and management of a child's enrolment information.
- 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 and feel culturally safe.
 - share their understanding of their child's strengths, interests, abilities and needs.
 - value the voice of the child, ensuring they have opportunity to articulate their individual interests 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.
- Reading and complying with this Enrolment and Orientation Policy.

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 kindergarten.
 - become familiar with kindergarten 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 kindergarten's Privacy and Confidentiality Policy in relation to the collection and management of a child's enrolment information.
- Reading and complying with this Enrolment and Orientation Policy.

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 kindergarten and providing AIR Immunisation History Statement (refer to Definitions) 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 an up-to-date AIR Immunisation History Statement (refer to Definitions) to the kindergarten
- Ensuring that all other required information is provided to the kindergarten.
- Updating information by notifying the kindergarten of any changes as they occur.
- Notify Ewing Kindergarten in writing if they wish to cancel their enrolment.

Volunteers and students, while at the service, are responsible for

- Following this policy and its procedures.

Related Policies and Procedures

- 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

References and Further Sources

- Australian Childhood Immunisation Register:
www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/medicare/australian-childhood-immunisation-register
- Australian Government Department of Health, National Immunisation Program Schedule:
<https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/immunisation/immunisation-throughout-life/nationalimmunisation-program-schedule>
- 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/vaccinationchildren/no-jab-no-play/immunisation-enrolment-toolkit>
- Child Care Benefit (Eligibility of Child Care Services for Approval and Continued Approval) Determination 2000: www.legislation.gov.au/Series/F2006B01541
- Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: www.acecqa.gov.au/
- Guide to the National Quality Standard: www.acecqa.gov.au/
- Priority for allocating places in child care services: <http://education.gov.au/priority-allocating-places>
- The Kindergarten Guide (Department of Education and Training):
www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/funding/Pages/kinderfundingcriteria.aspx
- Immunisation enrolment toolkit for early childhood education and care services 2015:
www2.health.vic.gov.au/about/publications/policiesandguidelines/immunisation-enrolment-toolkit
- Victorian Department of Health: www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation
- [Enrolment-and-Orientation-Policy-2022.pdf \(kindergarten.vic.gov.au\)](http://www.kindergarten.vic.gov.au/Enrolment-and-Orientation-Policy-2022.pdf)

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.

Definitions

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy.

Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) Immunisation History Statement: is the only form of acceptable evidence of immunisation. The AIR is a national register administered by Medicare that records all vaccinations given in Australia, including to children. Parents/carers must provide a copy of their most recent AIR Immunisation History Statement, which shows that the child is up to date with their immunisations upon enrolment and when a child has received or been due to receive a vaccination while attending the service. In the case of medical contraindication, an authorised medical practitioner completes and signs a Medical Exemption Form and supplies it to the AIR. In order to confirm enrolment, the Immunisation History Statement must show the child is up to date with the vaccines they can have, medical contraindication and indicate the due date for the next vaccinations the child is able to receive in the future if applicable.

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.

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 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 application form: A form to apply for a place 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 kindergarten.

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. This information is kept confidential by the kindergarten.

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

Grace period: allows specific categories of children of families experiencing vulnerability and disadvantage to enrol and attend the service without an AIR Immunisation History Statement (refer to Definitions) or when the statement is assessed as not being up-to-date. Services complete the grace period eligibility form with families during enrolment and keep a copy with the child's enrolment record. The 16-week grace period starts on the first day of the child's attendance at the service. During the grace period, the service is required to take reasonable steps to obtain the AIR Immunisation History Statement (refer to Definitions) and to encourage families to access immunisation services.

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 Funding Guide (see Attachment 1: Eligibility and priority of access criteria for a 3 and 4-year-old funder kindergarten program), or if in receipt of the CCS, comply with the Commonwealth Government's policy for allocating places (see Source).

Vulnerable Children/Families: Children are vulnerable if the capacity of parents and family to effectively care, protect and provide for their long-term development and wellbeing is limited. Some factors which may contribute to a child being vulnerable include: a child with a disability; living in a family with a low income, or one which is experiencing problems with housing, domestic violence, known to Child Protection, Out of Home Care, substance abuse, or mental health; Aboriginal and/or Torre Strait Islander, having a culturally and linguistically diverse background; having a young or sole parent, or a parent with a disability (adapted from the Kindergarten Funding Guide)

School Readiness Funding: funding provided by DE for programs and supports that builds the capacity of kindergarten services, educators and families to support children's learning and development outcomes.

Second year of funded four-year-old kindergarten: second year eligibility may be considered when a child shows delays in key outcomes of learning and development. An assessment is carried out for each child by an early childhood teacher in Term 4 (the year before the child is to attend school) when a second year is being considered.

Attachments

- Attachment 1: Eligibility and priority of access criteria
- Attachment 2: General enrolment procedures
- Attachment 3: Letter for parents/guardians without acceptable immunisation documentation

ATTACHMENT 1

Eligibility and priority of access criteria for the funded kindergarten program 3- and 4-year-old program

The Approved provider must notify all families of the priority of access policy that applies when they enrol their child. In instances where more eligible children apply for a place at a kindergarten service than there are places available, services must:

- prioritise children based on the DET criteria listed below.
- work with other local kindergarten services and the regional Department office to ensure all eligible children have access to a kindergarten place.

These criteria must be used by the Approved Provider when prioritising enrolments. Funding guidance is available from the Department's regional offices if required.

Service providers should build flexibility into their enrolment processes that consider the circumstances of families from priority groups.

Services must first apply the DET's Priority of Access criteria, and following this may apply locally developed criteria, as per examples below:

DET's Priority of Access criteria	Process that could be used to verify need(s)
<p>Children at risk of abuse or neglect, including children in Out-of-Home Care</p>	<p>The child is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • attending a three-year-old kindergarten program through Early Start Kindergarten* or Access to Early Learning, or is referred by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Child Protection ○ Child and family services (family services referral and support team, Child FIRST/integrated family services/Services Connect case worker) • Maternal and Child Health nurse, or • Out-of-Home Care provider
<p>Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children</p>	<p>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 KIM.</p>
<p>Children eligible for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A child or parent holds a Commonwealth Health Care Card, Pensioner Concession Card, Veteran's Affairs Card, or • Multiple birth children (triplets, quadruplets). • Asylum seekers and refugee children
<p>Children with additional needs, defined as children who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • require additional assistance in order to fully participate in the kindergarten program 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is assessed as having delays in two or more areas or has been granted approval to receive funding and is declared eligible for a second funded year of kindergarten : www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/funding/Pages/kindefundingcriteria.aspx.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • require a combination of services which are individually planned • have an identified specific disability or developmental delay 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • holds a Child Disability Health Care Card • has previously been approved for Kindergarten Inclusion Support Package, or referred by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The National Disability Insurance Scheme ○ Early Childhood Intervention Service ○ Preschool Field Officer, or ○ Maternal and Child Health nurse.
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Examples to consider for second priority:

- children who were eligible to attend in the previous year, but:
 - deferred
 - withdrew from the kindergarten 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 have a sibling that has previously attended Ewing 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 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
- During the roll-out of Three-Year-Old Kindergarten, Early Start Kindergarten (ESK) 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 funded Three-Year-Old Kindergarten is available at the service. 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.

When demand exceeds availability, the Approved Provider will refer to the kindergarten’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 kindergarten 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

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

Eligibility and access criteria for the three-year-old kindergarten program

- Children are eligible for attendance in the three-year-old kindergarten program provided they have turned three prior to commencement.
- 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 kindergarten. Considerations may include:
 - children recommended by an educator for an additional year in the three-year-old program.
 - date of application – for example, applications for the three-year-old program can open at the start of Term 1 in the year prior to commencement.
 - siblings attending the kindergarten
 - places allocated by the service for transient families e.g. RAAF, seasonal workers and tourism workers
 - local community zoning.
 - Full fee-paying families.

Allocation within groups

- Where the kindergarten provides more than one funded kindergarten program or three-year-old program, places within the programs will be allocated to groups by the kindergarten in line with the eligibility and priority of access criteria. Considerations may include:
 - Needs of individual children
 - Needs of the group
 - Parental wishes

Guidelines for students wanting to change 3–4-year-old programs (from 2025 onwards)

In order to ease the transition for 3 to 4 year-old kindergarten for children and parents it has been proposed to have more aligned programs.

Proposed 2024 Programme Days

- Joeys –Monday and Thursday
- Wombats –Monday, Wednesday (Nature Kinder 8.30-12pm) and Thursday
- Koalas - Tuesday and Friday
- Possums- Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday (Nature Kinder 8.30-12pm)

2023-2024

- Requests for 4-year-old groups from 3-year-old parents as per current enrolment policy

2025 onwards

While transition to the 4-year-old program from the 3-year-old program with the corresponding days (i.e. Joeys to Wombats, Koala's to Possums) is encouraged, there is some flexibility to move between groups. Families are able to nominate whether they would like to change to the other 4-year-old group with a specific reason and the Director and Committee of Management will action the change where the need is more apparent.

The below are reasons for requesting the change.

- Teacher recommendation
- Social / learning conflict within the particular group
- Family preferences

Where a family does not receive its first preference for 4-year-old groups they will be communicated to via email and or phone by the Director or Committee of Management.

ATTACHMENT 2

General enrolment procedures

Application for a place

- Enrolment applications will be accepted any time but for the 3-year-old-program, ideally in the year the child turns 2
- Enrolment applications are completed online via the link on Ewing Kindergarten website.
- Ewing Kindergarten will determine the date(s) by which applications must be received for offer of places in the three and four-year-old kindergarten program.
- A separate application form must be completed for each child.
- To facilitate the inclusion of all children into the program, the enrolment application form will clearly identify any additional or specific needs of the child (refer to Inclusion and Equity Policy).
- Proof of address must be submitted with all applications.
- All enrolment application forms must be accompanied by an enrolment application fee in line with Ewing Kindergarten's Fees Policy of \$25. This fee is to cover administrative costs associated with the processing of a child's enrolment application and is non-refundable.
- Access to completed enrolment application forms will be restricted to the person(s) responsible for the enrolment process, the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor and educators at the kindergarten, unless otherwise specified by the Approved Provider.
- Applications will be automatically entered on the waiting list using the eligibility and priority of access criteria.

Offer of places

3-year-old enrolment moving to 4-year-old the following year (Internal offer of place)

- Internal families will be sent an email informing when internal offers will commence.
- Internal letters of preference will be emailed to each eligible family on the stipulated date (usually May each year)
- Preferential places will be allocated on the allocated return date in a receipt of return order.
- Families will be emailed a letter of their allocated group for the following year stipulating a response due date. (Families that did not receive their preferential group will be added to an internal waitlist to swap across if any vacancies become available).
- Families will be emailed a letter of enrolment confirmation requesting a \$300 deposit to secure their place the following year.
- Enrolments packs will be distributed to families via email in the first week of term 4 for completion prior to the commencement of the following year.
- Parents/guardians who do not wish to accept the offer of a tentative or confirmed 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.

External Application for a place (4-year-old)

- Once all internal allocations have been completed, any remaining vacancies will be offered to families on the external waitlist.
- All families in the eligible age grouping will be sent an email stipulating the date first round external offers will be made.

- First round offers will be emailed to families and places allocated in accordance to their priority and ranking on the waitlist.
 - (1) children who have been granted approval to receive funding for a second year of kindergarten in accordance with The Kindergarten Guide
 - (2) Siblings of children that previously attended Ewing Kindergarten who turn four years of age by 30 April in the year they will attend kindergarten
 - (3) children who were eligible to attend in the previous year, but:
 - (a) deferred
 - (b) withdrew from the service prior to the April data collection
 - (4) children who turn four years of age by 30 April in the year they will attend kindergarten
- Families will be emailed a letter of their allocated group for the following year stipulating a response due date. (Families that did not receive their preferential group will be added to an internal waitlist to swap across if any vacancies become available).
- Families will be emailed a letter of enrolment confirmation requesting a \$300 deposit to secure their place the following year.
- Enrolments packs will be distributed to families via email in September for completion prior to the commencement of the following year.
- Parents/guardians who do not wish to accept the offer of a tentative or confirmed 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.

External Application for a place (3 year old)

- Once all internal allocations have been completed, any remaining vacancies will be offered to families on the external waitlist
- All families in the eligible age grouping will be sent an email stipulating the date first round external offers will be made
- First round offers will be emailed to families and places allocated in accordance to their priority and ranking on the waitlist.
 - (1) Siblings of children that previously attended Ewing Kindergarten who turn three years of age by the commencement of term one in the year they will attend kindergarten
 - (2) Children who turn three years of age by the commencement of term one in the year they will attend kindergarten
- Families will be emailed a letter of their allocated group for the following year stipulating a response due date. (Families that did not receive their preferential group will be added to an internal waitlist to swap across if any vacancies become available).
- Families will be emailed a letter of enrolment confirmation requesting a \$300 deposit to secure their place the following year.
- Enrolments packs will be distributed to families via email in September for completion prior to the commencement of the following year.
- Parents/guardians who do not wish to accept the offer of a tentative or confirmed 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 year of 4 year old funded kindergarten

To be considered for a second year 4 year old funded place at Ewing kindergarten, the child must be deemed as having delays in key outcomes of learning and development.

An assessment by the child's teacher will be carried out when a second year of funding is considered. The teacher's assessment of the child has identified delays in at least **two** key learning and development outcomes, as determined from the *Term three plan for learning and development*:

To be eligible, following are the areas the child will be assessed as developmentally delayed:

- Wellbeing
- Identity
- Community
- Communication
- Learning
- Other factors may also be considered

Parent Involvement in the assessment process

This is paramount to achieve the best outcome for the child. With your consent the teacher will:

- Complete the assessment of the child.
- Get the support of other early childhood development professionals as needed (Preschool Field Officer, PSFO)

If the teacher believes the child has a developmental delay, they will recommend a second year of kindergarten by sending a declaration to the Department of Education and Training.

Only children that have been approved by the Department of Education and Training as eligible will be offered a second year of funded kindergarten.

Each 4-year-old kindergarten group will have two provisional places reserved for second year funded children each year if required. These places will be offered on to families on the internal or external waitlists if not required.

ATTACHMENT 3

Letter for parents/guardians without acceptable immunisation documentation

Ewing Kindergarten
32A Manning Rd
Malvern East VIC 3145

Dear _____

Re: Enrolment at Ewing Kindergarten for _____

I am contacting you regarding your tentative place for [insert child's name] at Ewing Kindergarten in the _____ group] in _____

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 _____ by the due date, we are unable to confirm a place at our kindergarten for _____ 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
- City of Stonnington.
- National Immunisation Information Line Tel. 1800 671 811
- Australian Childhood Immunisation Register Tel 1800 653 809
- Better Health Channel website: <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/no-jab-no-play>

Should you wish to re-apply for a place for _____], we are happy to accept a new enrolment application accompanied by AIR Immunisation History Statement. The new application would be considered in line with Ewing Kindergarten's Enrolment and Orientation policy.

Yours sincerely

Director

Ewing Kindergarten