



## WAVERLEY MEADOWS PRE-SCHOOL Assoc. Inc.

6 Farnham Avenue Wheelers Hill Vic 3150

Telephone: 9560 2791 Fax: 9560 9323

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## ENROLMENT AND ORIENTATION POLICY

### Mandatory – Quality Area 6

#### Purpose

This policy will outline:

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

#### Policy statement

##### Values

Waverley Meadows Pre-School is committed to:

- equal access for all children
- meeting the needs of the local community
- complying with DET funding requirements relating to the enrolment of children in government funded kindergarten places
- \* complying with the ‘No Jab, No Play’ government policy ensuring all enrolled children are vaccinated.
- maintaining confidentiality in relation to all information provided on enrolment forms
- ensuring all families are welcomed and receive an effective orientation into the service.

##### Scope

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Certified Supervisor, educators, staff and parents/guardians who wish to enroll or have already enrolled their child at Waverley Meadows Pre-School.



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### **Background and legislation**

#### **Background**

The Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 require approved services to have a policy and procedure 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 is applied by the Monash Council in order to allocate the available places. The criteria used to determine the allocation of places is the same from service to service in the City of Monash and is based upon agreed philosophies, 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*



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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)*

### **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- available at the Pre-School.

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

<https://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/child-care-subsidy>

**Child Care Subsidy (CCS):** A Commonwealth Government payment to help families who use either approved or registered childcare services. You may be eligible if you or your partner meet the requirements. Details are available at

<https://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/child-care-subsidy>

**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. DET considers that this child has not accessed a year of funded kindergarten and is therefore eligible for DET funding in the following year. Deferred 4 Year Old Program (D4) has been developed by Waverley Meadows Staff. The D4 program tailors the preschool experience for children not yet ready for the 4 year old program, yet require a bridging program or a more developmentally appropriate program. These older children turn four between the 1st January and 30th June (these dates may vary depending on the number of children and can be extended until 30th October).

**Eligible child:** *A child who meets the criteria outlined in the Kindergarten Funding Guide.*

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



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**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.

### Sources and related policies

#### Sources

- *Child Care Subsidy*

<https://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/child-care-subsidy>

- *Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011:*

<https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2018-01/NQF-Resource-02-Guide-to-ECS-Law-Regs.pdf>

- Guide to the National Quality Standard:

<https://www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/national-quality-standard>

- Priority for allocating places in child care services:

<https://www.education.gov.au/priority-filling-child-care-places>

- *Victorian kindergarten policy, procedures and funding criteria:*

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/funding/Pages/kinderfundingcriteria.aspx>



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### **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:**

- 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 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



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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 responsible for the enrolment process is accountable for the following:**

- maintaining a waiting list.
- collecting, receipting and banking enrolment fees.
- 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.

### **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).



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- 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 into 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 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.**

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**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: Sample Enrolment Application Form

**Authorisation**

This policy was adopted by the Approved Provider of Waverley Meadows Pre-School on 19th August 2013.

**Last Review:** September 2019 (See *Policy Schedule* for next review date)

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### ATTACHMENT 1

#### General enrolment procedures

##### 1. Application for a place

- Enrolment applications will be accepted any time after the child has turned 18 months of age.
- Enrolment application is made through the Monash Central Registration System via the City of Monash website;

<https://www.monash.vic.gov.au/Services/Children-Family/Kindergartens/Enrolment>

- A separate application must be submitted for each child, and each proposed year of attendance at the service, included on the application.
- To facilitate the inclusion of all children into the program, enrolment applications should clearly identify any additional or specific needs of the child (refer to Inclusion and Equity Policy).
- Parents/guardians of children applying for a second year of funded kindergarten or currently attending a three-year-old program must also submit an enrolment application for the following year.
- The following documents are required at the time of application;
  - Proof of address
  - Proof of date of birth
  - Immunisation status
- All completed Enrolment application forms must be lodged via the City Of Monash website.
- Access to completed enrolment applications will be accessible via the Monash Central Registration System Online.
- Applications will be entered on the waiting list using the eligibility and priority of access criteria.
- All administration fees and/or deposits are non refundable unless specially approved by the Committee of Management.

##### 2. Closing dates for enrolment applications

The closing dates for enrolment applications to be considered for first round offers will be 30th June the year proceeding, for both the 3 year old and 4 year old programs.



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

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

### 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 line with the eligibility and priority of access criteria.

### 5. Offer of places

- Places will be offered to applicants via email from the City of Monash Kinder Enrolments division, 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 by email of a confirmed place.
- Parents/guardians who do not wish to accept the offer of a place, or intend to withdraw their enrolment, are requested to do so via the parent portal as soon as possible.
- In the event of no withdrawal notice being provided, the Committee has the authority to invoice the parent/guardian for the notice period.
- The deposit is not refundable, but the Committee reserves the right to take individual circumstances into consideration.
- Second/third round offers will be made in September/October the year preceding attendance, as per the Monash Preschool Central Enrolment Scheme.
- A deposit of \$50 must be paid by the date indicated on the letter of offer to hold the place for the following year. This deposit will be deducted from Term 4 fees.
- An enrolment form and other relevant information will be provided after the place is accepted and the deposit has been paid.

Note: Places will not be allocated to children until any substantial debt owed to the service by the family



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is paid, or a payment plan is agreed to between the family and the service (refer to Fees Policy).

- The Committee may withdraw the provision of service to a family who persistently refuse to pay fees. This is to be considered as a last resort option, and must only occur once the preceding stages as outlined in the Fees Policy have been followed.

### Procedures for casual enrolments

The normal enrolment process will occur only when vacancies are available, at committee discretion.

### Special Enrolment procedures

Parents/guardians of children with special needs should advise the Enrolment Officer at the time of enrolment of the specific needs of that child. It is then the responsibility of the Enrolment Officer to advise the Committee of the nature of the extra assistance required, and for the President and the Treasurer to seek the appropriate aid from the DHS or Council as appropriate.

### Fees

An enrolment will only be deemed official once the deposit has been paid. Enrolment in the program will only remain current if the term fees, as determined annually by the Committee of Management, are paid by the due date. For further details please refer to the Fees Policy.

## 6. Eligibility and priority of access criteria for the funded kindergarten program

After consultation with the current and future users of the service, the Committee will determine the program and hours of attendance to be offered at Waverley Meadows Pre-School, based on enrolments received and the financial viability of the program to be offered.

The number of 4-year-old places is set at a maximum of 40 children per group. The enrolment of a special needs' child will be deemed to be the equivalent of 2 places. In the event of there being enrolments in excess of this number additional groups may be scheduled after consultation with the Teacher and the Committee of Management.

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 Funding Guide;  
<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/funding/Pages/kinderfundingcriteria.aspx>
- children who were eligible to attend in the previous year, but:
  - withdrew from the service on or before the last day of Term 2 and have completed the



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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 kindergarten
- children turning six years of age at kindergarten who have been granted an exemption from school entry age requirements by the DET (refer to Kindergarten Funding Guide available at; <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/funding/Pages/kinderfundingcriteria.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 the 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 the 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 the 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 <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/childhood/providers/comms/whatisearlystartkinder.pdf>

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 on or before the last day of Term 2. If there are more applicants than places available, preferences will be offered in the following order:
  - I. Residence/Ratepayers living in the Monash Municipality;
  - II. Children who have received funding for a second year of 4 year old Pre-school;
  - III. Government Priorities
  - IV. Children who have attended the preschool in the previous year
  - V. Children who have had siblings attend the preschool in the past 3 years.



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### VI. Proximity

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

Children are eligible for attendance in the three-year-old program provided they have turned three prior to commencement.

The number of 3-year-old places is set at a maximum of 18 children per group.

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.

*If there are more applicants than places available, preference will be offered in the following order,*

- I. Residence/Ratepayers living in the Monash Municipality;
- II. Children who have received funding for a second year of 4 year old Pre-school;
- III. Government Priorities
- IV. Children who have attended the preschool in the previous year
- V. Children who have had siblings attend the preschool in the past 3 years.
- VI. Proximity

First priority will be given to those children living within the Monash district and who have submitted their application prior to July 1st of that year.

#### 8. Eligibility and access criteria for Deferred 4 year old program (D4) children

The Deferred 4 Year Old Program (D4) is designed to enable preschoolers to learn through play at a level appropriate to their age and developmental stage.

- The number of deferred 4-year-old places is set at a maximum of 22 children per group.
- All children attending the D4 program must be 3 years of age by 1st January in the year they attend, and preferably turn four between 1st January and 30th June the year of commencement.
- Please note that children whose birthdays fall between 1st July and 31st October maybe offered a place in either the 3yo or the D4 programs according to student numbers and at the teacher's discretion.



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### Selection Criteria for Offers of Places

- Children are eligible for attendance in the Deferred 4-year-old program provided they have turned four years of age between 1st January and 30th June the year of commencement.

*If there are more applicants than places available, preference will be offered in the following order:*

- I. Residence/Ratepayers living in the Monash Municipality;
- II. Children who have received funding for a second year of 4 year old Pre-school;
- III. Government Priorities
- IV. Children who have attended the preschool in the previous year
- V. Children who have had siblings attend the preschool in the past 3 years.
- VI. Proximity

First priority will be given to those children living within the Monash district and who have submitted their application prior to July 1st of that year.

### PROCEDURES

#### *Procedures for Offers of Place*

- Offers of places for 4-year-old group/s will be emailed to applicants via the Central Registration System in mid July the year preceding attendance.
- Offers of places in the 3-year-old group will be made approximately 1 week after places for 4 year old have been notified, via the Central Registration System.
- Second/third round offers will be made in September/October the year preceding attendance, via the Central Registration System.
- Applicants will be advised of a confirmed place by email. Parents/guardians are required to confirm acceptance within one week.
- Failure to formally accept the position within the specified time will result in the withdrawal of the offer of a place. The child may be re-enrolled subject to a place being available, or be placed on the waiting list as appropriate.
- Applicants who are unsuccessful in obtaining a place will be notified as soon as possible, and placed on a waiting list with the same order of priority as outline above. Regular contact with the parents/guardians of children on the waiting list will be maintained to advise of the status of that list.



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