

## DEPARTMENTAL POLICY



<b>TITLE:</b>	ENROLMENT AND ORIENTATION FUNDED KINDERGARTEN
<b>ID NUMBER:</b>	DPO-COM-CHI-007
<b>DEPARTMENT:</b>	Community Services
<b>UNIT:</b>	Children's Services
<b>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:</b>	Team Leader Education and Care

<b>ADOPTED DATE AND BY WHOM:</b>	Children's Services Manager August 2026
<b>EXPIRY DATE:</b>	Not Applicable
<b>REVIEW DATE:</b>	August 2026 <i>This policy will be reviewed every four years or as required by any legislative or council changes.</i>

<b>AVAILABILITY:</b>	Staff - Unit	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
	Staff - Department	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>ADVISE AVAILABILITY:</b>	Email designated Groups & Staff (Responsible Officer to prepare)		

## 1. References (if applicable)

- Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations Policy DPO-COM-CHI-035 DocSetID: 2147175
- Complaints and Grievances Policy DPO-COM-CHI-008 DocSetID: 2149803
- Dealing with infectious disease policy – DPO-COM-CHI-010 DocSetID: 1853728
- Children’s Services Fees and charges policy – DPO-COM-CHI-044? DocSetID: 2641606
- Kindergarten Enrolment Administration Fee - DPR-COM/CUL-CHI-107 DocSetID: 2193391
- Inclusion and Equity Policy DPO-COM/CUL-CHI-024 DocSetID: 2156161
- Privacy and Confidentiality Policy DPO-COM-CHI-030 DocSetID:
- Charter of Human Rights & Responsibilities Act 2006
- Glenelg Shire Council, Records Management Policy OPO-CORPS-RECM-001
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## 2. Purpose

This policy will outline:

- The criteria for enrolment at Glenelg Shire Council’s Children’s Services education and care services.
- Procedures for the orientation of new families and children into a service.
- Ensuring compliance with Victorian and national legislation, including disability discrimination, anti-discrimination, human rights laws, No Jab No Play and department of Education and Training (DET) Kindergarten funding guide.
- Ensuring access to participation, especially for vulnerable and disadvantaged children.
- Ensuring early entry applicants (this includes children younger than three years and children younger than four years old on 30<sup>th</sup> April in the year they will attend kindergarten) are given equitable access to enrolment.
- Adhering to DET’s priority of access requirements for both three and four-year-old children.

### 3. Scope

- Equal access for all eligible children.
- Ensuring all families are welcomed and receive an affective orientation to the service.
- This policy applies to the approved provider, persons with management or control, nominated supervisors, persons in day-to-day charge, early childhood teachers, educators, staff, students, volunteers, parents/guardians, children and others attending the programs and activities of Glenelg Shire Council Childrens Services, including during offsite excursions and activities.

### 4. Departmental Policy

#### Background

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

It is intended that all eligible 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 DET's Priority of Access criteria (*refer to Definitions and Attachment 1*) in order to allocate available spaces. The criteria used to determine the allocation of places takes account of the requirements set out in DET's Kindergarten Funding Guide (*refer to sources*), the services philosophy, values and beliefs, and the provision of the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*. The Victorian Government required funded organisations to ensure that their policies and procedures promote equal opportunity for all children. Services participating in a central registration and enrolment scheme are required to comply with the registration and/or enrolment procedures of that scheme.

The Central Registration and Enrolment Scheme (CRES), co-designed by DET provides access to families to register for and secure a place for their children in kindergarten. It is a collaborative model that brings together councils, service providers, MCH staff, support services, and other stakeholders to support children and their families. In 2020 more than half of all local councils across Victoria operate a form of central enrolment or central registration scheme. These schemes provide a single point of entry for families, simplifying the kindergarten enrolment process and improving equity of access.

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*).

## Legislation and Standards

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- 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 160,161,162,168,170,171,177,181,183
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)
- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 6: Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities
- Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 (Vic)
- Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2019 (Vic)
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984

## 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 and Specific Definitions* section of this manual.

- Access to Early Learning (AEL)
- Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) Immunisation History Statement
- Authorised Nominee
- Children/families experiencing vulnerability and/or disadvantage (in relation to this policy)
- Children with additional needs
- Central Registration and Enrolment Scheme (CRES)
- Deferral
- Early Start Kindergarten (ESK)
- Early Start Kindergarten extension grants
- Eligible Child
- Enrolment record
- Kindergarten Registration fee
- Kindergarten Registration form
- Grace period
- Kindergarten Fee Subsidy (KFS)
- Priority of access
- Registration
- School Readiness Funding
- Second year of funded four-year-old kindergarten

## Sources

- Australian Childhood Immunisation Register: [www.servicesaustralia.gov.au](http://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au)
- Australian Government Department of Health, National Immunisation Program Schedule: [www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au)

- Department of Health and Human Services, Immunisation enrolment toolkit for early childhood education and care service: [www.health.vic.gov.au](http://www.health.vic.gov.au)
- Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: [www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au)
- Guide to the National Quality Standard: [www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au)
- Priority of Access Guidelines for childcare service: [www.dese.gov.au](http://www.dese.gov.au)
- The Kindergarten Funding Guide (Victorian Department of Education and Training): [www.education.vic.gov.au](http://www.education.vic.gov.au)

### Service Policies

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

**Table of Responsibilities:**

Procedures / Guidelines	Approved Provider and persons with management or control	Nominated Supervisor and persons in day to day charge	Early Childhood Teacher, educators and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Contactors, volunteers and students
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing a funded kindergarten program to children who turn four years of age by 30 April in the year they will attend, 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.</li> </ul>	✓				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing a funded kindergarten program to children who turn three years of age by 30 April in the year they will attend, that si delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher and offering a minimum of 5 hours per week.</li> </ul>	✓				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.</li> </ul>	✓				

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Following the priority of access criteria for funded programs at all Glenelg Shire Council children's services, as described in Department of Education and Training's (DET) <i>The Kindergarten Funding Guide (refer to attachment 1)</i>.</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicating and providing advice to families regarding the best time to commence kindergarten for children born between January and April.</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supporting inclusion and access through specific funding stream (for eligible families): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kindergarten Fee Subsidy (<i>refer to definitions</i>)</li> <li>Early Start Kindergarten (<i>refer to definitions</i>)</li> <li>Early Start Kindergarten extension grants (<i>refer to definitions</i>)</li> <li>Access To Early Learning (<i>refer to definitions</i>)</li> <li>Second year of funded four-year-old kindergarten (<i>refer to definitions</i>)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supporting families whose children may be eligible for early entry to kindergarten or late entry to kindergarten and school exemption (<i>refer to Attachment 2</i>)</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing communication to families explaining how they can only access one funded kindergarten program per child, per year.</li> </ul>	✓	✓		✓	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complying with the <i>Inclusion and Equity Policy</i></li> </ul>	✓	✓		✓	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring the collection of accurate, consistent and timely kindergarten date, to monitor and proactively manage capacity, utilisation or services and to meet</li> </ul>	✓	✓			

School Readiness Funding requirements.					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring families have access to:</li> <li>Parent Handbook</li> <li>Child Safe Environment Policy and/or Statement of Commitment to Child Safety</li> <li>Fees policy</li> <li>Privacy Statement</li> <li>Code of Conduct Policy</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appointing a person to be responsible for the enrolment process and the day-to-day basis and referring people to the person responsible for the enrolment process as required (refer to attachment</li> </ul>	✓				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Responding to enrolment enquiries on a day-to-day basis and referring people to the person responsible for the enrolment process as required.</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Considering access inclusion for venerable children in the allocation of places at the service. (<i>refer to attachment 1 and 2</i>)</li> </ul>	✓	✓			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring that the inability for parents/guardians to produce a birth certificate for a child is not a barrier to enrolling in a funded kindergarten program.</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing parents/guardians with alternative documentation to supply requests in the event a birth certificate can not be produced when enrolling their child in a funded kindergarten program. Appropriate documentation to request includes:</li> <li>Statement from the Australian Immunisation Register</li> <li>Medicare card</li> <li>Letter from the Doctor or Midwife who attended the birth</li> <li>Doctors note attesting to the child's age</li> <li>Passport</li> <li>Citizenship documents,</li> <li>Australian Visa documents</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓		

• Immicard					
• Where applicable, providing families with consistent and transparent communication on waitlist management process ( <i>refer to attachment 2</i> )	✓	✓			
• Complying with the services <i>Privacy and Confidentiality Policy</i> in relation to the collection and delivery of a child's enrolment information	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
• Providing opportunities 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 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, early childhood teachers or educators under the <i>National Law: Section 167</i>	✓	✓	✓		
• Providing parents/guardians with information about the requirements of the law for enrolment, including obtaining the AIR Immunisation History Statement ( <i>refer to definitions</i> ) and accessing immunisation services					
• Ensuring parents/guardians are only offered a tentative place until the AIR Immunisation History Statement ( <i>refer to definitions</i> ) 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 ( <i>refer to sources</i> ) 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 ( <i>refer to definitions</i> )					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advising parents/guardians who do not have an AIR Immunisation History Statement (<i>refer to Definitions</i>) 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 (<i>refer to Attachment 4</i>)</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Taking reasonable steps to obtain an up-to-date AIR Immunisation History Statement (<i>refer to Definitions</i>) from a parent/guardian of a child enrolled under a grace period within 16 weeks from when the child begins attending (<b>Note:</b> the child can continue to attend the service if acceptable immunisation documentation is not obtained).</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completing the enrolment record prior to their child's commencement at the service and providing AIR Immunisation History Statement (<i>refer to Definitions</i>) of their child's immunisation status</li> </ul>				✓	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where a child is eligible for the 16 weeks grace period, ensuring that the child's immunisations are updated in line with the schedule and providing an up-to-date AIR Immunisation History Statement (<i>refer to Definitions</i>) to the service</li> </ul>				✓	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Taking reasonable steps to obtain an up-to-date AIR Immunisation History Statement (<i>refer to Definitions</i>) from all parents/guardians after enrolment, timing reminders to comply with the maximum seven-month interval (<i>Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2019 107, Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 Section 143E</i>)</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring all authorised nominees (<i>refer to Definitions</i>) have been completed on the enrolment record</li> </ul>	✓	✓		✓	

(refer to Definitions) (Regulations 160 and 161)					
• Ensuring that the enrolment record (refer to Definitions) both digital and/or hard copy complies with the requirements of Regulations 160, 161, 162 and that it effectively meets the management requirements of the service	✓	✓	✓		
• Ensuring that enrolment record (refer to Definitions) is kept up to date if family circumstances change, and that services are made aware if they become eligible for additional funding as a result of changed circumstances (e.g. if a child acquires a Health Care Card the child becomes available for Kindergarten Fee Subsidy; if the child or family becomes known to Child Protection, the child becomes eligible for Early Start Kindergarten and Early Start Kindergarten Extension grant).	✓	✓	✓	✓	
• 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 (1a) (2d))	✓	✓	✓		
• 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.	✓	✓	✓		
• 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 ( <i>Regulation 157</i> ), 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, early childhood teachers or educators under the <i>National Law: Section 167</i>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Taking reasonable steps to contact non-attending families prior to the cancellation of their enrolment (<i>refer to Attachment 5</i>)</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reviewing enrolment applications to identify children with additional needs (<i>refer to Definitions and the Inclusion and Equity Policy</i>)</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓		
<p>Encouraging parents/guardians to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>stay with their child as long as required during the settling in period</li> <li>make contact with educators at the service, when required</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assisting parents/guardians to develop and maintain a routine for saying goodbye to their child</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sharing information with parents/guardians concerning their child's progress regarding settling into the service</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussing support services for children with parents/guardians, where required such as Pre School Field Officer, Early Intervention Programs, and Maternal Health Services</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	
<p>Developing strategies to assist new families to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>feel welcomed into the service become familiar with service policies and procedures</li> <li>share information about their family beliefs, values and culture and feel culturally safe</li> <li>share their understanding of their child's strengths, interests, abilities and needs</li> <li>value the voice of the child, ensuring they have opportunity to</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>articulate their individual interests and needs</li> <li>discuss the values and expectations they hold in relation to their child's learning</li> <li>providing comfort and reassurance to children who are showing signs of distress when separating</li> </ul>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reading and complying with this <i>Enrolment and Orientation Policy</i></li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updating information by notifying the service of any changes as they occur, for example obtaining or the cancellation of a Health Care Card, if the child or family becomes known to Child Protection</li> </ul>				✓	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Notifying Glenelg Shire Council in writing if they wish to cancel their enrolment.</li> </ul>				✓	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing Glenelg Shire Council with other acceptable evidence, that includes the child's full name &amp; date of birth in the absence of a birth certificate at the time of enrolment. Acceptable documents include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Statement from the Australian Immunisation Register</li> <li>- Medicare card</li> <li>- Letter from the Doctor or Midwife who attended the birth</li> <li>- Doctors note attesting to the child's age</li> <li>- Passport</li> <li>- Citizenship documents,</li> <li>- Australian Visa documents</li> <li>- Immicard</li> </ul> </li> </ul>				✓	

## 5. Records Management

All Council records created and managed as a result of implementing this policy will be managed in accordance with the Council's Records Management Policy.

The Records Management Policy assigns responsibilities for records management to employees, supervisors, volunteers and other specific positions.

No Council records are to be destroyed without consideration of the requirements of the Act(s) that govern the functions relevant to this policy. Prior to destruction, advice must be sought from the Information and Data Unit, with consideration to the requirements of the appropriate Retention and Disposal Authority (RDA).

## 6. Orientation Procedures

The time required for orientation and settling in will vary for each child and their family, therefore it is important to be flexible and individualise orientation for each family.

Offer families the opportunity to visit the service at different times during the day/session, this allows the child and their family to become familiar with the various routines of the service.

Provide reassurance to the family that they may stay with their child for as long as they choose during orientation and once the child commences

Provide the family with suggestions for developing and maintaining a routine for saying goodbye to their child

Reassure the family:

- They can leave their child initially for a shorter day, gradually increasing the length of time
- They may call and speak to their child's early childhood teacher or educator(s) at an agreed time
- The early childhood teacher/educators will keep them informed on how their child is settling in
- They will be informed about any changes or circumstances which may affect them or their child.
- Further considerations may include but are not limited to:
- Send an email during the day to update the family on their child including a photo of the child (if the child has settled in) (*refer to the information and Communication Technology Policy*). **Note:** For children in out-of-home care, the educator may need to seek permission from Child Protection before taking and distributing photos of the child
- Asking the family how they have settled in and if they have any questions or concerns.

## 7. 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
- Notifying all stakeholders affected by this policy at least 14 days before making any significant changes to this policy or its procedures, unless a lesser period is necessary due to risk (*Regulation 172*).

## 8. Attachments

- Attachment 1: Attachment 1 – Eligibility and priority of access criteria for 3 and 4-year-old funded kindergarten program
- Attachment 2: General kindergarten registration and enrolment procedures
- Attachment 3: Sample kindergarten registration form for non CRES services
- Attachment 4: Letter for parents/guardians without acceptable immunisation documentation
- Attachment 5: Cancellation of enrolment and non-attendance

## 7. Victorian State Legislation Copyright Acknowledgement

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