

Mandatory – Quality Area 6

PURPOSE

This policy will outline:

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

POLICY STATEMENT

VALUES

Goulburn Region Preschool Association Inc 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 all relevant legislation
- 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 Supervisors, educators, staff and parents/guardians who wish to enrol or have already enrolled their child at Goulburn Region Preschool Association Inc.

PROCEDURES

The Approved Provider is responsible for:

- determining the criteria for priority of access to programs at Goulburn Region Preschool Association Inc, based on funding requirements and the philosophy of GRPSA.
- 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 Supervisors and educators) for interested families to attend the services 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 funding criteria
- reviewing the orientation processes for new families and children to ensure the objectives of this policy are met
- ensuring that parents/guardians of a child attending the service can enter the service premises at any time that the child is being educated and cared for, except where this may pose a risk to the safety of children or staff, or conflict with any duty of the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisors or educators under the Law (Regulation 157).

The person responsible for the enrolment process is accountable for the following:

- collating enrolments and recording the date of receipt of each application
- maintaining a waiting list
- offering places in line with this policy and criteria for priority of access, and providing relevant paperwork to families in accordance with this policy
- providing a regular report to the Approved Provider regarding the status of enrolments and any difficulties encountered
- complying with the *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy* of the service
- ensure *Enrolment and Orientation Policy* is available on request

All Early Childhood Staff are responsible for:

- responding to enrolment enquiries on a day-to-day basis and referring people to the GRPSA website and explaining the enrolment process, as required
- reviewing enrolment form 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
- providing information regarding Early Start Programs and potential to participate in Funded Kindergarten programs for eligible children
- ensuring that enrolment forms are completed prior to the child's commencement at the service storing completed enrolment forms in a lockable file and secured digitally (refer to *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*) as soon as is practicable
- ensuring that parents/guardians of a child attending the service can enter the service premises at any time that the child is being educated and cared for, except where this may pose a risk to the safety of children or staff, or conflict with any duty of the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor or educators under the Law (Regulation 157)
- developing strategies to assist new families to:
 - feel welcomed into the service
 - become familiar with service policies and procedures
 - share information about their family beliefs, values and culture
 - share their understanding of their child's strengths, interests, abilities and needs
 - discuss the values and expectations they hold in relation to their child's learning

- discussing the individual child's needs with parents/guardians and developing an orientation program to assist them to settle into the program
- encouraging parents/guardians to:
 - stay with their child as long as required during the settling in period
 - make contact with educators and carers at the service, when required
- assisting parents/guardians to develop and maintain a routine for saying goodbye to their child
- providing comfort and reassurance to children who are showing signs of distress when separating from family members
- sharing information with parents/guardians regarding their child's progress with regard to settling 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:

- 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.

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 & Criteria for Priority Access– for funded kindergarten programs
- Attachment 2: General enrolment procedures & Criteria for Priority Access – for Long Day Care Programs

AUTHORISATION

This policy was adopted by the Approved Provider of Goulburn Region Preschool Association Inc on 8th October 2012

Reviewed and approved: 11th July 2019

Reviewed: August 2021

Review date: August 2024

ATTACHMENT 1

General enrolment procedures – Funded Kindergarten Programs

- Enrolments open at the start of term 2 in the year prior to attendance
- A link to the application for Enrolment is on the GRPSA website
- The closing dates for enrolments for the next year is the 31st August
- Enrolments 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 Goulburn Region Preschool Association Inc.
- A separate enrolment form must be completed for each child, and for each proposed year of attendance at the service.
- To facilitate the inclusion of all children into the program, enrolment forms should clearly identify any additional or specific needs of the child (refer to Inclusion and Equity Policy).
- After the 31st August (for applications for the next year) and applications for the current year are received, the person responsible for enrolments will check if a position is available and send out the acceptance of enrolment and request that they complete the enrolment form.
- Completed enrolment forms are to be forwarded to the person responsible for the enrolment process at the service.
- Access to completed enrolment forms will be restricted to the person responsible for the enrolment process, the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisors and educators at the service, unless otherwise specified by the Approved Provider.
- Groups may be capped at 22 enrolments.
- GRPSA will consider offering separate groups for 4 and 3 year old kindergarten :
 - when the four year old group is 11 or more children and/or
 - when more than 10 eligible three year olds are received

Offer of places

- Applicants who are successful will be sent an acceptance of enrolment with the request to complete the full enrolment form.
- Parents/guardians who do not wish to accept the offer of a place, or intend to withdraw their enrolment, are requested to notify the service or GRPSA
- Note: Places may not be allocated to children until any debt owed to the service by the family is paid, or a payment plan is agreed to between the family and the service (refer to Fees Policy).

Criteria for priority access – for funded kindergarten programs

1. Children who are identified as being at risk or neglect, known to Child First and or Child Protection, indigenous, or children with special needs.
2. Children with second year funding.
3. A family who chose not to accept position in the previous year
4. Families with a child currently or previously enrolled with the service
5. Families who live/work/study in the local government area in which the service is located
6. Order of receipt before designated closing date

Goulburn Region Preschool Association will endeavour to allocate a position to all eligible children.

ATTACHMENT 2

General Enrolment procedures for Long Day Care programs

- Enrolments are accepted at any time
- Link to the Application for enrolment is available on the GRPSA website
- To facilitate the inclusion of all children into the program, enrolment forms should clearly identify any additional or specific needs of the child (refer to Inclusion and Equity policy)
- As soon as a vacancy is available an acceptance email will be sent with a request to complete the full enrolment form.
- Completed enrolment forms are to be forwarded to the person responsible for the enrolment process at the service
- Access to completed enrolment forms will be restricted to the person responsible for the enrolment process, the Approved Provider, Nominated supervisors and educators at the service, unless otherwise specified by the Approved Provider.

Offer of places

- Places will be offered if vacancies are available, as soon as possible after enrolment
- If places are not available the enrolment will be placed on a waiting list and offered in accordance with the criteria of priority access.

Criteria for priority access – for Long Day Care programs

1. Children who are identified as being at risk or neglect, known to Child First or Child Protection, Indigenous or children with special needs.
2. Families who are currently enrolled in the service
3. Order of receipt