

ENROLMENT AND ORIENTATION

FUNDED KINDERGARTEN

QUALITY AREA 6 | ELAA version 1.2



Appletree Hill Pre School Association

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PURPOSE

This policy provides a clear set of guidelines and procedures for:

- enrolling a child at Appletree Hill Preschool
- the orientation of new families and children into Appletree Hill Preschool
- 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 April in the year they will attend kindergarten) are given equitable access to enrolment.
- adhering to the DET's priority of access requirements for both three and four-year-old children



POLICY STATEMENT

VALUES

Appletree Hill Preschool is committed to:

- 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
- maintaining confidentiality in relation to all information provided for enrolment
- 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 full 15 hours of kindergarten program

SCOPE

This policy applies to the approved provider, persons with management or control, nominated supervisor, persons in day-to-day charge, early childhood teachers, educators, staff, students, volunteers, parents/guardians, children and others attending the programs and activities of Appletree Hill Preschool, including during offsite excursions and activities.



RESPONSIBILITIES	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	Contractors, volunteers and students
R indicates legislation requirement, and should not be deleted					
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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15 hours per week for 40 weeks of the year, or • 600 hours per year 	R				
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	R				
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	R				
Following the Priority of Access criteria to funded programs at Appletree Hill Preschool , as described in Department of Education and Training's [DET] <i>The Kindergarten Funding Guide (refer to Attachment 1)</i>	R	√	√		
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): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kindergarten Fee Subsidy <i>(refer to Definitions)</i> • Early Start Kindergarten <i>(refer to Definitions)</i> • Early Start Kindergarten extension grants <i>(refer to Definitions)</i> • Access to Early Learning <i>(refer to Definitions)</i> • Second year of funded four-year-old kindergarten <i>(refer to Definitions)</i> 	R	√	√		
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>	√	√	√		
Providing communication to families explaining how they can only access one funded kindergarten program per child, per year.	R	√			
Receiving written confirmation from families confirming they are attending one funded kindergarten program per child, per year	R	√		√	

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	R	√	√		
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	R	√			
Complying with the <i>Inclusion and Equity Policy</i>	R	R	√	√	√
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	R	R			
Ensuring families have access to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent handbook • <i>Child Safe Environment Policy and/or Statement of Commitment to Child Safety</i> • <i>Fees Policy</i> • Privacy Statement • <i>Code of Conduct Policy</i> 	R	√	√		
Appointing a person to be responsible for the enrolment process and the day-to-day implementation of this policy (<i>refer to Attachment 2 and 3</i>)	R				
Responding to enrolment enquiries on a day-to-day basis and referring people to the person responsible for the enrolment process as required	√	√	√		
[Where applicable] Considering access and inclusion for vulnerable children in the allocation of places at the service (<i>refer to Attachment 1 and 2</i>)	R	√			
Where applicable, providing families with consistent and transparent communication on waitlist management processes (<i>refer to Attachment 2</i>)	R	√			
Complying with the service's <i>Privacy and Confidentiality Policy</i> in relation to the collection and management of a child's enrolment information	R	R	R	√	√
Providing opportunities for interested families to attend the open days 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, including obtaining the AIR Immunisation History Statement (<i>refer to Definitions</i>) and accessing immunisation services	R	√	√		
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	R	√	√		
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	R	√	√		

requirements or whether the child is eligible for the 16-week grace period (<i>refer to Definitions</i>)					
Ensuring that only children whose AIR Immunisation History Statements (<i>refer to Definitions</i>) have been assessed as being acceptable or who are eligible for the grace period (<i>refer to Definitions</i>) have confirmed places in the program	R	√	√		
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>)	R	√	√		
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 (Note: the child can continue to attend the service if acceptable immunisation documentation is not obtained).	R	√	√		
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				√	
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				√	
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>)	R	√	√		
Ensuring all authorised nominees (<i>refer to Definitions</i>) have been completed on the enrolment record (<i>refer to Definitions</i>) (<i>Regulations 160 and 161</i>)	R	√		√	
Ensuring that the enrolment record (<i>refer to Definitions</i>) both digital and/or hard copy complies with the requirements of <i>Regulations 160, 161, 162</i> and that it effectively meets the management requirements of the service	R	√	√		
Ensuring that enrolment record (<i>refer to Definitions</i>) 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).	R	√	√	√	√
Ensuring that enrolment records (<i>refer to Definitions</i>) 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 (<i>Regulation 183 (1a) (2d)</i>)	R	√	√		

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.	R	√	√		
Reviewing the orientation processes for new families and children to ensure the objectives of this policy are met	R	√	√	√	
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>	R	R	√	√	√
Taking reasonable steps to contact non-attending families prior to the cancellation of their enrolment (<i>refer to Attachment 5</i>)	√	√	√		
Reviewing enrolment applications to identify children with additional needs (<i>refer to Definitions</i> and the <i>Inclusion and Equity Policy</i>)	√	√	√		
Encouraging parents/guardians to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 in to 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	√	√	√	√	
Developing strategies to assist new families to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 <i>Enrolment and Orientation Policy</i>	R	R	R	√	√
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					
Notifying Appletree Hill Preschool in writing if they wish to cancel their enrolment.				√	



PROCEDURES

The information contained within the procedure is to be used as a guide and modified according to the services context.

GENERAL 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.
- Refer to *Attachment 2* for the general kindergarten registration and enrolment procedures
- Refer to *Attachment 5* for cancellation of enrolment and non-attendance procedures.

BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION



BACKGROUND

The *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011* require approved services to have a policy and procedures in place in relation to enrolment and orientation (*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 DET'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 DET'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. 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 (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



DEFINITIONS

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy. For regularly used terms e.g. approved provider, nominated supervisor, notifiable complaints, serious incidents, duty of care, etc. refer to the Definitions file of the PolicyWorks catalogue.

Access to Early Learning (AEL): a program for a child who is at least three years old on April 30th in the year of enrolment, providing intensive support to eligible families with multiple and complex needs, assisting them to access universal kindergarten programs.

Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) Immunisation History Statement: The AIR is a national register administered by Medicare that records all vaccinations given in Australia, including to children. In the case of medical contraindication, an authorised medical practitioner completes and

signs a Medical Exemption Form and supplies it to the AIR (previous forms of documentation, for example a letter from a GP or local council, are no longer acceptable).

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/families experiencing vulnerability and/or disadvantage (in relation to this policy): 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 experiencing vulnerability include: a child with a disability; living in a family with a low income, or one which is experiencing problems with housing, domestic violence, substance abuse, or mental health; known to child protection; in statutory out-of-home care; Aboriginal and/or Torres 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)

Children with additional needs: Children whose development or physical condition requires specialist support or children who may need additional support due to language, refugee or asylum seeker experience, complex trauma, cultural or economic circumstances (*refer to Inclusion and Equity Policy*) (*refer to Children/families experiencing vulnerability and/or disadvantage Definition*).

Central Registration and Enrolment Scheme (CRES): CRES provides a single point for families to apply for multiple kindergarten services within a local government area, helping them secure a place that meets their needs and enabling funded kindergartens to work collaboratively with other services to engage vulnerable and disadvantaged families.

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 annual confirmation in April DET considers that this child has not accessed a year of funded kindergarten and is therefore eligible for a DET funded kindergarten place in the following year.

Early Start Kindergarten (ESK): Early Start Kindergarten provides eligible children with 15 hours of free or low-cost kindergarten each week led by a qualified Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) registered teacher. ESK is available to children who are at least three years old by 30 April in the year they are enrolled to attend the program and are:

- from a refugee or asylum seeker background, or
- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, or
- known to child protection.

These children can also access free or low cost year-before-school kindergarten through the ESK Extension Grant regardless of whether they have accessed ESK in the previous year.

Early Start Kindergarten extension grants: provides eligible children with 15 hours of free or low cost kindergarten each week led by a qualified VIT registered teacher. The ESK extension grants are available to children attending kindergarten in the year-before-school and are:

- not eligible for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy
- from a refugee or asylum seeker background, or Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, or
- known to child protection.
- A child is not required to access ESK in the previous year to access the ESK extension grant.

Eligible child: as defined by the Victorian DET Kindergarten Funding Guide:

- a child who is at least four years old on 30 April in the year of attendance; enrolled for at least 15 hours per week or 600 hours per year in a Four-Year-Old Kindergarten; and not enrolled at a funded kindergarten program at another service
- a child who is at least three years old on 30 April in the year of attendance and is enrolled in a funded Three-Year-Old Kindergarten for a minimum of 5 hours per week

- any child that is enrolled in an early childhood and education and care service must have an AIR Immunisation History Statement that indicates that the child is fully vaccinated for their age or who qualifies for the 16-weeks grace period

Enrolment record: the collection of documents which contains information on each child as required under the National Regulations (*Regulations 160, 161, 162*) including but not limited to parent details; emergency contacts; authorised nominee; transportation authorisations, details of any court orders; and health information including immunisation status. Enrolment records are stored securely in the service due to their confidential nature.

Kindergarten registration 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, if applicable.

Kindergarten registration form: The process of families providing initial information about their child to confirm their intention to enrol in kindergarten, administered by the CRES Provider (*refer to Definition*) or by the kindergarten service. This includes collection of basic contact information, kindergarten preferences and any other details that may inform prioritised allocation in kindergarten (*refer to Attachment 3*)

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.

Kindergarten Fee Subsidy (KFS): Promotes kindergarten participation by enabling eligible children in funded three and four-year-old groups to access up to 15 hours of kindergarten delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher free of charge or at low cost.

Local Government Area (LGA): a geographic area governed by a local council or shire

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 DET Kindergarten Funding Guide (*refer to Attachment 1 and Sources*).

Registration: The process of families and carers giving initial information about their child to confirm their intention to enrol in kindergarten, administered by the service provider/EYM/CRES Provider. This includes collection of basic contact information, kindergarten preferences and any other details that may inform prioritised allocation in kindergarten.

School Readiness Funding: funding provided by DET 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.

SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES

SOURCES

- Australian Childhood Immunisation Register: www.servicesaustralia.gov.au
- Australian Government Department of Health, National Immunisation Program Schedule: www.health.gov.au
- Department of Health and Human Services, Immunisation enrolment toolkit for early childhood education and care service: www2.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
- Guide to the National Quality Standard: www.acecqa.gov.au
- Priority of Access Guidelines for child care service: www.dese.gov.au
- The Kindergarten Funding Guide (Victorian Department of Education and Training): www.education.vic.gov.au

Related Policies

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

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*).

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 4: Letter for parents/guardians without acceptable immunisation documentation
- Attachment 5: Cancellation of enrolment and non-attendance

AUTHORISATION

This policy was adopted by the approved provider of Appletree Hill Preschool. March 2023

REVIEW DATE March 2024



ATTACHMENT 1. ELIGIBILITY AND PRIORITY OF ACCESS CRITERIA

FOR A FUNDED KINDERGARTEN THREE OR FOUR-YEAR-OLD KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

The approved provider must notify all families of the priority of access (PoA) 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 Department of Education (DE) criteria listed in the table below
- work with other local kindergarten services and the regional DE office to ensure all eligible children have access to a kindergarten place.

These criteria must be used by the approved provider when prioritising enrolments. 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.

If participating in a central registration and enrolment scheme, the CRES provider will allocate places in accordance with DE's PoA criteria, and other local criteria if applicable

Services must first apply the DE's PoA criteria, and following this may apply locally developed criteria, as per examples below.

All information relating to PoA criteria should be respectfully collected from families upon enrolment, recorded in the child's confidential enrolment record and entered into the Kindergarten Information Management (KIM) system, where applicable.

DE's Priority of Access criteria

High priority children	Criteria and processes for verifying need(s)
Children at risk of abuse or neglect, including children in Out-of-Home Care	<p>The child is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • eligible for ESK or AEL, and/or • family, carer or legal guardian identifies the child as known to Child Protection or in out-of-home care, and/or • referred by one of the following: <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 • out-of-home care provider.
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children	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 KIMS
Asylum seeker and refugee children	<p>Child or family holds a visa or supporting documentation and information, including an ImmiCard, identifying the child and/or parents, carers or legal guardians as a refugee or asylum seeker and/or</p> <p>Referred as a refugee or asylum seeker by a CALD outreach worker.</p>
Children eligible for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy	<p>A child or parent holds a Commonwealth Health Care Card, Pensioner Concession Card, Veteran's Affairs Card, or</p> <p>The child is identified on their birth certificate as one of a set of triplets, quadruplets or more.</p>
Children with additional needs, defined as children who:	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • holds a Child Disability Health Care Card, and/or • has previously been approved for Kindergarten Inclusion Support (KIS) program, and/or •

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • require additional assistance in order to fully participate in • the kindergarten program • require a combination of services which are individually planned • have an identified specific disability or developmental delay 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has been referred by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the National Disability Insurance Scheme • Early Childhood Intervention Services • Preschool Field Officer • Maternal and Child Health nurse, or • is assessed as having delays in 2 or more areas and is declared eligible for a second year of funded Four-Year-Old Kindergarten.
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Examples to consider for second priority

- children who turn four years of age by 30 April in the year they will attend kindergarten; or
- children who turn three 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
- children who have a sibling that has previously attended the same kindergarten as their first preference
- home address falls within the same suburb as the kindergarten
- family lives, works, studies or attends child care in [LGA]

Examples to consider for third priority

- service for transient families e.g. RAAF, seasonal workers and tourism workers
- date of application
- local community zoning
- full fee paying families

Note: DE's PoA guidelines are to ensure that kindergarten programs are available to those children who stand to benefit the most from attending early education. In mixed age groups, PoA guideline will equally prioritise three and four-year-old children that are considered high priority. Where programs for three- and four-year old children are provided separately, the PoA criteria will be applied separately for each age cohort.

* Early Start Kindergarten and Three-Year-Old Kindergarten

During the roll-out of Three-Year-Old Kindergarten, Early Start Kindergarten (ESK) (*refer to Definitions*) 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.

The Kindergarten Funding Guide 2023 states for ESK funding, service providers should:

- provide up to 15 hours in a kindergarten program free of charge and maximise access to 15 hours of kindergarten (children accessing ESK can be enrolled in a 3-year-old group, a 4-year-old group, a mixed age group or a combination of groups in order to access the full 15 hours per week)

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.

ESK is available to children who turn three years of age by 30 April in the year of enrolment and who:

- are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
- are known to Child Protection
-
-
-

-
- have a refugee or asylum seeker background*

*Children/families without a current refugee visa or ImmiCard who have a recent refugee experience may be eligible by exception for Early Start Kindergarten, for more information contact your local Department of Education and office.

Refer to the Department of Education's website for up-to-date information: www.education.vic.gov.au

ATTACHMENT 2. GENERAL KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION AND ENROLMENT PROCEDURES

The information contained within this attachment is to be used as a guide and modified accordingly for kindergarten services that are not part of a CRES

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION PROCESS

Application for a place

- Enrolment applications for in three to four-year-old or four to five-year-old kindergarten require you to go via the Monash Council Website <http://www.monash.vic.gov.au/Services/Children-Family/Kindergartens>.
- if you wish to be considered in the initial series of offers, please submit your application by 30 June in the year prior to attending kindergarten
- Children must turn three or four years old on or before 30 April in the year they attend preschool for the respective group. Note: a three-year-old child cannot start at preschool until their 3rd birthday
- A separate application form must be completed for each child, and parents may indicate via Monash council enrolment portal if the enrolment is for only one year or both 3 and 4- year- old preschool.
- 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).
- You will be asked to provide three documents to verify your information. The three documents must include: * Proof of address (for example, a driver's licence, utility bill, rates notice etc.) * Proof of date of birth (for example, a birth certificate, passport or immunisation certificate) * Immunisation status (a current immunisation Statement from Medicare website)
- Children assessed by the DET specialist children's services team as having additional developmental needs may access a second year of funded preschool. Strict eligibility criteria apply to the second year of funded preschool. (Refer to the DET preschool funding criteria)
- In consultation with teachers and parents, the Administration Officer can inform the PSO names of children requiring a seconded year of funded kindergarten and children who are delaying to the following year
- Details of all information on application forms will be sent to the Enrolment Officer by the council's PSO in form of current and future waitlists. Access to completed enrolment application forms will be restricted to the Administration Officer, the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor and educators at the service, unless otherwise specified by the Approved Provider
- Applications will be entered on the waiting list using the eligibility and priority of access criteria

Closing date for enrolment applications

- Preschool applications must be received at the council's Central Register by the closing date of 30th June prior to the year the child has been registered to attend, to be considered in the first round offers

Procedure for a late application for enrolment

- Registrations received after that 30th June in the year prior to attendance will be processed for inclusion after first round offers have been dealt with in July/August.

Allocation within Service

- Once the first series of offers have been made by Monash Council, subsequent offers will be made until the preschool is full. If a child on the preschools waitlist misses out on a place, the council's PSO will then assist in finding a place in their additional preference or suggest other alternatives if available

Offer of places

- Places will be offered in accordance with the timetable jointly agreed by Monash preschools through the Central Enrolment Scheme.
- Offer of places in the three to four-year-old and the funded four to five-year-old kindergarten program will be handled by the Monash Council in line with the council's timetable.
- Places will be offered using the applications for enrolment received by 30 June in the year prior to attendance and allocated to eligible children who are on the waiting list.
- Places will be allocated to applicants in accordance with the eligibility and priority of access criteria of the service, noting that residents must be given preference.
- Parents/guardians who do not wish to accept the offer of a place or intend to withdraw their enrolment are requested to notify the council as soon as possible.
- Depending on the number of acceptances and available places from the initial round of offers, the council will then make additional offers. This will be a continuous process until all places are filled at the service.
- Council will notify the centre of all accepted offers and these families will be issued with a letter of offer via email from the centre. Families will be required to return this document, proof of deposit payment, birth certificate, Australian Childhood Immunisation Record, fees agreement and if applicable government concession card.
- An invoice will be emailed prior to the AGM
- Places at the preschool will not be held unless the term fees are paid in full by the due date on the invoice. This applies when a child is unable to attend for the part or entire term due to holidays, work, prolonged sickness, withdrawing from the program part way through a term. This also applies to a place being held for a child who is unable to commence until the child turns three years of old (provided the child turns three years old before 30 April in the year they commence). This is inclusive of Term 1, 2 or 3.
- Note: Places will not be allocated to children until any substantial 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).
- **No Jab, No Play**
- Tentative places will be offered in writing to applicants in accordance with the eligibility and priority of access criteria of the service making clear that confirmation of places is not final until immunisation documentation has been received, assessed and found acceptable.
- The documentation is assessed as outlined in the Immunisation enrolment toolkit for early childhood education and care services by the person responsible for the enrolment process on behalf of the Approved Provider. The Key Dates work form in the Immunisation enrolment toolkit for early childhood education and care services is used to determine the date at which immunisations must be up to date. The toolkit also provides guidance on assessing immunisation documentation to determine if a child is up to date or qualifies for an exemption. The following documents and resources can be accessed from <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au>:
- The Immunisation enrolment toolkit for early childhood education and care services (search 'Immunisation enrolment toolkit')
- The Key Dates work form (search 'Key Dates work form')
- Hard copies of the immunisation resources (search 'immunisation resources order form')
- The acceptable outcomes of the assessment for offering a confirmed place are:
- That the next due vaccine for the child on the ACIR Immunisation History Statement or the Immunisation Status certificate is within the acceptable timeframe for an enrolment, or;
- That the child is on a recognised catch-up schedule if they have fallen behind with their vaccinations, or;
- That the child has a medical reason not to be vaccinated, or,
- That the child has been assessed by Appletree Hill Preschool as being eligible for a 16 week grace period
- Parents/guardians who do not have acceptable immunisation documentation cannot be offered a place and are referred to Australian Childhood Immunisation Register (refer to Appendix 4 – Letter for parents/guardians who do not have acceptable immunisation documentation
- **Eligibility and priority of access criteria for the funded three to four-year-old and funded four to five-year-old kindergarten program**

- In allocating places for children who have received funding for a second year of four to five-year-old, delayed children and new enrolments, the eligibility and priority of access criteria in order of priority is as follows:
 - Children who are repeating are offered a place first (regardless whether residents, ratepayers or non- residents)
 - B. Available places will first be allocated to children of Monash residents or ratepayers (who apply by 30 June). In allocating places of children of Monash residents and ratepayers, the PSO will allocate places on the basis of:
 - Children who are in the “High priority” categories
 - Children at risk of abuse or neglect and children in Out of Home Care
 - Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children
 - Asylum seeker and refugee children * Children eligible for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy
 - Children with additional needs, defined as children:
 - who require additional assistance in order to fully participate in the kindergarten program
 - who require a combination of services which are individually planned
 - Who have an identified specific disability or developmental delay
 - 2. Attended the preschool’s 3-4-year-old program (for 4-5-year-old places)
 - 3. Prior attendance of sibling at the preschool within the last 3 years
 - 4. Proximity to kinder
 - C. Places will only be offered to children of non-Monash residents after all children of Monash residents and ratepayers (who apply by 30 June) have received a formal offer and had the opportunity to respond.
 - The number of places offered to non-Monash residents will be determined by the overall number of places available and the number of Monash residents and ratepayers who accept a place.
 - In allocating places of children of non-Monash residents and ratepayers, the preschool will allocate places on the basis of:
 - Children who are in the “High priority” categories
 - Children at risk of abuse or neglect and children in Out of Home Care
 - Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children
 - Asylum seeker and refugee children
 - Children eligible for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy
 - Children with additional needs, defined as children:
 - who require additional assistance in order to fully participate in the kindergarten program
 - who require a combination of services which are individually planned.
 - Who have an identified specific disability or developmental delay
- Attended the preschool’s 3-4-year-old program (for 4-5-year-old places)
- Prior attendance of sibling at the preschool within the last 3 years
- Proximity to kinder

NOTE: Attendance by a non-resident child at the preschool’s 3-4-year-old program, does not guarantee a place in the preschool’s 4-5 year old program, as Monash Council stipulate residents must be given priority.

Registration

The quickest way to complete a registration form is online at Website <http://www.monash.vic.gov.au/Services/Children-Family/Kindergartens>.

Kindergarten’s can direct families to register through Monash Council and assist them to complete the registration.

To fill out the registration form, families will need to provide information about themselves and their child. At this stage they do need to attach any supporting documentation. They will need a credit card (to pay the registration fee). The fee can also be paid in person at Monash Council office. This fee is waived for all families and carers eligible for Priority of Access allocation.

The registration form asks families for:

- Basic information about the child including name, date of birth, language spoken at home, previous kindergarten attendance and immunisation status.
- Details of any additional support the child might require due to a disability including intellectual, sensory or physical impairment.

- Contact details for the family or carer and any additional adults that should be kept informed throughout the process (e.g. another family member, a case worker or other support service staff member the family or carer trusts).
- Whether the child is identified as fulfilling any of the following criteria:
 - Is Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
 - Is from a multiple birth (triplet or greater)
 - Is known to Child Protection
 - Is in Out-Of-Home Care
 - Holds, or has a family member who holds, a Commonwealth Health Care Card, Commonwealth Pensioner Concession Card, Department of Veteran's Affairs Gold Card or White Card, or a Refugee or Asylum Seeker Visa.

- Proof of identity: the child's birth certificate, birth notice or passport
- Proof of residence: a utility bill, rental agreement or rates notice with family name and address (this must be the main residence of the child).
- Subsidy card and immigration visas (where applicable).
- Documents from Family Support Services or a MCH nurse confirming high support needs and/or disability, or letter from a doctor for complex medical needs (where applicable).
- Other proof required to verify the child meets local criteria.
- Credit card (to pay the registration fee). The fee can also be paid in person at their nearest council office. This fee is waived for all families and carers eligible for ESK/KFS/priority allocation.

Enrolment

Once a kindergarten place has been accepted, the enrolment process can begin.

To enrol a child, families will need to provide copies of (if not already done so):

- Proof of identity: child's birth certificate, birth notice or passport
- Proof of residence: a utilities bill, rental agreement or rates notice with your family name and address (this must be the main residence of your child).
- Concession cards and immigration visas (where applicable).
- Documents from Family Support Services or a Maternal and Child Health nurse confirming high support needs and/or disability or letter from a doctor for complex medical needs (where applicable).
- Immunisation History Statement (unless experiencing vulnerability or disadvantage, at which point they can take advantage of a 16-week 'grace period'. More information is available at <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/immunisation/vaccination-children/no-jab-no-play/immunisation-enrolment-toolkit>)
- Documents detailing any medical conditions or requirements the child has.

Kindergartens may also require additional documentation. The kindergarten should ensure that information regarding any additional documentation is easily accessible for families, carers and support services.

Note: Places will not be allocated to children until any outstanding fees 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*).

Enrolment Records

Enrolment records (*refer to Definitions*) form part of the enrolment procedure and are completed by families after they have been allocated a place, and before commencing attendance.

Cancellations

Families to notify Appletree Hill Preschool in writing of their intention to leave the service. If the service is not informed, fees will continue to be generated for that place.

Second Year Registration

- Families of children who have been determined as eligible for a second year must complete and submit a kindergarten registration form for a second year, signed and dated by the early childhood teacher.
- It will be weighted with the relevant points and allocated accordingly.
- A Declaration of Eligibility Form for a second year of kindergarten must be completed and submitted to the relevant funding authority.

Children Younger than the Eligible Preschool Age

- If a child is aged less than four by April 30 in the year they are to attend Kindergarten, the family must request early school entry approval in writing for their child to attend school in the following year. Requests should be made to the officer in charge, usually a director of the relevant government education authority region, or the non-government school that the child will be attending.
- Should the child not attend school the following year, the child will not be eligible for another year of funded preschool, as identified in the relevant funding criteria.

Children Older than the Eligible Preschool Age

- Some children may turn six years of age during their preschool year. This is usually relevant in the case of children who have been identified as requiring a second year of preschool.
- Children who will turn six during the preschool year must apply for an exemption from school from the relevant Regional Director of the education department.
- Families must complete an 'Exemption from School due to attendance in kindergarten program' form before the child starts kindergarten and submit it to relevant regional office of the education department authority. The form is available on the website or by contacting the Regional Office.
- The kindergarten service must sight the approved exemption letter from relevant education authority and note that it has been sighted on the child's enrolment record. Data on the number of children attending Kindergarten who are six years plus, and confirmation that the exemption was sighted for each child, must be provided as part of funding data collection process.

Withdrawal

Some children who have commenced Kindergarten may benefit from withdrawing from the program, in order to access Kindergarten in the following year.

- A withdrawal can occur without any impact on government funding for that child's place the following year, only if it is implemented **before** the first funding data collection that occurs in, or around April each year.
- If a withdrawal occurs later in the year, the government funding will not be available in the next year.
- When a withdrawal occurs, a fee adjustment will be made of either correct invoicing or fee reimbursement.

Adapted from the Kindergarten Funding Guide, 2016

* If the kindergarten believes a family will need extra support completing a registration form or are likely to miss the first round registration date, refer them to the [CRES Provider] with the attached referral form. [CRES Provider] will follow up with this family or carer to offer support in getting their children into kindergarten.

ATTACHMENT 4. LETTER FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS WITHOUT ACCEPTABLE IMMUNISATION DOCUMENTATION

Appletree Hill Preschool

[Address]

[Insert date]

Dear [insert name]

Re: Enrolment at Appletree Hill Preschool for [insert year]

I am contacting you regarding your tentative place for [insert child's name] at Appletree Hill Preschool in the [insert 3 year old or 4 year old program] in [insert year].

Under the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* early childhood education and care services cannot enrol a child unless the parent/guardian has provided AIR Immunisation History Statement.

AIR Immunisation History Statement includes evidence of immunisations and is used to assess whether your child is fully vaccinated for their age.

As we have not received acceptable immunisation documentation for [insert name of child] by the due date, and your child is not eligible for the 16 week grace period, we are unable to confirm a place at our service for [insert year] 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
- [insert details of local government immunisation service]
- National Immunisation Information Line Tel. 1800 671 811
- Australian Immunisation Register: www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/medicare/australian-immunisation-register
- Better Health Channel website: www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/campaigns/no-jab-no-play

Should you wish to re-apply for a place for [insert child's name], we are happy to accept a new enrolment application accompanied by an AIR Immunisation History Statement. The new application would be considered in line with Appletree Hill Preschool's *Enrolment and Orientation policy*.

Yours sincerely

[Insert name]

[Insert title]

Appletree Hill Preschool

Immunisation history statement

As at: 01 June 2019
For: ARMANDO D BOWERS
Date of birth: 01 Nov 2017
Immunisation status: up to date

Schedule	Immunisation	Date given	Brand name given	Provider type
Birth	Hepatitis B	01 Nov 2017	Engerix-B	Hospital
2 months	Diphtheria Tetanus Pertussis Hepatitis B Polio Hib Pneumococcal Rotavirus	01 Jan 2018	Infanrix Hexa Prevenar 13 RotaTeq	GP
4 months	Diphtheria Tetanus Pertussis Hepatitis B Polio Hib Pneumococcal Rotavirus	01 Mar 2018	Infanrix Hexa Prevenar 13 RotaTeq	GP
6 months	Diphtheria Tetanus Pertussis Hepatitis B Polio Hib Pneumococcal Rotavirus	01 May 2018	Infanrix Hexa Prevenar 13 RotaTeq	GP
12 months	Measles Mumps Rubella Meningococcal C Hib	01 Nov 2018	MMR II Menitorix	GP
18 months	Measles Mumps Rubella Varicella	01 May 2019	Priorix-Tetra	GP

Next immunisation/s due
 Diphtheria Tetanus Pertussis Poliomyelitis

Date due
 01 Nov 2020

FOR FUNDED KINDERGARTEN

Cancellation of Enrolment

Families MUST notify Appletree Hill Preschool and/or an Enrolment Officer in writing of their intention to cancel their child's enrolment. Fees will continue to be generated for that place until the Appletree Hill Preschool is notified.

Note: This process does not apply to vulnerable children (*refer to Definitions*). Children and families that are experiencing vulnerability are to be supported according to their individual needs. Where children/families are linked to Child Protection and not attending; early childhood teacher or educator will need to inform their Case Officer.

Non-attendance

- Term One
Families that have accepted a placement and have not completed an enrolment form and not attended the service within the first 3 weeks of Term One will be contacted and informed their placement has been cancelled.

- Families Traveling Overseas
Families are required to notify Appletree Hill Preschool prior to extended periods of travel, and ensure any applicable fees are paid if they wish to return to the service.

- Non-contactable Families
 - After two/three weeks of a child not attending the service, early childhood teacher or educator to call the family. If there is no response, educator to log this attempt and place in the child's file.
 - After second week of the child not attending and the family has made no attempts to contact the service, early childhood teacher or educator to contact the family via phone/text and/or email. If there is no response, Educator to log this attempt and place in the child's file.
 - After third week of non-attendance, early childhood teacher or educator to inform nominated supervisor and cross check families contact details.

- Nominated supervisor or approved provider to email family, ensuring a response date is documented in the email.
- If the family have made no attempt to communicate with the service before the response date, post a final attempt letter, ensuring a response date is documented in the letter.
- If the family has not responded to the final attempt letter before the response date, their placement will be cancelled.



Appletree Hill Pre School Association

37 Shepherd Road Glen Waverley 3150. Ph: 9560 2940 ABN: 24 765 831 120
Email: appletree.hill.kin@kindergarten.vic.gov.au

Date Received by Preschool:	/ /
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WITHDRAWAL OF ENROLMENT

Year of Attendance:	
3 Year Old Program :	
4 Year Old Program :	Red Group Yellow Group Blue Group Green Group Purple Group
Surname of Child:	
Given Names Of Child:	
Gender:	Male Female
Date Of Birth	/ / /
Home Address of Child:	
Mother/Father /Guardian:	Given Name:
	Surname:
	Mobile Ph:

Final Date of Attendance:	/ / /
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Reason for Withdrawal (optional)

Please accept the withdrawal of my child's enrolment from Appletree Hill Preschool.
I understand that once the Preschool has received this form, my child's position will be offered to the next child on the waiting list, with that child starting after my child's "Final Date of Attendance".

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Printed Name of Parent/Guardian

Date