

ENROLMENT AND ORIENTATION POLICY

Mandatory – Quality Area 6

PURPOSE

This policy outlines:

- the process to be followed when enrolling a child at St. Paul's Anglican Kindergarten
- procedures for the orientation of new families and children into St. Paul's Anglican Kindergarten

POLICY STATEMENT

1. VALUES

St. Paul's Anglican Kindergarten is committed to:

- complying with the Boroondara Kindergarten Central Enrolment Scheme (BKCES)
- maintaining confidentiality in relation to all information provided for enrolment
- ensuring all families are welcomed and receive an effective orientation into the service.

2. SCOPE

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

3. DEFINITIONS

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

Acceptable immunisation documentation: documentation as defined by the *Immunisation Enrolment Toolkit for early childhood education and care services* as acceptable evidence that a child is fully vaccinated for their age, or is on a recognised catch-up schedule if their child has fallen behind their vaccinations; or has a medical reason not to be vaccinated; or has been assessed as being eligible for a 16 week grace period.

Approved care: Care given by a service provider that has been approved by the Family Assistance Office to receive Child Care Benefit payments on behalf of eligible families. Most long day care, family day care, before-and-after school care, vacation care, some occasional care and some in-home care childcare services are approved providers. Details are available at:

www.familyassist.gov.au/payments/family-assistance-payments/child-care-benefit/

Approved Provider: St. Paul's Anglican Kindergarten

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.

BKCES: Is the Boroondara Kindergarten Central Enrolment Scheme. St. Paul's Anglican Kindergarten is a member of the Scheme and operates under the BKCES Enrolment policy as published by BKCES. This policy is available at:

<https://www.boroondara.vic.gov.au/community-support/children-and-families/kindergarten>

Enrolment application fee: A payment to BKCES to cover administrative costs associated with the processing of a child's enrolment for a place in a program at any member service of the BKCES.

Online Enrolment form: An online system owned by the Service that collects contact details, personal and medical information from parents/guardians about their child. The information on this form is part of the child's enrolment record (see below) and is kept confidential by the service.

Enrolment record: The collection of documents which contains information on each child as required under the National Regulations (Regulations 160, 161, 162) including the enrolment form; details of any court orders; and immunisation documentation as specified in the *Immunisation Enrolment Toolkit for early childhood education and care services*. This information is kept confidential by the service.

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

Nominated Supervisor: Responsible for the day to day management of the Service.

Regulatory Authority: Department of Education and Training.

Scheme: Boroondara Kindergarten Central Enrolment Scheme

Service: St. Paul's Anglican Kindergarten

4. SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES

Sources

Boroondara Kindergarten Central Enrolment Scheme Enrolment Policy 2017

- Australian Childhood Immunisation Register:
www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/medicare/australian-childhood-immunisation-register
- Child Care Benefit (Eligibility of Child Care Services for Approval and Continued Approval) Determination 2000: www.legislation.gov.au/Series/F2006B01541
- *Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*: www.acecqa.gov.au/
- *Guide to the National Quality Standard*: www.acecqa.gov.au/
- *Priority for allocating places in child care services*: <http://education.gov.au/priority-allocating-places>
- *The Kindergarten Guide (Department of Education and Training)*:
www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/funding/Pages/kinderfundingcriteria.aspx
- *Immunisation enrolment toolkit for early childhood education and care services 2015*:
www2.health.vic.gov.au/about/publications/policiesandguidelines/immunisation-enrolment-toolkit
- Victorian Department of Health: www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation

Service policies

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

PROCESS

Parents may review the BKCES Information Kit and are welcome to visit the kindergarten by appointment.

Applications are submitted by the family direct to BKCES along with a fee and places are offered to families by them in accordance with their policies. Once offers have been accepted by the family, BKCES will forward contact details to the Service to finalise enrolment. The Service will then make contact with the family and send information including a link to the online enrolment system and

information relating to fees associated with the online enrolment process that will be required to confirm their child's place at the Service.

Failure by the family to pay fees and submit satisfactory enrolment information (including immunisation documentation) by the required timeframe, will lead to BKCES being notified and the place being offered to the next child on the waitlist.

PROCEDURES

The Approved Provider is responsible for:

Boroondara Kindergarten Central Enrolment Scheme Enrolment Policy 2017

- Complying with the general enrolment process of the BKCES
- Developing procedures that ensure all eligible families are aware of and are able to access, an early childhood program, and considering any barriers to access that may exist
- complying with the *Inclusion and Equity Policy*
- appointing a person to be responsible for the enrolment process and the day-to-day implementation of this policy
- providing opportunities (in consultation with the Nominated Supervisor and educators) for interested families to attend the service during operational hours to observe the program and become familiar with the service prior to their child commencing in the program
- providing parents/guardians with information about the requirements of the law for enrolment, locating and accessing immunisation services and obtaining acceptable immunisation documentation required for enrolment
- ensuring parents/guardians are only offered a tentative place until the child's immunisation documentation is assessed as being acceptable
- assessing the child's immunisation documentation **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
- ensuring that only children who have acceptable immunisation documentation have a confirmed place in the program
- advising parents/guardians who do not have acceptable immunisation documentation that their children are not able to attend the service and referring them to immunisation services
- taking reasonable steps to obtain acceptable immunisation documentation from a parent/guardian of a child enrolled under a grace period within the 16 weeks from when the child begins attending (Note: the child cannot continue to attend the service if acceptable immunisation documentation is not obtained).
- If no acceptable immunisation documentation is provided to the service, the child will be unable to attend. The service will advise BKCES and the vacated spot will be offered to another family in line with the BKCES enrolment scheme policy.
- ensuring that the enrolment form (refer to *Definitions*) complies with the requirements of Regulations 160, 161, 162 and that it effectively meets the management requirements of the service
- ensuring that enrolment records (refer to *Definitions*) are stored in a safe and secure place, and kept for three years after the last date on which the child was educated and cared for by the service (Regulation 183)
- ensuring that the orientation program and plans meet the individual needs of children and families, and comply with DET funding criteria
- reviewing the orientation processes for new families and children to ensure the objectives of this policy are met
- ensuring that parents/guardians of a child attending the service can enter the service premises at any time that the child is being educated and cared for, except where this may pose a risk to the safety of children or staff, or conflict with any duty of the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor or educators under the Law (Regulation 157)

The person (Enrolment Officer Committee member) responsible for the enrolment process is accountable for the following:

- Communicating with Boroondara Council in relation to BKCES
- Acting as a conduit of information between BKCES and the service and as a point of contact for BKCES staff.
- Attending quarterly BKCES Advisory Group meetings. This includes sharing, with notice, the agenda for the meetings to the Vice President(s), Treasurer and Nominated Supervisor of the Service and raising items on behalf of the service and committee at the subsequent BKCES meeting and; providing a verbal report of the BKCES Advisory Group meetings at the next Committee meeting and/or sharing resources and time critical information as necessary prior to the Committee meeting and; circulating minutes of the BKCES Advisory Meetings to Committee and Providing timely reports to the approved provider regarding the status of enrolments
- Ensuring key roles within the Service, Committee (Treasurer, Secretary) and the Service's book keeper are provided with up to date enrolments lists and that they only contain as much private information as necessary for their roles
- Complying with the Privacy and Confidentiality Policy of the service.

The Nominated Supervisor and early childhood teachers are responsible for:

- reviewing enrolment applications to identify children with additional needs (refer to *Definitions* and the *Inclusion and Equity Policy*)
- responding to parent/guardian enquiries regarding their child's readiness for the program that they are considering enrolling their child in
- discussing the individual child's needs with parents/guardians and developing an orientation program to assist them to settle into the program
- encouraging parents/guardians to:
 - stay with their child as long as required during the settling in period
 - make contact with educators and carers at the service, when required
- assisting parents/guardians to develop and maintain a routine for saying goodbye to their child
- sharing information with parents/guardians regarding their child's progress with regard to settling in to the service
- discussing support services for children with parents/guardians, where required.

All educators are responsible for:

- responding to enrolment enquiries on a day-to-day basis and referring people to the person responsible for the enrolment process, as required
- providing parents/guardians with information about the requirements of the law for enrolment, locating and accessing immunisation services and obtaining acceptable immunisation documentation required for enrolment
- developing strategies to assist new families to:
 - feel welcomed into the 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
- providing comfort and reassurance to children who are showing signs of distress when separating from family members
- complying with the service's *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy* in relation to the collection and management of a child's enrolment information.

Parents/guardians are responsible for:

- reading and complying with this *Enrolment and Orientation Policy*
- completing the enrolment application form and the enrolment form prior to their child's commencement at the service and providing acceptable immunisation documentation of their child's immunisation status and paying all fees required to confirm enrolment in a timely manner in line with the Fees Policy)
- where a child is on an immunisation catch-up schedule, ensuring that the child's immunisations are updated in line with the schedule and providing acceptable immunisation documentation to the service
- ensuring that all other 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.

AUTHORISATION

This policy was adopted by the Approved Provider of St. Paul's Anglican Kindergarten on 19 September 2017.

REVIEW DATE: 19 SEPTEMBER 2018

ATTACHMENT 1

Letter for parents/guardians without acceptable immunisation documentation

[Service Name]

[Address]

[Insert date]

Dear [insert name]

Re: Enrolment at [Service Name] for [insert year]

I am contacting you regarding your tentative place for [insert child's name] at [Service Name] 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 acceptable immunisation documentation.

Acceptable immunisation documentation includes evidence that your child:

- is fully vaccinated for their age
- is on a recognised catch-up schedule
- has a medical reason not to be vaccinated
- has been assessed by our service as being eligible for a 16 week grace period.

As we have not received acceptable immunisation documentation for [insert name of child] by the due date, 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 Childhood Immunisation Register Tel 1800 653 809
- Better Health Channel website: <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/no-jab-no-play>

Should you wish to re-apply for a place for [insert child's name], we are happy to accept a new enrolment application accompanied by acceptable immunisation documentation. The new application would be considered in line with [Service Name]'s Enrolment and Orientation policy.

Yours sincerely

[Insert name]

[Insert title]

[Service Name]