

Enrolment and Orientation Policy

Policy Details

Classification	Mandatory
Quality area/s	6 – Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
Policy owner	President president@raleighst.org
Date of approval/most recent review	Oct 2024
Date of next review	Oct 2025



PURPOSE

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

- enrolling a child at Raleigh St Community Children's Centre Services (Raleigh St)
- the orientation of new families and children into Raleigh St
- ensuring compliance with Victorian and national legislation, including disability discrimination, anti-discrimination, human rights laws, No Jab No Play, Family Assistance Law and Department of Education [DE] Kindergarten Funding Guide.
- ensuring access to participation, especially for vulnerable and disadvantaged children
- ensuring early entry applicants for kindergarten programs (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 DE's priority of access requirements for both three and four-year-old children



POLICY STATEMENT

VALUES

Raleigh St offers an Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) program for children aged from 4 months to 3 years old, and an integrated kindergarten program (*refer to Definitions*) for children aged 3-5 years old. From January 2025 Raleigh St will offer a limited number of sessional kinder places (*refer to Definitions*) where capacity permits.

Children that are attending a funded kindergarten program at another facility may be able to attend Raleigh St's ECEC program for additional days only if there are vacancies available after all children enrolled in funded kindergarten at Raleigh St have been placed.

Children that are attending the sessional kinder program at Raleigh St will not have access to additional days of ECEC unless they change their enrolment type to integrated kinder.

Raleigh St is committed to:

- engaging collaboratively and respectfully with families during enrolment and orientation to learn about their expertise, culture, values and beliefs and priorities for their child’s learning and wellbeing
- being flexible where possible and catering for unique family circumstances and needs
- ensuring families are assisted through the enrolment process where required
- meeting the needs of the local community
- supporting families to meet the requirements for enrolment through the provision of information and communication
- being transparent in the process and allocation of places through consistent communication and information sharing
- maintaining confidentiality in relation to all information gathered for enrolment
- ensuring families who may experience barriers to accessing kindergarten are proactively engaged
- promoting fair and equitable access to kindergarten programs whilst keeping the service viable
- enrolling Early Start Kindergarten (*refer to Definitions*) eligible children into the full 15 hours of a kindergarten program

SCOPE

This policy applies to the Committee of Management (CoM), persons with management or control, Director, persons in day-to-day charge, early childhood teachers, educators, staff, students, volunteers, families, children and others attending the programs and activities of Raleigh St.

RESPONSIBILITIES	CoM (approved provider)	Director and persons in day-to-day charge	Early childhood teacher, educators and all other staff	Families	Contractors, volunteers and students
R indicates legislation requirement, and should not be deleted					
Ensuring that obligations under the <i>Education and Care Services National Regulations</i> and <i>Education and Care Services National Law</i> are met	R	✓			
Ensuring that the <i>Enrolment and Orientation Policy</i> is readily accessible to nominated supervisors, educators, staff, volunteers and families, and available for inspection (<i>Regulation 171</i>)	R	✓			
Ensuring that the <i>Enrolment and Orientation Policy</i> and procedures are followed (<i>Regulation 170</i>)	R	✓	✓		✓
Ensuring not to exceed the maximum number of children whom the service is licensed to provide care for.	R	✓			
Enrolling children as per the <i>Family Assistance Law</i> for all children who attend Raleigh St	R	✓			
Ensuring all enrolled children are six years of age and under. Children aged six years old will require an exemption from school form from the Department of Education	R	✓			

Communicating to families the days and times the service will operate, planned closures (including public holidays) service philosophy and governance.	R	✓			
Providing families easy-to-read information about how the service operates and what the service will provide (including information about inclusion and learning)	✓	✓	✓		
Ensuring families have access to and are aware of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Family handbook</i> • <i>Statement of philosophy</i> • <i>Child Safe Environment and Wellbeing Policy</i> and <i>Statement of Commitment to Child Safety</i> • <i>Fees Policy</i> • <i>Privacy and Confidentiality Policy</i> • <i>Family Code of Conduct Policy</i> • <i>Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations Policy</i> • <i>Dealing With Medical Conditions Policy</i> • <i>Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy</i> • <i>Delivery and Collection of Children Policy</i> 	R	✓	✓		
Developing strategies on how to communicate with families with varying literacy skills, or where English is not a first language	✓	✓	✓		
Complying with the <i>Inclusion and Equity Policy</i>	R	R	✓	✓	✓
Appointing a person to be responsible for the enrolment process and the day-to-day implementation of this policy (<i>refer to Attachment 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	✓	✓	✓		
Providing families with consistent and transparent communication on waitlist management processes (<i>refer to Attachment 3</i>)	R	✓			
Informing families that children who haven't attended a session of care in 26 consecutive weeks will no longer be eligible for Child Care Subsidy.	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 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 CoM, Director, early childhood teachers or educators under the <i>National Law: Section 167</i>	R	✓	✓		
Seeking information from families about any specific health care need, allergy or medical condition, including whether a medical practitioner has been consulted in relation to a specific health care need, allergy or relevant medical condition	R	✓	✓	✓	

Ensuring that a medical management plan has been provided and that the risk minimisation and communication plan has been developed and both documents are kept in the child's enrolment records	R	✓	✓	✓	
Providing any required authorisations, such as for the approved provider, nominated supervisor or an educator to seek medical treatment for the child from a registered medical practitioner, hospital or ambulance service and, if required, transportation by an ambulance service				✓	
Informing families if they are receiving Child Care Subsidy, they must update Centrelink on any changes to their income, activity and other circumstances via their Centrelink online account	R	✓			
Gathering information from families to support continuity of care between home and the service	✓	✓	✓		
Providing families 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 families 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 support period, at which point their place can be confirmed (<i>refer to Attachment 1</i>)	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 requirements or whether the child is eligible for the 16-week support period (<i>refer to Definitions</i>)	R	✓	✓		
Advising families who do not have an AIR Immunisation History Statement (<i>refer to Definitions</i>) and who are not eligible for the support period that their children are not able to attend the service and referring them to immunisation services (<i>refer to Attachment 5</i>)	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 (<i>refer to Attachment 1</i>)				✓	
Where a child is eligible for the 16 weeks support 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 families after enrolment, twice per calendar year, timing reminders to comply with the maximum seven-month interval (<i>Public Health and Wellbeing Regulation 107, Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 Section 143E</i>)	R	✓	✓		

Once payment has been made to secure the placement, providing families a confirmation letter stating the starting date, days and hours (<i>refer to Attachment 1</i>)	R	✓			
Once an enrolment record (<i>refer to Definitions</i>) has been completed for a child, review the enrolment record to ensure that no section/question has been left blank.	R	✓			
Ensuring all authorised nominees (<i>refer to Definitions</i>) have been completed on enrolment record for each child (<i>refer to Definitions</i>) (<i>Regulations 160 and 161</i>) as well as authorisations from families relating to medical treatment, regular outings, health information and transportation	R	✓		✓	
Ensuring that the enrolment record for each child (<i>refer to Definitions</i>) both digital and/or hard copy complies with the requirements of <i>Regulations 160, 161, 162</i> (<i>refer to Attachment 2</i>) and that it effectively meets the management requirements of the service	R	✓	✓		
Ensuring that enrolment record for each child (<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 for each child (<i>refer to Definitions</i>) are kept confidential (<i>Regulations 181, 182</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 families and developing an orientation program to assist them to settle into the service, taking into consideration barriers families may have in disclosing sensitive information including communication and information barriers and the development of trusting relationships.	R	✓	✓		
Reviewing enrolment applications to identify children with additional needs (<i>refer to Definitions</i> and the <i>Inclusion and Equity Policy</i>)	R	✓	✓		
Accessing the Inclusion Support Program (<i>refer to Sources</i>) when applicable	R	✓			
Review enrolment to see if the family qualifies for CCS preschool exemption	✓	✓			
Ensuring that the orientation program meet the individual needs of children and families	✓	✓	✓		
Communicating with families when their child will be eligible for a funded year of kindergarten	✓	✓	✓		
Supporting families to make an informed decision on when is the best time for their child to start kindergarten	✓	✓	✓		

Reviewing the orientation processes for new families and children to ensure the objectives of this policy are met	R	✓	✓	✓	
Ensuring that families 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 CoM, nominated supervisor, early childhood teachers or educators under the <i>National Law: Section 167</i>	R	R	✓	✓	✓
Encouraging families during orientation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> stay with their child as long as required during the settling in period contact educators at the service, when required 	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Assisting families to develop and maintain a routine for saying goodbye to their child	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Sharing information with families concerning their child's progress regarding settling into the service	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Discussing with families support services for children, 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	R	✓
Notifying Raleigh St in writing if they wish to cancel their enrolment, giving at least four weeks' notice.				✓	
KINDERGARTEN SPECIFIC					
Offering a kindergarten program to children who turn four years of age by 30 April in the year they will be attending, delivered by a qualified Early Childhood Teacher, with the full \$2,050 payment from the Victorian Dept of Education directly offset from fees, and offering at least 15 hours of kindergarten per week for 40 weeks of the year	R				
Offering a 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 between 5 to 15 hours a week with the pro-rated \$2,050 payment from the Victorian Dept of Education directly offset from fees, according to the number of hours of enrolment in the program	R				

Providing communication to families explaining their access to one year of three-year-old and one of four-year-old funded kindergarten program	R	✓			
Ensuring families sign DE's one funded kindergarten place form in Term 4 and confirm in Term 1. Service providers must use the form provided on the department's template and must not adapt the content into service's own templates.	R	✓			
Applying the Priority of Access criteria to funded kindergarten programs (both sessional and integrated enrolment types) and ECEC programs at Raleigh St, as described in the Department of Education's [DE] <i>The Kindergarten Funding Guide</i> , and Raleigh St's priorities of allocation as outlined in <i>Attachment 2</i>	R	✓	✓		
Ensuring the following is displayed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the current Kindergarten Program Certificate information promoting ESK information promoting the KFS in services not participating in Free Kinder operating times and name(s) of the qualified teachers delivering the program	R	✓			
Communicating to parents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> fees waiting lists access and inclusion policies availability of ESK and KFS where applicable details of the annual kindergarten parent opinion survey to parents, carers or legal guardians that the service will prepare a Transition Statement for all children to help them transition to school 	R	✓			
Supporting inclusion and access through specific funding streams (for eligible families): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 3</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	✓	✓		

<p>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</p> <p>Where a birth certificate cannot be produced, other acceptable evidence of a child's full name and date of birth includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • statement from the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) • Medicare card • letter from the doctor or midwife who attended the birth • doctor's note attesting to a child's age • passport • citizenship documents or Australia visa documents or Immicard 	R	✓			
<p>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</p>	R	R			
<p>Where applicable; considering access and inclusion for children experiencing vulnerability/disadvantage in the allocation of places at the service (<i>refer to Attachment 2 and 3</i>)</p>	R	✓			
<p>Taking reasonable steps to obtain an up-to-date AIR Immunisation History Statement (<i>refer to Definitions</i>) from a family of a child enrolled under a support period within 16 weeks from when the child begins attending (Note: the child can continue to attend the service within the support period if acceptable immunisation documentation is not obtained).</p>	R	✓	✓		
<p>Taking reasonable steps to contact non-attending families prior to the cancellation of their enrolment (<i>refer to Attachment 6</i>)</p>	✓	✓	✓		
<p>Updating information by notifying the service of any changes as they occur, for example if the child or family becomes known to Child Protection</p>				✓	
<p>Ensuring the service adheres to the DE Kindergarten Funding Guide (<i>refer to Sources</i>) when the family withdraws enrolment, ensuring all necessary steps are taken prior to annual confirmation.</p>	R	✓			

PROCEDURES



GENERAL ORIENTATION PROCEDURES

Introducing your child/ren to a new care environment can be an emotional time. It is fair to expect some tearful goodbyes in the early days; however, there are many ways to assist your child/ren with this transition. The time required for orientation and settling in will vary for each child and their family, therefore it is important to be flexible and allow enough time for a successful orientation.

- Families are offered the opportunity to visit the service at different times during the day, so that they become familiar with the various routines of the service

- Families may stay with their child for as long as they choose during orientation and once the child commences
- Staff will help families develop and maintain a routine for saying goodbye to their child
- During orientation the family:
 - can leave their child initially for a shorter day, gradually increasing the length of time (NOTE: children cannot be left at the Centre until enrolment is complete and the child has a valid booking – prior to this time, a parent or guardian must stay at the Centre premises)
 - may call and speak to their child's educator(s) at an agreed time
 - will be kept informed on how their child is settling in
 - will be informed about any changes or circumstances which may affect them or their child.
- Further considerations may include but are not limited to:
 - An email or phone call during the day to update the family on their child (*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 1* for the general enrolment procedures
- Refer to *Attachment 3* for the kindergarten enrolment procedures
- Refer to *Attachment 6* 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)*).

ECEC services providing approved ECEC (*refer to Definitions*) must abide by the *Family Assistance Legislation Amendment (Jobs for Families Child Care Package) Act 2017* (*refer to Legislation and standards*). Australian families receive help with the cost of ECEC through the Child Care Subsidy (CCS). The Australian Government, through the Department of Education (DE) and Services Australia, administers the Child Care Subsidy (CCS). Providers must be approved by the department to receive CCS.

DE is responsible for the legislation that underpins CCS. This legislation is called Family Assistance Law (FAL). All providers that receive CCS must follow the rules under FAL. DE monitors providers' compliance with FAL.

The Australian Government subsidises the cost of ECEC. State and territory governments are responsible for the health, safety, wellbeing and educational outcomes of children.

CCS is paid directly to approved providers and passed on to families as a fee reduction.

Additional Child Care Subsidy (*refer to Sources*) provides additional fee assistance to support vulnerable or disadvantaged families and children. This support recognises the preventative and protective influence of quality ECEC on a child's health, wellbeing and development; and the importance of continuity of care.

There are four different payments under Additional Child Care Subsidy:

- Additional Child Care Subsidy (child wellbeing): to help children who are at risk of serious abuse or neglect.
- Additional Child Care Subsidy (grandparent): to help grandparents on income support who are the principal caregiver of their grandchildren.

- Additional Child Care Subsidy (temporary financial hardship): to help families experiencing financial hardship.
- Additional Child Care Subsidy (transition to work): to help low-income families transitioning from income support to work.

The Inclusion Support Program is designed to assist early childhood education and care services to include children with additional needs by providing support, in the form of practical and tailored advice and strategies on effective inclusive practice, from contracted Inclusion Agencies as well as funding to address more challenging inclusion barriers.

The Community Child Care Fund is designed to help eligible ECEC providers address barriers to ECEC participation, particularly in disadvantaged communities, including Indigenous communities.

The Australian Government considers that immunisation is an important health measure for children and their families, as it is the safest and most effective way of providing protection against harmful and often deadly diseases. To meet the Child Care Subsidy immunisation requirements, children must be immunised according to the standard vaccination schedule, be on an eligible catch-up vaccination schedule or have an approved exemption from being immunised.

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*). To meet the Child Care Subsidy immunisation requirements, children must be immunised according to the National Immunisation Program Schedule (*refer to Sources*) set out by the Australian Government Department of Health.

All eligible Victorian children (*refer to Definitions*) will have access to two years of Free Kinder before commencing school. Where demand is higher than availability, approved providers must adhere to their eligibility and DE's Priority of Access criteria (*refer to Definitions and Attachment 2*) in order to allocate the available places. The criteria used to determine the allocation of places takes account of the requirements set out in DE'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 DE 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. Currently 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.

LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999
- A New Tax System (Family Assistance) (Administration) Act 1999
- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)
- Child Care Subsidy Minister's Rules 2017
- Child Care Subsidy Secretary's Rules 2017
- 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)
- Family Assistance Legislation Amendment (Jobs for Families Child Care Package) Act 2017
- 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)
- 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. CoM, nominated supervisor, notifiable complaints, serious incidents, duty of care, etc. refer to the Definitions file of the PolicyWorks catalogue.

Access to Early Learning (AEL): is an early intervention program for a child who is at least three years old on April 30th in the year of enrolment. It aims to provide 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. Parents/carers must provide a copy of their most recent AIR Immunisation History Statement, which shows that the child is up to date with their immunisations upon enrolment and when a child has received or been due to receive a vaccination while attending the service. 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). In order to confirm enrolment, the Immunisation History Statement must show the child is up to date with the vaccines they can have, medical contraindication and indicate the due date for the next vaccinations the child is able to receive in the future if applicable.

Authorised nominee: (In relation to this policy) is a person who has been given written authority by the families of a child to collect that child from the education and care service. These details will be on the child's enrolment record

Centrelink: The agency that delivers payments and services to individuals and families on behalf of the Australian Government.

Child care software: software developed and provided by commercial providers to interact with the Australian Government's Child Care Subsidy System (information technology system) and to support other administrative and management activities for ECEC providers.

Child Care Safety Net: Targeted assistance to vulnerable and at-risk children and their families, as well as supporting ECEC services in disadvantaged communities to address barriers in accessing ECEC.

The Child Care Safety Net has three components:

- Additional Child Care Subsidy
- Community Child Care Fund
- Inclusion Support Program.

Child Care Subsidy (CCS): A Commonwealth Government means tested subsidy to assist eligible families with the cost of ECEC. Payments are paid directly to approved ECEC providers (*refer to Definitions*). Further information can be found at: www.dese.gov.au/child-care-package/child-care-subsidy

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 Torre 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.

Central Registration System (CRS): Provides an equitable and transparent application and allocation process, enabling families to access local kindergarten services within a local government area.

Complying Written Arrangement: A written arrangement between a ECEC provider and an individual to provide ECEC in return for fees. The arrangement includes certain required information:

- the names and contact details of the provider and the individual(s)
- the date the arrangement starts
- the name and date of birth of the child (or children)
- if care will be provided on a routine basis and if so
 - details about the days on which sessions of care will usually occur
 - the usual start and end times for these sessions of care
 - whether care will be on a casual or flexible basis (in addition to, or instead of, a routine basis)

- details of fees charged under the arrangement (providers can reference a fee schedule or information available on their website), which the parties understand may vary from time to time.

Additional information can be included to support the individual's understanding of their payment obligations

Early Start Kindergarten (ESK): Early Start Kindergarten provides eligible children with 15 hours of free of charge kindergarten each week led by a qualified early childhood teacher register with Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT). 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
- the family have had contact with child protection.

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

Early Start Kindergarten Extension Grants: For services not participating in Free Kinder are available to assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from refugee and asylum seeker backgrounds and children who have contact with Child Protection who are not eligible for the KFS to access a free Four-Year-Old Kindergarten program.

Eligible child: as defined by the Victorian DE 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 support period

Enrolment: An enrolment occurs when the provider has an arrangement with an individual or organisation to provide education and care to a child and the provider submits an enrolment notice in the Child Care Subsidy System. It is a requirement under Family Assistance Law for all children who attend ECEC (or have an arrangement for care) to have an enrolment notice regardless of their Child Care Subsidy eligibility status

Enrolment notice: The notice given by a provider through the Child Care Subsidy System that they have an arrangement with an individual or organisation to provide care to a child.

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.

Inclusion Support Program: A program that assists ECEC services to include children with additional needs by providing tailored inclusion advice and support from contracted Inclusion Agencies as well as funding to address more challenging inclusion barriers.

Integrated Kindergarten: Integrated kindergarten provides families with a full day of access to the ECEC program, with the kindergarten program embedded into the day. Families pay the daily attendance fees and may be eligible for Child Care Subsidy. During term breaks, kindergarten is not provided but the children attend and receive the ECEC program. Education and care is provided for 49 weeks of the year.

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, payable to the Darebin Centralised Waiting List. *(Refer to Free Kindergarten Fees policy)*

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/CRS 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)*

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

Orientation: Process to support the child's transition to the service, whereby families spend time at the service with the child a few times before leaving the child on their own. The time required for orientation and settling in will vary for each child and their family.

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 places using the criteria outlined in the DE Kindergarten Funding Guide *(refer to Attachment 2 and Sources)*.

Provider Entry Point: The online interface that providers can use to sign in and access the Child Care Subsidy System.

Registration: The process of families and carers giving initial information about their child to confirm their intention to enrol in kindergarten, administered by the 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 DE 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 3 (the year before the child is to attend school) when a second year is being considered.

Security bond: A charge to secure a place that has been offered in a program at the service. This should not act as a barrier to enrolling for any families. Services must ensure that families understand that the security bonds will only be refunded at the end of a child's enrolment – it will **not be refunded** if the child does not commence in the service *(Refer to Fees policies)*

Sessional kindergarten: kindergarten delivered at specific days and times that the kindergarten service sets. These sessions can be provided as 3 x 5 hr sessions a week or 2 x 7.5 hr sessions a week, for example. Children are not offered care outside of the hours of the kindergarten sessions, and children provide their own lunch each session. Children can only attend at the centre for a maximum of 15 hours per week, and families are charged late fees if they fail to pick up their child at the end of their kinder session. Sessional kinder children must also provide their own lunch and snack for each day of attendance.

Support period: allows specific categories of children of parents/guardians 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 support period eligibility form with parents/guardians during enrolment and keep a copy with the child's enrolment record. The 16-week support period starts on the first day of the child's attendance at the service. During the support period, the service is required to take reasonable steps to obtain the AIR Immunisation History Statement *(refer to Definitions)* and to encourage parents/guardians to access immunisation services.

SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES



SOURCES

- Australian Childhood Immunisation Register: www.servicesaustralia.gov.au
- Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care, National Immunisation Program Schedule: www.health.gov.au
- Community Child Care Fund: www.education.gov.au/community-child-care-fund
- Department of Education: [Starting age calculator](#)
- Department of Health, Immunisation enrolment toolkit for early childhood education and care service: www2.health.vic.gov.au
- Guide to Additional Child Care Subsidy (child wellbeing): www.education.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
- Inclusion Support Program: www.education.gov.au/inclusion-support-program
- Priority of Access Guidelines for ECEC service: www.education.gov.au
- The Family Assistance Law as the basis for Commonwealth ECEC fee assistance including the Child Care Subsidy (CCS) and Additional Child Care Subsidy (ACCS): www.education.gov.au
- Going to kindergarten if your child is 6 years old: www.vic.gov.au

RELATED POLICIES

- Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations
- Child Safe Environment and Wellbeing
- Family Code of Conduct Policy
- Compliments and Complaints
- Dealing with Infectious Disease
- Dealing With Medical Conditions
- Delivery and Collection of Children
- Fees
- Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness
- Inclusion and Equity
- Privacy and Confidentiality

EVALUATION



In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the CoM 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.
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ATTACHMENTS



- Attachment 1: General enrolment procedures
- Attachment 2: Eligibility and priority of access criteria
- Attachment 3: Kindergarten registration and enrolment procedures (for new enrolments)
- Attachment 4: Enrolment record requirements
- Attachment 5: Letter for families without acceptable immunisation documentation
- Attachment 6: Cancellation of enrolment and non-attendance

AUTHORISATION



This policy was adopted by the CoM of Raleigh St on 08/10/2024

REVIEW DATE: Oct 2025

POLICY REVIEW HISTORY

Date	Modification
SEP 2024	Updated to reflect changes in ELAA's ECEC and Kinder policy templates, including greater detail required for enrolment record. Reduction of bond to one week of fees rather than two weeks of fees per child
Jun 2024	Reviewed to include information about Sessional kinder to be offered in 2025 Changes to language to remove Child Care and replace with ECEC Clarity provided around different service offerings
Sept 2023	Combined Enrolment and Orientation Policy for ECEC and Free Kindergarten -Made formatting changes -Updated information to reflect updates in ELAA Table of updates dated 28 th August 2023 -Tailored procedures to processes followed at RSCCC, added text to clarify information specific to integrated kindergarten
May 2023	Enrolment and Orientation Policy for Long Day Care created in order to separate Kinder enrolment policy from LDC, based on ELAA Version 1.1
July 2017	Policy created and endorsed by CoM

ATTACHMENT 1. GENERAL ENROLMENT PROCEDURES

ENROLMENT PROCEDURE – FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES

All applications for a place (for ECEC or integrated kindergarten) are processed through the Darebin Centralised Waitlist, accessed at <https://darebincentralenrolments.councilonline.com.au/Public/Login.aspx>. Siblings of children already attending at the Centre must be processed through the Darebin Centralised Waitlist and all families are encouraged to put their child's name on the list with a preferred start date as early as possible to maximise the chances of receiving an offer.

Applications are taken throughout the year, and if there are no vacancies at the Centre for the requested start date, the child will be added to the waiting list. When the family has received an offer of a place at Raleigh St from the Darebin Centralised Waitlist and formally accepted the place, they will need to:

- Complete separate enrolment records (*refer to Definitions*) for each child attending the service, using the Xap parent portal at www.xap.rocks. Families experiencing difficulties accessing this online enrolment facility can call the Centre and a paper form will be supplied, or assistance to fill in the online form
- Provide the information in the enrolment record as defined in *Attachment 4*
- Provide details of a bank account for the direct debit of fees fortnightly. Note that these details are not visible to anyone other than the family once saved in the system. Care will not be provided until the bond has been paid and the direct debit agreement is set up.
- Clearly identify any additional or specific needs of the child (*refer to Inclusion and Equity Policy*) to facilitate the inclusion of all children into the program.
- Pay the security bond in line with Raleigh St *Fees Policy*, equal to one week of the child's usual unsubsidised fees. This bond is to ensure that all payment accounts are never more than one week in arrears. At the end of a child's enrolment, once outstanding fees have been deducted, the bond will be refunded to the family.
- Create or access their Centrelink online account to lodge a Child Care Subsidy claim for each of their children (*refer to Diagram 1*).
- Complete and sign a Complying Written Agreement (*refer to Definitions*), which includes:
 - The names and contact details of the CoM and the parent/guardian(s)
 - the date the arrangement starts
 - the name and date of birth of the child (or children) and:
 - details about the days on which sessions of care will usually occur
 - the usual start and end times for these sessions of care
 - whether care will be on a casual basis in addition to a routine basis (note that Raleigh St does NOT offer casual or occasional care for children that aren't attending on a routine basis)
 - details of fees charged under the arrangement (providers can reference a fee schedule or information available on their website), which the parties understand may vary from time to time.
 - additional information can be included to support the individual's understanding of their payment obligations.
 - once the CWA is signed, it is then filed in the child's record

IMMUNISATION – NO JAB NO PLAY

- Prior to the child/children commencing care Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) Immunisation History Statement 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 CoM.
- The "Key dates work form for immunisation and enrolment" 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 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 for Immunisation and enrolment (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 AIR Immunisation History Statement is within the acceptable timeframe for an enrolment, or;
 - That the child has been assessed by Raleigh St as being eligible for a 16-week support period
- The person responsible for the enrolment process advises the parent/guardian in writing whether a confirmed place is offered, and the enrolment can proceed.
- Families who do not have an up to date AIR Immunisation History Statement and whose child is not eligible for the support period cannot be offered a place and are referred to Australian Childhood Immunisation Register or to an immunisation provider (refer to Attachment 3).

CHILD CARE SUBSIDY ENROLMENT PROCESS

Enrolling children is a requirement under *Family Assistance Law* for all children who attend ECEC (or have an arrangement for care) regardless of their parent's or guardian's eligibility for Child Care Subsidy.

- The person responsible for the enrolment e.g. the approved provider must lodge an enrolment notice (through their ECEC software or the PEP) in the Child Care Subsidy System to show they have made an arrangement with the parent/guardian and the child is enrolled (*refer to Diagram 1*).
- The approved provider for the enrolment may need to provide several enrolment notices for a child if there is more than one arrangement to provide care for that child (because those arrangements are considered different enrolments under *Family Assistance Law*)—for example, where either:
 - a child is a dependent child of two families, such as when separated parents share care for a child
 - the fees for some sessions of care provided to a child are paid by a third party (such as an employer) and other sessions are paid by the parent(s).
- The agreement through which families can receive Child Care Subsidy is called a Complying Written Arrangement (*Refer to Definitions*). A Complying Written Arrangement is an agreement to provide care in return for fees.
- Complying Written Arrangements must have certain information. If the Complying Written Arrangement includes this information in writing, it can be made through the same enrolment form or process the provider uses to enrol a child.
- An arrangement must be recorded, either on paper or electronically, and must be kept by the approved provider. An arrangement can cover more than one child if multiple children in a family will attend the same ECEC service (each child must have their own enrolment).
- Once the approved provider enters into a Complying Written Arrangement with a family, they must submit an enrolment notice within seven days of the end of the week in which the arrangement started.
- If the approved provider enters into a Complying Written Arrangement more than 14 weeks before the child starts care, the enrolment will cease in the system before the child starts care. Therefore, the provider and individual would need to re-establish the Complying Written Arrangement and the provider would need to submit another enrolment notice. The Complying Written Arrangement would need to contain up-to-date details (where any have changed). At minimum, a new start date for the arrangement would be needed.
- Once the provider has made an arrangement with an individual, they can create a new enrolment notice through their ECEC software or the PEP. The provider must submit an enrolment notice for each child at each service. If an arrangement covers more than one child, or more than one service, a separate enrolment notice must be provided for each child at each service.

What information is required for an enrolment notice?

Through their ECEC software or the PEP, providers will be able to view, create, update or cease enrolments for all children attending their service(s). Providers will also be able to see the complete enrolment history (all current and ceased enrolment notices) for each child enrolled with them.

Category	Details to be provided
Enrolment circumstances	<p>Whether either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an arrangement for care has been made • a certificate or determination has been made for Additional Child Care Subsidy (child wellbeing). <p>Whether the arrangement is any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a Complying Written Arrangement • a Relevant Arrangement • Additional Child Care Subsidy (child wellbeing)—provider eligible • an arrangement with an organisation (third party)
Expected pattern of care	<p>Whether this includes any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • routine sessions, with possible casual care • casual enrolment—no routine sessions are included • routine sessions only—casual care is not included
Dates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Date the care arrangement was made • End date for the arrangement (not mandatory—if known at the time the arrangement was created)
Parties to the arrangement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Names of individuals (or organisation) who have made the arrangement—usually the same as the Child Care Subsidy claimant, but it can be someone else (for example, where one parent is the Child Care Subsidy claimant, but the other parent enters into the arrangement with the service to provide care) • If both parents are parties to the arrangement, enter the parent who is also the Child Care Subsidy claimant
Child receiving care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child's name • Child's Customer Reference Number • Child's date of birth
Service providing care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service ID • Regular educator (mandatory for Family Day Care)
Child Care Subsidy claimant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual's name • Individual's Customer Reference Number • Individual's date of birth
Session details and liability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day of routine sessions. • Session start time. • Session end time. • Routine session — usual fee (hourly fee or session fee); casual session (if applicable) — hourly or session fee

- After the approved provider submits an enrolment notice for a child, the parent/guardian will be notified and asked to check the main enrolment notice details. This will occur through their Centrelink online account. Where an individual cannot access myGov, they can confirm their enrolment over the phone with Centrelink or by visiting a Centrelink office.
- The parent/guardian must then indicate that either:
 - the enrolment details are correct
 - one or more enrolment details are incorrect (do not reflect their arrangement)
 - the child is not enrolled at the service.
- The approved provider will be notified through their ECEC software or the PEP when an enrolment has been confirmed.

Updating and ending arrangements and enrolments

Where there are changes to the arrangement for care between the approved provider and an family, the approved provider must update the arrangement in writing (electronic or hard copy).

The approved provider must update an enrolment notice if:

- the family disagrees with details of an enrolment and the approved provider agrees an update is required
- an arrangement for care is changed at the request of, or in discussion with, the family (and this has been updated in the Complying Written Arrangement)
- the approved provider finds out that the information provided in an enrolment is (or becomes) wrong either at the time of or after the enrolment notice was created
- the arrangement for care ends.

The corresponding enrolment notice must be updated in the Child Care Subsidy System within seven days of the change or event which caused the change to the arrangement.

The Approved Providers should update an existing enrolment notice through their ECEC software or the PEP by updating only the fields where information has changed and submitting the update.

Where an enrolment has an end date, the approved provider will be notified through the Child Care Subsidy System four weeks before that date.

If care is going to continue under the arrangement, the enrolment end date must be updated or else the arrangement will end. If that happens, the child will need to be re-enrolled and a Complying Written Arrangement will need to be re-established.

An enrolment will end for Child Care Subsidy purposes if a child does not attend a session of care for 14 continuous weeks. The approved provider will be notified after four weeks of no sessions of care being reported.

If the child starts attending the service again after 14 weeks or more, the provider will need to re-establish the Complying Written Arrangement with the family and submit a new enrolment notice.

Adapted from the Child Care Provider Handbook, October 2023

WAITLIST

- If there are no suitable vacancies, the child / children's details will be placed on a waitlist, managed by Darebin Centralised Waiting List
- Families on the waitlist are not guaranteed a place at Raleigh St
- Applications will be allocated places using the priority of access criteria, Recognition is given to siblings of current children who attend Raleigh St
- A non-refundable waiting list application fee (payable to Darebin Council) will apply to all new applications
- It is the responsibility of families to update personal information, as required
- Darebin Centralised Waiting List team will update the wait list annually by written correspondence
- To remain on the wait list families will need to provide written response within 2 working days from the date of the correspondence
- Families who do not respond to the annual waiting list update request will be removed from the waitlist

- Families who have been offered a place at Raleigh St will have 48 hours to accept or decline the offer. If no response is received, the offer will be deemed to have been declined, but the applicant will remain on the waitlist unless the offer is the third one declined.

ATTACHMENT 2. ELIGIBILITY AND PRIORITY OF ACCESS CRITERIA

Raleigh St participates in a central registration and enrolment scheme (CRES), who will allocate places in accordance with the DESE's DE's PoA criteria, and other local criteria if applicable

PRIORITY OF ACCESS – CHILDREN ATTENDING ECEC ONLY

All registrations with the Darebin Centralised Waiting List are processed in accordance with the priority of access as outlined below:

- Vulnerable families - see the Australian Government's [early childhood support page](#) for more information
- Families with a child or sibling currently accessing the same service
- Length of time on the waitlist
- A child of a sole parent who satisfies, or parents who both satisfy, the activity test through paid employment.

PRIORITY OF ACCESS - FUNDED KINDERGARTEN

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.

Raleigh St participates in a central registration and enrolment scheme, run by the City of Darebin. The CRES provider will allocate places in accordance with DE's PoA criteria, and other local criteria if applicable.

All information relating to PoA criteria should be respectfully collected from families upon enrolment, recorded in each 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>

<p>Children eligible for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy</p>	<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>
<p>High priority children</p>	<p>Process that could be used to verify need(s)</p>
<p>Children with additional needs, defined as children who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • with an identified specific disability or developmental delay • who require additional assistance to fully participate in the kindergarten program • who require a combination of services which are individually planned 	<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 • 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.

<p>Examples to consider for second priority</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 ECEC in [LGA]
<p>Examples to consider for third priority</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.

<p>* Early Start Kindergarten and Three-Year-Old Kindergarten</p>
<p>During the roll-out of Three-Year-Old Kindergarten, Early Start Kindergarten (ESK) (<i>refer to Definitions</i>) 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</p> <p>It is important to continue to enrol eligible children in ESK, even if funded Three-Year-Old Kindergarten is available at the service. This guarantees that ESK eligible children can continue to access 15-hour kindergarten programs and allows the correct calculation of the service's SRF entitlement.</p> <p>The Kindergarten Funding Guide 2023 states for ESK funding, service providers should:</p>

- 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
- have had contact with 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 office.

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

ATTACHMENT 3. KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION AND ENROLMENT PROCEDURES (FOR CHILDREN STARTING AT RALEIGH ST IN A KINDERGARTEN YEAR)

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION PROCESS

NOTE: if your child is already enrolled in ECEC at Raleigh St and wishes to attend the integrated kindergarten program at Raleigh St, families do not need to re-register at the Centralised waitlist. The Centre will ask for kinder preferences and process accordingly. The following procedure is for new families. If you wish for your child to attend sessional kinder after attending the ECEC program at Raleigh St, you will be required to register with Darebin Central Enrolments for a place. Sessional kinder is offered as a standalone program – ie no long day care is provided to children enrolled in the sessional program, kinder sessions are only offered during school term times. Sessional kinder children also provide their own lunch, as they do not pay fees.

Kindergarten registration dates

In Darebin Council the registrations open for kindergarten applications on 1st February each year, for kindergarten programs starting in the following year.

If families miss the registration close deadline, they can still register although they will be placed into a pool for second-round (or even later rounds) of allocation and are less likely to get their top preference. After second round offers have been confirmed, Darebin Centralised Waitlist will continue to allocate children to kindergarten places where they are available. More places may become available as children move kindergartens or withdraw, or when kindergartens add capacity.

Date	Activity
1 February	Registrations open
30 June	Registrations close*
Mid July	First round offers – 4 yr old kindergarten
Mid July	Acceptance of first round offers due
Mid August	Second round offers – 3 yr old kindergarten
Mid August	Acceptance of second round offers due
Ongoing	Subsequent offers on an individual basis

*Registrations will still be accepted after 30 June, but registrations received prior will be allocated first. Children eligible for Priority of Access will be prioritised regardless of when registration is received.

Registration

Families can register for kindergarten on the registration system anytime using the [Darebin Central Enrolments Online Portal](#). Contact the kindergarten registration team on 03 8470 8825 or email registration.kindergartenchildcare@darebin.vic.gov.au if you would like help with registration, or would like to request a paper form to register.

Families cannot register directly with Raleigh St, they must go through the centralised registration process (unless their child is already attending ECEC at the Centre).

To fill out the registration form, families will need to provide information about themselves and their child. At this stage they do not 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 Darebin Council Service Centres. 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: Where a birth certificate cannot be produced, other acceptable evidence of a child's full name and date of birth includes:
 - Statement from the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR)
 - Medicare card
 - letter from the doctor or midwife who attended the birth
 - doctor's note attesting to a child's age
 - passport
 - citizenship documents or Australia visa documents or Immicard.
- 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 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 Raleigh St in writing of their intention to leave the service, providing four weeks' notice.

Second year of funded Four-Year-Old Kindergarten

- All children in Three-Year-Old Kindergarten will be expected to transition to Four-Year-Old Kindergarten in the following year. A funded second year of kindergarten will only be available for children in the Four-Year-Old Kindergarten program who meet the criteria.
- 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.

Early entry to Four-Year-Old kindergarten

- Early entry to Four-Year-Old Kindergarten may be appropriate for some gifted children where families are seeking an early entry to school for their child i.e. the child will not be 5 years of age before 30 April in the year of school commencement.

- Early entry to school is approved only when exceptional circumstances apply and is subject to an application process and rigorous eligibility criteria. It is important to note that most children who enrol early in Four-Year-Old Kindergarten are not approved for early entry into school because they did not meet the eligibility criteria.
- The decision regarding early entry should be discussed with families and consider the following:
 - Children are not guaranteed early school entry as a result of being enrolled to attend kindergarten early.
 - To start school early, the child must possess suitable academic ability as evidenced by a formal cognitive assessment, and be considered at risk of long-term educational disadvantage if they don't early entry to school.

School Exemption

- Children who will turn six during the kindergarten year must apply for an exemption from school from the relevant their local ECIB that their child is seeking an exemption from school by submitting an Exemption from school due to attendance in kindergarten program form to the appropriate departmental regional office by 1 November in the year prior to the child turning 6.
- The kindergarten service must sight the approved exemption form 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.
- Children who will turn 6 while attending their second year of Four-Year-Old Kindergarten can be exempted from school if a Declaration of eligibility for a second year of funded kindergarten has been completed by the child's kindergarten teacher.

Adapted from the Kindergarten Funding Guide, 2023

ATTACHMENT 4. ENROLMENT FORM REQUIREMENTS

The CoM must ensure that an enrolment record (*refer to Definitions*) is kept for each child enrolled at Raleigh St. *Regulations 160, 161, 162* outlines the enrolment record requirements for services under the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 (National Law)*, *the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 (National Regulations)*.

The CoM must keep enrolment records available for inspection by an authorised officer (*National Law: Section 175*). The CoM must also take reasonable steps to ensure the enrolment records are:

- accurate
- made available to the parents of the child upon request unless otherwise required by a court order (*Regulations 177 and 178*).

Information that **must** be included in enrolment record:

- Full name, date of birth and address of the child
- The name, address and contact details of:
 - each known parent of the child
 - any emergency contact
 - any authorised nominee
 - any person authorised to consent to medical treatment or administration of medication
 - any person authorised to give permission to the educator to take the child off the premises
- Details of any court orders, parenting orders or parenting plans
- Gender of the child
- Language used in the child's home
- Cultural background of the child and their parents
- Any special considerations for the child, such as cultural, dietary or religious requirements or additional needs
- Authorisations for:
 - the CoM, nominated supervisor or an educator to seek medical treatment and/or ambulance transportation for the child
 - the service to take the child on regular outings
 - for regular transportation of the child
 - any person who is authorised to authorise the education and care service transport the child or arrange transportation of the child
- Name, address and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner or medical service
- Medicare number (if available)
- Details of any specific healthcare needs of the child, including any medical conditions, allergies, or diagnosis that the child is at risk of anaphylaxis
- Any medical management plan, anaphylaxis medical management plan or risk minimisation and communication plan
- Dietary restrictions
- Immunisation status (In Victoria, AIR Immunisation History Statement, as required under the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*)

ATTACHMENT 5. LETTER FOR FAMILIES WITHOUT ACCEPTABLE IMMUNISATION DOCUMENTATION

Raleigh St Community Children's Centre

28 Raleigh St

Thornbury, VIC 3071

[Insert date]

Dear [insert name]

Re: Enrolment at Raleigh St for [insert year]

I am contacting you regarding your tentative place for [insert child's name] at Raleigh St 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 that your child:

- is fully vaccinated for their age; or
- has been assessed by our service as being eligible for a 16 week support period.

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 support 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
- Darebin Council 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 AIR History Statement. The new application would be considered in line with Raleigh St's *Enrolment and Orientation policy*.

Yours sincerely

[Insert name]

[Insert title]

Raleigh St Community Children's Centre

ATTACHMENT 6. CANCELLATION OF ENROLMENT AND NON-ATTENDANCE

FOR FUNDED KINDERGARTEN

Cancellation of Enrolment

Families MUST notify Raleigh St in writing of their intention to cancel their child's enrolment with four (4) weeks' notice. Fees will continue to be generated for that place until Raleigh St is notified and the notice period of 4 weeks has elapsed.

It is Raleigh St Policy that if a family withdraws their child(ren) attending the 4-year-old kindergarten program from the Centre after the start of term 4, they agree to pay fees to the end of the calendar year (See *Fees Policy*)

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 for extended periods

- Families are required to notify Raleigh St prior to extended periods of travel, and ensure any applicable fees are paid if they wish to return to the service. Fees are charged for the duration of any absences in order to hold a place for your child.

Non-contactable Families

- After a second week of a child not attending and the family has made no attempts to contact the service, the early childhood teacher or educator will contact the family via phone/text and/or email. If there is no response, Educator will 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 CoM 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.