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|  | <b>Enrolment and Orientation<br/>Policy &amp; Procedures</b> |
| <b>Version No.</b>  | Created November 2018  |
| <b>Authorisation</b>  | General Manager  |
| <b>Expiry Date</b>  | Policy to be reviewed Annually                               |
| <b>Responsible Officer</b>  | Manager Evolve Early Learning & Kindergarten                 |
| <b>Policy Owner</b>   | Evolve Early Learning & Kindergarten                         |

### **\*\*Kindergarten Specific Policy & Procedures**

#### **Policy**

Evolve Early Learning & Kindergarten is committed to:

- Equal access for all children
- Meeting the needs of the local community
- Maintaining confidentiality in relation to all information provided on Enrolment Forms
- Ensuring all families are welcomed and receive an effective orientation into the service.

#### **Purpose**

Evolve Early Learning & Kindergarten is committed to:

- Following the process set when enrolling a child at Evolve Early Learning & Kindergarten, and the basis on which places within the programs will be allocated
- Procedures for the orientation of new families and children into Evolve Early Learning & Kindergarten This policy has been adapted from *PolicyWorks* Manual - National Quality Framework released by the Early Learning Association Australia.

#### **Scope**

This policy applies to Evolve Early Learning & Kindergarten who is responsible for the direct education and care of children including offsite excursions and activities.

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor/Primary Nominee, Approved/ Accepted Nominee, Certified Supervisor, Educators, Staff, Students on placement, Volunteers, Parents/guardians, Children and others attending the programs and activities of Evolve Early Learning & Kindergarten.

#### **No Jab No Play-**

- The Victorian Government has passed immunisation legislation named '[No Jab, No Play](#)'. No Jab No Play is a commitment made by the Government to help protect children from serious and potentially life-threatening illnesses.
- Under the new law in effect from 1 January 2016, all children must be fully vaccinated in order to be enrolled in an Early Childhood program.
- Only Children who cannot be vaccinated for medical reasons will be exempt.
- "Conscientious Objection" will not be an exemption.

### **What does this mean?**

- You will be required to provide your selected care provider with a copy of your child's immunisation history Statement. You can obtain a record of your child's immunisation history from Australian Childhood Immunisation Register (ACIR) through the website below.
- <https://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/medicare/australian-childhood-immunisation-register>
- Alternatively, you can call ACIR and request that a statement is sent to you.
- Your child will not be eligible to attend the service until the Immunisation History is provided.
- Vulnerable and disadvantaged children will be eligible to enrol in a service under a grace period - without having provided proof of up to date immunisation - to allow families to continue accessing services while they seek advice and assistance to get their child's vaccination schedule on track.

### **National Quality Standards (NQS)**

#### **Quality Area 6: Collaborative Partnerships**

**6.1 Supportive relationships with families-** Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role

**6.1.1 Engagement with the service-** Families are supported from enrolment to be involved in their service and contribute to service decisions

**6.1.2 Parent views are respected-** The expertise, culture, values and beliefs of families are respected and families share in decision-making about their child's learning and wellbeing

**6.1.3 Families are supported-** Current information is available to families about the service and relevant community services and resources to support parenting and family wellbeing

**6.2 Collaborative partnerships-** Collaborative partnerships enhance children's inclusion, learning and wellbeing

**6.2.3 Community and engagement-** The service builds relationships and engages with it's community

#### **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 (National Regulation 168).
- Childcare services providing Approved Care (refer to *Definitions*)
- Approved Care services must abide by the *Family Assistance Legislation Amendment (Child Care Rebate) Act 2011* (refer to *References*).

#### **Education and Care National Regulations**

- Health, hygiene and safe food practices (National Regulations 77)
- Food and beverages (National Regulations 78)

- Service providing food and beverages (National Regulations 79)
- Weekly Menu (National Regulations 80)
- Infectious diseases (National Regulations 88)
- Medical conditions policy (National Regulations 90)
- Medical Record (National Regulations 92)
- Administration of medication (National Regulations 93)
- Emergency and evacuation procedures (National Regulations 97)
- Children leaving the education and care service premises (National Regulations 99)
- Risk assessment must be conducted before excursion (National Regulations 100)
- Conduct of risk assessment for excursion (National Regulations 101)
- Authorisation for excursions (National Regulations 102)
- Access for parents (National Regulations 157)
- Child enrolment records to be kept by approved provider and family day care educator (National Regulations 160)
- Authorisations to be kept in enrolment record (National Regulations 161)
- Health information to be kept in enrolment record (National Regulations 162)
- Education and care service must have policies and procedures (National Regulations 168)
- Prescribed information to be displayed (National Regulations 173)
- Prescribed enrolment and other documents to be kept by approved provider (National Regulations 177)
- Confidentiality of records kept by approved provider (National Regulations 181)
- Storage of records and other documents (National Regulations 183)

## **Determining the criteria for priority of access to programs at Evolve Early Learning & Kindergarten**

### **Priority 1 criteria include a child if they are:**

- At risk of abuse or neglect (including children in out of home care)
- Are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
- Are an asylum seeker or refugee
- Are eligible for Kindergarten Fee Subsidy
- Have an additional need
- Are eligible for a second year of funded kindergarten or have delayed their kindergarten year
- 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*.

### **Priority 2 criteria include a child if they are:**

- Children that have been previously enrolled in the centre
- Siblings of children already or previously enrolled in the centre
- A child of a single parent or parents who satisfy the work/training/study test under section 14 of the “ A New Tax System (family assistance) act 1999”

## **Responsibility/Accountability**

- The Approved Provider, according to Regulations is responsible for the implementation of this policy. This will be achieved through the Centre Manager and the staff.
- 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/Primary Nominee 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
- Ensuring that Enrolment Forms (refer to *Definitions*) comply with the requirements of National Regulations 160, 161 and 162
- Reviewing the Enrolment Form to determine its effectiveness in meeting the regulatory and management requirements of the service
- Ensuring that Enrolment Records (refer to *Definitions*) are stored in a safe and secure place, and kept for three years after the last date on which the child was educated and cared for by the service (National 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/Primary Nominee or educators under the Law (National Regulation 157).

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

- Providing Enrolment Application Forms
- Collating enrolments
- Maintaining a waiting list, if required
- Offering places in line with this policy and criteria for priority access, and providing relevant paperwork to families in accordance with this policy
- Storing completed Enrolment Application Forms in a lockable file (refer to *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*) as soon as is practicable
- Complying with the *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy* of the service.

### **The Nominated Supervisor/Primary Nominee, Certified Supervisor and other 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
- Reviewing enrolment applications to identify Children with Additional Needs (refer *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
- Ensuring that Enrolment Forms are completed prior to the child's commencement at the service
- 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/ Primary Nominee or educators under the Law (National Regulation 157)

#### **Developing strategies to assist new families to:**

- Feel welcomed into the service
- Become familiar with service policies and procedures
- Share information about their family beliefs, values and culture
- Share their understanding of their child's strengths, interests, abilities and needs
- Discuss the values and expectations they hold in relation to their child's learning
- Discussing the individual child's needs with educators/staff and develop an orientation program to assist the child to settle into the program

#### **Encouraging parents/guardians to:**

- Stay with their child during the settling in period as agreed with the educator/staff
- Make contact with educators and carers at the service, when required
- Assisting parents/guardians to develop and maintain a routine for saying goodbye to their child
- Providing comfort and reassurance to children who are showing signs of distress when separating from family members
- Sharing information with parents/guardians regarding their child's progress with regard to settling in to the service
- Discussing support services for children with parents/guardians, where required
- Complying with the service's *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy* in relation to the collection and management of a child's enrolment information.

#### **Parents/guardians are responsible for:**

- Reading and complying with this *Enrolment and Orientation Policy*
- Completing Enrolment Forms prior to their child's commencement at the service
- Ensuring that all required information is provided to the service
- Updating information by notifying the service of any changes as they occur.
- Volunteers and students, while at the service, are responsible for following this policy and its procedures.

#### **Fundraising**

Evolve Early Learning and Kindergarten supports Children's Charities and Families are under no obligation to be involved.

#### **Kindergarten Expectations.**

4 Year old Kindergarten Children are expected to complete a full year of kindergarten in the year they enrol and begin attending as that funding is limited to one year for each child. (unless they are eligible for an Early Start Kindergarten grant or a second year of funded kindergarten).

## Early/Late entry to Kindergarten.

Families considering early or late entry to kindergarten should seek advice from early childhood professionals to inform their decision. This could include a prep teacher or principal at the family's school of choice, a Maternal and Child Health nurse, family doctor or speech therapist. Our Kindergarten educator would be happy to meet your child in order to provide your family with a professional opinion about whether your child would benefit from late or early entry into our Kindergarten Program.

For children born between 1 January and 30 April, parents have a choice about whether they commence school in the year they turn five, or in the following year, and therefore whether they commence kindergarten in the year they turn four or the year they turn five.

- families should carefully consider the best time for their child to start kindergarten, as all children learn and develop in different ways
- families should consult with relevant early childhood professionals for guidance
- families can discuss with Educators how the kindergarten program will support their child's learning and development
- children are expected to complete a full year of kindergarten in the year they enrol and begin attending and that funding is limited to one year for each child (unless they are eligible for an Early Start Kindergarten grant or a second year of funded kindergarten).

## School Exemption for Kindergarten Children.

Children who turn six at any time during the kindergarten year, including children attending a second year of funded kindergarten, must be exempted from attending school. Parents need to apply for an exemption before the child starts kindergarten by submitting an Exemption from school due to attendance in kindergarten program form to the local Departmental regional office by 1 November in the year prior to the child turning six.

## Kindergarten Waiting List

If spaces are not available, parents/guardians can have their names and contact information added to a wait list.

Our waiting list is used to ensure that families are all given equal opportunity to enrol their child(ren).

Parents who place a child on the waiting list will have the following information recorded:

- Parents' names
- Parent's contact information
- Child's name
- Child's Birth date

Parents will be contacted when space is available. As spaces become available, the Centre Manager will contact parents to offer them a space.

Parents are given two days to accept the space. If they decline, or do not return the call, the space will be offered to the next family on the list.

Calls are made in the order of the wait list, with families already attending the centre, taking priority.

1 weeks fees in advance is to be paid before commencement for each child attending Evolve Early Learning & Kindergarten.

## Kindergarten Children with additional needs.

There is support available for children with additional needs attending a DET funded Kindergarten Program.

Please see information contained in the following link:

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/professionals/needs/Pages/kinderinclusion.aspx>

### Definitions

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy and related procedures. For commonly used terms e.g. Approved Provider, Regulatory Authority etc. refer to the *Glossary of Terms*.

| Word/Term                             | Definition  |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Approved Care</b>                  | Care given by a service provider that has been approved by the Family Assistance Office to receive CCR for eligible families. Further details are available on the Department of Human Services website (see <i>Sources</i> ).  |
| <b>Children with Additional Needs</b> | Children whose development or physical condition requires specialist support or children who may need additional support due to language, cultural or economic circumstances (refer to <i>Inclusion and Equity Policy</i> ).  |
| <b>Eligible Child</b>                 | A child who meets the criteria outlined in the Victorian Kindergarten Guide 2014 (see <i>Sources</i> ), procedures and funding criteria.  |
| <b>Enrolment Application Fee</b>      | 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.  |
| <b>Enrolment Application Form</b>     | A form to apply for a place at the service.   |
| <b>Enrolment Form</b>                 | A form that collects contact details, personal and medical information from parents/guardians about their child. This is completed during the enrolment process. The information on this form is placed on the child's Enrolment Record (see below) and is kept confidential by the service.  |
| <b>Enrolment Record</b>               | Contains information on each child, as required under the National Regulations, including but not limited to contact details, names of authorised nominees (persons authorised to consent to medical treatment, administration of medication or take the child outside the service), details of any court orders, personal and health information including specific healthcare needs, medical management plans and dietary restrictions (National Regulations 160, 161). This information is kept confidential by the service. |
| <b>Fees</b>                           | A charge for a place within a program at the service.   |

# ENROLEMENT AND ORIENTATION PROCEDURE

## Purpose

This procedure will outline:

- The process to be followed when enrolling a child at Evolve Early Learning & Kindergarten, and the basis on which places within the programs will be allocated
- Procedures for the orientation of new families and children into Evolve Early Learning & Kindergarten

## In terms of Enrolment:

- Families wishing to enrol in Evolve Early Learning & Kindergarten program are required to complete an Enrolment Form and return it to the service.
- Educators need to ensure they have a child's Enrolment Form prior to care starting.
- Enrolment Forms need to be updated as changes occur and where programs require, a new form is completed annually.
- Enrolment Forms are confidential and are kept in a secure place on the premises.
- Parent/guardians are required to notify the service in writing of any changes or amendments to their Enrolment Forms.
- Educators must have up to date details of parent/guardians and/or emergency contacts for communication in cases of an emergency.
- The service needs to be notified of all medical needs of the children in care.
- To facilitate the inclusion of all children into the program, enrolment applications should clearly identify any additional or specific needs of the child (refer to *Inclusion and Equity Policy*).
- Enrolment Forms must be fully completed. Incomplete forms will be returned to parents/guardians to complete and this may delay the enrolment process and the child's commencement into care.
- Parents/guardians are to provide two week's notice of any changes or cancellations to their child's regular care days of attendance.
- Families unsuccessful in gaining a place are added to a waiting list and advised if a vacancy arises.
- Waiting lists are maintained in accordance with the Priority of Access Guidelines.

## In terms of bookings and absences:

To ensure that quality programs can be planned appropriately in accordance with attendance levels and Staffing

- This means that parents/guardians will be charged for all days they book.
- If parents/guardians do not use the booked days (due to changed holiday plans, sickness, etc), payment for the total booking still applies.
- If the child cannot attend a booked day due to illness, parents/guardians will still be required to pay for that day.
- Children are allocated 42 absences per financial year

## In terms of Orientation:

Evolve Early Learning & Kindergarten aim to ensure a smooth orientation of children and their families into programs by:

- Providing families with access to a comprehensive policy and procedures manual for the service that includes detailed program procedures, requirements and expectations of staff/educators, families and children
- Confirming enrolments after all medical and additional needs requirements have been discussed and appropriate documentation and information has been collected
- Introducing new children to the staff/educators and other children at the service
- Planning a smooth transition into care with each orientation based upon the individual needs of the child. Parents/guardians and staff will jointly plan the transition to care to secure a successful long-term experience for the child
- Encouraging families to make an appointment to visit the programs before commencing care. During this visit parents/guardians can experience a tour of the service, meet staff/educators, ask questions and discuss the individual needs of the child
- Encouraging parents/guardians to spend time with their child at a session in order to settle and familiarise the child with their new surroundings.

**Evolve Early Learning & Kindergarten is committed to:**

- Equal access for all children
- Meeting the needs of the local community
- Complying with Department of Education & Training (DET) funding requirements relating to the enrolment of children in government-funded programs
- Maintaining confidentiality in relation to all information provided on Enrolment Forms
- Ensuring all families are welcomed and receive an effective orientation into the service.

**References, Sources, Links to Legislation and Other Documents**

Please refer to Reference and Sources page.

**Related service policies:**

*Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations Policy*  
*Complaints and Grievances Policy*  
*Emergency and Evacuation Policy*  
*Excursion and Service Events*  
*Fees Policy*  
*Inclusion and Equity Policy*  
*Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*