

Leadership and service management QA 7 **ORIENTATION, ENROLMENT including PRIORITY OF ACCESS Policy and Procedures**

Links to Regulations: 158, 160-162, 168 (2)(k), 177 (1)(l), (2), (3), (4) Links to quality areas, standards or elements: 2.3, 4.1, 6, 7.1, 7.3

Rationale:

The Centre has a duty of care towards all children and recognises the importance of protecting children from abuse and neglect, supporting children's individual development whilst striving to meet the needs of families.

ORIENTATION Procedures:

Generally conducted face to face, enrolment is part of an informative **Orientation Process** which includes:

- a tour of the Centre when general information is provided and any questions answered
- the explanation and supply of the *Enrolment Pack*, which includes the DECD enrolment form for either Preschools or Integrated Services, Policy and Procedure information and a Welcome letter. A free 'Come & Try' session for new Childcare Enrolments is offered
- negotiation of times and/or dates for attendance
- information sharing between the parents/caregivers and Director or Assistant Director about the child/ren, their interests, routines and individual needs, including medication or health requirements and Family Court or Intervention Orders
- verification of a child's age in the form of either a passport; Birth Certificate or Official Centrelink documentation stating the child's name and date of birth prior to the acceptance of the Enrolment.

Enrolment Information, including the type of document used for verification of Proof of Age, is entered onto a data base, either SPIKE and/or the *Early Years System (EYS)*, with an *Individual Personal File* created for the child where the original enrolment form, authorisations for consent, Health Care Plans and other relevant individualised documents are housed securely.

Attendance cannot commence until the Enrolment Forms have been completed and returned to the Centre.

ENROLMENT and PRIORITY of ACCESS Policy & Procedures:

Our Centre is licensed to offer fulltime, part-time, permanent, casual and Outside School Hours Care for children between the ages of 6 weeks and 12 years. The Centre is licensed for 59 children in total per day. As a guide, when Pre-school is in attendance, the licence for the Childcare Service is approximately 29 children with a maximum of 8 children under 2 years of age. In negotiation, Leadership and Governing Council *may* vary these numbers and ratios depending on the total capacity across the Centre and the Service's ability to cater in a sufficient manner for the children in an alternative combination of numbers and age groups.

Priority of access to the **Childcare Service** follows government guidelines for **eligibility/priority of access:**

1. Abuse/Neglect - Child considered to be at risk of abuse or neglect
2. Working Parents - Single parent or both parents are employed, seeking employment or studying/training for future employment
3. Respite Care - Families where parents need respite from parenting or parental illness.

Within each category, the Centre must consider the benefit of childcare to the child and the family and alternative arrangements reasonably available to achieve that benefit.

The Centre also reserves the right to consider enrolments based on the Priority of Access on other grounds. A Waiting List is maintained.

Priority of Access to the **Preschool Service** is based on the National Quality Standards Universal Access and Same Start Day Policies where all children turning 4 years of age, prior to the 1st May in any given year, commence Preschool at the commencement of term 1 of that year. Children turning 4 years of age on or after the 1st May commence Preschool the following year in term 1.

All Pre-schoolers are entitled to 600 hours of Preschool. BCCC Preschool service is able to cater for 30 children per session (we run 2 groups) and *may* need to use the following priority of access if more than 60 children are eligible to attend (in which case, a waiting list will be maintained). As long as child safety can be guaranteed, we have the option of applying for a temporary exemption to be over capacity.

1. Children at risk
2. Oldest children
3. Special needs children
4. Distance
5. Accessibility

Supporting Resources:

- BCCC *Complaints and Communication Policy and Procedures and Parents Concern and Complaints* brochure
- BCCC Enrolment and Induction Packs
- Centre waiting list for childcare and preschool children
- *Responding to Child Abuse and Neglect* training
- *Early Years System*
- DECD *Preschool Enrolment Policy*
- Preschool and Integrated Services Enrolment Forms
- DECD Attendance Policy, including Attendance Recording Procedures for Preschools
- Legislation and Legal Services website: Resources and Services

Sources:

- DECD Enrolment Policy and Procedures, including *Proof of Age; Children subject to Family Law & Intervention Orders*
- DECD Early Years System

Policy last reviewed: Term 3 2013

Policy review due: Term 3 2014

Approval Signature: