

PURPOSE

This policy outlines:

- the criteria for enrolment at South Kingsville Preschool
- the process to be followed when enrolling a child at South Kingsville Preschool
- the basis on which places within the programs will be allocated
- procedures for the orientation of new families and children into South Kingsville Preschool
- processes to ensure compliance with legislative and DET funding requirements in relation to the enrolment of children in early childhood education and care services.

POLICY STATEMENT

1. VALUES

South Kingsville Preschool is committed to:

- equal access for all eligible children
- meeting the needs of the local community
- supporting families to meet the requirements for enrolment through the provision of information
- maintaining confidentiality in relation to all information provided for enrolment
- ensuring all families are welcomed and receive an effective orientation into the service.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, early childhood teachers, educators, staff and parents/guardians who wish to enrol or have already enrolled their child at South Kingsville Preschool.

3. BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION

Background

The *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011* require approved services to have a policy and procedures in place in relation to enrolment and orientation (Regulation 168(2)(k)).

It is intended that all eligible children (refer to *Definitions*) will have access to one year of kindergarten before commencing school. However, a shortage of places in some areas can limit choices for parents/guardians. Where demand is higher than availability, a priority system for access must be determined by the Approved Provider in order to allocate the available places. The criteria used to determine the allocation of places will vary from service to service, but is generally based on a service's philosophy, values and beliefs, and the provisions of the *Equal Opportunity Act 2012*. The Victorian Government requires funded organisations to ensure that their policies and procedures promote equal opportunity for all children. Criteria for access and inclusion are outlined in *The Kindergarten Guide* (refer to *Sources*). Services participating in central enrolment schemes are required to comply with the enrolment procedures of that scheme.

Childcare services providing approved care (refer to *Definitions*) must abide by the *Family Assistance Legislation Amendment (Child Care Rebate) Act 2011* (refer to *Legislation and standards*) and the Commonwealth Government's *Priority for allocating places in child care services* (refer to *Sources*).

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* have legislative responsibilities under the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act*

2008 to only offer a confirmed place in their programs to children with acceptable immunisation documentation (refer to *Definitions*).

Legislation and standards

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- *A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999*
- *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, 177, 183
- *Equal Opportunity Act 2010* (Vic)
- *Family Assistance Legislation Amendment (Child Care Rebate) Act 2011*
- *National Quality Standard, Quality Area 6: Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities*
 - Standard 6.1: Respectful and supportive relationships with families are developed and maintained
 - Element 6.1.1: There is an effective enrolment and orientation process for families
- *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* (Vic)
- *Public Health and Wellbeing Amendment (No Jab, No Play) Regulations 2015* (Vic)
- *Sex Discrimination Act 1984* (Cth)

4. DEFINITIONS

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy. For commonly used terms e.g. Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Regulatory Authority etc. refer to the *General Definitions* section of this manual.

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

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

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

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

Child Care Subsidy: A Commonwealth Government payment to help families who use either approved or registered childcare services. All eligible families can receive some Child Care Subsidy. Details are available at: <https://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/steps/claiming-child-care-subsidy/42981>

Children with additional needs: 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 *Inclusion and Equity Policy*).

Deferral: When a child does not attend in the year when they are eligible for a funded kindergarten place, or is officially withdrawn from a service prior to the April data collection. DET considers that this child has not accessed a year of funded kindergarten and is therefore eligible for DET funding in the following year.

Eligible child: A child attending an early childhood education and care service as described in the *Immunisation enrolment toolkit for early childhood education and care services* or a child in a kindergarten program who meets the requirements of both *The Kindergarten Guide* and the *Immunisation enrolment toolkit for early childhood education and care services*.

Enrolment application 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.

Enrolment application form: A form to apply for a place at the service.

Enrolment form: A form that collects contact details, and personal and medical information from parents/guardians about their child. This is completed after a place has been offered by the service and accepted by the applicant. The information on this form is placed on the child's enrolment record (see below) and is kept confidential by the service.

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

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

5. SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES

Sources

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

Service policies

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

PROCEDURES

The Approved Provider is responsible for:

- determining the criteria for priority of access to programs at South Kingsville Preschool, based on funding requirements and the service's philosophy (refer also to Attachment 1 – Eligibility and priority of access criteria)
- considering any barriers to access that may exist, developing procedures that ensure all eligible families are aware of, and are able to access, an early childhood program
- complying with the *Inclusion and Equity Policy*
- appointing a person to be responsible for the enrolment process and the day-to-day implementation of this policy
- providing opportunities (in consultation with the Nominated Supervisor and educators) for interested families to attend the service during operational hours to observe the program and become familiar with the service prior to their child commencing in the program
- providing parents/guardians with information about the requirements of the law for enrolment, locating and accessing immunisation services and obtaining acceptable immunisation documentation required for enrolment
- assessing the child's immunisation documentation **at orientation** to determine if the child's vaccination status complies with requirements or whether the child is eligible for the 16 week grace period
- advising parents/guardians who do not have acceptable immunisation documentation that their children are not able to attend the service and referring them to immunisation services (see Attachment 4 – Letter for parents/guardians without acceptable immunisation documentation)
- taking reasonable steps to obtain acceptable immunisation documentation from a parent/guardian of a child enrolled under a grace period within the 16 weeks from when the child begins attending (Note: the child can continue to attend the service if acceptable immunisation documentation is not obtained).
- ensuring that the enrolment form (refer to *Definitions*) complies with the requirements of Regulations 160, 161, 162 and that it effectively meets the management requirements of the service
- ensuring that enrolment records (refer to *Definitions*) are stored in a safe and secure place, and kept for three years after the last date on which the child was educated and cared for by the service (Regulation 183)
- ensuring that the orientation program and plans meet the individual needs of children and families, and comply with DET funding criteria
- reviewing the orientation processes for new families and children to ensure the objectives of this policy are met
- ensuring that parents/guardians of a child attending the service can enter the service premises at any time that the child is being educated and cared for, except where this may pose a risk to the safety of children or staff, or conflict with any duty of the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor or educators under the Law (Regulation 157).

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

- providing enrolment application forms (refer to Attachment 2 – Sample Enrolment Application Form)
- collating enrolments
- maintaining a waiting list
- collecting, receipting and banking enrolment fees
- offering places in line with this policy and criteria for priority access, and providing relevant paperwork to families in accordance with this policy
- reporting to the Approved Provider regarding the status of enrolments and any difficulties encountered

- 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
- providing a copy of the *Enrolment and Orientation Policy* with the enrolment application form.

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

All educators are responsible for:

- responding to enrolment enquiries on a day-to-day basis and referring people to the person responsible for the enrolment process, as required
- providing parents/guardians with information about the requirements of the law for enrolment, locating and accessing immunisation services and obtaining acceptable immunisation documentation required for enrolment
- developing strategies to assist new families to:
 - feel welcomed into the service
 - become familiar with service policies and procedures
 - share information about their family beliefs, values and culture
 - share their understanding of their child's strengths, interests, abilities and needs
 - discuss the values and expectations they hold in relation to their child's learning
- providing comfort and reassurance to children who are showing signs of distress when separating from family members
- complying with the service's *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy* in relation to the collection and management of a child's enrolment information.

Parents/guardians are responsible for:

- reading and complying with this *Enrolment and Orientation Policy*
- completing the enrolment application form and the enrolment form prior to their child's commencement at the service and providing acceptable immunisation documentation of their child's immunisation status
- where a child is on an immunisation catch-up schedule, ensuring that the child's immunisations are updated in line with the schedule and providing acceptable immunisation documentation to the service
- ensuring that all other required information is provided to the service
- updating information by notifying the service of any changes as they occur.

Volunteers and students, while at the service, are responsible for following this policy and its procedures

EVALUATION

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the Approved Provider will:

- regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness
- monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy
- keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice
- revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required
- notify parents/guardians at least 14 days before making any changes to this policy or its procedures.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1: General enrolment procedures
- Attachment 2: Enrolment procedures for the 3 year old pre school program
- Attachment 3: 3 year old registration form
- Attachment 4: Letter for parents/guardians without acceptable immunisation documentation
- Attachment 5: Enrolment procedures for the 4 year old pre school program & Priority of Access Criteria

AUTHORISATION

This policy was adopted by the Approved Provider of South Kingsville Preschool on 5th September 2016.

REVIEW DATE: 20/06/2020

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The SKPS Enrolment and Orientation Policy was originally created by ELAA ©2012

Telephone 03 9489 3500 or 1300 730 119 (rural)

ATTACHMENT 1

General enrolment procedures

- A separate application form must be completed for each child, and for each proposed year of attendance at the centre.
- To facilitate the inclusion (refer to Inclusion and equity policy) of all children into the program, enrolment applications should clearly identify any additional or specific needs of the child.
- Parents/guardians of children applying for a second year of funded kindergarten or currently attending a three-year-old program must submit an enrolment application form for the following year.
- A copy of the child's birth certificate must accompany all applications.
- 3 year old enrolments must be accompanied by the Kindergarten Deposit Fee of \$50. This is a non-refundable fee and is in addition to the Term 1 Fees. Term 1 fees will be invoiced during the 4th term preceding the year of commencement and in order to secure a place in the 4 year old program, Term 1 Fees must be paid by the requested due date. This date is dependent on the release of places from Hobson's Bay Council (Refer to the Fees policy).
- Access to completed enrolment application forms will be restricted to the enrolment secretary (or delegated person), staff, president and secretary, unless otherwise specified by the committee.

Places will not be allocated to children until any substantial debt owed by the family to the centre is paid, or a payment plan is agreed to between the family and the centre. (Refer to the Fees policy)

1. Offer of places

- Tentative places will be offered in writing to applicants in accordance with the eligibility and priority of access criteria of the service making clear that confirmation of places is not final until immunisation documentation has been received, assessed and found acceptable.
- The documentation is assessed as outlined in the *Immunisation enrolment toolkit for early childhood education and care services* by the person responsible for the enrolment process on behalf of the Approved Provider. The Key Dates work form in the *Immunisation enrolment toolkit for early childhood education and care services* is used to determine the date at which immunisations must be up to date. The toolkit also provides guidance on assessing immunisation documentation to determine if a child is up to date or qualifies for an exemption. The following documents and resources can be accessed from <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au>:
 - The *Immunisation enrolment toolkit for early childhood education and care services* (search 'Immunisation enrolment toolkit')
 - The Key Dates work form (search 'Key Dates work form')
 - Hard copies of the immunisation resources (search 'immunisation resources order form')
- The acceptable outcomes of the assessment for offering a confirmed place are:
 - That the next due vaccine for the child on the ACIR Immunisation History Statement or the Immunisation Status certificate is within the acceptable timeframe for an enrolment, or;
 - That the child is on a recognised catch-up schedule if they have fallen behind with their vaccinations, or;

- That the child has a medical reason not to be vaccinated, or,
- That the child has been assessed by South Kingsville Preschool as being eligible for a 16 week grace period
- A separate application form must be completed for each child, and for each proposed year of attendance at the centre.
- To facilitate the inclusion (refer to Inclusion and equity policy) of all children into the program, enrolment applications should clearly identify any additional or specific needs of the child.
- Parents/guardians of children applying for a second year of funded kindergarten or currently attending a three-year-old program must submit an enrolment application form for the following year.
- A copy of the child's birth certificate must accompany all applications.
- 3 year old enrolments must be accompanied by the Kindergarten Deposit Fee of \$50. This is a non-refundable fee and is in addition to the Term 1 Fees. Term 1 fees will be invoiced during the 4th term preceding the year of commencement and in order to secure a place in the 4 year old program, Term 1 Fees must be paid by the requested due date. This date is dependent on the release of places from Hobson's Bay Council (Refer to the Fees policy).
- Access to completed enrolment application forms will be restricted to the enrolment secretary (or delegated person), staff, president and secretary, unless otherwise specified by the committee.
- The person responsible for the enrolment process advises the parent/guardian in writing whether a confirmed place is offered and the enrolment can proceed.
- Parents/guardians who do not wish to accept the offer of a tentative or confirmed place, or intend to withdraw their enrolment, are requested to notify the Approved Provider, or the person responsible for managing the enrolment process at the service, in writing as soon as possible.
- An enrolment form and other relevant information will be provided by South Kingsville Preschool to the parent/guardian after a confirmed place has been accepted and the fee has been paid.

Note: Places will not be allocated to children until any outstanding fees owed to the service by the family is paid, or a payment plan is agreed to between the family and the service (refer to *Fees Policy*).

ATTACHMENT 2

ENROLMENT PROCEDURES FOR THE 3 YEAR-OLD PRE SCHOOL PROGRAM:

1. Children attending South Kingsville Pre School in the 3-year-old group must be 3 years of age on or before the 30th April of the year in which they are eligible to attend.

Children may begin following their 3rd birthday. For those children who turn 3 years of age after the commencement of term 1, and prior to 30th April, a full term's fees will still be payable in order to hold their position. Children who have not yet turned three are able to attend kindergarten from one week prior to their third birthday ONLY when accompanied by an adult. After they have turned three they are able to attend kindergarten unaccompanied.

2. Parents/Guardians should register their wish to enrol their child in the 3-year-old program at South Kingsville Pre School by visiting, telephoning the centre or obtaining an enrolment form from the South Kingsville Preschool website. A copy of their child's birth certificate is required to complete the registration process.

For planning purposes, it is the Parents'/Guardians' responsibility to inform the centre of any additional needs a child may have at this initial registration.

3. Positions in the 3-year-old group will be offered in order of registration.

Registration will be accepted 18 months prior to the year of proposed attendance.

4. For those registrations that exceed available places, the child's name shall remain on a waiting list and the parent/guardian shall be notified should a vacancy occur.

5. In June parents/guardians shall be notified, in writing, if their child has obtained a place in the 3-year-old program.

6. Acceptance of this place must be made by the required date or the place shall be forfeited. As confirmation of acceptance of the place in the 3-year-old program, South Kingsville Pre School requires payment of an administration levy. This levy is determined by the service budget for the program.

7. The 3-Year-Old Group Teacher will contact parents/guardians of children with additional needs to obtain further information and to discuss the possible arrangement of appropriate support from specialist agencies.

8. It is essential for parents/guardians to attend the SKPS Annual General Meeting/Information Night. At this meeting parents will receive the forms and information required for their child to commence the program in the following year.

9. Enrolment procedures and forms will be completed at an interview with the 3-Year-Old Group Teacher. This interview will be conducted prior to the commencement of the pre-school year.

10. Parents/Guardians are asked to carefully consider their child's readiness for kindergarten, as South Kingsville Pre School is unable to provide a guarantee that a second year of funded 4-year-old pre-school will be available. The 3-Year-Old Group Teacher can assist with advice & information about readiness.

Eligibility and access criteria for three-year-old children

Children are eligible for attendance in the three-year-old program provided they have turned three prior to commencement. Children will only be able to attend a second year of three-year-old kindergarten in exceptional circumstances (which have been considered by the committee and staff) or when all eligible children on the waiting list have been offered a place.

The Committee of Management will need to determine eligibility and access criteria applicable to the centre. Examples include:

- Children who the teacher has recommended an additional year in the three-year-old program
- Applications for the three year old program are accepted from the 1st of June, 18 months prior to attendance (eg. Enrolment on 1st June 2013 for attendance in the year of 2015). Enrolments are accepted in order of application from 8:30am on the first official day of enrolment (eg. June 1st). Enrolment forms and/or birth certificates sent in to the centre via mail will not receive priority and instead will only be registered at the end of the business day.

ATTACHMENT 3

**South Kingsville Pre School
3 Year Old Registration Form**

Complete this Registration Form and:

- Enclose a copy of the birth certificate or suitable evidence of the child's birth date

- Forward the completed registration form, with attachments, to South Kingsville Pre School. (Please note, postal registrations will be accepted on June 1st but will not be recorded until the end of business that day. Registrations hand delivered at the beginning of the day will take priority over those received by mail.)

- Please notify the centre of any changes to your address or other relevant information on 93919780

Children must be 3 years of age on or before the 30th April of the year they are eligible to attend. **Children may commence following their 3rd birthday.** For those children who turn 3 years of age after the commencement of term 1 and prior to the 30th April, will be required to pay a full terms fee in order to hold their position.

This application is for my child to attend in (please circle): 2018 2019

Please circle: Male Female

Child's family name: _____

Given names: _____

Date of birth: ___/___/___

Parents'/guardians' names: _____

Address: _____

_____ Postcode: _____

Email Address

Telephone number: (Home) _____ (Business) _____ (Mobile) _____

Language/s spoken at home: _____

DEECD provides a fee subsidy for:

• Three-year-old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander concession card holders to access the funded program or, where there are no places available in the funded program, they may access a three-year-old program at no cost

• Children known to Child Protection to attend a kindergarten program.

No Jab No Play. All children enrolling in early childhood education will need to be up to date with their immunisation or have an approved exemption.

Children with additional needs:

Does your child have additional needs? Yes No

If yes, please specify:

You are encouraged to discuss your child's needs with the teacher when your child's place is confirmed.

Is your child registered with a specific agency? Yes No

Name of agency: _____

Signature of parent/guardian:

Date: _____

ATTACHMENT 4

Letter for parents/guardians without acceptable immunisation documentation

[Service Name]

[Address]

[Insert date]

Dear [insert name]

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

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

Under the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* early childhood education and care services cannot enrol a child unless the parent/guardian has provided acceptable immunisation documentation.

Acceptable immunisation documentation includes evidence that your child:

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

As we have not received acceptable immunisation documentation for [insert name of child] by the due date, we are unable to confirm a place at our service for [insert year] and your child's name has been removed from our list.

Immunisation programs are effective in reducing the risk of vaccine preventable diseases. Immunisation from an early age helps protect your child against serious childhood infections. Further information about immunisations for your child is available from:

- your doctor
- [insert details of local government immunisation service]
- National Immunisation Information Line Tel. 1800 671 811
- Australian Childhood Immunisation Register Tel 1800 653 809
- Better Health Channel website: <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/no-jab-no-play>

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

Yours sincerely

[Insert name]

[Insert title]

[Service Name]

ATTACHMENT 5

ENROLMENT PROCEDURES FOR THE 4 YEAR OLD PRE SCHOOL PROGRAM:

Children attending South Kingsville Pre School in the 4-year-old group must be 4 years of age on or before the 30th April of the year in which they are eligible to attend.

Pre Schools in the municipality of Hobsons Bay have a Central Enrolment Scheme for their 4-year-old programs.

Parents/guardians wishing to enrol their child in the 4-year-old program at South Kingsville Pre School should obtain an enrolment application form from the kindergarten or Hobsons Bay City Council: www.hobsons.vic.gov.au

The completed form should then be submitted with a copy of the child's birth certificate & application fee, to the organising body identified on the form.

The Director or staff of the Pre School cannot accept 4-year-old enrolments on behalf of Hobson's Bay City Council.

Between July & November of the year prior to the child's attendance at kindergarten, Hobsons Bay City Council shall notify parents/guardians, in writing, if their child has obtained a place in the 4-year-old program.

In accordance with the Hobsons Bay City Council's Central Enrolment Scheme & the HBCC Kindergarten Central Enrolment Officer will communicate directly with parents/guardians on all matters relating to enrolment applications, offers and acceptance of a place in the 4-year-old program.

Upon acceptance of all offered places in the 4-year-old program at SKPS, Hobsons Bay City Council will advise the kindergarten of allocations and group preferences which are based on date of application.

Group preferences will then be reviewed by SKPS prior to confirmation. Preferences for a particular group will be accommodated where possible, but cannot be guaranteed. SKPS is committed to fostering the best possible group dynamics and environment for all children enrolled in the 4-year-old programs. Should the initial group allocations have the potential to compromise this commitment in any way, SKPS reserves the right to alter group allocations accordingly. If such alterations are found to be necessary, they will be made based on date of application.

South Kingsville Pre School will confirm group allocations in writing, via email.

Before the commencement of the coming year, the Pre School Director will contact parents/guardians of children with additional needs. This is in order to obtain further information and to discuss the possible arrangement of appropriate support from specialist agencies.

As confirmation of acceptance of a 4-year-old program position, SKPS requires payment of an

Administration Fee and Term 1 fees paid in advance. Fees are determined by the service budget for the centre. Parents/guardians will receive an invoice in late October, together with their invitation to attend the SKPS Annual General Meeting / Information Night. Fees must be paid by the date specified in order to retain a place at SKPS for the following year.

It is essential for parents/guardians to attend the SKPS Annual General Meeting / Information Night. At this meeting parents will be receive the forms and information required for their child to commence the program in the following year.

All places in the 4-year-old program are subject to government funding.

Parents/Guardians are asked to carefully consider their child's readiness for kindergarten and school, as South Kingsville Pre School is unable to provide a guarantee that a second year of funded 4-year-old pre-school will be available. The SKPS teachers can assist with advice & information about kindergarten & school readiness & the option of deferral.

Eligibility and priority of access criteria

1. Eligibility and priority of access criteria for the funded kindergarten program

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 criteria listed below**
- **Work with other local kindergarten services and the regional Department office to ensure all eligible children have access to a kindergarten place.**

High priority children	Process that could be used to verify need(s)
Children at risk of abuse or neglect, including children in Out-of-Home Care	The child is: attending a three year old kindergarten program through Early Start Kindergarten or Access to Early Learning, or is referred by: 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, or 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 KIM.
Asylum seeker and refugee children	An appropriate visa identifies the child and/or parents as a refugee or asylum seeker.
Children eligible for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy	A child or parent holds a Commonwealth Health Care Card, Pensioner Concession Card, Veteran's Affairs Card, or multiple birth children (triplets, quadruplets).
Children with additional needs, defined as children who: require additional assistance in order to fully participate in the kindergarten program require a combination of services which are individually planned have an identified specific disability or developmental delay	The child: is assessed as having delays in two or more areas and is declared eligible for a second funded year of kindergarten holds a Child Disability Health Care Card has previously been approved for Kindergarten Inclusion Support Package, or referred by: the National Disability Insurance Scheme Early Childhood Intervention Service Preschool Field Officer, or Maternal and Child Health nurse.

The following children are eligible for attendance in the funded kindergarten program:

- children who have been granted approval to receive funding for a second year of kindergarten in accordance with *The Kindergarten Guide* available at: www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/funding/Pages/kinderfundingcriteria.aspx
- Children who are born January 1st – April 30th may start the following year at 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 (refer to *The Kindergarten Guide*, available at: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/funding/Pages/default.aspx>)
- children who are younger than the eligible age, but whose parents/guardians have submitted an early age entry request for their child to attend school the following year. This written request is to be directed to the regional office of DET, or the non-government school the child will be attending. A copy of the approval must be attached to the kindergarten application. Parents/guardians should note that very few requests are approved by DET. If the child attends kindergarten early, but does not proceed to school in the following year, they will be unable to access a second year of kindergarten unless they are deemed eligible by DET for having recognised developmental needs
- three-year-old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, and children known to Child Protection may be eligible for the Early Start Kindergarten program. This scheme provides funding to enable children to attend a kindergarten program that is planned and delivered by an early childhood teacher for a specific number of hours. Details are available at: www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/learningdev/pages/earlystartkinder.aspx

When demand exceeds availability, the Approved Provider will refer to the service's values, philosophy and *Inclusion and Equity Policy* to determine the priority of access. This will include:

- children who have received funding for a second year of kindergarten
- children who were eligible to attend in the previous year but deferred or withdrew from the service prior to the April data collection.
- priority of access criteria as outlined in *The Kindergarten Guide* available at: www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/funding/Pages/kinderfundingcriteria.aspx

Other considerations may include date of application, siblings already enrolled at the service, attendance in the three-year-old program and local community zoning.

If participating in a central enrolment scheme, the priority of access for that scheme will be implemented. Childcare services providing approved care (refer to *Definitions*) must abide by the *Family Assistance Legislation Amendment (Child Care Rebate) Act 2011* (refer to *Legislation and standards*) and the Commonwealth Government's *Priority for allocating places in child care services* (refer to *Sources*).

