

PRIORITY OF ACCESS POLICY (PRESCHOOL)

AIM

To provide fair and equitable access to the care available at the Centre.

To provide care within the guidelines as set out by the Department of Family, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.

IMPLEMENTATION

Leadership will:

- Ensure this policy is reviewed regularly and implemented throughout the site
- Identify each family's category of priority, considering individual circumstances.
- Determine priority of children accessing Preschool placements via the following:
 - **Priority One:** Children in the Department prescribed catchment area. If more local children apply than there are spaces, the below criteria will also be considered. Children in care are to be given a place at their first choice Preschool
 - **Priority Two:** For children who already attend the site, priority will be given to children based on:
 - At risk (e.g. referred to site by service, would benefit from continuity at site, accesses services/support at site)
 - Children who are Aboriginal
 - Parent/caregivers work/study/undergoing training
 - Length of time at the site/length of time living in catchment area
 - Attendance of current sessions (i.e. priority given to children who attend more days)
 - Siblings who attend or on waiting list to attend
 - Planned school of attendance
 - Proximity to catchment zone (in kilometres)
 - Transportation (i.e. driving versus accessibility by public transport)
 - **Priority Three:** For children on the waiting list who are not categorised above, priority will be given based on:
 - children who are considered at risk (e.g. referred to site by service, accesses services/support at site)
 - children who are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
 - children who will be attending Forbes Primary
 - children in close proximity to the zone
 - children with limited transport
 - any other child, prioritised by length of time on the wait list
- Prioritise children who have been referred to enrol from other sites in the Partnership, if they have been unable to be placed at their zoned preschool and the Centre still has places to offer.
- Preschool children will be enrolled according to the Same First Day Policy with one in-take each year. There may be exceptions where children are:
 - Aboriginal or Under the Guardianship of the Minister
 - Transferring from an interstate or overseas Preschool (and have completed at least one term of preschool)
 - From a family that is part of the Australian Defence Force
- Communicate with families regarding the Preschool placement process
- Inform families with children turning four years at the beginning of each year, that they are not automatically eligible for Preschool placement despite attending child care at the Centre.
- Document the reasons for declining placements for children and inform families they do not have a placement in a timely manner.
- Manage the expression of interest and enrolment process, including delegating responsibilities.

Administration will:

- Ask families if they have a child attending the Centre or Forbes Primary School when completing expression of interest.

Families will:

- Complete Priority of Access assessment forms and return to the Centre when registering interest for Preschool.
- Inform the Centre and update their details if their circumstances change in any way that would affect their child's level of priority.
- Touch base with their local Preschool, based on catchment area, prior to their child turning four years.
- Understand attending child care at the Centre does not guarantee a Preschool placement (see priority criteria above).
- Be able to request the reason for being declined a preschool placement in writing.

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD- Leadership and service management

6.2.2 Effective partnerships support children's access, inclusion and participation in the program.

EVALUATION:

This policy is viewed to be working effectively when

- Appropriate guidelines are followed, and fair and equitable access is provided to all families.

Record of Policy Adoption and Amendment:

Version	Date	Details	Author	Approver
1.0	January 2011	Policy adopted.	Ocean View CC Polices	Governing Council
2.0	June 2012	Policy circulated to Policy Review Committee and staff for review and suggested amendments identified, including; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NQF regulations • Leaving the service 	K Cook	Policy Review Committee
2.1	September 2014	Reformatted and added family and administration responsibilities.	P Murray	Policy Review Committee
2.2	December 2016	Added exclusions from Same First Day and changed to match DECD policy	P Murray	Director
3.0	November 2018	Split Priority of Access into Preschool and Childcare policies. Added priority based on extra factors to accommodate non-zoned families who would benefit from Preschool place.	K Cook	Director

Review:

To be reviewed biennially by the Assistant Director and any recommended amendments endorsed by the Policy Review Committee.

Last reviewed: 3rd November 2022

Source:

Child Care Management Service 2011