

ENROLMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURE - KINDERGARTEN

CONTENTS

1. PRINCIPLE	1
2. POLICY	1
3. SCOPE.....	2
4. IMPLEMENTATION.....	4
5. PROCESS.....	4
The criteria and process for selection and allocation of places, including special conditions (eg ESK).....	4
The enrolment, orientation, settling period and evaluation process.....	5
Application for a place.....	5
Offer and Acceptance of a place	6
Orientation program	6
Withdrawing from Kindergarten procedure.....	7
6. DEFINITIONS.....	7
7. RELATED LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS	8
8. SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES.....	8
9. EVALUATION.....	9
10. APPROVAL AND REVIEW DETAILS	9
ATTACHMENT 1.....	10
Kinder Funding Confirmation Letter (sample)	10

1. PRINCIPLE

A clear enrolment policy and process helps families decide whether FWCSS Kindergarten is the best choice for their child and how to proceed following that decision; it supports teachers and educators to establish a cohesive kindergarten group where all children have the opportunity to thrive; and allows the school to administer the kindergarten program, and meet all regulatory requirements, efficiently and effectively.

2. POLICY

When families enquire about a kindergarten place at FWCSS, the school will clearly communicate the following

- Roles and responsibilities of staff members (eg approved provider, nominated supervisor etc)
- What they can expect their child to experience at FWCSS kinder
- The process to be followed when enrolling a child at Freshwater Creek Steiner Kindergarten
- The priority of access criteria that is applied during the allocation of places
- The enrolment, orientation, settling period and evaluation process
- The kindergarten communication policies and processes, including how to communicate concerns
- How the school enacts its privacy policy, and other relevant legislated policies.

FWCSS aims to provide equitable access to all eligible children.

Freshwater Creek Steiner School and Kindergarten is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people.

At FWCSS we have zero tolerance for child abuse. We are committed to providing a child safe environment where children and young people are safe and feel safe, and their voices are heard. We pay attention to the safety of all children, including the cultural safety of Aboriginal children and children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, as well as the safety of gender diverse children, and children with a disability.

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to parents/guardians who wish to enrol or have already enrolled their child at Freshwater Creek Steiner Kindergarten, their Authorised Nominees, and to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, early childhood teachers, educators and other staff, volunteers and visitors to FWCSS.

Roles and responsibilities of staff members

<p>The Approved Provider will:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure that obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations are met • determine the local criteria for priority of access • ensure that an enrolment record is kept for each child which contains all the information set out in regulation 160, as well as authorisations from parents relating to medical treatment, regular outings, health information and transportation • keep prescribed enrolment and other documents as set out in regulation 177, including a medication record and children’s attendance record • keep records confidential, and stored safely and securely for the relevant period listed in regulation 183 • consider quality practice approaches to enrolment and orientation • take reasonable steps to ensure that nominated supervisors, educators, staff and volunteers follow the Enrolment and orientation policy and procedures • ensure that copies of the policy and procedures are readily accessible to nominated supervisors, coordinators, educators, staff, volunteers and families, and available for inspection • notify families at least 14 days before changing the policy or procedures if the changes will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • affect the fees charged or the way they are collected or • significantly impact the service’s education and care of children or • significantly impact the family’s ability to utilise the service • ensure the Kindergarten’s obligations under the Child Safe Standards legislation are met.
<p>The Enrolment Officer will:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure that regulatory obligations are met in relation to

	<p>enrolment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • implement procedures for enrolment • ensure families are aware of relevant policies and procedures at time of enrolment, eg: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical Conditions Policy • Code of Behaviour for the School Community etc • promote quality practice approaches to enrolment • allocate places to Kindergarten families in accordance with the DET and priority of access criteria and the local priority of access criteria • Maintain a waiting list • Keep records confidential, in accordance with the FWCSS Privacy Policy
The Nominated Supervisor will:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be familiar with regulatory requirements • promote quality practice approaches to orientation • implement procedures for enrolment and orientation • ensure that the orientation program and plans meet the individual needs of children and families • support families' involvement in the service and contribution to service decisions regarding the enrolment and orientation of their child at the service • review enrolment applications to identify children with additional needs and link families with external agencies where appropriate
Educators will:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be familiar with regulatory requirements • support families' involvement in the service and contribution to service decisions regarding the orientation of their child at the service • share information with families to support the child's transition into the service • respect the culture, values and beliefs of families, and incorporate (?) their decision-making in their child's learning and wellbeing • familiarise themselves with the information supplied by the family about the child and use this to support the child to transition into the service • keep records confidential. • ensure 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).
Families will:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • read and comply with this Enrolment Policy and the FWCSS Code of Behaviour for the School Community, and act in alignment with the FWCSS Values • complete all documentation required by the service • provide 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

	<p>service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • notify the service upon enrolment of any specific health care needs of the child, including any medical conditions and allergies and any medical management plans that need to be followed • ensure all information about the child and family held by the service is kept up-to-date.
Volunteers, students, and other visitors (such as Authorised Nominees or external agencies) will:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • follow this policy and its procedures whilst at the service.

4. IMPLEMENTATION

This policy is implemented through a combination of:

- Staff training;
- Effective communication procedures;
- Effective record keeping procedures; and
- Initiation of corrective actions where necessary.

5. PROCESS

The criteria and process for selection and allocation of places, including special conditions (eg ESK)

The number of places offered in the FWCSS Government Funded Kindergarten programs each year is at the discretion of the School Council and meets the ratio requirements within the current legislation.

Subject to availability, and in alignment with school terms, FWCSS offers:

- 3YO Program – 2 days per week (12 hours)*
- 4YO Program – 3 days per week (18 hours)

*refer Early Start Kindergarten (ESK) eligibility

Children are only eligible for two years of funded kindergarten; one 3YO year, and one 4YO year so careful consideration should be made as to which year families enrol their child in kindergarten. Families with children born between January and April can choose which year to start Three-Year-Old Kindergarten. These children can start in the same year they turn three, or in the year they turn four years of age. More information can be found at:

<https://www.vic.gov.au/starting-kindergarten>.

Outside these age guidelines, the following children are also eligible for attendance in the funded kindergarten program:

- children who have been granted approval to receive funding for a third year of kindergarten in accordance with The Kindergarten Funding Guide available at: <https://www.vic.gov.au/kindergarten-funding-guide>
- 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 Funding Guide, available at: <https://www.vic.gov.au/kindergarten-funding-guide>)
- 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.

- Early Start Kindergarten:
Children who are:
 - from a refugee or asylum seeker background, or
 - identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, or
 - whose family has had contact with 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: <https://www.vic.gov.au/early-start-kindergarten>

When demand exceeds availability, the Approved Provider will:

- a. Apply the DET *Priority of access criteria* to identify High Priority children, as detailed in The Kindergarten Funding Guide, available at: <https://www.vic.gov.au/kindergarten-funding-guide> .

High Priority children include children who:

- Are at risk of abuse or neglect
 - Are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
 - Are, or have parents or carers who are, asylum seekers or refugees
 - Are eligible for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy (hold a valid concession card or are a triplet or quadruplet)
 - Have additional developmental needs.
- b. After the Service has applied the DET *Priority of access criteria* to identify High Priority children, locally agreed criteria specific to FWCSS will be applied for all remaining places.
 - children with siblings currently enrolled in the school or Kinder
 - children transferring from another Steiner Kindergarten
 - the fee-paying record of the family;
 - knowledge of and commitment to Steiner Education
 - date of application.

The enrolment, orientation, settling period and evaluation process

Application for a place

- Enrolment application forms are available from the service and are provided to parents/guardians together with information about the requirements of the law for enrolment, locating and accessing immunisation services, obtaining acceptable immunisation documentation, and information about how to access copies of the Enrolment Policy, Fees Policy, and FWCSS School Community Code of Behaviour, Child Safe Code of Conduct and other relevant policies.
- A separate enrolment application form must be completed for each child.
- To facilitate the inclusion of all children into the program, the completed enrolment application form should clearly identify any additional or specific needs of the child.
- A copy of the child's birth certificate and immunisation certificate must be submitted with all applications.
- Completed enrolment application forms are to be forwarded to FWCSS Administration by email to info@fwcss.vic.edu.au or mail to Freshwater Creek Steiner School, 52 McIntyres Rd, FRESHWATER CREEK VIC 3217.
- Applications will be entered on the waiting list using the eligibility and priority of access

criteria.

- Submission of an enrolment application does not constitute a confirmed enrolment.

Offer and Acceptance of a place

- If places are available, a provisional enrolment place 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.
- Freshwater Creek Steiner Kindergarten requires parents/guardians who have been offered a provisional place to provide acceptable immunisation documentation for assessment two months prior to the child first attending the service, to finalise their enrolment. Children who do not have acceptable immunisation documentation cannot be offered a place and their parents/guardians will be referred to Australian Childhood Immunisation Register or to an immunisation provider.
- Parents/guardians who do not wish to accept the offer of a provisional or confirmed place, or intend to withdraw their enrolment, are requested to notify the Kindergarten Enrolments Officer in writing as soon as possible.
- Second-round offers will be made two weeks after first-round offers. Further rounds of offers will be made as necessary.
- If a reply is not received from parents by the due date noted in the Letter of Offer, the place is released and offered to the next child on the waiting list.
- An Enrolment Bond must be paid in accordance with the FWCSS Fees Policy by the date indicated on the letter of offer, to confirm acceptance of the place. Refer FWCSS Fees Policy for full conditions surrounding the Enrolment Bond.
- Places will not be allocated to children until any outstanding fees owed to the service by the family are paid, or a payment plan is agreed to between the family and the service (refer to FWCSS Fees Policy)

Orientation program

The beginning of year orientation program will consist of:

- a class meeting with Kindergarten Teachers, Business Manager, other Kindergarten Parents
- a welcome picnic
- provision of the FWCSS Kindergarten Handbook
- provision of the FWCSS Kindergarten Orientation Period Timetable
- a teacher home visit.

For children joining part way through the year, the orientation program will consist of:

- a meeting between Kindergarten teacher and family
- provision of the FWCSS Kindergarten Handbook
- a teacher home visit.

During the orientation period, Educators will:

- discuss the individual child's needs with parents/guardians and develop a plan in consultation with parents, to assist the child to settle into the program, e.g. managing separation anxiety and other concerns.
- share information with parents/guardians regarding their child's progress towards settling into the service
- ensure that the orientation program and plans meet the individual needs of children and families, and comply with DET funding criteria
- discuss 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
- 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.

Volunteers and students:

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

Withdrawing from Kindergarten procedure

- Withdrawal from the Kindergarten requires 10 school weeks written notice (excluding any holiday weeks) to be submitted in writing to the Administration Office. Failure to provide the required notice of withdrawal will result in the Enrolment Bond being forfeited.
- If the child is absent from Kindergarten for more than four term weeks and the Kindergarten teacher is unable to contact the parents/guardians to obtain a valid reason for the absence, the child's enrolment may be withdrawn.
- The relevant Kindergarten Teacher, in consultation with the kinder administration team, will manage any contact requested by the child's next education placement.
- An exit interview will be offered to the parents of all students who leave the Kindergarten prior to the end of year. This is organised through the Kindergarten administration and involves a meeting between the leaving parent(s), the Kindergarten teacher and the Head of School. Parents will be offered an alternative option of completing an exit questionnaire.
- A register of exited students along with their destinations when known will be kept on record by the Enrolments Officer.

6. DEFINITIONS

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy.

Approved Provider: An entity/person who holds a provider approval (National Law). A provider approval authorises an entity/person to apply for one or more service approvals and is valid in all jurisdictions. The Freshwater Creek Steiner School Association Incorporated is the Approved Provider for our Kindergarten.

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 are requested on the child's enrolment form.

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.

Eligible child: A child who meets the DET and local eligibility criteria for a Kindergarten place.

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 (refer *Privacy Policy*).

Nominated Supervisor: means a person who is nominated by the approved provider of the service to be a nominated supervisor of that service; and unless the individual is the approved provider, has provided written consent to that nomination (National Law).

The Service: refers to Freshwater Creek Steiner Kindergarten

The School: refers to Freshwater Creek Steiner School.

7. RELATED LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS

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)

The most current amendments to listed legislation can be found at:

- Victorian Legislation – Victorian Law Today: <http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/>
- Commonwealth Legislation – Federal Register of Legislation: <https://www.legislation.gov.au/>

8. SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES

Sources

- Australian Childhood Immunisation Register: www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/medicare/australian-childhood-immunisation-register
- 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/
- 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

- Kindergarten Childsafe environment
- Dealing with Complaints Policy
- Delivery and Collection of Children Policy
- Notifiable and Infectious Diseases Policy
- Fees Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Disability Discrimination
- Student Duty of Care
- Code of Behaviour for the School Community

9. 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.

10. APPROVAL AND REVIEW DETAILS

Approval and Review	Details
Approval Authority	School Council
Administrator	Head of School
Next Review Date	01/06/2024
Approval and Amendment History	Details
Original Approval Authority and Date	
Amendment Authority and Date	16/11/2023
Notes	

YEAR Kinder Funding Confirmation Letter (sample) Accessing only one Government-funded Kindergarten place at any one time

Date

Dear parent/guardian,

Important information regarding your child’s kindergarten year

The Victorian Government provides funding to support children to access a high quality kindergarten program in the two years before they start school. The funding is a contribution towards meeting the cost of the kindergarten program.

Your child can only be funded for a kindergarten place at one service at any one time for their prekindergarten and kindergarten years. This funding is available for only one year in the 3yo Prekindergarten program. In the 4yo Kindergarten program which takes place in the year before a child attends school, funding is also usually available for only one year, unless your child is assessed as being eligible for a second funded year by your child’s kindergarten teacher.

In YEAR, your child is enrolled to attend our Kindergarten program and we will be claiming funding for your child on your behalf. **Please sign below and return this form to acknowledge that your child is accessing their funded kindergarten place at our service in YEAR.**

If your child will be attending another children’s service that offers a funded kindergarten program, you must tell that service we will be claiming funding for your child.

The Kindergarten Fee Subsidy (KFS) is available for some children to attend kindergarten for free (Government Kindergartens) or at lower cost (Fee-paying Kindergartens such as FWCSS). Your child is eligible if they are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, are a triplet or quadruplet, or if you (or your child) hold an eligible concession card. Please notify us if you believe your child may be eligible for the KFS.

Kind regards

Kelli Lavelle
 Early Childhood Coordinator

I confirm that my child will be accessing their funded kindergarten place at this service in 2023.

Freshwater Creek Steiner School	
Date:	Child name:
Parent name:	Signature: