

Enrolment and Orientation – Sessional Kinder Policy**Contents**

1.	OBJECTIVE	2
2.	SCOPE	2
3.	CONTEXT AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES	2
4.	DEFINITIONS	3
5.	POLICY	6
6.	ACCOUNTABILITIES	12
7.	RELATED DOCUMENTS	12
8.	RELEVANT LEGISLATION	12
9.	DOCUMENT	13

Enrolment and Orientation – Sessional Kinder Policy

1. Objective

bestchance is committed to:

- families feeling respected, safe and supported during the enrolment process
- ensuring families who may experience barriers to accessing kindergarten are proactively engaged
- being flexible and catering for unique family circumstances and needs
- being transparent in the process and allocation of places through consistent communication and information sharing
- ensuring the registration, allocation and enrolment process is simple to understand, follow and implement
- maintaining confidentiality in relation to all information provided for enrolment
- promoting fair and equitable access to kindergarten programs, including those who face barriers to participation
- enrolling Early Start Kindergarten eligible children into full 15 hours of kindergarten program

This policy provides a clear set of guidelines and procedures for:

- enrolling a child at **bestchance**
- the orientation of new families and children into our services
- ensuring compliance with Victorian and national legislation, including disability discrimination, anti-discrimination, human rights laws, No Jab No Play and Department of Education [DE] Kindergarten Funding Guide.
- ensuring access to participation, especially for vulnerable and disadvantaged children
- ensuring early entry applicants (this includes children younger than three years and children younger than four years old on 30 April in the year they will attend kindergarten) are given equitable access to enrolment.
- adhering to DE's priority of access requirements for both three and four-year-old children

2. Scope

This policy applies to the approved provider, persons with management or control, nominated supervisor, persons in day-to-day charge, early childhood teachers, educators, staff, students, volunteers, parents/guardians, children and others attending the programs and activities of **bestchance**, including during offsite excursions and activities.

3. Context and Guiding Principles

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)*).

All eligible Victorian children will have access to two years of Free Kinder before commencing school. Where demand is higher than availability, approved providers must adhere to their eligibility and DE's Priority of Access criteria to allocate the available places. The criteria used to determine the allocation of places takes account of the requirements set out in DE's Kindergarten Funding Guide, the service's philosophy, values and beliefs, and the provisions of the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*. The Victorian Government requires funded organisations to ensure that their policies and procedures promote equal

Enrolment and Orientation – Sessional Kinder Policy

opportunity for all children. Services participating in a central registration and enrolment scheme are required to comply with the registration and/or enrolment procedures of that scheme.

The Central Registration and Enrolment Scheme (CRES), co-designed by DE, provides access to families to register for and secure a place for their children in kindergarten. It is a collaborative model that brings together councils, service providers, MCH staff, support services and other stakeholders to support children and their families. Currently more than half of all local councils across Victoria operate a form of central enrolment or central registration scheme. These schemes provide a single point of entry for families, simplifying the kindergarten enrolment process and improving equity of access.

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 and Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011* have legislative responsibilities under the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* to only offer a confirmed place in their programs to children with an Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) Immunisation History Statement.

4. Definitions

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

Term	Definition
Access to Early Learning (AEL):	is an early intervention program for a child who is at least three years old on April 30th in the year of enrolment. It aims to provide intensive support to eligible families with multiple and complex needs, assisting them to access universal kindergarten programs.
Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) Immunisation History Statement:	The AIR is a national register administered by Medicare that records all vaccinations given in Australia, including to children. In the case of medical contraindication, an authorised medical practitioner completes and signs a Medical Exemption Form and supplies it to the AIR (previous forms of documentation, for example a letter from a GP or local council, are no longer acceptable).
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.
Children/families experiencing vulnerability and/or disadvantage	(in relation to this policy): children are vulnerable if the capacity of parents and family to effectively care, protect and provide for their long-term development and wellbeing is limited. Some factors which may contribute to a child experiencing vulnerability include: a child with a disability; living in a family with a low income, or one which is experiencing problems with housing, domestic violence, substance abuse, or mental health; known to child protection; in statutory out-of-home care; Aboriginal and/or Torre Strait Islander, having a culturally and linguistically diverse background; having a young or sole parent, or a parent with a disability (adapted from the Kindergarten Funding Guide)
Children with additional needs:	Children whose development or physical condition requires specialist support or children who may need additional support due to language, refugee or asylum seeker experience,

Enrolment and Orientation – Sessional Kinder Policy

Term	Definition
	complex trauma, cultural or economic circumstances (<i>refer to Inclusion and Equity Policy</i>) (<i>refer to Children/families experiencing vulnerability and/or disadvantage Definition</i>).
Central Registration and Enrolment Scheme (CRES):	CRES provides a single point for families to apply for multiple kindergarten services within a local government area, helping them secure a place that meets their needs and enabling funded kindergartens to work collaboratively with other services to engage vulnerable and disadvantaged families.
Central Registration System (CRS):	Provides an equitable and transparent application and allocation process, enabling families to access local kindergarten services within a local government area.
Early Start Kindergarten (ESK):	<p>Early Start Kindergarten provides eligible children with 15 hours of free kindergarten each week led by a qualified early childhood registered with Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT). ESK is available to children who are at least three years old by 30 April in the year they are enrolled to attend the program and are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • from a refugee or asylum seeker background, or • Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, or • the family have had contact with child protection. <p>These children can also access free kindergarten the year-before-school through the ESK Extension Grant regardless of whether they have accessed ESK in the previous year.</p>
Eligible child:	<p>as defined by the Victorian DE Kindergarten Funding Guide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a child who is at least four years old on 30 April in the year of attendance; enrolled for at least 15 hours per week or 600 hours per year in a Four-Year-Old Kindergarten; and not enrolled at a funded kindergarten program at another service • a child who is at least three years old on 30 April in the year of attendance and is enrolled in a funded Three-Year-Old Kindergarten for a minimum of 5 hours per week • any child that is enrolled in an early childhood and education and care service must have an AIR Immunisation History Statement that indicates that the child is fully vaccinated for their age or who qualifies for the 16-weeks support period
Enrolment:	An enrolment occurs when the provider has an arrangement with an individual or organisation to provide education and care to a child.
Enrolment record:	the collection of documents which contains information on each child as required under the National Regulations (<i>Regulations 160, 161, 162</i>) and DE funding requirements (Arrival) including but not limited to parent details; emergency contacts; authorised nominee; transportation authorisations, details of any court orders; and health information including immunisation status. Enrolment records are stored securely in the service due to their confidential nature.
Free Kinder:	A Victorian Government Best Start, Best Life initiative providing Free Kinder programs for four-year-old and three-year-old children in funded services, that have opted into the initiative.

Enrolment and Orientation – Sessional Kinder Policy

Term	Definition
	<p>Free Kinder supports families to access a funded kindergarten program by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • providing a free 15-hour program to 4-year-old children enrolled at a sessional service • providing a free 5 to 15-hour program to 3-year-old children enrolled at a sessional service (subject to the length of funded program offered)
Kindergarten registration form:	The process of families providing initial information about their child to confirm their intention to enrol in kindergarten, administered by the CRES Provider or by the kindergarten service. This includes collection of basic contact information, kindergarten preferences and any other details that may inform prioritised allocation in kindergarten
Support period:	allows specific categories of children of families experiencing vulnerability and disadvantage to enrol and attend the service without an AIR Immunisation History Statement or when the statement is assessed as not being up to date. Services complete the support period eligibility form with families during enrolment and keep a copy with each child's enrolment record. The 16-week support period starts on the first day of the child's attendance at the service. During the support period, the service is required to take reasonable steps to obtain the AIR Immunisation History Statement and to encourage families to access immunisation services. Note: services are not required to exclude the child from the program at the end of the support period if an up-to-date history statement is not provided, except in the instance of an outbreak of an infectious disease.
Local Government Area (LGA):	a geographic area governed by a local council or shire.
Orientation:	Process to support the child's transition to the service, whereby families spend time at the service with the child a few times before leaving the child on their own. The time required for orientation and settling in will vary for each child and their family.
Pre Prep:	From 2026 across the state, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from a refugee or asylum seeker background, and children who have had contact with Child Protection services can access up to 25 hours of Pre-Prep a week, increasing to up to 30 hours a week from 2028. Children from this priority cohort can be enrolled in more than 1 group at a single service (including 4-year-old, mixed age, and 3-year-old groups). In addition, any child who was supported by the Access to Early Learning program as a 3-year-old is eligible for these same hours of Pre-Prep as a 4-year-old from 2026.
Priority of access:	in instances where more eligible children apply for a place at a service than there are places available, the service must allocate places using the criteria outlined in the DE Kindergarten Funding Guide.
School Readiness Funding:	funding provided by DE for programs and supports that builds the capacity of kindergarten services, educators and families to support children's learning and development outcomes.
Additional year of funded kindergarten:	Eligibility for a second year of Four-Year-Old Kindergarten is determined by the child's early childhood teacher, if the child is observed as having developmental delays in at least 2 VEYLDF Learning and Development Outcomes and there is evidence to suggest the child will achieve better outcomes at kindergarten than if they go to school. From 2026, across Victoria, children who meet the eligibility requirements due to their learning or

Enrolment and Orientation – Sessional Kinder Policy

Term	Definition
	developmental needs can access an additional year of either, three-year-Old Kindergarten; or Pre-Prep (or Four-Year-Old Kindergarten for children not eligible for Pre-Prep),

5. Policy

RESPONSIBILITIES	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and Responsible person in charge	Early childhood teacher, educators and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Contractors, volunteers and students
	R indicates legislation requirement, and should not be deleted				
	Ensuring that copies of the <i>Enrolment and Orientation Policy</i> and procedures are readily accessible to nominated supervisors, coordinators, educators, staff, volunteers and families, and available for inspection	R	√		
	Applying the Priority of Access criteria to funded programs at bestchance, as described in the Department of Education's [DE] <i>The Kindergarten Funding Guide</i>	R	√	√	
	Working with local council, other local kindergarten services, key stakeholders and the local ECIB to ensure all eligible children have access to a kindergarten place	√	√		
	Providing a free kindergarten program to children who turn four years of age by 30 April in the year they will attend, that is delivered by a qualified early childhood, VIT registered teacher, and offering at least: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15 hours per week for 40 weeks of the year, or 600 hours per year 	R			
	Ensuring children eligible for Pre-Prep are enrolled for a minimum of 16 hours per week for 40 weeks of the year (or 640 hours per year)	R	√		

Enrolment and Orientation – Sessional Kinder Policy

Providing a free kindergarten program to children who turn three years of age by 30 April in the year they will attend, that is delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher and offering between 5 to 15 hours a week or 200 to 600 a year	R				
Providing communication to families explaining their access to one year of three-year-old and one year of four-year-old funded kindergarten program. Only children eligible to receive funding can access bestchance kindergarten programs.	R	√			
Ensuring families sign DE's one funded kindergarten place form in Term 4 and confirm in writing in Term 1. Service providers must use the form provided on the department's template and must not adapt the content into service's own templates	R	√			
Ensuring that attendance data collection is implemented as per the Arrival requirements	R	√			
Communicating to families the days and times the service will operate, planned closures (including public holidays and child-free days), details of any planned alternative sessions, and unplanned teacher absences or emergency situations	R				
Communicating and providing advice to families regarding the best time to commence kindergarten for children born between January and April. This includes communicating to families advising children are unable to commence in the three-year-old funded kindergarten program until on or after their 3 rd birthday. The child's place will be held until the child can commence once 3.	√	√	√		√
Ensuring the following is displayed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the current Kindergarten Program Certificate information promoting ESK information promoting the KFS in services not participating in Free Kinder operating times and name(s) of the qualified teachers delivering the program. 	R	√			
Communicating to parents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> waiting lists access and inclusion policies availability of ESK and KFS where applicable details of the annual kindergarten parent opinion survey to parents, carers or legal guardians that the service will prepare a Transition Statement for all children to help them transition to school. 	R	√			
Supporting inclusion and access through specific funding stream (for eligible families): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early Start Kindergarten Early Start Kindergarten extension grants Access to Early Learning Additional year of funded four-year-old kindergarten 	R	√	√		

Enrolment and Orientation – Sessional Kinder Policy

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional year of funded three-year-old kindergarten 					
Supporting families whose children may be eligible for early entry to kindergarten or late entry to kindergarten and school exemption	√	√	√		
Providing communication to families explaining how they can only access one funded kindergarten program per child, per year.	R	√			
Receiving written confirmation from families confirming they are attending one funded kindergarten program per child, per year	R	√		√	
Considering any barriers to access that may exist, developing procedures that ensure all eligible families are aware of, and are able to access a kindergarten program	R	√	√		
<p>Working with the families to obtain an alternate form of identification if a birth certificate or other official documentation is not available</p> <p>Where a birth certificate cannot be produced, other acceptable evidence of a child's full name and date of birth includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> statement from the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) Medicare card letter from the doctor or midwife who attended the birth doctor's note attesting to a child's age passport citizenship documents or Australia visa documents or Immi card. 	R	√			
Complying with the <i>Inclusion and Equity Policy</i>	R	R	√	√	√
Ensuring the collection of accurate, consistent and timely kindergarten data, to monitor and proactively manage capacity, utilisation of services and to meet School Readiness Funding requirements	R	R			
<p>Ensuring families have access to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parent information handbook Child Safe Environment and Wellbeing Policy and/or Statement of Commitment to Child Safety Fees Policy Privacy Statement Code of Conduct Policy Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations Dealing With Medical Conditions Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness 	R	√	√		
Appointing a person to be responsible for the enrolment process and the day-to-day implementation of this policy	R				
Responding to enrolment enquiries on a day-to-day basis and referring people to the person responsible for the enrolment process as required	√	√	√		

Enrolment and Orientation – Sessional Kinder Policy

Where applicable; considering access and inclusion for children experiencing vulnerability/disadvantage in the allocation of places at the service	R	√			
Where applicable, providing families with consistent and transparent communication on group allocation and waitlist management processes	R	√			
Complying with the service's <i>Privacy and Confidentiality Policy</i> in relation to the collection and management of a child's enrolment information	R	R	R	√	√
Providing opportunities for interested families to attend the open days to observe the program and become familiar with the service prior to their child commencing in the program	√	√	√		
Seeking information from parents about any specific health care need, allergy or medical condition, including whether a medical practitioner has been consulted in relation to a specific health care need, allergy or relevant medical condition	R	√	√	√	
Ensuring that medical management plan has been provided and that the risk minimisation plan has been developed and both documents are kept in the child's enrolment records. Medical management plans must be signed by a medical practitioner and dated within 12 months.	R	√	√	√	
Providing 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 service				√	
Assessing the child's immunisation documentation as defined by the Immunisation Enrolment Toolkit (<i>refer to Documents</i>) for early childhood education and care services prior to enrolment to determine if the child's vaccination status complies with requirements or whether the child is eligible for the 16-week support period	R	√	√		
Ensuring that only children whose AIR Immunisation History Statements have been assessed as being acceptable or who are eligible for the support period have confirmed places in the program	R	√	√		
Advising parents/guardians who do not have an AIR Immunisation History Statement and who are not eligible for the support period that their children are not able to attend the service and referring them to immunisation services	R	√	√		
Taking reasonable steps to obtain an up-to-date AIR Immunisation History Statement from a parent/guardian of a child enrolled under a support period within 16 weeks from when the child begins attending (Note: the child can continue to attend the service if acceptable immunisation documentation is not obtained).	R	√	√		
Completing the enrolment record prior to their child's commencement at the service and providing all associated enrolment documents and AIR Immunisation History Statement of their child's immunisation status				√	

Enrolment and Orientation – Sessional Kinder Policy

Where a child is eligible for the 16 weeks support period, ensuring that the child's immunisations are updated in line with the schedule and providing an up-to-date AIR Immunisation History Statement to the service				√	
Taking reasonable steps to obtain an up-to-date AIR Immunisation History Statement from all parents/guardians after enrolment, timing reminders to comply with the maximum seven-month interval	R	√	√		
Ensuring all authorised nominees have been completed on the enrolment record for each child as well as authorisations from parents relating to medical treatment, regular outings, health information and transportation	R	√		√	
Ensuring that the enrolment record for each child both digital and/or hard copy complies with the requirements of <i>Regulations 160, 161, 162</i> and DE funding requirements (Arrival) and that it effectively meets the management requirements of the service	R	√	√		
Ensuring that enrolment record for each child is kept up to date if family circumstances change, and that services are made aware if they become eligible for additional funding as a result of changed circumstances	R	√	√	√	√
Ensuring that enrolment records for each child are kept confidential 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	R	√	√		
Discussing the individual child's needs with parents/guardians and developing an orientation program to assist them to settle into the service. The service should take into consideration barriers parents/guardians may have in disclosing sensitive information including communication and information barriers and the development of trusting relationships.	R	√	√		
Reviewing the orientation processes for new families and children to ensure the objectives of this policy are met	R	√	√	√	
Ensuring that parents/guardians of a child attending the service can enter the service premises at any time whilst 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, early childhood teachers or educators under the <i>National Law: Section 167</i>	R	R	√	√	√
Taking reasonable steps to contact non-attending families prior to the cancellation of their enrolment	√	√	√		
Reviewing enrolment applications to identify children with additional needs.	√	√	√		
Encouraging parents/guardians to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> stay with their child as long as required during the orientation period, keeping in mind the best interest of the child contact educators at the service, when required 	√	√	√	√	

Enrolment and Orientation – Sessional Kinder Policy

Assisting parents/guardians to develop and maintain a routine for saying goodbye to their child	√	√	√	√	
Sharing information with parents/guardians concerning their child's progress with regard to settling into the service	√	√	√	√	
Discussing support services for children with parents/guardians, where required such as Pre School Field Officer, Early Intervention Programs, and Maternal Health Services	√	√	√	√	
Developing strategies to assist new families to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> feel welcomed into the service and help them to become familiar with service policies and procedures share information about their family beliefs, values and culture and feel culturally safe share their understanding of their child's strengths, interests, abilities and needs value the voice of the child, ensuring they have opportunity to articulate their individual interests 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 	√	√	√	√	
Arrange telephone, onsite or video interpretation to assist conversations with parent/carers where required	√	√	√	√	
Reading and complying with this <i>Enrolment and Orientation Policy</i>	R	R	R	√	√
Updating information by notifying the service of any changes as they occur, for example if the child or family becomes known to Child Protection				√	
Notifying bestchance in writing if they wish to cancel their enrolment.				√	
If your child is unwell, away or unable to attend kindergarten families are to advise the kindergarten service child is enrolled at.			√	√	
Planned extended leave - Families planning or requiring extended leave of more than 4 weeks must advise the kindergarten and or bestchance Central enrolment team in writing including the dates of absence and reason.			√	√	
Late collection charge - bestchance reserves the right to implement a late collection fee when parents/guardians are consistently or excessively late in collecting a child/ren at the end of the kindergarten session.			√	√	

Enrolment and Orientation – Sessional Kinder Policy

6. Accountabilities

The approved provider and persons with management or control are responsible for:

- The review and approval of this policy and associated procedures.
- Ensuring all staff and volunteers abide by this policy.

The nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge are responsible for:

- Ensuring all staff, parents/guardians, contractors, students and volunteers abide by this policy.
- Reporting breaches and non-compliance of this policy to the Approved Provider.

Early childhood teachers, educators and all other staff are responsible for:

- Abiding by this policy.

Parents/guardians, contractors, volunteers and students are responsible for:

- Abiding by this policy.

7. Related Documents

- Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations
- Code of Conduct Policy
- Compliments and Complaints
- Dealing with Infectious Disease
- Dealing With Medical Conditions
- Delivery and Collection of Children
- Fees
- Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness
- Inclusion and Equity
- National Model Code of Conduct
- Privacy and Confidentiality
- Australian Childhood Immunisation Register: www.servicesaustralia.gov.au
- Australian Government Department of Health, National Immunisation Program Schedule: www.health.gov.au
- Department of Health, Immunisation enrolment toolkit for early childhood education and care service: www2.health.vic.gov.au
- Department of Education, Arrival: Information for sessional services: <https://www.vic.gov.au/arrival-information-sessional-kindergarten#more-information>
- Department of Education: [Stating age calculator](#)
- Department of Education: [Early Childhood Language Services](#)
- Department of Education: [Supporting CALD families to engage in kindergarten](#)
- Department of Education: [Information about kindergarten in your language](#)
- Department of Education, Resources for funded kindergartens: www.vic.gov.au/resources-

Enrolment and Orientation – Sessional Kinder Policy

[funded-kindergartens](#)

- Free Kinder funding requirements for long day care providers: www.vic.gov.au
- 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 Funding Guide (Victorian Department of Education): www.education.vic.gov.au
- Going to kindergarten if your child is 6 years old: www.vic.gov.au

8. Relevant Legislation

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- 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, 170, 171, 177, 181, 183
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)
- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 6: Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities
- Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 (Vic)
- Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2019 (Vic)
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)

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

Victorian Legislation – Victorian Law Today: www.legislation.vic.gov.au

Commonwealth Legislation – Federal Register of Legislation: www.legislation.gov.au

9. Document

Document ID	EY 06.18		
Document Type	Policy		
Document Owner	General Manager Early Years		
Approval Authority	General Manager Early Years		
Next Review	September 2026		
Document History	Version	Approval Date	Summary of Changes
	1.0	01 March 2019	Inaugural version
	2.0	01 September 2025	Update to new branding/Alignment with National Model Code, Arrival