

WAITLIST POLICY

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1. POLICY STATEMENT

This policy has been developed to ensure fair and equitable access to education and care. The Centre aims to respond to the needs of the local community and to be inclusive of all children and families. As there will usually be more families requesting access than there are places available, there will be clear guidelines for the management of the waiting list and for the allocation of places.

Our Centre will:

- Develop transparent guidelines to manage the waiting list;
- Comply with the Priority of Access Guidelines set by Family Assistance Law and defined by NSW State Government Funding Agreements; and
- Ensure care is provided to families using these priorities.

2. STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Management of the Waiting List

Families apply for a place at Styles Street by completing an online waiting list form and paying the waitlist fee. Payment of this fee does not guarantee placement.

The completed form will be filed according to the following criteria:

- Priority of Access Guidelines (see below)
- Date of birth
- Date the application is received
- Sibling attendance
- Children of staff members

The responsibility of remaining in contact with the Centre regarding placement lies with the family. The family should telephone the Centre to advise of any changes to contact or placement details, and to enquire when a place is likely to become available. Failure to advise of changes to contact information could result in loss of a placement at the Centre.

A child will remain on the list for up to twelve months after the preferred date of enrolment as indicated on the application form. Beyond that time, unless the family contacts the Centre to extend the application, the child's name will be removed from the list.

Families will be contacted by telephone when an offer of a place is to be made. This can happen at any time during the year. If the family cannot be contacted after two attempts this will be noted on the list before moving to the next family.

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An offer may be temporarily declined without jeopardising the position on the list. The position on the list will be held for either a period of six months or for another two offerings of placement. If after this time the position is not accepted the application will be removed from the list.

Families who wish to increase days for an already enrolled child or children should inform the Centre in writing of their needs. Requests to add days will be managed according to the above criteria. Once a day becomes available the family will be offered the additional day(s) and will be asked to complete a Change of Booked Days form.

Priority of Access Guidelines

The Centre will use the Priority of Access Guidelines to prioritise the waiting list and to allocate available education and care places to families.

The Priority of Access Guidelines followed by Long Day Care and Outside School Hours Care services are set by Family Assistance Law. These are:

- Priority 1: a child at risk of serious abuse or neglect
- Priority 2: a child of a single parent who satisfies, or of parents who both satisfy, the work/training/study test
- Priority 3: any other child.

Within these three priority categories, priority should also be given to children who are:

- from low-income families
- from Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander families
- with disability and/or additional needs
- with language needs

at risk of significant harm (from a child protection perspective).

Whilst these guidelines are in priority order, childcare needs are also assessed at the discretion of the Nominated Supervisor, based on:

- a. The benefit to the child and family
- b. The alternative arrangements reasonably available to achieve that benefit.

Families classified as low priority (non-working parents or two parent families with one working parent) can be required to reduce their hours at the Centre should a family classified as a higher priority require care. This would only be done in exceptional circumstances and after consultation with the parents or guardians.

The Centre endeavours to meet the needs of the children and families in our community while complying with the above guidelines.

3. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

This policy will be monitored to ensure compliance with legislative requirements and unless deemed necessary through the identification of practice gaps, the service will review this Policy every two years.

Families and staff are essential stakeholders in the policy review process and will be encouraged and given opportunities to be actively involved.



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In accordance with R. 172 of the Education and Care Services National Regulations, the service will ensure that families of children enrolled at the service are notified at least 14 days before making any change to a policy or procedure that may have significant impact on the provision of education and care to any child enrolled at the service; a family's ability to utilise the service; the fees charged or the way in which fees are collected.

4. LEGISLATION AND CONSIDERATIONS

- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care 2011 - 6.1.1, 6.3.3, 7.3.2
- Child Care Benefit (Eligibility of Child Care Services for Approval and Continued Approval) Determination 2000 (subsection 2051 Family Assistance (Administration) Act)
- Priority of Access Guidelines for child care services
- Department of Education and Communities Funding Agreement
- Family Assistance Law

5. SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES

- Community Early Learning Australia (CELA) - www.cela.org.au
- Department of Education - www.education.gov.au/early-childhood
- Australian Government Department of Social Services - <https://www.dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/families-and-children/publications-articles/instruction-sheet-10-priority-of-access-guidelines-for-child-care-services>

Policy reviewed: June 2023

Policy adopted: 5 July 2023

For review: July 2025