

# **ENROLMENT AND ORIENTATION POLICY**

Mandatory - Quality Area 6

Precious Gems Childcare Pty Ltd trading as "Kids Haven Childcare"

**Quality Area 6.1** Supportive relationships with families

Quality Area 6.1.1 Families are supported from enrolment to be involved in the service and contribute to service

decisions.

**Quality Area 6.1.2** Parent views are respected **Quality Area 6.1.3** Families are supported

Quality Area 7.1.1 Service philosophy and purpose

National Law Section 165(1)(2)Offence to inadequately supervise children

National Law Section 167 Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards National Law Section 169 Offence relating to staffing arrangements (Ratios -Reg123)

National Law Section 170(2) must ensure that a person does not remain at the education and care service

premises while children are being educated and cared for at the premises,

unless-

(a) the person is an authorised person; or

(b) the person is under the direct supervision of an educator or other staff member

of the service.

**National Law Section 175** 

Regulation 74

Offence relating to requirement to keep enrolment and other documents

Documenting of child assessments or evaluations for delivery of educational

program

**Regulation 75(a)** information about the contents and operation of the educational program for the

service is displayed at the education and care service premises at a place accessible to parents of children being educated and cared for by the service

**Regulation 76** Information about educational program to be given to parents **Regulation 122** Educators must be working directly with children to be in ratios

Regulation 123(1) Educator to child ratios – centre-based services

Regulation 151 Keeping a record of ECT/educators working directly with children

**Regulation 157** Access for parents - (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 *National Law: Section 167*)

**Regulation 158(1)** Children's Attendance record to be kept by approved provider Child enrolment records to be kept by approved provider

Regulation 161 Authorisations to be kept in enrolment record
Regulation 162 Health information to be kept in enrolment record

**Regulation 168** Education and care service must have policies and procedures

**Regulation 171** Policies and procedures to be kept available

**Regulation 177** Prescribed enrolment and other documents to be kept by approved provider

Regulation 181 Confidentiality of records kept by approved provide

**Regulation 183** Storage of records and other documents

#### **Related 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

# **PURPOSE**

This policy outlines:

- · the criteria for enrolment at Precious Gems Childcare Pty Ltd
- the process to be followed when enrolling a child at Precious Gems Childcare Pty Ltd
- the basis on which places within the programs will be allocated
- procedures for the orientation of new families and children into Precious Gems Childcare Pty Ltd
- ensuring compliance with Victorian and national legislation, including disability discrimination, anti-discrimination, human rights laws, No Jab No Play and Family Assistance Law

#### POLICY STATEMENT

## 1. VALUES

Precious Gems Childcare Pty Ltd is committed to:

- engaging collaboratively and respectfully with parents/guardians during enrolment and orientation to learn about their expertise, culture, values and beliefs and priorities for their child's learning and wellbeing
- being flexible and catering for unique family circumstances and needs
- ensuring the enrolment process is simple to understand, follow and implement
- meeting the needs of the local community
- supporting parents/guardians to meet the requirements for enrolment through the provision of information and communication
- being transparent in the process and allocation of places through consistent communication and information sharing
- maintaining confidentiality in relation to all information gathered for enrolment.

## 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 Precious Gems Childcare Pty Ltd.

## 3. GENERAL ORIENTATION PROCEDURES

The time required for orientation and settling in will vary for each child and their family, therefore it is important to be flexible and individualise orientation for each family.

- Offer parents/guardians the opportunity to visit the service at different times during the day/session, this allows the child and their family to become familiar with the various routines of the service
- Providing reassurance to the family that they may stay with their child for as long as they choose during orientation and once the child commences
- Provide the family with suggestions for developing and maintaining a routine for saying goodbye to their child
- Reassure the family:
  - o they can leave their child initially for a shorter day, gradually increasing the length of time
  - o they may call and speak to their child's educator(s) at an agreed
  - o the educators will keep them informed on how their child is settling in
  - o they will be informed about any changes or circumstances which may affect them or their child.
- Further considerations may include but are not limited to:
  - o send an email during the day to update the family on their child including a photo of the child (if the child has settled in) (refer to the Information and Communication Technology Policy).
  - Note: For children in out-of-home care, the educator may need to seek permission from Child Protection before taking and distributing photos of the child
  - o asking the family how they have settled in and if they have any questions or concerns.

## RESPONSIBILTIES

RESPONSIBILITIES	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Early childhood teacher, educators and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Contractors, volunteers and students
<b>R</b> indicates legislation requirement, and should not be deleted					

Ensuring not to exceed the maximum number of children whom the service is licensed to provide care for	R				
Ensuring all enrolled children are six years of age and under. Children aged six years old will require to complete an exemption from school form from the Department of Educations and Training	R	V			
Communicating to parents/guardians the days and times the service will operate, planned closures (including public holidays) service philosophy and governance.	R	<b>V</b>			
Providing parents/guardians easy-to-read information about how the service operates and what the service will provide (including information about inclusion and learning)	V	V	<b>V</b>		
Ensuring parents/guardians has access to:					
<ul> <li>Parent handbook</li> <li>Statement of philosophy</li> <li>Child Safe Environment Policy and/or Statement of Commitment to Child Safety</li> <li>Fees Policy</li> <li>Privacy Statement</li> </ul>	R	1	1		
Code of Conduct Policy  Developing strategies on how to communicate with					
parents/guardians with varying literacy skills, or where English is not a first language	V	√	√		
Complying with the Inclusion and Equity Policy	R	R			
Appointing a person to be responsible for the enrolment process and the day-to-day implementation of this policy (refer to Attachment 1)	R				
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 consistent and transparent communication on waitlist management processes (refer to Attachment 1)	R	<b>V</b>			
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 parents/guardians 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 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				
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	V	V	<b>V</b>	
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	R	<b>V</b>	<b>√</b>	√	

Cathering information from parents/guardians to support continuity of care between home and the service  Providing parents/guardians with information about the requirements of the law for enrolment, including obtaining the AIR immunisation History Statement (refer to Definitions) and accessing immunisation services  Ensuring parents/guardians are only offered a tentative place until the AIR immunisation History Statement (refer to Definitions) has been assessed as being acceptable or the child has been assessed as being acceptable or the child has been assessed as being acceptable or the child has been assessed as being acceptable or the grace period (refer to Edinitions) has been assessed as being acceptable for the grace period status complies with requirements or whether the child is eligible for the 16-week grace period (refer to Definitions)  Ensuring that only children whose AIR immunisation History Statement (refer to Definitions) have confirmed place in the program (refer to Definitions) have confirmed place in the program (refer to Definitions) have confirmed place in the program (refer to Definitions) have confirmed place in the program (refer to Definitions) status (refer to Definitions) and who are not eligible for the grace period that their children are not able to attend the service and referring them to immunisation services (refer to Attachment 3)  Taking reasonable steps to obtain an up to date AIR Immunisation History Statement (refer to Definitions) from all parents/guardians after enrolment, twice per calendary ear, timing reminders to comply with the maximum seven-month interval (Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2019 107, Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2019 107, Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations after enrolment, twice per calendary vear, timing reminders to comply with the maximum seven-month interval (Public Health and Wellbeing Regulation 107, Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 Section 143E)  Completing the conditions of the period of the period of the period of t						
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Ensuring all authorised nominees (refer to Definitions) have been completed on the enrolment record (refer to Definitions) (Regulations 160 and 161)	R	√		√	
Ensuring that the enrolment record (refer to Definitions) both digital and/or hard copy complies with the requirements of Regulations 160, 161, 162 (refer to Attachment 2) and that it effectively meets the management requirements of the service					
Ensuring that enrolment record (refer to Definitions) is kept up to date if family circumstances change	R	√	<b>V</b>	√	
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 (1a) (2d))	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	1	<b>√</b>		
Reviewing enrolment applications to identify children with additional needs (refer to Definitions and the Inclusion and Equity Policy)	R	V	V		
Ensuring that the orientation program meet the individual needs of children and parents/guardians	R				
Communicating with parents/guardians when their child will be eligible for a funded year of kindergarten	R	√	√		
Reviewing the orientation processes for new parents/guardians 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 (Regulation 157), 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 National Law: Section 167	R	R			
Encouraging parents/guardians during orientation to:         stay with their child as long as required during the settling in period         make contact with educators 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 concerning their child's progress with regard to settling into the service					
Discussing support services for children with parents/guardians, where required.					
Developing strategies to assist new parents/guardians to:					

<ul> <li>share information about their family beliefs, values and culture and feel culturally safe</li> <li>share their understanding of their child's strengths, interests, abilities and needs</li> <li>value the voice of the child, ensuring they have opportunity to articulate their individual interests and needs</li> <li>discuss the values and expectations they hold in relation to their child's learning</li> <li>providing comfort and reassurance to children who</li> </ul>					
are showing signs of distress when separating					
Reading and complying with this <i>Enrolment and Orientation Policy</i>	R	R	R	R	
Notifying [Company] in writing if they wish to cancel their enrolment.					

#### 4. 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)).

Childcare services providing approved child care (refer to Definitions) must abide by the Family Assistance Legislation Amendment (Jobs for Families Child Care Package) Act 2017 (refer to Legislation and standards). The Commonwealth Government supports working parents/guardians in making early childhood education and care more affordable and accessible through the Child Care Package (The Package). The Package includes the Child Care Subsidy (refer to Definitions) and Child Care Safety Net (refer to Definitions). Together, they enable parents/guardians to participate in the workforce by making early childhood education and care affordable and accessible.

The Child Care Subsidy helps by assisting families with their child care fees and provides greater assistance to low and middle-income families

The Child Care Safety Net provides families and services extra support if they are vulnerable and disadvantaged, or located in a regional or remote community. The Child Care Safety Net includes:

- The Additional Child Care Subsidy which provides extra payment on top of the Child Care Subsidy for families who need more help. There are five different payments:
  - o For families who need help to support their children's safety and wellbeing
  - o For grandparents who care for their grandchildren
  - o For families experiencing significant financial stress
  - o For parents transitioning from welfare to work
  - o Community Child Care Fund
- The Community Child Care Fund which helps services stay open and available to children in disadvantaged, regional and remote communities.
- The Inclusion Support Program which provides support to Early Childhood Education and Care services to build their capacity and capability to include children with additional needs in mainstream services
- subsidiseded Care Low-Income Families who earn \$69,390 or less a year can access 24 hours of subsided care per child per fortnight without having to meet the activity test.

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 *(refer to Definitions)*. To meet the Child Care Subsidy immunisation requirements, children must be immunised according to the National Immunisation Program Schedule *(refer to Sources)* set out by the Australian Government Department of Health.

#### 5. 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.:

**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.

The National Law and National Regulations do not specify a minimum age limit for an authorised nominee. Each service will need to consider a risk assessment on an individual basis to determine if a person under the age of 18 is able to be an authorised nominee and, if so, what constitutes the minimum acceptable age at that service.

**Child Care Subsidy (CCS):** 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: <a href="https://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/child-care-subsidy">https://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/child-care-subsidy</a>

**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*).

\_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. 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.

#### 6. LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999
- A New Tax System (Family Assistance) (Administration) Act 1999
- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)
- Child Care Subsidy Minister's Rules 2017
- Child Care Subsidy Secretary's Rules 2017
- 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)
- Family Assistance Legislation Amendment (Jobs for Families Child Care Package) Act 2017
- 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: <u>www.legislation.vic.gov.au</u>
- Commonwealth Legislation Federal Register of Legislation: www.legislation.gov.au

# **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.

#### **AUTHORISATION**

This policy was adopted by the Approved Provider of Precious Gems Childcare Pty Ltd on 1st December 2022.

**REVIEW DATE:** 01/01/2024

## ATTACHMENT 1. GENERAL ENROLMENT PROCEDURES

#### PRIORITY OF ACCESS

There are no requirements for filling vacancies. The approved provider can set their own rules for deciding who receives a place.

Approved providers are asked to (but are not legally obliged to) prioritise children who are:

- at risk of serious abuse or neglect
- a child of a sole parent who satisfies, or parents who both satisfy, the activity test through paid employment.

This meets the Australian Government's aims of helping parents/guardians who are most in need and supporting the safety and wellbeing of children at risk.

The approved provider can set their own rules for deciding who receives a place, this can include but not limited to:

Siblings attending the service

- Length of time on the waitlist
- Proximity to the service
- Family works or studies close to the service

The information contained within Enrolment Procedure is to be used as a guide and modified accordingly.

#### **ENROLMENT PROCEDURE**

Enrolments will be taken throughout the year subject to availability. If there are no placements available, the child will be placed on a waiting list. Once a family has decided to commence at [Company] they will need to:

- Complete separate enrolment records (refer to Definitions) for each child attending the service
- Provide the following information:

child's name, address and details of any special needs

information about themselves and any other parents, carers or guardians

details of the people who can pick up the child

child's birth certificate or other identity documents

details of any parenting orders or legal matters to do with the care or safety of the child (refer to Privacy and Confidentiality Policy)

the child's medical health and AIR Immunisation History Statement status.

- To facilitate the inclusion of all children into the program, the enrolment process should clearly identify any additional or specific needs of the child *(refer to Inclusion and Equity Policy)*.
- All enrolments must be accompanied by an enrolment fee in line with Kids Haven Childcare Fees Policy of \$125 per day.
- Completed enrolment records are to be forwarded to the person responsible for the enrolment process at [Company]
- Access to completed enrolment records will be restricted to the person responsible for the enrolment process, the approved provider and/or nominated supervisor at the service, unless otherwise specified by the approved provider.
- Parent/guardians to create or access their Centrelink online account to lodge a Child Care Subsidy claim for each of their children (refer to Diagram 1).
- The service and parent/guardian to complete and sign a Complying Written Agreement (refer to Definitions), which includes:

The names and contact details of the approved provider and the parent/guardians(s)

the date the arrangement starts

the name and date of birth of the child (or children) if care will be provided on a routine basis and if so

- details about the days on which sessions of care will usually occur
- the usual start and end times for these sessions of care
- whether care will be on a casual or flexible basis (in addition to, or instead of, a routine basis)

details of fees charged under the arrangement (providers can reference a fee schedule or information available on their website), which the parties understand may vary from time to time.

additional information can be included to support the individual's understanding of their payment obligations. once the CWA is signed, it is then filed in the child's record

#### IMMUNISATION - NO JAB NO PLAY

- Prior to the child/children commencing care Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) Immunisation History Statement 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 for immunisation and enrolment" 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 <a href="https://www2.health.vic.gov.au">www2.health.vic.gov.au</a>: The Immunisation enrolment toolkit for early childhood education and care services (search 'Immunisation enrolment toolkit')

The Key dates work form for Immunisation and enrolment (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 AIR Immunisation History Statement is within the acceptable timeframe for an enrolment, or;

That the child has been assessed by [Service Name] as being eligible for a 16-week grace period

- 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 have an up to date AIR Immunisation History Statement and whose child is not eligible for the grace period cannot be offered a place and are referred to Australian Childhood Immunisation Register or to an immunisation provider (refer to Attachment 3).

## ATTACHMENT 3. ENROLMENT FORM REQUIREMENTS

The approved provider must ensure that an enrolment record (refer to Definitions) is kept for each child enrolled at [Service Name]. Regulations 160, 161, 162 outlines the enrolment record requirements for services under the Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 (National Law), the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 (National Regulations).

The approved provider must keep enrolment records available for inspection by an authorised officer (*National Law: Section 175*). An approved provider must also take reasonable steps to ensure the enrolment records are:

- accurate
- made available to the parents of the child upon request unless otherwise required by a court order (Regulations 177 and 178).

Information that **must** be included in enrolment record:

- Full name, date of birth and address of the child
- The name, address and contact details of:

each known parent of the child

any emergency contact

any authorised nominee

any person authorised to consent to medical treatment or administration of medication any person authorised to give permission to the educator to take the child off the premises

- Details of any court orders, parenting orders or parenting plans
- Gender of the child
- Language used in the child's home
- Cultural background of the child and their parents
- Any special considerations for the child, such as cultural, dietary or religious requirements or
- additional needs
- Authorisations for:

the approved provider, nominated supervisor or an educator to seek medical treatment and/or ambulance transportation for the child

the service to take the child on regular outings

for regular transportation of the child

any person who is authorised to authorise the education and care service transport the child or arrange transportation of the child

- Name, address and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner or medical service
- Medicare number (if available)
- Details of any specific healthcare needs of the child, including any medical conditions, allergies, or diagnosis that the child is at risk of anaphylaxis
- Any medical management plan, anaphylaxis medical management plan or risk minimisation plan
- Dietary restrictions
- Immunisation status (In Victoria, AIR Immunisation History Statement, as required under the *Public Health* and *Wellbeing Act* 2008)