

ENROLMENT AND ORIENTATION POLICY

DONVALE PRESCHOOL

QUALITY AREA 6 | MANDATORY POLICY V1.1



PURPOSE

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

- enrolling a child at Donvale Preschool
- the orientation of new families and children into Donvale Preschool
- 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
- adhering to DE's priority of access requirements for both three and four-year-old children



POLICY STATEMENT

VALUES

Donvale Preschool 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 the full 15 hours of kindergarten program

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 Donvale Preschool, including during off site excursions and activities.

CLASS SIZE AND STRUCTURE

Donvale Preschool is licensed for a capacity of 28 children. The number of places and group size is determined by the committee of management in view of current legislation in relation to educator / child ratios, funding, financial viability and operational guidelines. The committee of management will notify families in writing of the proposed class size and structure for the upcoming year at the earliest available time.

Please note that children can only enrol in one funded kindergarten program in the year they are eligible to attend.

Maximum place numbers may be closed off at any time, for any group, at the discretion of the educators, in consultation with the Committee of Management. This decision will be based upon the likely deterioration of program delivery if additional children are accepted into the group.

Should actual enrolments exceed or fall short the quota for the three-year-old or four-year-old programs, the Committee of Management will re-evaluate the services offered and may change the timetable, hours or decrease the number of groups.

RESPONSIBILITIES	Committee of Management	Nominated supervisor and Enrolment Officer	Early childhood teacher, educators and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Contractors, volunteers and students
Providing a funded kindergarten program to children who turn four years of age by 30 April in the year they will attending, that is delivered by a qualified early childhood 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 	√				
Providing a funded kindergarten program to children who turn three years of age by 30 April in the year they will be attending, that is delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher and offering between 5 to 15 hours of kinder a week.	√				
Advising families of children who are enrolled in the kinder program who have children who turn three during the kinder year (between Jan 1 st to April 30 th) that their child cannot attend kinder sessions until their child turns three.	√	√	√		
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	√	√	√		
Applying the Priority of Access criteria to funded programs at Donvale Preschool, as described in Department of Education's [DET] The Kindergarten Funding Guide	√	√	√		
Communicating and providing advice to families regarding the best time to commence kindergarten for children born between January and April		√	√		
Supporting inclusion and access through specific funding stream (for eligible families): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kindergarten Fee Subsidy Early Start Kindergarten Early Start Kindergarten extension grants Access to Early Learning Second year of funded four-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.	√	√	√		
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	√	√	√		
Complying with the <i>Inclusion and Equity Policy</i>	√	√	√	√	√
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	√	√			
Ensuring families have access to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Parent information handbook</i> • <i>Child Safe Environment and Wellbeing Policy and/or Statement of Commitment to Child Safety</i> • <i>Fees Policy</i> • <i>Privacy Statement</i> • <i>Code of Conduct Policy</i> • <i>Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations</i> • <i>Dealing With Medical Conditions &</i> • <i>Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policies</i> • <i>Delivery and Collection of children</i> 	√	√	√		
Appointing an Enrolment Officer to be responsible for the enrolment process and the day-to-day implementation of this policy	√				
Responding to enrolment enquiries on a day-to-day basis and referring people to the person responsible for the enrolment process and/or how to apply via the website as required		√	√		
Updating the enrolment policy as needed and providing updates to Enrol Now and Donvale Preschool's website.		√			
Running and maintaining The Enrol Now, Enrolment Platform		√			
Issuing and updating the timetable for the following year	√	√			
[Where applicable] Considering access and inclusion for vulnerable children in the allocation of places at the service	√	√	√		
Where applicable, providing families with consistent and transparent communication on waitlist management processes		√			
Complying with the service's <i>Privacy and Confidentiality Policy</i> in relation to the collection and management of a child's enrolment information	√	√	√	√	√
Providing opportunities for interested families 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> .	√	√	√		
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	√	√	√	√	
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	√	√	√	√	

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				√	
Providing parents/guardians with information about the requirements of the law for enrolment, including obtaining the AIR Immunisation History Statement and accessing immunisation services	√	√	√		
Ensuring parents/guardians are only offered a tentative place until the AIR Immunisation History Statement has been assessed as being acceptable or the child has been assessed as eligible for the grace period	√	√	√		
Assessing the child's immunisation documentation as defined by the Immunisation Enrolment Toolkit 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 grace period	√	√	√		
Ensuring that only children whose AIR Immunisation History Statements have been assessed as being acceptable or who are eligible for the grace period have confirmed places in the program	√	√	√		
Advising parents/guardians who do not have an AIR Immunisation History Statement 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	√	√	√		
Taking reasonable steps to obtain an up to date AIR Immunisation History Statement from a parent/guardian of a child enrolled under a grace period within 16 weeks from when the child begins attending.		√	√		
Ensuring all authorised nominees have been completed on the enrolment record (Regulations 160 and 161) as well as authorisations from parents relating to medical treatment, regular outings, health information and transportation		√	√	√	
Advising families that children attending Donvale Preschool need to be toilet trained. The building at Donvale Preschool does not have nappy change facilities or above award staff ratios that comply with OHS standards to allow for nappy changing in a safe and respectful manner. Please contact the staff at Donvale Preschool so we can discuss your child's individual needs.	√	√	√		
Offering positions at Donvale Preschool and providing relevant paperwork to families in accordance with this policy. Corresponding with unsuccessful applications		√			
Completing the enrolment record prior to their child's commencement at the service and providing AIR Immunisation History Statement of their child's immunisation status				√	
Where a child is eligible for the 16 weeks grace 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 (Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2019 107 , Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 Section 143E)		√	√		

Ensuring that the enrolment record both digital and/or hard copy complies with the requirements of Regulations 160, 161, 162 and that it effectively meets the management requirements of the service	√	√	√		
Ensuring that enrolment record 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 (e.g., if a child acquires a Health Care Card the child becomes available for Kindergarten Fee Subsidy; if the child or family becomes known to Child Protection, the child becomes eligible for Early Start Kindergarten and Early Start Kindergarten Extension grant).	√	√	√	√	√
Ensuring that enrolment records are kept confidential (Regulations 181, 182) 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))	√	√	√		
Providing a monthly report to the committee regarding the status of enrolments and any difficulties encountered.		√			
Collating group preferences and meeting with the Nominated Supervisor to finalise group allocations. Communicating group placements to parents.		√			
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.		√	√		
Reviewing the orientation processes for new families and children to ensure the objectives of this policy are met	√	√	√	√	
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	√	√	√	√	√
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 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 in to 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 become familiar with service policies and procedures 	√	√	√	√	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 					
Reading and complying with this <i>Enrolment and Orientation Policy</i>	√	√	√	√	√
Updating information by notifying the service of any changes as they occur, for example obtaining or the cancellation of a Health Care Card; if the child or family becomes known to Child Protection				√	
Notifying Donvale Preschool in writing if they wish to cancel their enrolment.				√	
Liaising with parents in regard to all 2 nd year kinder applications. Where the child is transferring from another service, educators are required to provide parents with all necessary information with regard to funding applications and to assist these families with this process where required		√	√		



PROCEDURES

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.

- Provide 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:
 - they can leave their child initially for shorter times, gradually increasing the length of time
 - they may call and speak to their child's early childhood teacher or educator(s) at an agreed time
 - the early childhood teacher/educators will keep them informed on how their child is settling in
 - they will be informed about any changes or circumstances which may affect them or their child.
- Refer to *Attachment 2* for the general kindergarten registration and enrolment procedures
- Refer to *Attachment 5* for cancellation of enrolment and non-attendance procedures.

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)*).

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 in order 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 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.

LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS

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



DEFINITIONS

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 Torres 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, complex trauma, cultural or economic circumstances.

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 annual confirmation in April DET considers that this child has not accessed a year of funded kindergarten and is therefore eligible for a DET funded kindergarten place in the following year.

Early Start Kindergarten (ESK): Early Start Kindergarten provides eligible children with 15 hours of free or low-cost kindergarten each week led by a qualified Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) registered teacher. 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:

- from a refugee or asylum seeker background, or
- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, or
- the family have had contact with child protection.

These children can also access free or low cost year-before-school kindergarten through the ESK Extension Grant regardless of whether they have accessed ESK in the previous year.

Early Start Kindergarten extension grants: provides eligible children with up to 15 hours of free or low cost kindergarten each week led by a qualified VIT registered teacher. The ESK extension grants are available to children attending kindergarten in the year-before-school and are:

- not eligible for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy
- from a refugee or asylum seeker background, or Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, or
- known to child protection.

A child is not required to access ESK in the previous year to access the ESK extension grant.

Eligible child: as defined by the Victorian DET Kindergarten Funding Guide:

- 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 grace period

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.

Kindergarten registration form: The process of families providing initial information about their child to confirm their intention to enrol in kindergarten, administered by the kindergarten service. This includes collection of basic contact information, kindergarten preferences and any other details that may inform prioritised allocation in kindergarten.

Enrolment record: the collection of documents which contains information on each child as required under the National Regulations (*Regulations 160, 161, 162*) 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.

Grace 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 grace period eligibility form with families during enrolment, and keep a copy with the child's enrolment record. The 16-week grace period starts on the first day of the child's attendance at the service. During the grace period, the service is required to take reasonable steps to obtain the AIR Immunisation History Statement and to encourage families to access immunisation services.

Kindergarten Fee Deposit: The Fee charged to confirm acceptance of a position at Donvale Preschool

Kindergarten Fee Subsidy (KFS): Promotes kindergarten participation by enabling eligible children in funded three and four-year-old groups to access up to 15 hours of kindergarten delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher free of charge or at low cost.

Local Government Area (LGA): a geographic area governed by a local council or shire

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

Registration: The process of families and carers giving initial information about their child to confirm their intention to enrol in kindergarten. This includes collection of basic contact information, kindergarten preferences and any other details that may inform prioritised allocation in kindergarten.

School Readiness Funding: funding provided by DET for programs and supports that builds the capacity of kindergarten services, educators and families to support children's learning and development outcomes.

Second year of funded four-year-old kindergarten: second year eligibility may be considered when a child shows delays in key outcomes of learning and development. An assessment is carried out for each child by an early childhood teacher in Term 4 (the year before the child is to attend school) when a second year is being considered.

SOURCES



- 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
 - 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
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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
- notifying all stakeholders affected by this policy at least 14 days before making any significant changes to this policy or its procedures, unless a lesser period is necessary due to risk ([Regulation 172](#)).

ATTACHMENTS



- Attachment 1: Attachment 1 – Eligibility and priority of access criteria for 3 and 4-year-old funded kindergarten program
- Attachment 2: Donvale Preschool registration and enrolment procedures
- Attachment 3: Letter for parents/guardians without acceptable immunisation documentation
- Attachment 4: Cancellation of enrolment and non-attendance

AUTHORISATION



This policy was reviewed by the Committee of Management on the 16th October 2023

ATTACHMENT 1. ELIGIBILITY AND PRIORITY OF ACCESS CRITERIA

FOR A FUNDED KINDERGARTEN THREE OR FOUR-YEAR-OLD KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

In instances where more eligible children apply for a place at a kindergarten service than there are places available, Donvale Preschool will:

- prioritise children based on the Department of Education and Training (DET) criteria listed below
- work with other local kindergarten services and the regional DET office to ensure all eligible children have access to a kindergarten place.

All information relating to PoA criteria will be respectfully collected from families upon enrolment, recorded in the child's confidential enrolment record and entered into the Kindergarten Information Management (KIM) system, where applicable.

DET's Priority of Access criteria	Process that could be used to verify need(s)
Children at risk of abuse or neglect, including children in Out-of-Home Care	<p>The child is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This information can be obtained from the child's carer/family as part of the enrolment process and/or received from a referral source which may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Child Protection ○ Child and family services (family services referral and support team, Child FIRST/integrated family services/Services Connect case worker) ○ Maternal and Child Health nurse, or ○ Out-of-Home Care provider
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As part of the enrolment process, service providers must respectfully ask families 'is your child Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander?'
Asylum seeker and refugee children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As part of the enrolment process, service providers should respectfully ask whether the family/child holds a visa or ImmiCard identifying the child and/or parents as a refugee or asylum seeker
Children eligible for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A child or parent holds a Commonwealth Health Care Card, Pensioner Concession Card, Veteran's Affairs Card, or • Multiple birth children (triplets, quadruplets). • Asylum seeker and/or refugee children
Children with additional needs, defined as children who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • require additional assistance in order to fully participate in the kindergarten program • require a combination of services which are individually planned • have an identified specific disability or developmental delay 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is assessed as having delays in two or more areas and is declared eligible for a second funded year of 4-year-old kindergarten, or • holds a Child Disability Health Care Card, or • has previously been approved for Kindergarten Inclusion Support Package, or referred by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the National Disability Insurance Scheme • Early Childhood Intervention Services • Kindergarten Field Officer • Maternal and Child Health nurse, or • is assessed as having delays in 2 or more areas and is declared eligible for a second year of funded Four-Year-Old Kindergarten.

After places have been offered to all children who meet the criteria for priority of access, remaining positions will be offered to families in the following order:

- children who are already currently attending Donvale Preschool in the 3 year old program
- children who were eligible to attend in the previous year but deferred
- children who have a sibling that has previously attended Donvale Preschool
- date of submitted application

* Early Start Kindergarten and Three-Year-Old Kindergarten

During the roll-out of Three-Year-Old Kindergarten, Early Start Kindergarten (ESK) will continue to provide 15 hours a week of funded kindergarten for all eligible children up until 2029, when three-year-old children across the state will have access to 15 hours

It is important to continue to enrol eligible children in ESK, even if funded Three-Year-Old Kindergarten is available at the service.

The Kindergarten Funding Guide 2023 states for ESK funding, service providers should:

- provide up to 15 hours in a kindergarten program free of charge and maximise access to 15 hours of kindergarten (children accessing ESK can be enrolled in a 3-year-old group, a 4-year-old group, a mixed age group or a combination of groups in order to access the full 15 hours per week)

This guarantees that children experiencing vulnerability will continue to be enrolled in the full 15 hours of kindergarten in all service settings, including long day care. It also ensures that service providers can continue to receive all funding entitlements.

Service providers are expected to continue to provide the full 15 hours funded through Early Start Kindergarten, even in instances where three-year-old groups are being offered fewer than 15 hours.

ESK is available to children who turn three years of age by 30 April in the year of enrolment and who:

- are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
- have had contact with Child Protection
- have a refugee or asylum seeker background*

ATTACHMENT 2. DONVALE PRESCHOOL REGISTRATION AND ENROLMENT PROCEDURES

REGISTRATION FOR ENROLMENT

Expression of interest are lodged on our website www.donvalepreschool.org.au via the Enrol Now Platform. A \$20 application fee is payable with the initial expression of interest form. This is to cover the costs of the Enrol Now Platform. **This is a non-refundable enrolment application fee.** Applications must be via this platform and a separate application submitted for each child.

Enrolment applications will be **accepted from 1st May provided your child turns 2 years between 01 May in the current year and 30 April of the following year.**

- Completed online forms are then entered into the Enrol Now Platform and notifications are emailed to the Enrolment Officer.
- To be eligible for Three-Year-Old Kindergarten, your child must turn 3 by April 30 in the year in which they attend
- To be eligible for Four-Year-Old Kindergarten, your child must turn 4 by April 30 in the year in which they attend
- A copy of the **child's birth certificate** must also accompany the application. Applications submitted without a copy of birth certificate included cannot be processed.
- To facilitate inclusion and Priority of Access of all children into the program, enrolment applications should clearly identify any additional or specific needs of the child, if known at the time of the application.
- Access to completed expression of interest forms will be restricted to the enrolment officer and staff, unless otherwise specified by the Committee of Management.
- Applications will be entered into the waiting list using the priority of access criteria and the date the expression of interest was received.
- Applications for three-year-old Kindergarten will automatically be entered onto the four-year-old waitlist for the following year.
- For enrolments that are received mid term for the current year, the enrolment deposit must be received and enrolment paperwork be fully completed prior to commencement.

**Should the kindergarten have spaces available in the 4 year old program, enrolments will not be accepted for the current year after the end of term 3.*

ENROLMENT AND IMMUNISATIONS

The Government's No Jab No Play laws require all children to be age-appropriately immunised before enrolment can be confirmed. Parents/guardians offered tentative places will be asked to provide immunisation documentation to Donvale Preschool no earlier than the 1st December that shows that their child's immunisations are up to date for their age or that an exemption applies.

Confirmation of places is finalised after the documentation has been assessed that the child is up to date or that the child is on a recognised catch-up schedule if they have fallen behind with their vaccinations, or that the child has a medical reason not to be vaccinated or that the child has been assessed as being eligible for a 16 week grace period. Further information on immunisation requirements for enrolment in early childhood services is available on the State Government's [Better Health Channel](https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/campaigns/no-jab-no-play) at www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/campaigns/no-jab-no-play

Documentation that will be accepted for the assessment for offering a confirmed place are:

- That the next due vaccine for the child on the ACIR Immunisation History Statement is within the acceptable timeframe for an enrolment, or;

- That the child is on a recognised catch-up schedule if they have fallen behind with their vaccinations, or;
- That the child has a medical reason not to be vaccinated, or,
- That the child has been assessed by Donvale Preschool as being eligible for a 16 week grace period
- Please note that Maternal Health Record Books are no longer an acceptable form of documentation.
- **Parents/guardians who do not have acceptable immunisation documentation cannot be offered a place and will be referred to Australian Childhood Immunisation Register or to an immunisation provider.**

OFFER OF PLACES

Places will be offered to eligible applicants in order of **priority of access** and the **date the application form was received**, until all places are filled or the waiting list is exhausted.

- Offer of places in the three-year-old and four-year-old programs will be emailed to applicants during May in the year preceding attendance. Tentative places 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.
- The closing date for replying to these offers will be **two working weeks from the date the letter is sent**. However, there will also be an additional one week's grace period for follow-up phone calls/emails after this time.
- In the event of a place being available/offered later in the year (from November onwards) the closing date for replying to these offers will be reduced to one week from the date the letter is sent to expedite the process of filling remaining places.
- Should the kindergarten fee deposit not be paid after the total three weeks, the place will then be offered to the next applicant on the waiting list, as per **priority** and **date of expression of interest received**.
- If an emailed offer is not accepted, then an offer will be made via telephone to the next child on the registration list (telephone offers must be made due to time constraints). These applicants will be given at least 24 hours to respond usually by 5pm the following day. If no response is gathered, then the assumption will be made that the placement is no longer required. On telephone acceptance, the letter of offer will then be emailed.
- Parents/guardians who do not wish to accept the offer of a place, or intend to withdraw their enrolment, will be requested to notify the enrolment officer in writing as soon as possible.
- If available, the timetable will be sent with the letter of offer, however, session groups will not be allocated at this time (Refer to group preference allocation below).
- All offers must be confirmed by payment of a kindergarten fee deposit, paid by the due date specified on the letter of offer otherwise the position will be reallocated.
- Requests for extension of the due date for the kindergarten fee deposit will not be granted. In extraordinary circumstances, families may apply in writing, up to one week prior to the due date, for the committee of management to review.
- The kindergarten fee deposit is \$140.00 (non-transferable and non-refundable) which includes a maintenance levy and administration fee as per the Fees Policy. **If a parent/guardian defers or withdraws after the deposit is processed the fee is forfeited.**
- The enrolment process information and other relevant documents will be provided after the place is accepted and deposit paid.
- Applicants who are unsuccessful will be notified and will be asked to indicate whether they wish to remain on the waiting list if a vacancy arises.

- If a family declines an offer of place, or removes themselves from the enrolment list and then later decides to reapply for a position, they will be placed at the bottom of the waiting list, as per new enrolments. Date of enrolment received will be adjusted to reflect this change.
- If a family declines a further second offer, they will not be able to re-join the waiting list again.

First term fees need to be paid in full by the AGM held in November, date specified on the Term one invoice, otherwise the placement cannot be confirmed

Note: Places will not be allocated to children until any outstanding fees owed to the service by the family is paid, or a payment plan is agreed to between the family and Donvale Preschool

LONG TERM ABSENCE FROM KINDER

If a child is unwell for a long period of time and unable to attend or a family wishes to withdraw their child from the program for any period of time, i.e., a term, regardless of reason, they must pay the full fees for the period of time absent to hold their child's place at the kindergarten.

If the family decides not to pay the fees for the period absent, they must advise the Enrolment Officer in writing of their intention and their place will be offered to the next child on the waiting list. If places are available upon return, re-enrolment will be considered, however cannot be guaranteed.

GROUP PREFERENCE ALLOCATION

Group preference requests will be made available to parents with their letter of offer for the following year advising of the available group times and days. When parents accept their child's position for the following year and pay their enrolment deposit, families will be able to submit their group preference request.

- Group allocation will be made in order of preferences received. Every endeavour will be made to place your child into your preferred group; however, this is not always possible. Staff will need to allow for all considerations, which will be prioritised as follows: Needs of individual children, Needs of the group and Parental wishes
- Educators and the Nominated Supervisor will be consulted to ensure the individual needs of each child and family are supported and the foreseeable group dynamic ensures staff can provide a safe and supportive environment for all children enrolled.
- Priority of access guidelines do not apply to group allocations and preferences, only to offer of place. If there are Court Orders pertaining arrangements that clash with a particular group timetable, these will be considered, however cannot be guaranteed.
- It is highly recommended that families considering a second year of preschool consult with kindergarten staff prior to the beginning of term 3, to allow for the second year application to be commenced and submitted prior to the end of term three. It should be noted that families who decide to apply for a second year of kindergarten after initial letter of offer are sent out will not be able to select group preferences for the following year, as group preference forms will have already been distributed to families enrolled for the following year. Group preferences for 2nd year of kinder applications lodged after letters of offer have been sent will be allocated based on remaining spaces available.
- **NOTE: Places withheld for children receiving a second year of kindergarten are only given priority of offer, not preference of group**
- Group allocations will be finalised and families will be notified of their group by the date specified on the group preference letter. **This shall be done as early as possible in the year, but no later than the end of September.**

- Donvale Preschool requires parents/guardians who have been offered a tentative place to provide acceptable immunisation documentation for assessment no more than two months prior to the child first attending the service in order that a confirmed place can be offered.

**Special consideration will be given to families with children in both three-year-old and four-year-old kindergarten and/or to parents of twins and other multiples to ensure that the children attend on the same day. This does not ensure the first preference can be met.*

ORIENTATION


During November each year an orientation session will be held for all incoming three-year-old children.

Four-year-old groups will run a staggered entry program during the first few weeks of kindergarten during term one to assist with settling and orientating the children.

ENROLMENT FORMS

Enrolment Forms are emailed to families on the 1st December in the year prior to their child commencing kinder. Families have 10 days to complete these forms online. These forms must be submitted and returned to the kinder by the 10th December for enrolment and immunisation records to be checked, so that final confirmation of enrolment can be sent to families.

Example of an immunisation history statement


 Australian Government
 Department of Human Services
medicare

Immunisation history statement

As at: 01 June 2019

For: ARMANDO D BOWERS

Date of birth: 01 Nov 2017

Immunisation status: up to date

Schedule	Immunisation	Date given	Brand name given	Provider type
Birth	Hepatitis B	01 Nov 2017	Engerix-B	Hospital
2 months	Diphtheria Tetanus Pertussis Hepatitis B Polio Hib Pneumococcal Rotavirus	01 Jan 2018	Infanrix Hexa Prevenar 13 RotaTeq	GP
4 months	Diphtheria Tetanus Pertussis Hepatitis B Polio Hib Pneumococcal Rotavirus	01 Mar 2018	Infanrix Hexa Prevenar 13 RotaTeq	GP
6 months	Diphtheria Tetanus Pertussis Hepatitis B Polio Hib Pneumococcal Rotavirus	01 May 2018	Infanrix Hexa Prevenar 13 RotaTeq	GP
12 months	Measles Mumps Rubella Meningococcal C Hib	01 Nov 2018	MMR II Menitorix	GP
18 months	Measles Mumps Rubella Varicella	01 May 2019	Priorix-Tetra	GP

Next immunisation/s due
 Diphtheria Tetanus Pertussis Poliomyelitis

Date due
 01 Nov 2020

ATTACHMENT 3. LETTER FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS WITHOUT ACCEPTABLE IMMUNISATION DOCUMENTATION

Insert Letterhead

Donvale Preschool
7 Florence Avenue
Donvale, Vic 3111
[Insert date]

Dear [insert name]

Re: Enrolment at Donvale Preschool for [insert year]

I am contacting you regarding your tentative place for [insert child's name] at Donvale Preschool in the [insert 3 year old or 4 year old program] in [insert year].

Under the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* early childhood education and care services cannot enrol a child unless the parent/guardian has provided AIR Immunisation History Statement.

AIR Immunisation History Statement includes evidence of immunisations and is used to assess whether your child is fully vaccinated for their age.

As we have not received acceptable immunisation documentation for [insert name of child] by the due date, and your child is not eligible for the 16 week grace period, we are unable to confirm a place at our service for [insert year] and your child's name has been removed from our list.

Immunisation programs are effective in reducing the risk of vaccine preventable diseases. Immunisation from an early age helps protect your child against serious childhood infections. Further information about immunisations for your child is available from:

- your doctor
- Manningham Council Immunisation Services
- National Immunisation Information Line Tel. 1800 671 811
- Australian Immunisation Register: www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/medicare/australian-immunisation-register
- Better Health Channel website: www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/campaigns/no-jab-no-play

Should you wish to re-apply for a place for [insert child's name], we are happy to accept a new enrolment application accompanied by an AIR Immunisation History Statement. The new application would be considered in line with Donvale Preschool's *Enrolment and Orientation policy*.

Yours sincerely

Jackie Raine

Enrolment Officer

Donvale Preschool

ATTACHMENT 4. CANCELLATION OF ENROLMENT AND NON-ATTENDANCE

FOR FUNDED KINDERGARTEN

Cancellation of Enrolment

Families **MUST** notify Donvale Preschool and/or an Enrolment Officer in writing of their intention to cancel their child's enrolment. Fees will continue to be generated for that place until the Donvale Preschool is notified.

Note: This process does not apply to vulnerable children. Children and families that are experiencing vulnerability are to be supported according to their individual needs. Where children/families are linked to Child Protection and not attending; early childhood teacher or educator will need to inform their Case Officer.

Non-attendance

- Term One
Families that have accepted a placement and have not completed an enrolment form and not attended the service within the first 2 weeks of Term One will be contacted and informed their placement has been cancelled.
- Families Traveling Overseas
Families are required to notify Donvale Preschool prior to extended periods of travel, and ensure any applicable fees are paid if they wish to return to the service.
- Non-contactable Families
 - After two weeks of a child not attending and the family has made no attempts to contact the service, the early childhood teacher or educator will contact the family via phone. If there is no response, the Educator is to log this attempt and place in the child's file. A follow up email will be sent to the family.
 - After the third week of non-attendance, the early childhood teacher or educator will inform the nominated supervisor and cross check families contact details.
- Nominated supervisor or Committee of Management to email family, ensuring a response date is documented in the email.
- If the family have made no attempt to communicate with the service before the response date, post a final attempt letter, ensuring a response date is documented in the letter.
- If the family has not responded to the final attempt letter before the response date, their placement will be cancelled.