



Enrolment and Orientation Policy

Authorisation	DSCC Management Committee
Review Date	October 2023
Approved Date	31 October 2023
Next Review Date (Frequency)	October 2024 (1 year) or sooner if required.
Relevant Documents	Attachment 1 – Priority Access Criteria

AUTHORISATION

This policy was reviewed and adopted by the Dawson Street Child Care Co-operative (DSCC), at a committee meeting on the Approved Date defined above.

POLICY STATEMENT

Values

DSCC is committed to:

- equal access for all eligible children
- meeting the needs of the local community
- supporting families to meet the requirements for enrolment through the provision of information
- maintaining confidentiality in relation to all information provided for enrolment
- ensuring all families are welcomed and receive an effective orientation into the service.

Purpose

This policy outlines:

- the criteria for enrolment at Dawson Street Children's Cooperative (DSCC)
- the process to be followed when enrolling a child at DSCC
- requirements in relation to No Jab No Play
- the basis on which places within the programs will be allocated
- procedures for the orientation of new families and children into DSCC
- processes to ensure compliance with legislative and DET funding requirements in relation to the enrolment of children in early childhood education and care services.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Persons with Management and Control, Nominated Supervisor, early childhood teachers, Persons in Day to Day Charge, educators, staff and parents/guardians who wish to enrol or have already enrolled their child at DSCC.

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)).

It is intended by 2022 that all eligible children (refer to *Definitions*) will have access to two years of kindergarten before commencing school. However, a shortage of places in some areas can limit choices for parents/guardians. Where demand is higher than availability, Approved Provider's must adhere to their eligibility and priority of access criteria (refer to *Definitions* and *Attachment 1*) in order to allocate the available places. The criteria used to determine the allocation of places takes account of the requirements set out in *The Kindergarten Funding Guide* (refer to *Sources*), 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 central enrolment schemes are required to comply with the enrolment procedures of that scheme.

Childcare services providing approved child care (refer to *Definitions*) must abide by the *Family Assistance Legislation Amendment (Jobs for families childcare package) Act 2017* (refer to *Legislation and standards*) and the Commonwealth Government's *Priority for allocating places in child care services* (refer to *Sources*).

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.

Legislation and standards

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- *A New Tax System (Family Assistance) (Administration) Act 1999*
- *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* (Vic)
- *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005* (Vic)
- *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* (Vic)
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cth)
- *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*: Regulations 160, 161, 162, 168, 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)

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.

Administration Fee: Non-refundable, one-off payment to the Centre, due prior to Commencement of Care date.

Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) Immunisation History Statement: is the only form of acceptable evidence of immunisation. The AIR is a national register administered by Medicare that records all vaccinations given in Australia, including to children. Parents/carers must provide a copy of their most recent AIR Immunisation History Statement, which shows that the child is up to date with their immunisations upon enrolment and when a child has received or been due to receive a vaccination while attending the service. In the case of medical contraindication, an authorised medical practitioner completes and signs a Medical Exemption Form, and supplies it to the AIR. In order to confirm enrolment, the Immunisation History Statement must show the child is up to date with the vaccines they can have, medical contraindication and indicate the due date for the next vaccinations the child is able to receive in the future if applicable.

Approved child care providers: providers that operate services that have Australian Government approval to receive Child Care Subsidy (refer to Definitions) on behalf of eligible parents. Approved child care providers include centre-based day care, including long day care and occasional care, family day care, outside school hours care and in-home care.

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 means tested subsidy to assist eligible families with the cost of child care. Payments are paid directly to approved child care providers (refer to *Definitions*). Further information can be found at: <https://www.education.gov.au/child-care-subsidy-0>

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*).

Child Enrolment Application Form: A form, which collects details about the child. This is completed after a place has been offered by DSCC and accepted by the applicant.

Commencement of Care Date: The date on which children are eligible to start care. It is expected that children will commence attendance at DSCC no later than two weeks from this date.

Current Children: Those children already in attendance at DSCC

Deferrals: A child who does not attend preschool in the year when the child is eligible for a funded preschool place, or officially withdraws from a service on or before the last day of term

one. These children are considered by DEECD not to have accessed a year of funded preschool, and are therefore eligible for DEECD funding in the following year.

DET: Department of Education and Training (www.education.vic.gov.au).

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 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; details of any court orders; and health information including immunisation status. Enrolment records are stored securely in the service due to their confidential nature.

Fee: Fees payable to DSCC for care of children.

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 (refer to *Definitions*) 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 (refer to *Definitions*) and to encourage families to access immunisation services.

New Children: Those children who have not commenced care at DSCC.

Orientation: Period of settling in for children, usually 2-3 hours either in the morning or afternoon. Free of charge if completed prior to Commencement of Care or on a non-booked day as per Orientation Policy

For most children, entry into the Centre will be the first experience they have had separating from their parents. Most children will experience some anxiety leaving their parents for the first time and it is important parents and staff work together to build the special relationship necessary for a successful adjustment.

As the needs and circumstances of each family are different, the Centre will aim to tailor the settling in period to best meet the needs of both the child and the family.

The main goals of orientation are to address:

- Separation from the parents (separation anxiety)
- Bonding with the DSCC educators
- Eating and sleeping (if appropriate) at the Centre

Participation Levy: Levy charged prior to Commencement of Care date. It is rolled over each year, if participation has been completed as per Participation Policy, and returnable on leaving DSCC. Levy is forfeited if participation is not completed by the end of the year, and a new levy will be requested with re-enrolment for following year.

Per Capita Funding: Preschool funding from the state government is received as an amount per eligible child enrolled in the preschool program.

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 spaces using the criteria outlined in *The Kindergarten Funding Guide (see Attachment 1: Eligibility and priority of access criteria for a 3 and 4-year-old funder kindergarten program)*, or if in receipt of the CCS, comply with the Commonwealth Government's policy for allocating places (see *Source*).

Renewal of Care Form: Form which collects details of required care for current children for the following year.

Selection Criteria: The criteria under which applications for places at DSCC are assessed.

Vacant Funded Place: A government funded place in the preschool programme from which a child has withdrawn.

Waiting List Application Form: A form to apply for a non-preschool or preschool place at DSCC.

SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES

Sources

- Australian Childhood Immunisation Register:
www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/medicare/australian-childhood-immunisation-register
- Australian Government Department of Health, *National Immunisation Program Schedule*:
<https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/immunisation/immunisation-throughout-life/national-immunisation-program-schedule>
- Department of Health and Human Services, *Immunisation enrolment toolkit for early childhood education and care service*: <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/immunisation/vaccination-children/no-jab-no-play/immunisation-enrolment-toolkit>
- *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/
- Priority of Access Guidelines for child care service:
<https://www.dese.gov.au/uncategorised/resources/priority-access-guidelines-child-care-services>
- The Family Assistance Law as the basis for Commonwealth child care fee assistance including the Child Care Subsidy (CCS) and Additional Child Care Subsidy (ACCS):
<https://www.education.gov.au/child-care-legislation>
- *The Kindergarten Funding Guide (Department of Education and Training)*:
www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/funding/Pages/kinderfundingcriteria.aspx
- Victorian Department of Health: www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation

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*

PROCEDURES

The Approved Provider or Persons with Management and Control is responsible for:

- determining the criteria for priority of access to programs at DSCC, as described in The Kindergarten Funding Guide; and/or as describe under the Family Assistance Law for CCS recipients, and the service's philosophy (refer also to Attachment 1 – Eligibility and priority of access criteria for 3 and 4-year-old funded kindergarten program)
- considering any barriers to access that may exist, developing procedures that ensure all eligible families are aware of, and are able to access, an early childhood program

- complying with the *Inclusion and Equity Policy*
- appointing a person to be responsible for the enrolment process and the day-to-day implementation of this policy.
- providing opportunities (in consultation with the Nominated Supervisor and educators) 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
- providing parents/guardians with information about the requirements of the law for enrolment, locating and accessing immunisation services and obtaining the AIR Immunisation History Statement (refer to *Definitions*) required for enrolment
- 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 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 (refer to *Definitions*)
- ensuring that only children whose AIR Immunisation History Statement (refer to *Definitions*) has been assessed as being acceptable or who are eligible for the grace period (refer to *Definitions*) have a confirmed place in the program
- advising parents/guardians who do not have an AIR Immunisation History Statement (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 (see Attachment 3 – Letter for parents/guardians without acceptable immunisation documentation)
- taking reasonable steps to obtain an up to date AIR Immunisation History Statement (refer to *Definitions*) from a parent/guardian of a child enrolled under a grace 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) (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 calendar year, timing reminders to comply with the maximum seven-month interval (Public Health and Wellbeing Regulation 107, Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 Section 143E)
- ensuring that the enrolment record (refer to *Definitions*) complies with the requirements of Regulations 160, 161, 162 and that it effectively meets the management requirements of the service
- 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))
- ensuring that the orientation program and plans meet the individual needs of children and families, and comply with DET funding criteria
- 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, except where this may pose a risk to the safety of children or staff, or conflict with any duty of the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor or educators under the Law (Regulation 157).

Enrolment Process:

Application for placement on the Waiting List for NEW CHILDREN

- Waiting list applications for children to attend DSCC from parent/guardians will be accepted when Waiting List is open which is determined by the Director.
- Applications for unborn babies will only be accepted if there is an actual expected date of delivery.
- Waiting list applicants will be charged a non-refundable fee of \$20 to cover the administration costs of maintaining the list. The charge will apply to each family, regardless of the outcome of their application.
- Waiting List Application Forms are available from the Director's office at DSCC and can be completed after a tour of the service.
- A separate application form must be completed for each family.
- Completed Waiting List Application Forms are to be forwarded to the Director at DSCC.
- Access to completed Waiting List Application Forms will be restricted to the Director and Admin Officer.
- On receipt of the completed Waiting List Application Form and fee, the Director will assess the application, apply the Priority of Access criteria and place the applicant into the appropriate place in the waiting list.
- If the Waiting List Application Form is for a child wishing to do a second year of preschool, families need to let the Director know at time of application.
- If any family circumstances change that would affect your priority in the waiting list, the Director is to be immediately notified.
- Every six months, the Director or Office Administrator may be asked to contact families on the waiting list to ascertain whether they still require a place.

Enrolment offered in multi-day blocks

DSCC recognises the critical importance of children developing strong attachment to Educators, in particular in the early years, to ensure the wellbeing of children at Dawson St. As such, parents are obliged to enrol children in a minimum of 2 days.

In order to prioritise the needs of the children and allow educators to plan and explore learning with specific groups of children and meet the ongoing financial requirements of the centre, enrolments are offered as multi-day blocks, as follows: Dawson Street will offer places based on the amount of days required. These grouping are to ensure consistency of the children's learning and educators teaching. The blocks offered are as follows:

Number of days enrolled	Option	Days Offered
Five days	5	Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday
Four days	4a	Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday
	4b	Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday
	4c	Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday
Three days	3a	Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday
	3d	Wednesday, Thursday, Friday
Two days	2a	Monday, Tuesday
	2b	Thursday, Friday

From time to time, a single day may come available. When this occurs the next eligible child on the waiting list will be offered this day. Subsequently, should an additional day be available, that child will be obliged to accept the additional day of enrolment, to ensure they meet the 2-day minimum requirement.

Application for permanently different or permanent extra days made throughout the year for current children (non-preschool or preschool place)

Waiting list applications for current children to attend DSCC on different or extra days will be accepted at anytime, in accordance with the multi-day blocks outlined above.

- The Director, or administration officer, will record applicant details on the in-house waiting list.
- Access to completed Waiting List Application Forms will be restricted to the Director and staff.
- On receipt of the application, the Director will assess the application, apply the Priority of Access criteria and place the applicant into the appropriate place in the waiting list.

Allocation of places to NEW CHILDREN

- Places will be allocated to children who are on the waiting list in accordance with the all the selection and eligibility criteria above.
- Those on the waiting list may contact the Centre to review their progress on the waiting list at any time.
- Parents/guardians wishing to withdraw their waiting list application are requested to let the Director know as soon as possible.
- Contact will be made with applicants by telephone and may constitute an answer machine message.
- Offer of a place requires verbal notice of acceptance within 48 hours of being contacted; otherwise the family may be removed from the waiting list.
- If the family does not want the place at that particular time, they may choose to remain on the waiting list.
- Once the place has been verbally accepted the Administration Officer will send out a Commencement of Care Pack, advising the family of the Commencement of Care date, with other related forms.
- An invoice for the first two weeks of care from Commencement of Care date, a \$100 administration fee, and a \$150 participation levy will be requested in the Commencement of Care Pack, and this must be paid prior to the Commencement of Care date. Families will be required to buy one share in DSCC for \$1.
- Child enrolment and immunisation history statement need to be completed and returned to the Director, prior to the Commencement of Care date
- It is the responsibility of families to keep Child Information forms updated throughout the year.
- All other issues addressed in the Commencement of Care Pack, government funding, special requirements, etc. must be discussed with the Centre Director prior to the Commencement of Care date.
- Parents are advised that DSCC complies with the Victorian Government school exclusion table.
- It is highly recommended that orientation takes place prior to the Commencement of Care date if space permits (at no cost), or during the first week of attendance after the Commencement of Care date (fees payable).
- First day of subsidised/non-subsidised attendance is expected to take place no longer than two weeks from the Commencement of Care date. CCS funding may be affected if

attendance does not occur on Commencement of Care date. Please refer to the Family and Community Services Child Care Services Handbook or Director for more information. Any deviation must be with the approval of the MC.

- Children must be twelve weeks of age or more on the date they first physically attend DSCC care (excluding orientation). N.B This is not the Commencement of Care date. If a child is 6 to 12 weeks on the Commencement of Care date the family is eligible to take up the offer of a place and pay for up to six weeks fees to hold the place without physically attending. Places can only be held for a maximum of six weeks.
- Children older than six weeks, but younger than twelve weeks may first physically attend DSCC prior to twelve weeks of age, as long as they meet Priority 1 of the Priority of Access Guidelines.
- On the date of Commencement of Care, families (attending and not attending on this date) will receive an invoice for weeks three and four of care. The terms of this invoice and subsequent invoices are 14 days.

Renewal of Care procedures and priority of access for CURRENT children for the following year

- All existing families will receive a Request for Renewal of Care form by the first Monday of October. This form will allow current families to opt for different or extra days should they so wish or to state that they would like to continue with the same days for current children the following year.
- Families will be reminded of this date prior to distribution, and it is expected families will collect their forms at the earliest possible time. These can be sent out by email by the first Monday of October but the Director must be notified in advance if this is required.
- At this time all existing waiting list applications from current children will be suspended until the Confirmation of Care process is completed.
- Places for the next year will have the following priority of access criteria:
 - (a) Days requested that are the same as the previous year (when forms are returned by the return date)- this will be applied wherever possible and at the discretion of the Director. From January 2021 we will no longer be accepting request for places outside our specified block days.
 - (b) priority will be given to those who return their forms first (when forms are returned by the return date)
 - (c) Extra or different days from the previous year with priority given to those who return their forms first (when forms are returned after the return date)
- Confirmation of Care letters will be emailed to families approximately two weeks after the return date on the Renewal of Care form.
- Families will be informed on the Confirmation of Care form of the return confirmation of acceptance date in which to contact the Director, before vacant places are offered to new children.
- Any vacant places will be offered to new children from 48 hours after the Confirmation of Care letters are sent out.
- If families drop booked days after re-enrolment (i.e.. after receipt of their confirmation of care letters) but prior to the commencement of the following year, they will be charged an additional penalty fee of one day's full fee for every dropped day. (i.e. one dropped day will result in payment equivalent to one days fees, three dropped days results in payment of three days fees). This fee is to meet the additional costs of the centre in reallocating the dropped day – no care is provided for the fee.
- Places will not be allocated to children until any substantial debt owed by the family to DSCC is paid, or a payment plan is agreed to between the family and the Director and Management Committee, prior to the return date on the Request for Renewal of Care form.
- Every endeavour will be made to allocate places to current children as requested by families, however the allocation of places, is at all times at the discretion of the Director, in consultation with families, with consideration to the Centre priority categories, the age

group the vacancy is in, the days available, the developmental needs of the individual child and the needs and circumstances of the individual family.

- Should there be a discrepancy between what was requested and places allocated in the Confirmation of Care letter, children will be placed on the waiting list for the next available vacancy. Families will be placed on the waiting list in the order in which the Renewal of Care forms were received by the Director, in cases of equality when Priority of Access criteria are applied.
- Families are welcome to discuss their request with the Director at anytime.
- Prior to commencement of the following year, two weeks' advance fees must be paid, a new participation levy paid (if required) and a new Child enrolment form is required to be completed.
- It is the responsibility of families to keep Child Information forms updated throughout the year.

The Nominated Supervisor, Persons in Day to Day Charge and early childhood teachers are responsible for:

- reviewing enrolment applications to identify children with additional needs (refer to *Definitions* and the *Inclusion and Equity Policy*)
- responding to parent/guardian enquiries regarding their child's readiness for the program that they are considering enrolling their child in
- discussing the individual child's needs with parents/guardians and developing an orientation program to assist them to settle into the program
- encouraging parents/guardians 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 in to the service
- discussing support services for children with parents/guardians, where required.

All educators are responsible for:

- responding to enrolment enquiries on a day-to-day basis and referring people to the person responsible for the enrolment process, as required
- providing parents/guardians with information about the requirements of the law for enrolment, locating and accessing immunisation services and obtaining AIR Immunisation History Statement (refer to *Definitions*) required for enrolment
- developing strategies to assist new families to:
 - feel welcomed into the service
 - become familiar with service policies and procedures
 - share information about their family beliefs, values and culture
 - share their understanding of their child's strengths, interests, abilities and needs
 - discuss the values and expectations they hold in relation to their child's learning
- providing comfort and reassurance to children who are showing signs of distress when separating from family members
- complying with the service's *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy* in relation to the collection and management of a child's enrolment information.

Parents/guardians are responsible for:

- reading and complying with this *Enrolment and Orientation Policy*
- completing the enrolment application form and the enrolment record prior to their child's commencement at the service and providing AIR Immunisation History Statement (refer to *Definitions*) 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 (refer to *Definitions*) to the service
- ensuring that all other required information is provided to the service
- updating information by notifying the service of any changes as they occur.

Volunteers and students, while at the service, are responsible for following this policy and its procedures**Phone Numbers**

- DSCC Director – (03) 9380 8668
- National Quality Standard Regulatory and Assessment Officer at the regional DEECD office (available from DSCC Notice Board in foyer)
- Early Learning Association Australia - (03) 9489 3500

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.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1: Priority of Access Criteria for children wishing to access a non-preschool place
- Attachment 2: Immunisation and Enrolment
- Attachment 3: Letter for parents/guardians without acceptable immunisation documentation
- Attachment 4: Orientation procedures
- Attachment 5: Staff Rosters and Changing Rooms procedure

Child Orientation and Enrolment Policy

Date Reviewed	Details of Changes (if any)	Date of Next Review
October 2023	Minor changes, including updating for email transmission of Confirmation of Care letters.	October 2024
May 2021	Split into 2 policies: DSCC enrolment and orientation & Kindergarten enrolment policy. Updated to block day booking schedule. Update to renewal of care changes.	May 2022
August 2019	Updated to introduce multi-day block enrolment system as approved by AGM	March 2023
July 2016	Updated in line with amendments made to the Public Health & Wellbeing Act 2008 and the inclusion of new requirement for families to pay a penalty fee if they drop booked days before the commencement of the new year.	October 2018
February/October 2014	Enrolment Policy combined with Orientation Policy. Clothing and Comfort Policy incorporated into new policy in October 2014. New policy titled: Child Orientation and Enrolment Policy	October 2018

Orientation Policy (superseded)

Date Reviewed	Details of Changes (if any)	Date of Next Review
October 2012	Updates to the responsibilities of the Director and Management Committee	September 2013

September 2011	Clarification of responsibility of parents to bring items on checklist	September 2012
December 2010	Clarification that fees are not charged during orientation	September 2011
September 2009	None	September 2010
August 2008	To include details of the brochure received by parents in their enrolment pack	August 2009
August 2007	To include procedural information regarding separation anxiety & leaving children at DSCC.	August 2008
September 2006	Initial DSCC policy based on 2005 KPV Child Orientation policy.	September 2007

Enrolment Policy (superseded)

Date Reviewed	Details of Changes (if any)	Date of Next Review
August 2012	Updates to relevant legislation and regulations and details of funded preschool places	March 2013
March 2011	Updates to relevant legislation and regulations	March 2012
April 2010	Change to Department name	March 2011
March 2009	Insertion of requirement for new families to buy a share in DSCC; change word from pre-school to kinder	March 2010
March 2008	Insertion of Waiting List Administration Fee	March 2009
December 2007	7.3 & 7.5 – preference will be given to those families who meet the work/training/study test over those families where the work/training/study/test is not met.	December 2008

May 2007	Section 7.6 - DSCC complies with DHS Communicable Diseases Exclusion Table.	May 2010
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ATTACHMENTS 1

Priority of Access Criteria for children wishing to access a non-preschool place

Moving up a room within the calendar year must be by consensus with the family, Director and educators.

Before the priorities and guidelines below come into effect, excepting Priority One, all current children with a waiting list application submitted for a change of days or extra days in the same room shall be offered the first choice of the vacant place, then children deemed ready to move up a room.

These children will be given priority by their date of application to the Waiting List.

The Australian Government has determined guidelines for allocating places in these circumstances. They set out the following three levels of priority, which child care services must follow when filling vacant places:

- 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 under section 14 of the *A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999*
- Priority 3 – any other child.

Within these main categories priority will be given to the following children:

- (a) children with siblings already in attendance at DSCC **OR** children of staff members who are parents/guardians **OR** children with siblings who attended DSCC within the past 2 years
- (b) children of a parent/guardian who satisfies the work/training/study test within the boundaries of the Municipality of Moreland
- (c) children in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families
- (d) children in families which include a disabled person, on lower incomes, with a non-English speaking background, socially isolated families
- (e) children of single parents.

Notes:

1. DSCC believes it is important that places at the Centre are viewed as “family places”, rather than individual child places; meaning that we offer care to children from the same family on the same days. This coincides with best practise in child care and is in line with our community and cooperative values. We also value continuity of care and once a place is offered to a child they will continue to be viewed as having first priority on places until such time that the Federal Government clarifies otherwise.

2. DSCC values above staff-child ratios when possible, so that higher quality care for each individual child can be provided. It is with this in mind that a limit of three children per day under nine months is in place in the Gumnut room. The Management Committee, in consultation with Director and Educators, must approve any deviation.

3. At the AGM on 28 November 2007, it was agreed by all present that existing DSCC sole parent families who satisfy, or families with both parents who satisfy, the work/training/study test under section 14 of the *A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999* will be given priority of childcare over families where at least one parent does not satisfy the test.

In these situations the Director has the discretion to request families who do not meet the work/training/study test under section 14 of the *A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999*, to change days of childcare. In

situations where the discretion is exercised by the Director, at least two weeks' notice shall be provided to the affected family.

Priority of Access Criteria for children wishing to access a funded or non-funded preschool place

DSCC recognises that, unlike stand-alone preschools, children accessing programmes in long day-care centres may be eligible for Child Care Subsidy. As such DSCC needs to account for Federal Government required priorities, whilst assessing priority of access to the preschool programme.

Before the priorities and guidelines below come into effect, excepting Priority One, all current children in the 3yr old program who will be eligible to attend the preschool program in a funded place the following January will have first priority. Current children wishing to access a second year of the funded preschool program will receive priority access to the programme through the renewal of care process.

- 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 under section 14 of the Family Assistance Act
- Priority 3 – Children who have received funding for a second year of four year old kindergarten who are not currently attending the Centre.
- Priority 4 - Children who were eligible to attend in the previous year but deferred or withdrew from a service on or before the last day of term one, and have applied to the Waiting List
- Priority 5 – Any other eligible child
- Priority 6 – Any child wishing to access non-funded preschool place

Within these main categories priority will be given to the following children

- (a) children with siblings already in attendance at DSCC **OR** children of staff members who are parents/guardians **OR** children with siblings who attended DSCC within the past 2 years
- (b) children of a parent/guardian who satisfies the work/training/study test within the boundaries of the Municipality of Moreland
- (c) children in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families
- (d) children in families which include a disabled person, on lower incomes, with a non-English speaking background, socially isolated families
- (e) children of single parents.

Note:

At the AGM on 28 November 2007, it was agreed by all present that existing DSCC sole parent families who satisfy, or both parents who satisfy, the work/training/study test under section 14 of the *A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999* will be given priority of childcare over families where at least one parent who does not satisfy the test.

In these situations the Director has the discretion to request families who do not meet the work/training/study test under section 14 of the *A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999*, to change days of childcare. In situations where the discretion is exercised by the Director, at least two weeks' notice shall be provided to the affected family.

ATTACHMENT 2

Immunisation and Enrolment

In accordance with amendments made to the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008, effective from 1 January 2016, parents/guardians are required to provide documentation at enrolment that shows their child:

- is fully vaccinated for their age, or;
- is on a recognised catch-up schedule if their child has fallen behind with their vaccinations; or
- has a medical reason not to be vaccinated.

'Conscientious objection' to vaccination is not an exemption.

DSCC cannot confirm enrolment of a child unless a parent/guardian has provided an accepted form of documentation. Accepted documentation is in the form of either an Immunisation History Statement from the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register (ACIR) or an Immunisation Status Certificate from a medical doctor or local council immunisation service.

Children who fall within any of the below categories are eligible for a 16 week grace period which allows the child to enrol and attend care while the required documentation is obtained.

- Children experiencing vulnerability or disadvantage
- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Children
- Children known to child protection
- Children in the care of an adult who is not their parent
- Children in emergency care
- Evacuated children

Immunisation schedule Victoria

Infants and children – April 2020

*Live attenuated vaccine Medical risk factors

Age	Disease	Vaccine brand ¹	Reconstitute	Site given	Route given	Notes
Birth	Hepatitis B	H-B-Vax-II paediatric or Engerix-B paediatric	✗ •	Anterolateral thigh	IM	Give preferably within 24 hours of birth May be given up to 7 days after birth
2 months (from 6 weeks) and 4 months	Diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis, poliomyelitis-hepatitis B-Haemophilus influenzae type b	Infanrix hexa	✓	Anterolateral thigh	IM	
	Pneumococcal	Prevenar 13	✗	Anterolateral thigh	IM	
	Rotavirus	Rotarix*	✗	Mouth	Oral	1st dose must be given before 15 weeks of age 2nd dose must be given before 25 weeks of age
6 months	Diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis-poliomyelitis-hepatitis B-Haemophilus influenzae type b	Infanrix hexa	✓	Anterolateral thigh	IM	Give with an 8-week interval after dose 2 of Infanrix hexa at minimum age of 24 weeks.
6 months of age premature baby < 28 weeks gestation or with medical risk factor	Pneumococcal	Prevenar 13	✗	Anterolateral thigh	IM	See the online edition of The Australian Immunisation Handbook (handbook) for children with a medical risk
6 months to <5 years - all infants and children	Influenza	As supplied	✗	Anterolateral thigh only if < 12 months of age	IM	Annually. In children aged 6 months to less than 9 years of age in the first year of administration, give 2 doses a minimum of 1 month apart

Immunisation Section – Department of Health and Human Services: 1300 882 008
 Australian Immunisation Register: 1800 653 809
 SAEFVIC - Victoria's vaccine safety service: 1300 882 934 #1

This schedule is intended as a guide only and complete consultation with The Australian Immunisation Handbook is recommended. For additional information refer to the online edition of the immunisation handbook <<https://immunisationhandbook.health.gov.au/>>



Immunisation schedule Victoria. Infants and children – April 2020 (continued)

*Live attenuated vaccine Medical risk factors

Age	Disease	Vaccine brand ¹	Reconstitute	Site given	Route given	Notes
12 months	Measles-mumps-rubella	Priorix* or M-M-R-II*	✓	Anterolateral thigh/Deltoid	IM/SC	Measles-mumps-rubella vaccines are the least reactogenic in this schedule point
	Meningococcal ACWY	Nimenrix	✓	Deltoid	IM	
	Pneumococcal	Prevenar 13	✗	Deltoid	IM	
12 months of age premature baby < 32 weeks gestation or < 2000g birthweight	Hepatitis B	H-B-Vax-II Paediatric or Engerix-B Paediatric	✗	Deltoid	IM	single booster dose
18 months	Measles-mumps-rubella-varicella (chickenpox)	PriorixTetra* or ProQuad*	✓	Deltoid	IM/SC	Online edition of the handbook recommends 2nd dose of Varirix [®] /Varivax [®] to reduce incidence of 'breakthrough' varicella. This MUST be on prescription. Minimum 1 month interval for 2 live vaccines.
	Diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis	Infanrix or Tripacel	✗	Deltoid	IM	
	Haemophilus influenzae type b	ActHIB	✓	Anterolateral thigh/Deltoid	IM	Haemophilus influenzae type b vaccine is the least reactogenic in this schedule point
4 years	Diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis-poliomyelitis	Infanrix IPV or Quadracel	✗	Deltoid	IM	
5 years of age and over for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children	Influenza	As supplied	✗	Deltoid	IM	If less than 9 years of age in the first year of administration, give 2 doses a minimum of 1 month apart
4-5 years of age with medical risk factor	Pneumococcal	Pneumovax 23	✗	Deltoid	IM	See online edition of the handbook for recommended additional doses for children at increased risk
BCG for eligible infants and children	Tuberculosis	As supplied				BCG* for infants and children under 5 years of age travelling to TB endemic countries
5 years of age and over with medical risk factor	Influenza	Influenza	✗	Deltoid	IM	If less than 9 years of age in the first year of administration, give 2 doses a minimum of 1 month apart

Intramuscular injection (IM)	Needle size	Angle of needle insertion
Infants and children	23G/25G, 25mm length	90° to skin plane
Pre-term babies and very small babies	25G/23G, 16mm length	90° to skin plane

Subcutaneous injection (SC)	Needle size	Angle of needle insertion
In all persons	25G/26G, 16mm length	45° to skin plane

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ATTACHMENT 3

Letter for parents/guardians without acceptable immunisation documentation

[Address]

[Insert date]



Dear [insert name]

Re: Enrolment at DSCC for

I am contacting you regarding your tentative place for [insert child's name] at DSCC in the [insert room name] 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 that your child:

- is fully vaccinated for their age; or
- has been assessed by our service as being eligible for a 16 week grace period.

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 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
- Moreland Immunisation Service. Tel. 9240 1111
- National Immunisation Information Line Tel. 1800 671 811
- Australian Immunisation Register:
<https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/medicare/australian-immunisation-register>
- Better Health Channel website: <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/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 AIR History Statement. The new application would be considered in line with DSCC's Enrolment and Orientation policy.

Yours sincerely,

Bonnie Thomson

Director of Dawson Street Children's Co-operative

31 Dawson St, Brunswick, 3056.

ATTACHMENT 4

Orientation procedures:

Orientation handouts and settling in brochures are distributed to each new family with the Enrolment Pack, prior to starting care at the Centre.

Even if your child has been in another child-care situation or centre, they will still need to adjust to the new staff and environment.

It is suggested that orientation takes place in the week prior to a child beginning care. However, for new children at the start of the year, or where parents have commitments and cannot come to the Centre before care commences, then this orientation period will take place during the first week of booked care. All enrolled children will have 2 orientation days that will not be charged by the centre.

Orientation may take place in two ways:

- a. Prior to commencement of care or on a non-booked day: By appointment and only when space permits, usually two sessions for 2-3 hours either in the morning or afternoon. No fees will apply.
- b. Once the care booking has commenced, on a normal booked day: Preferably for 2-3 hours either in the morning or afternoon.

It is not always possible for orientation to happen before the care booking has commenced, especially at the beginning of the calendar year when the Centre has several new children orientating at the same time. DSCC will endeavour to arrange orientation as soon as is practicable, but it is possible that it will not be in the first week of booked care.

Appointments for orientation are necessary, especially at the beginning of the year, to enable staff to plan for extra time to talk to the parent and to settle the child. Parents can make appointments with the DSCC Director.

Parents or Guardians MUST complete the sign-in book and ensure all enrolment forms are with the Director prior to leaving the centre.

We aim to have only two children orientating at any given time, however, at the beginning of the year and especially in the Gumnut room, this may not always be possible. DSCC aims to support staff during these busy times and may employ additional staff for short periods / occasional days, if there are several children orientating in any one room at the same time.

Parents can help their child adjust by:

- Arranging to spend some time when you and your child can be together at the Centre prior to leaving them. This gives your child the chance to familiarise him/herself with the setting with someone familiar by their side.
- Initially only leaving the child for short periods, usually 2-3 hours and over one meal / snack time. For babies it is also preferable to have had at least one sleep time during orientation.
- It is an important aim of orientation that the child has the opportunity to bond with DSCC educators. Therefore, while parents are welcome to stay with their child as long as they wish, it is recommended that parents leave the room or Centre and remain out of sight during some of the orientation period. Parents are welcome to call as often as they wish to check on their child's progress.
- Being confident themselves (if parents are anxious they can easily influence the way a child feels).
- Ensuring the child has his or her special "security object" such as a teddy or a blanket.
- Always telling the child when you are going and that you will be back.
- Allow time at drop off and pick up to spend a few minutes with your child and exchange information with staff. If your child sees you are comfortable with the centre and staff, he/she will feel better about the prospect of staying at the Centre without you.
- If you feel your child is having difficulty settling into the Centre, please feel free to discuss this with the room leader. Alternative methods of settling in may be organised or the type of care for your child's needs may need to be considered.

- If you are at all concerned after leaving your child, you should telephone to check on them. Please telephone at any time if you feel the need to check on your child's progress. Parents are invited to visit the Centre at any time throughout the day.
- Parents are welcome to stay as long as they wish with their child when dropping them off. When leaving, please say good-bye to your child/children. However, once good-bye is said, it is best for your child if you go straight away and therefore not cause a prolonged and possibly upsetting situation.
- If parents or staff members feel a child is having difficulty settling at the Centre or into a new room we encourage open communication to discuss options for individual situations. DSCC supports development of flexible approach which will be discussed between the educator and parents if a child continues to have difficulty settling.

Checklist of what to bring to the Centre

The following items must be provided by parents/guardians:

- all prepared bottle feeds for those children requiring them
- any medications/nappy change creams that the child requires during the day (refer to DSCC Medications Policy)
- sunscreen if your child is not going to use the Centre's sunscreen
- two complete changes of clothing in a suitable bag
- appropriate footwear (not thongs or strapless sandals)
- several changes of pants for those children who are toilet training
- clothing that can be easily removed by the child
- a security item on which your child is dependent
- in the cold weather a warm hat and coat
- in the summer, an appropriate sun hat (legionnaire or wide brim style) that must be left at the Centre

All of the above items must be clearly named.

Parents should inform staff of any religious, cultural or individual issues in relation to clothing.

ATTACHMENT 5

Staff Rosters and Changing Rooms procedure

As a small centre, children do become familiar with all staff, however, the staff members who work in your child's room will naturally take on the primary role of caring for and educating your child.

Photos of all staff members and their position in the Centre are located on the individual room doors.

Staff rosters are drawn up to ensure consistency & continuity of care for the children where possible. One staff member from each room is rostered onto the earlier shifts and one onto the later shifts. This ensures opportunities for communication between parents and a staff member working with their child can take place at both ends of each day.

Parents / guardians may ring to speak to staff at any time. Alternatively, if convenient, you may prefer to make an appointment to meet with the room leader during their weekly 3-hour planning time.

Changing Rooms

On entering the Centre, children will go into the most appropriate room for their development.

We believe children cope best with transitioning into new rooms when they can be supported by a familiar educator and peers. Therefore we move children to new rooms in January of each year. If places become available during the year we will consider if any current children would benefit from moving or whether we offer the place to a child from our waiting list. Individual children and their developmental levels are fully catered for by educators in each room, and we group children of similar abilities together to ensure best outcomes for each child.

- Parents will be advised in advance if their child is to move from one group to another.
- As young children can become unsettled with changes such as this, parent and staff communication is vital to ensure that the child settles into this new situation.
- A time of orientation in the new room will be organized for the child in the week prior to moving up. Parents will also be given the opportunity to talk to educators in their child's new room to ensure open communication lines are established, and the transition time is as smooth as possible for all parties.
- During the course of the year, children will move rooms according to the waiting list and offer of places per policy.
- If you are unsure when your child will be changing rooms, please speak to the Director.