

Policy title	6.1 Child Enrolment and Attendance Records
Policy type	Management
Group	Family and Children

Rationale

The *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011* and *Victorian Children's Services Regulations 2009*, requires the approved provider of early years education and care services, and a family day care service, to have clear enrolment procedures in place, and to keep an enrolment and attendance record for each child enrolled at an approved service.

Policy statement

Moonee Valley City Council has a commitment to ensure enrolment procedures, administration and record-keeping practices associated with the provision of early childhood education and care services comply with the:

- *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*
- *Victorian Children's Services Regulations 2009*
- *Public Records of Victoria Act 1973*, PROS 09/05 Retention and Disposal Authority for Records of Local Government Functions
- Commonwealth Government's *Priority of Access Guidelines*
- Victorian Government's *Kindergarten Guide 2016 for Priority of Access Guidelines*
- Council's *Long Day Care Priority of Access Guidelines*

Long day and occasional care: Council manages five long day care centres and one occasional care service. All of the long day care services also deliver funded kindergarten programs within the education and care service. As a Child Care Benefit-

Group	Responsible Manager	Document	Document No	Approval Date	Review Date
Family and Children's Services	Michele Leonard	6.1 Child Enrolment and Attendance Records Procedure	17/150823	August 2017	August 2019

approved child care provider, long day care services, Shuter Street, and Council's occasional care services are required to use the Commonwealth Government's *Priority of Access Guidelines* for enrolment and allocation of places at their particular services. The guidelines are used when there is a waiting list for a child care service or when a number of parents/guardians are applying for a limited number of vacant places.

Family day care: Families requiring family day care contact the Council's Family Day Care Coordination Service and are placed on a waiting list. Access is dependent on vacant places with available family day care educators, who are contractors of Council. Once care arrangements are agreed between a family and the educator/contractor, Council's Family Day Care Coordination Unit will ensure all relevant details are obtained and recorded.

Kindergarten: Places offered in the sessional kindergarten program are managed through Council's Central Registration Service. Staff manage kindergarten enrolments for 17 kindergartens in the Moonee Valley municipality, and set the kindergarten registration timeframe prior to the year of attendance. The Victorian Department of Education and Training's *Priority of Access Guidelines* are applicable for kindergarten registrations and enrolments.

Further details on current, adopted enrolment processes and records management for the above services are covered in the following pages of this Policy and Procedures.

Group	Responsible Manager	Document	Document No	Approval Date	Review Date
Family and Children's Services	Michele Leonard	6.1 Child Enrolment and Attendance Records Procedure	17/150823	August 2017	August 2019

Procedure	6.1 Child Enrolment and Attendance Records Procedure
Policy type	Management
Group	Family and Children

Action	Approved Provider	Responsible Person or Primary Nominee	Educator/contractor	Families	Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011	Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010	Children's Services Regulations 2009 & Children's Services Act 1996
Meet all legislative and regulatory requirements for enrolment and attendance records and store these records for a period of 25 years from the last service date for each child.	✓	✓			r.15-162 r.168-172 r.181-184	s.175	r.28-35 s.29B s.32B
Abide by the Australian Government's <i>Priority of Access Guidelines</i> for Childcare Benefit-approved child care services.	✓	✓					
Have a detailed understanding of priority of access and eligibility guidelines for the relevant services.	✓	✓	✓				
Adhere to this Policy and Procedures, and provide families with a copy on enquiry and enrolment.	✓	✓			r.170-173		r.40-41 r.45-49
Be aware of this Policy and Procedures for enrolments and attendance records for early years education and care services. Provide supporting documents to verify eligibility for any claim to priority of access criteria on families' enrolment registration. Ensure family information on a service waiting list is current, and to advise families to contact Council should family details or needs change.	✓	✓	✓		r.158-162		r.28-35 s.29B s.32B

Group	Responsible Manager	Document	Document No	Approval Date	Review Date
Family and Children's Services	Michele Leonard	6.1 Child Enrolment and Attendance Records Procedure	17/150823	August 2017	August 2019

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Maintain regular contact with Council in respect to their waiting list registration.							
Ensure Responsible Persons, staff and educators/contractors are aware of and supported in keeping the service fully utilised.	✓	✓					
Ensure Responsible Persons, staff and educators/contractors have a complete understanding of <i>Priority of Access Guidelines</i> .	✓	✓					
Communicate with families making enquiries about the waiting list, how it is prioritised, and when and how positions are offered.		✓					
Adhere to <i>Priority of Access Guidelines</i> in offering childcare places to families on internal and external waiting lists.	✓	✓	✓				
Regularly review centre waiting list and offer places immediately as they become available.	✓	✓	✓				
Maintain a general and internal waiting list.	✓	✓	✓				
Communicate twice yearly with families on the waiting list to update information.	✓	✓					
Maintain a history of communication, positions offered and contact made with families on the waiting list.		✓	✓				
Ensure <i>Priority of Access Guidelines</i> are followed.	✓	✓					
Responsible Person or Primary Nominee and Certified Supervisor, as Responsible Persons under the <i>Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010</i> , are to ensure enrolment and attendance records are retained	✓	✓	✓		r.15-162 r.168-172 r.181-184	s.175	r.28-35 s.29B s.32B

Group	Responsible Manager	Document	Document No	Approval Date	Review Date
Family and Children's Services	Michele Leonard	6.1 Child Enrolment and Attendance Records Procedure	17/150823	August 2017	August 2019

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and made available for inspection as required by the <i>Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011</i> , the <i>Public Records of Victoria Act 1973</i> , and as specified in this Policy and Procedures (see detailed requirements listed under 'Approved Provider' section).			✓				
The following additional records are to be retained by the service: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • timesheets for staff • service Policies and Procedures • statistical data • accounting records 	✓	✓					
Confidential records are to be maintained in lockable storage facilities such as filing cabinets, and archive rooms.	✓	✓	✓		r.181-184	s.175	r.35 s.29B s.32B
Where appropriate, take phone enquiries from families and explain the process for enrolment and the <i>Priority of Access Guidelines</i> .		✓	✓				
Families submit a Registration Form.	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Pass this information to the Responsible Person.		✓	✓				
Family day care educators/contractors are to ensure enrolment and attendance records are retained and made available for inspection as required by the <i>Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011</i> , the <i>Public Records of Victoria Act 1973</i> , and as specified in this Policy and Procedures (see detailed	✓	✓			r.15-162 r.168-172 r.181-184	s.175	r.28-35 s.29B s.32B

Group	Responsible Manager	Document	Document No	Approval Date	Review Date
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requirements listed under 'Approved Provider' section).							
Ensure the family information on the waiting list is updated and current. Contact the service's Central Registration should your details or needs change. Confirm family information when contacted.				✓	r.15-162 r.168-172 r.181-184	s.175	r.28-35 s.29B s.32B
Maintain regular contact with Council in respect to the waiting list.				✓			
Give two weeks' notice of the family's decision to remove their children from a Council education and care service.				✓			

Group	Responsible Manager	Document	Document No	Approval Date	Review Date
Family and Children's Services	Michele Leonard	6.1 Child Enrolment and Attendance Records Procedure	17/150823	August 2017	August 2019

Child enrolment records

The approved Responsible Person must keep an enrolment record for each child enrolled at an approved service. The enrolment record must contain the following information:

- full name, date of birth and address of the child
- name, address and contact details for:
 - each known parent/guardian
 - any emergency contact
 - any authorised nominee: **Authorised nominee** means a person who has been given permission by a parent/guardian or family member to collect the child from the education and care service or the family day care educator/contractor. See section 170(5) of the Law
 - any person who is authorised to consent to medical treatment or administration of medication
 - any person who is authorised to give permission to an educator/contractor to remove the child from the education and care service premises
- details of any court orders, parenting orders or parenting plans
- gender of the child
- language used in the child's home
- cultural background of the child and parent/guardians
- any special considerations for the child, such as any cultural, religious or dietary requirements or additional needs
- authorisations for:
 - the approved provider, Responsible Person or Primary Nominee or an educator/contractor (including family day care educator/contractor) to seek medical treatment for the child and/or ambulance transportation
 - the service to take the child on regular outings.
- name, address and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner or medical service
- child's Medicare number (if available)
- details of any specific healthcare needs of the child, including any medical condition
- allergies, or a diagnosis that the child is at risk of anaphylaxis

Group	Responsible Manager	Document	Document No	Approval Date	Review Date
Family and Children's Services	Michele Leonard	6.1 Child Enrolment and Attendance Records Procedure	17/150823	August 2017	August 2019

- any medical management plan, Anaphylaxis Management Plan or Risk Minimisation Plan for the child
- any dietary requirements of the child
- immunisation status certificate of the child. Under new legislation effective 1 January 2016, early childhood services will have to obtain evidence that the child is:
 - fully immunised for their age OR
 - on a vaccination catch-up program OR
 - unable to be fully immunised for medical reasons
- ‘conscientious objection’ is not an exemption under the legislation.
- if the approved Responsible Person or staff member has sighted a health record for that child, a notation of that fact

Child attendance records

The Responsible Person must ensure that an accurate attendance record is kept which:

- records the full name of each child attending the service
- records the date and time each child arrives and departs
- is signed on the child’s arrival and departure by either:
 - the person who delivers or collects the child
 - the Responsible Person or Primary Nominee or an educator/contractor
 - for family day care services, if the signature of the person who delivers the child cannot be reasonably obtained, the family day care educator/contractor may sign
- the Responsible Person arrange for the retention of enrolment and attendance records, including Childcare Benefit and service complaints records (if applicable), in conjunction with Council’s Records Department. These records must be stored for a period of 25 years from the last service date for a child as required under the Public Records of Victoria Act 1973.

Enrolment for centre-based childcare

Families contact the centre directly to ascertain if there are any vacancies.

If there are no vacancies that suit a family’s requirements, the family will be advised of other available Council services such as family day care.

- families will be offered the opportunity to go on the waiting list, with their details registered by completing a Registration Form and submitting via Central Registration Services.

Group	Responsible Manager	Document	Document No	Approval Date	Review Date
Family and Children’s Services	Michele Leonard	6.1 Child Enrolment and Attendance Records Procedure	17/150823	August 2017	August 2019

- prior to commencement, the family is requested to visit the service with their child to familiarise themselves with the service and procedures.
- a tailored orientation program can be arranged with the Service Coordinator.
- an enrolment form must be completed prior to the child commencing at the service.

On enrolment, families will be provided with:

- Council's Family and Children's Services Policy list showing where and how to access the service policies and procedures
- a parent/guardian handbook specific to the service the child will be attending
- information about the requirement for families to provide two (2) weeks' notice of their intention to cease attending the service

How we allocate places

Places are offered in accordance with Council's *Priority of Access Guidelines* and the Australian Government's *Priority of Access Guidelines*. Having satisfied the Commonwealth guidelines for Priorities 1 and 2, remaining places will be allocated using Council's *Priority of Access Guidelines*

- service centres are to retain an internal waiting list for families already attending our service who may need extra days, may need to change their days or may have additional children requiring care. The service understands the importance of supporting families, and with this in mind, the internal waiting list is to be addressed first as a Priority level 3
- vacancies are offered firstly to these families and then to those on the external waiting list. Positions are offered according to the date of request registered on the waiting list. When a place becomes available, Council staff will contact a family to offer a childcare position. If families are unable to be contacted over a 48-hour period (after four attempts to contact the family), then the place will be offered to the next family on the waiting list. Family places on the list (according to the registered date of request) will remain the same.
- families are requested to let the service know if they do not have access to a telephone or may be away on holiday while their request is being determined.
- families may be offered a place that differs to the days or time they have requested. If families do not wish to accept the offer there will be no change to their position on the waiting list. However, if they are offered their preferred times/dates/place and choose to decline it but wish to remain on the waiting list, they will be placed on the bottom of the list. The date of refusal will be their new waiting list entry date.

Group	Responsible Manager	Document	Document No	Approval Date	Review Date
Family and Children's Services	Michele Leonard	6.1 Child Enrolment and Attendance Records Procedure	17/150823	August 2017	August 2019

Priority of Access Guidelines — centre-based childcare

The Australian Government recognises that demand for childcare sometimes exceeds supply and has *Priority of Access Guidelines* to assist services in allocating available places to those families with the greatest need for childcare support. Every Childcare Benefit-approved childcare service has to abide by the guidelines and tell families about them when they enrol their child into care.

The *Guidelines* set out the following three levels of priority:

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 *A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999*.

Priority 3 — any other child. Having satisfied the Commonwealth priority of access process, remaining places will be allocated using Council's *Priority of Access Guidelines* as follows:

1. Families who are currently using a Council centre and require more days.
2. Children with siblings already enrolled in a Council centre.
3. Families who live, work or study in the Moonee Valley Municipality.
4. Any other child.

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

- children in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families
- children in families which include a disabled person.
- children in families on low incomes (Pension/Healthcare Card holders)
- children in families with a non-English speaking background
- children in socially isolated families
- children of single parents

Group	Responsible Manager	Document	Document No	Approval Date	Review Date
Family and Children's Services	Michele Leonard	6.1 Child Enrolment and Attendance Records Procedure	17/150823	August 2017	August 2019

Enrolment for kindergarten

To be included in the first round offers, kindergarten registration must be completed and submitted within the specified timeframe, which is set by the Central Registration Service prior to the year of attendance. This information may be found on Council's website www.mvcc.vic.gov.au

A child may attend a state-funded kindergarten program when they turn 4 years of age on or before 30 April in the year of attendance.

Priority of access criteria

The following criteria are used to determine the priority of access for each registration form received. One or more criteria may apply to each application:

- Moonee Valley Resident/ratepayer
Children of residents and/or ratepayers of the City of Moonee Valley.
- the family is known to Child Protection and/or Child FIRST.
Children in Out of Home Care
The Child is currently in out of Home Care arrangement including kinship care.
- aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
The child is identified by a parent/guardian, carer/legal guardian as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent.
- child with complex additional needs/complex medical needs
- the child individually holds, or has a parent/guardian who holds, one of the following:
 - health care card; or
 - pensioner/ concession card; or
 - a temporary protection/humanitarian/refugee visa.
- proximity to the service
Preferred program is the closest service to the family's primary residence.
- non-resident with municipal link
- work/study/formal or informal care for two (2) days or more in Moonee Valley.
- sibling attending in same year
multiple births/three year old and four year old siblings enrolled in same year.
- past association with service
sibling has attended the service in the past three years.

Group	Responsible Manager	Document	Document No	Approval Date	Review Date
Family and Children's Services	Michele Leonard	6.1 Child Enrolment and Attendance Records Procedure	17/150823	August 2017	August 2019

Supporting documents required

Applicants may be asked to provide supporting documents to verify eligibility for any claim to priority of access criteria on their enrolment registration.

Supporting documents from registered support agencies are required for children identified as at risk. Supporting documents may be requested for parents/guardians who work, study or are involved in training in the City of Moonee Valley or for children attending child care in Moonee Valley. In order to verify eligibility for priority of access criteria, contact may be made with the person providing the supporting documentation.

Registration timeframes

The Central Registration Service (CRS) will set timeframes each year when applications will be received.

- the enrolment registration form must be received by the applicable closing date to be considered for an offer in the initial round.
- for more detailed information regarding the Central Registration Service, please refer to the CRS Information Booklet. This can be accessed at <http://mvcc.vic.gov.au/kinder>

Enrolment for family day care

Families contact the Council's Family Day Care area supervisors to be placed on the family day care waiting list. An FDC area supervisor will complete the Request for Care Form at this time.

- when vacancies are identified, families are invited for an interview to complete additional documentation required. At this time an FDC area supervisor will provide details of an educator/contractor who the family is encouraged to contact to arrange a meeting. If there are no vacancies that suit the family's requirements, the family will be advised of the other services available through the municipality that may be able to assist them.
- once families have met and agreed on the care arrangement, they complete an Educator/contractor/parent/guardian Agreement Form. At this time, the family will notify the Family Day Care Coordination Unit. The Coordination Unit together with the family and educator/contractor will ensure that all relevant details are obtained and recorded. This will form part of an individualised orientation that suits both the family and the educator/contractor.
- educators are contractors of the Council and as such determine their own fees and charges, and the requirement for notice to cease care forms part of their individual agreements.

Group	Responsible Manager	Document	Document No	Approval Date	Review Date
Family and Children's Services	Michele Leonard	6.1 Child Enrolment and Attendance Records Procedure	17/150823	August 2017	August 2019

Family day care – emergency placement

An FDC educator/contractor may only accept an emergency placement under the following circumstances, **and only if the educator/contractor has a vacancy and is not over the legal educator-to-child ratio limit:**

- if a parent/guardian is called in to work on an emergency matter
- if a parent/guardian must travel unexpectedly on an emergency matter
- illness, accident, hospitalisation or death of a family member
- in the event of a parent/guardian being taken into police custody
- a request for immediate care may arise through an emergency or the immediate commencement of employment. In the interest of the child, parent/guardian and educator/contractor, this interview should take place prior to placement. If in extreme cases an interview is not possible, parents/guardians must complete a Child Enrolment Form prior to the child attending the family day care service.

Child absences

- if a child does not physically attend a session (day of child care), the child will be reported as absent. Parents/guardians cannot sign the child into and out of care if the child is not attending.
- if a child is absent from a long day care or family day care service for two weeks consecutively, and the service has not been notified that the child is ill, on holidays, or of absence for any other reason, the child's place at the service will be cancelled.
- all outstanding fees for the period the child has been absent will be payable in accordance with the service's Payment and Provision of Fees — Childcare Services, and Payment and Provision of Fees—Kindergarten Services policies and procedures.

Link to Council Policies

This Policy and Procedures are to be read in conjunction with the:

Information Privacy Policy;

Orientation Policy and Procedures;

Payment and Provision of Fees – Childcare Services Policy and Procedures;

Payment and Provision of Fees – Kindergarten Services Policy and Procedures.

Priority of Access Kindergarten Policy

Priority of Access Long Day Care Policy

Resources and useful websites

This Policy and Procedures are aligned to the following National Quality Standard

www.acecqa.gov.au/national-quality-framework/the-national-quality-standard

Group	Responsible Manager	Document	Document No	Approval Date	Review Date
Family and Children's Services	Michele Leonard	6.1 Child Enrolment and Attendance Records Procedure	17/150823	August 2017	August 2019