

# ENROLMENT AND ORIENTATION

## SESSIONAL KINDERGARTEN

QUALITY AREA 6 | ELAA version 1.1



### PURPOSE

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

- enrolling a child at Denzil Don Kindergarten
- the orientation of new families and children into Denzil Don Kindergarten
- ensuring compliance with Victorian and national legislation, including disability discrimination, anti-discrimination, human rights laws, No Jab No Play and Department of Education and Training [DET] Kindergarten Funding Guide.
- ensuring access to participation, especially for vulnerable and disadvantaged children
- ensuring early entry applicants (this includes children younger than three years and children younger than four years old on 30 April in the year they will attend kindergarten) are given equitable access to enrolment.
- adhering to the DET's priority of access requirements for both 3 and 4-year-old children.



### POLICY STATEMENT

#### VALUES

Denzil Don Kindergarten is committed to:

- ensuring families feel 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 (*refer to Definitions*) eligible children into full 15 hours of kindergarten program

#### SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Persons with Management 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 Denzil Don Kindergarten, including during offsite excursions and activities.

RESPONSIBILITIES	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Early childhood teacher, educators and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Contractors, volunteers and students
Providing an early childhood teacher delivered, funded kindergarten program to children who turn four years of age by 30 April in the year they will attend, and offering at least: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 15 hours per week for 40 weeks of the year, or</li> <li>- 600 hours per year</li> </ul>	√				
Providing a minimum of 5 hours per week of funded kindergarten delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher to children who turn 3 years of age by 30 April in the year they will attend	√				
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	√	√			
Following the Priority of Access criteria to funded programs at Denzil Don Kindergarten, as described in Department of Education and Training's [DET] <i>The Kindergarten Funding Guide (refer to Attachment 1)</i>	√	√	√		
Providing advice to families regarding the best time to start 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"> <li>- Kindergarten Fee Subsidy (<i>refer to Definitions</i>)</li> <li>- Early Start Kindergarten (<i>refer to Definitions</i>)</li> <li>- Early Start Kindergarten extension grants (<i>refer to Definitions</i>)</li> <li>- Access to Early Learning (<i>refer to Definitions</i>)</li> <li>- Second year of funded four-year-old kindergarten (<i>refer to Definitions</i>)</li> </ul>	√	√	√		
Supporting families whose children may be eligible for early entry to kindergarten or late entry to kindergarten and school exemption ( <i>refer to Attachment 2</i> )	√	√	√		
Ensuring families understand that their child(ren) 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"> <li>- Family Welcome Booklet</li> <li>- Child Safe Environment Policy and Statement of Commitment to Child Safety</li> <li>- Fees Policy</li> <li>- Privacy Statement</li> <li>- Code of Conduct Policy</li> </ul>	√	√	√		
Responding to enrolment enquiries and referring people to the person responsible for the enrolment process as required		√	√		
Considering access and inclusion where applicable, for vulnerable children in the allocation of places at the service <i>(refer to Attachment 1 and 2)</i>	√	√			
Providing consistent and transparent communication to families regarding waitlist management <i>(refer to Attachment 2)</i>	√	√			
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 families to visit the service during operational hours to observe the program and facilities prior to registering their child for a place (unless doing so poses 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> ).	√	√	√		
Providing parents/guardians with information about the requirements of the law for enrolment, including obtaining the AIR Immunisation History Statement <i>(refer to Definitions)</i> and accessing immunisation services	√	√	√		
Ensuring parents/guardians are only offered a tentative place until the AIR Immunisation History Statement <i>(refer to Definitions)</i> 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 <i>(refer to Sources)</i> for early childhood education and care services to determine if the child's vaccination status complies with requirements or whether the child is eligible for the 16-week grace period <i>(refer to Definitions)</i>	√	√	√		
Ensuring that only children whose AIR Immunisation History Statements <i>(refer to Definitions)</i> have been viewed and assessed as acceptable, or are eligible for the grace period <i>(refer to Definitions)</i> have confirmed places in the program	√	√	√		
Advising parents/guardians who do not have an AIR Immunisation History Statement <i>(refer to Definitions)</i> and who are not eligible for the grace period that their children are not able to attend the service and are referred to immunisation services <i>(refer to Attachment 3)</i>	√	√	√		

Taking reasonable steps to obtain an up-to-date AIR Immunisation History Statement ( <i>refer to Definitions</i> ) from a parent/guardian of a child enrolled under a grace period within 16 weeks from when the child begins attending ( <b>Note:</b> the child can continue to attend the service if acceptable immunisation documentation is not obtained).	√	√	√		
Completing the enrolment form and any other centre forms prior to the child's commencement at the service and providing AIR Immunisation History Statement ( <i>refer to Definitions</i> ) 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 ( <i>refer to Definitions</i> ) to the service				√	
Taking reasonable steps to obtain an up-to-date AIR Immunisation History Statement ( <i>refer to Definitions</i> ) from all parents/guardians after enrolment, timing reminders to comply with the maximum seven-month interval ( <i>Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2019 107, Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 Section 143E</i> )	√	√	√		
Ensuring that the enrolment form ( <i>refer to Definitions</i> ) complies with the requirements of <i>Regulations 160, 161, 162</i> and that it effectively meets the management requirements of the service	√	√	√		
Ensuring that enrolment records ( <i>refer to Definitions</i> ) are kept up-to-date if family circumstances change, and that services are made aware if eligibility for additional funding as a result of changed circumstances occurs (e.g. a child acquires a Health Care Card; the child/family becomes known to Child Protection)	√	√	√	√	√
Ensuring all authorised nominees (refer to Definitions) have been completed on the enrolment record (refer to Definitions) ( <i>Regulations 160 and 161</i> )	√	√	√	√	
Ensuring enrolment records ( <i>refer to Definitions</i> ) are stored in a safe and secure place, and kept for three years after the last day the child attended a session at service ( <i>Regulation 183 (1a) (2d)</i> )	√	√	√		
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 parents/guardians of a child attending the service can enter the service at any time their child is being educated and cared for ( <i>Regulation 157</i> ), except when it may pose a risk to the safety of children/staff, or conflict with any duty of the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, early childhood teachers or educators under <i>National Law: Section 167</i>	√	√	√	√	√
Taking reasonable steps to contact non-attending families prior to the cancellation of their enrolment ( <i>refer to Attachment 5</i> )	√	√	√		

Reviewing enrolment applications to identify children with additional needs ( <i>refer to Definitions</i> and the <i>Inclusion and Equity Policy</i> )	√	√	√		
Encouraging parents/guardians to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- make contact with the service, when required</li> <li>- develop and maintain a routine for saying goodbye to their child</li> </ul>	√	√	√	√	
Sharing information with parents/guardians concerning their child's progress with regard to settling into the service	√	√	√	√	
Discussing support services for children with parents/guardians, where required 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"> <li>- feel welcome at the service</li> <li>- become familiar with service policies and procedures</li> <li>- share information about their family beliefs, values and culture and feel culturally safe</li> <li>- share their understanding of their child's strengths, interests, abilities and needs</li> <li>- value the voice of the child, ensuring they have opportunity to voice their interests and needs</li> <li>- discuss the values and expectations they hold in relation to their child's learning</li> <li>- provide comfort and reassurance to children who are showing signs of distress when separating</li> </ul>	√	√	√	√	
Reading and complying with this policy	√	√	√	√	√
Informing the service of changes to circumstances as they occur, for example obtaining/no longer being eligible for a Health Care Card OR a child/family becomes known to Child Protection				√	
Notifying Denzil Don Kindergarten in writing if they wish to cancel their enrolment.				√	



## PROCEDURES

### GENERAL ORIENTATION PROCEDURES

The time required for orientation and settling 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 can stay with their child during orientation and once their child commences, so long as it will not hinder their child's settling routines
- Offer the family suggestions for developing and maintaining a goodbye routine at drop-off
- Reassure the family:
  - may leave their child for a shorter session initially, gradually increasing the length of time, guided by the advice of the teaching team and the needs of the child
  - may call and speak to their child's early childhood teacher or educator(s) at an agreed time
  - the educating team will keep them informed on how their child is settling
  - they will be informed of any changes or circumstances that may impact them or their child.
- Refer to *Attachment 2* for the general kindergarten registration and enrolment procedures
- Refer to *Attachment 4* 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)*).

It is intended by 2022 that all eligible Victorian children (*refer to Definitions*) will have access to two years of kindergarten before commencing school. Where demand is higher than availability, Approved Providers must adhere to their eligibility and DET's 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 DET's 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.

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*).

### 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](http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au)

Commonwealth Legislation – Federal Register of Legislation: [www.legislation.gov.au](http://www.legislation.gov.au)



### DEFINITIONS

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy. For regularly used terms e.g. Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, notifiable complaints, serious incidents, duty of care, etc. refer to the Definitions file on the kindergarten website.

**Access to Early Learning (AEL):** a program for a child who is at least three years old on April 30th in the year of enrolment, providing intensive support to eligible families with multiple and complex needs, assisting them to access universal kindergarten programs.

**Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) Immunisation History Statement:** a national register administered by Medicare that records all vaccinations given in Australia. In the case of medical contraindication, an authorised medical practitioner completes and signs a Medical Exemption Form and supplies it to the AIR.

**Authorised nominee:** (in relation to this policy) 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 (*refer to Inclusion and Equity Policy*) (*refer to Children/families experiencing vulnerability and/or disadvantage Definition*).

**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):** 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
- known to 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 15 hours of free or low cost kindergarten each week led by a qualified VIT registered teacher. 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 record:** documents which contain information on each child, as required by the National Regulations (*Regulations 160, 161, 162*) including but not limited to parent/guardian details; emergency contacts; authorised nominee; transportation authorisations; details of any court orders;

and health information including immunisation status. Enrolment forms are digital and are stored securely.

**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.

**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.

**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 DET Kindergarten Funding Guide (*refer to Attachment 1 and Sources*).

**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.

**Waitlist Registration:** process of families/guardians providing information about their child so as to place their child on the waitlist for a position at kindergarten. This includes collection of basic contact information and other details that may inform prioritised allocation in kindergarten.

**Waitlist Registration 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, if applicable.

**Waitlist Registration form:** a form for children to access a place in the 3 or 4 year old kindergarten program. The form allows families to provide information about their child and confirm their intention to enrol in kindergarten in a particular year. This includes collection of basic contact information and other details that may inform prioritised allocation in kindergarten (*refer to Attachment 3*)

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## SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES



### SOURCES

- Australian Childhood Immunisation Register: [www.servicesaustralia.gov.au](http://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au)
- Australian Government Department of Health, National Immunisation Program Schedule: [www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au)
- Department of Health and Human Services, Immunisation enrolment toolkit for early childhood education and care service: [www2.health.vic.gov.au](http://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](http://www.acecqa.gov.au)
- Guide to the National Quality Standard: [www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au)
- Priority of Access Guidelines for child care service: [www.dese.gov.au](http://www.dese.gov.au)
- The Kindergarten Funding Guide (Victorian Department of Education and Training): [www.education.vic.gov.au](http://www.education.vic.gov.au)

## Related Policies

- Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations
  - Complaints and Grievances
  - Dealing with Infectious Disease
  - Fees
  - Inclusion and Equity
  - Privacy and Confidentiality
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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](#)).
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## ATTACHMENTS



- Attachment 1: Eligibility and priority of access criteria
  - Attachment 2: Registration, Offer of a Place and Acceptance (enrolment) process
  - Attachment 3: Email proforma for parents/guardians without acceptable immunisation documentation
  - Attachment 4: Cancellation of enrolment and non-attendance
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## AUTHORISATION

This policy was adopted by the approved provider of Denzil Don Kindergarten on 29/07/2022.

**REVIEW DATE:** 29 / July / 2023



## ATTACHMENT 1. ELIGIBILITY AND PRIORITY OF ACCESS CRITERIA

### FOR A FUNDED KINDERGARTEN 3 OR 4-YEAR-OLD KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

The Approved Provider must notify all families of the priority of access (PoA) policy that applies when they enrol their child.

In instances where the waitlist exceeds the places available at a kindergarten service, services must:

- 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.

The criteria must be used by the Approved Provider when prioritising enrolments.

Providers should build flexibility into their enrolment processes that consider the circumstances of families from priority groups.

Services must first apply the DET's PoA criteria, and following this may apply internally developed criteria, as per below.

All information relating to PoA criteria should be respectfully collected from families upon enrolment, recorded in the child's confidential enrolment form 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)
<b>Children at risk of abuse or neglect, including children in Out-of-Home Care</b>	The following can be obtained from the child's family as part of the enrolment process and/or received from a referral source: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child Protection</li> <li>• Child and family services (family services referral and support team, Child FIRST/integrated family services/Services Connect case worker)</li> <li>• Maternal and Child Health nurse, or</li> <li>• Out-of-Home Care provider</li> </ul>
<b>Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children</b>	As part of the enrolment process, service providers must respectfully ask families 'is your child Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander?'
<b>Asylum seeker and refugee children</b>	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.
<b>Children eligible for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A child or parent holds a Commonwealth Health Care Card, Pensioner Concession Card, Veteran's Affairs Card, or</li> <li>• Multiple birth children (triplets, quadruplets).</li> <li>• Asylum seeker and/or refugee children</li> </ul>
<b>Children with additional needs, defined as children who:</b> 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	The child is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• assessed as having delays in two or more areas and is declared eligible for a second funded year of 4-year-old kindergarten, or</li> <li>• holds a Child Disability Health Care Card, or</li> <li>• has previously been approved for Kindergarten Inclusion Support Package, or referred by:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ the National Disability Insurance Scheme</li> <li>○ Early Childhood Intervention Service</li> <li>○ Preschool Field Officer, or</li> <li>○ Maternal and Child Health nurse</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

#### Considerations for second priority

- children eligible for a second year of funded 4-year-old kindergarten
- children who turn four years of age by 30 April in the year they will attend kindergarten; or
- children who turn three years of age\* by 30 April in the year they will attend kindergarten

- children turning six years of age at kindergarten who have been granted an exemption from school-entry age requirements by the regional office of DET
- children currently attending the 3-year-old kindergarten program
- children who have a sibling that has previously attended Denzil Don Kindergarten
- proximity to Denzil Don Kindergarten: families living in Brunswick West followed by Moreland or close proximity to the kinder (5km radius) will be given higher priority to children in other council's
- order of receipt of *Acceptance of a Place* form and Acceptance Fee (*see Fee Policy*).

**Note:** DET's PoA guidelines are to ensure that kindergarten programs are available to those children who stand to benefit the most from attending early education.

#### \* Early Start Kindergarten and Three-Year-Old Kindergarten

During the roll-out of 3-Year-Old Kindergarten, Early Start Kindergarten (ESK) (*refer to Definitions*) will continue to provide 15 hours a week of funded kindergarten for all eligible children up until 2029, when 3-year-old children across the state will have access to 15 hours

This guarantees that children experiencing vulnerability will continue to be enrolled in the full 15 hours of kindergarten in all service settings. 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 3-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
- are known to Child Protection
- have a refugee or asylum seeker background\*

\*Children/families without a current refugee visa or ImmiCard who have a recent refugee experience may be eligible by exception for Early Start Kindergarten, for more information contact your local Department of Education and Training office.

Refer to the Department of Education and Training website for up-to-date information: [www.education.vic.gov.au](http://www.education.vic.gov.au)

## ATTACHMENT 2. WAITLIST REGISTRATION, OFFER OF A PLACE AND ACCEPTANCE PROCESS

### WAITLIST REGISTRATION FOR A PLACE IN A PROGRAM

- Denzil Don Kindergarten will accept registration for a place in the 3-year-old and/or 4-year-old kindergarten program any time after a child has turned 2 years of age.
- The Waitlist Registration form is available from the kindergarten website: [denzildonkinder.org.au/enrolment/](http://denzildonkinder.org.au/enrolment/)
- Denzil Don Kindergarten will act with transparency, providing enquiring families with any information that will assist them in deciding whether to proceed with registering their child(ren) on the waitlist, including but not limited to the current status of enrolments including the length of the waitlist.
- The Waitlist Registration form asks families for information about the child including:
  - name, date of birth and gender
  - details of any additional support the child might require due to a disability including intellectual, sensory or physical impairment.
  - contact details for the family/guardian.
- A separate registration form must be completed for each child.
- The registration form must be accompanied by an enrolment application fee in line with Denzil Don Kindergarten's Fees Policy (*refer to Fee Policy*). This fee is to cover administrative costs associated with the processing of the enrolment registration and is non-refundable.
- Registrations will be placed on the waitlist in order of receipt. **Applications meeting PoA criteria will be flagged and moved to the top of the waitlist.**

### OFFER OF A PLACE IN A PROGRAM

#### Age eligibility

To be eligible for 3-year-old Kindergarten, your child must turn 3 by April 30 2022.

To be eligible for 4-year-old Kindergarten, your child must turn 4 by April 30 2022.

#### Immunisations

According to the No Jab, No Play law in Victoria, children must be fully vaccinated to attend kindergarten. An Immunisation History Statement (IHS) from the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) must be provided with the *Acceptance of a Place* form for a child's place in a program to be considered confirmed.

A grace period applies for families who may find it difficult to provide an up-to-date statement. Families will be notified of this period and subsequently, must provide the statement by that date, otherwise, their child's enrolment will be forfeited. Clear communication will ensure families are aware of the date the IHS is required.

Further information on immunisation requirements for enrolment in early childhood services is available through the DET website at <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/parents/child-care-kindergarten/Pages/enrol-in-kindergarten.aspx>.

#### Priority of access

Denzil Don Kindergarten follows the Department of Education and Training's Priority of Access criteria (*refer to Attachment 1*), that prioritises allocation of kindergarten places for children who are:

- At risk of abuse or neglect,
- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander,
- Have parents or carers who are, asylum seekers or refugees,
- Are eligible for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy (hold a valid concession card or are a triplet or quadruplet) OR
- Have additional developmental needs.

Children that fit one or more of those criteria will be allocated to a place in kindergarten as a high priority. The *Letter of Acceptance Form* will collect all the information required to determine if a child is eligible for Priority of Access.

If you believe you or your child are in exceptional circumstances which require prioritisation and are not covered by any of the above criteria, please contact Denzil Don Kindergarten to discuss.

## Timeline and process for offer of a place in a program

- Tentative places will be offered to families via email and in accordance with the eligibility and priority of access criteria of Denzil Don Kindergarten making clear that confirmation of places is not final until an up-to-date AIR Immunisation History Statement has been received, assessed and deemed acceptable and the Acceptance Fee has been paid (*refer to Fee Policy*).
- First round offers will be sent around the 31 July. Second round offers will be sent two weeks later or as families forfeit their *Offer of a Place*.
- Denzil Don strives to offer families their first group preference. Where this is not possible, second preference will be allocated and so on.
- Parents/guardians who do not wish to proceed with a tentative or confirmed offer of a place are requested to notify the Centre Coordinator via email at [enrolments@denzildonkinder.org.au](mailto:enrolments@denzildonkinder.org.au) as soon as possible.

**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 the service (*refer to Fees Policy*).

## Second Year Registration

As soon as children are determined eligible for a second year of funded kindergarten families should advise the Centre Coordinator of their preferred group for the following year. A place will be held for their child in their preferred group as a priority. Families must complete and submit a kindergarten Acceptance of a Place form and pay the Acceptance Fee.

A Declaration of Eligibility Form for a second year of kindergarten must also be completed and submitted to the relevant funding authority.

## Children Younger than the Eligible Preschool Age

If a child is younger than 4 by April 30 in the year they are to attend Kindergarten, the family must request early school entry approval in writing for their child to attend school in the following year. Requests should be made to the officer in charge, usually a director of the relevant government education authority region, or the non-government school the child will attend.

Should the child not attend school the following year, the child will not be eligible for another year of funded kindergarten, as identified in the funding criteria.

## Children Older than the Eligible Preschool Age

Some children may turn 6 years of age during their preschool year. This is usually relevant in the case of children who have been identified as requiring a second year of preschool.

Children who will turn six during the preschool year must apply for an exemption from school from the relevant Regional Director of the education department.

Families must complete an 'Exemption from School due to attendance in kindergarten program' form before the child starts kindergarten and submit it to relevant regional office of the education department authority. The form is available on the website or by contacting the Regional Office.

Denzil Don Kindergarten must sight the approved exemption letter from relevant education authority and note that it has been sighted on the child's enrolment record. Data on the number of children attending Kindergarten who are six years plus, and confirmation that the exemption was sighted for each child, must be provided as part of funding data collection process.

## ACCEPTANCE OF A PLACE (ENROLMENT)

Once a kindergarten place has been accepted, the enrolment process begins.

Families will need to provide copies of the following (unless already done):

- Concession cards and immigration visas (where applicable)
- Documents from Family Support Services or a Maternal and Child Health nurse confirming high support needs and/or disability or letter from a doctor for complex medical needs (where applicable)
- Immunisation History Statement (unless experiencing vulnerability or disadvantage, at which point they can take advantage of a 16-week 'grace period'. More information is available at <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/immunisation/vaccination-children/no-jab-no-play/immunisation-enrolment-toolkit>)
- Documents detailing any medical conditions or requirements the child has

- Other paperwork as required by Denzil Don Kindergarten.

### Enrolment Records

Enrolment records (*refer to Definitions*) form part of the enrolment procedure and are completed by families after they have been allocated a place, and before commencing attendance.

### Withdrawal

Some children who have commenced Kindergarten may benefit from withdrawing from the program, in order to access Kindergarten the following year.

A withdrawal can occur without any impact to government funding for that child's place the following year if it is implemented **before** the first funding data collection that occurs in, or around April each year. If a withdrawal occurs later in the year, the government funding will not be available in the next year.

### ATTACHMENT 3. INFORMATION FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS WITHOUT ACCEPTABLE IMMUNISATION DOCUMENTATION

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 Statements (see picture below) include evidence of immunisations and is used to assess whether you child is fully vaccinated for their age.

As we have not received acceptable immunisation documentation, and the child is not eligible for the 16 week grace period, we are unable to confirm a place at our service 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 family doctor
- Moreland Council
- National Immunisation Information Line Tel. 1800 671 811
- Australian Immunisation Register: [www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/medicare/australian-immunisation-register](http://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/medicare/australian-immunisation-register)
- Better Health Channel website: [www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/campaigns/no-jab-no-play](http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/campaigns/no-jab-no-play)

  
 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	01 Jan 2018	Infanrix Hexa	GP
	Polio Hib		Prevenar 13	
	Pneumococcal Rotavirus		RotaTeq	
4 months	Diphtheria Tetanus Pertussis Hepatitis B	01 Mar 2018	Infanrix Hexa	GP
	Polio Hib		Prevenar 13	
	Pneumococcal Rotavirus		RotaTeq	
6 months	Diphtheria Tetanus Pertussis Hepatitis B	01 May 2018	Infanrix Hexa	GP
	Polio Hib		Prevenar 13	
	Pneumococcal Rotavirus		RotaTeq	
12 months	Measles Mumps Rubella	01 Nov 2018	MMR II	GP
	Meningococcal C Hib		Menitorix	
18 months	Measles Mumps Rubella Varicella	01 May 2019	Priorix-Tetra	GP
<b>Next immunisation/s due</b>				<b>Date due</b>
Diphtheria Tetanus Pertussis Poliomyelitis				01 Nov 2020

## ATTACHMENT 4. CANCELLATION OF ENROLMENT AND NON-ATTENDANCE

### FOR FUNDED KINDERGARTEN

#### Cancellation of Enrolment

Families MUST notify the Centre Coordinator at Denzil Don Kindergarten in writing of their intention to cancel their child's enrolment. Fees will continue to be generated for that place until the Denzil Don Kindergarten is notified.

**Note:** This process does not apply to vulnerable children (*refer to Definitions*). 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 3 weeks of Term One will be contacted and informed their place has been cancelled.

##### Families Traveling Overseas

Families are required to notify Denzil Don Kindergarten 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/three weeks of a child not attending the service, Coordinator to call the family. If there is no response, this attempt should be recorded on the child's file.
- After second week of the child not attending without contact from the family, Coordinator to contact the family via phone and/or email. If there is no response, a record of this attempt should be recorded on the child's file.
- After third week of non-attendance, Coordinator and/or Nominated Supervisor to check families contact details.

Centre Coordinator to phone or email family, ensuring a response date is provided in the email/voicemail. If the family have made no attempt to communicate with the service before the response date, a final attempt letter should be sent ensuring a response date is provided in the letter. If the family does not respond to the final attempt letter before the response date, their placement should be cancelled.