

	Parkdale Preschool Association Policy Document
Policy No. AO1-06-00	Title: Enrolment Kindergarten
	Function: Administration and Operation
	Review Cycle: 12 months

Document/Revision History

Policy Revision #	Issue Date	Description of Changes	Superseded Document #
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Purpose

This policy will outline:

- The criteria for enrolment at **Parkdale Preschool**
- The process to be followed when enrolling a child, and the basis on which places within the programs will be allocated.

Policy statement

Values

Parkdale Preschool is committed to:

- Equal access for all children
- Meeting the needs of the local community
- Complying with the Children's Services Regulations 2009 (CSR)
- Complying with the DEECD funding requirements relating to the enrolment of children in government-funded kindergarten places
- Maintaining confidentiality in relation to the details on enrolment forms.

Scope

This policy applies to the committee, staff and parents/guardians who wish to have their child/ren enrolled, or have child/ren already enrolled, at the **Parkdale Preschool**.

Background and legislation

The Children's Services Regulations 2009 (CSR) require licensed services to have available information about admission requirements and enrolment procedures (CSR r41). It is intended that all eligible children will have access to a year of kindergarten before school; however, a shortage of places in some areas can cause problems and limit choices for parents. Where there is a higher demand than places available, a priority of access must be determined by the committee in order to allocate the places.

The criteria used by centres to determine the allocation of places vary from centre to centre, but they are generally based on a centre's philosophy, values and beliefs. Centres participating in central enrolment schemes are required to comply with the enrolment procedures of the scheme.

Relevant legislation may include but is not limited to:

- *Children's Services Act 1996*
- Children's Service's Regulations 2009 (CSR)
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cwlth)*
- *Equal Opportunity Act 1995 (Vic.)*
- *Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986 (Cwlth)*
- *Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cwlth).*

Definitions

Children with additional needs: Children whose development or physical condition needs specialist support, or children who may need additional support due to language, cultural or economic circumstances (refer to Inclusion and equity policy).

Deferrals: A child who does not attend in the year when the child is eligible for a funded kindergarten place, or officially withdraws from a centre prior to the end of Term 2. These children are considered by DEECD not to have accessed a year of funded kindergarten, and are therefore eligible for DEECD funding in the following year.

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD): The state government department responsible for the funding, licensing and regulation of children's services in Victoria.

Eligible child: Child who meets the criteria outlined in the *Victorian Kindergarten policy, procedures and funding criteria*.

Enrolment application form: A form to apply for a place at the centre.

Enrolment application fee: The amount charged to cover administrative costs associated with enrolling a child at the centre.

Enrolment form: A form that collects details regarding individual children. This is completed after a place has been offered by the centre and accepted by the applicant.

Fees: The amount charged to attend a program at the centre.

Guardian: Person/s who have been granted lawful authority by a court order for child/ren. The definition of 'guardian' under the Children's Services Act 1996 also means a person who has custody or control of the child but does not include a person providing children's services to a child.

Kindergarten: Kindergarten (sometimes known as preschool) is a universal early childhood program, funded by the state government, for children in the year prior to commencing primary school. It may also include an unfunded program for three-year-old children (two years before school).

Lawful authority: A power, duty responsibility or authority conferred in relation to a child at common law or under an Act or by an order of a court.

Siblings: Sisters and brothers by whole or half blood, adoptions or by marriage, including de facto or to whom foster care is provided by a parent (including an adoptive parent) or guardian of the first mentioned child.

Vacancy: A place in a program that becomes free as a result of a child leaving the centre, or is available because all places are not filled.

Vacant funded place: A government-funded place at the centre from which a child has withdrawn.

Sources and related centre policies

Sources

- DEECD, Children's Services Guide
- DEECD, Victorian Kindergarten policy, procedures and funding criteria

Centre policies

- Communication
- Complaints and grievances
- Fees
- Inclusion and equity
- Privacy

Procedures

The committee is responsible for:

- Determining the criteria for priority of access to centre programs based on funding requirements and the centre's philosophy
- Developing procedures that will ensure all eligible families are aware of and able to access a kindergarten program, including advertising, providing information in other languages and considering any barriers that may exist
- Providing a locked secure file for the storage of completed enrolment forms (refer to Privacy policy)
- Complying with the Inclusion and equity policy
- Providing opportunities (in consultation with staff) for interested families to attend the centre during operational hours to view the program
- Ensuring that enrolment forms comply with the requirements of CSR r 31, r33 and r34.

The enrolment secretary (or the delegated person) is responsible for the day-to-day implementation of this policy, which includes:

- Providing enrolment application forms (see [Attachment 2](#), 'Sample enrolment application form')
- Collating enrolments
- Maintaining a waiting list
- Collecting, receipting and banking enrolment fees
- Offering places and providing relevant paperwork to families in accordance with this policy
- Providing a monthly report to the committee/board regarding the status of enrolments and any difficulties encountered
- Storing completed enrolment application forms, as soon as is practicable, in a lockable file (CSR r35)
- Complying with the Privacy policy of the centre
- Providing a copy of the Enrolment policy with the enrolment application form.

The staff are responsible for:

- Reviewing enrolment applications to identify children with additional needs (refer to the Inclusion and equity policy for procedures to follow)

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- Responding to enrolment enquiries on a day-to-day basis and referring people to the enrolment secretary as required
 - Responding to parent/guardian enquiries regarding their child's readiness for the program in which they are considering enrolling their child
 - Complying with the centre's Privacy policy in relation to the collection and management of children's enrolment information
 - Ensuring that enrolment forms are completed before the child commences attending the program.

Parents are responsible for:

- Completing enrolment forms prior to their child's attendance at the centre
- Ensuring that all required information is provided to the service
- Updating information by notifying the centre of any changes.

The City of Kingston is responsible for:

- Operating a kindergarten central enrolment register for 4 year old, funded kindergarten across the municipality and distributing prioritised applications to the kindergartens. Four year old kindergarten enrolments are ranked in priority and date of receipt order and must be received by the council by 31st July the year before the child is to attend kindergarten for them to be included in the first allocation round.

Evaluation

In order to assess whether the policy has achieved the values and purposes, the committee will:

- Assess whether a satisfactory resolution has been achieved in relation to issues relating to enrolment procedures
- If appropriate, conduct a survey in relation to this policy, or incorporate relevant questions in the general parents'/guardians' survey
- Take into account feedback on the policy from the enrolment secretary or designated person and staff
- Monitor complaints and incidents regarding the enrolment of children
- Review the enrolment form to determine its effectiveness in meeting the regulatory and management requirements of the service.

Attachments

- [Attachment 1](#): General enrolment procedures
- [Attachment 2](#): Sample enrolment application form

Authorisation

This policy was adopted by the **Parkdale Preschool** committee at a committee meeting on.

Review date: 17/NOV/2010

General enrolment procedures

Application for a place

Enrolment applications for children to attend the centre from parents/guardians will be accepted any time after the child has turned 2 years of age for the 3 year old program or 3 years of age for the 4 year old (funded) program. Enrolment application forms are available from the centre and one is attached to this policy. Funded (4 year old) forms are also available from the City of Kingston council offices. A separate application form must be completed for each child, for each proposed year of attendance at the centre.

To facilitate the inclusion of all children into the education program enrolment applications should clearly identify any additional or specific needs of the child. Parents/guardians of children applying for a second year of funded or three year old kindergarten must submit an enrolment application form for a second year. This needs to be clearly marked 'second year'.

A copy of the child's birth certificate must accompany all applications. Completed enrolment application forms are to be forwarded to the enrolment officer, or designated person, at the centre. Access to completed enrolment application forms will be restricted to the enrolment secretary (or delegated person), staff, president and secretary, unless otherwise specified by the committee/board.

The applications will be entered in the waiting list using the eligibility and access criteria noted in the enrolment form.

Allocation within groups

Where the centre provides more than one funded kindergarten program or three-year-old program, places within the programs will be allocated on acceptance of a place at the centre. Parents will be asked which session they prefer and why. The Enrolment Officer and Director will allocate positions and if a decision cannot be reached a ballot may take place. Positions would then be reviewed again by the Director and Enrolment Officer taking into consideration, for example but not limited to; boy girl ratio, children with additional needs and group dynamics. Requested sessions cannot be guaranteed.

Offer of places

Places will be allocated to eligible children who are on the waiting list in accordance with the eligibility and access criteria of the centre for the 3 year old program.

The council will forward the kindergarten a prioritised list of applications for the 4 year old program. Closing dates for applications and timing of offers of places in the three-year-old program/s and the funded kindergarten program are detailed in the enrolment form. Applicants who are successful will be notified, in writing, of a confirmed place.

Parents/guardians, who do not wish to accept the offer of a place, or withdraw their enrolment, will be requested to notify the committee/board in writing as soon as possible. Families who have not replied to their offer of a position within 7 days of the cut off time for replies will be removed from the waiting list.

For 3 year old kinder, second and third round offers will be made in July if positions are available. Applicants who are unsuccessful will be notified in writing and advised of their place on the waiting list. Parents must advise of their wish to stay on the waiting list by a due date or their child's name will be removed from the list. A deposit of \$100 must be paid by cheque, money order or direct deposit on the date allocated for collecting deposits and sighting proof of age to hold the place for the following year. This deposit is NOT refundable or transferable under any circumstances and will be deducted from the fourth term fees if a family has participated in one or more working bees during Term 1, 2 or 3.

During Term 4, a cheque will be forwarded to: families who complete a Term 4 working bee and have paid their fourth term fees, families who have chosen to pay their fees up front and have participated in one or more working bees during the year.

An enrolment form and other relevant information will be provided after the place is accepted and deposit paid. There is a holding fee equal to a term's fees payable for one term if the child is a late starter.

3 year old applicants who do not accept a place and do not pay a deposit by the cut-off date will be removed from the waiting list. Any children eligible for both 3 year old and 4 year old kindergarten programs are only able to be on one waiting list. If a 3 year old position is offered and accepted, parents MUST complete the council deferral form available from the City of Kingston, Parkdale Preschool or Enrolment Officers.

Note: Places will not be allocated to children until any substantial debt owed by the family to the centre is paid, or a payment plan is agreed to between the family and the centre. (Refer to *Fees Policy*).

Eligibility and access criteria for funded (four year old) kindergarten program

The following children are eligible for attendance in the funded (4 year old) kindergarten program:

- Children who will have turned four years of age by 30 April in the year she/he will attend kindergarten.
- Children who have received funding for a second year of kindergarten.
- Children who were eligible to attend in the previous year but:
 - Deferred
 - Withdrew from the centre on or before the last day of Term 2.
- Children turning six years of age in their year at kindergarten who have been granted an exemption from school entry age requirements by their regional office of the Department of Education, and Early Childhood Development (DEECD). (Refer to DHS *Victorian Kindergarten policy, procedures and funding criteria 2007-2009*).
- Children who are younger than the eligible age, but whose parents/guardians have submitted a written request for their child to attend school the following year to their

regional office of the DE&T, or the non-government school their child will be attending. A copy of the written request must be attached with the application.

- Parents/guardians are to be advised that very few requests are approved by DEECD. If the child attends kindergarten early, but does not proceed onto school the following year, the child will be unable to access another year unless they are funded by DEECD for a second year.

The criteria to be used, if there are more applications than places available, is:

- Children who have received funding for a second year of kindergarten
- Children who were eligible to attend in the previous year but deferred or withdrew from the centre on or before the last day of Term 2
- Date of application.

Note – there are 22 places offered in the 3 year old program.

Eligibility and access criteria for the three year old program

- Children are eligible for attendance in the three-year-old program provided they have turned three years of age on or before the 31st January in the year of attendance.
- A position will be offered to children who have deferred or are repeating the 3 year old program at Parkdale Preschool. .
- The prioritised criteria to be used, if there are more applications than places available is:
 - Children of staff, committee and sub-committee members from most years of service on the committee to least years of service on the committee, then from most recent committee to least recent committee and finally by age (eldest to youngest).
 - Siblings of children who have previously attended the preschool from most recent to least recent and then by age (eldest to youngest).
 - Children who live within the council boundaries of Parkdale, Mentone and Mordialloc.
 - Age (eldest to youngest).
- If there are still vacant positions, we will accept children who turn 3 before 30th of April. These children can only attend kinder when they have turned 3 and must pay fees to secure their position.

The Following is the selection criteria for Parkdale Pre School only. Other kindergarten's criteria may vary.

Children are eligible for attendance in the three-year-old program provided they have turned three years of age prior to 31st of January.

All criteria will follow in date of birth order from oldest to youngest.

The weighted selection criteria (1-75) to be used, if there are more applications than places available:

1. Children who are repeating the 3 year old program at Parkdale Pre School or who received an offer at Parkdale Pre School, but decided to defer the position until the following year.
2. Children of present and past committee members, from most to least recent.
3. Children who have had siblings attend the centre, from most to least recent (including current year).
4. Children who live within the council boundaries of Parkdale, Mentone and Mordialloc.
5. Children who live outside the stated boundaries.

If there are still vacant positions, we will accept children who turn three before the 30th of April. These children can only attend kinder when they have turned three and must pay fees to secure their position.

Closing date for applications is the second Friday in May of the prior year. Any applications received after this date, will go onto a second waiting list following the above criteria. Offers for three year old kinder will be sent out on the last Friday in May of the prior year.

Please remember to apply for 4-year-old kindergarten on your child's 3rd birthday. Applications must be lodged at the City of Kingston.

Please see our website for further information about our pre school including a link for 4 year old application forms.

Alameda Place, Parkdale, VIC 3195 -Phone: 9580 1155 -Fax: 9588 0172
www.parkdalepreschool.com.au

OFFICE USE ONLY:

PARKDALE PRE SCHOOL APPLICATION FOR 3 YEAR OLD KINDERGARTEN

Please refer to back of page for selection criteria

CHILD'S DETAILS:

Surname: _____ Given Names: _____

Date Of Birth: D ____ M ____ Y _____

Year your child will attend 3-year-old kindergarten: _____

PARENT GUARDIAN'S DETAILS:

NAME 1	NAME 1
HOME PHONE	HOME PHONE
MOBILE PHONE	MOBILE PHONE
STREET ADDRESS	STREET ADDRESS
POSTAL ADDRESS (if different to above)	POSTAL ADDRESS (if different to above)

SIBLINGS WHO ATTENDED PARKDALE PRE-SCHOOL:

NAME: _____ YEAR: _____

NAME: _____ YEAR: _____

NAME: _____ YEAR: _____

Have you been a past committee member? YES / NO YEAR/S. _____

I declare that all of the information provided is true and correct.

Signature of Parent: _____ Date: _____

Please return this form to the preschool

Alameda Place, Parkdale, VIC 3195 -Phone: 9580 1155 -Fax: 9588 0172
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