

ALLOCATIONS, ENROLMENT AND ORIENTATION POLICY

This policy addresses the following:
 Enrolment and Orientation QA6
 Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations QA2
 Delivery and Collection of Children QA2
 Allocation of Places QA7
 Payment of Fees QA7
 Free Kinder QA7

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1. BACKGROUND

The Education and Care Services National Regulations require approved providers to ensure their services have policies and procedures in place in relation to:

- Enrolment and orientation
- Acceptance and refusal of authorisations
- Delivery and Collection of Children
- Allocation of Places
- Payment of Fees

2. PURPOSE

This policy and associated procedures will provide direction on

- The process followed when enrolling a child at the City of Kingston's Family and Children's Centres.
- The requirements in relation to the No Job No Play legislation.

- The basis on which places within our programs will be allocated.
- Procedures for the orientation of new families and children.
- Compliance with legislative and DET funding requirements in relation to the enrolment of children in early childhood education and care services.
- Procedures to be followed when obtaining written authorisation from a parent/guardian or person authorised and named in the enrolment record.
- Procedures to be followed when refusing written authorisation from a parent/guardian or person authorised and named in the enrolment record.
- Safe delivery and collection of children attending the service.
- The setting, payment, and collection of fees.
- We comply with Free Kinder funding and legislative requirements.

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, management, visitors and volunteers of Kingston Family and Children's Centres.

4. IMPLEMENTATION

This policy will be implemented through the adherence to current applicable State and Federal Legislation, City of Kingston Governance policies, procedures, Child Safe Standards, and professional advice.

5. ENROLMENT AND ORIENTATION

City of Kingston's Family and Children's Centres understand that enrolment and orientation is an exciting and often emotional time for families and children. We aim to provide a fair and equitable opportunity for families to enrol at our service, that children and families transition positively and that legislative requirements are adhered to.

During enrolment and orientation, we work in partnerships with families, build trusting relationships with children and identify the individual needs of children and families. Through these partnerships, we are able to work together with families to provide high quality outcomes for children.

Families must comply with our enrolment and orientation requirements and where there is ongoing or serious circumstances of non-compliance to our policies and procedures, a child's enrolment may be terminated.

6. ACCEPTANCE AND REFUSAL OF AUTHORISATIONS

Our priority is ensuring the health, safety, and wellbeing of children. We have procedure in place to ensure educators, staff, and volunteers understand when and how authorisations need to be provided what does or does not constitute correct authorisation. When parents/guardians have not provided appropriate information it may lead to refusal of authorisations. Our processes are effective and meet all regulatory requirements.

We require parent/guardian written authorisation to be provided on various matters and decisions around refusing an authorisation will be made on a case-by-case basis by the service in discussion with the Nominated Supervisor, Police or other authorities.

7. DELIVERY AND COLLECTION OF CHILDREN

To ensure the health and safety of children at our service, the delivery and collection procedure must be strictly adhered to, allowing only nominated authorised persons to collect children at any time throughout the day. We are legally required to record children's sign in and out times, as per National Law and Regulations, accurately recording the parent/guardian or nominated authorised person who collected the child from the service.

Our sign in and out records are used in various situations, including during emergency evacuation, to ensure the health and safety of all children at the service.

All staff and families must adhere to the delivery and collection of children processes.

8. ALLOCATION OF PLACES

City of Kingston Family and Children's Centres are committed to providing equal opportunities for all eligible children to attend our services. When developing our allocation of places procedure, we considered the needs of families attending our services, the local community, and the Victorian Governments Priority of access for early childhood education. Our processes are transparent and are allocated in accordance with anti-discrimination and human rights laws.

To support priority one families, there may be some variations to the offer and allocation process on a case-by-case basis. The Senior Coordinator in consultation with the Team Leader has the ability to use discretion in relation of allocations.

9. PAYMENT OF FEES

Our Service aims to ensure families understand the fee schedule and payment process required for education and care to be provided for their child. We are committed to meet our obligations to maintain financial integrity and comply with all Child Care Subsidy legislative requirements. We have effective compliance systems in place to ensure childcare funding is administered appropriately. Our Service ensures the confidentiality and privacy of all personal information provided to the Service about the enrolled child and family.

To ensure we continue to provide high quality education and care, Council reviews fees and charges annually, to provide responsible financial management and viability of the service.

We have fair processes in place to deal with non-payment and/or inability to pay fees, working with families to identify any financial barriers to accessing our programs. In extenuating circumstances, the team leader, in consultation with the manager, may waive fees.

Families must understand their financial responsibilities and comply with our fee requirements, and where ongoing or serious circumstances of non-compliance to our policies and procedures, a child's enrolment may be terminated.

Where applicable, Child Care Subsidy is paid directly to the service, and this is used as a fee reduction (visible on a family's fortnightly invoice).

Families are required to pay the difference between the fee charged and the subsidy amount, known as the 'gap' amount. Families are required to pay fees fortnightly using the services direct debit system. The family is required to provide banking details to facilitate set up of the direct debit account. A dishonour fee will apply for direct debit transactions where there are insufficient funds to cover the fees. Families will be issued with an invoice on a fortnightly basis in accordance with the fee payment and regulatory requirements.

Families are liable to pay full fees in cases where subsidy entitlements drop out or cease.

10. FREE KINDER

Families are provided with a fee schedule and how *Free Kinder* funding is applied for our kindergarten programs and payment of fees for additional education and care above the 15-hour funded program.

Priority of Access (PoA) provisions apply, with all PoA children to be given priority over all other children regardless of whether they are enrolling in more than 15 hours.

For children enrolled in our Sessional Kindergarten Program at Carrum Family and Children's Centre, a free 15-hour program is available without any need or expectation to purchase additional hours. Children can only attend this program during term time, on the days/times allocated by Kingston Central Registration. This program is not available during school holidays.

Where children are enrolled in our Extended Day Kindergarten program, the Victorian Government will make Free Kinder payments to our Service to offset the parent fee component for the 15-hour program. This equates to a \$2,000 reduction in fees per year for each child and is calculated pro-rata from a child's funding start date. The *Free Kinder* fees will be applied fortnightly and will appear on the family statement as Victorian Government Free Kinder offset. Families are required to pay the difference between the fee charged, *Free Kinder* offset and the CCS subsidy amount – the 'gap' amount.

11. RELATED DOCUMENTS

Related policies and procedures are recorded in the [23/219216 - FCC POLICY MASTER](#)

12. LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities 2006* (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*: Regulation 168(2)(n)
- *Equal Opportunity Act 1995* (Vic)
- *National Quality Standard*, including Quality Area 7: Governance and Leadership
- *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005* (Vic) *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* (Vic)
- *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* (Vic) (Part 2: Principles for Children)
- *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*: Section 167
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*: Regulations 96, 99, 102, 160, 161, 168(2)(m), 170
- *Family Law Act 1975* (Cth)
- *National Quality Standard*, Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety
 - Standard 2.2: Safety

13. SOURCES

Sources include but are not limited to:

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).

ACECQA. (2021). Policy and procedure guidelines. *Acceptance and refusal of authorisations*.

Cancer Council. Preventing cancer: Sun protections: <https://www.cancer.org.au/preventing-cancer/sun-protection/>

Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016).

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. (Amended 2018).

[Education and Care Services National Regulations](#). (2011).

Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations. (2017).

Guide to the National Quality Standard. (2020).

Revised National Quality Standard. (2018).

Victorian Department of Education - Priority of access for early childhood education

<https://www.vic.gov.au/priority-access-criteria>

Australian Government Department of Education – Managing childcare places

<https://www.education.gov.au/child-care-package/child-care-provider-handbook/enrolling-children/managing-child-care-places>

Department of Education and Training. (2023). [The Kindergarten Funding Guide](#)

13. KEY TERMS

Key terms that may be referred to in our policy and procedures can be found here: [23/267579 -](#)

[FCC POLICY AND PROCEDURE KEY TERMS](#)

14. DOCUMENT CONTROL

RESPONSIBLE PERSON	Team Leader Family and Children's Centres
APPROVED/ADOPTED BY	Mark Patterson Manager Family, Youth and Children's Services
SIGNATURE	<i>Mark Patterson</i>
APPROVAL DATE	October 2023
EFFECTIVE DATE	
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Administrative Updates From time to time, minor administrative changes are required to ensure accuracy of this document. This can include changes to document names, related references, Council, State or Federal government departments, positions or services, or minor amendments to legislation that does not have material impact. In the event of such changes, FCC'S will review the impact and provide a new version where necessary.

DELIVERY AND COLLECTION OF CHILDREN PROCEDURE

Policy:

The Delivery and Collection of Children Procedure falls under the Allocations, Enrolment and Orientation Policy.

Purpose:

To ensure the safe delivery and collection of children.

Procedure:

General

Educators discuss the procedures for delivery and collection of children with parents/guardians during the orientation process or at the Kindergarten Information Sessions.

XAP Kiosk application (app) allows the service to digitally record the attendance of children.

Educators monitor the arrival and departure of the children in their group and use XAP Kiosk to ensure all children are signed in and out as required.

The door code for the Early Years area is:

- Given only to parents/guardians and others authorised to collect on a child's Early Years Enrolment Form
- Entered only by adults.
- Changed annually or when required.
- All visitors must sign in and out of the visitor register located at reception.
- Educators and parents/guardians ensure public doors and gates are closed at all times to prevent children from leaving the service unaccompanied or from accessing unsupervised/unsafe areas of the service.
- Educator-to-child ratios are maintained at all times

Road/Car Safety

Educators:

- Discuss road safety with children as part of the educational program.
- Implement road safety behaviours with children during excursions.
- Parents/guardians and others dropping off or collecting children are encouraged to:
 - Use the dedicated car parking areas where available.
 - Use the pedestrian walkways and crossings where available.
 - Hold children's hands when crossing the road.

- Discuss road safety with children and assist them to develop awareness of other road users including cars, cyclists and other pedestrians.
- The service discourages families from leaving children in cars or leaving the car keys in the car with children through the use of signage both inside and outside of the service.

Delivery of Children

- Upon arrival at the service, parents/guardians or others dropping off:
 - Mark their child's attendance using the XAP Kiosk Application (app) on the administration iPad located outside the child's room.
 - The administration iPads are for adult use only. The personal pin number should only be known by parents/guardians. Children are not permitted to use the administration iPads to sign in or out via XAP Kiosk.
 - Where a parent/guardian, family member or friend drops off or collects a child(ren) and either doesn't know the pin number, or has forgotten it, Educators can sign the child(ren) in or out using their pin number.
 - Accompany the child into their room.
 - Notify an Educator of their arrival.
 - Support the child to settle in by following their morning routine e.g. by assisting them to place their bag in their locker, washing their hands, greeting Educators, and saying goodbye. Parents/guardians are encouraged to say goodbye to the child and to provide reassurance that they will be returning e.g. after work, after their sleep etc.
- Parents/guardians are encouraged to telephone the centre at any time to discuss their child's wellbeing, especially if they were distressed at drop off.
- Educators will provide support and reassurance to children who are upset or distressed after their parent/guardian has left.
- If children are attending an excursion and the parent/guardian meets the group at the excursion destination, the parent/guardian must sign the child in using the XAP Kiosk Application (app) on the excursion iPad.

Collection of Children

children can only leave the service premises:

- When released to an authorised person as per this policy.
- During an excursion
- During an emergency evacuation

- Educators can only release children to parents/guardians and those authorised to collect in the child's Early Years Enrolment Form. If the Educator does not know the person collecting, they must request photo identification to confirm the person's identity on arrival at the service. Children can only be released to this person if the identification matches the information provided by parents/guardians in the child's Early Years Enrolment Form
 - Children under 16 years of age are not permitted to collect children, unless they are the parent of the child.
 - Upon arrival at the service, parents/guardians or others collecting children:
 - Sign their child out using the XAP Kiosk Application (app) on the administration iPad located outside the child's room.
 - Check the child's locker for their belongings.
 - Talk to the Educator about the child's day.
 - Read the information boards.
 - Notify an Educator that they are collecting the child.
 - Must close the door securely when they leave.
 - Must not allow siblings or other children to open and close the doors.
 - Must ensure only adults press the green door release buttons.
 - Supervise their child and other children in their care
 - As per the City of Kingston Child Protection Protocol:
 - In the event that a parent/guardian arrives at the service in a drug affected or significantly alcohol affected state to collect a child(ren), Educators and/or the Coordinator team will attempt to dissuade* the parent/guardian from leaving the service with the child(ren). Where the parent/guardian insists on leaving with the child(ren), the service will:
 - Contact the Police immediately on 000.
 - Make a report to Child Protection (DHHS) Southern Region on 1300 655 795 or the Child Protection After Hours Line outside business hours on 13 12 78.
 - Notify DET within 24 hours.
- *Educators can encourage the parent/adult to take a taxi home and arrange for another adult to meet them at home and stay with them; or arrange for a family member, partner or friend to be contacted to collect both the child and the adult from the centre and stay with them.
- If children are attending an excursion and the parent/guardian meets the group at the excursion destination, the parent/guardian must sign the child out using the XAP Kiosk Application (app) on the excursion iPad.

Court Orders

- Where there is a court order, parenting plan or parenting order in place, parents/guardians must:
 - Advise the service upon enrolment or when the court order, parenting plan or parenting order comes into effect.
 - Provide a copy of the current court order, parenting plan or parenting order to be stored securely in their child's file in the Coordinator's office and on XAP. Where required, a summary of the court order, parenting plan or parenting order may be stored in a confidential pocket in the children's room and at the reception desk.
- If a person who has restricted access to a child through a court order, parenting plan or parenting order attempts to collect the child, the service will:
 - Advise the person:
 - Of the court order, parenting plan or parenting order and their restricted access.
 - That the service must phone the parent/guardian of the child and the Police where applicable.
 - Phone the parent/guardian of the child. Where verbal permission is not given for the person to collect the child, Educators or Staff will request that the person leave the service premises.
 - If the person becomes aggressive and the safety of other children, parents/guardians or Educators/Staff at the service is threatened, the child is to be released to them.
 - The service will then:
 - Contact the:
 - Police on 000.
 - Parent/guardian of the child.
 - Team Leader Family and Children's Centres
 - Document the following information:
 - Description of the person who took the child and any other person or child who was with them.
 - The time the child was taken.
 - Description of the car or taxi used, including the registration number, direction taken etc.
 - Description of any noticeable behaviour or emotional response of the child.
 - Any other information that may help the Police.

- Report the incident to DET within 24 hours.

Children Not Collected From the Service

- It is the responsibility of parents/guardians or other authorised nominees to collect their child promptly at the designated pick up time or by the closing time of the service. It is important to note that the centres close at 6:00pm, so parents/guardians should arrive prior to this e.g. 5:50pm to allow adequate time to collect their child ..
- If the person collecting the child is going to be late, they must contact the service as soon as they are aware of the delay to give an estimated arrival time.
- Where a child is not collected at the end of a session, or by the closing time of the service, Educators must adhere to the following procedure:
 - two Staff must remain on duty at all times children are being cared for or educated, including after a session, or after the service has closed. Relief Staff can be arranged where required.
 - If the parent/guardian or authorised nominee has not arrived by 6:05pm or five minutes after the end of the session, Educators will:
 - Phone the child's parent/guardian or person listed to collect to determine their expected arrival time. Educators will use all available contact numbers listed (e.g. home, work) in the child's Early Years Enrolment Form
 - Document all attempts at contact, including times and the person contacted.
 - If the parent/guardian or authorised nominee has not arrived by 6:15pm or 15 minutes after the end of the session (and there has been no contact with the parent/guardian), Educators will phone the child's emergency contacts to request that the child be collected from the service immediately. Educators will use all available contact numbers listed (e.g. home, work) in the child's Early Years Enrolment Form
 - If the parent/guardian or authorised nominee has not arrived by 6:30pm or 30 minutes after the end of the session, and no contact has been made with either the parent/guardian or emergency contacts, Educators will contact the:
 - Coordination team and/or the
 - Team Leader Family and Children's Centre
- Educators will attempt to contact the parents/guardians and/or the emergency contacts every 5 minutes for an additional half an hour (until 7.00pm for Multi-Age Childcare and Education and Kindergarten and one hour after the close of the session for sessional three and four year old kindergarten).

- If the parent/guardian or authorised nominee has not arrived by 7:00pm or 60 minutes after the end of the session, and no contact has been made with either the parent/guardian or emergency contacts, Educators will contact Child Protection (DHHS) Southern Region on 1300 655 795. Educators will advise Child Protection (DHHS) of the circumstances surrounding the child's collection, including all attempts at contacting parents/guardians and emergency contacts.
- At all times the child's welfare must be the priority. Educators must ensure the child does not overhear any conversations or experience any anxiety.
- Educators must provide:
 - A meal for the child where required. All food provided must be in line with the child's medical and dietary needs.
 - Appropriate play experiences for the child.
 - Comfort and reassurance to the child.
- Educators and Staff are not permitted to transport children in their personal vehicles at any time.
- The service must provide a written report of the incident to DET within 24 hours.
- Parents/guardians will be charged a late fee.

Enrolment and Orientation Procedure

Policy:

The Enrolment and Procedure falls under the Allocations, Enrolment and Orientation Policy.

Purpose:

The purpose of this procedure is to ensure:

- There is a clear enrolment process for all new children.
- Each child enrolled at the City of Kingston Family and Children's Centres is fully immunised as per the 'No Jab, No Play' legislation.
- An orientation process is offered for each new child.

Procedure:

Enrolment

- When an offer has been made, the administration team notifies the primary parent/guardian listed on the application, via email, sending the **Letter of Offer** and required documentation to complete.
- A child's enrolment at the service is not confirmed until the following is complete:
 - Enrolment Fee Deposit paid as per Payment of Fees procedure.
 - Enrolment details in the families XAP guardian portal.
 - An up-to-date copy of the child's Immunisation History Statement.
 - Requested kindergarten documentation.
- Once the enrolment requirements are complete and verified. Administration will confirm the enrolment, by emailing the **Enrolment Confirmation** to the primary parent/guardian listed on the application.

Immunisation

- As per No Jab No Play Legislation, the service cannot confirm a child's enrolment without an up to date Immunisation History Statement.
- The service follows the No Jab No Play requirements [No Jab No Play for early childhood education and care services | health.vic.gov.au](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/no-jab-no-play)
- Where a child has not been immunised or no immunisation is provided, a grace period assessment form must be completed. This will determine if the child can be enrolled under the 'support period' otherwise known as the 'grace period'. This period allows 16 weeks for the family to obtain an acceptable immunisation status certificate.

- Additional documentation may be requested to support the 'grace period', or where the child has a medical exemption or is on a recognised catch up schedule.
- The administration team track children's immunisation status' and will prompt families to provide up to date copies of their child's Immunisation History Statement.
- After two requested attempts for an up-to-date Immunisation History Statement, the matter will be escalated to the Senior Coordinator.

Orientation

An Orientation Program is offered for all enrolments to ensure new children are supported to settle into the service. The orientation program can be tailored to meet the needs of individual children and to ensure a smooth transition into the service.

Orientation sessions allow children to:

- Familiarise themselves with the environment, other children and Educators.
 - Explore a new setting with the support of a parent/guardian.
 - Participate in the educational program, including routines and transitions.
- After receiving the Enrolment Confirmation email, the administration team will contact the primary guardian by phone, to discuss the child's orientation, half day and full day commencement at the service.
 - Children with medical, dietary, or additional needs will require a meeting with the Centre Coordinator prior to commencing at the service.
 - Orientation sessions allow the parent/guardian and child, to become familiar with the service and educators.
 - Educators will explain how the service communicates with families and will request the family to complete the **EDUCA permission form**.
 - The administration team will set up a profile for the child on EDUCA and invite the nominated parents/guardians.
 - The Education and Care Leader will allocate the child to the relevant group/s and link key educators.
 - Parents/guardians are responsible for their children during orientation sessions and must remain with them at all times (unless specified otherwise). The City of Kingston accepts no liability for injury or illness sustained during an orientation session.
 - Families are offered two orientation sessions and one-half day (charged at half the daily rate).
 - Where additional orientation or half day sessions are requested, adjustments can be made to the orientation plan with approval from the Senior Coordinator.
 - Where a child is currently attending the service is moving into a new room, the educators will support the child's transition, in consultation with parents/guardians, on the child's usual days of attendance.



Sessional Kindergarten Enrolment and Orientation

Our Sessional Kindergarten Program offered at Carrum Family and Children's Centre, operates during school terms only.

- Due to child:staff ratio requirements children cannot attend the sessional kindergarten until they are 3 years old. Children may attend sessions under parent/guardian supervision until they turn 3.
- Prior to term one commencing, the administration team will email parents/guardians with children enrolled in the Sessional Kindergarten Program, their child's allocated orientation plan.
- The child's orientation and half day sessions will fall on the day/s of the child's allocated kindergarten group, once term has commenced.

PAYMENT OF FEES PROCEDURE

Policy:

The Payment of Fees Procedure falls under the Allocations, Enrolment and Orientation Policy.

Purpose:

For parents to gain a clear understanding of the Service fee structure, payment requirements and Child Care Subsidy benefits. This procedure explains our process for fee payment and the necessity of ensuring children's fees are paid on time and consequences for failure to pay fees on time.

Procedure:

Enrolment Fee and Bond Payment

- A bond payment of \$100 per day is charged upon the acceptance of a booking offer and is applicable to every new offer made after the initial enrolment.
- When a family receives offers for enrolment of multiple children simultaneously, the maximum bond required will be limited to \$500.
- The bond payment is non-refundable where the child does not commence at the service.
- A bond payment of \$100 is charged to secure a child's sessional kindergarten place. The kindergarten bond will be refunded during term one. The bond payment is non-refundable where the child does not commence at the service.
- Families with children already enrolled in our education and care program, seeking to enrol their child in the kindergarten program, are required to provide a \$100 deposit to reserve their child's place. The \$100 kindergarten bond will be refunded during term one.
- If an existing family wishes to increase their child's days in the kindergarten program, an additional \$100 bond per day is applicable.
- Where 4 weeks' written notice is provided to cease care at the service and final invoice has settled, the bond payment will be refunded.
- The bond is waived for families who hold a valid Health Care or Concession Card.
- Where the bond payment poses a barrier to a family enrolling at the service, the bond may be waived at the senior coordinator's discretion.
- Children can attend one half-day session on their first day of commencement to assist settling into the service. These sessions are charged at half the daily rate.

General Fees

- Child Care Subsidy is paid directly to the service, and this is used as a fee reduction (visible on a family's fortnightly invoice).
- Families are required to pay the difference between the fee charged and the subsidy amount, known as the 'gap' amount.
- Families are liable to pay full fees in cases where subsidy entitlements drop out or cease.
- A dated receipt will be provided for each payment via email.

- Fees are payable for every session that a child is enrolled at the service. This includes when your child is absent for any reason including illness and family holidays.
- If a session of care falls on a public holiday, families are required to pay normal fees. Child Care Subsidy may be paid for sessions that fall on public holidays.
- Fees are charged for full sessions only (regardless of the actual attendance hours any day).
- Casual days may be offered to families who have a child currently utilising the service, on a case-by-case basis, subject to coordinator approval.

Holiday Discount

Families may be eligible for a holiday discount of 25% for up to 2 weeks of care (pro rata) if they notify the service a minimum 2 weeks in advance of their child/ren's absence of two or more consecutive days.

Casual Booking Request

- Families can request casual days, by emailing the administration team.
- Administration will confirm when a casual booking request can be accommodated, by emailing the primary parent/guardian listed on the XAP guardian portal.
- Families need to provide 24 hours' notice to cancel a casual booking request.
- The administration team will notify the child's educators of the casual booking, and the kitchen team where applicable.

Child Care Subsidy

- Parents/guardians are required to register for Child Care Subsidy through their myGov account linked to Centrelink and provide documentation to support the CCS payment.
- Child Care Subsidy will be paid directly to the Service and this amount deducted from the parent/family account.
- Families must regularly check their details are correct and report a change in circumstances to Centrelink (family income, activity levels, relationship changes or any other changes to their circumstances).
- Any disputes with CCS payments are the responsibility of the family. The family will be referred to contact Centrelink directly for any enquiries regarding CCS payments.
- For more information about CCS and eligibility requirements visit <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/child-care-subsidy>

Payment of Fees

- Families are required to pay fees using the services direct debit system. The family is required to provide banking details to facilitate set up of the direct debit account.
- A dishonour fee will apply for direct debit transactions where there are insufficient funds to cover the fees.
- Families will be issued with an invoice on a fortnightly basis in accordance with the fee payment and regulatory requirements.

- The invoice will include details of the sessions of care provided and the resulting fee reduction amounts.
- The invoice is generated using our CCM Software which meets all requirements as per Family Assistance Law legislation.

Salary Sacrifice

Employees of the City of Kingston are able to salary sacrifice their childcare fees. This can be arranged by contacting payroll@kingston.vic.gov.au

Salary sacrifice is considered a third-party payment, and we must deduct the contribution from the total session fee. More information can be found by visiting <https://www.education.gov.au/early-childhood/child-care-subsidy/payments-and-fees/third-party-payments>

Kindergarten

Eligible children attending our Victorian Government Approved funded kindergarten programs may receive reduced fees or free kindergarten. Parents/guardians should speak with our administration team or coordinators to understand which fees will apply to their chosen session type.

- Where children are enrolled in our Extended Day Kindergarten program, the Victorian Government will make Free Kinder payments to our Service to offset the parent fee component for the 15-hour program.
- This equates to a \$2,000 reduction in fees per year for each child and is calculated pro-rata from a child's funding start date.
- The *Free Kinder* fees will be applied fortnightly and will appear on the family statement as Victorian Government Free Kinder offset.
- Families are required to pay the difference between the fee charged, *Free Kinder* offset and the CCS subsidy amount – the 'gap' amount.
- The offset will be applied as per FCC Victorian Government Free Kinder Offset Schedule.
- Where a family's out of pocket fees are less than the fortnightly Free Kinder Offset payment, the service will use surplus funding to improve the kindergarten program.

Absences from the Service

- Families are required to contact the service if their child is unable to attend.
- Families must still pay the 'gap' fee to the service if their child is unable to attend.
- Under Child Care Subsidy, families are allowed forty-two absence days per child, per financial year and may be entitled to additional absence days in certain circumstances.
- Additional absences can be claimed for the specified reasons as defined by the Family Assistance Law.
- Records and evidence will be kept by the service for each additional absence, where required.
- Families can view their absence count through their Centrelink online account via myGov.

- In a period of local emergency, such as a bushfire or pandemic, and our service is temporarily shut down on public health advice, families may be provided with additional absence days as per Family Assistance Law legislation.
- If our service is forced to close as a result of a public health directive, we may waive gap fees in line with Family Assistance Law legislation.

Financial Difficulties

- If a family is experiencing financial difficulties, a suitable payment plan may be arranged with authorisation from the Administration and Operations Coordinator.
- Families can apply for Additional Child Care Subsidy (ACCS) through Centrelink for additional fee assistance.
- For more information about ACCS and eligibility requirements visit <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/additional-child-care-subsidy>

Outstanding Fees and Debt Recovery

- If a family fails to pay the required fees on time, a reminder letter will be issued after one week and then again, after two weeks.
- A child's position will be terminated if payment has not been made after three weeks, for which a family will receive a final letter terminating the child's position. At this time, the service will initiate its debt collection process, following privacy and conditional requirements.
- Where a family has outstanding fees, additional day requests and transfers to other services will not be accommodated until the existing account is brought up to date.

Early Drop off and Late Collection Fees

- Families must drop off and collect their child during program session times. An early drop off or late fee will apply where children are dropped off prior to the session commencing or after the session has finished.
- A review of the child's enrolment will occur where families are consistently attending outside of session times.

Additional fees

- In the event the service needs to seek emergency medical treatment for a child. Parents/Guardians are responsible for any and all associated costs including but not limited to medical, hospital or ambulance transportation costs.

Change of Fees

- Fees are subject to change at any time provided a minimum of four weeks' written notice is given to all families.
- CCS hourly rate caps may be increased by the CPI at the commencement of each financial year.
- CCS hourly rate increases are governed by CCS and are automatically adjusted through our CCMS Software.

Termination of Enrolment

- Families must provide four weeks' written notice of their intention to withdraw a child from the centre.
- In some circumstances CCS may not be paid for sessions if the child has not physically started care.
- Additionally, CCS may not be paid for absences submitted after a child's last physical day of care, unless conditions have been met as specified by Family Assistance Law.

Third Party Payments

- Parents are generally liable to pay the co-contribution for childcare fees. Only state and territory governments (and their agencies) can contribute to the cost, in part or full of childcare fees for families.
- Where an agreement has been made between an employer or charity to assist in the contribution of fees, the fees must be reduced accordingly before CCS has been applied.
- A third party can pay all of the family's childcare fees – but in such cases the family is not entitled to CCS.
- Our service will record all documentation regarding any third-party payments.

Complaints relating to the administration of Child Care Subsidy

- Families who wish to raise concerns regarding the management of Child Care Subsidy should speak with the Nominated Supervisor in the first instance.
- The Nominated Supervisor will follow the steps as outlined in this policy, including advising the Approved Provider of all grievances.
- Families can raise concerns regarding management of the Child Care Subsidy to the dedicated Child Care Tip-Off Line either via phone 1800 664 231 or email tipoffline@education.vic.gov.au

Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations Procedure

Policy:

The Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations Procedure falls under the Allocations, Enrolment and Orientation Policy.

Purpose:

We aim to ensure that all educators, staff, and volunteers are consistent in how authorisations are managed and understand what does or does not constitute a correct authorisation, which consequently may lead to a refusal.

Procedure:

Our Service will ensure we comply with the current *Education and Care Services National Regulations*, and have policies and procedures in place in relation to the acceptance and refusal of authorisations which require parent or guardian written authorisation to be provided in matters including:

- Administration of medication to children
- Administration of medical treatment and first aid treatment
- Emergency Ambulance transportation
- Transportation- including regular outings and regular transportation
- Excursions, including regular outings
- Incursion attendance
- Taking of photographs by people other than educators
- Enrolment of children, including providing details of persons nominated to authorise consent for medical treatment, to collect children from the service, or to provide authority for the child to be taken outside the service and online communication platforms
- Children leaving the premises in the care of someone other than a parent or guardian

THE APPROVED PROVIDER/ NOMINATED SUPERVISOR WILL ENSURE THAT:

- The Allocations, Enrolment and Orientation Policy and related procedures are reviewed and maintained by the service and adhered to at all times by educators and staff
- policies and procedures are readily accessible to families, nominated supervisors, coordinators, educators and staff.
- The approved provider of the service must take reasonable steps to ensure that nominated supervisors and staff members of, and volunteers at, the service follow the Refusal of an authorisation.
- Inform the Approved Provider when a written authorisation does not meet the requirements outlined in the Service's policies.
- the right of refusal is exercised if written or verbal authorisations do not comply with National Regulations or Child Protection Legislation. If an authorisation is refused by the Service, it is best practice to document:
 - the details of the authorisation

- why the authorisation was refused, and
 - actions taken by the service. For example: if the service refused an authorised nominee named in the child's enrolment record to collect the child from the service as they were under the influence of alcohol, the action taken to ensure that the child was collected.
- attendance records are maintained for all children attending the Service
 - a written record of all visitors to the Service, including time of arrival and departure and reasons for visit is documented
 - educators/staff do not administer medication without the written authorisation of parent/guardian or authorised nominee named in the enrolment record as authorised to consent to the medical treatment of the child, except in the case of an emergency, including an asthma or anaphylaxis emergency (refer to related policies)
 - where a child requires medication to be administered by educators/staff, that an *Administration of Medication Record* is completed, and authorisation provided by the parent/guardian or authorised nominee and included within the child's record
 - when a child requires emergency medical treatment for conditions such as anaphylaxis or asthma compliance for authorisation is waived. In accordance with National Regulations (R. 93) the Service can administer medication in these circumstances without authorisation. If these situations occur Management will be required to contact the parent/guardian as soon as practicable after the medication has been administered and emergency services. Notification to the Regulatory Authority is required within 24 hours of a serious incident
 - educators and staff only allow a child to participate in regular outings and regular transportation with the written authorisation of a parent/guardian or authorised nominee name in the child's enrolment record
 - educators and staff allow a child to participate in excursions only with the written authorisation of a parent/guardian or authorised nominee named in the child's enrolment record is received and documented (refer to related policies)
 - educators/staff allow a child to depart the Service only with:
 - a person who is the parent/guardian or authorised nominee named in the child's enrolment record; or
 - with a person authorised by a parent or authorised nominee; or
 - leaves in accordance with the written authorisation of the parent; or authorised nominee; or
 - is taken on an excursion; or
 - in the case of a medical emergency or another emergency
 - there are procedures in place if an inappropriate person, or a person who does not appear to be fit to take care of the child attempts to collect the child from the Service or poses a risk to the safety of children or staff (*refer to related policies*)
 - notify families at least 14 days before changing the policy or procedures (Reg. 172).

EDUCATORS WILL:

- follow the policies and procedures of the Service
- ensure that written authorisation is provided by the parent/guardian or other person named in the child's enrolment record for a regular outing or regular transportation
- ensure that parents/guardians sign and date permission forms for excursions prior to the excursion being implemented

- allow a child to participate in an excursion only with the written authorisation of a parent/guardian or authorised nominee
- check that parents/guardians or an authorised nominee sign the attendance record as their child arrives and departs from the Service
- administer medication only with the written authorisation of a parent/guardian or authorised nominee as per the *Administration of Medication Record*, except in the case of an emergency, including an asthma, anaphylaxis.
- allow a child to depart from the Service only with:
 - with a person authorised by a parent or authorised nominee; or
 - leaves in accordance with the written authorisation of the parent; or authorised nominee; or
 - is taken on an excursion; or
 - in the case of a medical emergency or another emergency (*Refer to related policies*).
- follow procedures if an inappropriate person attempts to collect a child from the Service and poses a risk to the safety of the children and staff (for example, an intoxicated person)

ADMINISTRATION STAFF WILL:

- Ensure each child's enrolment record is complete.

FAMILIES WILL:

- read and comply with the policies and procedures of the Service
- complete and sign the authorised nominee section of their child's enrolment form before their child commences at the Service
- ensure that changes to nominated authorised persons are provided to the Service in a timely manner
- advise nominated authorised persons that they will require photo identification (such as a driver's licence) in order to collect their child from the Service
- sign and date permission forms for regular transportation and regular outings
- sign and date permission forms for excursions
- sign the attendance record as their child arrives and departs from the Service
- provide written authorisation on the *Administration of Medication Form* when their child requires medication to be administered by educators/staff, including signing and dating it for inclusion in the child's medication records
- provide completed Medical Management Plans and Action Plans where relevant for their child
- understand that there are circumstances where authorisations may be refused/not applicable.

AUTHORISATION REQUIREMENTS

Authorisation documents are required for the following situations and must have details recorded as specified:

<p>Administration of Medication</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name of the child <i>Administration of Medication Record</i> is signed by a parent or a person named in the child's enrolment record as authorised to consent to administration of medication Name of the medication to be administered Clearly indicate time and date the medication is to be administered Dosage of the medication to be administered Method of dosage (e.g.: oral or inhaled) Period of authorisation (actual days and dates: from and to) Date the authorisation is signed Medication must be in its original container and bearing the correct child's name Medication is not past its expiry or use-by date Medication is administered in accordance with any instructions attached to the medication or provided by a registered medical practitioner. A second person checks the signed <i>Administration of Medication Record</i>, checks the dosage of the medication, and witnesses its administration The educator administering medication and the witness must write their full name and sign the medication record Details of the administration must be recorded in the medication record
<p>Medical treatment of the child including transportation by an ambulance service (Included and authorised initially as part of the child's enrolment record)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name of the child Authorisation to seek medical treatment for the child from a registered medical practitioner, hospital or ambulance service Authorisation for the transportation of the child by an ambulance service Name, address and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner or medical service Child's Medicare number Name of the parent or guardian providing authorisation Relationship to the child

<p>Emergency Medical Treatment</p> <p>(included and authorised initially as part of the child's enrolment record or as updates during enrolment)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Service is able to seek emergency medical assistance for a child as required (i.e. medical practitioner, ambulance or hospital) without seeking further authorisation from a parent or guardian in the case of an emergency, including for emergencies relating to medical conditions noted on the enrolment form.
<p>Collection of Children</p> <p>(included and authorised initially as part of the child's enrolment record or as updated during enrolment)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name of the child Name of the parent or the guardian of the child or the authorised nominee on the enrolment form providing authorisation Name of the person/s authorised by a parent or authorised nominee named in the child's enrolment record to collect the child from the premises State relationship to the child of the persons authorised to collect the child from the premises Signature of the person providing authorisation and date of authorisation
<p>Transportation</p> <p>(as part of an excursion)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name of the child the reason the child is to be transported the date the excursion/transportation will take place a description of the proposed pick-up location and destination the means of transport the period of time during which the child is to be transported the anticipated number of children likely to be transported the anticipated number of staff members and any other adults who will accompany and supervise the children during the transportation any requirements for seatbelts or safety restraints under a law of each jurisdiction in which the children are being transported that a risk assessment has been prepared and is available at the education and care service that written policies and procedures for transporting children are available at the education and care service

Excursions	<p>The authorisation must state:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name of the child • Date of the excursion • Reason for the excursion • Proposed destination for the excursion • Method of transport to be used • Route to be taken to and from the excursion • Period of time away from premise- include time leaving premise and time returning to premise • Proposed activities to be undertaken by the child during the excursion • Anticipated number of children likely to be attending the excursion • Ratio of educators attending the excursion to the number of children attending the excursion • Number of staff members and any other adults who will accompany and supervise the children on the excursion (including parents, students, volunteers) • Statement that a risk assessment has been prepared and is available at the service • Name of the parent or guardian-providing authorisation • Relationship to the child • Signature of the person providing authorisation and date of authorisation • Details of any water hazards and risks associated with water-based activities (to be included in risk assessment). • Items that should be taken on the excursion
Regular outing	<p>A regular outing means a walk, drive or trip to and from a destination that the service visits regularly as part of its educational program and where the circumstances relevant to the risk assessment are the same on each outing. Written authorisation only needs to be given once in a specified 12-month period for a regular outing. (Reg. 102(5)). If the conditions of the regular outing change, a new authorisation is required. The written authorisation must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name of the child • a description of when the child is to be taken on the regular outings • a description of the proposed destination • method of transportation (including walking) • proposed activities to be undertaken • anticipated ratio of educators to the anticipated number of children

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> that a risk assessment has been prepared and is available at the service
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<p>Sunscreen and Insect Repellent application</p> <p>(Permission to apply sunscreen is included on enrolment form)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name of child Permission authorised for staff to apply SPF 30 or higher broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen supplied by the service or Permission authorised for staff to apply SPF 30 or higher broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen supplied by parent/guardian (for children who may have allergies) Parent signature and date Safety Data Sheet required for all products Permission authorised for staff to apply insect repellent supplied by the service or, Permission authorised for staff to apply insect repellent supplied by the parent/guardian [adjust for your own service requirements]
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<p>Confirmation of Authorisation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All authorisation forms received (including the initial enrolment form) are to be checked for completion All authorisations (excluding the initial enrolment form) are checked to ensure that the authoriser (name and signature) is the nominated parent or guardian a person named on the enrolment form as having authority to authorise If incomplete or inappropriately signed, the authorisation form should be returned to the parent or guardian for correction Children will be suspended from any activity requiring authorisation until the appropriate form has been correctly completed and signed
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ALLOCATIONS OF PLACES PROCEDURE

Policy:

The Allocation of Places Procedure falls under the Allocations, Enrolment and Orientation Policy.

Purpose:

For the equitable allocation of places at Kingston Family and Children's Centres where there are more families and children than places available.

Procedure:

Priority One: Children considered high priority

The purpose of the priority one criteria is to help families who are most in need and supporting the safety and wellbeing of children at risk. Families who believe they meet the priority one criteria are required to provide supporting documentation at the time of application.

High priority	Supporting documentation requested to verify
Children at risk of abuse or neglect, including children in Out-of-Home Care This may include where a child lives with a parent/guardian who has a diagnosed disability, is experiencing domestic violence, or other extenuating circumstances.	Referral from; Child Protection, Child and family services, Maternal and Child Health nurse or Out-of-Home Care provider
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children	Families are encouraged to share information with the service about any agencies they have engaged with so the service can establish a partnership and best support the family and child
Asylum seeker and refugee children	An appropriate visa identifies the child and/or parents as a refugee or asylum seeker
A child or parent holds a Commonwealth Health Care Card, Pensioner Concession Card, Veteran's Affairs Card	A copy of a current card to be provided to the service to support application
Multiple birth children triplets or quadruplets	Birth certificate
Children with additional needs, defined as children who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Require additional assistance in order to fully participate in the program - Require a combination of services which are individually planned - Have an identified specific disability or developmental delay 	<p>The child has been assessed as having delays in two or more areas and is declared eligible for a second year of kindergarten</p> <p>Holds a Child Disability Health Care Card</p> <p>Has previously been approved for Kindergarten Inclusion Support Package</p> <p>Referral from; the National Disability Insurance Scheme, Early Childhood Intervention Service, Preschool Field Offer, Maternal and Child Health nurse or Paediatrician</p>

Priority Two:

- Families currently utilising Kingston's Education and Care or Kindergarten Services

Priority Three:

- Children who are Kingston residents

Priority Four:

- Non-Kingston resident, who works or studies in Kingston

Priority Five:

- All other children

Waitlist Applications

- Waitlist applications can be made via our software provider, Xap, by visiting the City of Kingston website
- Upon completion of your first application, you will receive log in details to your 'Xap Guardian Portal'
- Additional applications can be made for existing or new siblings by logging into your 'Xap Guardian Portal'
- Families are solely responsible for managing their waitlist applications and should take care to ensure all fields, including priority of access, are complete at the time of submission and to respond to any correspondence made by Kingston's Family and Children's Centres about the waitlist application
- Education and Care Waitlist applications can be made after your child is born. Where an application is submitted prior, the application submission date will be amended to the child's date of birth.
- Where waitlist applications have the same priority score, offers will be made by application date
- Waitlist applications with the same priority score and application date will be balloted
- When families cease care and have no future bookings confirmed, consideration as priority two on the waitlist is forfeited
- In the instance where incorrect information is supplied by the parent/guardians on the waitlist application, applications may be re-classified against the criteria and or offers may be retracted prior to child commencing

Extended Day Kindergarten

Children are only eligible for two years of funded kindergarten. Families must apply for their child to attend each year of funded kindergarten. The attendance in the funded kindergarten program commences when the service re-opens for the new calendar year in January (for existing children) or

as per orientation plan for new children to the service. The kindergarten booking period will cease at the end of the calendar year (December). We do not offer January care for children going to school.

In addition to the above criteria, the following children will be prioritised when offering Extended Day Kindergarten places:

- Who enrol for a minimum of two days and
- Nominate this program as their funded three- or four-year-old kindergarten year
- Who apply within the kindergarten enrolment period, in the year before their child will commence.

Applications received after the cut off in the year before the child is due to commence, and where vacancies remain, offers will be made by application date.

- As per State Government funding requirements priority in the kindergarten environment must be given to children accessing funded program. Where vacancies remain in the kindergarten environment once the kindergarten term has commenced, children who are attending our education and care (long day care) program may have their booking moved into the kindergarten program at the discretion of the Senior Coordinator.
- Children's age, development and individual needs will be taken into consideration when moving bookings into the kindergarten environment.
- It is important to note, where an education and care (long day care) booking has been moved into the kindergarten environment, this does not rollover into the following year. Children will only be able to access the kindergarten environment once all funded places have been exhausted.

Delaying Commencement of a Funded Extended Day Kindergarten Place

To delay commencement of a funded three-year-old extended day kindergarten place, the parent/guardian must notify the service in writing. This can be done at the time of receiving an offer or within four weeks of term one commencing. In the instance there is a delay in the commencement, the place will be transferred to the following years allocations.

Children who don't attend three-year-old kindergarten and defer their funded four-year-old kindergarten year, will have the place transferred to the following years allocations.

Kindergarten Funding Agreement

Where a family accepts a funded place at City of Kingston Family and Children's Centre's, the service:

- Will lodge the child's enrolment on the Kindergarten Information Management System.
- Receive funding for the child to participate in the program

In the event a family accepts a funded place at two services:

- The service who lodges the enrolment on the Kindergarten Information Management System will receive the funding for the child.

- If the family chooses to accept the funded kindergarten offer for another service, the kindergarten offer made by City of Kingston Family and Children's Centre's will be deemed void and the child's place will be offered to the next family on the waitlist. In this case, where the family requires Education and Care, the family is encouraged to join the waitlist for their child to attend the Education and Care program.

Notification of Offer

- Families will be notified via email when an offer is made
- Families must accept or decline the offer via their Xap guardian portal and complete any requests for additional documentation within 48 hours
- Offers automatically expire after 48 hours
- Where an offer expires, the place will be offered to the next family on the waitlist

Accepting an Offer

- At the time of accepting an offer, the parent/guardian will be prompted to pay a bond
- Where a child or parents holds a Commonwealth Health Care Card, Pensioner Concession Card, Veteran's Affairs Card, or where the bond poses a barrier to enrolment, the bond will be waived

Declining an Offer

- Families may wish to decline an offer and remain on the waitlist. This option must be selected when declining the offer via the Xap guardian portal. Where a family does not select this option, the waitlist application will be archived
- Should a family wish to join the waitlist again, a new application must be submitted. Prior applications will not be considered
- Families can decline up to three offers made. Where the third offer is declined, the waitlist application will be archived
- Waitlist applications will no longer be considered when a family does not action an offer made, and there is no response to communication attempts made by the centre.

Ballot System

- Waitlist applications with the same priority score and application date will be balloted.
- Allocations will be selected through a Ballot System whereby children with the same priority score and application date will be included in a recorded, manual ballot to be drawn. The ballot is to be conducted in the presence of a minimum of two City of Kingston staff members, at least one of which will be a member of the leadership team.