



The Meeting House Inc

47 Burns Bay Rd Lane Cove NSW 2066
Phone : (02) 9008 5549
Email: admin@meetinghouse.org.au

Enrolment and Orientation

Issue Date: 3 July 2015

Updated: 18 Feb 2019

Aim: To ensure that all available places at the preschool are allocated to families in an equitable and reasonable manner. To support families by offering places to siblings of children who have or still attend the preschool. To enable the preschool to gain valuable information from families who terminate their enrolment. This information assists the preschool in its planning to meet the needs of families in the future. Enrolments are the responsibility of the Preschool Director together with the Preschool's Administration Officer.

Relevant Legislation: Family Assistance Act 1999. Children (Education and Care Services National Law), 2010. Education and Care Services National Regulations.

Resources: Child Care Service Handbook (DEEWR), Community Services, Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.

Practices: When a vacancy exists the following practices will apply:-

1. Children already attending the preschool on another day will have priority of placement over potential new enrolments.
2. Children on the waitlist will be offered a place according to their age: older children having priority.
3. Should there be two children of the same age on the waitlist and only one place available the child who has been on the waitlist the longest will have priority.
4. Siblings of children currently enrolled or of children who have attended the preschool will have priority over other families on the waiting list. However the preschool does not guarantee a place for a sibling and therefore recommends that families be aware of alternative options in the local area.
5. The preschool is aware of the Federal Government Priority of Access Guidelines and seeks to be inclusive.

Enrolment Procedures

When a place becomes available at the Preschool.

The Preschool:-

- Will contact the next family on the waitlist by email or verbally by phone to offer the place.
- If the family declines the next family on the waitlist will be contacted.
- When a family accepts the place by email or verbally the preschool will send an offer letter. Once the offer letter has been signed and returned by the family and the preschool has received the required \$200 non-refundable enrolment fee the preschool will forward the relevant enrolment forms or the family can download them from the website.

As part of the enrolment process parents are asked to:-

- Complete and return the Enrolment Form prior to the child's commencement date.
- Complete and return the signed confirmation that they have read and accepted the Preschool Policy excerpts provided. Parents are free to read the whole policy document at the preschool at any time.
- Provide a copy of their child's birth certificate. The preschool must also sight the original document.
- Provide proof of their child's immunisation status or supporting documentation of an approved exemption in the case of a non-immunised child.
- Provide a copy of documentation providing proof of their own identity i.e. drivers licence, passport etc.
- Provide a signed copy of permission forms for Appessment, Paracetamol and emergency treatment.
- Where a child enrolling at the preschool has an allergy or health issue parents must provide the Preschool with a letter from their GP outlining a treatment plan. It is the responsibility of the Preschool Director/Nominated Supervisor to ensure that other staff are made aware of the child's health issues and know what to do should a situation arise.
- Allow sufficient time on the child's first day to settle the child into the Preschool. Parents of young children may be asked to pick up their child early if there is a settling issue.

Orientation and Preschool Show Throughs.

When a child is enrolled at the end of a year for the following year:-

Parents will receive a letter from the preschool advising them of the date and time of the Preschool's Orientation Day which may be staggered. Parents and their child/ren are encouraged to attend on this day to meet the staff, to familiarise themselves with preschool procedures and policies/routines and ask any questions.

If parents are unable to attend on the day assigned, they have the option to make an appointment at a mutually convenient time with the Preschool Director or Administration Officer. Parents will be asked to bring their child to this appointment in order to familiarise them with the centre and the staff.

When a child is enrolled through the year:-

Parents are encouraged to view the preschool with their child at a time when either the Administration Officer or the Preschool Director can show them through the centre.

Orientation

Orientation is a vital component to settling children into the preschool. For many children commencing at the centre may be their first experience of being separated from a parent. Most children will experience some anxiety leaving their parents and it is therefore essential that staff/educators and parents work together to establish a successful orientation process for each child. Children who have experienced child care before may still require a lot of support when they start at a new service.

Parents are encouraged to help their child to settle into the preschool by attending the Orientation morning and/or organising a visit prior to the child's first day of being left at the centre. The duration of this visit may only be for up to a half hour but it will still assist the child to become familiar with the preschool environment and its staff/educators. Parents are required to remain at the service with their child during these visits.

During the orientation morning the child and parents will be introduced to the staff who will be working with the child. Staff will talk to parents about their values and expectations in relations to their child's learning, as well as encouraging parents to share their child's strengths, interests, abilities and needs (interests to be incorporated within the program).

Once the child's enrolment has commenced we may ask parents to collect their child earlier than the usual departure time for the first few days to assist the child to settle. Staff/educators understand a full day can be very distressing and awfully long for a little person who is experiencing separation anxiety. Staff/educators will always phone a parent if there is any separation issue to discuss ways to assist the child to settle.

Staff will make known strategies that may assist parents i.e. encouraging them to:-

- Be confident yourself, if you are anxious this will negatively influence the way your child feels.
- Ensure your child has a security object, such as a teddy, blanket or something that belongs to you/them from home.
- Always tell your child when you are going and when you will be back. It is best to first warn the child and staff/educators you will be leaving soon. Then when it is time, tell the child you will be back to collect them later in the day, say a quick goodbye and leave the preschool promptly. Staff will support your child to join the program.
- Parents may phone the centre at any time if they are anxious about the progress of their child.
- Parents will be given information about how their child is settling when they arrive to collect him/her at the end of the day or earlier if requested to do so.

Required notification Periods for withdrawing/reducing days of enrolment.

Parents are asked as a matter of courtesy to provide the preschool with written notice of 4 weeks in term time, of their intent to withdraw their child or reduce their child's enrolment. Fees already paid will not be refunded unless there are extenuating circumstances. The decision will be the responsibility of the Senior Co-ordinator in conjunction with The Meeting House Inc. Committee.

Individual needs of children

All children attending the preschool have individual needs.

The enrolment process is designed to identify and address these needs prior to the child's first day to ensure that the staff/educators are able to effectively settle children in at the preschool.

Individual needs may include:-

1. Special dietary considerations
2. Allergies
3. Medication requirements
4. Learning difficulties
5. Physical/emotional/intellectual difficulties
6. Nurturing requirements, such as settling techniques
7. Non English Speaking strategies
8. Any other concern the family identifies.
9. Permission to administer paracetamol
10. Permission to seek urgent, medical, dental or hospital treatment.
11. Appessment

Parents are asked to identify any of these individual needs on the Enrolment Form.

If the child is receiving assistance from other organisations, such as speech therapy, then permission will be sought to contact that service to discuss the child's progress, current program and any specific strategies that the service may need to follow. This will assist the staff/educator to begin programming for the child at the appropriate level.

The preschool will aim to work with other agencies to ensure that the individual child's needs are being met and maintained.

Where a child has support needs:

Families must understand that the preschool has a limited number of staff, funding and resources. Whilst the preschool adheres to an inclusion policy it will be at the discretion of the Preschool Director together with the Senior Co-ordinator as to whether a child will be offered a place based on the needs of the child/family and whether the preschool can safely meet these needs. Other Special Needs agencies will be contacted to assist where possible in the inclusion of children with support needs.

Re-enrolment in the service for the following year.

A re-enrolment process will occur during the last quarter of each year for the following year:-

- Parents will be asked to specify whether their child will continue at the preschool the following year or whether they will be leaving to attend another centre or Primary School.
- Places will be allocated to children already attending the preschool but once a parent has given an indication that their child will be leaving there is no guarantee of a place should they change their mind as the preschool may already have contacted other families on the waitlist to offer places for the following year.
- Once a parent has confirmed acceptance for a spot, a holding deposit \$240 will be charged to secure the spot. This will be deducted from the child's first term invoice but is non-refundable should the child not return.

Once the Preschool Director and Administration Officer are aware of the number of current children intending to stay for the following year they will allocate the correct number of places and then offer the remaining to families on the waitlist in the order of priority as specified earlier.

Federal Government Priority of Access Guidelines.

Where the demand for childcare exceeds available places, a Federally Funded service is required to apply the following three levels of priority when allocating vacancies from the waiting list.

1. A child at risk of serious abuse or neglect;
2. A child of a single parent who satisfies, or of parents who both satisfy, the work/training/study tests under section 14 of A New Tax system (Family Assistance) Act 1999.
3. Any other child.

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

- Children in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families;
- Children in families which include a disabled person;
- Children in families which include an individual whose taxable income does not exceed the lower income threshold or who or whose partner are on income support
- Children in families with a non-English speaking background;
- Children in socially isolated families;
- Children of single parents.

The service may require evidence to support a family's claim to a priority under any of the above categories.

A change in employment may warrant a reassessment of the time in care provided to a family. However any decrease in care resulting from such a change should allow for a suitable period of transition, and not preclude a parent's opportunity to seek other employment.



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Meeting House Kindergarten exit form

Child's Name:	Date of advice:
I wish to TERMINATE my child's days of attendance to take effect as from the following date: _____	I wish to REDUCE my child's days of attendance to take effect as from the following date: _____ New enrolment details will start on: _____ For the following days: Mon Tues Wed Thurs Fri
For reporting requirements we would appreciate you completing the following: Reason for terminating your enrolment or reducing your days of enrolment (please circle)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cost of preschool <input type="checkbox"/>• No longer working <input type="checkbox"/>• Change of employment / study status <input type="checkbox"/>• No longer living in the area <input type="checkbox"/>• No longer working in the area <input type="checkbox"/>• Maternity leave <input type="checkbox"/>• Transfer to another service (Please specify) -----• Unhappy with this preschool (Please comment) <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Commencing Primary School (Please specify)-----• Other /Additional Comments <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Parents Signature : _____• Date: _____	