

## Enrolment and Orientation Policy

### RATIONALE

A family's decision to place their child/ren in care is often an emotional time for both the parents/guardian and child. KAZ Early Learning Centre aims to ensure that this transition from home to the children's service is smooth and supportive of the child and their family's needs.

### AIMS

To provide quality care to families within the community according to the *Australian Government Priority of Access Guidelines*, whilst ensuring the Service does not exceed the number of children specified in the license for the centre.

To ensure all required information about the child is given to the Service.

To ensure information and relevant policies and procedures about KAZ Early Learning Centre are made available and communicated to families.

To provide the child and their family with an orientation to the service to ensure the enrolment of the child is smooth and supportive to their needs

To clarify the processes to be followed by educators and families with regard to the enrolment and orientation of children.

### PROCEDURE

#### Waiting List Application

Parents/ guardians wishing to apply for a position for their child/children to attend KAZ Early Learning Centre are required to contact the Service and complete a *Waiting List Application Form*. Completed *Waiting List Application Forms* are to be returned to the Service. Once parents/ guardians have returned the completed form their child will be entered on the Waiting List. It is assumed that placement on the Waiting List means that both residential parents/guardians are in agreement regarding the childcare arrangements.

Parents/ guardians are encouraged to visit the centre with their child prior to placing their child on the Waiting List, to meet with the Manager and educators to decide if the Service offers the program and environment that they want for their child.

Vacancies at the Centre will be filled from the Waiting List following the *Australian Government Priority of Access Guidelines*. KAZ Early Learning Centre reserves the right to close the Service's waiting list at any time, due to high numbers of children requiring positions.

Information provided on the *Waiting List Application Form* will be treated in the strictest confidence and is only used for allocating a place on the waiting list for the Service.

Parent/ guardians are required to provide the Service with relevant up to date information about the child, days required, parent/guardian details, priority of access details and any additional needs the child may have. Any parent/ guardian who fails to inform the Service of any changes to these details may forfeit the child's place on the Waiting List.

Inclusion on the Waiting List does not guarantee a place at the Service. The Service will notify parents/ guardians when a place has become available for their child and once accepted by the parent/ guardian, the enrolment process will begin.

Parents/Guardians willing to take the days available will be offered positions as soon as practicable. Parents/guardians wishing to commence with only particular days or only a full five (5) day placement, may have to wait until such time as such a vacancy occurs.

When additional days become available, these will be firstly offered to children who already attend the Service then to children on the Waiting List, according to Priority of Access Guidelines.

### **Priority of Access**

KAZ Early Learning Centre complies with the **Australian Government Priority of Access Guidelines**. This is a requirement under the Child Care Benefit scheme.

The Guidelines are as follows:

- **Priority 1**- a child at risk of serious abuse or neglect
- **Priority 2**- a child of a parent (or both parents if you have a partner) who satisfies the Government's work, training, study test (for the purposes of the priority of access guidelines)\*.
- **Priority 3**- any other child.

Within these main categories priority should also be given to:

- Children in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families
- Children in families which include a disabled person
- Children in families which include an individual whose adjusted taxable income does not exceed the lower income threshold of \$42,997 for 2014-2015, or who or whose partner are on income support
- Children in families from a non-English speaking background
- Children in socially isolated families
- Children of single parents
- **\*Note:** To satisfy the work, training, study test for the purposes of the priority of access guidelines, both you and your partner (if you have one) must have work, training or study-related activities at some time during the week or have an exemption. No minimum number of hours is required. More information is available in Fact Sheet 7—*What is the work, training, study test?*

There are some circumstances in which a child of Priority 3 status who is already in a Service may be required to leave the Service in order to provide a place for a higher priority child, but only if you:

- Are notified when your child first entered care that your service follows this policy.
- Are given at least 14 days notice of the need for your child to vacate.

(Department of Education and Training: Information for Families Using Child Care - fact sheet 16)

### **Enrolment**

KAZ Early Learning Centre's Nominated Supervisor will contact parents/guardians by telephone or in writing to offer a position at the Service. The parents/guardians will be asked to make a time to visit the Service with their child.

Families will be given an *Enrolment Form*, *Enrolment Agreement* and *Family Handbook* which includes a written copy of the Service philosophy and highlights important policies and procedures. The complete Policy and Procedures Manual is available for parents/guardians to access at the Service.

The Manager or delegated staff member will ensure parents/guardians understand and sign the Enrolment Agreement and clarify concerns. The Enrolment Agreement MUST be completed and signed off by the Manager or delegated staff member prior to the child starting care.

Families will provide the following, prior to the agreed start date for the child:

- A completed enrolment form including authorisations;
- A bond payment as outlined in service fee policy;
- Current Immunisation status;
- Birth Certificate, Passport or other identification;
- Current contact information for parents and emergency contacts;
- Information on children's additional needs (including medical conditions, health and developmental concerns).

This information will be kept at the service premises in accordance with service policies and the Education and Care Services National Regulations.

If at any time during the child's time in care, there are changes to the information given at enrolment, it is the parent's/guardians responsibility to inform the Service of the changes, in writing, immediately. The Service will periodically request updates of the child's information, in regard to such things as emergency contact persons and phone numbers, agreed times of attendance, personal details (address, telephone numbers, and parent's/guardians employment details) and re-enrolment requirements for the following year, if applicable.

Should Court Orders relating to the child be put in place or change after the initial enrolment parents/ guardians will be required to notify the Service, supply copies and complete an updated *Enrolment Form*. If Custody or Access Orders from the courts are not supplied to the Service we cannot refuse a parent access to their child if they can prove that they are the parent.

If one parent/guardian signs the *Enrolment Agreement* it is understood that the parent/guardian is signing on behalf of the other custodial parent/guardian where applicable.

Should a child speak English as a second language, we request that families provide us with some key words in the language the child speaks at this time so Educators/Staff can assist in meeting the child's needs.

Families also need to contact the Family Assistance Office (Centrelink) to have their eligibility for Child Care Benefit assessed. If these details are available, we will complete the child's formal

enrolment. Should a family still need to access this information, we will complete an informal enrolment until these details are finalised.

Prior to the child's first day educators and staff will familiarise themselves with information about the child from the enrolment information provided. They will ensure they are aware of any medical conditions and how to manage them if required.

The Nominated Supervisor will inform the educators and staff of the intended time for any pre-commencement orientation visits.

### **Deposit/ Enrolment Fee**

Refer to centre *Fees* Policy.

### **Orientation**

Families are welcome to visit the service with their child prior to enrolment.

During orientation a tour of the service will be given with ample opportunity for the family to meet educators/staff, ask questions and clarify any concerns they may have. At this time the Director will discuss the following:

- Centre Access - arrival and departure including the Sign In /Out procedures,
- Payment of Fees
- What to bring e.g. clothing and where to place children's items such as bag, hat, drink bottle
- Family Library
- Policies and Procedures Manual
- Where the nappy/toileting chart and daily routine documents are located
- Menu and dietary requirements
- Medical Conditions
- The Daily Routine
- The Daybook and the Educational Program
- Communication Books
- Child's development and interests
- Educators/Staff- i.e. responsible persons on duty

A Family Information Booklet is given to all new families, which contains the following information:

- Centre Operation
- Management
- Staffing
- Policy and Procedures Manual
- Centre Philosophy
- What to do when your child begins care
- Hours of attendance
- Attendance register
- Arrival & Departure
- Access

- Authorised persons
- Court orders
- Collection of children
- Children's belongings
- Routine procedures
- Reducing/increasing days of attendance
- What to bring each day
- Sun safe requirements
- Education Program and Policy
- Daily Timetable
- Guidance of Child Behaviour
- Children's Records
- Child Protection
- Inclusion, Anti-bias & Diversity
- Children with Additional Needs
- Payment of Fees
- Health & Safety policies & procedures
- Infectious Diseases
- Food and Nutrition
- Communication and Complaints
- Family Library
- Waiting Lists
- Legal Matters

All children enrolling in the service are invited to attend the service for 1-2 mornings (9am to 12.30) prior to commencing at the service, to become familiar with the educators, the program, the children and the morning routine. The orientation process however is not limited to one or two days, families are welcome to visit at anytime, as we have an open door policy. Discussions are held between office staff and families regarding availability of days, a start date and tailoring an orientation process to suit the needs of the family and child.

### **Upon commencement**

On the child's first day of attendance educators and staff will welcome the family and the child, ensuring that there is a space ready for the child's belongings. Educators will reassure the family and assist with separation if required. Throughout the day, educators will contact the family to let them know how their child is settling. The Nominated Supervisor will undertake a final check of enrolment details, authorisations and information updates prior to the family departing the service.

### **Withdrawal of a child**

Withdrawal of a child requires two weeks written notice (that being 10 operational days inclusive of the day notice is given), from parents/guardians. Refer to *Fees Policy*.

### **Termination of Care**

KAZ Early Learning Centre's Management has the right to choose not to enrol or to terminate care of a child if it is felt that there is a risk of harm to this child, other children in care or to staff. Termination would not take place until all avenues of intervention have been exhausted.

**The Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor will ensure that this policy is maintained and implemented at all times.**

#### **KAZ Early Learning Centre Related Policies and Procedures:**

Payment of Fees Policy

#### **Appendices:**

Waiting List Application Form

Enrolment Agreement

#### **Sources:**

**Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010**

**Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011**

**Guide to National Quality Standards 2011**

**Department of Education and Training: Information for Families Using Child Care - fact sheet 16**

[http://docs.education.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/education\\_fact\\_sheet\\_16\\_final\\_-\\_will\\_my\\_child\\_be\\_given\\_priority\\_for\\_child\\_care\\_services\\_0.pdf](http://docs.education.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/education_fact_sheet_16_final_-_will_my_child_be_given_priority_for_child_care_services_0.pdf)

#### **REVIEW**

The policy will be reviewed annually. Review will be conducted by management, employees, parents/guardians and any interested parties.