

# ENROLMENT AND ORIENTATION POLICY

Mandatory - Quality area 6



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## COLLEGE IDENTITY

- Plenty Valley Christian College (the college) is an independent, co-educational, Kindergarten – Year 12 *College located in a magnificent semi-rural setting.*
- The college is a member of Christian Education National Ltd, a national partnership of Christian school associations whose core values may be summarised:
  - The central positioning of Christian scripture, Christian thinking and a vibrant demonstration of Christian faith in school communities.
  - Christian parents having a determinative and ongoing involvement in setting the educational direction of a school.
  - School partnership in a national community of accountability and support.
  - Sharing the vision of Christian education in the wider community.
  - Education of children for competent and responsible membership of the international community.
  - Training teachers to understand and to teach from a Christian perspective.
- Therefore, at an operational level, the college seeks to employ the principles, practices and values of a Christian theology and tradition to underpin and develop all relationships and learning.
- Joining the college community means one is expected to actively participate in learning through curricular and co-curricular activities that involve a Christian understanding of the world. Parents and students should expect to commit themselves to this identity and purpose of the college and participate in ways that make the place better for others.

## General

- Applicants are expected to support the ethos, identity and purpose, and policies of the college and Plenty Kids Early Learning Centre.
- The college will exercise its discretion in determining whether to make an offer of enrolment and enrolment decisions shall be based on a range of information and factors and determined on a case-by-case basis. Each case shall be judged on its merits, taking individual circumstances, finances and practical implications into account as well as:
  - the physical numbers of currently enrolled students
  - the resources available to cater for the educational needs of students
  - the willingness of the student and the student's family (where applicable) to comply with the college and Plenty Kids Early Learning Centre's policies and procedures.
- An enrolment offer may be withdrawn, regardless of the availability of places, in situations where:
  - relevant information is withheld, or information provided is found to be inaccurate; or
  - there is a significant change in the circumstances of a family and/or student which cannot be reasonably accommodated by the college. In these circumstances, all due consultation will take place with the family involved.
- The college will not unlawfully discriminate against any person in considering whether to make an offer of enrolment.

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## PURPOSE

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

- enrolling a child at Plenty Kids Early Learning Centre
- the orientation of new families and children into Plenty Kids Early Learning Centre
- ensuring compliance with Victorian and national legislation, including No Jab No Play and Department of Education (DE) Kindergarten Funding Guide
- ensuring access to participation, especially for vulnerable and disadvantaged children
- ensuring early entry participants (this includes children younger than three years and children younger than four years old on 30 April in the year they will attend kindergarten ) are given equitable access to enrolment
- adhering to the DE's priority of access requirements for both three and four-year-old children.

## POLICY STATEMENT

### Values

Plenty Kids Early Learning Centre is committed to:

- families feeling respected, safe and supported during the enrolment process
- ensuring families who may experience barriers to accessing kindergarten are proactively engaged
- being flexible and catering for unique family circumstances and needs
- being transparent in the process and allocation of places through consistent communication and information sharing
- ensuring the registration, allocation and enrolment process is simple to understand, follow and implement
- maintaining confidentiality in relation to all information provided for enrolment
- promoting fair and equitable access to kindergarten programs, including those who face barriers to participation
- enrolling Early Start Kindergarten (*refer to Definitions*) eligible children into the full 15 hours of a kindergarten program.

### Scope

This policy applies to the approved provider, persons with management or control, nominated supervisor, person in day-to-day charge, early childhood teachers, educators, staff, students, volunteers, parents/guardians, children and others attending the programs and activities at Plenty Kids Early Learning Centre, including during offsite excursions and activities.

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RESPONSIBILITIES	Approved provider and persons with management or	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Early childhood teacher, educators and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Contractors, volunteers and students
R indicates legislation requirement, and should not be deleted					
Providing a funded kindergarten program to children who turn four years of age by 30 April in the year they will attending, that is delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher, and offering at least 15 hours per week for 40 weeks of the year, or 600 hours per year	R				
Providing a funded kindergarten program to children who turn three years of age by 30 April in the year they will attending, that is delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher and offering between 5 to 15 hours a week or 200 to 600 a year	R				
Communicating to families the days and times the service will operate, planned closures (including public holidays and child-free days), details of any planned alternative sessions, and unplanned teacher absences or emergency situations	R				
Applying the Priority of Access criteria to funded programs at Plenty Kids Early Learning Centre, as described in the Department of Education's [DE] <i>The Kindergarten Funding Guide (refer to Attachment 1)</i>	R	√	√		
Communicating and providing advice to families regarding the best time to commence kindergarten for children born between January and April	√	√	√		
Supporting inclusion and access through specific funding stream (for eligible families): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kindergarten Fee Subsidy <i>(refer to Definitions)</i></li> <li>• Early Start Kindergarten <i>(refer to Definitions)</i></li> <li>• Early Start Kindergarten extension grants <i>(refer to Definitions)</i></li> <li>• Access to Early Learning <i>(refer to Definitions)</i></li> <li>• Second year of funded four-year-old kindergarten <i>(refer to Definitions)</i></li> </ul>	R	√	√		
Supporting families whose children may be eligible for early entry to kindergarten or late entry to kindergarten and school exemption <i>(refer to Attachment 2)</i>	√	√	√		
Providing communication to families explaining how they can only access one funded kindergarten program per child, per year	R	√			
Receiving written confirmation from families confirming they are attending one funded kindergarten program per child, per year	R	√		√	

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Considering any barriers to access that may exist, developing procedures that ensure all eligible families are aware of, and are able to access a kindergarten program	R	√	√		
Working with the child's family or carer to obtain an alternate form of identification if a birth certificate or other official documentation is not available	R	√			
Complying with the <i>Inclusion and Equity Policy</i>	R	R	√	√	√
Ensuring the collection of accurate, consistent and timely kindergarten data, to monitor and proactively manage capacity, utilisation of services and to meet School Readiness Funding requirements	R	R			
Ensuring families have access to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Parent Handbook</i></li> <li>• <i>Child Safe Environment and Wellbeing Policy</i></li> <li>• <i>Fees Policy</i></li> <li>• <i>Privacy and Confidentiality Policy</i></li> <li>• <i>Code of Conduct Policy</i></li> <li>• <i>Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisation Policy</i></li> <li>• <i>Dealing With Medical Conditions Policy</i></li> <li>• <i>Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy</i></li> <li>• <i>Delivery and Collection of Children Policy</i></li> </ul>	R	√	√		
Appointing a person to be responsible for the enrolment process and the day-to-day implementation of this policy ( <i>refer to Attachment 2 and 3</i> )	R				
Responding to enrolment enquiries on a day-to-day basis and referring people to the person responsible for the enrolment process as required	√	√	√		
Where applicable, considering access and inclusion for vulnerable children in the allocation of places at the service ( <i>refer to Attachment 1 and 2</i> )	R	√			
Where applicable, providing families with consistent and transparent communication on waitlist management processes ( <i>refer to Attachment 2</i> )	R	√			
Complying with the service's <i>Privacy and Confidentiality Policy</i> in relation to the collection and management of a child's enrolment information	R	R	R	√	√
Seeking information from parents about any specific health care need, allergy or medical condition, including whether a medical practitioner has been consulted in relation to a specific health care need, allergy or relevant medical condition	R	√	√	√	
Ensuring that medical management plan has been provided and that the risk minimisation plan has been developed and both documents are kept in the child's enrolment records	R	√	√	√	
Providing any required authorisations, such as for the approved provider, nominated supervisor or an educator to seek medical treatment for the child from a registered medical practitioner, hospital or ambulance service and, if required, transportation by an ambulance service				√	
Assessing the child's immunisation documentation as defined by the Immunisation Enrolment Toolkit ( <i>refer to Sources</i> ) for early childhood	R	√	√		

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education and care services prior to enrolment to determine if the child's vaccination status complies with requirements or whether the child is eligible for the 16-week grace period ( <i>refer to Definitions</i> )					
Ensuring that only children whose AIR Immunisation History Statements ( <i>refer to Definitions</i> ) have been assessed as being acceptable or who are eligible for the grace period ( <i>refer to Definitions</i> ) have confirmed places in the program	R	√	√		
Advising parents/guardians who do not have an AIR Immunisation History Statement ( <i>refer to Definitions</i> ) and who are not eligible for the grace period that their children are not able to attend the service and referring them to immunisation services ( <i>refer to Attachment 4</i> )	R	√	√		
Taking reasonable steps to obtain an up to date AIR Immunisation History Statement ( <i>refer to Definitions</i> ) from a parent/guardian of a child enrolled under a grace period within 16 weeks from when the child begins attending ( <b>Note:</b> the child can continue to attend the service if acceptable immunisation documentation is not obtained).	R	√	√		
Completing the enrolment record prior to their child's commencement at the service and providing AIR Immunisation History Statement ( <i>refer to Definitions</i> ) of their child's immunisation status				√	
Where a child is eligible for the 16 weeks grace period, ensuring that the child's immunisations are updated in line with the schedule and providing an up to date AIR Immunisation History Statement ( <i>refer to Definitions</i> ) to the service				√	
Taking reasonable steps to obtain an up to date AIR Immunisation History Statement ( <i>refer to Definitions</i> ) from all parents/guardians after enrolment, timing reminders to comply with the maximum seven-month interval ( <i>Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2019 107, Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 Section 143E</i> )	R	√	√		
Ensuring all authorised nominees ( <i>refer to Definitions</i> ) have been completed on the enrolment record ( <i>refer to Definitions</i> ) ( <i>Regulations 160 and 161</i> ) as well as authorisations from parents relating to medical treatment, regular outings, health information and transportation	R	√		√	
Ensuring that the enrolment record ( <i>refer to Definitions</i> ) both digital and/or hard copy complies with the requirements of <i>Regulations 160, 161, 162</i> and that it effectively meets the management requirements of the service	R	√	√		
Ensuring that enrolment record ( <i>refer to Definitions</i> ) is kept up to date if family circumstances change, and that services are made aware if they become eligible for additional funding as a result of changed circumstances (e.g. if a child acquires a Health Care Card the child becomes available for Kindergarten Fee Subsidy; if the child or family becomes known to Child Protection, the child becomes eligible for Early Start Kindergarten and Early Start Kindergarten Extension grant).	R	√	√	√	√

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Ensuring that enrolment records ( <i>refer to Definitions</i> ) are kept confidential ( <i>Regulations 181, 182</i> ) are stored in a safe and secure place, and kept for three years after the last date on which the child was educated and cared for by the service ( <i>Regulation 183 (1a) (2d)</i> )	R	√	√		
Discussing the individual child's needs with parents/guardians and developing an orientation program to assist them to settle into the service. The service should take into consideration barriers parents/guardians may have in disclosing sensitive information including communication and information barriers and the development of trusting relationships.	R	√	√		
Reviewing the orientation processes for new families and children to ensure the objectives of this policy are met	R	√	√	√	
Ensuring that parents/guardians of a child attending the service can enter the service premises at any time whilst the child is being educated and cared for ( <i>Regulation 157</i> ), except where this may pose a risk to the safety of children or staff, or conflict with any duty of the approved provider, nominated supervisor, early childhood teachers or educators under the <i>National Law: Section 167</i>	R	R	√	√	√
Taking reasonable steps to contact non-attending families prior to the cancellation of their enrolment ( <i>refer to Attachment 5</i> )	√	√	√		
Reviewing enrolment applications to identify children with additional needs ( <i>refer to Definitions</i> and the <i>Inclusion and Equity Policy</i> )	√	√	√		
Encouraging parents/guardians to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>stay with their child as long as required during the settling in period</li> <li>make contact with educators at the service, when required</li> </ul>	√	√	√	√	
Assisting parents/guardians to develop and maintain a routine for saying goodbye to their child	√	√	√	√	
Sharing information with parents/guardians concerning their child's progress with regard to settling into the service	√	√	√	√	
Discussing support services for children with parents/guardians, where required such as Pre School Field Officer (PSFO), Early Intervention Programs, and Maternal Health Services	√	√	√	√	
Developing strategies to assist new families to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>feel welcomed into the service become familiar with service policies and procedures</li> <li>share information about their family beliefs, values and culture and feel culturally safe</li> <li>share their understanding of their child's strengths, interests, abilities and needs</li> <li>value the voice of the child, ensuring they have opportunity to articulate their individual interests and needs</li> <li>discuss the values and expectations they hold in relation to their child's learning</li> <li>providing comfort and reassurance to children who are showing signs of distress when separating</li> </ul>	√	√	√	√	



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Reading and complying with this <i>Enrolment and Orientation Policy</i>	R	R	R	√	√
Updating information by notifying the service of any changes as they occur, for example obtaining or the cancellation of a Health Care Card; if the child or family becomes known to Child Protection				√	
Notifying Plenty Kids Early Learning Centre in writing if they wish to cancel their enrolment.				√	

## PROCEDURES

### General Orientation Procedures

The time required for orientation and settling in will vary for each child and their family, therefore it is important to be flexible and individualise orientation for each family.

- Offer families the opportunity to visit the service at different times during the day/session, this allows the child and their family to become familiar with the various routines of the service
- Provide reassurance to the family that they may stay with their child for as long as they choose during orientation and once the child commences
- Provide the family with suggestions for developing and maintaining a routine for saying goodbye to their child
- Reassure the family:
  - they can leave their child initially for a shorter day, gradually increasing the length of time
  - they may call and speak to their child's early childhood teacher or educator(s) at an agreed time
  - the early childhood teacher/educators will keep them informed on how their child is settling in
  - they will be informed about any changes or circumstances which may affect them or their child.
- Further considerations may include but are not limited to:
  - send an email during the day to update the family on their child including a photo of the child (if the child has settled in) (*refer to the information and Communication Technology Policy*).
  - Note:** For children in out-of-home care, the educator may need to seek permission from Child Protection before taking and distributing photos of the child
  - asking the family how they have settled in and if they have any questions or concerns.
- Refer to *Attachment 2* for the general kindergarten registration and enrolment procedures
- Refer to *Attachment 5* for cancellation of enrolment and non-attendance procedures.

### Second year of funded Four-Year-Old Kindergarten

- All children in Three-Year-Old Kindergarten will be expected to transition to Four-Year-Old Kindergarten in the following year. A funded second year of kindergarten will only be available for children in the Four-Year-Old Kindergarten program who meet the criteria.
- Families of children who have been determined as eligible for a second year must complete and submit a kindergarten registration form for a second year, signed and dated by the early childhood teacher.
- It will be weighted with the relevant points and allocated accordingly.
- A Declaration of Eligibility Form for a second year of kindergarten must be completed and submitted to the relevant funding authority.

## Early entry to Four-Year-Old kindergarten

- Early entry to Four-Year-Old Kindergarten may be appropriate for some gifted children where families are seeking an early entry to school for their child i.e. the child will not be 5 years of age before 30th April in the year of school commencement.
- Early entry to school is approved only when exceptional circumstances apply and is subject to an application process and rigorous eligibility criteria. It is important to note that most children who enrol early in 4-Year-Old Kindergarten are not approved for early entry into school because they did not meet the eligibility criteria.
- The decision regarding early entry should be discussed with parents/guardians and consider the following:
  - Children are not guaranteed early school entry as a result of being enrolled to attend kindergarten early.
  - To start school early the child must possess suitable academic ability as evidenced by a formal cognitive assessment, and be considered at risk of long-term educational disadvantage if denied early entry to school.

## School Exemption

- Children who will turn six during the kindergarten year must apply for an exemption from school from the relevant their local ECIB that their child is seeking an exemption from school by submitting an Exemption from school due to attendance in kindergarten program form to the appropriate departmental regional office by 1 November in the year prior to the child turning 6 years old.
- The kindergarten service must sight the approved exemption form from relevant education authority and note that it has been sighted on the child's enrolment record. Data on the number of children attending Kindergarten who are six years plus, and confirmation that the exemption was sighted for each child, must be provided as part of funding data collection process.
- Children who will turn 6 while attending their second year of Four-Year-Old Kindergarten can be exempted from school if a Declaration of eligibility for a second year of funded kindergarten has been completed by the child's kindergarten teacher.



## Priority of access

Plenty Kids Early Learning Centre follows the Department of Education's Priority of Access criteria (*refer to Attachment 1*), that prioritises allocation of kindergarten places for children who:

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

Children that fit one or more of those criteria will be allocated a higher priority when being considered for a place in kindergarten. This form will collect all the information required to determine if a child is eligible for Priority of Access.

If you believe you or your child are in exceptional circumstances which require prioritisation and are not covered by any of the above criteria, please contact Plenty Kids Early Learning Centre to discuss.

## Background and legislation

### Background

The *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011* require approved services to have a policy and procedures in place in relation to enrolment and orientation (Regulation 168(2) (k)).

All eligible Victorian children (*refer to Definitions*) will have access to two years of kindergarten before commencing school. Where demand is higher than availability, approved providers must adhere to their eligibility and DE's Priority of Access criteria (*refer to Definitions and Attachment 1*) in order to allocate the available places. The criteria used to determine the allocation of places takes account of the requirements set out in DE's Kindergarten Funding Guide (*refer to Sources*), the service's philosophy, values and beliefs, and the provisions of the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*. The Victorian Government requires funded organisations to ensure that their policies and procedures promote equal opportunity for all children. Services participating in a central registration and enrolment scheme are required to comply with the registration and/or enrolment procedures of that scheme.

The Central Registration and Enrolment Scheme (CRES), co-designed by DE provides access to families to register for and secure a place for their children in kindergarten. It is a collaborative model that brings together councils, service providers, MCH staff, support services and other stakeholders to support children and their families. Currently, more than half of all local councils across Victoria operate a form of central enrolment or central registration scheme. These schemes provide a single point of entry for families, simplifying the kindergarten enrolment process and improving equity of access.

Immunisations are an effective means of reducing the risk of vaccine preventable diseases. Early childhood education and care services which are regulated under the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010* and *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011* have legislative responsibilities under the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* to only offer a confirmed place in their programs to children with an Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) Immunisation History Statement (*refer to Definitions*).

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## Legislation and standards

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)
- Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: Regulations 160, 161, 162, 168, 170, 171, 177, 181, 183
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)
- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 6: Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities
- Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 (Vic)
- Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2019 (Vic)
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)

The most current amendments to listed legislation can be found at:

- Victorian Legislation – Victorian Law Today: [www.legislation.vic.gov.au](http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au)
- Commonwealth Legislation – Federal Register of Legislation: [www.legislation.gov.au](http://www.legislation.gov.au)

## Definitions

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy. For regularly used terms e.g., approved provider, nominated supervisor, notifiable complaints, serious incidents, duty of care, etc. refer to the General Definitions section located on the PVCC website.

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

**Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) Immunisation History Statement:** The AIR is a national register administered by Medicare that records all vaccinations given in Australia, including to children. In the case of medical contraindication, an authorised medical practitioner completes and signs a Medical Exemption Form and supplies it to the AIR (previous forms of documentation, for example a letter from a GP or local council, are no longer acceptable).

**Authorised nominee:** (In relation to this policy) is a person who has been given written authority by the parents/guardians of a child to collect that child from the education and care service. These details will be on the child's Application for Student Admission form or Additional Authorised Nominee Form.

The National Law and National Regulations do not specify a minimum age limit for an authorised nominee. At Plenty Kids Early Learning Centre 18 years is the minimum acceptable age for an authorised nominee.

**Children/families experiencing vulnerability and/or disadvantage** (in relation to this policy): children are vulnerable if the capacity of parents and family to effectively care, protect and provide for their long-term development and wellbeing is limited. Some factors which may contribute to a child experiencing vulnerability include: a child with a disability; living in a family with a low income, or one which is experiencing problems with housing, domestic violence, substance abuse, or mental health; known to child protection; in statutory out-of-home care; Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, having a culturally and linguistically diverse background; having a young or sole parent, or a parent with a disability (adapted from the Kindergarten Funding Guide).

**Children with additional needs:** Children whose development or physical condition requires specialist support or children who may need additional support due to language, refugee or asylum seeker experience, complex trauma, cultural or economic circumstances (*refer to Inclusion and Equity Policy*) (*refer to Children/families experiencing vulnerability and/or disadvantage Definition*).

**Central Registration and Enrolment Scheme (CRES):** CRES provides a single point for families to apply for multiple kindergarten services within a local government area, helping them secure a place that meets their needs and enabling funded kindergartens to work collaboratively with other services to engage vulnerable and disadvantaged families.

**Central Registration System (CRS):** Provides an equitable and transparent application and allocation process, enabling families to access local kindergartens services within a local government area.

**Early Start Kindergarten (ESK):** Early Start Kindergarten provides eligible children with 15 hours of free or low-cost kindergarten each week led by a qualified Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) registered teacher. ESK is available to children who are at least three years old by 30 April in the year they are enrolled to attend the program and are:

- from a refugee or asylum seeker background, or
- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, or
- the family have had contact with child protection.

These children can also access free or low cost year-before-school kindergarten through the ESK Extension Grant regardless of whether they have accessed ESK in the previous year.

**Early Start Kindergarten extension grants:** provides eligible children with 15 hours of free or low cost kindergarten each week led by a qualified VIT registered teacher. The ESK extension grants are available to children attending kindergarten in the year-before-school and are:

- not eligible for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy
- from a refugee or asylum seeker background, or Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, or
- the family have had contact with child protection.

A child is not required to access ESK in the previous year to access the ESK extension grant.

**Eligible child:** as defined by the Victorian DE Kindergarten Funding Guide:

- a child who is at least four years old on 30 April in the year of attendance; enrolled for at least 15 hours per week or 600 hours per year in a Four-Year-Old Kindergarten; and not enrolled at a funded kindergarten program at another service
- a child who is at least three years old on 30 April in the year of attendance and is enrolled in a funded Three-Year-Old Kindergarten for a minimum of 5 hours per week
- any child that is enrolled in an early childhood and education and care service must have an AIR Immunisation History Statement that indicates that the child is fully vaccinated for their age or who qualifies for the 16-weeks grace period.

**Enrolment Agreement:** means the Agreement including the terms and conditions of enrolment by which the Applicant agrees to be bound.

**Enrolment fee:** A payment to cover administrative costs associated with the processing of a child's enrolment application for a place in a program at the service. A once-only non-refundable enrolment fee of \$500.00 (for new families) is payable upon acceptance of an offer.

**Enrolment record:** the collection of documents which contains information on each child as required under the National Regulations (*Regulations 160, 161, 162*) including but not limited to parent details; emergency contacts; authorised nominee; transportation authorisations, details of any court orders; and health information including immunisation status. Enrolment records are stored securely in the service due to their confidential nature.

**Fee:** A charge for a place within a program at the service.

**Kindergarten registration fee:** a payment to cover administrative costs associated with the processing of a child's enrolment application for a place in a program at the service, if applicable.

**Kindergarten registration form:** The process of families providing initial information about their child to confirm their intention to enrol in kindergarten, administered by the CRES/CRS Provider (*refer to Definition*) or by the kindergarten service. This includes collection of basic contact information, kindergarten preferences and any other details that may inform prioritised allocation in kindergarten (*refer to Attachment 3*).

**Grace period:** allows specific categories of children of families experiencing vulnerability and disadvantage to enrol and attend the service without an AIR Immunisation History Statement (*refer to Definitions*) or when the statement is assessed as not being up-to-date. Services complete the grace period eligibility form with families during enrolment, and keep a copy with the child's enrolment record. The 16-week grace period starts on the first day of the child's attendance at the service. During the grace period, the service is required to take reasonable steps to obtain the AIR Immunisation History Statement (*refer to Definitions*) and to encourage families to access immunisation services.

**The Principal:** means the Principal of the college, or the Principal's authorised representative.

**The College:** means Plenty Valley Christian College [ABN 87 670 414 115].

**Plenty Kids Early Learning Centre:** means the 3 year-old and 4 year-old kindergarten service.

**Priority of access:** in instances where more eligible children apply for a place at a service than there are places available, the service must allocate places using the criteria outlined in the DE Kindergarten Funding Guide (*refer to Attachment 1 and Sources*).

**Registration:** The process of families and carers giving initial information about their child to confirm their intention to enrol in kindergarten, administered by the service provider/EYM/CRES/CRS Provider. This includes collection of basic contact information, kindergarten preferences and any other details that may inform prioritised allocation in kindergarten.

**School Readiness Funding:** funding provided by DE for programs and supports that builds the capacity of kindergarten services, educators and families to support children's learning and development outcomes.

**Second year of funded four-year-old kindergarten:** second year eligibility may be considered when a child shows delays in key outcomes of learning and development. An assessment is carried out for each child by an early childhood teacher in Term 4 (the year before the child is to attend school) when a second year is being considered.

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## Sources and related policies

### Sources

- Australian Childhood Immunisation Register: [www.servicesaustralia.gov.au](http://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au)
- Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care, National Immunisation Program Schedule: [www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au)
- Department of Health, Immunisation enrolment toolkit for early childhood education and care service: [www2.health.vic.gov.au](http://www2.health.vic.gov.au)
- Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: [www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au)
- Guide to the National Quality Standard: [www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au)
- Priority of Access Guidelines for child care service: [www.education.gov.au](http://www.education.gov.au)
- [The Kindergarten Funding Guide](#) (Victorian Department of Education)

### Related policies

- [Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations Policy](#)
- [Code of Conduct Policy](#)
- [Complaints & Grievances Policy](#)
- [Dealing with Infectious Disease Policy](#)
- [Dealing with Medical Conditions Policy](#)
- [Delivery and Collection of Children Policy](#)
- [Fees Policy](#)
- [Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy](#)
- [Inclusion and Equity Policy](#)
- [Privacy and Confidentiality Policy](#)

## PRIVACY

The college collects personal information, including sensitive information regarding parents, guardians and students, during and after the enrolment process. The primary purpose of collecting such information is to enable the completion of the enrolment process and, during enrolment to provide for the best interests of students. Please refer to the Privacy Policy for more information.

## EVALUATION

To assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the Approved Provider will:

- regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness
- monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy
- keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice
- revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required
- notifying all stakeholders affected by this policy at least 14 days before making any significant changes to this policy or its procedures, unless a lesser period is necessary due to risk ([Regulation 172](#)).

# ENROLMENT AND ORIENTATION POLICY

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## ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1: Eligibility and priority of access criteria for a funded kindergarten 3 and 4-year-old program
- Attachment 2: General enrolment procedures
- Attachment 3: Link to Plenty Kids Application for Student Admission Form
- Attachment 4: Letter for parents/guardians without acceptable immunisation documentation
- Attachment 5: Cancellation of enrolment and non-attendance



## Attachment 1

### Eligibility and priority of access criteria for a funded kindergarten 3 or 4-year-old program

The approved provider must notify all families of the priority of access (PoA) criteria that applies when they enrol their child.

In instances where more eligible children apply for a place at a kindergarten service than there are places available, services must:

- prioritise children based on the Department of Education (DE) criteria listed in the table below
- work with other local kindergarten services and the regional DE office to ensure all eligible children have access to a kindergarten place.

These criteria must be used by the approved provider when prioritising enrolments. Guidance is available from the Department's regional offices if required.

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

If participating in a central registration and enrolment scheme, the CRES/CRS provider will allocate places in accordance with DE's PoA criteria, and other local criteria if applicable.

Services must first apply the DE's PoA criteria, and following this may apply locally developed criteria, as per examples below.

All information relating to PoA criteria should be respectfully collected from families upon enrolment, recorded in the child's confidential enrolment record and entered into the Kindergarten Information Management (KIM) system, where applicable.

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## DE's Priority of Access criteria

High priority children	Criteria and processes for verifying need(s)
<p><b>Children at risk of abuse or neglect, including children in Out-of-Home Care</b></p>	<p>The child is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• eligible for ESK or AEL, and/or</li> <li>• family, carer or legal guardian identifies the child as known to Child Protection or in out-of-home care, and/or</li> <li>• referred by one of the following:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Child Protection</li> <li>○ Child and family services (family services referral and support team, Child FIRST/integrated family services/Services Connect case worker)</li> <li>○ Maternal and Child Health nurse</li> <li>○ out-of-home care provider.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children</b></p>	<p>As part of the enrolment process, service providers must respectfully ask families 'is your child Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander?' and record this information in KIMS</p>
<p><b>Asylum seeker and refugee children</b></p>	<p>Child or family holds a visa or supporting documentation and information, including an ImmiCard, identifying the child and/or parents, carers or legal guardians as a refugee or asylum seeker and/or</p> <p>Referred as a refugee or asylum seeker by a CALD outreach worker.</p>
<p><b>Children eligible for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy</b></p>	<p>A child or parent holds a Commonwealth Health Care Card, Pensioner Concession Card, Veteran's Affairs Card, or</p> <p>The child is identified on their birth certificate as one of a set of triplets, quadruplets or more.</p>
<p><b>Children with additional needs, defined as children who:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• require additional assistance in order to fully participate in the kindergarten program</li> <li>• require a combination of services which are individually planned</li> <li>• have an identified specific disability or developmental delay</li> </ul>	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• holds a Child Disability Health Care Card, and/or</li> <li>• has previously been approved for Kindergarten Inclusion Support (KIS) program, and/or</li> <li>• has been referred by:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ the National Disability Insurance Scheme</li> <li>○ Early Childhood Intervention Services</li> <li>○ Preschool Field Officer</li> <li>○ Maternal and Child Health nurse, or</li> <li>○ is assessed as having delays in 2 or more areas and is declared eligible for a second year of funded Four-Year-Old Kindergarten.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

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<b>Examples to consider for second priority</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• children who turn four years of age by 30 April in the year they will attend kindergarten; or</li><li>• children who turn three years of age* by 30 April in the year they will attend kindergarten</li><li>• children turning six years of age at kindergarten who have been granted an exemption from school-entry age requirements by the regional office of DE</li><li>• children who have a sibling that has previously attended the same kindergarten as their first preference</li><li>• home address falls within the same suburb as the kindergarten</li><li>• family lives, works, studies or attends child care in [LGA]</li></ul>
<b>Examples to consider for third priority</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• service for transient families e.g. RAAF, seasonal workers and tourism workers</li><li>• date of application</li><li>• local community zoning</li><li>• full fee paying families</li></ul>

**Note:** DE’s PoA guidelines are to ensure that kindergarten programs are available to those children who stand to benefit the most from attending early education. In mixed age groups, PoA guideline will equally prioritise three and four-year-old children that are considered high priority. Where programs for three- and four-year old children are provided separately, the PoA criteria will be applied separately for each age cohort.

<b>*Early Start Kindergarten and Three-Year-Old Kindergarten</b>
<p>During the roll-out of Three-Year-Old Kindergarten, Early Start Kindergarten (ESK) (<i>refer to Definitions</i>) will continue to provide 15 hours a week of funded kindergarten for all eligible children up until 2029, when three-year-old children across the state will have access to 15 hours</p> <p>It is important to continue to enrol eligible children in ESK, even if funded Three-Year-Old Kindergarten is available at the service.</p> <p>The Kindergarten Funding Guide 2023 states for ESK funding, service providers should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• provide up to 15 hours in a kindergarten program free of charge and maximise access to 15 hours of kindergarten (children accessing ESK can be enrolled in a 3-year-old group, a 4-year-old group, a mixed age group or a combination of groups in order to access the full 15 hours per week)</li></ul> <p>This guarantees that children experiencing vulnerability will continue to be enrolled in the full 15 hours of kindergarten in all service settings, including long day care. It also ensures that service providers can continue to receive all funding entitlements.</p> <p>Service providers are expected to continue to provide the full 15 hours funded through Early Start Kindergarten, even in instances where three-year-old groups are being offered fewer than 15 hours.</p> <p>ESK is available to children who turn three years of age by 30th April in the year of enrolment and who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander</li><li>• have had contact with Child Protection</li><li>• have a refugee or asylum seeker background*</li></ul> <p>*Children/families without a current refugee visa or ImmiCard who have a recent refugee experience may be eligible by exception for Early Start Kindergarten, for more information contact your local Department of Education and office.</p> <p>Refer to the Department of Education’s website for up-to-date information: <a href="http://www.education.vic.gov.au">www.education.vic.gov.au</a></p>

## Attachment 2

### General enrolment procedure

The enrolment procedure is as follows:

- Families interested in applying for enrolment can obtain a college prospectus and arrange to visit the college.
- Applicants wishing to enrol their child at Plenty Kids Early Learning Centre will commence the application process by completing and submitting the online Application for Student Admission form, together with necessary documentation including the most recent Immunisation History Statement (IHS), birth certificate and a photo of the child.
- Where there is more than one parent/care-giver for the family, both persons must be Applicants and sign the Enrolment Agreement unless a court order provides otherwise and a copy is given to the college.
- Upon receipt of an Application for Student Admission form:
  - The college will send a notice to the applicant acknowledging the receipt of the application and advising them of the enrolment procedures.
  - Where places are not immediately available based on the application of the priority order of enrolment above, the Principal may determine to place the enrolment procedure on hold and a waiting list will be maintained by the college. Every effort will be made to give Applicants realistic advice on their child's likelihood of obtaining a place at the college.
  - An interview with the Plenty Kids Early Learning Centre Director (or their nominee) is arranged.
  - The family may be required to complete any necessary referrals for the child.
  - Any additional needs are noted and discussed with Applicant/s at the interview. Applicants may be required to provide additional information before the process can continue.
- An application does not guarantee progress to the interview stage of processing by the college.
- An interview does not guarantee an offer of enrolment.
- Acceptance into Plenty Kids Early Learning Centre does not guarantee an offer of enrolment into Plenty Valley Christian College.
- A formal offer of a place at plenty Kids Early Learning Centre may be made, once all required information has been provided.
- If the college offers enrolment, in order to confirm the enrolment place, the Applicants must:
  - Sign and return the Letter of Acceptance provided by the date indicated in the letter
  - Provide a current Immunisation History Statement (please note that a child's place being confirmed at Plenty Kids ELC is subject to children that have acceptable immunisation documentation and that immunisations are up to date).
  - Provide a copy of the student's Birth Certificate.
  - Provide passport photo/headshot of the child.
  - Provide a copy of Passport or Extract of Entry if applicable.
  - Pay a non-refundable enrolment fee of \$500 per family in accordance with the Plenty Kids Early Learning Centre *Fees Policy*.
- Should a student be offered enrolment in PVCC it is assumed that students graduating from Year 6 will automatically continue to the Secondary School. No re-enrolment is required (however, movement from Primary to Secondary is confirmed by way of expression of intention and potentially an interview of the student in Year 6).

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## Priority order of enrolment

- The college has a limited number of places that can be offered per year level each year. As such, due to the limited places available, applicants may not be offered a place.
- All applicants must submit the Application for Student Admission form fully completed and signed with all information that may be relevant to the provision of an educational program for the student. Applications will only be recorded on the waiting list if the applicant has correctly submitted to the college the Application for Student Admission and all relevant and necessary documentation.
- Enrolment into Prep at Plenty Valley Christian College is not automatic and will be based upon a school readiness recommendation from the kindergarten the student has been attending, an assessment of any reasonable adjustments, if any, that may be desired by the college or family, the alignment of the family values with those of the college, the child attending Prep orientation, and final approval by the college.
- At the discretion of the college, some applications may be given preference on the waiting list based on criteria such as:
  - Families that can demonstrate positive and practical support for the Christian ethos of the college
  - Siblings of current or past students of the college
  - Children of full-time ministers or missionaries of recognised Christian churches
  - Children of past students of the college
  - Children of current employees of the college.
- The college reserves the right to refuse an application or remove an application from the waiting list without providing a reason if there are reasonable grounds for doing so.
- The college will also consider the following:
  - A student's willingness and ability to contribute to the wider life of the college
  - Evidence of positive leadership and positive character
  - The date of lodgement of the Application for Student Admission form providing the family has not been offered previously and deferred to a later entry point.
- Parents/guardians who do not have an up-to-date AIR Immunisation History Statement and whose child is not eligible for the grace period cannot be offered a place and are referred to Australian Childhood Immunisation Register or to an immunisation provider (refer to Appendix 4 – Letter for parents/guardians who do not have acceptable immunisation documentation).
- Offer of places in the three-year-old program/s and the funded four-year-old kindergarten program will be made at the same time.
- A confirmation of enrolment letter and other relevant information will be provided by the Registrar to the parent/guardian after an offered place has been accepted and the fee has been paid.
- Parents/guardians who do not wish to accept the offer of a tentative or confirmed place, or intend to withdraw their enrolment, are requested to notify the Registrar, in writing or send an email to [office@pvc.vic.edu.au](mailto:office@pvc.vic.edu.au) as soon as possible.

Note: Places will not be allocated to children until any outstanding fees owed to the service by the family is paid, or a payment plan is agreed to between the family and the service (refer to *Fees Policy*).

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## Attachment 3

### Plenty Kids Application for Student Admission

Click here to go to the [Plenty Kids Application for Student Admission](#) which is available in the Enrol section of the Plenty Valley Christian College website.



## Attachment 4

### Letter for parents/guardians without acceptable immunisation documentation

Plenty Kids  
840 Yan Yean Road  
Doreen, Vic 3754  
[insert date]

Dear [insert name Parent 1] and [insert name Parent 2]

Re: Enrolment a Plenty Kids at Plenty Valley Christian College for [insert year]

I am contacting you regarding your tentative place for [insert child's name] at Plenty Kids at Plenty Valley Christian College in the [insert 3 year old or 4 year old program] in [insert year].

Under the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* early childhood education and care services cannot enroll a child unless the parent/guardian has provided AIR Immunisation History Statement.

AIR Immunisation History Statement includes evidence that your child:

- is fully vaccinated for their age; or
- has been assessed by our service as being eligible for a 16-week grace period.

As we have not received acceptable immunisation documentation for [insert name of child] by the due date, and your child is not eligible for the 16 week grace period, we are unable to confirm a place at our service for [insert year] and your child's name has been removed from our list.

Immunisation programs are effective in reducing the risk of vaccine preventable diseases. Immunisation from an early age helps protect your child against serious childhood infections. Further information about immunisations for your child is available from:

- your doctor
- [Immunisations - Nillumbik Shire Council](#)
- National Immunisation Information Line Tel. 1800 671 811
- Australian Immunisation Register:  
<https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/medicare/australian-immunisation-register>
- Better Health Channel website: <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/no-jab-no-play>

Should you wish to re-apply for a place for [insert child's name], we are happy to accept a new enrolment application accompanied by AIR History Statement. The new application would be considered in line with the Plenty Kids Enrolment and Orientation policy.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Vella  
Registrar  
Plenty Valley Christian College

## Attachment 5

### Cancellation of enrolment and Non-attendance

#### Cancellation of Enrolment

Families MUST notify the Registrar at Plenty Valley Christian College in writing of their intention to cancel their child's enrolment. Fees will continue to be generated for that place until the Registrar is notified.

**Note:** This process does not apply to vulnerable children (*refer to Definitions*). Children and families that are experiencing vulnerability are to be supported according to their individual needs. Where children/families are linked to Child Protection and not attending; Educators will need to inform their Case Officer.

#### Non-attendance

##### Term One

- Families that have accepted a placement and do not attend the service within the first 3 weeks of Term One will be contacted and informed their placement has been cancelled.

##### Families Traveling Overseas

- Families are required to notify Plenty Kids Early Learning Centre prior to extended periods of travel, and ensure any applicable fees paid if they wish to return to the service.

##### Non-contactable Families

- After one week of a child not attending the service, early childhood teacher or educator to call the family. If there is no response, teacher or educator to log this attempt and store it in the child's student record.
- After second week of the child not attending and the family has made no attempts to contact the service, teacher or educator to contact the family via phone/text and/or email. If there is no response, teacher or educator to log this attempt and store it in the child's student record.
- After third week of non-attendance, teacher or educator to inform Nominated Supervisor and cross check families contact details.
- Nominated Supervisor or Approved Provider to email family, ensuring a response date is documented in the email.
- If the family have made no attempt to communicate with the service before the response date, post a final attempt letter, ensuring a response date is documented in the letter.
- If the family has not responded to the final attempt letter before the response date, their placement will be cancelled.

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## DOCUMENT HISTORY AND VERSION CONTROL RECORD

<b>Name of document:</b>	PKELC Enrolment and Orientation Policy
<b>Responsible officer:</b>	Centre Director Administrator
<b>Approved by:</b>	Principal (Approved Provider)
<b>Assigned review period:</b>	Annually
<b>Date of next review:</b>	November 2024
<b>Category:</b>	Staff & Parents
<b>Previous name of Policy:</b>	NA

Version number	Version date	Responsible officer	Amendment details
0.1	04/12/2017	Centre Director	Initial issue as a controlled document
1.0	01/02/2019	Principal	Approved policy
1.1	19/02/2019	Centre Director	Minor amendments to wording
1.2	25/02/2019	Principal	Approved policy
1.3	02/04/2020	Centre Director	Minor amendments to wording and Application for Student Admission form
1.4	30/07/2020	Registrar	Amendments to Application for Students Admission Form
1.5	10/09/2020	Principal	Reviewed and signed
1.6	29/10/2020	Centre Director	Policy formatted in line with new style guide
1.7	09/08/2021	Centre Director and Registrar	Amendments to wording and removal of wording in Priority Order of Enrolment
1.8	12/08/2021	Principal	Approved policy
1.9	14/10/2021	Centre Director	Reviewed and amended in line with ELAA recommendations
1.10	28/10/2021	Principal	Approved policy
1.11	10/04/2024	Centre Administrator	Reviewed and amended in line with ELAA recommendations
1.12	30/04/2024	Principal	Approved policy

Approved By:



John Metcalfe  
Principal

30/4/2024  
Date