Uniting

Early Learning
Enrolment and Orientation Policy

1. Policy Statement/Purpose

All decisions made by educators and Uniting Victoria & Tasmania are guided by a commitment to children's safety, rights, and best interests.

Uniting Early Learning is committed to:

- Ensuring compliance with Victorian and national legislation, including disability discrimination, anti-discrimination, human rights laws, 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 applicants (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
- 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 eligible children into the full 15 hours of a kindergarten program.

2. Scope

This policy applies to the following groups working in Uniting Early Learning:

- Approved provider and persons with management or control
- Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge
- ECT, Educators, FDC educators and all other staff
- Parents/guardians
- Contractors, volunteers, and students.

3. Policy

3.1 Executive Summary

Uniting Early Learning recognises that the positive transition of children into an early childhood service requires the development of robust partnerships with families.

Collaborative relationships and information sharing ensure children's individual education and care requirements are met.

Consistent and equitable procedures that meet legislative requirements and reflect the diversity of families will support positive outcomes for children. Transparent criteria for access to a service will be provided and supported by clear processes and procedures that inform families to meaningfully engage upon first contact.

3.2 Current Environmental Context

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.

All eligible Victorian children (refer to Definitions) will have access to two years of Free Kinder before commencing school. From 2025, Four-Year-Old Kindergarten will gradually transition to Pre-Prep, with programs across Victoria increasing from 15 to 30 hours each week. Led by qualified teachers, Pre-Prep will give 4-year-old children greater opportunities to socialise and learn through play. Pre-Prep will be delivered through standalone (sessional) kindergartens and long day care centres.

By 2036, all children across Victoria will have access to 1,800 hours of funded kindergarten before school, including 600 hours of Three-Year-Old Kindergarten and 1,200 hours of Pre-Prep. Both Pre-Prep and Three-Year-Old Kinder are part of the Free Kinder program.

Pre-Prep will launch to eligible children from priority cohort groups in 2026 and 2028.

From 2026, between 16 and 25 hours of Pre-Prep will be available to:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children
- children from a refugee or asylum seeker background
- children who have had contact with Child Protection
- children who were supported by Early Start Kindergarten (ESK) or Access to Early Learning (AEL) in their Three-Year-Old Kindergarten year.

Pre-Prep hours for this group of priority cohort children increase to up to 30 hours from 2028.

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.

The Australian Government provides childcare fee assistance for eligible families in the form of CCS and Additional Child Care Subsidy (ACCS). The administration of CCS and ACCS is governed by Family Assistance Law, which imposes requirements on services and families when enrolling children in childcare.

To comply with Family Assistance Law, upon enrolment, all children must have one of the following forms completed:

- A Complying Written Arrangement (CWA) for enrolments where families wish to claim CCS/ACCS. This contains details of the care to be provided and fees to be charged
- A Relevant Arrangement for enrolments where the family has advised that they will not claim CCS/ACCS
- An arrangement with an organisation, for enrolments where a third-party organisation (such as an employer) will be responsible for paying childcare fees on behalf of the child.

We recommend families apply for CCS before enrolling their child or children at a Uniting Early Learning service.

Families wanting to claim CCS must provide their CCS details, including customer reference numbers (CRNs), for both the enrolling guardian and child. When a child starts attending a Uniting Early Learning service, if CCS details have not been provided, or if CCS eligibility has not been established, the enrolling guardian will be liable to pay full fees until the claim is finalised, and CCS details are provided. If the claim is later approved, Services Australia will pay any backdated CCS directly to the family.

National legislation protects the privacy of personal information in documents. The legislation applies to information contained in the following documents:

- The documentation of child assessments or evaluations for delivery of educational programs
- An incident, injury, trauma, and illness record
- A medication record
- A children's attendance record
- A child's enrolment record.

Written consent must be first obtained before any personal information of one of the following people is disclosed:

- A parent of a child enrolled at the service, other than the person requesting the documentation
- A person required to be notified of an emergency if a parent cannot be contacted.
- An authorised nominee of a child
- A person authorised to consent to medical treatment or the administration of medication to a child
- A person authorised to authorise an educator to take a child outside the service premises
- A person authorised to authorise the service to transport a child or arrange transportation of a child.

Consent must be expressly given in writing. Best practice is for approved providers and responsible persons to check the currency of consent before each disclosure is made. Consent may be withdrawn at any time after it has been given. Withdrawal of consent must be in writing.

Personal information is defined in the *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)* and includes any information about an identified individual such as their home address, email address, telephone number, date of birth, medical records, bank account details, and tax file number.

Authorised Nominees – Collection of Children

The approved provider nominated supervisor and educators will ensure that a child does not leave the education and care service premises except in accordance with Regulation 99.

A child may only be released from the service:

- to a parent of the child; or
- to an authorised nominee named in the child's enrolment record; or
- to a person authorised by a parent or authorised nominee; or
- in accordance with a court order; or
- where the child is taken outside the premises on an authorised excursion; or
- in the case of emergency, medical treatment or as otherwise permitted under the National Law and Regulations.

Authorised nominees must:

- attend the service in person to collect the child
- be known to educators or provide photo identification if requested
- be physically present and able to assume responsibility for the child immediately.

The service will not release a child to:

- a person who is not listed as an authorised nominee
- a person who is unknown to educators and unable to provide identification
- a person who appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- any person where releasing the child would pose a risk to the child's safety, including where a court order prohibits release.

Where there are court orders, parenting orders or parenting plans in place, a copy must be provided to the service and will be followed in accordance with legislative requirements.

3.3 Family and Child Support Services

- We will use children's enrolment information to provide families and carers the opportunity to share important information about their child and to highlight any additional needs.
- Prior to the first day of term one, educators will use information learnt through the enrolment process and any parent/carer discussions to make program adjustments to support a positive transition for the child and inclusion within the early learning program and wider community.
- Where there is assessed to be a need for further support and insight to a child's development, teachers and educators will work in partnership with the Preschool Field Officer (PSFO) program or the Inclusion Support (ISP) program.
- The Preschool Field Officer (PSFO) program is a targeted and time-limited capacity-building program. All Victorian funded kindergarten programs and children enrolled through Early Start Kindergarten, are eligible to receive PSFO service to support the access, inclusion, and participation of children with additional needs in a kindergarten program.
- Where appropriate teachers will discuss with parents and carers if the child meets the criteria for Kindergarten Inclusion Support (KIS). Teachers are encouraged to submit an application for KIS during term four prior to the year of attendance.
- The Inclusion Support Program is funded by the Australian Government for children attending non funded kindergarten programs. The service can lodge an application for funding for additional support workers through the ISP. Funding will be granted when the child meets specific criteria. Inclusion support workers will help the service with the integration of children with additional needs and will assist staff in putting together an individual program for each child.
- Using the program cycle, educators assess children's development and learning to provide a program that meets the needs of all children. Using assessment tools, educators will understand children's strengths, interests and developmental areas requiring ongoing attention and support.

- Parent Support Group (PSG) meetings will be organised for children identified through the assessment process as requiring additional supports. Children assessed to have high needs will have a PSG scheduled regularly.
- We will work in partnership with parents and carers to access external professional support services for children with additional needs
- Services will provide opportunities for all parents or carers to provide information throughout the year. This is regardless of additional needs, their child may or may not have.
- Educators will liaise with the Nominated Supervisor/Responsible Person and Educational Leaders to ensure the needs of each child are met throughout their education and care at the service.
- Educators will remain positive, open-minded to new ways of thinking and programming for the changing needs within their communities. Through conversations educators and service leaders recognise families as the experts in their child. Through open, respectful, and honest conversations, educators seek to learn more about the child within the home so they can increase their knowledge about the context of the child within their community (Ecological model VELYDF, Bronfenbrenner)
- Parents are responsible for passing on information from any professional support services accessed outside of the service. This will promote the continuity of learning for each child.
  Educators will work with local schools to help all children transition through writing strength-based transition statements. Where it is assessed that a child will require more individualised transition supports, the educator will make contact with the school to organise a PSG. When sharing information about a child, educators will identify their strengths, interests, and areas for ongoing support in a way that promotes positive self-identify and continuity of learning for the child.
- All children with additional needs where teaching teams or families have assessed that the child is a risk of serious injury to themselves, or to others will have an individual support plan (ISP). The ISP will be developed in partnership with families and where required, the child's medical practitioners and/or professional support services. Where appropriate and by common agreement of families and carers, the ISP may be shared with child's local school to support transition.
- Educators will access professional development for educators to help the service meet the needs of each child with additional needs.

3.4 Priority of Access, Eligibility and Funding

In accordance with The Kindergarten Funding Guide, the Department of Education and Training's (DE) and the Australian Government Priority of Access guidelines, Uniting has developed a priority of access that:

- Promotes fair and equitable access to our early learning programs
- Supports all eligible children to access our programs, including those who face barriers to participation
- Does not inadvertently present barriers to participation.

Some Councils/Shires administer the Central Registration Scheme (CRS) for kindergarten programs across Victoria. The Central Registration Scheme is the place to enrol for three and four-year-old kindergarten programs. Priority of Access criteria 1 will apply. Criteria 2 may be different across the Councils/Shires.

2026 Priority of Access criteria 1

High priority children	Criteria and processes for verifying need(s)
Children at risk of abuse or neglect, including children in out-of-home care	The child is: • Eligible for ESK or AEL, and/or • Family, carer or legal guardian identifies the child as known to Child Protection or in out-of-home care, and/or Referred by one of the following: • Child Protection • Child and family services (family services referral and support team, Orange Door/integrated family services/Services Connect case worker) • Maternal and Child Health nurse • Out-of-home care provider.
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children	As part of the enrolment process, service providers must respectfully ask families 'do you identify your child as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander?' and record this information in ARRIVAL.
Asylum seeker and refugee children	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 Referred as a refugee or asylum seeker by a CALD outreach worker. • Refugee visa (subclass 200) • In-country Special Humanitarian visa (subclass 201) • Global Special Humanitarian visa (subclass 202) • Emergency Rescue Visa (subclass 203) • A woman at Risk visa (subclass 204) • Humanitarian Stay visa (subclass 449) • Temporary Protection visa (subclass 785) • Temporary (Humanitarian Concern) visa (subclass 786) • Safe Haven Enterprise visa (subclass 790) • Protection visa (subclass 866)

	• A Bridging visa and is in the process of applying for one of the above Refugee or Humanitarian visas. • Current or expired ImmiCard • An approved exemption from the department.
Children that meet the eligibility criteria for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy	A child or parent holds a Commonwealth Health Care Card, Pensioner Concession Card, Veteran's Affairs Card, and/or The child is identified on their birth certificate as one of a set of triplets, quadruplets or more.
Children with additional needs, defined as children who: • With an identified specific disability or developmental delay • Who require additional assistance to fully participate in the kindergarten program • Who require a combination of services which are individually planned	The child: Holds a Child Disability Health Care Card, and/or has previously been approved for Kindergarten Inclusion Support (KIS) program, and/or has been referred by: • The National Disability Insurance Scheme • Early Childhood Intervention Services • Preschool Field Officer • Maternal and Child Health nurse or is assessed as having delays in 2 or more areas and is declared eligible for a second year of funded Four-Year-Old Kindergarten.

For Uniting kindergarten programs where Uniting manages the enrolments, the second priority of access is applied after the first priority of access has been allocated to children.

2026 Priority of Access criteria 2

Child is currently enrolled in a 3-year-old program and registering in a 4-year-old program at the same kindergarten service
Child is enrolling in a second year of funded kindergarten at the same kindergarten service
Sibling attending in the same year

2027 Priority of Access criteria

For all 2027 enrolments, the following priority of access criteria will be applied where the service is unable to meet enrolment demand. Priorities one and two are determined by the Department of Education, with all subsequent priorities applied in order once children meeting priorities one and two have been accommodated.

2027 Priority 1	
High priority children	**Criteria and processes for verifying need(s)**
Children at risk of abuse or neglect, including children in out-of-home care	• The child is eligible for Early Start Kindergarten or Access to Early Learning, and/or • The family, carer or legal guardian identifies the child as known to or having had contact with Child Protection or in Out-of-Home Care and/or • The parent or carer or child is experiencing family violence and/or has had contact with The Orange Door and/or • The child or family has previously accessed Flexible Support Packages and/or • The child or family is referred by one of the following: • Child Protection • Child and family services • Maternal and Child Health nurse (MCH) • Out of Home Care provider.
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children	• As part of the enrolment process, service providers must respectfully ask families 'Do you identify your child as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander?' and record this information in Arrival.
Asylum seeker and refugee children	• The child, a parent, a carer or a legal guardian holds, has previously held, or is applying for, a refugee or asylum seeker visa (see list of visas in the Kindergarten Funding Guide), and/or • The child, a parent, a carer or a legal guardian holds a current or expired ImmiCard, and/or • Children, parents, carers or legal guardians who previously held a refugee or asylum seeker visa and now hold Australian Citizenship or permanent residency.
Children and/or families holding concession cards	• A child or parent holds a Commonwealth Health Care Card, Pensioner Concession Card, Veterans' Affairs Card.
Children from families with multiple births	• Multiple birth children (i.e. triplets or more).
Children and/or families with additional needs who require additional assistance to fully participate in the kindergarten program	Child and family with additional needs who meet one of the following. Child: • Is eligible under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) or undergoing a continuing assessment of a disability under the NDIS (supported by a letter from a medical practitioner or specialist) • Is eligible for Early Childhood Intervention Service Continuity of Support (ECIS COS) • Is diagnosed with a disability or developmental delay or are undergoing diagnosis (supported by a letter from a medical practitioner or specialist)

	• Presents with developmental concerns that presents barriers to accessing a kindergarten program (supported by a letter or other evidence from a MCH nurse or similar practitioner such as an allied health practitioner) • Has complex medical needs that presents barriers to accessing a kindergarten program (supported by a letter from a medical practitioner or specialist) • Holds a Disability Health Care Card • Previously accessed the Kindergarten Inclusion Support Program, Commonwealth Inclusion Support Program or another similar program The child is referred by one of the following: • The National Disability Insurance Scheme • Early Childhood Intervention Service Continuity of Support (ECIS COS) • Preschool Field Officer program, or • MCH nurse or similar professional such as an allied health specialist, where developmental concerns have been identified. Parent or carer: • Is eligible under the NDIS or undergoing a continuing assessment of a disability under the NDIS (supported by a letter from a medical practitioner or specialist) • Has complex medical needs that present barriers to accessing a kindergarten program (supported by a letter from a medical practitioner or specialist) • Holds a Disability Health Care Card.
Children accessing an additional year of Three- and Four-Year-Old Kindergarten or Pre-Prep	Children assessed with delays in two or more areas and are identified as eligible for an additional year of funded Three-Year-Old Kindergarten, Four-Year-Old Kindergarten or Pre-Prep.
2027 Priority 2	
Children currently attending the service	• Children attending the service in the Three-Year-Old Kindergarten program and seeking to access Four-Year-Old Kindergarten or Pre-Prep at the same service for continuity of learning • Priority should be given to these children to remain at the same service for their Four-Year-Old Kindergarten or Pre-Prep year
2027 Priority 3	
Children who reside in the local government area – Children and their parents/guardians who reside within the local government area	
2027 Priority 4	
Siblings attending concurrently in the same year (e.g. one sibling enrolled in the 4-year-old program and another in the 3-year-old program). – siblings attending kindergarten in the same year	
2027 Priority 5	
Family connection to the service – child has had a sibling attend within the last 2 years	
2027 Priority 6	
Proximity to the service – children parents/guardians who live in closest proximity to the service Measured in a straight line from the child's residence to the kindergarten.	

3.5 Kindergarten enrolment one funded place

A child can only be funded for a kindergarten place at one service (either sessional or integrated kindergarten) at any one time. Children can attend for one year in a Three-Year-Old Kindergarten program and one year in a Four-Year-Old Kindergarten program. In **exceptional circumstances** a child may be assessed as being eligible for a second year of three or Four-Year-Old Kindergarten).

3.6 Children turning three during the year of kindergarten enrolment

For a kindergarten program in Victoria children must turn three years of age by 30 April in the year of attendance. Children can only attend the three (3) year old program once they have turned three years of age. If a child turns three after the program commences, their place will be held. Pro-rata fees will apply once the child commences.

3.7 Early Start Kindergarten

Families will be asked to identify as an Early Start Kindergarten (ESK) enrolment. This information will ensure our early learning services receive all funding entitlements and that children have access to 15 funded hours of kindergarten across Victoria. ESK enrolments contribute to School Readiness Funding (SRF) calculations for service providers. It also allows the Department to continue to monitor efforts to engage the most vulnerable children in kindergarten across Victoria and provide additional targeted support where required through SRF or Early Childhood LOOKOUT.

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
  known to child protection.

3.8 Funded kindergarten in an integrated Long Day Care Service Victoria

Uniting will directly offset the full Victorian Government entitlement from the fees of parents with children receiving their funded kindergarten program at our long day care services in Victoria. Parents will be credited the amount at the commencement of each term after CCS has been applied.

3.9 Immunisation requirements

3.9.1 No Jab, No Play Victoria

The 'No Jab, No Play' legislation requires early childhood education and care services in Victoria which are regulated under the Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 and have legislative responsibilities under the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 to only offer a confirmed place in their programs to children with acceptable immunisation documentation (refer to Glossary).

To have an enrolment confirmed for a child in long day care, kindergarten, family day care or occasional care, parents/carers have to provide the service with:

- A current immunisation history statement from the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR), and the statement must show that the child is up to date with all vaccinations that are due for their age, or that they are able to receive.

Services are unable to enroll a child until the acceptable Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) immunisation history statement is provided unless the child is eligible to enrol under the 'support period' (also known as the 'grace period') or the AIR has documented evidence that the child has immunisation medical exemptions.

After a child's enrolment has been confirmed, the No Jab No Play legislation does not require services to exclude enrolled children, except in the case of a disease outbreak.

After enrolment, services are required to take reasonable steps to obtain up-to-date immunisation history statements from parents/carers, such as regularly reminding them of this obligation, and to keep the latest statement with the child's enrolment records.

3.9.2 No Jab, No Play Grace Period Victoria

The support period is a provision in the No Jab No Play policy that allows some children to be enrolled in early childhood education when they have not provided evidence that they are up to date with their immunisations.

There are some children in the community whose families face difficulties accessing vaccinations and/or the required documentation to prove immunisation status. The support period allows the family to access early childhood education and care services while receiving information and assistance to obtain the required immunisation history statement from the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR), and/or get their child/children's immunisations up to date.
It is generally a 16-week period, during which early childcare centres should support families to obtain the required documentation, and/or seek information about immunisation.

Children whose parents have not provided evidence of their immunisation status or have provided evidence that states they are not up to date with their immunisations are eligible for the support period if they:

- Identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
- Are a refugee or asylum seeker
- Are from multiple births of triplets or more
- Hold or their parent/guardian holds a healthcare card
- Have a parent/guardian who is a pension concession card holder.
- Are evacuated from their home due to an emergency (such as a flood or bushfire)
- Are in the care of an adult who is not their parent due to exceptional circumstances (such as parental illness or incapacity)
- Are in the care of a parent who is a Gold or White Department of Veterans' Affairs card holder
- Are involved with child protection services or have been in the past

- Receive support through Family Services or have in the past
- Are living in crisis or emergency accommodation
- Are being supported by a housing agency or family violence service.

3.9.3 How to assess eligibility for the Grace Period

Educators complete the Grace Period application with the parent. Families who answer 'yes' to any of the following criteria are eligible for the grace period:

- Are you and your child currently evacuated from your home due to an emergency such as a flood or bushfire? (document the verbal response)
- Is your child in the care of an adult who is not the child's parent due to emergency or exceptional circumstances such as parental illness or incapacity? (document the verbal response)
- Did your child arrive in Australia as a refugee or asylum seeker? (document the verbal response)
- Is child protection involved with your family, or have they been in the past? (document the verbal response)
- Has your family received support through Family Services? (document the verbal response)
- Are you living in crisis or emergency accommodation, or are you supported by a housing agency or family violence service? (document the verbal response)
- Do you or your child hold a health care card? (sight a copy of card)
- Do you hold a pensioner concession card? (sight a copy of card)
- Do you hold a veteran's affairs Gold or White card? (sight a copy of card)
- Is your child from multiple births of triplets or more? (sight a copy of the child's birth certificate).

Once the assessment form has been completed and the parent has agreed to undertake vaccination and/or obtain an acceptable immunisation status certificate within 16 weeks, the child can be enrolled and commence at the service.

3.10 Collection of Information

Kindergarten services are required to collect information from all parents about their level of education, category of employment and concession cards or visa's you or your child holds.

Collecting this information will help the kindergarten to receive School Readiness Funding. This is in addition to normal kindergarten funding. The amount of funding each kindergarten receives will be based on the needs of its children, as determined by the information you provide the kindergarten.

School Readiness Funding will help children get even more out of their time at kindergarten. It can be used to purchase a range of programs and supports, such as programs to support children's language development, resources for educators to help children manage their emotions, or professionals such as speech therapists to work with children, teachers, and families.

This information provided by you during the enrolment process will only be used to inform kindergarten funding.

Forms

All forms are available on the Intranet: Early Learning (sharepoint.com)

Form 8.1	UT-EL-003-Immunisation commencement requirement letter.docx UT-EL-004-Immunisation review letter to parents 8.1.docx
Form 8.2	UF-EL-041-Family Orientation Checklist 8.2.docx
Form 8.3	UF-EL-026-Code of Conduct for Parents-Guardians Students Volunteers & Visitors 8.3.docx
Form 8.4	UF-EL-042-Grace period eligibility assessment form 8.4.docx
	no-jab-no-play-immunisation-evidence-request-decision-aid-flowchart-2024.docx no-jab-no-play-support-period-eligibility-assessment-form-2024.docx

Review

This policy to be reviewed by: December 2026

4. Responsibilities relating to the Enrolment and Orientation policy

Responsibilities	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	ECT, Educators, FDC educators and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Agency Staff, Contractors, volunteers, and students
R indicates legislation requirement, and should not be deleted					
Ensure that the *Enrolment and Orientation Policy* is readily accessible to nominated supervisors, coordinators, educators, staff, volunteers, and families, and available for inspection *R171*	**R**	✓	✓		
Apply the Priority of Access criteria to funded programs as described in the Department of Education's [DE] *The Kindergarten Funding Guide*	**R**				
Ensuring that the *Enrolment and Orientation Policy* and procedures are followed *R 170*	**R**	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ensuring compliance with State and National legislation, including *disability discrimination, anti-discrimination, human rights laws, No Jab No Pay and Family Assistance Law, No Jab No Play, Free Kindergarten, priority of access Victorian Kindergarten Funding Guide*	**R**	✓			
Work with the families to obtain an alternate form of identification if a birth certificate or other official documentation is not available. Where a birth certificate cannot be produced, other acceptable evidence of a child's full name and date of birth includes: • Statement from the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) • Medicare card • letter from the doctor or midwife who attended the birth • doctor's note attesting to a child's age • passport • Citizenship documents or Australia visa documents or Immicard	✓	✓	✓		
Provide communication to families explaining how they can only access one funded kindergarten program per child, per year *Victorian Kindergarten Funding Guide*	**R**	✓	✓		
Provide written confirmation confirming the child is attending one funded kindergarten program per year *Victorian Kindergarten Funding Guide*	**R**			✓	

Responsibilities	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	ECT, Educators, FDC educators and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Agency Staff, Contractors, volunteers, and students
R indicates legislation requirement, and should not be deleted					
Ensure the enrolment details (on *Xap, or Harmony*) complies with legislative requirements and is reviewed regularly to meet the service's regulatory and management requirements *R 160*	**R**	✓			
Assess the child's immunisation documentation within 12 weeks prior to commencing at the service to determine if the child's vaccination status complies with requirements or whether the child is eligible for the 16 weeks grace period. *No Jab no Pay/Play legislation*	**R**	✓	✓		
If required, support families to assess their eligibility for the 16-week grace period and provide information about immunisation and required documentation *No Jab no Pay/Play legislation*	**R**	✓	✓		
Ensure that a child does not commence at the service until the parent has provided a current immunisation status certificate. This can be provided by the parent within 12 weeks prior to commencement at the service. If required, the certificate will need to be updated to reflect immunisations had since the provision of the certificate and prior to commencement. *No Jab no Pay/Play legislation*	**R**	✓	✓	✓	
Where a child is on an immunisation catch-up schedule, ensure that the child's immunisations are updated in line with the schedule and provide acceptable immunisation. *No Jab no Pay/Play legislation*	**R**	✓	✓	✓	
Take reasonable steps to obtain an up-to-date AIR Immunisation History Statement from all parents/guardians after enrolment, twice per calendar year, timing reminders to comply with the maximum seven-month interval *(Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2019 107, Public Health, and Wellbeing Act 2008 Section 143E) No Jab no Pay/Play legislation*	**R**	✓	✓		
Keep a copy of the completed grace period form in the child's file in Xap or Harmony *No Jab no Pay/Play legislation*	**R**	✓	✓		

Responsibilities	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	ECT, Educators, FDC educators and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Agency Staff, Contractors, volunteers, and students
R indicates legislation requirement, and should not be deleted					
Ensure that all enrolment records are uploaded in Xap or Harmony and where applied also 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 *R 177, 178, 181, 182 & 183*	**R**	✓	✓		
Ensure that an exemption from school form from the Department of Educations and Training has been completed and authorised for children who turn 6 years of age during the year of attendance *Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)*	**R**	✓	✓		
Communicate to parents/guardians the days and times the service will operate, planned closures (including public holidays) service philosophy and governance *R 173*	**R**	✓	✓		
Provide parents/guardians easy-to-read information about how the service operates and what the service will provide (including information about inclusion and learning)	✓	✓	✓		
Provide parents/guardians with consistent and transparent communication on waitlist management processes	✓	✓	✓		
Develop strategies on how to communicate with parents/guardians with varying literacy skills, or where English is not a first language	✓	✓	✓		
Ensure that parents of a child at the service can enter the premises at any time the child is attending, except where this may pose a risk to the safety of children or staff, or conflict with any duty of the Approved Provider, Responsible person, or educators under legislation *R 167*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
Ensure 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 *Victorian Kindergarten Funding Guide*	**R**	✓			
Comply with the Uniting Privacy Policy in relation to the collection and management of a child's enrolment information *R 177, 181 & 182*	**R**	✓	✓		✓

Responsibilities	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	ECT, Educators, FDC educators and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Agency Staff, Contractors, volunteers, and students
R indicates legislation requirement, and should not be deleted					
Ensure written consent is first obtained **before** any information is disclosed to people including: • A parent of a child enrolled at the service, other than the person requesting the documentation • A person required to be notified of an emergency if a parent cannot be contacted • An authorised nominee of a child • A person authorised to consent to medical treatment or the administration of medication to a child • A person authorised to authorise an educator to take a child outside the service premises. A person authorised to authorise the service to transport a child or arrange transportation of a child. *R 177, 181 & 182*	**R**	✓	✓		✓
Provide authorised parents with access to the online Xap or Harmony	✓	✓	✓		
Respond to enrolment enquiries on a day-to-day basis and refer (where appropriate) queries to the central enrolment schemes or refer to the person responsible for the enrolment process	✓	✓			
Work with parents, where required, to ensure that enrolment information is completed correctly prior to commencement	✓	✓	✓		
Review enrolment applications to identify children with additional needs in line with the *Inclusion and Diversity and Equity Policy*	✓	✓	✓		
Respond to parent enquiries regarding their child's readiness for the program in which they are considering enrolling their child	✓	✓	✓		
Seek 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 90 & 162*	**R**	✓	✓		

Responsibilities	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	ECT, Educators, FDC educators and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Agency Staff, Contractors, volunteers, and students
R indicates legislation requirement, and should not be deleted					
Ensure that medical management plans have been provided and that the risk minimisation and communication plans have been developed and both documents are kept in the child's file in Xap or Harmony and displayed prominently in all areas of the service that the child accesses *R 90*	**R**	✓	✓		
Gather information from parents/guardians to support continuity of care between home and the service		✓	✓		✓
Assist parents/carers to access inclusion support services		✓	✓		
Once an enrolment record has been completed for a child, review the enrolment record to ensure that no section/question has been left blank *R 102, 160-162, 177, 178 & S 175*	**R**	✓	✓		
Ensure all authorised nominees have been completed on the enrolment record *R 161*	**R**	✓	✓		
Ensure that enrolment records for each child are 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 *R 161*	**R**	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ensure that enrolment records for each child are kept confidential *(Regulations 181, 182)* 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 *R 181, 182, 183*	**R**	✓	✓		
Ensure parents have access to all policies including: *R 171* • Parent handbook • Family Information Booklet (FDC) • Statement of philosophy • Child Safety Policy • Child Safe Environments and Wellbeing Policy • Fee Policy • Privacy Statement • Code of Conduct • Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations • Dealing With Medical Conditions • Incident, Injury, Trauma, and Illness • Delivery and Collection of Children	**R**	✓	✓		

Responsibilities	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	ECT, Educators, FDC educators and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Agency Staff, Contractors, volunteers, and students
R indicates legislation requirement, and should not be deleted					
Discuss the individual child's needs with parents/guardians and develop 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.		✓	✓		
Developing strategies to assist new parents/guardians to: • Feel welcomed into the service • Become familiar with service policies and procedures • Share information about their family beliefs, values and culture and feel culturally safe • Share their understanding of their child's strengths, interests, abilities and needs • Value the voice of the child, ensuring they have opportunity to articulate their individual interests and needs • Discuss the values and expectations they hold in relation to their child's learning • Provide comfort and reassurance to children who are showing signs of distress when separating					
Complete enrolment form in the online platform prior to the child's commencement at the service and share information with educators to support their child's inclusion in the program				✓	
Ensure that all required information is provided to the service including proof of age, e.g. a copy of the child's birth certificate and immunisation status certificate prior to commencement at the service *R 160*	**R**			✓	
Update information in the online portal and by notifying the service of any changes as they occur				✓	
Provide all 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 *R 160*	**R**			✓	

Responsibilities	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	ECT, Educators, FDC educators and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Agency Staff, Contractors, volunteers, and students
Provide all 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 *R 160*	**R**			✓	
Provide copies of any court orders, parenting orders or parenting plans provided to the approved provider relating to powers, duties, responsibilities, or authorities of any person in relation to the child or access to the child *R 160*	**R**			✓	

5. Legislation/Regulations

Australian Childhood Immunisation Register
Australian Government Department of Education and Training. Commonwealth guidelines
A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999
The Family Assistance Law as the basis for Commonwealth child care fee assistance including the Child Care Subsidy (CCS) and Additional Child Care Subsidy (ACCS)
Children's Services Amendment Act 2019
Children's Services Regulations 2020
Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
Department of Health and Human Services, Immunisation enrolment toolkit for early childhood education and care service – Immunisation Enrolment toolkits
The Kindergarten Funding Guide
National Quality Standard, Quality Area 6: Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities
Public Health and Wellbeing Amendment (No Jab, No Play) Act 2015 (Vic)
Tasmanian Licensing Standards for Centre Based Child Care, Class 5 October 2014. Standard 15.4
Victorian Department of Health – Immunisation Information

6. Related Documents

Uniting

Diversity Statement
Child Safety Commitment Statement
Child Safety Code of Conduct
Child Safety Policy
Code of Conduct
Reconciliation, Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Policy
Privacy Policy

Early Learning

Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations Policy -18
UP-EL-016-Compliments, Complaints and Grievances policy.pdf
UP-EL-014-Fee Policy.pdf
UT-EL-003-Immunisation commencement requirement letter.docx
UT-EL-004-Immunisation review letter to parents 8.1.docx
UF-EL-026-Code of Conduct for Parents-Guardians Students Volunteers & Visitors 8.3.docx
UF-EL-041-Family Orientation Checklist 8.2.docx
UF-EL-042-Grace period eligibility assessment form 8.4.docx
UF-EL-043-Acceptance of one funded 3 or 4 year old Kindergarten program place.docx
no-jab-no-play-immunisation-evidence-request-decision-aid-flowchart-2024.docx
no-jab-no-play-support-period-eligibility-assessment-form-2024.docx

Enrolment Procedures

Uniting Managed Kindergarten Enrolments

1. An EOI is submitted via Uniting website.
2. Registrations open May - end of June of the year prior to enrolment and the registration link is sent to families who have submitted an EOI or to families requesting to register after May opening date.
3. July onwards - Places will be allocated into service and group following Priority of Access guidelines.
4. August onwards- Families will receive communication advising that a place is being held at the service and group.
5. November onwards - families will be invited via email link to complete enrolment online through XAP or Harmony
6. Existing families will at this time check and update their child's XAP or Harmony enrolment.
7. All consents and permissions must be signed in XAP or Harmony, all mandatory fields completed in XAP or Harmony and documentation attached for the enrolment to be complete.

Mandatory documentation includes:

- Up to date Immunisation History Statement
- Birth Certificate or other identification document.
- Copy of Concession Card (if applicable)
- Court Orders (if applicable)
- Medical Management Plans (if applicable)
- Medical Risk Minimisation and Communication Plans (if applicable).

Local Government / Shire Central Enrolment Schemes

Many Uniting Early Learning services are managed centrally through the local Council/ Shire.
Services and families are required in these instances to abide by the policies and procedures of the local Government enrolment scheme.

All queries relating to Council managed services through Uniting website will be automatically linked to the relevant Council/Shire website to complete an EOI or Registration.

For services where the allocation to groups is not centrally managed by Council, Uniting will contact families via email inviting them to choose their group preference and places will be allocated as per Priority of Access guidelines.

Once allocated, families will be contacted to inform of their child's place held in the relevant group.

Please refer for the relevant local Council/Shire for application processes and timelines

Child Care Enrolment Procedure

Step 1: the family makes a CCS claim.

A parent must first lodge a CCS claim with Services Australia. Parents should do this before their child starts at your service.

Childcare Subsidy Enrolling Children

If a child starts at your service before the parent has lodged a claim, or while their claim is being assessed, parents will be charged full fees.

If the parent is assessed as eligible, CCS can be backdated up to 28 days. Backdated CCS will be paid directly to the parent.

Step 2: the provider and the family agree on care arrangements.

Before enrolling a child, parents must come to an agreement with the service on the care arrangements for the child.

Families must agree to the care arrangements in writing. They can do this electronically or in hard copy.

Step 3: the provider submits an enrolment notice.

Once you've agreed on care arrangements, you must submit an enrolment notice in the Child Care Subsidy System (CCSS) for each child covered by the arrangement.

Step 4: the family confirms the enrolment.

Once you've submitted an enrolment notice, the family will be prompted to confirm the enrolment via their Centrelink online account.

Shared care

Parents must inform Services Australia and their service of any changes to their relationship status.

If a child's parents are separated and both individuals share responsibility for child care fees:

- Both parents must make their own CCS claim
- Parents must establish separate care arrangements and enrolment notices for each child.

Family Orientation Program Guidelines *(All Services)*

Uniting Early Learning provides a welcoming environment where the diversity of families and the local communities are respected. Communication, collaboration, and consultation are the key elements when developing appropriate orientation procedures at the service level.

Families and children are to feel comfortable and welcome, with local

orientation procedures to be:

- Discussed
- Planned
- Individualised and based upon the child's requirements.
- Family friendly and flexible, with options provided
- Organised to minimise separation anxiety.
- An opportunity to share information.

The orientation program is an opportunity for families to:

- Learn about and clarify education and care practices, daily routines, and administrative requirements.
- Share their understanding of their child's strengths, interests, abilities, and needs.
- Communicate their family aspirations and expectations that they hold in relation to their child's learning.
- Gain further information about service expectations, policies, and procedures.

The orientation procedure will be developed at a local service level where families are:

- Invited and encouraged to visit and become familiar with the service before their child starts.
- Stay with their child for as long as needed during the settling-in period.
- Provided with a service handbook.
- Where appropriate, provided with an interpreter to facilitate communication and understanding.
- Encouraged to share information about other child-related services accessed by the family.
- Maintain contact with their child's primary educator during the day if required.
- Provided access to read relevant policies