

# ALLOCATION OF PLACES POLICY

*Best Practice – Quality Area 7*

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## 1. DOCUMENT CONTROL

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POLICY OWNER	Team Leader Family and Children's Centres
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## 2. PURPOSE

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

## 3. SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, and management of the Service.

## 4. IMPLEMENTATION

We allocate places using the Victorian Government's priority of access for early childhood education criteria and a ballot system for both our Education and Care and Extended Day Kindergarten programs. More information can be found here: <https://www.vic.gov.au/priority-access-criteria>.

To support priority one families, there may be some variations to the offer and allocation process on a case by case basis.

### Priority One: Children considered high priority

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

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

### Priority Two:

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

### Priority Three:

- Children who are Kingston residents

### Priority Four:

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

### Priority Five:

- All other children

## Waitlist Applications

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

## Extended Day Kindergarten

Children are only eligible for two years of funded kindergarten.

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

- Who enrol for a minimum of two days and
- Nominate this program as their funded three- or four-year-old kindergarten year
- Who apply between 1<sup>st</sup> May and 30<sup>th</sup> June in the year before their child will commence

Applications received after the 30<sup>th</sup> of June in the year before the child is due to commence, and where vacancies remain, offers will be made by application date.

## Delaying Commencement of a Funded Extended Day Kindergarten Place

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

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

## Kindergarten Funding Agreement

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

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

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

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

## Notification of Offer

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

## Accepting an Offer

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

## Declining an Offer

- Families may wish to decline an offer and remain on the waitlist. This option must be selected when declining the offer via the Xap guardian portal. Where a family does not select this option, the waitlist application will be archived
- Should a family wish to join the waitlist again, a new application must be submitted. Prior applications will not be considered
- Families can decline up to three offers made. Where the third offer is declined, the waitlist application will be archived

### Ballot System

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

### 5. RELATED RESOURCES AND DOCUMENTS

Allocating Education and Care places procedure

Allocating Kindergarten places procedure

### 6. SOURCES

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

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

Australian Government Department of Education – Managing childcare places <https://www.education.gov.au/child-care-package/child-care-provider-handbook/enrolling-children/managing-child-care-places>