POLICY NO.13: ENROLMENT AND ORIENTATION
Mandatory – Quality Area 6

PURPOSE
This policy will outline:
- the criteria for enrolment at Pines Learning Childcare
- the process to be followed when enrolling a child at Pines Learning Childcare, and the basis on which places within the programs will be allocated
- procedures for the orientation of new families and children into Pines Learning Childcare.

1. VALUES
Pines Learning Childcare is committed to:
- equal access for all children
- meeting the needs of the local community
- maintaining confidentiality in relation to all information provided on enrolment forms
- ensuring all families are welcomed and receive an effective orientation into the service.

2. SCOPE
This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Certified Supervisors, educators, staff and parents/guardians who wish to enrol or have already enrolled their child at Pines Learning Childcare.

Pines Learning Childcare staffing will accommodate up to 24 children at any one time however we hold a 28 place Licence.

3. 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)).

The criteria used to determine the allocation of places will vary from service to service, but is generally based on a service’s philosophy, values and beliefs, and the provisions of the Equal Opportunity Act 2012. The Victorian Government requires funded organisations to ensure that their policies and procedures promote equal opportunity for all children.
Childcare services providing approved care (refer to Definitions) must abide by the Family Assistance Legislation Amendment (Child Care Rebate) Act 2011 (refer to Legislation and standards) and the Commonwealth Government’s Priority for allocating places in child care services (refer to Sources).

**Legislation and standards**

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999
- 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, 177, 183
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)
- Family Assistance Legislation Amendment (Child Care Rebate) Act 2011
- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 6: Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities
  - Standard 6.1: Respectful and supportive relationships with families are developed and maintained
  - Element 6.1.1: There is an effective enrolment and orientation process for families
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)

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


**4. DEFINITIONS**

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy. For commonly used terms e.g. Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Regulatory Authority etc. refer to the General Definitions section of this manual.

**Approved care:** Care given by a service provider that has been approved by the Family Assistance Office to receive Child Care Benefit payments on behalf of eligible families. Most long day care, family day care, before-and-after school care, vacation care, some occasional care and some in-home care childcare services are approved providers. Details are available at: [www.familyassist.gov.au/payments/family-assistance-payments/child-care-benefit/](http://www.familyassist.gov.au/payments/family-assistance-payments/child-care-benefit/)

**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 enrolment form.

The National Law and National Regulations do not specify a minimum age limit for an authorised nominee. Each service will need to determine if a person under the age of 18 is able to be an authorised nominee and, if so, what constitutes the minimum acceptable age at that service.

**Child Care Benefit (CCB):** A Commonwealth Government payment to help families who use either approved or registered childcare services. All eligible families can receive some Child Care Benefit. Details are available at: [www.familyassist.gov.au/payments/family-assistance-payments/child-care-benefit/](http://www.familyassist.gov.au/payments/family-assistance-payments/child-care-benefit/)

**Children with additional needs:** Children whose development or physical condition requires specialist support or children who may need additional support due to language, cultural or economic circumstances (refer to Inclusion and Equity Policy).
Enrolment application form: A form to apply for a place at the service.

Enrolment application 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.

Enrolment form: A form that collects contact details, and personal and medical information from parents/guardians about their child. This is completed after a place has been offered by the service and accepted by the applicant. The information on this form is placed on the child’s enrolment record (see below) and is kept confidential by the service.

Enrolment record: Contains information on each child, as required under the National Regulations, including contact details, names of authorised nominees (refer to Definitions), names of persons authorised to consent to medical treatment or to authorise administration of medication, names of persons authorised to take the child outside the service, details of any court orders, personal and health information including specific healthcare needs, medical management plans and dietary restrictions etc. (Regulations 160, 161, 162). This information is kept confidential by the service.

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

5. SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES

Sources
- Child Care Benefit (Eligibility of Child Care Services for Approval and Continued Approval) Determination 2000:

Service policies
- Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations Policy
- Complaints and Grievances Policy
- Fees Policy
- Inclusion and Equity Policy
- Privacy and Confidentiality Policy

6. POLICY PROCEDURES

6.1 The Approved Provider is responsible for:

i. Of the 24 places we aim to reserve up to 3 places per day (depending on availability and at the discretion of the Nominated Supervisor) for parents/guardians/grandparents attending classes at Pines Learning. If these places are not utilised after the first two weeks of each term they will be offered on a casual basis for the remainder of that term

ii. appointing a person to be responsible for the enrolment process and the day-to-day implementation of this policy

iii. providing opportunities (in consultation with the Nominated Supervisor and educators) for interested families to attend the service during operational hours to observe the program and become familiar with the service prior to their child commencing in the program
iv. ensuring that enrolment forms (refer to Definitions) comply with the requirements of Regulations 160, 161, 162

v. reviewing the enrolment form to determine its effectiveness in meeting the regulatory and management requirements of the service

vi. ensuring that enrolment records (refer to Definitions) 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 (Regulation 183)

vii. ensuring that the orientation program and plans meet the individual needs of children and families, and comply with DEECD funding criteria

viii. reviewing the orientation processes for new families and children to ensure the objectives of this policy are met

ix. ensuring that parents/guardians of a child attending the service can enter the service premises at any time that the child is being educated and cared for, 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 or educators under the Law (Regulation 157).

6.2 The person responsible for the enrolment process is accountable for the following:

i. providing enrolment application forms

ii. collating enrolments

iii. maintaining a waiting list

iv. collecting, receipting and banking enrolment fees

v. offering places in line with this policy and criteria for priority access, and providing relevant paperwork to families in accordance with this policy

vi. providing a quarterly report to the Approved Provider regarding the status of enrolments and any difficulties encountered

vii. storing completed enrolment application forms in a lockable file (refer to Privacy and Confidentiality Policy) as soon as is practicable

viii. complying with the Privacy and Confidentiality Policy of the service

ix. providing a copy of the Enrolment and Orientation Policy with the enrolment application form.

6.3 The Nominated Supervisor, Certified Supervisor and other educators are responsible for:

i. responding to enrolment enquiries on a day-to-day basis and referring people to the person responsible for the enrolment process, as required

ii. reviewing enrolment applications to identify children with additional needs (refer to Definitions and the Inclusion and Equity Policy)

iii. responding to parent/guardian enquiries regarding their child’s readiness for the program that they are considering enrolling their child in

iv. ensuring that enrolment forms are completed prior to the child’s commencement at the service

v. ensuring that parents/guardians of a child attending the service can enter the service premises at any time that the child is being educated and cared for, 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 or educators under the Law (Regulation 157)

vi. developing strategies to assist new families to:

   a. feel welcomed into the service

   b. become familiar with service policies and procedures

   c. share information about their family beliefs, values and culture

   d. share their understanding of their child’s strengths, interests, abilities and needs

   e. discuss the values and expectations they hold in relation to their child’s learning

vii. discussing the individual child’s needs with parents/guardians and developing an orientation program to assist them to settle into the program
viii. encouraging parents/guardians to:
   a. stay with their child as long as required during the settling in period
   b. make contact with educators and carers at the service, when required
ix. assisting parents/guardians to develop and maintain a routine for saying goodbye to their child
x. providing comfort and reassurance to children who are showing signs of distress when separating from family members
xi. sharing information with parents/guardians regarding their child’s progress with regard to settling in to the service
xii. discussing support services for children with parents/guardians, where required
xiii. complying with the service’s Privacy and Confidentiality Policy in relation to the collection and management of a child’s enrolment information.

6.4 Parents/guardians are responsible for:
   i. reading and complying with this Enrolment and Orientation Policy
   ii. completing enrolment forms prior to their child’s commencement at the service
   iii. ensuring that all required information is provided to the service
   iv. updating information by notifying the service of any changes as they occur.

   Students, while at the service, are responsible for following this policy and its procedures.

6.5 Evaluation
In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the Approved Provider will:
   i. regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness
   ii. monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy
   iii. keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice
   iv. revise the policy and procedures as part of the service’s policy review cycle, or as required
   v. notify parents/guardians at least 14 days before making any changes to this policy or its procedures.

6.6 Attachments
   i. Attachment 1: General enrolment procedures
ATTACHMENT 1
General enrolment procedures

1. Application for a place
- Enrolment application forms are available from the service.
- A separate application form must be completed for each child, and for each proposed year of attendance at the service.
- To facilitate the inclusion of all children into the program, enrolment applications should clearly identify any additional or specific needs of the child (refer to Inclusion and Equity Policy).
- Completed enrolment application forms are to be forwarded to the person responsible for the enrolment process at the service, at Pines Learning.
- Access to completed enrolment application forms will be restricted to the person responsible for the enrolment process, the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor and educators at the service, unless otherwise specified by the Approved Provider.
- Applications will be entered on the waiting list using the eligibility and priority of access criteria.

2. Offer of places
- Places will be allocated to existing Pines Learning Childcare Clients and Pines Learning Students and then new clients.
- Enrolments will be confirmed by Childcare Manager/Nominated Supervisor or Certified Supervisor.
- Parents/guardians who do not wish to accept the offer of a place, or intend to withdraw their enrolment, are requested to notify the Approved Provider, or the person responsible for managing the enrolment process at the service, as soon as possible.
- An enrolment form and other relevant information will be provided after the place is confirmed by the Childcare Manager and accepted by parent/guardian.
- A copy of the child’s birth certificate must be submitted with all enrolment forms.
- Note: Places will not be allocated to children until any substantial debt 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).