

ENROLMENT AND ORIENTATION

Quality Area 6: Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities

AIM

Beacon Hill Community Kindergarten (BHCK) aims to provide fair and equitable entry to children from the local community. BHCK believes that all children have the right to access an Early Childhood experience prior to the commencement of school and aims to give a preschool experience to as many children as possible.

RATIONALE

This policy outlines the procedures for offering enrolments, sending out the enrolment form for completion including: bond deposit, information relating to the child and family, privacy statement and consent forms, and orientation session information.

GOALS

Enrolment and orientation procedures form the foundation for strong relationships between families and Beacon Hill Community Kindergarten (BHCK) and promote a quality experience of education and care for children.

IMPLEMENTATION

Families are offered a place for their child in order of their position on the waiting list for that year, in accordance with the *Priority of Access Policy*.

Waiting List

Families can register their children on the Waiting List on or after their child's second (2nd) birthday by completing an *Application for Waiting List* form.

A copy of the Enrolment Policy is provided with the *Application for Waiting List* form together with an information document *About Beacon Hill Community Kindergarten* and the *Priority of Access Policy*.

A child's name is entered on the waiting list in date order of receipt of a completed and signed *Application for Waiting List*, a non-refundable administration fee, the sighting of an original or a photocopy of the child's Birth Certificate and the child's Immunisation History Statement.

A computer-generated receipt is issued and forwarded by email to confirm the place on the Waiting List.

Being placed on the waiting list **does not guarantee an enrolment offer**. Therefore, parents are advised to place their child's name on waiting lists at other Centres in the community.

The family is responsible for ensuring BHCK is notified of any changes to phone numbers, email or address contact details.

When a clear decision cannot be made about when school entry will occur a child may be entered on the waiting list for both the year they turn 4 and the year they turn 5.

Application for Waiting List Form

The *Application for Waiting List* form collects all relevant information regarding additional needs, gender, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, family structure, economic status and linguistic backgrounds to enable us to apply for State Government funding and to best meet the needs of individual families.

Staff Children

Children of centre staff have the right to be registered on the waiting list and are subject to the same criteria as all other children. Hours of attendance will be the same as for other enrolled children. The child will not be assigned to the same class in which their parent is a teacher.

Enrolment Offers

BHCK is licensed to offer places to 41 children/ day. Offers will be made to 40 children per day and an additional space will be held for emergency situations. All enrolments are subject to the Director's discretion, in accordance with priority of access guidelines.

The Director and Administrator are responsible for offers of enrolment. These will be made by the end of Term 3 each year and are offered in chronological order of the wait list applications received and in accordance with the priority of access guidelines. Successful applicants will be forwarded an Enrolment Pack.

Offers will first be sent to already enrolled children that have indicated they will return to BHCK the following year.

The priority of access then follows:

- children who are at least 4 years old on or before the 31 July in that preschool year and not enrolled or registered at a school
- children who are at least 3 years old on or before 31 July in that preschool year and from low income and/or Aboriginal families
- children with English language needs
- children with disability and additional needs
- children who are at risk of significant harm (from a child protection perspective).

There is no order of priority assigned to the list of points above. Priority must be given to the groups outlined above before any other groups, including non-equity three year olds.

When the waitlist is exhausted of children meeting the above criteria, non-equity children (those turning 4 after 31 July) will be offered places. These children will pay higher daily fee (as per funding guidelines).

Applicants must return the completed Enrolment Pack and non-refundable deposit to BHCK by the due date to secure their place.

Children on the waiting list not offered a place (including those who meet the priority of access guidelines) will remain on the waiting list for future enrolment as vacancies arise, should they request to do so.

Siblings of children in attendance at the kindergarten will be registered on the waiting list and are subject to the same criteria as all other children.

Enrolment Form

The enrolment form must be completed by each enrolling family before the child commences at BHCK. At enrolment, parents are encouraged to provide any further information about their child that will support continuity of care between home and BHCK.

The enrolment record will collect data about the child and family relevant to the child's enrolment, safety whilst at the service, special considerations, authorisations and medical information.

Consent forms need to be completed by families and will be collected providing BHCK with consent to pass on relevant information to NSW Dept of Education as part of our Funding agreement terms and conditions.

Immunisation Documentation

In order to complete enrolment parents/guardians **MUST** provide an approved immunisation form that shows that the child:

- Is fully immunised for their age; or
- Has a medical reason not to be vaccinated; or

- Is on a recognised catch-up schedule if the child has fallen behind with their immunisations.

NB. Overseas immunisation records will NOT be accepted. Overseas records must be assessed by an immunisation provider who will transfer the information to the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR). Parents can then request an Immunisation History Statement.

Outstanding Fees

Wait List applications will not be accepted if a family has outstanding fees from a previously enrolled child at the Kindergarten. Once outstanding debts are cleared, the application for Wait List will be accepted.

Information for Parents

If a parent wishes to discuss their child's needs with the Director, they should contact the BHCK office to arrange an appointment with the Director before their Orientation Session.

Child Custody Orders

If a child is subject to a custody order, the necessary documentation needs to be supplied to the Director, including methods of how to identify the person involved.

Class Groups

Children attending the Kindergarten will be allocated one of four classes. Each class has a maximum of 20 children with a child to educator ratio of 1:7. The Room Leader in each class is a university trained teacher, supported by 2 other qualified staff.

Orientation

As part of the enrolment process all families are invited to attend an Orientation Session at the Kindergarten which will take place during Term 4 of the year prior to commencement. Attendance is highly recommended as it means that families and children can begin to form relationships with the Educators who will work with their children and also learn more about participation in the Beacon Hill Kindergarten community.

As well as families learning more about the Kindergarten, the children will begin to build familiarity with the environment, other children and teachers. They will be provided with a hat, t-shirt and morning tea bag for their first year of attendance.

Additional orientation sessions may be offered to children and families with additional needs that may impact on the families ability to settle, feel comfortable and have a smooth transition into BHCK.

A social story will be sent to each child along with their start time letter. This will generally occur in January or prior to their commencement at BHCK.

LINKS TO POLICIES

Confidentiality

Philosophy

Retention of Records

Priority of Access

Privacy Statement

LINKS TO

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010

Education and Law Care Service National Regulations: Regulations 168(2)(k), 160, 161, 162, 177, 183

Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)

Public Health Act 2010 NO 127: Part 5 Division 4, Section 87

Health records and Information Privacy Act 2002 (NSW)

Family Assistance Law www.dss.gov.au

SOURCES

Start Strong Guide lines for Community Preschools- Priority of access

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/early-childhood-education/operating-an-early-childhood-education-service/grants-and-funded-programs/start-strong/start-strong-guidelines>

Public Health Act 2010 no 127

www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/#/view/act/2010/127/full

CELA

www.cela.org.au