

Orange Grove Public School Preschool

Enrolment, Orientation and Transition Procedures

Associated National Quality Standards	Education and Care Services National Law or Regulation	Associated department policy, procedure or guideline
6.1	Regulation 160	Leading and operating department preschool guidelines
6.2	Regulation 161	
7.1	Regulation 162 National Law S. 175	Department Preschool enrolment procedures: Implementation document for Enrolment of Students in NSW Government schools policy
Pre-reading and reference documents		
ACECQA National Quality Standard Information Sheet: Enrolment and Orientation Application to enrol in a NSW Government preschool		

Record of procedure's review
Date of review and who was involved
07/04/2021 - Lauren Tinslay, family feedback survey 15/04/2021 - Kate Jones
Key changes made and reason/s why
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adding roles and responsibilities for principal, supervisor and educators to improve clarity of who is responsible for each task. - Changing order of information to improve access to necessary information. - Combination of enrolment procedures with orientation and transition procedures to make information more clear for families. - Removal of fees procedure to separate document to match regulatory requirements. - Update of changes to enrolment and expression of interest procedures based on review. - Update of changes to transition process after review.
Record of communication of significant changes to relevant stakeholders
15/04/2021 - communication with Kasey Hennes 21/04/2021 - communicated to the P&C

Staff roles and responsibilities	
School principal	<p>The principal as Nominated Supervisor, Educational Leader and Responsible Person holds primary responsibility for the preschool.</p> <p>The principal is responsible for ensuring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the preschool is compliant with legislative standards related to this procedure at all times • all staff involved in the preschool are familiar with and implement this procedure • all procedures are current and reviewed as part of a continuous cycle of self- assessment.
Preschool supervisor	<p>The preschool supervisor supports the principal in their role and is responsible for leading the review of this procedure through a process of self-assessment and critical reflection.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reflecting on how this procedure is informed by relevant recognised authorities • planning and discussing ways to engage with families and communities, including how changes are communicated. • developing strategies to induct all staff when procedures are updated to ensure practice is embedded.
Preschool educators including K-6 staff, relief staff and casual staff	<p>The preschool educators are responsible for working with leadership to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all staff in the preschool and daily practices comply with this procedure • storing this procedure in the preschool, and making it accessible to all staff, families, visitors and volunteers • being actively involved in the review of this procedure, at least annually, or as required • ensuring the details of this procedure's review are documented. • analysing complaints, incidents or issues and what the implications are for the updates to this procedure.

Enrolment

Following the [Department of Education Preschool Enrolment Procedure](#), children can enrol in a department preschool from the beginning of the school year if they turn four years of age on, or before, 31 July that year.

Most preschool children who are temporary visa holders enrol in department preschools under the same conditions as Australian citizens. However, children on some temporary visas such as visitor/tourist visas are not eligible.

Our preschool offers two enrolment patterns to children across the week to meet the requirements of Universal Access - 600 hours of quality education and care in the year

before commencing school. These are recorded as Group A and Group B on the expression of interest form. The groups attend as follows:

Semester 1 (Terms 1 and 2) – Group A: Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday

Group B: Thursday and Friday

Semester 2 (Terms 3 and 4) - Group A: Monday and Tuesday

Group B: Wednesday, Thursday and Friday

Please note: All Group B families are expected to pick up the third day in Semester 2 to satisfy the required 600 hours for the Universal Access to preschool agreement.

Orange Grove Public School Preschool caters to 40 children across the week, over the two enrolment patterns, with 20 in each group.

Department preschools enrol children for one year only, the year before they start school. In exceptional circumstances, the principal may consider an additional year of attendance after consultation with the parent/carer, the preschool teacher and other relevant personnel. If this is the case, the child is to be considered as a new application and prioritised in the same way as all new applications.

Expression of Interest

As Orange Grove Preschool usually has a higher number of applications to enrol than places to offer to children, families need to submit an expression of interest to be considered for enrolment at Orange Grove Public School Preschool. Expressions of interest for the preschool open on the first day of Term 2 in the year before enrolment.

Prior to this date, the preschool holds a community open evening for prospective families to provide information about the preschool operation, governance, philosophy and program as well as inform families about the expression of interest and enrolment procedures. In line with COVID-19 restrictions, this session has been held via Zoom with all members of the Preschool Team in 2020 and 2021.

Families can get an expression of interest form on or after the first day of Term 2 by visiting or calling the school office. Expression of interest forms must be submitted by families to the school office before the due date, which is the last day of Term 2. Expression of interest forms are stored in the school office until the Preschool enrolment panel meets.

Information collected through the expression of interest form includes,

- Child's name, gender and date of birth
- the family's home address
- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin
- Whether the family has a Government Health Care Card
- Details about whether the child's immunisations are up to date
- Details of the child's parents and/or carers

- Details about any additional needs, medical conditions or other factors about the child.
- The families' preference for enrolment pattern

In addition, families are asked to provide the following documentation along with their expression of interest:

- I. Documentation regarding [immunisation](#).
- II. Proof of address – eg. Utility bill
- III. Proof of child identify - e.g. Birth certificate or passport
- IV. Health Care Card (if required)
- V. Evidence of disability or learning need to confirm diagnosis– e.g letter from occupational therapist (if required)

The expression of interest form is reviewed each year by the Preschool Team prior to the start of Term 2. Changes to the form are made based on input from families and critical reflection about the expression of interest process. Changes to the process are communicated to families through the community open evening session and when they contact the school office to collect a form.

Enrolment Panel

Following this expression of interest period, a panel is formed to consider the submissions. A panel is formed at the end of the Expression of Interest period and will consist of the principal, preschool teacher, executive member, and a school community member. All panel members must declare any conflict of interest with regard to any applications.

When considering expressions of interest, the panel follows the [Department of Education Preschool Enrolment Procedure](#) which gives priority of enrolment to children who fall under the following categories:

- Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children
- children living in low socioeconomic circumstances
- children unable to access other early childhood services due to disadvantage or financial hardship.

After children who fall under these categories have been offered enrolment, the panel then considers other applications to fulfil any remaining preschool spaces.

Children do not have to reside within the school's catchment zone to attend the preschool, however the preschool enrolment panel will prioritise enrolment to children in the following order (after the above priorities):

1. children living within the school's enrolment designated intake area
2. children living outside the school's designated intake area and who have siblings enrolled in the school.

3. children living outside the school's enrolment designated intake area.

Orange Grove Public School preschool generally receives more expressions of interest from children living within the school's enrolment catchment than there are spaces to offer in the preschool, so applications from within the school's catchment are further prioritised by date of birth. **Older children are prioritised over younger children.** If applications for children living outside the school's enrolment catchment are considered for enrolment, priority is also given by date of birth, with older children receiving priority over younger children.

A gender balance is taken into consideration when collating the enrolments into program groups. There is no priority given according to the date the applications are received or whether children have siblings who attend Orange Grove Public School, other than specified above.

If any applications remain after the number of spaces in the preschool have been filled, a waitlist will be formed following the above priority procedures. Children on the waitlist may be offered an available space in either Preschool groups at any point from the date of the enrolment panel and throughout the following year.

First round offers are made via email to families whose children have been allocated a space in the preschool. There is a 2-week period for families to accept or decline an offer of enrolment. School office staff collect responses. After the 2 week period, where families have not accepted the offer to enrol, a second round of offers will be made via email to children on the waitlist in order of priority. Offers will be made based on availability in either group, not based on the preference indicated on the expression of interest form.

After the second-round offers have been made, all families who did not receive an offer to enrol are informed by email that their application was not successful. Families are informed that their application has been placed on a waitlist and they may receive an offer to enrol at any time, if a space becomes available before the end of the following year. The waitlist is valid for the year of application only.

Where families inform the school office that they no longer wish to enrol at preschool after the initial offer rounds, additional spaces may be offered to children on the waitlist. Offers will be made based on availability in either group, not based on the preference indicated on the expression of interest form.

Enrolment Process

Families offered a position in the preschool for the following year are provided with an enrolment pack by the school office. In the pack, families are asked to complete the "[Application to enrol in a NSW Government preschool](#)" form and supply the required supporting documentation listed in the form, if not already provided as part of the expression of interest.

School office staff check the enrolment forms are filled correctly and verify the supporting documentation for each child. School office staff contact families to rectify any errors or incomplete documentation before their enrolment is accepted. The principal reviews the enrolment records for each child to verify if the enrolment is accepted.

Storage and use of enrolment documents

Enrolment documents are collected and stored by the school office, on site. Critical information about each child, such as emergency contact information, authorised collectors, any non-authorisations and medical conditions is printed and stored in the preschool office, in specific folders and locations on the wall.

Orientation/Transition to Preschool

The preschool family handbook provides families with general information about the preschool and summarises key preschool procedures. The handbook is reviewed annually by the preschool team based on critical reflection and feedback from current families collected via survey.

Children and families are supported to transition into preschool through the Transition to Preschool process.

Families of enrolled children are invited to attend an information session in Term 4, the year before their child begins preschool. The session is presented by the school principal, preschool supervisor and preschool educators. Information about the operation of the preschool, the governance, educational program as well as any day-to-day information is shared with families. Families are given a pack including the preschool handbook, relevant authorisation forms and information about healthy lunchboxes. This year the pack also included a social story directed at children containing photos of the preschool along with a story outlining the different routines and activities available during the preschool day. Information is provided to families at this session about the transition interviews and orientation visit, which they can book in for using an online booking system. Families are notified about the staggered starting procedures on their child's first days of preschool and given a letter with the date and time of their child's allocated time slot.

Families of enrolled children can book to attend a 30-minute one-on-one transition to preschool interview with one of the preschool educators. Through this interview, families share information about their child's needs, interests, development, personality, cultural background, toileting needs, sleep and rest requirements, dietary information, medical conditions as well as goals they have for their child's year at preschool. Families also have the opportunity to ask the educators any questions they may have. Educators and family members use this meeting to plan for each child's smooth transition to preschool.

After the transition interview, families and children attend a preschool orientation visit on site. Children attend the orientation visit with their parent or carer alongside other children who will be in their group at preschool. A tour of the preschool is offered to families and children as well as a chance to play in the spaces and ask any questions.

Educators observe children's play and interactions with the preschool environment and other children to help them learn about each child. This information is then used for initial planning for each child's transition.

Orange Grove Public School Preschool staggers the starting dates for children on their first day of preschool. Small groups of children start at different times on each day over a period of 2 days for each group to allow families and children more time to settle and a greater ratio of educators to children on their first time at preschool. Information about staggered start times is provided at the information evening and transition interview.

Children with Additional Needs, Medical Conditions and in Foster Care

Children who have been identified in the expression of interest form as having additional needs, a medical condition or in foster care are involved in a more intensive transition program.

Families of these children are invited for a more extensive transition interview which may also involve the school counsellor, learning support teacher and/or any external professionals involved in the child's life. The interview will involve gathering information about the child's specific needs and planning for any adjustments that may need to be made to support the child. This will include any relevant reports, assessments or plans that have previously been made for the child. Additional meetings may be required, based on the child's needs, to plan for their transition to preschool and Individual Education Plan (IEP).

When required, and in the case of all children who have medical conditions, a risk management plan will be created to address risks relating to the child's medical condition and/or behaviour.

If a child may require an application for additional funding based on their disability, the school principal, learning and support Teacher and school counsellor are responsible for collection of documentation and application to the Department of Education. This would involve a separate meeting to gather the necessary information for the application. In some cases, the child may be eligible for enrolment or dual enrolment in a Department Early Intervention Preschool.

Some children will require a tailored transition to preschool. This may include additional visits to the preschool in the year prior to starting preschool and / or commencing on reduced hours or in the company of a parent or therapist. Decisions about this process will be made by the preschool supervisor and educators based on consultation with their family at the initial transition meeting and any further follow-up planning.

In some situations, at the Principal's discretion, it may be necessary for a child to commence preschool on a partial enrolment to support a smooth transition. This would be applicable for a child with a diagnosed disability with high support needs. This is done with the intention that the child's hours would gradually be increased as the child settled, and adjustments were put in place.