

ENROLMENT AND ORIENTATION POLICY



PURPOSE

This policy outlines:

- ▶ the criteria for enrolment at Sparkways Early Learning
- ▶ the process to be followed when enrolling a child at Sparkways Early Learning
- ▶ the basis on which places within the programs will be allocated
- ▶ procedures for the orientation of new families and children into Sparkways Early Learning
- ▶ processes to ensure compliance with legislative and DET funding requirements in relation to the enrolment of children in early childhood education and care services.
- ▶ processes to ensure compliance with legislative and 2021 Free Kindergarten initiative in relation to the enrolment of children in early childhood education and care services.

POLICY STATEMENT VALUES

Sparkways Early Learning is committed to:

- ▶ equal access for all eligible children
- ▶ meeting the needs of the local community
- ▶ supporting families to meet the requirements for enrolment through the provision of information
- ▶ maintaining confidentiality in relation to all information provided for enrolment
- ▶ ensuring all families are welcomed and receive an effective orientation into the service.
- ▶ supporting the Victorian Government's 2021 Free Kindergarten initiative .

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, early childhood teachers, educators, staff and parents/guardians who wish to enrol or have already enrolled their child at Sparkways Early Learning.

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)).

In response to the global coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, the Victorian Government is investing up to \$169.6 million in early childhood education by providing free kindergarten to each enrolled child participating in a funded kindergarten program in 2021. This includes all children attending funded kindergarten programs in the year before school (four-year-old kindergarten) and services offering funded three-year-old kindergarten. The initiative also includes reduced fees for children enrolled in a funded kindergarten program in a long day care centre and for children attending unfunded three-year-old programs in sessional kindergarten services.

Where demand is higher than availability, Approved Provider's must adhere to their eligibility and 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 The 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 central enrolment schemes are required to comply with the enrolment procedures of that scheme.

Document Control	Filename: Enrolment and Orientation	Page 1 of 15
Authorisation: CEO	Administered: Early Learning	
Date: May 2021	Version: 1	Next Revision Due Date: January 2022

Child care services providing approved childcare (refer to Definitions) must abide by the Family Assistance Legislation Amendment (Jobs for families childcare package) Act 2017 (refer to Legislation and standards) and the Commonwealth Government's Priority for allocating places in child care services (refer to Sources).

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 (refer to Definitions). To meet the Child Care Subsidy immunisation requirements, children must be immunised according to the National Immunisation Program Schedule (refer to Sources) set out by the Australian Government Department of Health.

Legislation and standards

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- ▶ A New Tax System (Family Assistance) (Administration) 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, 168, 170, 171, 177, 181, 183
- ▶ Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)
- ▶ Family Assistance Legislation Amendment (Jobs for Families Child Care Package) Act 2017
- ▶ National Quality Standard, Quality Area 6: Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities
- ▶ Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 (Vic)
- ▶ Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2019 (Vic)
- ▶ Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)

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.

Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) Immunisation History Statement: is the only form of acceptable evidence of immunisation. The AIR is a national register administered by Medicare that records all vaccinations given in Australia, including to children. Parents/carers must provide a copy of their most recent AIR Immunisation History Statement, which shows that the child is up to date with their immunisations upon enrolment and when a child has received or been due to receive a vaccination while attending the service. In the case of medical contraindication, an authorised medical practitioner completes and signs a Medical Exemption Form and supplies it to the AIR. In order to confirm enrolment, the Immunisation History Statement must show the child is up to date with the vaccines they can have, medical contraindication and indicate the due date for the next vaccinations the child is able to receive in the future if applicable.

Document Control	Filename: Enrolment and Orientation	Page 2 of 15
Authorisation: CEO	Administered: Early Learning	
Date: May 2021	Version: 1	Next Revision Due Date: January 2022

Approved child care providers: providers that operate services that have Australian Government approval to receive Child Care Subsidy (refer to Definitions) on behalf of eligible parents. Approved child care providers include centre-based day care, including long day care and occasional care, family day care, outside school hours care and in-home care.

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 consider a risk assessment on an individual basis 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 Subsidy (CCS): A Commonwealth Government means tested subsidy to assist eligible families with the cost of childcare. Payments are paid directly to approved childcare providers (refer to Definitions). Further information can be found at: <https://www.education.gov.au/child-care-subsidy-0>

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).

Deferral: When a child does not attend in the 2021 when they are eligible for a funded kindergarten place or is officially withdrawn from a service prior to the April data collection. DET considers that this child has not accessed a year of funded kindergarten and is therefore not eligible for Victorian Government Free Kindergarten initiative in 2022.

Eligible child: as defined by the Kindergarten Funding Guide; a child that is at least four years old on April 30th in the year of enrolment; enrolled for at least 15 hours per week or 600 hours per year in a 4-year-old program; and not enrolled at a funded kindergarten program at another service. Or a child that is at least three years old on April 30th in the year of enrolment and is enrolled in a funded 3-year-old kindergarten program. Any child that is enrolled in an early childhood and education and care service must have an AIR Immunisation History Statement that indicate that the child is fully vaccinated for their age or who qualify for the 16-weeks grace period.

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, which is not applicable in 2021. Any application fee made prior to the commencement of Term One will be reimbursed to families.

Enrolment application form: A form to apply for a place at the service (see Attachment 3: Sample Enrolment Application Form)

Enrolment record: The collection of documents which contains information on each child as required under the National Regulations (Regulations 160, 161, 162) including but not limited to parent details; emergency contacts; authorised nominee; details of any court orders; and health information including immunisation status. Enrolment records are stored securely in the service due to their confidential nature.

Fees: A charge for program hours over and above the 15 funded hours per week (600 per year) and/or wrap around care.

Document Control	Filename: Enrolment and Orientation	Page 3 of 15
Authorisation: CEO	Administered: Early Learning	
Date: May 2021	Version: 1	Next Revision Due Date: January 2022

Free Kindergarten 2021: Kindergarten programs for four-year-old and eligible three-year-old children in Victorian Government funded services will be free in 2021 as part of a \$169.6 million investment in early childhood education in the 2020/21 Victorian State Budget. Free Kinder forms part of the economic recovery support for Victorians as we recover from the global coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The initiative is for 2021 only.

Grace period: allows specific categories of children of families experiencing vulnerability and disadvantage to enrol and attend the service without an AIR Immunisation History Statement (refer to Definitions) or when the statement is assessed as not being up-to-date. Services complete the grace period eligibility form with families during enrolment, and keep a copy with the child's enrolment record. The 16-week grace period starts on the first day of the child's attendance at the service. During the grace period, the service is required to take reasonable steps to obtain the AIR Immunisation History Statement (refer to Definitions) and to encourage families to access immunisation services.

Priority of access: in instances where more eligible children apply for a place at a service than there are places available, the service must allocate spaces using the criteria outlined in The Kindergarten Funding Guide (see Attachment 1: Eligibility and priority of access criteria for a 3 and 4-year-old funder kindergarten program), or if in receipt of the CCS, comply with the Commonwealth Government's policy for allocating places (see Source).

SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES

Sources

- ▶ Australian Childhood Immunisation Register: www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/medicare/australian-childhood-immunisation-register
- ▶ Australian Government Department of Health, National Immunisation Program Schedule: <https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/immunisation/immunisation-throughout-life/national-immunisation-program-schedule>
- ▶ Department of Health and Human Services, Immunisation enrolment toolkit for early childhood education and care service: <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/immunisation/vaccination-children/no-jab-no-play/immunisation-enrolment-toolkit>
- ▶ Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: www.acecqa.gov.au/
- ▶ Guide to the National Quality Standard: www.acecqa.gov.au/
- ▶ Free Kinder 2021 – refer to Frequently Asked Questions at the bottom of the web page. <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/funding/Pages/freekinder2021.asp>
- ▶ Priority of Access Guidelines for child care service: <https://www.dese.gov.au/uncategorised/resources/priority-access-guidelines-child-care-services>
- ▶ 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): <https://www.education.gov.au/child-care-legislation>
- ▶ The Kindergarten Funding Guide (Department of Education and Training):
- ▶ www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/funding/Pages/kinderfundingcriteria.aspx
- ▶ Victorian Department of Health: www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation

Document Control	Filename: Enrolment and Orientation	Page 4 of 15
Authorisation: CEO	Administered: Early Learning	
Date: May 2021	Version: 1	Next Revision Due Date: January 2022

Service policies

- ▶ Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations Policy
- ▶ Complaints and Grievances Policy
- ▶ Dealing with Infectious Disease Policy
- ▶ Fees Policy
- ▶ Inclusion and Equity Policy
- ▶ Privacy and Confidentiality Policy

Document Control	Filename: Enrolment and Orientation	Page 5 of 15
Authorisation: CEO	Administered: Early Learning	
Date: May 2021	Version: 1	Next Revision Due Date: January 2022

PROCEDURES

The Approved Provider is responsible for:

- ▶ determining the criteria for priority of access to programs at Sparkways Early Learning, as described in The Kindergarten Funding Guide; and/or as describe under the Family Assistance Law for CCS recipients, and the service's philosophy (refer also to Attachment 1 – Eligibility and priority of access criteria for 3 and 4-year-old funded kindergarten program)
- ▶ considering any barriers to access that may exist, developing procedures that ensure all eligible families are aware of, and are able to access, an early childhood program
- ▶ complying with the Inclusion and Equity Policy
- ▶ appointing a person to be responsible for the enrolment process and the day-to-day implementation of this policy (refer also to Attachment 2 – General enrolment procedures and Attachment 3 – Sample enrolment application form)
- ▶ 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
- ▶ providing parents/guardians with information about the requirements of the law for enrolment, locating and accessing immunisation services and obtaining the AIR Immunisation History Statement (refer to Definitions) required for enrolment and Free Kindergarten initiative information
- ▶ ensuring parents/guardians are only offered a tentative place until the AIR Immunisation History Statement (refer to Definitions) has been assessed as being acceptable or the child has been assessed as eligible for the grace period
- ▶ assessing the child's immunisation documentation as defined by the Immunisation Enrolment Toolkit for early childhood education and care services prior to enrolment to determine if the child's vaccination status complies with requirements or whether the child is eligible for the 16-week grace period (refer to Definitions)
- ▶ ensuring that only children whose AIR Immunisation History Statement (refer to Definitions) has been assessed as being acceptable or who are eligible for the grace period (refer to Definitions) have a confirmed place in the program
- ▶ advising parents/guardians who do not have an AIR Immunisation History Statement (refer to Definitions) and who are not eligible for the grace period that their children are not able to attend the service and referring them to immunisation services (see Attachment 4 – Letter for parents/guardians without acceptable immunisation documentation)
- ▶ taking reasonable steps to obtain an up to date AIR Immunisation History Statement (refer to Definitions) from a parent/guardian of a child enrolled under a grace period within 16 weeks from when the child begins attending (Note: the child can continue to attend the service if acceptable immunisation documentation is not obtained).
- ▶ taking reasonable steps to obtain an up to date AIR Immunisation History Statement (refer to Definitions) from all parents/guardians after enrolment, twice per calendar year, timing reminders to comply with the maximum seven-month interval (Public Health and Wellbeing Regulation 107, Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 Section 143E)
- ▶ ensuring that the enrolment record (refer to Definitions) complies with the requirements of Regulations 160, 161, 162 and that it effectively meets the management requirements of the service
- ▶ 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 (1a) (2d))

Document Control	Filename: Enrolment and Orientation	Page 6 of 15
Authorisation: CEO	Administered: Early Learning	
Date: May 2021	Version: 1	Next Revision Due Date: January 2022

- ▶ ensuring that the orientation program and plans meet the individual needs of children and families, and comply with DET funding criteria
- ▶ reviewing the orientation processes for new families and children to ensure the objectives of this policy are met
- ▶ ensuring that parents/guardians of a child attending the service can enter the service premises at any time whilst 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).

The Nominated Supervisor, Persons in Day to Day Charge and early childhood teachers are responsible for:

- ▶ reviewing enrolment applications to identify children with additional needs (refer to Definitions and the Inclusion and Equity Policy)
- ▶ responding to parent/guardian enquiries regarding their child's readiness for the program that they are considering enrolling their child in
- ▶ discussing the individual child's needs with parents/guardians and developing an orientation program to assist them to settle into the program
- ▶ encouraging parents/guardians to:
 - stay with their child as long as required during the settling in period
 - make contact with educators at the service, when required
- ▶ assisting parents/guardians to develop and maintain a routine for saying goodbye to their child
- ▶ sharing information with parents/guardians concerning their child's progress with regard to settling in to the service
- ▶ discussing support services for children with parents/guardians, where required.

All educators are responsible for:

- ▶ responding to enrolment enquiries on a day-to-day basis and referring people to the person responsible for the enrolment process, as required
- ▶ providing parents/guardians with information about the requirements of the law for enrolment, locating and accessing immunisation services and obtaining AIR Immunisation History Statement (refer to Definitions) required for enrolment
- ▶ developing strategies to assist new families to:
 - feel welcomed into the service
 - become familiar with service policies and procedures
 - share information about their family beliefs, values and culture
 - share their understanding of their child's strengths, interests, abilities and needs
 - discuss the values and expectations they hold in relation to their child's learning
- ▶ providing comfort and reassurance to children who are showing signs of distress when separating from family members
- ▶ complying with the service's Privacy and Confidentiality Policy in relation to the collection and management of a child's enrolment information.

Document Control	Filename: Enrolment and Orientation	Page 7 of 15
Authorisation: CEO	Administered: Early Learning	
Date: May 2021	Version: 1	Next Revision Due Date: January 2022

Parents/guardians are responsible for:

- ▶ reading and complying with this Enrolment and Orientation Policy
- ▶ completing the enrolment application form and the enrolment record prior to their child's commencement at the service and providing AIR Immunisation History Statement (refer to Definitions) of their child's immunisation status
- ▶ where a child is eligible for the 16 weeks grace period, ensuring that the child's immunisations are updated in line with the schedule and providing an up to date AIR Immunisation History Statement (refer to Definitions) to the service
- ▶ ensuring that all other required information is provided to the service
- ▶ updating information by notifying the service of any changes as they occur.

Volunteers and students, while at the service, are responsible for following this policy and its procedures

Document Control	Filename: Enrolment and Orientation	Page 8 of 15
Authorisation: CEO	Administered: Early Learning	
Date: May 2021	Version: 1	Next Revision Due Date: January 2022

EVALUATION

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the Approved Provider will:

- ▶ regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness
- ▶ monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy
- ▶ keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice
- ▶ revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required
- ▶ notify parents/guardians at least 14 days before making any changes to this policy or its procedures.

ATTACHMENTS

- ▶ Attachment 1: Attachment 1 – Eligibility and priority of access criteria for 3 and 4-year-old funded kindergarten program
- ▶ Attachment 2: General enrolment procedures
- ▶ Attachment 3: Letter for parents/guardians without acceptable immunisation documentation

AUTHORISATION

This policy was adopted by the Approved Provider of Sparkways Early Learning on January 2020.

Policy Reviewed Annually

NEXT REVIEW: January 2021

Document Control	Filename: Enrolment and Orientation	Page 9 of 15
Authorisation: CEO	Administered: Early Learning	
Date: May 2021	Version: 1	Next Revision Due Date: January 2022

ATTACHMENT 1

Eligibility and priority of access criteria for a funded kindergarten 3 and 4-year-old program

The Approved provider must notify all families of the priority of access policy that applies when they enrol their child. In instances where more eligible children apply for a place at a kindergarten service than there are places available, services must:

- ▶ prioritise children based on the DET criteria listed below
- ▶ work with other local kindergarten services and the regional Department office to ensure all eligible children have access to a kindergarten place.

These criteria must be used by the Approved Provider when prioritising enrolments. Funding guidance is available from the Department's regional offices if required.

Service providers should build flexibility into their enrolment processes that consider the circumstances of families from priority groups.

If participating in a central enrolment scheme, the priority of access for that scheme will be implemented.

Services must first apply the DET's Priority of Access criteria, and following this may apply locally developed criteria, as per examples below.

DET's Priority of Access criteria	Process that could be used to verify need(s)
Children at risk of abuse or neglect, including children in Out-of-Home Care	<p>The child is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ attending a three-year-old kindergarten program through Early Start Kindergarten* or Access to Early Learning, or is referred by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Child Protection - Child and family services (family services referral and support team, Child FIRST/integrated family services/Services Connect case worker) - Maternal and Child Health nurse, or - Out-of-Home Care provider
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ As part of the enrolment process, service providers must respectfully ask families 'is your child Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander?' and record this information in KIM.
Children eligible for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ A child or parent holds a Commonwealth Health Care Card, Pensioner Concession Card, Veteran's Affairs Card, or ▶ Multiple birth children (triplets, quadruplets). ▶ Asylum seekers and refugee children <p>Note: Free Kindergarten subsidy will be replaced by the 2021 Free Kindergarten initiative, however in regards to priority of access, the above still applies. Service providers should still collect this information and recorded this on the KIM system.</p>
Children with additional needs, defined as children who: ▶ require additional assistance in order to fully	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The child: ▶ is assessed as having delays in two or more areas and is declared eligible for a second funded year of kindergarten

Document Control	Filename: Enrolment and Orientation	Page 10 of 15
Authorisation: CEO	Administered: Early Learning	
Date: May 2021	Version: 1	Next Revision Due Date: January 2022

participate in the kindergarten program

- ▶ require a combination of services which are individually planned
- ▶ have an identified specific disability or developmental delay

- ▶ holds a Child Disability Health Care Card
- ▶ has previously been approved for Kindergarten Inclusion Support Package, or referred by:
 - the National Disability Insurance Scheme
 - Early Childhood Intervention Service
 - Preschool Field Officer, or
 - Maternal and Child Health nurse.

Examples to consider for second priority

- ▶ children who turn four years of age by 30 April in the year they will attend kindergarten; or
- ▶ children who turn three years of age* by 30 April in the year they will attend kindergarten
- ▶ children turning six years of age at kindergarten who have been granted an exemption from school-entry age requirements by the regional office of DET
- ▶ children who have a sibling that has previously attended the same kindergarten as their first preference

Examples to consider for third priority

- ▶ service for transient families e.g. RAAF, seasonal workers and tourism workers
- ▶ date of application
- ▶ local community zoning

Note: DET's Priority of Access (POA) guidelines are to ensure that kindergarten programs are available to those children who stand to benefit the most from attending early education. In mixed age groups, POA guideline will equally prioritise three and four-year-old children that are considered vulnerable. Where programs for three- and four-year old children are provided separately, the POA criteria will be applied separately for each age cohort.

* Early Start Kindergarten and Three-Year-Old Kindergarten

During the roll-out of Three-Year-Old Kindergarten, Early Start Kindergarten (ESK) will continue to provide 15 hours a week of funded kindergarten for all eligible children up until 2029, when three-year-old children across the state will have access to 15 hours

It is important to continue to enrol eligible children in ESK as this ensures that service providers receive all funding entitlements and that these 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

Eligibility and access criteria for the three-year-old kindergarten program

Children are eligible for attendance in the three-year-old kindergarten program provided they have turned three prior to commencement.

Children will only be able to attend a second year of three-year-old kindergarten in exceptional circumstances (after consideration by the Approved Provider) or when all eligible children on the waiting list have been offered a place.

The Approved Provider must determine eligibility and access criteria applicable to the service. Considerations may include:

Document Control	Filename: Enrolment and Orientation	Page 11 of 15
Authorisation: CEO	Administered: Early Learning	
Date: May 2021	Version: 1	Next Revision Due Date: January 2022

- ▶ children recommended by an educator for an additional year in the three-year-old program
- ▶ date of application – for example, families can enrol for the program when their child has turned two, or applications for the three-year-old program can open at the start of Term 1 in the year prior to commencement
- ▶ siblings attending the service
- ▶ places allocated by the service for transient families e.g. RAAF, seasonal workers and tourism workers
- ▶ local community zoning.

1. Allocation within groups

Where the service provides more than one funded kindergarten program or three-year-old program, places within the programs will be allocated to groups by the service in line with the eligibility and priority of access criteria.

Considerations may include:

- ▶ Needs of individual children
- ▶ Needs of the group
- ▶ Parental wishes.

Document Control	Filename: Enrolment and Orientation	Page 12 of 15
Authorisation: CEO	Administered: Early Learning	
Date: May 2021	Version: 1	Next Revision Due Date: January 2022

ATTACHMENT 2

General enrolment procedures

1. Application for a place

- ▶ Enrolment applications process will be determined by the relevant Kindergarten Central Enrolment scheme.
- ▶ Enrolment application forms are available from the service and are provided to the parents/guardians together with information about the requirements of the law for enrolment, locating and accessing immunisation services, obtaining an up to date AIR Immunisation History Statement and a copy of the Enrolment and Orientation Policy.
- ▶ Sparkways Early Learning will determine the date(s) by which applications must be received for offer of places in the three-year-old and the funded kindergarten program.
- ▶ 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, the enrolment application form should clearly identify any additional or specific needs of the child (refer to Inclusion and Equity Policy).
- ▶ Parents/guardians of children applying for a second year of funded kindergarten or currently attending a three-year-old program must also submit an enrolment application form for the following year.
- ▶ A copy of the child's birth certificate and proof of address must be submitted with all applications.
- ▶ Completed enrolment application forms are to be forwarded to the Sparkways Early Learning Administration Team at cs@sparkways.org.au or

Sparkways Early Learning,
45 Yazaki Way, Carrum Downs VIC 3201

- ▶ 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.
- ▶ Applications received after the above dates set by Sparkways Early Learning will be considered if there are available places, and after all other applicants have been offered a place, in line with the eligibility and priority of access criteria of Sparkways Early Learning.

2. Offer of places

- ▶ Tentative places will be offered in writing to applicants in accordance with the eligibility and priority of access criteria of the service making clear that confirmation of places is not final until an up to date AIR Immunisation History Statement has been received, assessed and found acceptable.
- ▶ Sparkways Early Learning requires parents/guardians who have been offered a tentative place to provide acceptable immunisation documentation for assessment prior to the child first attending the service in order that a confirmed place can be offered.
- ▶ The documentation is assessed as outlined in the Immunisation enrolment toolkit for early childhood education and care services by the person responsible for the enrolment process on behalf of the Approved Provider. The Key Dates work form in the Immunisation enrolment toolkit for early childhood education and care services is used to determine the date at which immunisations must be up to date. The toolkit also provides guidance on assessing immunisation

Document Control	Filename: Enrolment and Orientation	Page 13 of 15
Authorisation: CEO	Administered: Early Learning	
Date: May 2021	Version: 1	Next Revision Due Date: January 2022

documentation to determine if a child is up to date or qualifies for an exemption. The following documents and resources can be accessed from <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au>:

- The Immunisation enrolment toolkit for early childhood education and care services (search 'Immunisation enrolment toolkit')
- The Key Dates work form (search 'Key Dates work form')
- Hard copies of the immunisation resources (search 'immunisation resources order form')
- ▶ The acceptable outcomes of the assessment for offering a confirmed place are:
 - That the next due vaccine for the child on the ACIR Immunisation History Statement or the Immunisation Status certificate is within the acceptable timeframe for an enrolment, or;
 - That the child is on a recognised catch-up schedule if they have fallen behind with their vaccinations, or;
 - That the child has a medical reason not to be vaccinated, or,
 - That the child has been assessed by Sparkways Early Learning as being eligible for a 16 week grace period
- ▶ The person responsible for the enrolment process advises the parent/guardian in writing whether a confirmed place is offered and the enrolment can proceed.
- ▶ Parents/guardians who do not have acceptable immunisation documentation cannot be offered a place and are referred to Australian Childhood Immunisation Register or to an immunisation provider (refer to Appendix 4 – Letter for parents/guardians who do not have acceptable immunisation documentation).
- ▶ Offer of places in the three-year-old program/s and the funded kindergarten program will be made at the same time.
- ▶ Parents/guardians who do not wish to accept the offer of a tentative or confirmed 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, in writing as soon as possible.
- ▶ Refer to the Sparkways Early Learning Fee Policy for details regarding payment of fees.
- ▶ An enrolment form and other relevant information will be provided by Sparkways Early Learning to the parent/guardian after a confirmed place has been accepted and the fee has been paid.

Note: Places will not be allocated to children until any outstanding fees 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).

Document Control	Filename: Enrolment and Orientation	Page 14 of 15
Authorisation: CEO	Administered: Early Learning	
Date: May 2021	Version: 1	Next Revision Due Date: January 2022

ATTACHMENT 3

Letter for parents/guardians without acceptable immunisation documentation

Sparkways Early Learning

45 Yazaki Way, Carrum Downs VIC 3201

[Insert date]

Dear [insert name]

Re: Enrolment at [Service Name] for [insert year]

I am contacting you regarding your tentative place for [insert child's name] at [Service Name] in the [insert 3 year old or 4 year old program] in [insert year].

Under the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 (Vic), as amended May 2016 early childhood education and care services cannot enrol a child unless the parent/guardian has provided acceptable immunisation documentation.

Acceptable immunisation documentation includes evidence that your child:

- ▶ is fully vaccinated for their age
- ▶ is on a recognised catch-up schedule, which must be provided prior to commencement
- ▶ has a medical reason not to be vaccinated
- ▶ has been assessed by our service as being eligible for a 16 week grace period.

As we have not received acceptable immunisation documentation for [insert name of child] by the due date, we are unable to confirm a place at our service for [insert year] and your child's name has been removed from our list.

Immunisation programs are effective in reducing the risk of vaccine preventable diseases. Immunisation from an early age helps protect your child against serious childhood infections. Further information about immunisations for your child is available from:

- ▶ your doctor
- ▶ [insert details of local government immunisation service]
- ▶ National Immunisation Information Line Tel. 1800 671 811
- ▶ Australian Childhood Immunisation Register Tel 1800 653 809
- ▶ Better Health Channel website: <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/no-jab-no-play>

Should you wish to re-apply for a place for [insert child's name], we are happy to accept a new enrolment application accompanied by acceptable immunisation documentation. The new application would be considered in line with [Service Name]'s Enrolment and Orientation policy.

Yours sincerely

[Insert name]

[Insert title]

[Service Name]

Document Control	Filename: Enrolment and Orientation	Page 15 of 15
Authorisation: CEO	Administered: Early Learning	
Date: May 2021	Version: 1	Next Revision Due Date: January 2022