**Enrolment and Orientation Policy**

**Kindoo!/ Our ARK Pty Ltd**

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| **PURPOSE** | To ensure that each child’s enrolment is completed as per legal requirements. Additionally, Kindoo! aims to ensure that each child and family receives an enrolment and orientation process that meets their needs, allowing the family and child to feel safe and secure in the level of care that we provide. |
| **REQUIREMENT** | Mandatory – Quality Area 6 |
| **REVIEW DATE** | This policy shall be reviewed in April **2019**. |

# POLICY STATEMENT

## 1. VALUES

Kindoo! Is committed to:

* Equal access for all children
* Meeting the needs of the local community
* Supporting families to meet the requirements for enrolment through the provision of information
* Ensuring all families are welcomed and receive an effective orientation into the service.
* Maintaining confidentiality in relation to the details on enrolment forms.

## 2. SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Person in Day-to-Day Charge (PIDTDC), educators, staff, students on placement, volunteers, parents/guardians, children and others attending the programs and activities of Kindoo! including during offsite excursions and activities.

## 3. BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION

In order to receive kindergarten per capita funding, a child must be at least four years of age on 30 April in the year in which they will attend the kindergarten program (this is to align with the requirement for children to be five years of age on 30 April in the year they first attend school) and attend a minimum of 15 hours per week.

3-Year-Old kindergarten is not funded by the Victorian Government but is offered by Kindoo! To be eligible for our 3-year-old program, children must have attained the age of 3 years by 30 April in the year of attendance and have turned 3 before commencement. Exemptions apply should children be eligible for Early Start Kindergarten grant.

## 4. DEFINITIONS

**Kindergarten**: Kindergarten (sometimes known as preschool) is a universal early childhood program, funded by the state government, for children in the year prior to commencing primary school. It may also include an unfunded program for three-year-old children (two years before school).

**Permanent Booking**: Same session on same day that carries over week to week until cancelled in writing.

**Casual Booking:** Any booking made up to 24 hours ahead of a session that is not a permanent

Booking

**Emergency Booking:** Any booking that is not a permanent booking or casual booking. Usually booked in the immediate 24 hours preceding session commencement.

**Funded Kindergarten Program**- refers to the state funded kindergarten program offered in the year prior to a child accessing school. This is sometimes referred to as a four-year-old program.

**Unfunded Pre-Kindergarten Program** refers to the kindergarten program offered in the year prior to the Funded Kindergarten Program. This is sometimes referred to as a three-year-old or a pre-kinder program. It may also refer to unfunded four-year-old kindergarten.

**Early Start Kindergarten (ESK)** A child eligible for Early Start kindergarten is any child aged three by 30 April of the year she or he is attending kindergarten, who has been identified by a parent, carer or legal guardian as being Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander or is a child known to Child Protection (where abuse has been substantiated) or a child referred by Child Protection to Child FIRST. Refer to DEECD The Kindergarten Guide 2014

**Children with additional needs**: Children whose development or physical condition needs specialist support, or children who may need additional support due to language, cultural or economic circumstances

**DEECD:** Department of Education and Early Childhood Development is the state government department responsible for the funding, licensing and regulation of children’s services in Victoria.

**Eligible child:** Child who meets the criteria outlined in the Victorian Kindergarten policy, procedures and funding criteria.

**Enrolment form:** A form that collects details regarding individual children and their family.

**Fees:** The amount charged to attend a program at the centre.

**Guardian:** Person(s) who have been granted lawful authority by a court order for a child(ren). The definition of ‘guardian’ under the Education and Care Services National Regulations also means a person who has custody or control of the child but does not include a person providing children’s services to a child.

**Vacancy:** A place in a program that becomes free as a result of a child leaving the centre or is available because all places are not filled.

## 5. SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES

Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011)

Education and Care Services Act (2010)

The Kindergarten Guide 2014 (DEECD, Victoria)

Equal Opportunity Act 1995 (Victoria)

Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986 (Commonwealth)

Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Commonwealth)

Information Privacy Act 2000 (Victoria) Health Records Act (2001)

Fee Policy

Privacy Policy

# PROCEDURES

Kindoo! Offers four types of enrolments for children aged 3-years to 6-years of age.

1. Permanent bookings
2. Casual bookings
3. Emergency bookings
4. Holiday Program

Enrolments will be accepted providing:

* The maximum daily attendance does not exceed the approved number of places- being 30 permanent or more places and 29 casual/emergency places.
* Children have turned 3 years of age or older prior to commencement.
* Maximum daily attendance does not exceed 11.5 hours
* Child-educator ratios are maintained across the service
* A vacancy is available
* Enrolment forms are completed and all required documentation has been received prior to booking being confirmed.
* Fees have been paid in advance and approved in accordance with Kindoo’s Terms and conditions.
* Priority of access has been followed

## Priority of Access Guidelines

Children who are enrolled at the service or whose families are seeking a place at the service will be given Priority of Access in accordance with the guidelines that have been established by the Department of Family and Community Services and Indigenous Affairs. Below are the Priority of Access levels which the service must follow when filling vacancies:

* A child at risk of serious abuse of neglect.
* A child of a single parent/guardian who satisfies, or of parents/guardians who both satisfy the work/training/study test under Section 14 of the Family Assistance Legislation Amendment (Child Care) Act 2010.
* Any other child.

## Within these three categories priority is also given to the following children:

* Children in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families.
* Children in families which include a disabled person.
* Children in families on low income.
* Children in families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
* Children in socially isolated families.
* Children of single parents/guardian.

**Cancellation of Enrolment**

* For all permanent bookings families are required to provide Kindoo! four (4) weeks’ notice in writing if they wish to change/drop day/s or cease using the Service. Fees will be charged up to the end of the four weeks from the date at which notice was received in writing, whether or not the child has attended the Centre during those 4 weeks. (For further information please see Kindoo! Terms and conditions)
* For all Casual and Emergency bookings, cancellations must be given 24 hours prior to the booked session. Sessions cancelled prior to 24 hours can be rescheduled by arrangement with the Director or refunded at the Approved Providers discretion. For Cancellations where less than the 24 hours’ notice is received, full fees will be charged and rescheduling is not permitted.
* For Camp Kindoo! any changes and cancellations must be made 7 days prior to the first day of a Holiday Session. Any changes to bookings made with less than 7 days’ notice before the commencement date or during the Holiday Program Session period will result in the full fee being charged.

**Orientation;**

Families are offered orientation sessions at no charge and are organized to suit individual family requirements. Orientation sessions are an excellent opportunity for sharing information about a family’s values and expectations and each child’s strengths, interests, abilities and needs. Please contact the Director if you would like to arrange orientation for your child.

**The Nominated Supervisor is responsible for:**

* Determining the criteria for priority of access to Kindoo! Programs.
* Responding to enrolment enquiries on a day-to-day basis
* Ensuring all families are aware of the kindergarten and other programs available at Kindoo!
* Providing opportunities 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
* Ensuring that the enrolment complies with the requirements of Regulations 160, 161, 162 and that it effectively meets the management requirements of the service
* Offering places in line with this policy and criteria for priority access,
* Ensuring that enrolment forms are completed prior to the child’s commencement at the service
* Assessing the child’s immunisation documentation to determine if the child’s vaccination status complies with requirements.
* Advising parents/guardians who do not have acceptable immunisation documentation that their children are not able to attend the service in accordance with the “No Jab No Play’ Legislation
* Reviewing enrolment applications to identify children with additional needs
* Discussing the individual child’s needs with parents/guardians and developing an individual 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 and carers at the service, when required

* Assisting 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

* Sharing information with parents/guardians regarding their child’s progress with regard to settling in to the service
* Discussing support services for children with parents/guardians, where required.
* Providing secure storage of completed enrolment forms (refer to Privacy policy)
* Maintaining a waiting list

**PIDTDCs and other educators are responsible for:**

* Reviewing enrolment applications to identify children with additional needs.
* Responding to enrolment enquiries on a day-to-day basis and referring people to the Nominated Supervisor.
* Responding to parent/guardian enquiries regarding their child’s readiness for the program in which they are considering enrolling their child
* Discussing the individual child’s needs with parents/guardians and developing an orientation program to assist them to settle into the program
* Providing comfort and reassurance to children who are showing signs of distress when separating from family members
* Sharing information with parents/guardians regarding their child’s progress with regard to settling in to the service
* Discussing support services for children with parents/guardians, where required
* Complying with the centre’s Privacy policy in relation to the collection and management of children’s enrolment information

**Parents/guardians are responsible for:**

* Completing enrolment forms prior to their child’s attendance at the centre
* Ensuring a copy of their child(ren)’s up-to-date immunisation record is provided prior to commencing attendance at the centre, as per State Government Legislation
* Ensuring that all required information is provided to the service
* Ensuring that payment of all fees is made at the time of booking or by the due date
* Updating information by notifying the centre of any changes
* Contacting the Family Assistance Office (FAO) to register for Child Care Benefit and Rebate and, from July 2018, Child Care Subsidy

# 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
* review an and analyse information gathered in enrolment forms
* assess the ability of the Nominated Supervisor, PIDTDC, educators, staff, children and others to follow the policy and procedures
* revise the policy and procedures as part of Kindoo!’s policy review cycle, or as required by legislation, research, policy and best practice
* notify parents/guardians at least 14 days before making any change to this policy

# ATTACHMENTS

Nil