



## Waiting List, Priority of Access and Enrolment and Orientation Policy

**Aim:**

- To ensure Maryland Care & Early Education Centre is accessible to all community members
- To ensure our service maintains compliance with Commonwealth Priority of Access guidelines and State Government Service funding requirements
- To ensure that Maryland Care and Early Education Centre offers a fair system for staff, families and their children who are waiting for placement within the service
- Enrolment and orientation procedures form the foundation for strong relationships between families and our early education setting and begin to promote a positive experience for education and care of children
- To ensure that enrolment and orientation processes are planned and implemented
- To ensure that each family is welcomed to the Centre, we aim to inform all parents of the centre policies, and involve them in the consultation process
- To respect parents by giving them the opportunity and encouraging them to discuss their family values, areas of expertise, and any concerns they may have about placing their child into early education and care
- To ensure that children’s enrolment in the service is a positive and happy experience
- To ensure consideration is given to culture and language during the enrolment and orientation period

**Legislative requirements / Sources:**

**Regulations:**

92	Medical record
99	Children leaving the education and care setting
102	Authorisation for excursions
161	Authorisations to be kept in enrolment record
162	Health information to be kept in enrolment record
168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
170	Policies and procedures to be followed

171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
177	Prescribed enrolment and other documents to be kept by approved provider
181	Confidentiality of records kept by Approved Provider

### National Quality Standards (NQS)

<b>7.1</b>	<b>Governance</b>	<b>Governance supports the operation of a quality service</b>
7.1.2	Management systems	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable effective management and operation of a quality service
7.1.3	Roles and responsibilities	Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, and understood, and support effective decision-making and operation of the service

#### Sources:

- Department of Social Services ([www.dss.gov.au](http://www.dss.gov.au))
- Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Act 2010

#### Implementation:

### Waiting List and Priority of Access

This policy supports inclusive practices at Maryland Care and Early Education Centre. Please see inclusion policy and Procedures for further information.

We encourage families to come and view our service before completing a waitlist application.

It is the responsibility of each family on the waiting list to ensure that they notify Maryland Care and Early Education Centre of any changes to their waiting list application or contact details. If we attempt to contact a family on the waitlist and their details are incorrect, they will be removed from the waiting list.

Families who are offered a placement but choose not to take the position can still maintain their current position on the waiting list or elect to have their child removed from the waiting list.

Maryland Care and Early Education Centre will use the software system CRM to keep an up to date list of children and families on the waitlist and send out regular communications to families to see if they wish to be kept on our waitlist.

## **Enrolment and Orientation**

Families are able to enquire about our service via phone, web site, email and/or a personal visit. Families who enquire via email, website or phone are invited to visit our service and see our service in operation.

Maryland Care and Early Education Centre welcomes visits from prospective families and children. The Nominated Supervisor or delegated person will provide the visiting family with a tour of our centre, provide information and answer any questions that may arise. Information is available online on our website for families that includes information such as:

- Our Centre Philosophy
- Fees
- What we provide
- A selection of centre policies
- Information on the different types of play

(See our procedure for enrolment and orientation)

Once the families enrolment has been finalised it is recommended that they schedule an orientation visit where families and children get the opportunity to:

- Meet educators and staff
- Find out about daily routines
- Share children's interests and needs
- Find out about the services management operations

## **Settling in**

Please be assured that our educators will communicate with you regularly about how your child is settling in. We encourage families to call throughout the day if they need to and educators may give you a call just to ease your mind. If you or your child experiences separation anxiety at any stage during your time with us please talk to your child's educators so we can work together to devise some strategies to assist. Educators may suggest the possibility of children doing half days or reduced hours until that feel comfortable and secure at the service

# **Waiting List, Enrolment and Orientation Procedures**

## **Waiting List**

1. All families wishing to place their child on our waitlist for future enrolment must complete a waitlist form. This can be completed via an online waitlist form or a paper copy from the centre. This includes staff wanting a place for their child at Maryland Care & Early Education Centre.

Once the waiting list form has been submitted an email and text message of acknowledgement will be sent referring the family to the website for further information.

2. Maryland Care & Early Education Centre follows the Governments Priority of access guidelines when enrolling children into the service. This priority is linked to the Government funded child care subsidy.

***Australian Government Priority of Access Guidelines:***

- First Priority: a child at risk of serious abuse or neglect;
- *Second Priority: a child of a single parent who satisfies, or of parents who both satisfy, the work/training/study test under Section 14 of the 'A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999*
- Third Priority: Any other child.

*Within these main categories priority should also be given to the following children:*

- *Children in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families;*
- Children in families which include a disabled person;
- *Children in families which include an individual whose adjusted taxable income does not exceed the lower income threshold of \$42,997 for 2014-2015 or who or whose partner are on income support;*
- *Children in families from a non-English speaking background;*
- Children in socially isolated families; and
- Children of single parents.

*A child care service may require a Priority 3 child to vacate a place to make room for a child with a higher priority. They can only do so if you:*

- Are notified when your child first entered care that your service follows this policy

- *Are given at least 14 days notice of the need for your child to vacate.*

3. Having satisfied the requirements of Commonwealth Priority of Access Guidelines, places will be allocated utilising the following Maryland Care and Early Education Centre Priority of Access guidelines:

Priority 1 – Staff members who satisfy the work/training/study requirements according to the Australian Government priority of access guidelines in order of earliest date placed on the waitlist

Priority 2 - Siblings of children already enrolled in Maryland Care & Early Education Centre and children who have had siblings who have attended the centre who satisfy work/training/study requirements according to the Australian Government priority of access guidelines in order of earliest date placed on the waitlist

Priority 3 –Children of parents who satisfy the work/training/study requirements according to the Australian Government priority of access guidelines in order of earliest date placed on the waitlist

Priority 4 - All other children in order of earliest date placed in the waiting list. A copy of this policy will be given to families upon placing their child on the waitlist and to staff upon employment.

### **Enrolment and Orientation**

#### **When a position becomes available**

When a position becomes available, the Nominated Supervisor or delegated person will refer to the waitlist and considering access guidelines and offer the next person on the waiting list a position. The family will be contacted via either phone or email with the details of days available and fees payable and requested to either accept or decline the position by a nominated date. After this date has passed and family hasn't contacted the service the position will be offered to the next person on the waiting list.

#### **Enrolment**

Upon the acceptance of a position the Nominated supervisor or delegated person will create an enrolment pack for the family. This pack will include:

- A welcome letter outlining fees and charges payable
- Information regarding the orientation process
- An enrolment form that includes authorisation forms
- Collection of detailed information about their child for educators
- Directions to our website to gain information around policies
- Information regarding the room the child is to be a member of
- Feedback form regarding the orientation process
- Information regarding National Quality Framework, National Quality Standards & the Early Years Learning Framework
- Information regarding Childcare Subsidy
- Fee information and Idebit Debit form (optional)

Prior to the enrolment pack being created for each family consideration will be given to the language and cultural needs of the family.

## **Orientation**

In consultation with the child's family an orientation process will be discussed and planned to provide the best possible start for the child at the service. There is no set plan for orientation; rather we are flexible to cater for the needs of each individual family. We do encourage families to visit with their child at least once for approximately an hour before starting care & early education with us.

The Nominated Supervisor will complete a Family Orientation Checklist with each family and offer an Orientation Feedback Survey for each family to complete.

During an orientation visit families will be introduced to educators an opportunity given to discuss their child's interests, any areas of concern, individual needs, dietary requirements etc. You will also be told about different methods of communication, sign in sheets that must be filled out on arrival and departure each day and any other information relevant to you and your child. Families are required to stay with their child during orientation visits.

Before the child begins their first day the following will need to be returned to the centre:

- Enrolment form with current contact information
- Copy of your child's birth certificate, passport or other identification and immunisation details
- CRN numbers for yourself and your child (for Childcare Subsidy purposes)
- Payment of the security deposit and enrolment fee
- Information on children's additional needs (including medical conditions, health & developmental concerns)

This information will be kept on the service premises in accordance with service policies and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011.

## **Withdrawing from the Service**

When a family gives 2 weeks' notice to cease care completely, an exit survey will be offered to each family to complete for feedback on that families experience at the centre and this information is used as part of our quality improvement process for further practices.

This policy is the intellectual property of Maryland Care & Early Education Centre and is created with consultation of staff and families attending the service. This policy will be reviewed annually. This policy is available in other languages upon request.

Last reviewed: October 2023

Next Review: October 2024