

Collaborative Partnerships with Families & Communities

Priority of Access Policy.

Our Vision.

To give every child **the best start in life.**

Our Mission.

To deliver high quality childcare and exciting learning opportunities for every child, giving them a head start as they prepare for school.

Our Values.

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| Care | We take care of the children entrusted to us and our dedicated staff. All are appreciated and diversity is valued. |
| Quality | We maintain the highest standards in care and safety and provide exceptional early years education. |
| Service | We provide exceptional service and are integral to supporting parents bringing up children. |
| Value | We provide outstanding value for our families. |



Busy Bees Early Learning Australia grant entry to children on a first-come, first-served basis when there are available positions. In cases where positions are limited, the Services manage a waiting list that is organised by age groups. The priority of admission is regulated by The Australian Government Department of Education.

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARDS (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 5 – Relationships with Children	
5.1 – Relationships with Children	5.1.1 – Positive Educator to Child Interactions
QUALITY AREA 6 – Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities	
6.1 – Supportive Relationships with Families	6.1.1 – Engagement with the Service
	6.1.2 – Parents Views are Respected
	6.1.3 – Families are Supported
6.2 – Collaborative Partnerships	6.2.2 – Access and Participation

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL LAW AND REGULATIONS

Part 3	Service Approval (Law 51, 52)
Part 4.2	Children's Health and Safety (Reg - 84)
Part 4.6	Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities (Reg - 157)
Part 4.7	Governance and Leadership (Reg - 160, 168)

RELATED POLICIES

Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisation Policy	Delivery and Collection of Children Policy
Child Enrolment and Orientation Policy	Fee Payment Policy
Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy	Governance Policy
Child Safe Environment Policy	Record Keeping and Retention Policy
Confidentiality and Privacy Policy	

PURPOSE

Busy Bees Early Learning Australia will ensure that children who face a range of disadvantages, and/or are at risk of vulnerability, will have access to early education and care than other children, as well as provide clarity around how Busy Bees will offer places on its waiting list to prospective Families.

SCOPE

This policy applies to Management and Families

POLICY

In all cases, enrolment will be subject to Busy Bees' ability to provide the staff and resources to ensure that:

- The maximum daily attendance does not exceed the approved number of places of the Service
- The required child to educator ratios is maintained across the Service
- The educational needs of all children at the Service can be met

In addition, Busy Bees adopts relevant State and Territory requirements in relation to Priority of Access, as set out in Schedule 1.

Management of Priority of Access for New Enrolments

For all Busy Bees Services, Busy Bees aim to assist Families who are most in need and may prioritise filling vacancies with children who are:

- At risk of serious abuse or neglect (**Priority 1**)
- A child of a sole parent who satisfies, or parents who both satisfy, the activity test through paid employment (**Priority 2**)
- Any other child (**Priority 3**)

Within these priority categories, Busy Bees will provide priority of access for children in:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Families
- Families which include a disabled person
- Families on lower incomes
- Families from a non-English speaking background
- Socially isolated families
- Single parent families

The above list is not in any priority order and children may fall into more than one category.

Management of Priority of Access for Ongoing Enrolments

At any time, the number of children enrolled at a Busy Bees Service may exceed the number of children it can care for (either on a temporary or long-term basis). In these circumstances, Busy Bees may apply priority of access to current enrolments, which may mean that Families in the Priority 3 category may need to vacate their place, should a child in a higher priority category need care.

Schedule 1 – Priority of Access Criteria by State and Territory

1. Victoria – 3 and 4 year old Kindergarten children

For enrolments to Busy Bees Kindergarten Services in Victoria that receive Kindergarten funding from the Victorian Department of Education, Busy Bees will prioritise enrolments based on the criteria set out in the table below. Where possible, Busy Bees will work with other local kindergarten Services and the regional Department office to ensure all eligible children have access to a kindergarten place.

High priority children

High priority children	Information required by Busy Bees to verify need(s)
Children at risk of abuse or neglect, including children in Out-of-Home Care	Evidence that your child is attending a three-year-old kindergarten program through Early Start Kindergarten or Access to Early Learning, or referral 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	Indicate Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander status on your child's enrolment form

Asylum seeker and refugee children	Evidence of an appropriate visa that identifies you and/or your child as a refugee or asylum seeker
Children eligible for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy	Evidence that you and/or your child holds a Commonwealth Health Care Card, Pensioner Concession Card, Veteran's Affairs Card, or you children are multiple birth children triplets or quadruplets
Children with additional needs, defined as children who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> require additional assistance in order to fully participate in the kindergarten program require a combination of services which are individually planned have an identified specific disability or developmental delay 	Evidence that your child: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> has been assessed as having delays in two or more areas and is declared eligible for a second funded year of kindergarten holds a Child Disability Health Care Card has previously been approved for Kindergarten Inclusion Support Package, or referred by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the National Disability Insurance Scheme Early Childhood Intervention Service Preschool Field Officer, or Maternal and Child Health nurse

2. Queensland – Kindergarten children

For enrolments to Busy Bees Kindergarten Services in Queensland that receive Kindergarten funding from the Queensland Department of Education, Busy Bees will:

- Prioritise enrolment of eligible children into approved kindergarten programs prior to opening additional programs or enrolling non-eligible children
- Ensure claims are made for eligible children in one kindergarten program only
- Support Family choice regarding the Service provider to which kindergarten funding is applied, where a child attends multiple Services
- Ensure enrolments are not refused for eligible children in an approved kindergarten program if funding has been claimed for that child by another Service provider

3. New South Wales – Preschool children

For enrolments to Busy Bees Kindergarten Services in New South Wales that receive Start Strong funding from the New South Wales Department of Education, Busy Bees will:

Ensure equal priority of access to children aged 4 and above who are:

- From low-income Families
- From Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Families
- With disability and/or additional needs
- With language needs
- At risk of significant harm (from a child protection perspective)

There is no order of priority assigned to the list above.

These guidelines are intended to assist Approved Providers with making enrolment decisions, in a way that seeks to allocate places to those in the greatest need. Approved Providers may prioritise enrolments for 600 hours or more and consider the hours children are enrolled at other funded services when making enrolment decisions. However, community and Family needs will also be relevant.

4. South Australia – Preschool children

For enrolments to Busy Bees Kindergarten Services in South Australia that receive Preschool funding from the South Australia Department of Education, Busy Bees will prioritise enrolments based on the South Australian state requirements detailed in the above policy.

SOURCES

[ACECQA](#)

[National Quality Standard](#)

[Education and Care services National Regulations](#)

[Education and Care Service National Law Act 2010](#)

[Early Childhood Australia](#)

[Australian Government – Department of Social Services: Priority of Access Guidelines](#)

VERSION CONTROL

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years and/or in line with legislation and organisation requirements.

Version	Date	Owner	Responsibility	Change Description
1	01/10/2023	Chief Operating Officer	Policy Development Officer	Replace all previous versions

This document is uncontrolled when printed and may be varied, replaced, or terminated without notice.