**Enrolment, Orientation & Bond Policy**

**Rationale:**

To outline the criteria and process of enrolment at The Avenue Children’s Centre and Kindergarten and the process of orientation for families.

All families are strongly encouraged to participate in orientation when they have been offered a place of care at The Avenue children’s Centre and Kindergarten. This allows the family and child to slowly become familiar with the centre, educators/staff and the surrounding environment.

As we are a not for profit centre, this policy has been put into place to ensure we are running at full capacity at all times and cover the cost of days if the family decides to no longer enroll their child.

**Policy:**

The Avenue Children’s Centre and Kindergarten 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.

A bond of $400 is payable at the time of enrolment to secure your place. This amount will be used for your fees immediately when you begin care at The Avenue. This bond is absolutely non-refundable.

**Strategies and practices:**

**Waiting List**

If you want to enrol your child at The Avenue Children's Centre and Kindergarten, you will be required to contact the City of Port Phillip on 9209 6360 as we are part of the centralised waitlist with the City of Port Phillip. You are strongly encouraged to come and visit the centre to make sure it is what you are after. If the days of care that you require are available, you will proceed with enrolment.

The centralised waitlist is a priority-based waitlist in accordance with the Australian Government Priority of Access Guidelines. The centre will offer out places as and when they become available throughout the year, however in October bulk placement offers are made available for the following year.

**Acceptance of an offer of placement**

Once offered placement at the centre for your child/ren you have 24 hours to confirm your acceptance and proceed with enrolment. This will ensure that the centre can pass those days to another family on the waiting list if you do not wish to take up the days.

**Enrolment**

Upon acceptance of an offer of placement, parents are asked to come into the centre and complete the necessary enrolment forms prior to the child commencing care.

A bond is required within 48 hours to secure your place. This will be used for the couple of weeks of care provided at the centre. If the enrolment bond is not paid, the child’s place may be jeopardised. If you change your mind after paying the bond, the bond would not be refunded.

If you have any difficulties paying the bond, please do not hesitate to bring it to our attention so we can discuss an alternative payment plan.

Upon accepting a position at The Avenue, parents will be asked to meet with the coordinator/2IC to fill in the appropriate enrolment forms including the type of arrangement with the childcare such as the following:

* Complying Written Arrangement
* Relevant Arrangement
* Additional Child Care Subsidy (child wellbeing)—provider eligible arrangement
* arrangement with an organisation (third party).

If families are consenting to care through a Complying Written Arrangement the following information must be included:

* the names and contact details of the provider and the individual(s)
* the date the arrangement starts
* the name and date of birth of the child (or children)
* if care will be provided on a routine basis and if so
* details about the days on which sessions of care will usually occur
* the usual start and end times for these sessions of care
* whether care will be on a casual or flexible basis (in addition to, or instead of, a routine basis)
* details of fees charged under the arrangement (providers can reference a fee schedule or information available on their website), which the parties understand may vary from time to time.
* Additional information can be included to support the individual's understanding of their payment obligations.

Once the CWA has been confirmed, The Avenue Children’s Centre will submit an enrolment notice through *Qikkids*. It must be submitted within seven days from the following:

* the end of the week in which the provider and family made an arrangement
* the provider or service being approved (if this occurs after the start of the arrangement or attendance), or
* the end of a suspension of service (if the Department of Education has suspended the approved service and the enrolment occurred during the suspension).

The enrolment notice must supply the following information as outlined by education.gov.au

| **Category** | **Details to be provided** |
| --- | --- |
| **Enrolment circumstances** | Whether either:   * an arrangement for care has been made * a certificate or determination has been made for Additional Child Care Subsidy (child wellbeing).   Whether the arrangement is any of the following:   * a Complying Written Arrangement * a Relevant Arrangement * Additional Child Care Subsidy (child wellbeing)—provider eligible * an arrangement with an organisation (third party). |
| **Expected pattern of care** | Whether this includes any of the following:   * routine sessions, with possible casual care * casual enrolment—no routine sessions are included * routine sessions only-casual care is not included. |
| **Dates** | * Date the care arrangement was made. * End date for the arrangement (not mandatory—if known at the time the arrangement was created). |
| **Parties to the arrangement** | Names of individuals (or organisation) who have made the arrangement—usually the same as the Child Care Subsidy claimant, but it can be someone else (for example, where one parent is the Child Care Subsidy claimant, but the other parent enters into the arrangement with the service to provide care).  If both parents are parties to the arrangement, enter the parent who is also the Child Care Subsidy claimant. |
| **Child receiving care** | * Child's name. * Child's Customer Reference Number. * Child's date of birth. |
| **Service providing care** | * Service ID |
| **Child Care Subsidy claimant** | * Individual's name. * Individual's Customer Reference Number. * Individual's date of birth. |
| **Session details and liability** | * Day of routine sessions. * Session start time. * Session end time. * Routine session—usual fee (hourly fee or session fee); casual session (if applicable)— hourly or session fee. |

Once submitted, the parent/guardian will receive notification to check their enrolment details through myGov to confirm either:

* the enrolment details are correct
* one or more enrolment details are incorrect (do not reflect their arrangement)
* the child is not enrolled at the service.

The Avenue Children’s Centre will receive notification of confirmation through *Qikkids* when enrolment is complete.

Should there be a dispute about enrolment, the parent/guardian can provide information back to Centrelink about their dispute and this will be taken back to The Avenue. The Avenue Children’s Centre will review the dispute and either recognise their mistake in any details and amend it to be resubmitted, or recognise there is not a mistake in the details submitted and contact the parent/guardian directly to resolve the matter.

While a dispute is being resolved, The Avenue Children’s Centre can continue to care for the child and must submit session reports, although payments will not be processed by the Australian Government for those sessions. Once the disagreement is resolved and the enrolment is confirmed, childcare fee assistance payments will be processed. Provided the individual has claimed and was eligible for Child Care Subsidy during this period, these payments will be made to the provider.

Immunisation History Statement is required upon enrolment or documentation that a child is on a recognised catch-up schedule if their child has fallen behind their vaccinations; or has a medical reason not to be vaccinated; or has been assessed as being eligible for a 16 week grace period.

Upon enrolment parents will be offered an orientation period before they commence the care at The Avenue Children’s Centre and Kindergarten. During this time, parents are encouraged to visit as often as possible during different times of the day and are welcome to orientate on days that the child will not actually be attending. Parents are encouraged to stay with the child in the room at first, then gradually build up the amount of time they are away from the room whilst their child is orientating. During orientation, the parent must not leave the centre premises. Fees will not be charged during the process of orientation. During this time, we strongly recommend and encourage parents/guardian to regularly discuss and review their needs with educators so that the child’s transition into the centre is as smooth as possible

Educators recognise that each family has individual needs and some children may take a few weeks to feel comfortable while others may only take a couple of days.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to:

• visit the centre with your child prior to actually leaving them;

• prepare your child before the first day and allow time for a relaxed handover to educators;

• bring along any comfort items;

• tell your child where you are going and when you will be returning;

• develop a routine with your child on arrival at the children’s centre;

• encourage your child to say hello to educators and to the other children;

• settle your child in an activity with a small group;

• let your child know you are going, say goodbye and leave; and

• greet your child upon return.

Once your child has started at the centre, families are encouraged to contact the centre as often as they wish to receive reassurance and information about how their child is settling in. We welcome family members to visit the centre at any time and encourage them to actively participate in the daily activities.

The Child Care Subsidy is the main way the Government assists families with their childcare fees.

CCS- Child Care Subsidy

The Child Care Subsidy (CCS) is the main way the Government assists families with their childcare fees and is targeted to provide greater assistance to low and middle income families.

Some basic requirements must be satisfied for an individual to be eligible to receive CCS for a child. These include:

* the child must be aged 13 or under and not attending secondary school, except in certain circumstances where an individual may be eligible for a child who does not meet this criteria, such as children with a disability or medical condition in certain circumstances
* the individual must care of the child at least 2 nights per fortnight or have 14% per cent of care or be receiving Family Tax Benefit for the child
* the child must meet immunisation requirements
* the individual, or their partner, must meet the residency requirements
* In addition, to be eligible for CCS the individual must be liable to pay for care provided, the care must be delivered in Australia by an approved child care provider, and not be part of a compulsory education program.

Child Care Subsidy entitlement

There are three factors that determine a family's level of CCS. These are:

* Combined annual family income
* Activity test – the activity level of both parents
* Service type – type of childcare service and whether the child attends school

CCS is generally paid directly to service providers to be passed on to families as a fee reduction. Families make a co-contribution to their childcare fees and pay to the provider the difference between the fee charged and the subsidy amount (also called the out of pocket fee or fee gap).

To support disadvantaged and vulnerable children attend quality early childhood education and care, state and territory governments can contribute to the out of pocket fee on behalf of the family

There is also targeted additional fee assistance for vulnerable families through the Child Care Safety Net.

For more information and resources, please visit Australian Government, Department of Education Skills and Employment https://www.education.gov.au/child-care-subsidy-0

**Links to other policies:**

* Waiting List
* Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations Policy
* Complaints and Grievances Policy
* Dealing with Infectious Disease Policy
* Fees Policy
* Inclusion and Equity Policy
* Privacy Policy
* Immunisation Policy
* Room allocation Policy
* Enrolment procedure

**Sources and further reading:**

* Australian Childhood Immunisation Register: www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/medicare/australian-childhood-immunisation-register
* 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/
* Priority for allocating places in child care services: <http://education.gov.au/priority-allocating-places>
* Enrolment Process: <https://www.education.gov.au/child-care-provider-handbook/enrolment-process-0>
* The Kindergarten Guide (Department of Education and Training):
* www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/funding/Pages/kinderfundingcriteria.aspx
* Immunisation enrolment toolkit for early childhood education and care services
* Victorian Department of Health: [www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation)
* Bubup Womindjeca <http://www.bwfcc.org.au/>
* Australian Government, Department of Education Skills and Employment https://www.education.gov.au/child-care-subsidy-0

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