ENROLMENT AND ORIENTATION POLICY

Mandatory – Quality Area 6

PURPOSE

This policy will outline:

- the criteria for enrolment at Boronia K -12 College ELC
- the process to be followed when enrolling a child at Boronia K -12 College ELC, and the basis on which places within the programs will be allocated
- procedures for the orientation of new families and children into Boronia K -12 College ELC.

POLICY STATEMENT

1. VALUES

Boronia K -12 College ELC is committed to:

- equal access for all children
- meeting the needs of the local community
- complying with DEECD funding requirements relating to the enrolment of children in government-funded kindergarten places
- maintaining confidentiality in relation to all information provided on enrolment forms
- ensuring all families are welcomed and receive an effective orientation into the service.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Certified Supervisor, educators, staff and parents/guardians who wish to enrol or have already enrolled their child at Boronia K -12 College ELC.

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)).

It is intended that all eligible children (refer to *Definitions*) will have access to one year of kindergarten before commencing school. However, a shortage of places in some areas can limit choices for parents/guardians. Where demand is higher than availability, a priority system for access must be determined by the Approved Provider in order to allocate the available places. The criteria used to determine the allocation of places will vary from service to service, but is generally based on a service's philosophy, values and beliefs, and the provisions of the *Equal Opportunity Act 2012*. The Victorian Government requires funded organisations to ensure that their policies and procedures promote equal opportunity for all children. Criteria for access and inclusion are outlined in *The Kindergarten Guide* (refer to *Sources*). Services participating in central enrolment schemes are required to comply with the enrolment procedures of that scheme.

Childcare services providing approved care (refer to *Definitions*) must abide by the *Family Assistance Legislation Amendment (Child Care Rebate) Act 2011* (refer to *Legislation and standards*) and the Commonwealth Government's *Priority for allocating places in child care services* (refer to *Sources*).

Legislation and standards

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- *A New Tax System (Family Assistance) 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, 177, 183
- *Equal Opportunity Act 2010* (Vic)

- *Family Assistance Legislation Amendment (Child Care Rebate) Act 2011*
- *National Quality Standard*, Quality Area 6: Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities
  - Standard 6.1: Respectful and supportive relationships with families are developed and maintained
    - Element 6.1.1: There is an effective enrolment and orientation process for families
- *Sex Discrimination Act 1984* (Cth)

> The most current amendments to listed legislation can be found at:
> - Victorian Legislation – Victorian Law Today: http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/
> - Commonwealth Legislation – ComLaw: http://www.comlaw.gov.au/

4. 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.

Approved care: Care given by a service provider that has been approved by the Family Assistance Office to receive Child Care Benefit payments on behalf of eligible families. Most long day care, family day care, before-and-after school care, vacation care, some occasional care and some in-home care childcare services are approved providers. Details are available at:
www.familyassist.gov.au/payments/family-assistance-payments/child-care-benefit/

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 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 Benefit (CCB): A Commonwealth Government payment to help families who use either approved or registered childcare services. All eligible families can receive some Child Care Benefit. Details are available at:
www.familyassist.gov.au/payments/family-assistance-payments/child-care-benefit/

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 year when they are eligible for a funded kindergarten place, or is officially withdrawn from a service prior to the April data collection. DEECD considers that this child has not accessed a year of funded kindergarten and is therefore eligible for DEECD funding in the following year.

Eligible child: A child who meets the criteria outlined in *The Kindergarten Guide.*

Enrolment application form: A form to apply for a place at the service.

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.

Enrolment form: A form that collects contact details, and personal and medical information from parents/guardians about their child. This is completed after a place has been offered by the service and accepted by the applicant. The information on this form is placed on the child's enrolment record (see below) and is kept confidential by the service.

Enrolment record: Contains information on each child, as required under the National Regulations, including contact details, names of authorised nominees (refer to *Definitions*), names of persons authorised to consent to medical treatment or to authorise administration of medication, names of persons authorised to take the child outside the service, details of any court orders, personal and health information including specific healthcare needs, medical management plans and dietary restrictions etc. (Regulations 160, 161, 162). This information is kept confidential by the service.

Fees: A charge for a place within a program at the service.

5. SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES

Sources

- Child Care Benefit (Eligibility of Child Care Services for Approval and Continued Approval) Determination 2000:
  http://www.comlaw.gov.au/Series/F2006B01541
- *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
- *The Kindergarten Guide (Department of Education and Early Childhood Development)*:
  http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/funding/Pages/default.aspx

Service policies

- *Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations Policy*
- *Complaints and Grievances Policy*
- *Fees Policy*
- *Inclusion and Equity Policy*
- *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*

PROCEDURES

The Approved Provider is responsible for:

- determining the criteria for priority of access to programs at Boronia K -12 College ELC , based on funding requirements and the service's philosophy
- developing procedures that ensure all eligible families are aware of, and are able to access, an early childhood program, and considering any barriers to access that may exist
- 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
- 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
- ensuring that enrolment forms (refer to *Definitions*) comply with the requirements of Regulations 160, 161, 162
- reviewing the enrolment form to determine its effectiveness in meeting the regulatory and 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)
- ensuring that the orientation program and plans meet the individual needs of children and families, and comply with DEECD 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 that 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 person responsible for the enrolment process is accountable for the following:

- providing enrolment application forms (refer to Attachment 2 – Sample Enrolment Application Form)
- collating enrolments
- maintaining a waiting list
- collecting, receipting and banking enrolment fees
- offering places in line with this policy and criteria for priority access, and providing relevant paperwork to families in accordance with this policy
- providing a monthly report to the Approved Provider regarding the status of enrolments and any difficulties encountered
- storing completed enrolment application forms in a lockable file (refer to *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*) as soon as is practicable
- complying with the *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy* of the service
- providing a copy of the *Enrolment and Orientation Policy* with the enrolment application form.

The Nominated Supervisor, Certified Supervisor and other 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
- 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
- ensuring that enrolment forms are completed prior to the child's commencement at the service
- ensuring that parents/guardians of a child attending the service can enter the service premises at any time that 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)
- 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
- 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 and carers at the service, when required
- assisting parents/guardians to develop and maintain a routine for saying goodbye to their child
- 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 service's *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy* in relation to the collection and management of a child's enrolment information.

Parents/guardians are responsible for:

- reading and complying with this *Enrolment and Orientation Policy*
- completing enrolment forms prior to their child's commencement at the service
- ensuring that all 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.

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

- General enrolment procedures
- Enrolment Application Form

AUTHORISATION

This policy was adopted by the Approved Provider of Boronia K -12 College ELC on September 2014.

REVIEW DATE: JUNE 2015

General enrolment procedures

1. Application for a place

- Enrolment application forms are available from the College.
- 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, enrolment applications 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 must be submitted with all applications.
- All applications must be accompanied by an enrolment application fee of $50. This fee is to cover administrative costs associated with the processing of a child's enrolment application and is not refundable.
- Completed enrolment application forms are to be forwarded to the person responsible for the enrolment process at the service, at Boronia K – 12 College.
- 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.

2. Closing dates for enrolment applications

The closing dates for enrolment applications are:

- June 30 2014 for children to attend the funded kindergarten program in 2015.
- June 30 2014 for children to attend the three-year-old program in 2015.
- After this date if there are any vacancies the spaces will be filled on a first in first served basis.

3. Procedure for a late application for enrolment

Applications received after the closing date will be considered after all other applicants have been offered a place, in line with the eligibility and priority of access criteria of Boronia K – 12 College ELC.

4. Allocation within groups

Places within the programs will be allocated by the service in line with the eligibility and priority of access criteria.

5. Offer of places

- Places will be allocated to applicants in accordance with the eligibility and priority of access criteria of the service.
- Offer of places in the three-year-old program/s and the funded kindergarten program will be made at the same time.
- Applicants who are successful will be notified in writing of a confirmed place.
- Parents/guardians who do not wish to accept the offer of a 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.
- Second-round offers will be made six weeks after first-round offers.
- A deposit of $50 must be paid by 30th June to hold the place for the following year. This deposit will be deducted from first term fees.
- An enrolment form and other relevant information will be provided after the place is accepted and the deposit has been paid.

Note: Places will not be allocated to children until any substantial debt 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*).

6. Eligibility and priority of access criteria for the funded kindergarten program

The following children are eligible for attendance in the funded kindergarten program:

- children who have been granted approval to receive funding for a second year of kindergarten in accordance with *The Kindergarten Guide* available at:
http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/funding/Pages/default.aspx

- children who were eligible to attend in the previous year, but:
  - deferred
  - withdrew from the service prior to the April data collection and have completed the *Kindergarten withdrawal and deferment form* (available from the service)

- children who turn four 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 DEECD (refer to *The Kindergarten Guide*, available at:
http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/funding/Pages/default.aspx

- children who are younger than the eligible age, but whose parents/guardians have submitted an early age entry request for their child to attend school the following year. This written request is to be directed to the regional office of DEECD, or the non-government school the child will be attending. A copy of the approval must be attached to the kindergarten application. Parents/guardians should note that very few requests are approved by DEECD. If the child attends kindergarten early, but does not proceed to school in the following year, they will be unable to access a second year of kindergarten unless they are deemed eligible by DEECD for having recognised developmental needs

- three-year-old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, and children known to Child Protection may be eligible for the Early Start Kindergarten program. This scheme provides funding to enable children to attend a kindergarten program that is planned and delivered by an early childhood teacher for a specific number of hours. Details are available at:
http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/learningdev/pages/earlystartkinder.aspx

When demand exceeds availability, the Approved Provider will refer to the service's values, philosophy and *Inclusion and Equity Policy* to determine the priority of access. This will include:

- children who have received funding for a second year of kindergarten

- children who were eligible to attend in the previous year but deferred or withdrew from the service prior to the April data collection.

Other considerations may include date of application, siblings already enrolled at the service, attendance in the three-year-old program and local community zoning.

If participating in a central enrolment scheme, the priority of access for that scheme will be implemented. Childcare services providing approved care (refer to *Definitions*) must abide by the *Family Assistance Legislation Amendment (Child Care Rebate) Act 2011* (refer to *Legislation and standards*) and the Commonwealth Government's *Priority for allocating places in child care services* (refer to *Sources*).

7. Eligibility and access criteria for three-year-old children

Children are eligible for attendance in the three-year-old 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:

- 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.

Enrolment Application Form

Boronia K – 12 ELC

Three Year Old Program

Complete this enrolment application form and:

enclose a copy of the child's birth certificate or suitable evidence of the child's birth date

enclose the $50 enrolment application fee, which is not refundable and covers administrative costs

forward the completed enrolment application form with attachments to Boronia K – 12 College Office

notify the service of any changes to your address or other relevant information

----

This application is for my child to attend Boronia K -12 College ELC three year old program in 2015.

- Child's family name: _____

- Child's given names: _____

- Language/s spoken at home: _____

- Is your child of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent? ☐ Yes •   ☐ No•
- Is your child a triplet or quadruplet? ☐ Yes •   ☐ No
- Has your child ever received medical attention for Anaphylaxis, Asthma, Epilepsy or any other serious medical condition? ☐ Yes •   ☐ No

- If Yes, provide details _____

_____

- Has your child been involved in any developmental support services, for example therapy for speech, hearing or mobility difficulties? ☐ Yes •   ☐ No

    If Yes, provide details _____

    _____

    _____

Children with additional needs

- Does your child have additional needs? ☐ Yes • ☐ No

  If yes, please specify:

- You are encouraged to discuss your child's needs with the educator when your child's place is confirmed.

- Is your child registered with a specific support service/agency? ☐ Yes • ☐ No •

  Name of support service/agency: _____

- Do you have support from the Department of Human Services? For example, is there a Child Protection Order in place for your child? ☐ Yes • ☐ No

  If Yes, please attach a copy of your documentation.

- Do you have a letter of recommendation from a doctor or other health professional regarding your child's circumstances? ☐ Yes • ☐ No

  If Yes, please attach a copy of your documentation.

- Date of birth: ____/____/____ ☐ Male • ☐ Female •

- Parents'/guardians' names: _____

- Address: _____

- _____ Postcode: _____

- Telephone number: (Home)_____ (Business) _____

- (Mobile) _____

Declaration

I hereby declare that I have checked all details above and that they are true and correct.   I understand that the personal information provided is for the above purpose and that he or she may apply to the College for access to and/or amendment of the information. Requests for access and or correction should be made to the Boronia K -12 College ELC on (03) 8760 4900

Applicant's Signature:

Date /   /

Relationship to Child:

Enrolment Application Form

Boronia K – 12 ELC
Funded Four Year Old Program

Complete this enrolment application form and:

enclose a copy of the child's birth certificate or suitable evidence of the child's birth date

enclose the $50 enrolment application fee, which is not refundable and covers administrative costs

forward the completed enrolment application form with attachments to Boronia K – 12 College Office

notify the service of any changes to your address or other relevant information

----

This application is for my child to attend Boronia K -12 College ELC three year old program in 2015.

- Child's family name: _____

- Child's given names: _____

- Language/s spoken at home: _____

Is your child of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent?　　☐ Yes •　　☐ No•

- Is your child a triplet or quadruplet?　　　　　　　　　　　☐ Yes •　　☐ No

Has your child ever received medical attention for Anaphylaxis, Asthma, Epilepsy or any other serious medical condition?
☐ Yes •　　　☐ No

If Yes, provide details _____

_____

Has your child been involved in any developmental support services, for example therapy for speech, hearing or mobility difficulties?　　　　　　　　　　　☐ Yes •　　☐ No

If Yes, provide details _____

_____

_____

Children with additional needs

- Does your child have additional needs? ☐ Yes • ☐ No

  If yes, please specify: _____

- You are encouraged to discuss your child's needs with the educator when your child's place is confirmed.

- Is your child registered with a specific support service/agency? ☐ Yes • ☐ No •

  Name of support service/agency: _____

- Do you have support from the Department of Human Services? For example, is there a Child Protection Order in place for your child? ☐ Yes • ☐ No

  If Yes, please attach a copy of your documentation.

- Do you have a letter of recommendation from a doctor or other health professional regarding your child's circumstances? ☐ Yes • ☐ No

  If Yes, please attach a copy of your documentation.

- Date of birth: ____/____/____   ☐ Male • ☐ Female •
- Parents'/guardians' names: _____
- Address: _____
- _____ Postcode: _____
- Telephone number: (Home)_____   (Business) _____
- (Mobile) _____

Kindergarten Fee Subsidy

DEECD provides a fee subsidy for eligible families. Please indicate and tick the box if you are eligible for one of the following concessions, or meet one of the following criteria:

Health Care Card ☐   Pensioner Concession Card ☐

DVA Gold Card   ☐   Bridging Visas A–F ☐

Temporary Protection/Humanitarian Visas 447, 451, 785 or 786 ☐

Resolution of Status Visa (RoS) Visa Class CD, Subclass 851 ☐

Refugee and Special Humanitarian Visas 200–217 ☐

Triplets or Quadruplets ☐   Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander ☐

Supporting documentation will need to be sighted on commencement at Boronia K – 12 College ELC by the College staff.

Note: the eligibility of concessions may vary from time-to-time. Up-to-date information can be found at:

http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/parents/support/Pages/financialassist.aspx

Declaration

I hereby declare that I have checked all details above and that they are true and correct.   I understand that the personal information provided is for the above purpose and that he or she may apply to the College for access to and/or amendment of the information. Requests for access and or correction should be made to the Boronia K -12 College ELC on (03) 9760 4900

Applicant's Signature:

Date /   /

Relationship to child _____

Priority of Access

For each relevant section, tick the **Yes** box for the question that best fits your circumstances and **No** for the remaining questions.

All Applicants	Do you have a subsidy card such as a: **Health Care Card; Pensioner Concession Card; Veterans' Affairs Gold** or **White Card;** or **Protection / Humanitarian / Refugee Visa**? If **Yes**, please attach a copy of the card for verification. For more information on eligibility visit DEECD's website at **http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/parents/kindergarten/**.	Yes ☐	No ☐
	Do you have support from the **Department of Human Services**? For example, is there a Child Protection Order in place for your child? If **Yes**, please attach a copy of your documentation.	Yes ☐	No ☐
	Do you have a letter of recommendation from a doctor or other health professional regarding your child's circumstances? If **Yes**, please attach a copy of your documentation.	Yes ☐	No ☐

Declaration

I hereby declare that I have checked all details above and that they are true and correct.

The applicant understands that the personal information provided is for the above purpose and that he or she may apply to Council for access to and/or amendment of the information. Requests for access and or correction should be made to the Knox Council Privacy Officer on (03) 9298 8000.

Applicant's Signature:	**Date**
	/ /

Relationship to Child: