

# LMPA Central Enrolment System (CES) Policy

## Purpose

This policy will outline, for all users:-

- The criteria for placement in funded and unfunded early childhood programs participating in the CES
- The process in allocating places
- The responsibilities of those involved with the CES, including LMPA, service staff, committees and families.

## Values

The CES is committed to:

- Promoting the opportunity for all eligible children to have access to a funded kindergarten program in the year prior to school
  - Involving community in the review of CES policy and procedure
  - Providing clear application processes for families, enabling them to make informed choices about services that meet their needs
  - Compliance with legislation relevant to this policy (see listed below)
  - Maintaining confidentiality
  - Utilising statistics gathered by the CES to shape future service delivery and development and lobby local, state and federal government.
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### 1. Scope

This policy applies to participating services, volunteer parent committee's, LMPA Board and staff, and parents/guardians of children enrolled/ing at a CES centre.

### 2. Legislation

The following documents form the basis of the LMPA CES Policy:

- Education and Care Services National Law
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Commonwealth)
- Equal Opportunity Act 1995 (Victoria)
- Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986 (Commonwealth)
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Commonwealth)
- Victorian Information Privacy Act 2000
- Victorian *Kindergarten Policy, Procedures and Funding Criteria(VKP) update 2010-2012*
- No Jab No Play (amendment to the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008)

3. Definitions

**The Board:** the LMPA Board of Management that has management responsibility of the Central Enrolment System

**DET:** Department of Education and Training

**Central Enrolments Officer/s:** the person/s employed by LMPA to operate the CES

**Children with additional needs:** Children who have diagnosed disabilities or high support needs, or a child who has a parent with special needs, or is deemed at risk

**Eligible child:** Refer to DET *Victorian Kindergarten Policy, Procedures and Funding Criteria update 2009*, a child that meets the eligibility criteria to access a funded kindergarten place

**Enrolment form:** A form, which collects details regarding individual children. This form is combined with the application form and is completed prior to a child being offered a place in a Kindergarten

**Fees:** A payment for a place within a program at the centre. These include the placement application fees, term fees etc.

**Kindergarten Fee Subsidy:** Funding paid directly to licensees to reduce kindergarten fees for a child who individually holds or has a parent/guardian who holds one of the following:

- Commonwealth Health Care Card **or** Pensioner Concession Card
- Department of Veterans Affairs Gold Card
- Temporary Protection/ Humanitarian Visas 447, 451, 785, or 786
- Refugee/ Special Humanitarian Visa 200 to 217
- Asylum seeker Bridging Visa A – F
- Or the child is a triplet or quadruplet

This does not apply to unfunded programs. (e.g. pre-kindergarten)

**Kindergarten:** Kindergarten (formerly known as preschool) is a universal early childhood program, funded by the state government, for children in the year prior to commencing primary school.

**Pre-Kindergarten:** A program for children in the year immediately prior to funded kindergarten attendance. Attendance is for approximately 2-3 hrs 1 day per week.

**Siblings:** Sisters and brothers

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

**Vacant funded place:** A government funded place at a centre from which a child has withdrawn

#### 4. Procedures

##### **The LMPA Board is responsible for:**

- Approving any changes to this policy after appropriate community consultation
- Responding to any queries that arise in relation to any aspect of the policy
- Ensuring the CES complies with relevant legislation, policy and procedure
- Setting the annual enrolment application fee.

##### **Early Education Staff** is responsible for:

- Distributing placement application forms to prospective parents and referring people to the Central Enrolments Officer as required
- Adhering to agreed protocols as per the CES Policy
- Consulting/advising the Central Enrolments Officer about applications that identify children with additional needs. Communicating with the Central Enrolments Officer in a timely manner regarding any changes/ concerns including specific needs of families and children in relation to placement if known.

##### **CES Staff** is responsible for the day-to-day implementation of this policy, including:

- All administration of the CES system
- Reporting to services and LMPA Board regarding the status of enrolments.
- Providing secure storage of documentation, as per Victorian Privacy Legislation

##### **Parent/guardians** are responsible for:

- Ensuring all application information is true and accurate
- That CES staff is notified of any changes to status, preferences and contact details or other information as soon as possible
- Submitting a new application for each child for each year. (If the child meets the criteria for a second year of funded kindergarten, an application needs to be completed to ensure updated and accurate information. There is no need to provide proof of age or payment of the application fee)
- Submitting applications within the required timeframes
- Returning confirmations within required timeframes.

## **FUNDED KINDERGARTEN INFORMATION**

### **1. Eligibility**

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

- Children who have received funding for a second year of Kindergarten
- Children turning six years of age in their year at Kindergarten who have been granted an exemption from school entry age requirements by their regional office of the Department of Education and Training (DET)
- Children who are four years of age by the 30th April in the year of attendance
- Children who are eligible under the Early Start Program or have submitted a written request for early entrance to primary school
- CES reserves the right to allocate children where specific issues arise. i.e. children are at risk as reported by family support and other agencies.

## 2. General Enrolment Procedure

### Application for a funded kindergarten place

Enrolment applications will be available after 1 February each year.

Enrolment application forms are available online at [www.lmpa.org.au](http://www.lmpa.org.au) and distributed to Kindergartens and other relevant community services to be locally available for families.

A separate placement application form must be completed for each child in each year.

Enrolment applications encourage families to clearly identify additional or specific needs children to assist with transition. \*\*\*\*Applications for funding may occur in the year prior to attendance to support children with additional needs where this information is provided.

Proof of birth must be provided with each enrolment application.

Proof of current Immunisation Status must be provided with each enrolment application. This can be the Immunisation History Statement, Catch up Schedule or Medical Contraindicator statement. Conscientious Objection forms and Homeopaths treatment are no longer accepted under the new No Jab No Play Legislation.

Each enrolment application must include the prescribed non-refundable fee  
OR a copy of a current Health Care Card/Pension Card or eligible fee exempt card.

Completed enrolment application forms are to be forwarded to the Central Enrolments Officer by the following methods:

In person/Mail: C/- LMPA 10A Merino Court East Bendigo 3550

E-mail: [enrolments@lmpa.org.au](mailto:enrolments@lmpa.org.au)

(if sending via Mail it is recommended that Registered or Express Post is used)

\*\*Applications without appropriate documentation may not be accepted.

### 3. Closing dates for first allocation

The closing date for the first allocation is June 30<sup>th</sup> in the year prior to attendance.

### 4. Procedure for second and subsequent allocations

Applications received after the closing date for the first allocation will be allocated in subsequent allocations as per the CES Timeline.

### 5. Allocation within groups

The CES places children to kindergartens. Kindergartens will then allocate children to groups/sessions. CES holds no responsibility for the placement of children into individual Kindergarten/Pre-kindergarten groups.

### 6. Offer of funded kindergarten places

Letters of offer will be sent to families as in the CES timeline and are requested to confirm acceptance or rejection in writing within 10 days.

Additional allocation round offers will occur regularly after the first round as per the CES Timeline.

Waiting list letters will be sent to families who did not receive a placement. They will be included in future allocation rounds.

Kindergartens will be provided with a detailed list of all confirmed enrolments after the first allocation. This will be updated as necessary.

Families must respond to accept an offer of a kindergarten place in writing to CES within 10 days. If a family will not be able to receive letters of offer of placement at the end of July they should notify the Central Enrolments Officer.

Where a family has been offered a place and not responded through three separate allocations, the application will be withheld from further placement until the family contacts CES.

### **Kindergarten Allocation of Places Process**

All children will be allocated to preferred kindergartens indicated using the following criteria;

- Children eligible for Priority Placement (eldest first). Children eligible for priority placement either;
  - Children at risk of abuse or neglect, including children in Out-of-Home Care. Early Start Kindergarten or Access to Early Learning, or referred by:
    - Child Protection
    - Child and family services (family services referral and support team, Child FIRST)
    - Maternal and Child Health nurse, or
    - Out-of-Home Care provider
  - Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children
  - Children eligible for a second year of Kindergarten
  - Asylum seeker and refugee children appropriate visa that identifies the child and/or parents as a refugee or, asylum seeker
  - Children eligible for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy
    - Children or parents who hold a Commonwealth Health Care Card, Pensioner Concession Card, Veteran's Affairs Card and multiple birth children (3+)
  - Children with additional needs,
    - Defined as children who:
      - 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
- Attended Prekindergarten at the same service (first preference only) in the year prior kindergarten
- Has had a sibling attend at the same service (first preference only) in the three years prior to kindergarten

*For a child to be considered for sibling/prekinder priority placement the application MUST be received by 30th June and is only used for the first round of allocations.*

The Priority Placement option does not guarantee placement

Priority placement does not apply to pre-kindergarten applications

- Children who are younger than the eligible age, but whose parents/guardians have submitted a written request for their child to attend school the following year to their regional office of the DET, or the non-government school their child will be attending. A copy of the written request must be attached with the application
- Three year old and four year old children who qualify for the Early Start Program
- Date of Birth - eldest child first applications received post 30 June

**UN-FUNDED PRE-KINDERGARTEN INFORMATION****7. Eligibility and access criteria for Pre-Kindergarten programs**

The following children are eligible for attendance in the **Pre-Kindergarten** program:

Children must be three years of age prior to pre-kindergarten attendance.

Three year old children who qualify for the Early Start Program

**8. Pre- Kindergarten Allocation of Places Process**

- Date of Birth – eldest child first
- Parent’s preference of kindergarten as on the application form
- Applications received before 31 August
- Applications received after 31 August
- A child turning 3 after 31 January of the year they attend Pre-kindergarten will not be placed until the child has had their third birthday

**9. Offer of unfunded Pre-kindergarten places**

Letters of offer will be sent to families as in the CES timeline and are requested to confirm acceptance or rejection in writing within 10 days. Those who do not respond will be returned to the waiting list for the next allocation.

**10. Closing dates for first allocation**

The closing date for the first allocation is August 31st in the year prior to attendance.

**11. Procedure for second and subsequent allocations**

Applications received after the closing date for the first allocation will be allocated in subsequent allocations as per the CES Timeline.

Waiting list letters will be sent to families who did not receive a placement. They will be included in future allocation rounds.

Services will be provided with a detailed list of confirmed enrolments after the first allocation has been confirmed.

All children will be allocated to indicated preferred pre-kindergartens using the following criteria: Date of birth.

\*\* LMPA does not inform families of children’s position on the waiting list due to the changing nature of the list.

**12. Complaints**

If a family wishes to raise any concern regarding their placement or the enrolment application process, they must lodge this in writing within 7 days.

**13. Review date**

This policy will be reviewed annually in consultation with the Early Childhood community via staff, stakeholder and other community avenues.

**14. Evaluation**

In order to assess whether the policy has achieved the values and purposes, the LMPA Board will:

Assess whether a satisfactory resolution has been achieved in relation to issues relating to enrolment procedures.

Conduct regular surveys in relation to this policy, or incorporate relevant questions in the general parents/guardians survey.

Take into account feedback on the policy from the Central Enrolment Officer and Early Childhood staff and other consultation opportunities.