

# Stockton Public School Preschool Procedure



## Enrolment and orientation

Reviewed:

Education and care services regulation/s	NSW Department of Education policy, procedure or guidelines	<a href="#">Preschool Handbook</a> reference	School policy or procedure, where applicable
<u>Regulation 168(2)(k)</u> <u>Regulation 160</u> <u>Regulation 161</u> <u>Regulation 162</u>	<p>The following department policies and relevant documents can be accessed from the preschool section of the department's <a href="#">website</a>;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enrolment of Students in NSW Government Schools: A Summary and Consolidation of Policy PD/2002/0006/V01</li> <li>• Department Preschool Classes: Enrolment procedure (attached below)</li> <li>• Preschool waiting list application form</li> <li>• Application to enrol in a NSW Government preschool</li> <li>• Schedule of Visa Subclasses and Enrolment Condition</li> </ul>		

*Add statements here to document your local procedures;*

- How do you orientate children into your preschool?
- How are families offered a place for their child, ie. by letter or verbally?
- If the number of applications for a place exceeds places available, what is your priority order for offering positions?
- Do you maintain a waiting list?
- Is any information additional to the enrolment form collected from families about their child?
- How is information collected about a child with additional learning or health needs?
- What are your attendance patterns, and how do you allocate children to each group?
- If a child turns four during their preschool year, what is your process for collecting the updated immunisation record?

## **PRACTICES**

A selection panel to be established at the beginning of each year. This panel must include:

- School Principal
- A member of staff
- A member of the school community nominated by the school parent organisation.

The placement panel will meet early August to review each application and waiting list application form and other documentation. They will place applications into priority order in accordance to the stated eligibility criteria. (NB. A buffer of 2 per program will be given for local area applications of high priority that may come in after August). All decisions to be recorded.

### **Criteria for enrolment :**

- Children living within local school boundary, in accordance with the *Priority Categories*.
- Children with siblings attending Stockton Public School.
- Children living outside local school boundaries with siblings attending Stockton Public School.
- Compassionate reasons

Within the above groups priority must be given to children whose families experience disadvantage and who are unable to access other prior to school services. Priority categories include children:-

- of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin.
- from families experiencing financial hardship.
- with disabilities.

Families wishing to place their child on the waiting list must fill in an application form (available from the school office). This form may be lodged with the school the year before the child is to start pre-school.

*A departmental student application to enrol form* must be completed at this time and given to the office along with proof of age, immunisation details and proof of residence.

NSW Preschools cannot enrol children unless they are fully vaccinated, on a catch up schedule, have a medical reason not to be immunised or have parents who are conscientious objectors.

Children who are not offered a position will be kept on a waiting list. If a vacancy occurs during the year the position will be filled by the child with the highest priority on the waiting list.

Families will be notified in writing of successful pre-school placement and if they have been placed on a waiting list.

The pre-school class will operate from 9.00am to 3.00pm, Monday to Friday and observe DoE school holidays.

In order to promote a successful start to pre-school, starting days will be staggered with all children starting by the end of the second week of the new school year.

Pre-school placements are for one year only. If a further year is required due to special circumstances, written application must be made to principal along with any supporting documentation.

# Department preschool classes

## Enrolment procedures

### Background

There are 100 department preschools located in government schools across NSW. Eleven of the classes are designated specifically for Aboriginal children. Four of the classes are delivered by distance education.

The preschool classes are an integral part of the school in which they are located and operate within the same hours as the school. Attendance patterns vary and are determined to meet the needs of the local community. Schools need to ensure they are able to offer at least 600 hours of preschool education over the year which equates to approximately 15 hours per week.

Parents pay a fee for their children to attend preschool. There are a range of fees. Families who are experiencing financial hardship are able to obtain fee relief.

### General principles of enrolment

1. Children attend department preschool classes for one year only, the year before they start school.
2. In exceptional circumstances, the principal may consider an additional year of attendance after consultation with the parent/carer, the preschool teacher and other relevant personnel. If this is the case, the child is to be considered as a new application and prioritised in the same way as all new applications.
3. Priority is given to:
  - I. Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children
  - II. children living in low socio-economic circumstances
  - III. children who are unable to access other early childhood services due to disadvantage or financial hardship.
4. The principal will consult with the school community to develop enrolment procedures that are specific to the preschool and which reflect the community's profile and needs.

5. Schools with designated preschools and those in communities with significant numbers of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children should liaise with the local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group.

### **Eligibility criteria**

6. Children can enrol from the beginning of the school year if they turn four years of age on or before 31 July in that year.
7. The principal will offer enrolment in the following order:
  - I. to children living within the school's enrolment catchment area with priority given to Aboriginal children and those who are disadvantaged
  - II. to children living outside the school's enrolment catchment area and who have siblings enrolled in the school, with priority given to Aboriginal children and those who are disadvantaged
  - III. to children living outside the local school's enrolment catchment area with priority given to Aboriginal children and those who are disadvantaged.

### **8. Eligibility for enrolment in a designated Aboriginal preschool**

Designated preschools specifically cater for local Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children.

Every effort needs to be made to ensure that vacant places are filled by Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children. Any vacancies may then be offered to non-Aboriginal children although a buffer of two places for Aboriginal children is to be maintained throughout the year.

### **9. Enrolling temporary visa holders in preschool**

Preschool children who are temporary visa holders enrol in department preschools under the same conditions as Australian citizens. However some temporary visas such as visitor/tourist visas are not eligible. For more information refer to the [Schedule of Visa Subclasses and Enrolment Conditions](http://bit.ly/1OzOxxm) [http://bit.ly/1OzOxxm].

Temporary visa holders enrolled in preschool do not complete the Temporary Residents Program Application Form (Authority to Enrol) or pay the Temporary Residents Fee.

### **10. Eligibility for enrolment in distance education preschool**

Distance education preschools cater specifically for geographically isolated children. Eligibility criteria for enrolment differ from the rest of the department preschools. For specific criteria refer to page 5 of [Distance Education Enrolment Procedures](http://bit.ly/1Oay0za) [http://bit.ly/1Oay0za]

### **Applications for enrolment**

11. Schools can accept enrolment applications for the following year from the beginning of term two of the current school year.
12. Parents/carers apply on the [Application to enrol in a NSW Government preschool](http://bit.ly/1TT6zOV) [http://bit.ly/1TT6zOV] although in some cases, schools may request the parent to initially use a waiting list application form (see section 18).
13. Enrolment requires the following documentation to be provided:
  - a. birth certificate and/ or [proof of identity and residency status](http://bit.ly/2cxWTJR) [http://bit.ly/2cxWTJR]
  - b. [immunisation documentation](http://bit.ly/1ObRB8r) [http://bit.ly/1ObRB8r] as specified by the Australian Government
  - c. proof of residential address
  - d. passport or immicard and evidence of visa status for children who are not Australian citizens
  - e. low-income health care card if applicable and
  - f. copies of any family law or other relevant court orders if applicable.
14. When enrolling young children with disabilities or special learning needs, the principal will seek support from the Learning and Wellbeing officer in the local Educational Services team.

### **Enrolment panel**

15. When applications for enrolment exceed places available, the principal will establish an enrolment panel. The panel will review each application, place applications into priority order, establish a prioritised waiting list and record all decisions.
16. The enrolment panel is to include at least one staff member (other than the principal), a school community member and a community member nominated by the local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group where applicable. Panel members must declare any conflict of interest with regard to any applications.
17. Parents/carers will be informed in writing of the result of their application and advised if they have been placed on a waiting list.

**Waiting list**

18. Schools may choose to ask parents to complete a waiting list application form if there is a possibility that the number of applications for enrolment will exceed the number of places available.
19. The waiting list is valid for the year prior to enrolment in the preschool class and for the current preschool year.
20. If a vacancy occurs during the year, the position will be offered to the child with the highest priority on the waiting list.

**Previous policies replaced by this document**

- A. *Enrolment (section 15.6.5) Preschool Education Policy, School Manual: Educational Management, 1 October 1987*
- B. *Memorandum to Principals of Schools with Preschool Classes 91.004, Entry Age to Government Preschools, 28 January 1991*
- C. *The Enrolment of Students in Government Schools – A Summary and Consolidation of Policy, August 1997*
- D. *Memorandum to Principals with Preschool Classes DN/04/00420, Enrolment of Children in New and Existing Preschool Classes, 4 July 2005*

**Contact**

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