



Title	Enrolment, Orientation and Cancellation Policy & Procedure
Date of Approval	March 2004
Date Last Reviewed	July 2017
Date of Next Review	May 2019
Approved By	General Manager
Owner	General Manager
Version	8
Purpose or Reason	Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
Source or Reference Material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Commonwealth)</li> <li>• Equal Opportunity Act 1995 (Victoria)</li> <li>• Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986 (Commonwealth)</li> <li>• Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Commonwealth)</li> <li>• Information Privacy Act 2000</li> <li>• Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011</li> <li>• DSS Child Care Services Handbook 2012-2013</li> <li>• DET The Kindergarten Guide 2016</li> <li>• ACS Fees Policy</li> </ul>

## VERSION CONTROL

Version No.	Date	Comment	Author
1	03/2004	Developed to ensure clear guidelines for the these procedures within ACS	Manager
2	10/2014	Merged the ACS Enrolment Policy with the ACS Consent Policy	General Manager
3	11/2014	Reviewed and reformatted by ACS CoM for consistency	ACS CoM
4	11/2015	Amended Priority of Access to include Myrtleford OSHC	General Manager
5	11/2015	Included a selection criteria for the Myrtleford OSHC to ensure the program is only accessible for school aged children	General Manager
6	1 May 2017	Reviewed policy to ensure consistency with the Victorian Department of Education and Training's Kindergarten Guide Slight changes to formatting to improve clarity	General Manager
7	16 June 2017	Added in the requirement for families to complete the ACS Enrolment Updates Form as part of the annual re-enrolment process and when a child has not attended an ACS service for more than 6-months	General Manager
8	6 July 2017	Included Bright Outside School Hours Care in Procedures	General Manager

## **Policy**

### **Scope**

The Enrolment, Orientation and Cancellation Policy & Procedure applies to all Alpine Children's Services (ACS) staff, Family Day Care Educators, parents/guardians, children, volunteers, students and contractors involved with the service.

### **Policy Statement**

This policy ensures that the enrolment process is fair equitable and that all families applying for a place with ACS are aware of the enrolment, transitions and cancellations. It is also important that the enrolment process proceeds smoothly and meets the needs of the child, family and the service.

### **Objectives/Principles**

Alpine Children's Services aims to offer places in a fair and equitable manner to all eligible children. Each service is obliged to take into account guidelines as set down by funding bodies and its own priority guidelines.

Enrolment and orientation processes will be planned and implemented in consultation with families, in order to orient a child and family to the service. Due consideration will be given to culture and language. Documentation, including authorisations, will be completed during the enrolment and orientation process.

Every effort will be made to work in partnership with families. ACS, however, recognises that there may be some extreme circumstances where the appropriate course of action is the cancellation of enrolment of a child's place.

## Procedure

### Enrolment Documentation

All enrolment documentation needs to be completed prior to the commencement of the child attending the services. This includes at least one emergency contact that does not necessarily need to live locally.

Any medical condition that requires an action plan (e.g. asthma, anaphylaxis or allergy) must be completed prior to the child commencing.

### Consent

ACS shall ensure that consent is obtained from the family, in respect of a defined activity of required information. The enrolment documentation includes a section on consent to items such as the application of sunscreen and emergency medical treatment.

In emergency situations where a person is unconscious or seriously ill and the situation demands immediate intervention to save a person's life, the overriding duty of care negates the need to obtain consent.

### Priority of Access

An explanation of the priority of access guidelines needs to be provided to families (refer to the <http://www.education.gov.au/priority-allocating-places> and the service's family handbook):

**Priority One:** Children at serious risk of abuse or neglect.

**Priority Two:** Children of parents who are both working/studying (as defined under section 14 of the Family Assistance Act).

**Priority Three:** All other children.

Within each category, children are to be given priority that fall into these groups:

- Children from Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander families
- Children from families which include a disabled family member
- Children in socially isolated families
- Children of single parents

When there are no vacant places and a child is considered 'third priority', a child may be required to leave the service in order for the service to provide a place for a higher priority child. Families will be provided with at least 14 days notice of the requirement for their child to leave the service.

In addition to the above, all children enrolled in the Myrtleford and Bright Outside School Hours Care Program that attend St. Mary's Primary School, Myrtleford P-12 College or Bright P-12 College, will be given first priority of access before children attending other schools.

### Enrolled Hours

Upon commencement the child's enrolled hours becomes a contract agreed upon by the family and the service. It is vital that families adhere to these times for two reasons:

- The service must always maintain a legal staff/child ratio in accordance with the Education and Care Services National Regulations; and
- Children know what time to expect their parents and may become concerned if the parent/guardian is late.

### Waiting List

If the demand for a program exceeds the number of places available, enrolment waiting lists will be established. The priority of the waiting list will follow firstly the priority of access guidelines (noted above) and in line with the date of request for the program.

## **Settling In**

Families will be encouraged to spend time in the room with their child prior to the commencement date in order to assist the child in their transition into the service.

Prior to the child's first day all relevant staff will familiarise themselves with information about the child from the enrolment information. They will ensure they are aware of any medical conditions and how to manage them if required.

A family member will remain in the service during orientation visits. The family must sign the visitors book/register on arrival and departure. Children cannot be left at the service until they have formally commenced.

During the orientation process educators and staff will interact with the child and encourage them to engage in the program and activities. They will also be available to the family to answer any questions, whilst ensuring they are not compromising the supervision of other children in their care or required ratios.

## **Casual Bookings**

Families seeking extra casual days for their child should consult with the Centre Coordinator to check availability. If additional day/s are available, payment is required within the usual fee payment timeframe. An administration fee is payable for all casual bookings of \$3 per full day/ respite, \$1.50 per half day.

## **Increases to Bookings**

Families seeking to increase their child's permanently enrolled days at the service, should consult with the Centre Coordinator or Administration Officer to check availability. Requests for additional days will be considered strictly in the order of submission, governed by priority of access and date of request.

## **Changing, Reducing or Cancellation of Bookings**

A family who wishes to change, reduce or cancel their child's enrolment should put this in writing. Families will need to give **two weeks' written notice** and if notice is not given two weeks' fees will be charged in lieu.

Any changes to enrolments must be a permanent booking e.g. if you wish to change your day for one week only you will be required to pay for your permanent day plus the new casual booking.

If a child does not attend their permanent session for two consecutive weeks without parent notification, his/her booking will be cancelled.

## **Transitions**

Throughout each day, children experience transitions. In the most part, these transitions involve seemingly simple activities - moving from one activity space to another, moving from one planned or informal activity to another or preparing to take part in meal breaks or rest times. For some, the transitions are greater - saying goodbye to family members at drop offs, moving from one Room Group to another or visiting school.

We recognise that for some children, even the smallest transitions can cause stress and concern. The service endeavours to plan and implement all transitions into seamless, low stress actions for all stakeholders.

The service works with families and embeds the routines consistently practiced in the home wherever it is operationally possible within the service. The service aims to lessen the negative impact of transitions, turning them into positive, learning experiences.

The service will:

- Ensure that transitions are age appropriate and achievable for all children
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the service's daily transitions through our Staff Orientation Program and appropriate staff mentoring
- Actively assist children to participate in transitions with an intention to build self-help skills and confidence
- Plan transitional routines to ensure that children are able to move from one activity to another individually or in groups
- Consistently remind children of the transitional practices through words and actions
- Provide written notification to families of intent to transition a child from one Room Group to another and allow ample time for discussion with families to allay any fears or concerns.
- Provide at least four guided and supported transitional sessions to children moving from one Room Group to another prior to final placement within the new Room;
- Offer the opportunity for parents and the child's key educator in the newly transitioned room to meet to discuss progress, plans and any areas of concern eventuating from the transition for the child.

#### **Updates to Enrolment Details**

Each child's enrolment records must be kept up-to-date.

It is therefore essential that families inform the service of any changes to their details such as residential address, child's health, work address and telephone numbers of either parent, their child's doctor's address and telephone number.

The ACS Enrolment Updates Form must be completed:

- As part of the annual re-enrolment process; and
- When a child has not attended an ACS service for more than 6-months.

#### **Eligibility for Myrtleford and Bright OSHC**

Children may attend Myrtleford and Bright OSHC in the year they commence school i.e. children may attend the January vacation program if they are starting school that same year.

#### **Eligibility for Funded 4YO Kindergarten & Universal Access Program**

The following children are eligible for attendance in the four year old kindergarten program or universal access program:

- Children who will have turned four years of age by 30 April in the year they would attend the program.
- Children who have received funding for a second year of four year old kindergarten or universal access program.
- Children turning six years of age in their year at kindergarten or universal access who have been granted an exemption from school entry age requirements by their regional office of the Victorian Department of Education & Training (DET). Refer to the DET kindergarten funding criteria.

- 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. A copy of the written request must be attached with the application. *Parents/guardians are advised that very few requests are approved by DET.* If the child attends kindergarten or universal access early, but does not proceed onto school the following year, the child will be unable to access another year unless they are funded by DET for a second year. Refer to the DET kindergarten funding criteria.

### **Eligibility for 3YO Kindergarten**

Children are eligible for attendance in the three year old program provided they have turned three years of age prior to commencement and before 30<sup>th</sup> April in the year of their attendance.

The program at Alpine View Children's Centre operates for the full calendar year. Families may elect to send their child for the full year *OR* for school terms only and must advise the service upon enrolment in this program.

The program at Lake View Children's Centre is determined each year with consideration of registrations. The program operates during school terms only (although an education and care program continues to be available at the service during school holidays).

### **Selection Criteria for 4YO Kindergarten & Universal Access Program**

The following selection criteria are to be used, if there are more applications than places available:

1. Priority of Access points one and two (please refer to previous section of this policy)
2. Children who have received funding for a second year of four year old kindergarten or universal access program.
3. Children who were eligible to attend in the previous year but deferred or withdrew from a service on or before the last day of term one.
4. Date of receipt of application.

### **Selection Criteria for 3YO Kindergarten at Lake View Children's Centre**

The following selection criteria are to be sure if there are more applications than places available:

1. Priority of Access points one and two (please refer to previous section of this policy)
2. Date of receipt of application

### **Registration for Lake View Children's Centre 4YO and 3YO Kindergarten**

Registration applications for children to attend Lake View Children's Centre will be accepted any time after the child has turned two years of age. Registration application forms are available from the service and from the ACS website [www.alpinechildresservices.asn.au](http://www.alpinechildresservices.asn.au)

If you are not linked to Family Assistance Office for Child care Benefits and/or Child Care Rebate then a copy of the child's birth certificate or passport must be attached to the registration application. A separate registration application form must be completed for each child, for each proposed year of attendance at the service.

Completed registration application forms are to be forwarded to the service. For confidentiality purposes, access to completed registration application forms will be restricted to ACS Staff.

Registration is considered to be finalised when:

1. The form has been fully completed,
2. If not linked with Family Assistance Office for CCB or CCR a copy of the child's birth certificate or passport has been attached, and

3. Administration staff have receipted the form.

Confirmation of registration will be made in writing within two weeks of administration receipting the form.

### **Close of Registration**

The closing date for registration for first round allocation of places is the 30 September of the year prior to the program.

### **Procedure for a Late Registration**

Registrations received after the 30 September of the year prior to the program will be processed where vacancies exist, or be placed on the waiting list. All late registrations will be allocated strictly with the date order system of registration processing.

### **Application and Registration for a Second Year of 4YO Kindergarten at Lake View Children's Centre**

Children assessed by the teacher as having additional developmental needs may access a second year of funded kindergarten. Strict eligibility criteria apply to this second year (refer to the DET kindergarten funding criteria). The teacher will advise the parents/guardians of any child he/she considers may require a second year before the close of eligibility for a second year as indicated by the DET for a funded place to be held at the same service.

Families of children applying for a second year of funded kindergarten are required to submit a registration application form for a second year. This needs to be clearly marked 'Second Year'.

### **Allocation of Places**

Determination of group sizing, session days and times will be developed in consultation with relevant staff and parent groups. The delivery of a high quality early childhood education program is of paramount importance, as is adhering to the requirements of any employment arrangements.

Places will be allocated to eligible children who are on the waiting list in accordance with the selection criteria of the service. Allocation of places for the programs will be determined by the service. Written confirmation will be provided to families early in September, either confirming a place or confirming that their child is on the waiting list.

Details of the kindergarten program will be provided to families early in Term Four, including days, session times, teaching staff, orientation day(s) and interview times.

Places will not be allocated to children until any substantial debt owed by the family to the service is paid, or a payment plan is agreed to between the family and the service.

Families who do not wish to accept the offer of a place, or who withdraw their enrolment, will be required to notify the service in writing as soon as possible. A \$10 enrolment fee (non-refundable) will be invoiced in Term One. Please refer to the Fees Policy.