

ENROLMENT POLICY

1. Purpose:

The purpose of this Policy is:

- To allow working families access to long day care and outside school hours care.
- To allow staff of St. Andrews Anglican College access to long day care and outside school hours care on Campus.
- To allow for a smooth transition for children to enter formal schooling into St. Andrews Anglican College.
- To comply with Centrelink and Government Regulations.

2. Scope:

This policy applies to:

- Little Saints Early learning Centre (the Service) and
- St Andrew's OSHC (the Service)

3. Policy Statement:

Little Saints Early Learning Centre is a long day care centre which provides care for children aged 6 weeks to 5 years. St Andrew's OSHC and Little Saints ELC was established to ensure working families in the local community are able to access a high quality long day care centre and allow for staff of St. Andrews Anglican College to have their children attend on campus. When Little Saints ELC is at its maximum capacity (145 children per day at LS and 73 children per day at OSHC), to gain access into the Centre at a future date, parents need to complete a Waiting List Application Form. Placements are offered by following the Priority of Access guidelines developed by the Federal Government.

4. Rationale:

Ensuring the Service has all relevant information from families in order to make their enrolment into a smooth and happy experience. To follow the Government's Priority of Access Guidelines, parents must complete a Waiting List Application Form and complete information to determine which category of the Priority of Access their child corresponds with.

5. Application Process:

- To be offered a placement at Little Saints ELC, a Waiting List Application Form must be completed and a \$30 non-refundable administration fee is payable.
- Waiting List Forms are organised in application date order in the child's year of birth.

- Once a position becomes available, management start with the oldest application form in the correct age group. Each form is checked in turn to determine Priority One Access, and all families will be contacted in order of application date. Once Priority One parents have been contacted, the procedure begins again with Priority Two Access and so on.
- Little Saints ELC was established to provide Long Day Care for children of staff of St. Andrews Anglican College and for this reason will receive Priority of Access over other working families.

6. Enrolment Process:

When a placement is offered and the parent/guardian accepts the place, a bond is payable (two weeks full fees). The bond is refundable at the end of enrolment at Little Saints ELC provided sufficient notice is received (10 working days' notice – during Centre operating days). Parents/guardians will be asked to visit the Centre to pay the bond and pick up the relevant enrolment forms etc.

All children are required to attend a minimum of two days per week. This helps children to settle into the routine of Little Saints quickly. Attending only one day per week can become quite distressful for young children as it is a long time between attendances.

Parent/guardians will be given tour of the Centre. During this tour, the Nominated Supervisor or Certified Supervisor conducting the tour will give the family information about the service including, but not limited to, programming methods, meals, incursions, excursions, inclusion, fees, policies, procedures, our status as a Sun Smart service, regulations, signing in and out procedure, the National Quality Framework, room routines, educator qualifications, introduction to educators in the room the child will be starting in and educator and parent communication. Families are also invited to ask any questions they may have.

Families are given a copy of the Parent Handbook to read and are invited to ask questions.

Discussions are held between Administration staff and families regarding availability of days, a start date and tailoring an orientation process to suit the needs of the family and child. Families are informed of the Priority of Access Policy, and have their position assessed as to how they place within this system. Any matters that are sensitive of nature, such as discussing a child's medical needs, Court Orders, parenting plans or parenting orders, will be discussed privately with the Nominated Supervisor / Certified Supervisor at this time. We request that parents begin to fill out enrolment forms at that time, and discuss their child with us so we can accommodate their needs in the service from the first day they start with us. Should a child use English as a second language, or speak another language at home, we request that families provide us with some key words in the languages the child speaks at this time so that educators can learn the words.

Prior to children commencing at the Centre, families and children are encouraged to visit the centre. This is an opportunity for children and parents to become familiar with staff and other children; it offers a chance to view the daily routine and most importantly to ensure the Centre is a place where they will be happy and comfortable. After children commence at the Centre, parents are encouraged to visit at any time. It is also suggested that the parents telephone the Centre during the day for reassurance that the child has settled in and this also offers an opportunity for discussing the child's day with the parent/parents. Staff will always contact the parents, if the child is having difficulty settling in or is distressed during the day.

No child/children can start at the Centre until we have their completed enrolment forms and signed enrolment agreement. We require accurate emergency contact details for any child/children starting at the Centre. It is vital for the Centre to be notified of any parent/guardian or emergency contact changes.

Before commencement of enrolment the following forms must be completed:

- Enrolment form
- Enrolment agreement
- Regular outing permission form i.e. excursions onto the College grounds (this must be completed every 12 months).
- Authorisations
- Care information form
- Collection restrictions

On enrolment Little Saints will photocopy the child/children's immunisation records. This can either be the child health book, a letter from a doctor verifying the immunisations have taken place or a letter from the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register (Medicare Australia). Failure to provide this information will result in the child/children being excluded from the Centre should we have an infectious outbreak. Child Care Benefit and Rebate is not applicable to non-immunised children.

Families also need to contact the Family Assistance Office (Centrelink) to have their eligibility for Child Care Benefit and Child Care Rebate assessed. If these details are available, we will complete the child's formal enrolment. Should a family still need to access this information, we will complete an informal enrolment until these details are finalised, and families will be charged at full fees until a formal enrolment can be created. Fees are to be kept two weeks in advance at all times.

As per our Orientation for Children Policy, families will be invited to bring their child into the service at a time that suits them so the child and family can familiarise themselves with the environment.

The Centre reserves the right to excluded or refuse an enrolment based on this placing another child or staff to be at risk or harm or additional trauma.

7. Measuring Tools:

http://www.deewr.gov.au/EarlyChildhood/Programs/ChildCareforServices/Operation/Documents/CCMSInstructionSheets/CCMS_Sheet10.pdf

For services operating under the Child Care Management System (CCMS)

It is a condition of approval and continued approval for Child Care Benefit (CCB) purposes that services must comply with Family Assistance Law.

The Priority of Access Guidelines are set out in the Child Care Benefit (Eligibility of Child Care Services for Approval and Continued Approval) Determination 2000.

The Guidelines apply to Long Day Care, Family Day Care, Outside School Hours Care and In-Home Care services. Failure to meet these Guidelines is a breach of the conditions of continued approval and may result in a service being sanctioned under the Act.

Priorities for filling vacant places

The Priority of Access Guidelines must be used by approved services to allocate available child care places where there are more families requiring care than places available.

When filling vacant places, a service must fill them according to the following priorities:

Priority 1: a child at risk of serious abuse or neglect

Priority 2: a child of a single parent who satisfies, or of parents who both satisfy, the work, training, study test

Priority 3: any other child.

Within these main Priority categories, priority should also be given to children in:

- *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families*
- *families which include a disabled person*
- *families with an individual on a low income or on income support – in 2009-10, low income means an adjusted taxable income below \$37,960*
- *families from a non-English speaking background*
- *socially isolated families*
- *single parent families.*

Note: Where a service is funded by an employer to provide child care solely or primarily for the children of the employer's employees, the service may give priority to those children. Requiring a child to vacate a place under the Priority of Access Guidelines a child care service may require a Priority 3 child only to vacate a place to make room for a higher priority child.

The service can only do so if:

- *the person liable for the payment of the child care fees was notified when the child first entered care that the service followed this policy, and*
- *the service gives the person at least 14 days notice of the requirement for the child to vacate the place.*

Employer Sponsored Places

Where a child care service has places sponsored by an employer, the service may require those places to be vacated for the employee's children.

8. Sources and Further Reading:

- http://www.deewr.gov.au/EarlyChildhood/Programs/ChildCareforServices/Operation/Documents/CCMSInstructionSheets/CCMS_Sheet10.pdf
- <http://www.deewr.gov.au/Earlychildhood/Resources/Pages/CCfactsheetkit.aspx> (contains all Child Care Benefit and Rebate information for families)
- Child Care Service Handbook 2012-2013
- www.familyassist.gov.au
- www.centrelink.gov.au
- www.mychild.gov.au
- www.deewr.gov.au

9. Links to Other Policies:

- Governance Policy
- Fee Payment Policy