



Policy and Procedures Wait list & Priority

POLICY STATEMENT

This policy has been developed to ensure fair and equitable access to education and care. Acacia aims to respond to the needs of the local community and to be inclusive of all children and families. As there will usually be more families requesting access than there are places available, there will be clear guidelines for the management of the wait list and for the allocation of places.

This policy has been developed under the CHILD values framework belonging to our organisation.

C- Compassion:

Acacia follows a code of ethics and does not discriminate against any child or families when following the wait list procedure as set out in this policy.

H- Honour:

Acacia will follow clear guidelines for the management of the wait list and for the allocation of places.

I - Integrity:

This policy ensures that parents, educators and staff adhere to the latest information on priority of access.

L- Learning:

All children have the right to access early childhood education.

D- Diversity:

All children are welcome to be placed on our waiting list.

Acacia maintains a Waiting List for future enrolments. Families are required to contact the Centre to place their child onto the wait list by either email, telephone or in person. The following details are needed to place a child on the wait list:

- Child's name and date of birth;
- Address;
- Contact details of parents/guardians;
- Preferred days to attend;
- Approximate date of commencement.



When a place becomes available:

- The Director will contact parents/guardians by telephone or email when a childcare place becomes available.
- Within 7 days, once the place offer is accepted, parents/guardians must visit the Centre to begin the enrolment process (as described in the *Enrolment Policy*) and waiting list will be attached to their enrolment form. After 7 days, if the family has not made contact with the service the place will be offered to the next family on the list.
- If the offered place is refused, the child will be removed from the wait list.
- An offer may be temporarily declined without jeopardising the position on the list. The position on the list will be held for either a period of six months or for another two offerings of placement. If after this time the position is not accepted, the application will be removed from the list.
- Families are responsible to keep us informed of any changes to their personal information in writing
- Families are encouraged to contact the Centre if they have not received any communication nearing the date of preferred commencement date.

Names are removed from the waiting list if contact cannot be made after three attempts. The information is kept in non-current records, which will be destroyed 6 months after a child has been removed from the waitlist.

All waitlist information will be stored in a locked cupboard or filing cabinet to preserve confidentiality.

Increasing existing enrolment days

Families with a child already in the Centre who wish to increase days will also be placed on the waitlist until the days become available.

To place request for additional days, the families must communicate their requests verbally or via email to the Centre Director. The Director will notify parents/guardians when the days become available. All enrolled children are given higher priority for additional days.

Priority of Access

Priority of access is determined according to Commonwealth Department of Human Services priority access guidelines. The order of priority is as follows:

- **Priority 1:** a child at risk of serious abuse or neglect (receiving Additional Child Care Subsidy)
- **Priority 2:** a child of a single parent who satisfies, or of parents who both satisfy the work or training or study test

In these main categories, priority should also be given to the following children:

- children in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families
- children in families which include a disabled person



- children in families on low incomes
- children in families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- children in socially isolated families
- children of single parents

Acacia is obliged to adhere to government requirement at all times. Therefore, at times where there are no vacant places to place a child in a low priority may be asked to give up their place for another child in a higher priority level. Acacia will give families at least 14 days' notice of the requirement for their child to leave the Centre.

A child's position on the waiting list can continually change due to the Priority of Access Guidelines set by the Commonwealth Government.

Existing Families enrolled at the centre

Ceasing enrolment will result in termination of all future enrolments.

- Families wishing to re-enroll will be considered a new applicant and will need to complete a new Waiting List application.
- Consideration will be given to children of permanent staff of Acacia and committee of management members who are on the waitlist. They will need to follow the Priority of Access Guidelines as set by the Government (as listed above). Staff members will not work directly with their own children.
- Consideration is given to siblings of current children who attend Acacia within the guidelines, as set by the Government.
- Recognition is given to past children and their siblings within the guidelines, as set by the Government.

References

Department of Human services

- *Child Care Service Handbook*
- <https://www.education.gov.au/priority-allocating-places>

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority,

- *National Quality Framework Resource Kit, 2011*

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

- *Belonging, Being & Becoming - The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia Commonwealth of Australia 2009*

Early Childhood Strategy Division DET and Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority

- *Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework, November 2009*

BREACH OF THIS POLICY

Any educator or staff found to have violated this policy may be subject to disciplinary action

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