

Priority of Access

POOSH Care Inc.

POLICY STATEMENT:

At POOSH Care Inc we understand that for families, enrolling their child into Outside School Hours Care can be an important priority. However the demand for Outside School Hours Care sometimes exceeds the number of places our service is approved for and there may be a waiting list to manage family demands. When this happens, our service will comply with the Australian Government '*Priority of Access Guidelines*' to ensure places are allocated to families with the greatest need for child care support. These Guidelines will be strictly adhered to and failure to meet these Guidelines is a breach of the conditions of continued approval for receiving Child Care Benefit and State Government funding.

The guidelines will be used during enrolment, ONLY when there is a waiting list for our service, or when a number of parents are applying for a limited number of vacant places.

PROCEDURES:

a) The Priority of Access Guidelines:

- Families will also have access to a copy of this policy if they wish to view it.
- The Priorities are:
 - **Priority 1:** a child at risk of serious abuse or neglect
 - **Priority 2:** a child of a single parent who satisfies, or parents who both satisfy, the work/training/study test under Section 14 of the '*A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999*'.
 - **Priority 3:** any other child.
- Within the three categories described above, priority will be given to children from:
 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families
 - Families which include a person with a disability
 - Families on lower incomes
 - Families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
 - Socially isolated families
 - Single parent families
- When our service has no vacant places and is providing care for a child who is Priority 3 (which includes a family in which one parent is not working) under the Guidelines, the service may require that child to leave the service in order to make room for a child with a higher priority. However, this can only happen if our service:
 - a) Notified the family that our service follows the Priority of Access Guidelines and this Policy when their child first entered care at our service, and gives the family at least 14 days notice of the need for their child to vacate their place. If the parent/guardian who is not working is seeking employment a 28 day notice period may be given.

POOSH Care Inc. Policies and Procedures

- When filling vacancies, our service will give priority to school children over children who have not yet started school and may ask a child not yet in school to leave care if a child who is in school applies for a place.
- If the Centre is at full capacity an existing family will NOT be asked to leave care for a child who is not yet enrolled in the service.
- If a child who is classified as Priority 1 enrolls in the school and wishes to attend the Centre, they will be able to enroll in the service and advice would be sought from NSW Early Childhood and Care Directorate and possible waiver so that the child can be included at the Centre until a space becomes available.
- During term 3 existing families will be required to complete a enrolment form for the following year within a designated time frame. Failure to complete this will forfeit their place for the following year.
- When considering enrolments for the following school year, the service will consider the physical space and accept enrolments ensuring compliance with the Education and Care Services National Regulations and Law is maintained. New enrollments will ONLY be allocated spots which are currently vacant at the Centre. Enrolments will only be looked at and assessed in term 4 for the future years kindy intake. Families will be notified via email that a space has been allocated for their child.
- If proposed enrolments exceed the current physical space, the service will investigate access to additional space. If suitable additional physical space cannot be secured, the service will place a cap on the number of enrolments and once that cap is reached a waiting list will be established. Families will be made aware of this process. When the waiting list is compiled the priority of access guidelines will be followed, meaning that a single parent child would receive priority over a child with two working parents unless they are on lower incomes. The only exception would be if a sibling of a child already enrolled in the service needs care. This family would already be enrolled in the service and would therefore have priority over NEW families unless the family is a priority 3 family and does not conform to the priority 3 guidelines outlined above.

CONSIDERATIONS:

Education and care Services National Regulations	National Quality Standard	Other Service policies/documentation	Other
108, 157	6.1.1, 6.3.3, 7.3.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrolment and Orientation Policy • Confidentiality policy • Management of complaints policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Care Benefit (Eligibility of Child Care Services Approval and Continued Approval) Determination 2000. • Child Care Service Handbook. Section 6 Service Delivery (6.3 Priority of access). • Family Assistance Act 1999.

Endorsed: 07/10/2018

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