ENROLMENT AND ORIENTATION GUIDELINES

City of Casey

Kindergarten Enrolment & Planning
Kindergarten Programs

1. Purpose and Intent

The City of Casey is committed to ensuring all children attending a City of Casey managed kindergarten service are provided with a safe and secure environment that supports their health and wellbeing and adheres to National Regulations. This guideline outlines the responsibilities of the service when managing enrolment via the Central Registration and Enrolment Scheme (CRES), and orientation into a City of Casey managed service.

2. Scope

This guideline will apply to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Responsible Person in Day-to-Day Charge, educators, staff, students on placement, volunteers, parents, children and others attending the programs, activities and services managed by the City of Casey.

3. Definitions

Key Term	Definition
Approved Provider	An individual or organisation, such as City of Casey, that has completed an application form and been approved by the Regulatory Authority as fit and proper (in accordance with Sections 12, 13 and 14 of the National Law) to operate one or more education and care services.
Central Registration and Enrolment Scheme (CRES)	The Central Registration and Enrolment Scheme (CRES) enables families to access funded three-year-old and/or four-year-old sessional kindergarten by providing a streamlined, centralised service, to allocate children to all available kindergarten places to maximise each child's opportunity to attend kindergarten.
Enrolment Record	A record that is completed by the family before a child begins at kindergarten. This record contains information on the child's medical, health, additional needs, who can drop off and collect the child and consents regarding photos and learning records. Child's Enrolment Record must comply with the requirements of The Education and Care National Law (2010) and Regulations (2012).
Immunisation – No Jab, No Play legislation	The 'No Jab, No Play' legislation aims to reduce the risk of vaccine preventable diseases through increased immunisation rates in the community. For children to attend kindergarten their immunisations must be up to date or meet the criteria for an exemption.

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Kindergarten Enrolment and Planning team (KEP)	The team (within Council) that executes the functions under the CRES.
Leave of absence	An application for the child to take a period of leave from the service, while maintaining the child's placement. This request can be made prior to the child starting at kindergarten or during the kindergarten year.
Nominated Supervisor	A person who is the Responsible Person in Day-to-Day Charge and has been nominated by the Approved Provider (City of Casey) of the service under Part 3 of the Act to be the Nominated Supervisor of that service, and who has consented to that nomination. The Nominated Supervisor has day-to-day responsibility for the service in accordance with the National Regulations. All services must have a Nominated Supervisor.
Person with Management and Control	Individuals responsible for managing the delivery of a service or those who have significant influence over its activities. PMCs have specific legal obligations for ensuring compliance within early childhood education and care providers.
Parent/Guardian	A biological parent or a person who has parental responsibility for the child under a decision or order of the court.
Kindergarten Funding Declaration	A declaration signed by the parent/guardian nominating that their kindergarten funding is paid to the Council kindergarten their child is attending.

4. Background

The City of Casey acknowledges the role early childhood education plays in supporting children's development, wellbeing, and lifelong learning. As the approved provider for funded kindergarten services, City of Casey will ensure that both enrolment and orientation processes are delivered in accordance with the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations.

Enrolment procedures ensure that access to kindergarten programs is managed transparently and equitably for all families, while orientation supports children and families to build familiarity with the kindergarten environment, educators, and routines, fostering a sense of belonging and emotional security.

Council's enrolment and orientation processes contribute to a positive start to early learning, and help establish respectful, supportive, and collaborative relationships between families and early childhood services. The orientation process aims to support children to establish positive relationships with educators and peers and to participate independently within the kindergarten environment.

5. Responsibilities for this guideline

Child Youth and Family Management, Person with Management or Control or the Approved Provider	• Provide strong leadership that supports a culture of child safety in the everyday practice of City of Casey employees. • Provide educators with clear guidelines, policies and procedures in relation to all matters specified in Regulation 168(2). • Ensure that the Child's Enrolment Record complies with the requirements of The Education and Care National Law (2010) and Regulations (2012). • Ensure the Funded Kindergarten Place Declaration complies with the requirements of the Kindergarten Funding Guide.

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	• Ensure the child's current immunisation status complies with the Public Health and Wellbeing Amendment (No Jab No Play) Bill 2015. • Ensure the orientation program complies with Department of Education funding criteria. • Consult with the Nominated Supervisors and Educators to support families in visiting City of Casey services during operational hours prior to their child commencing. • Provide a copy of the welcome book and timetable to families enrolled at a City of Casey service.
Kindergarten Enrolment and Planning Team (KEP) and Kindergarten Program Team	• Manage the administration of the enrolment process and enquiries. • Manage the administration of leave of absence requests. • Provide administration support with the Enrolment Record to ensure any updates to the form are entered into EnrolNow. • Review the Funded Kindergarten Place Declaration and ensure it complies with the requirements of the Kindergarten Funding Guide. • Manage information in line with the Privacy and Confidentiality guidelines. • Provide families with key dates and important information for orientation. • Provide administration support with Orientation Sessions and the start of year timetables
Educators	• Ensure the Child's Enrolment Record and Funded kindergarten declaration forms are completed prior to the child's commencement in the service. • Review the Child's Enrolment Record to identify children who may require additional support, and complete relevant forms such as Risk Minimisation and Communication Plans, and Medical Management Plans. • Uphold the *Immunisation and Infectious Disease guidelines* for all children at the service. • Record and store information in line with the *Privacy and Confidentiality guidelines*. • Aim to contact families to determine a commencement date within two operational business days of being notified of a new family being placed at the service. • Support families who wish to request a leave of absence during the kindergarten year. • Provide individual orientations for children who start throughout the year. • Build relationships with new families. • Address any individual support needs for children to access the orientation program. • Complete an *Orientation and Transition Plan* with parents or guardians for children who require a more supported transition to kindergarten. • Ensure parents are aware of and comply with their responsibilities related to the Digital Technology guidelines, by refraining from taking pictures of any children in the service at orientation. • Implement reasonable transition supports for children to participate in the program independently.

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	• Assist parents to develop and maintain a routine for saying goodbye to their child and provide comfort to the child at drop-off to the service. • Ensure parents/guardians can enter the service premises at any time that their child is being educated and cared for, except where this may pose a risk to the safety of children or staff, or conflict with any duty of the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor or educators under the Law (Regulation 157). • Contact families who do not attend orientation. • Provide access to Child Youth & Family guidelines via the City of Casey website.

Parents/Families and service users	• Complete their Child's Enrolment Records prior to the child commencing at the service by providing:
	  • Immunisation History Statement (via the Australian Immunisation Register)
	  • Medical Management Plans (where required)
	  • Risk Minimisation and Communication Plan (where required)
	• Complete the Funded Kindergarten Place Declaration form prior to commencing at the service.
	• Provide any information regarding Court Orders in relation to the child.
	• Update information by notifying the service of any changes as they occur.
	• Raise complaints using the City of Casey complaints process.
	• Comply with Enrolment and Orientation guidelines to support their child's enrolment and transition into the service.
	• Participate in the development of an *Orientation and Transition Plan* if required,
	• Provide an authorised nominee for the current year of attendance.
	• Provide information about their child's strengths, interests, abilities and needs and be engaged in goal setting for their child.
	• Complete a leave of absence request for their child if either the child cannot start on time or have leave during the year.
	• Advise the service if the child is absent, or if the child requires a leave of absence.

6. Funded Kindergarten Program

The Victorian Government provides approved kindergartens with funding for children to access one year of funded kindergarten in a 3-year-old program and one year in a 4-year-old program. Kindergarten is free for all 3-year-old and 4-year-old children and is led by a qualified Early Childhood Teacher.

The City of Casey only offer funded kindergarten places, where children can access:

- Up to 15 hours each week for 3-year-old and 4-year-old kindergarten
- 16 to 25 hours each week for Pre-Prep programs in the 4-year-old program

A child can only receive kindergarten funding at one service at one time. Your child can attend two kindergarten services, but City of Casey only provides funded kindergarten places. If your child attends a City of Casey managed kindergarten, you must choose that service to receive the kindergarten funding.

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7. Leave of absence (prior to the child starting kindergarten or once the child has started kindergarten)

Places are not automatically held at Council managed kindergartens if a child cannot start kindergarten on time or will be away for an extended period during the kindergarten year. Parents are required to advise either the Kindergarten Enrolment and Planning team or the child's kindergarten teachers and educators if they require a leave of absence.

The City of Casey is governed to adhere to the Kindergarten Funding Guidelines and the Priority of Access (POA) and cannot guarantee that a kindergarten place will be held if an eligible child is waiting for a place. Depending on the length of time the child will be absent, the family will be advised if they need to complete a Leave of Absence request form or email the kindergarten directly.

Families who are required to submit a Leave of Absence form will be notified of the outcome within 10 days of submitting the application.

Children must turn three years old to start kindergarten. Places will be held for children who have not yet turned three, so they can begin their three-year-old kindergarten year when eligible.

8. Orientation into Kindergarten

Orientation sessions are an important part of a child's transition into kindergarten. These sessions will help your child become familiar with the kindergarten environment and feel secure as they get to know the other children and educators. It will also give you the opportunity to meet your child's educators and other kindergarten parents. Orientation sessions occur at the beginning of the kindergarten year.

9. Transition into Kindergarten

Starting kindergarten is a significant milestone and some children may require additional support during this transition. In some circumstances, such as significant separation anxiety or identified wellbeing needs, educators may work in partnership with families to implement a short-term transition plan. Transition plans are intended to support children to feel safe, build confidence and develop the skills required to participate independently within the kindergarten program.

Once the transition plan has been completed, children are expected to attend kindergarten without a parent, guardian or sibling present. Parents attending the service as part of a transition plan cannot bring siblings or other children in the care to stay at the service during this time.

10. Associated documents and attachments

This guideline should be read in conjunction with:

- Privacy and Confidentiality guidelines
- Immunisation and Infectious Diseases guidelines
- Complaints guidelines
- Free Kinder Initiative guidelines
- Late Commencement guideline
- CRES and Priority of Access guidelines
- Management of Court Orders guidelines
- Attachment 1 – Child's Enrolment Record Amendment
- Attachment 2 – Leave of Absence Process and Eligibility for Families
- Attachment 3 – Leave of Absence before the kindergarten year starts – Internal Process
- Attachment 4 – Leave of absence once the kindergarten year has begun – Internal Process
- Attachment 5 – Orientation and Transition Plan

11. Relevant legislation

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

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- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2012
- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 6
- Public Health and Wellbeing Amendment (No Jab No Play) Bill 2015

12. Child Safety, Access and Inclusion

The City of Casey is committed to creating and maintaining a child safe organisation where protecting children from abuse is embedded in the everyday thinking and practice of Council, its employees, contractors, and volunteers. Council has zero-tolerance of child abuse.

Council aims to promote a culture of inclusion, respect and equity. We strive to ensure that all children, young people and families regardless of their background, ability, gender or identity are welcomed and supported. We are dedicated to providing equitable access to our services.

Council expects that all staff act on incidents of child abuse, racism, or any type of discrimination.

13. Monitoring, evaluation and review

The City of Casey will ensure:

- Regular monitoring of the implementation of this guideline and its associated documents including training and compliance.
- This guideline and its associated documents are kept up to date with current legislation, policy and best practice.
- Review and evaluation of this guideline and its associated documents as part of the service's review cycle, or as required.

Reviewed by:	CYF Policy Officer in consultation with Kindergarten Programs and Early Years & Partnerships		
Approved by:	Director – Community Life		
Date Approved:	16/12/2025		
Current Version:	1.4	**ECM ID:**	21582876
Review Cycle:	3 years	**Review Due:**	16/12/2028
Responsible Department and Team:	CYF Policy Officer		

14. Document History

Date changed	Change Type
13/03/2026	Late commencement information transferred from the CRES & POA guideline into this guideline
1/06/2026	Late Commencement attachments added
15/09/2026	Information on the Funded Kindergarten Program added.

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	Additional information on transitions and parent participation added.
21/10/2026	Late Commencement terminology updated to Leave of Absence. Updated Leave of Absence processes attached. Addition of the *Orientation and Transition Plan*.

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LEAVE OF ABSENCE PROCESS AND ELIGIBILITY FOR FAMILIES
ATTACHMENT 2

ENROLMENT AND ORIENTATION GUIDELINE

City of Casey

Child, Youth & Family

1. Introduction

The below process and assessment criteria will be used by the City of Casey for managing leave of absence requests for children enrolled in a Casey managed kindergarten that occur either before the child starts kindergarten or once the child has started kindergarten. The City of Casey is committed to supporting families maintain their child's place at kindergarten by accommodating a leave of absence where practicable, in order to promote participation in the kindergarten program.

2. Making an application

Any family enrolled at a City of Casey managed kindergartens can apply for a leave of absence if their child is unable to start on their scheduled start date or needs to take leave during the kindergarten year.

Requesting a leave of absence,

- If your child is not going to start on their scheduled start date families will need to complete a leave of absence request form via an email link they have received from the Kindergarten Enrolment and Planning team.
- If your child is going to take leave during the kindergarten year families must notify the kindergarten staff via email. If the leave is over 2 weeks families will need to complete a leave of absence request via an email link, they have received from the kindergarten staff.
- Provide any supporting information that may assist the City of Casey in assessing the application.
- Specify the start and end date of the leave request.

3. Assessing an application

The City of Casey will review the application and make an assessment based on the following information:

Timeframes	On submission of an application families will be advised of the outcome within 10 business days.
Eligibility Criteria	• receiving medical treatment – life threatening or immune compromised • travelling overseas to receive medical treatment for above reasons • receiving early intervention therapies to support the child • travelling overseas to support an immediate family member • moving house • exceptional family circumstances • cultural/religious reasons • bereavement leave • Sorry Business

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	• holidays (up to 8 weeks). For the purpose of this process, immediate family includes a child, parent, stepparent, foster parent, grandparent or sibling.
Criteria for assessment	• circumstances of leave. • length of time absent from kindergarten. • any Priority of Access eligibility that applies to your child • how many places are available at the kindergarten and whether other families are waiting for a place. **Note:** for a family who has applied for a leave of absence before their child is 3 years old, the timelines will begin on the child's 3rd birthday.

Assessment Outcome

Once the assessment has been completed, families will be notified of the outcome within 10 business days.

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