



Enrolment & Orientation Policy

Policy statement

We aim to ensure that our enrolment and orientation processes meet the unique needs of each child and family. This will support them during their transition to the service, help to develop collaborative partnerships, and promote a sense of belonging to the service community.

The NNS aims to offer preschool places in a fair and equitable manner to all children between the ages of 3 and 6, taking into account the priority guidelines set down by the regulatory authority, and the preschool's own priority guidelines outlined below.

Background

NNS accepts enrolments of children aged between 3 and 6 years. Access to placement at the preschool is made in accordance with the guidelines laid down by the regulatory authorities and Northern Nursery School policy. Please note that “school-age eligible” refers to children who turn 4 or 5 years of age on or before the 31st of July and who are eligible to start school the following year.” Three-year-old” refers to children who turn 3 by 31st of January of year beginning preschool. The standard intake for children is in January Term 1 of each year. Priority is given to school-age children and in accordance with the priority of access guidelines linked to our preschool funding.

Legislative requirements

Section 175	Offence relating to requirement to keep enrolment and other documents
Regulation 85	Incident, injury, trauma and illness policies and procedures
Regulation 86	Notification to parents of incident, injury, trauma and illness
Regulation 88	Infectious diseases
Regulation 90	Medical conditions policy
Regulation 91	Medical conditions policy to be provided to parents
Regulation 92	Medication record
Regulation 99	Children leaving the education and care service premises
Regulation 102	Authorisation for excursions
Regulation 102D	Authorisation for service to transport children
Regulation 157	Access for parents
Regulation 160	Child enrolment records to be kept by approved provider and family day care educator
Regulation 161	Authorisations to be kept in enrolment record
Regulation 162	Health information to be kept in enrolment record
Regulation 168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
Regulation 169	Additional policies and procedures – family day care service
Regulation 170	Policies and procedures to be followed
Regulation 171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
Regulation 172	Notification of change to policies or procedures

Regulation 177	Prescribed enrolment and other documents to be kept by approved provider
Regulation 178	Prescribed enrolment and other documents to be kept by family day care educator
Regulation 181	Confidentiality of records kept by approved provider
Regulation 182	Confidentiality of records kept by family day care educator
Regulation 183	Storage of records and other documents

Waiting List:

Enrolments will be accepted providing

- The maximum daily attendance does not exceed the approved number of places of the service.
- Child-educator ratios are maintained in each room.
- A vacancy is available. (Please see Priority of Access Guidelines below.)

Priority of Access Guidelines

Children who are enrolled at the service or whose families are seeking a place at the service will be given Priority of Access in accordance with the guidelines that have been established by our funding body.

Services are required to give equal priority of access to:

Children who are at least 4 years old on or before the 31 July in that preschool year and not enrolled or registered at a school.

Children who are at least 3 years old on or before 31 July in that preschool year and are:

- children from low-income families
- children with an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background
- children with disability or additional needs.

Children who are at least 3 years old on or before 31 July in that preschool year with English language needs

Children who are at risk of significant harm (from a child protection perspective).

Within these categories above we offer in the following order of priority

1. Children currently attending the preschool.
2. School-age-eligible children in order of application date with sibling previously at NNS (child will have turned four years by the end of July in the year of commencement at NNS)
3. Children with additional needs, children at risk, children from a non-English speaking background, and low-income families
4. Children who are at least 3 years old at the start of the preschool year and from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Families
5. School-age-eligible children in order of application date.
6. Three-year-olds in order of application date with sibling previously at NNS (only will be offered if spaces available after all above categories have been met).
7. Three-year-olds in order of application date.

Guidelines

- Children are eligible to be placed on the waiting list at two years of age.
- Entry onto the waiting list does not guarantee a position.
- Ideally children will be toilet trained before starting at NNS and it is advisable that this begins early to allow children plenty of time to acquire these skills. There may of course be circumstances for children with additional needs where this is not possible, and the Director will discuss this with families.

Application Procedure

When a child is to be placed on the waiting list:

- o Families are requested to view our waiting list and enrolment policies on the website - www.northernnursery.nsw.edu.au
- o Waiting list forms are completed via the website.
- o Each applicant completes a waiting list form (one per child) and a non-refundable administration fee is paid of \$50.00 per child. (Twins \$50.00). Waitlist applications are not active until payment is received.
- o Individual tours will be set up for families when they are offered a position at the preschool. An annual open day will be held each year for the community and waitlist families to attend. An invitation will be sent via Storypark Manage (XAP) to all families on the waiting list prior to the event.
- o Families are informed of the Priority of Access within our Waiting List 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 additional needs, medical needs, Court Orders, parenting plans or parenting orders, will be discussed privately with the Director (Nominated Supervisor) at this time and supporting documentation will be requested.
- o Should English be the second language, and a family needs the forms to be translated, we will seek assistance.
- o A waiting list application returned to the preschool without the fee enclosed will not be activated. It is the responsibility of the family to ensure this is paid directly by direct debit or credit card. If paying by credit card, a 1% levy will be added to your fees.
- o A receipt is issued once the fee is paid either at the time of payment or via mail.
- o Families are responsible for providing written notification of change of address or phone number to NNS.

From Waiting List to Allocation of Places and Enrolment

- o The enrolment selections from the waiting list begin at the end of Term 2.
- o Offers for places for the following year start around the beginning of Term 3.
- o The time frame above is an indication and may vary slightly from year to year.
- o We are unable to give families any information as to their place on the waiting list or likelihood of a place until this time.
- o Places will be offered via telephone and Storypark Manage (XAP) portal.

Non-Acceptance of Place

If a family is offered a place and declines at that time they can, if they wish, stay on the waiting list unless they indicate they wish to be removed or if the child is 6 years old and attending school.

Allocation after January Intake

If a place becomes available during the year, places will be offered in accordance with our Waiting List Priorities.

Sibling Priority

Sibling priority is in accordance with the detailed order of priority and placement is not guaranteed.

Children with Additional Needs

Children with special needs are given priority as detailed in Waiting List Policy. The preschool can accept a small number of children with special needs in any given year. The number accepted is determined by the needs of the children, the dynamics of the group, resources available, and the ability of the preschool to meet the needs of individuals.

Enrolment:

Attendance

3-day groups: Monday to Wednesday (for children who have turned 4 years by the first day of Term 1 in that year and are attending school the following year)

2-day groups: Thursday and Friday (for children who have turned 4 years by the first day of Term 1 in that year and are attending school the following year and for children not attending school the following year)

Enrolments for Returning Families

All families currently with children at the NNS will be given a letter at the end of Term 2, asking them to inform NNS as to whether their child will be returning the following year, or going to school. They will be asked to nominate which school, to help with transition to school procedures. Transition to School Statement permissions will be gathered from families in the year prior to their child starting school.

All children returning to the NNS are offered a placement for the following year at the beginning of Term 3, based on their intentions captured for re-enrolment.

As children will be moving to a three-day program, families will be asked to increase their 4-week refundable holding deposit (see below) to account for fee increases and the additional day. The deposit will be held until the child's last term at NNS and deducted from that term's fees.

Notification of Placement for New Families

Families will receive an offer of placement from July.

Families accepting the offer need to accept their enrolment offer in Storypark Manage (XAP) and pay the \$500 bond. The offer will need to be accepted within 5 days.

The holding deposit will be held until the child's last term at NNS and deducted from that term's fees.

If for any reason families later decide not to take up the place, the deposit (whole or part) will only be refunded if the place can be filled.

Families who fail to respond to the offer or pay the holding deposit within the given time frame will forfeit their place.

Families who do not wish to accept a place but wish to remain on the waiting list must inform the Director (nominated supervisor) or the Administrative Officer and they will maintain their place on the waiting list.

Second-round offers are made from October.

Cancelling Your Child's Place

Four weeks' notice of intention to withdraw children from the preschool must be given in writing to the Director during term time. The four weeks' notice does not include the period when the preschool is closed.

Deposits/fees are refunded only if the place can be filled but not in any other circumstances.

Any cancellations during Term 4 will mean forfeiting the fees for that term as it is unlikely the preschool will be able to fill the place.

Orientation:

Families who accept a place and pay the deposit are sent the following information:

1. An online enrolment form and a family Welcome Book.
2. Information outlining details of forthcoming orientation days and parent information nights.
3. Before a child begins at NNS, families will be offered the following orientation processes:
 - Initial tour of the preschool
 - A child's Welcome Book
 - Parent and child individual orientation, if required
 - Parent orientation evening for all parents who have accepted a place.
 - Child orientation session for all children attending the preschool the following year.
 - A copy of the Parent Welcome Book will be emailed to you, and information at the Orientation evening will include the following:
 - Programming methods
 - Incursions/excursion and special events
 - Room routines

- Signing in and out
- Food and waste-free policy
- Medication and Health
- Allergy policies - the preschool is nut-free and may have other restrictions that you will be alerted to
- Sun Safety policy
- Where to find all policies and procedures
- Fees
- Staff qualifications
- Communication procedures
- Regulations for our state and the licensing and assessment procedures
- The National Quality Framework
- Funding
- Before the child begins their first day with us, the service must have their enrolment form, including copies of birth certificates, immunisation details and specialist's documents. The child will not be accepted into the service without this being completed

On your child's first day:

The child and their family are welcomed into their room for the first day, staggered starts may be required, and parents will be informed by email prior to commencement and at the orientation session. Parents and children will be shown the procedures that we would like them to be familiar with, some of these for our parents are compliance responsibilities and must be followed.

The Director (Nominated Supervisor) and parents will ensure all details are finalised in the child starting at the preschool.

Cancelling the Enrolment of a Child's Place

The Management Committee recognises that there may be some extreme circumstances where the appropriate course of action is the cancellation of enrolment of a child's place. This would not be a decision taken lightly and would require all possible avenues of resolution to be explored first. Our aim is to provide the best possible care and education for all children at the preschool.

Circumstances that could lead to cancelling a child's enrolment:

- A parent committing an illegal act on the preschool's premises.
- Continual non-compliance with the preschool's policies or procedures.
- Parents who abuse or threaten children, staff or other parents in the preschool.
- Habitual non-payment of fees, as per our Fees Policy.
- Willfully or negligently making a false or misleading statement that relates to the enrolment of a child at the preschool or to the care the child receives.
- Any circumstance that the Management Committee believes adversely affects the ability of the preschool to give proper care to a child and /or the family, or adversely affects the welfare of staff or other children and families at the preschool.
- Extreme behaviour of the child which the preschool educators are unable to manage, which affects the well-being of other children at the preschool.
- The Director (nominated supervisor) will make the Management Committee aware of any situation that may possibly lead to the cancellation of a child's place. Confidential, dated, written records of the situation will be made and kept secure with the child's enrolment form.
- The Management Committee and the Director (nominated supervisor) will arrange a meeting/s with the family to discuss the situation in order to move toward a positive resolution. Confidential, dated, written records will be made, detailing discussions, issues raised, and actions taken.
- All avenues of resolution will be followed through within a specified and agreed time frame.
- If, after every effort has been made, the Management Committee believes that there is still no alternative to cancelling the child's place, it will give the family four weeks' notice in writing.

Reference and resources

Community Early Learning Australia (CELA)

Early Years Learning Framework

Education and Care Services National Regulations

National Quality Standard

Work Health and Safety Act

Review

Reviewed - June 2023

Approved by Management Committee – 21/9/23