

Department preschool classes

Enrolment procedures

Background

There are 100 department preschools located in government schools across NSW. Eleven of the classes are designated specifically for Aboriginal children. Four of the classes are delivered by distance education.

The preschool classes are an integral part of the school in which they are located and operate within the same hours as the school. Attendance patterns vary and are determined to meet the needs of the local community. Schools need to ensure they are able to offer at least 600 hours of preschool education over the year which equates to approximately 15 hours per week.

Parents pay a fee for their children to attend preschool. There are a range of fees. Families who are experiencing financial hardship are able to obtain fee relief.

General principles of enrolment

1. Children attend department preschool classes for one year only, the year before they start school.
2. In exceptional circumstances, the principal may consider an additional year of attendance after consultation with the parent/carer, the preschool teacher and other relevant personnel. If this is the case, the child is to be considered as a new application and prioritised in the same way as all new applications.
3. Priority is given to:
 - I. Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children
 - II. children living in low socio-economic circumstances
 - III. children who are unable to access other early childhood services due to disadvantage or financial hardship.
4. The principal will consult with the school community to develop enrolment procedures that are specific to the preschool and which reflect the community's profile and needs.

5. Schools with designated preschools and those in communities with significant numbers of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children should liaise with the local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group.

Eligibility criteria

6. Children can enrol from the beginning of the school year if they turn four years of age on or before 31 July in that year.
7. The principal will offer enrolment in the following order:
 - I. to children living within the school's enrolment catchment area with priority given to Aboriginal children and those who are disadvantaged
 - II. to children living outside the school's enrolment catchment area and who have siblings enrolled in the school, with priority given to Aboriginal children and those who are disadvantaged
 - III. to children living outside the local school's enrolment catchment area with priority given to Aboriginal children and those who are disadvantaged.
8. Eligibility for enrolment in a designated Aboriginal preschool
Designated preschools specifically cater for local Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children.
Every effort needs to be made to ensure that vacant places are filled by Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children. Any vacancies may then be offered to non-Aboriginal children although a buffer of two places for Aboriginal children is to be maintained throughout the year.
9. Enrolling temporary visa holders in preschool
Preschool children who are temporary visa holders enrol in department preschools under the same conditions as Australian citizens. However some temporary visas such as visitor/tourist visas are not eligible. For more information refer to the [Schedule of Visa Subclasses and Enrolment Conditions](http://bit.ly/1OzOxxm) [http://bit.ly/1OzOxxm].
Temporary visa holders enrolled in preschool do not complete the Temporary Residents Program Application Form (Authority to Enrol) or pay the Temporary Residents Fee.
10. Eligibility for enrolment in distance education preschool
Distance education preschools cater specifically for geographically isolated children. Eligibility criteria for enrolment differ from the rest of the department preschools. For specific criteria refer to page 5 of [Distance Education Enrolment Procedures](http://bit.ly/1Oay0za) [http://bit.ly/1Oay0za]

Applications for enrolment

11. Schools can accept enrolment applications for the following year from the beginning of term two of the current school year.
12. Parents/carers apply on the [Application to enrol in a NSW Government preschool](http://bit.ly/1TT6zOV) [http://bit.ly/1TT6zOV] although in some cases, schools may request the parent to initially use a waiting list application form (see section 18).
13. Enrolment requires the following documentation to be provided:
 - a. birth certificate and/ or [proof of identity and residency status](http://bit.ly/1NsmSAK) [http://bit.ly/1NsmSAK]
 - b. [immunisation documentation](http://bit.ly/1ObRB8r) [http://bit.ly/1ObRB8r] as specified by the Australian Government
 - c. proof of residential address
 - d. passport or immicard and evidence of visa status for children who are not Australian citizens
 - e. low-income health care card if applicable and
 - f. copies of any family law or other relevant court orders if applicable.
14. When enrolling young children with disabilities or special learning needs, the principal will seek support from the Learning and Wellbeing officer in the local Educational Services team.

Enrolment panel

15. When applications for enrolment exceed places available, the principal will establish an enrolment panel. The panel will review each application, place applications into priority order, establish a prioritised waiting list and record all decisions.
16. The enrolment panel is to include at least one staff member (other than the principal), a school community member and a community member nominated by the local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group where applicable. Panel members must declare any conflict of interest with regard to any applications.
17. Parents/carers will be informed in writing of the result of their application and advised if they have been placed on a waiting list.

Waiting list

18. Schools may choose to ask parents to complete a waiting list application form if there is a possibility that the number of applications for enrolment will exceed the number of places available.
19. The waiting list is valid for the year prior to enrolment in the preschool class and for the current preschool year.
20. If a vacancy occurs during the year, the position will be offered to the child with the highest priority on the waiting list.

Previous policies replaced by this document

- A. *Enrolment (section 15.6.5) Preschool Education Policy, School Manual: Educational Management, 1 October 1987*
- B. *Memorandum to Principals of Schools with Preschool Classes 91.004, Entry Age to Government Preschools, 28 January 1991*
- C. *The Enrolment of Students in Government Schools – A Summary and Consolidation of Policy, August 1997*
- D. *Memorandum to Principals with Preschool Classes DN/04/00420, Enrolment of Children in New and Existing Preschool Classes, 4 July 2005*

Contact

Early Learning Coordinator, Early Learning and Primary Education

Phone 02 9266 8165

A. Child's details

Child's name _____

Male Female

Date of birth _____

Home address: _____

Aboriginality: Is your child of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin? Yes No

Residency status: What is your child's residency status?

Australian citizen New Zealand citizen Norfolk Islander Permanent resident

Temporary visa holder Current visa sub-class: _____ Visa expiry date: _____

A child born in Australia is only automatically an Australian citizen if at least one parent was an Australian citizen or permanent resident when the child was born.

Languages spoken at home:

Does your child speak a language other than English at home? Yes No

If yes, what language(s) other than English are spoken at home by your child?

Main language: _____

Other language(s): _____

Enrolment information can be provided in other languages if required.

Child's additional learning and support needs:

Does your child have any additional needs? eg disability, significant difficulty in learning or behaviour. If yes, please give details and attach any reports available.

Child's medical details: Does your child have any allergies or medical conditions?

If yes, please describe: _____

B. Family details

Parent/carer's name: _____

Occupation: _____

Work details: Full time Part time – Days worked: _____

Home telephone number: _____ Work: _____

Mobile telephone number: _____

Email: _____

Parent/carer's name: _____

Occupation: _____

Work details: Full time Part time – Days worked: _____

Home telephone number: _____ Work: _____

Mobile telephone number: _____

Email: _____

C. Other information:

Is your child currently attending another childcare service? Yes No

If yes, name of service: _____

Next year, will your child attend another childcare service in addition to this preschool?

Yes No If yes, name of service: _____

Name of school your child will attend in Kindergarten: _____

NAMES OF OTHER CHILDREN RESIDING WITH YOUR CHILD (*attach details of additional children to this form*)

	Given names	Family name	Date of birth	Sex	Name of School (If applicable)
1					
2					

