

▲ PRIORITY OF ACCESS POLICY

Professor Lynn Corcoran Early Learning Centre: FROEBEL Parkville

▲ PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to detail the Priority of Access Guidelines as recommended by the Australian Government and agreed between the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research (Institute) and FROEBEL.

The policy recognises the Australian Government's intention to help families who are most in need and to support the safety and wellbeing of children at risk in accordance with the Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009–2020.

▲ POLICY

If demand for enrolments exceed the number of available, approved places at the education and care service, a parent/guardian can apply for their child to be registered on the service's waiting list; the following **Priority of Access Guidelines** will apply when allocating placements.

Priorities:

- **Priority 1:** a child at risk of serious abuse or neglect
a child is taken to be at risk of serious abuse or neglect if the child is at risk of experiencing harm, as a result of current or past circumstances or events that resulted in the child being subject to, or exposed to one or more of the following: (Family Assistance Guide)
 - *serious physical, emotional or psychological abuse,*
 - *sexual abuse,*
 - *domestic or family violence, or*
 - *neglect.*
- **Priority 2:** any other child.

Within **Priority 2**, priority is given to

- a child of an *Eligible Institute Employee* under **Priority 2A**,
- a child of an *Eligible Melbourne Health Employee* under **Priority 2B**,
- any other child (**Priority 2C**).

Within Priority 2C, priority will be considered

- for sibling children of Priority 2C families who are already enrolled at the service.

Waiting List

To apply for their child to be registered on the service's waiting list, a parent/guardian will submit their expression of interest through the service's online waiting list platform, indicating their priority status (if applicable) as prompted. The priority status and time stamp on their submission will determine the child's ranking on the waiting list.

Acceptance of Enrolment Offer

Families who are offered enrolment under this policy are encouraged to accept or reject the enrolment offer without delay and no later than 72 hours from when the offer was made. FROEBEL is entitled to make an offer to the next family on the waiting list if the enrolment offer has not been accepted within that timeframe.

Places which cannot be filled with a Priority 1, 2A or 2B family or siblings of currently enrolled families at the time of the vacancy will be offered to the general community.

Definitions

Eligible Institute Employee under Priority 2A is a parent (or guardian) who, at the time of enrolment,

- is a paid employee of the Institute or FROEBEL Australia Limited (Parkville); or
- is a student at the Institute; or
- is a visiting overseas scientist at the Institute who is a postdoc on their own fellowship and not employed elsewhere; or
- is an affiliate, with a significant collaborative relationship with the Institute (where a significant research collaborative relationship is defined as a collaboration that is planned to last at least 12 months and for an average of 2.5 days per week) and where the collaboration takes place on Institute premises;

and

- produces a respective current written employer confirmation issued by the Institute's People & Culture department.
- The person can be in the Institute's full-time or part-time permanent employment. Casual staff of the Institute are not eligible.

Exceptions for Institute staff who do not meet the above criteria may be requested through the Institute's People & Culture department.

Eligible Melbourne Health Employee under Priority 2B is a parent (or guardian) who, at the time of enrolment,

- is a paid employee of Melbourne Health; and
- produces a respective current written employer confirmation issued by Melbourne Health's People & Culture department.

The person can be in Melbourne Health's full-time or part-time permanent employment. Casual staff of Melbourne Health are not eligible.

▲ SOURCES AND FURTHER READING

- Child Care Service Handbook:
<https://www.education.gov.au/child-care-provider-handbook-0>
- National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children
https://www.dss.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/child_protection_framework.pdf
- Family Assistance Guide
<https://guides.dss.gov.au/family-assistance-guide/2/8/1/20>

▲ ASSOCIATED POLICIES

- Enrolment and Orientation
- Victorian Child Protection Policy

▲ POLICY REVIEW

- The Service (together with educators) will review this policy every 12 months.
- The Approved Provider and Centre Director will ensure that this policy and its procedures are maintained and implemented at all times.
- Families are encouraged to collaborate with the Service to review the policy and procedures.

- **Last review:** 09/06/2021
- **Next review:** 09/06/2022