



Priority of Access

Review Date: 24/10/2025

Introduction

"The NSW Government is committed to ensuring that all children in New South Wales can participate in 600 hours of quality preschool education in the year before school"

(<https://education.nsw.gov.au>)

Failure to meet Guidelines defined in NSW Government Funding Agreements is a breach of the conditions of continued approval for receiving State Government funding.

Goals – What are we going to do?

Evans Head Preschool Association Inc. will follow the Priority of Access Guidelines when enrolling children. The waiting list application will reflect these guidelines to ensure that care is provided to families using these priorities.

Strategies - How will it be done?

The Priority of Access Guidelines followed by state funded preschools are defined by NSW State Government funding Agreements. In no particular order, these are:

- Children who are at risk of harm (from a child protection perspective).
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.
- Children from low income families.
- Children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- Children with disabilities.
- Children in their year before school who must attend school in the following year by law.

It is possible for a child to attend more than one Early Childhood Education & Care Service. However, children who are not enrolled in another service will have priority of access over children who already receive an early education in another service, in accordance with NSW funding guidelines.

Evans Head Preschool Association endeavours to meet the needs of the children and families in our community while complying with the above guidelines.

Statutory Legislation & Considerations

- Start Strong Guidelines
- Department of Education Funding Agreement
- Family Assistance Legislation Amendment (Jobs for Families Child Care Package) Act 2017

Sources

- Department of Education and Training
<https://education.gov.au/early-childhood-education>
- Early Childhood Contract Management System (ECCMS)
<https://education.nsw.gov.au/early-childhood-education/operating-an-early-childhood-education-service/grants-and-funded-programs/early-childhood-management-system>

Links to other Policies/ Documents

- Enrolment and Orientation
- Confidentiality
- Providing a Child Safe Environment
- Inclusion

Calculation of 600 hours

600 hours (per year) = 15 hours enrolment per week or 30 hours per fortnight.

In order to provide access for as many children with priority access, Evans head Preschool Association has introduced two sessions per week.

To be fully funded by the NSW Department of Education, a child needs to be enrolled for one session = 30 hours per fortnight.

See Procedure for session details.

Evaluation

All enrolments will adhere to the Priority of Access Guidelines to ensure equity and consistency for the community.

President's Name: Narissa Cuskelly.....

President's Signature:

Date: ...24...../...10...../...2023.....

REVIEW DATE:24/10/2025

| Policy Dated | Adopted by | Review Date |
|--------------|------------------|-------------|
| 11/11/2016 | Naomi Simpson | 11/11/2018 |
| 04/12/2018 | Belinda Fayle | 04/12/2020 |
| 13/09/2022 | Kieran O'Reilly | 13/09/2024 |
| 24/10/2023 | Narissa Cuskelly | 24/10/2025 |

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PROCEDURE

Applications

Completing an enrolment form from our OWNA portal does not guarantee a place once a child turns three. If there are no vacancies when a child has their third birthday, they will be placed on a waiting list in accordance with the Priority of Access Guidelines.

Sessional Information

Woodburn Service

Children enrol for two x 7.5 hour days. These two groups are:



Guhgun (Kookaburra): Monday & Tuesday



Jena Jenas (Echidnas): Wednesday & Thursday

Evans Head Service

Children enrol for a 5 day fortnight (6 hour days) OR for 4 days per fortnight (7.5 hour days), as follows:



Jellums (Fish): Alternate Mondays and every Tuesday and Wednesday



Bing Gings (Turtles): Thursdays and Fridays (7.5 hours per day)

Enrolling three year olds

Community preschools receive **full funding** for three year olds who are:

1. From low income background (family Health Care Card or Pension card);
2. Identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander;
3. Are diagnosed with additional needs;
4. Are at risk from a child protection perspective (e.g. foster children)
5. Are the third triplet (or higher multiple birth)

Three year old children who do not turn four years old until after 31st July (are not eligible to attend school in the following year) **AND** are not from any of the priority groups listed above, are **partially funded**.

Three year olds who are eligible for partial funding may attend our services, but priority must be given to children in the year before school or fully funded 3 year olds, in accordance with our Funding Agreement.

For each calendar year, the decision to offer partially funded three year olds a place will be made by the end of the previous year for working families and by the commencement of the new school year for other families of three year olds.

Requests for Additional Days (above 600 hours)

If requested, additional enrolment days (over 600 hours at one service) will be offered on a case by case basis and will not be offered if it prevents another child from accessing 600 hours of the preschool program.

The preschool receives **NO** additional funding for children to attend any additional days (above the 600 hour session). As we are not Long Day Care, we cannot access funding for extra days.

Preschool has a capped number of places available each day. Hence, if a child attends an extra day, they prevent another child from accessing preschool that day.

Each preschool is funded separately, so parents can access 4 days of preschool by enrolling in the Monday/Tuesday session at Woodburn Preschool (Guhgun) and the Thursday/Friday session at Evans Head Preschool (Bing Ging).

If requested, additional enrolment days (over 600 hours at one service) will be offered on a case by case basis and cannot be offered if it prevents another child from accessing 600 hours of the preschool program.

Children re-enrolling for a consecutive year of Preschool

A Re-Enrolment Form in OWNA must be completed for each consecutive year a child is enrolled at preschool.

In order to maintain priority over new enrolments for a place, forms must be received by the conclusion of third term of the school calendar year. This allows time in Term 4 for letters of offer to be sent and accepted, orientation sessions conducted for new families, applications for funding for children with additional needs to be submitted, etc.