

KINDERGARTEN (FREE) ENROLMENT AND ORIENTATION POLICY

Policy number: CSK02

Version: 2

Responsible person: BoG Chair

Approved by BoG on: 19th August 2024

Schedule review date: 09-2025

Mandatory – Quality Area 6

PURPOSE

This policy outlines:

- the criteria for enrolment at **Hampton Park Community Kindergarten (HPCK)**
- the process to be followed when enrolling a child at Hampton Park Community Kindergarten
- the basis on which places within the programs will be allocated
- procedures for the orientation of new families and children into HPCK
- processes to ensure compliance with legislative and DET funding requirements in relation to the enrolment of children in early childhood education and care services.

POLICY STATEMENT

VALUES

Hampton Park Community Kindergarten is committed to:

- equal access for all eligible children
- meeting the needs of the local community
- supporting families to meet the requirements for enrolment through the provision of information
- maintaining confidentiality in relation to all information provided for enrolment
- ensuring all families are welcomed and receive an effective orientation into HPCK.

SCOPE

This policy applies to Hampton Park Care Croup Inc. (Hampton Park Community House) the Approved Provider, Person with Management and Control, Nominated Supervisor, early childhood teachers, educators, staff and parents/guardians who wish to enrol or have already enrolled their child at Hampton Park Community Kindergarten.

RESPONSIBILITIES	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Early childhood teacher, educators and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Contractors, volunteers and students
R indicates legislation requirement, and should not be deleted					
Implementing and reviewing this policy in consultation with parents/guardians, the Nominated Supervisor and staff, and in line with the requirements of DET's Free Kindergarten initiative (<i>refer to Definitions</i>)	R	√	√	√	
Reimbursing families in full for enrolment deposits that have already been paid upon acceptance of enrolment	R	√			
Keeping an enrolment record for each child with the information set out in regulation 160	R	√			
inclusion in the record of authorisations from families relating to medical treatment and regular outings (regulation 161) and health information (regulation 162)	R	√			
Ensuring any non-funded positions are enrolled in accordance with the Funding Guidelines (<i>refer to Sources</i>)	R	√			
Ensuring families that attend both sessional kindergarten and a long day care service nominate and document which service the child will participate in the funded kindergarten program	R	√		√	
keeping enrolment and other documents (section 175, regulations 177– 178), including a children's attendance record (regulations 158–159)	R	√			

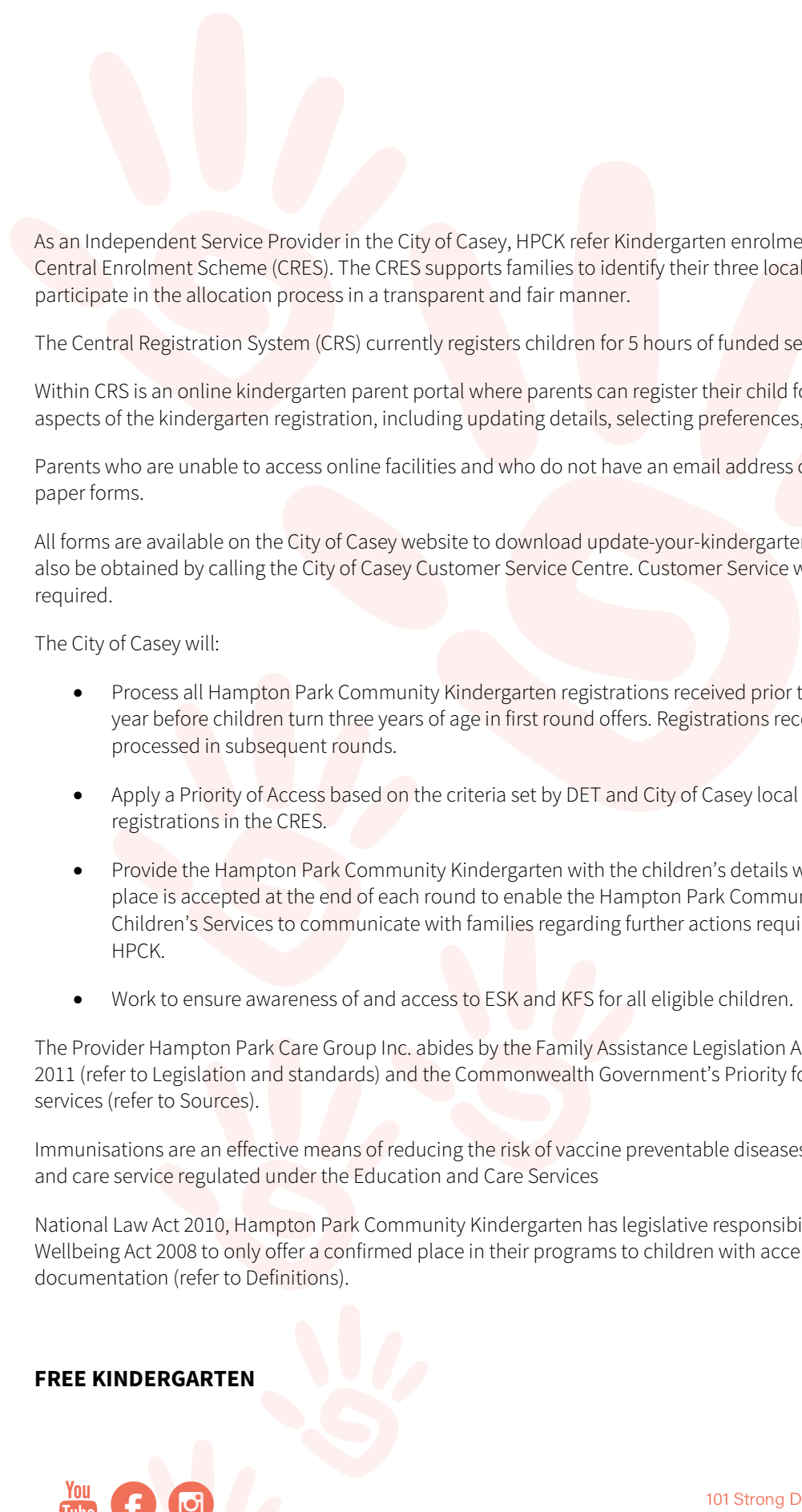
Ensuring any voluntary parent payments/donations are explicitly agreed to in writing and receipted	R	√			
Charging families only for an occasional special event/ excursions that occur outside the normal program/curriculum	R	√	√		
Ensuring that any child that is eligible for Early Start Kindergarten is still enrolled at HPCCK and recorded on the KIM system	R	√	√		
Collecting all relevant information regarding those with entitlement to concessions and recording it on the KIM system	R	√	√		
Ensuring that the Free Kindergarten Fee Policy is readily accessible at HPCCK (Regulation 171)	R	√			
Providing all parents/guardians with information about Free Kindergarten Enrolment Policy and Procedures	R	√			
Keeping records confidential (regulations 181–182) and storing them safely and securely for the relevant period (regulation 183).	R	√			
Complying with HPCCK's <i>Privacy and Confidentiality Policy</i> regarding financial and other information received, including in relation to the payment/non-payment of additional hours fees	R	√	√	√	
Notifying parents/guardians a minimum of 14 days of any proposed changes to the Enrolment Policy	R	√			
Implementing and reviewing this policy, in consultation with parents/guardians, the approved provider and staff, and in line with the requirements of DET's Free Kindergarten initiative	R	√	√	√	
Informing the approved provider of any complaints or concerns that have been raised regarding enrolment at HPCCK		√	√		
Referring parents'/guardians' questions in relation to this policy to the approved provider.		√	√		

BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION

Background

The Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 require approved services to have a policy and procedures in place in relation to enrolment and orientation (Regulation 168(2)(k)).

It is intended that all eligible children (refer to Definitions) will have access to one year of kindergarten before commencing school. However, a shortage of places in some areas can limit choices for parents/guardians.



As an Independent Service Provider in the City of Casey, HPCK refer Kindergarten enrolment enquires to the City of Casey's Central Enrolment Scheme (CRES). The CRES supports families to identify their three local kindergartens of choice and participate in the allocation process in a transparent and fair manner.

The Central Registration System (CRS) currently registers children for 5 hours of funded sessional three-year-old kindergarten.

Within CRS is an online kindergarten parent portal where parents can register their child for kindergarten and manage all aspects of the kindergarten registration, including updating details, selecting preferences, and accepting offers.

Parents who are unable to access online facilities and who do not have an email address can complete all processes on paper forms.

All forms are available on the City of Casey website to download update-your-kindergarten-registration. Relevant forms can also be obtained by calling the City of Casey Customer Service Centre. Customer Service will post the forms to the parents if required.

The City of Casey will:

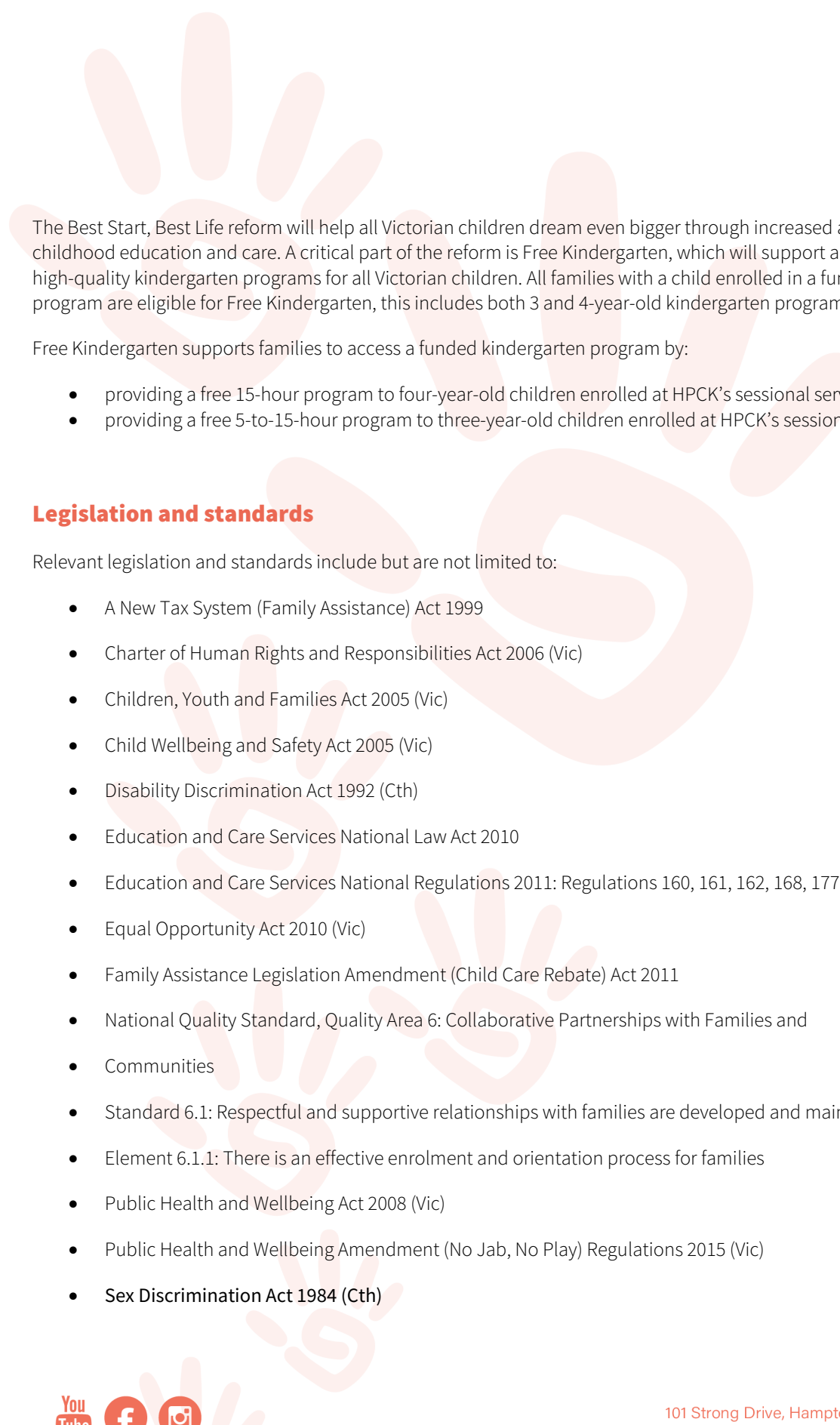
- Process all Hampton Park Community Kindergarten registrations received prior to (and including) the 30 April of the year before children turn three years of age in first round offers. Registrations received after this date will be processed in subsequent rounds.
- Apply a Priority of Access based on the criteria set by DET and City of Casey local criteria to all kindergarten registrations in the CRES.
- Provide the Hampton Park Community Kindergarten with the children's details when offers are sent and when a place is accepted at the end of each round to enable the Hampton Park Community House (HPCK) Director of Children's Services to communicate with families regarding further actions required and commencement with HPCK.
- Work to ensure awareness of and access to ESK and KFS for all eligible children.

The Provider Hampton Park Care Group Inc. abides by the Family Assistance Legislation Amendment (Child Care Rebate) Act 2011 (refer to Legislation and standards) and the Commonwealth Government's Priority for allocating places in child care services (refer to Sources).

Immunisations are an effective means of reducing the risk of vaccine preventable diseases. As and early childhood education and care service regulated under the Education and Care Services

National Law Act 2010, Hampton Park Community Kindergarten has legislative responsibilities under the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 to only offer a confirmed place in their programs to children with acceptable immunisation documentation (refer to Definitions).

FREE KINDERGARTEN



The Best Start, Best Life reform will help all Victorian children dream even bigger through increased access to quality early childhood education and care. A critical part of the reform is Free Kindergarten, which will support access to two years of high-quality kindergarten programs for all Victorian children. All families with a child enrolled in a funded kindergarten program are eligible for Free Kindergarten, this includes both 3 and 4-year-old kindergarten programs.

Free Kindergarten supports families to access a funded kindergarten program by:

- providing a free 15-hour program to four-year-old children enrolled at HPCK's sessional service.
- providing a free 5-to-15-hour program to three-year-old children enrolled at HPCK's sessional service

Legislation and standards

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999
- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)
- Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: Regulations 160, 161, 162, 168, 177, 183
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)
- Family Assistance Legislation Amendment (Child Care Rebate) Act 2011
- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 6: Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities
- Standard 6.1: Respectful and supportive relationships with families are developed and maintained
- Element 6.1.1: There is an effective enrolment and orientation process for families
- Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 (Vic)
- Public Health and Wellbeing Amendment (No Jab, No Play) Regulations 2015 (Vic)
- **Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)**

- Funded Kindergarten reform act Vic (2021)

DEFINITIONS

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy.

Acceptable immunisation documentation: documentation as defined by the Immunisation Enrolment Toolkit for early childhood education and care services as acceptable evidence that a child is fully vaccinated for their age, or is on a recognised catch-up schedule if their child has fallen behind their vaccinations; or has a medical reason not to be vaccinated; or has been assessed as being eligible for a 16 week grace period.

Approved care: Care given by a service provider that has been approved by the Family Assistance

Office to receive Child Care Benefit payments on behalf of eligible families. Most long day care, family day care, before-and-after school care, vacation care, some occasional care and some in-home care childcare services are approved providers. Details are available at:

www.familyassist.gov.au/payments/family-assistance-payments/child-care-benefit/

Authorised nominee: (In relation to this policy) is a person who has been given written authority by the parents/guardians of a child to collect that child from the education and care service. These details will be on the child's enrolment form. The National Law and National Regulations do not specify a minimum age limit for an authorised nominee. Each service will need to consider a risk assessment on an individual basis to determine if a person under the age of 18 is able to be an authorised nominee and, if so, what constitutes the minimum acceptable age at that service.

The most current amendments to listed legislation can be found at:

- Victorian Legislation – Victorian Law Today: <http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/>
- Commonwealth Legislation – Federal Register of Legislation: <https://www.legislation.gov.au/>

Child Care Benefit (CCB): A Commonwealth Government payment to help families who use either approved or registered childcare services. All eligible families can receive some Child Care Benefit.

Details are available at:

www.familyassist.gov.au/payments/family-assistance-payments/child-care-benefit/

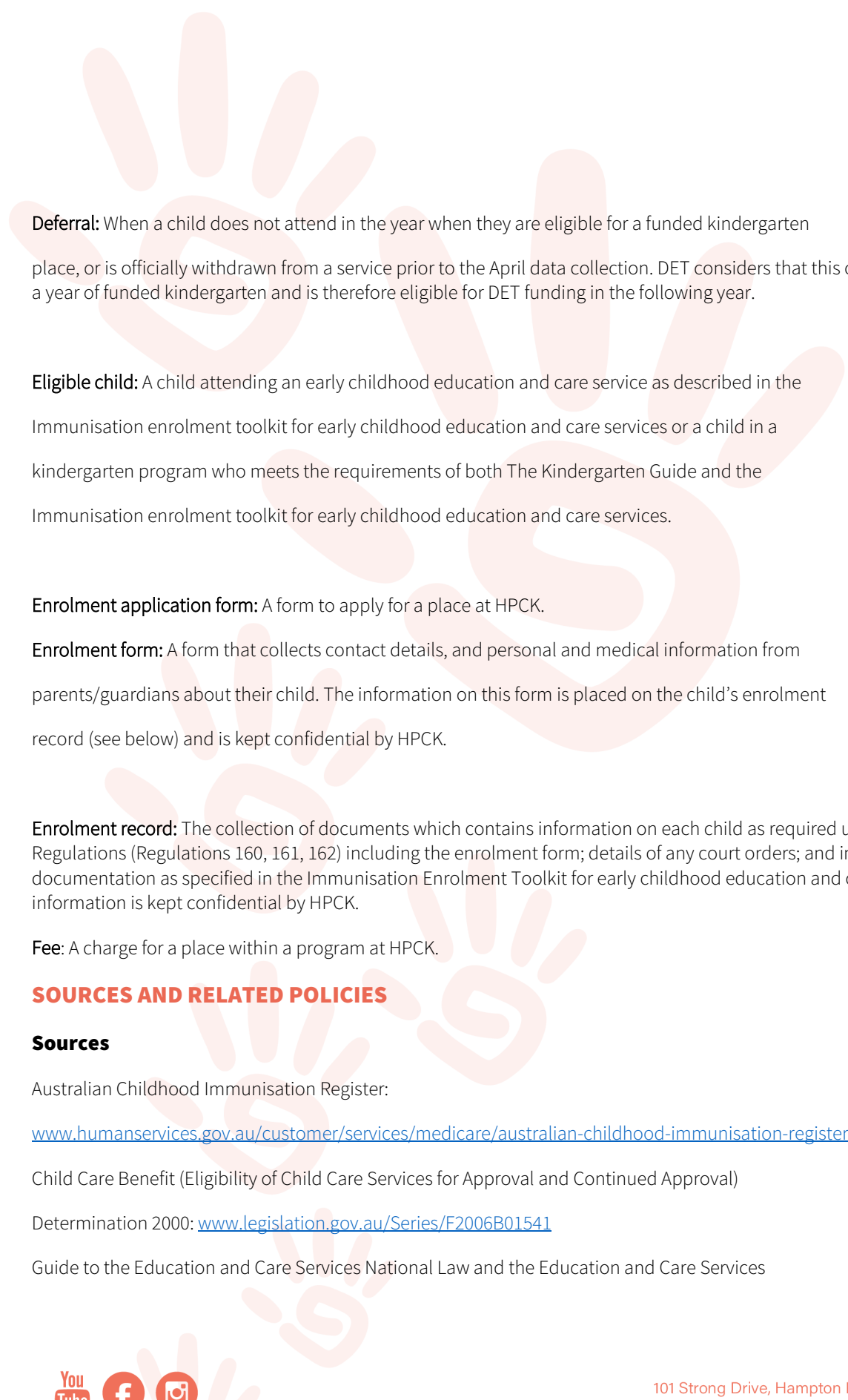
Please note - Changes to CCB from 1st June 2018

Children with additional needs: Children whose development or physical condition requires specialist support or children who may need additional support due to language, cultural or economic circumstances (refer to Inclusion and Equity Policy).

CREs: The City of Casey's Central Enrolment Scheme

CRS: The Central Registration System is the database that the City of Casey uses to administer the registration and allocation of kindergarten places.





Deferral: When a child does not attend in the year when they are eligible for a funded kindergarten place, or is officially withdrawn from a service prior to the April data collection. DET considers that this child has not accessed a year of funded kindergarten and is therefore eligible for DET funding in the following year.

Eligible child: A child attending an early childhood education and care service as described in the Immunisation enrolment toolkit for early childhood education and care services or a child in a kindergarten program who meets the requirements of both The Kindergarten Guide and the Immunisation enrolment toolkit for early childhood education and care services.

Enrolment application form: A form to apply for a place at HPCK.

Enrolment form: A form that collects contact details, and personal and medical information from parents/guardians about their child. The information on this form is placed on the child's enrolment record (see below) and is kept confidential by HPCK.

Enrolment record: The collection of documents which contains information on each child as required under the National Regulations (Regulations 160, 161, 162) including the enrolment form; details of any court orders; and immunisation documentation as specified in the Immunisation Enrolment Toolkit for early childhood education and care services. This information is kept confidential by HPCK.

Fee: A charge for a place within a program at HPCK.

SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES

Sources

Australian Childhood Immunisation Register:

www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/medicare/australian-childhood-immunisation-register

Child Care Benefit (Eligibility of Child Care Services for Approval and Continued Approval)

Determination 2000: www.legislation.gov.au/Series/F2006B01541

Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services

National Regulations 2011: www.acecqa.gov.au/

Guide to the National Quality Standard: www.acecqa.gov.au/

Priority for allocating places in child care services: <http://education.gov.au/priority-allocating-places>

The Kindergarten Guide (Department of Education and Training):

www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/funding/Pages/kinderfundingcriteria.aspx

Immunisation enrolment toolkit for early childhood education and care services 2015:

www2.health.vic.gov.au/about/publications/policiesandguidelines/immunisation-enrolment-toolkit

Victorian Department of Health: www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation

<https://www.vic.gov.au/three-year-old-kindergarten-victorians>

The City of Casey Kindergartens

<https://www.casey.vic.gov.au/kindergarten-offering-process>

Related policies:

- Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations Policy
- Complaints and Grievances Policy
- City of Casey Central Registration and Enrolment Scheme (CRES) Attachment 2
- Dealing with Infectious Disease Policy
- Service Philosophy
- Inclusion and Equity Policy
- Free Kindergarten Fees Policy
- OSCH Enrolment Policy
- OSCH Fees Policy
- Privacy and Confidentiality Policy



Evaluation

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, Hampton Park Care Group Inc. will:

- regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness, particularly in relation to affordability, flexibility of payment options and procedures for the collection of fees
- monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy
- keep the policy up to date with current legislation and government policy, research, policy and best practice
- revise the policy and procedures as part of HPCH's policy review cycle, or as required
- notifying all stakeholders affected by this policy at least 14 days before making any significant changes to this policy or its procedures, unless a lesser period is necessary due to risk (*Regulation 172 (2)*).

Authorisations:

Signature of BoG Chair:



Date: 19th August 2024



