

INTRODUCTION

This policy has been developed to ensure that BDCS complies with the *Priority of Access Guidelines* set by *Family Assistance Law* and defined by *NSW State Government Funding Agreements*. Failure to meet these Guidelines is a breach of the conditions of continued approval for receiving Child Care Benefit and State Government funding.

OVERALL GOALS – What are we going to do?

BDCS will ensure the *Priority of Access Guidelines* are followed at all times when enrolling children into the service. The waiting list will reflect these guidelines to ensure that care is provided to families using these priorities as a basis of determining enrolments.

BDCS - CHILDCARE ADDITIONAL GOALS - What it aims to do differently

We will use the *Priority of Access Guidelines* to allocate available education and care places to families and to prioritise the waiting list. The *Priority of Access Guidelines* are set by *Family Assistance Law*. These are:

- Priority 1 A child at risk of serious abuse or neglect.
- Priority 2 A child of a single parent who satisfies, or of parents who both satisfy, the work/training/study test under *Section 14* of the 'A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999'.
- Priority 3 Any other child.

Within these three priority categories, precedence should also be given to:

- children in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families
- children in families which include a disabled person
- children in families which include an individual whose adjusted taxable income does not exceed the lower income threshold of \$45,114 for 2017-18, or who or whose partner is on income support
- children in families from a non-English speaking background
- children in socially isolated families
- children of single parents.

BDCS may require a Priority 3 child to vacate a place to make room for a child in a higher priority group. They can only do so if the parents are:

- notified when their child first entered care that the service follows this policy
- given at least 14 days' notice of the need for their child to vacate.

BDCS - PRESCHOOL'S ADDITIONAL GOALS - What it aims to do differently

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.
- 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 (with highest priority given to children closest to school entry).

MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

This policy will be monitored to ensure compliance with legislative requirements and unless deemed necessary through the identification of practice gaps, the service will review this Policy every 18 months. Families and staff are essential stakeholders in the policy review process and will be given opportunity and encouragement to be actively involved.

In accordance with R. 172 of the Education and Care Services National Regulations, the service will ensure that families of children enrolled at the service are notified at least 14 days before making any change to a policy or procedure that may have significant impact on the provision of education and care to any child enrolled at the service; a family's ability to utilise the service; the fees charged or the way in which fees are collected.

RELATED LEGISLATION

- New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999

LINKS TO:

- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 6: 6.1, 6.2

SOURCES

- Australian Government's Priority of Access Guidelines:
https://docs.education.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/instruction_sheet_10_-_priority_of_access_guidelines_for_child_care_services_0.pdf

Policy Revision History

<i>Date</i>	<i>Authorised By</i>	<i>Description of Amendments</i>	<i>Sections affected</i>
Jan 2021	P. Ritchie – GM		

- **Review Date: Jan 2022**