Preschool Enrolment Policy

The Department of Education and Children’s Services is responsible for providing preschool education programs in a range of government funded centres including kindergartens, child-parent centres, integrated centres and Early Childhood Development Centres. These centres provide sessional preschool for eligible children, and where possible unfunded programs to support young children such as pre-entry sessions, emergency care and playgroups.

Eligible enrolments
In government funded preschool programs:

- children aged four years and above are entitled to attend a preschool program for the equivalent of up to four sessions per week for up to four terms
- children who are Aboriginal or under the guardianship of the Minister for Families and Communities, are entitled to attend up to four preschool sessions per week from three years of age, and may continue to attend up to four sessions per week until they are six years old
- children attending DECS designated “Rural Preschools”\(^1\) can attend up to three sessions of preschool from the age of three years and six months
- approved early and extended enrolments.

Early entry and extended enrolment
Directors/principals may negotiate early entry or extended enrolment when:

- additional time at preschool is likely to significantly improve a child’s learning and developmental outcomes, and
- the preschool has the capacity within its current resources, and
- consultation has occurred between the director/principal, centre staff, parents and where applicable, personnel from the district, such as preschool support program, bi-lingual support program, and/or specialist agencies (such as Department of Families and Communities or Children, Youth and Women’s Health)

These enrolments are counted as eligible enrolments for funding purposes.

Early entry
Early entry to preschool may be considered by directors/principals for:

- children who live in small rural communities who may be enrolled from three years and six months of age in order to attend the equivalent of up to four sessions per week for up to four terms
- children with additional needs such as a disability, developmental delay, gifted development, culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds or family and social circumstances who may commence early entry two terms prior to their eligible year of preschool. These children are eligible to attend for one session per week in the first term, and increase to a maximum of two sessions per week from the beginning of their second term of early entry.

Extended enrolment
Extended enrolment in preschool may be considered by directors/principals for children with additional needs. Children with additional needs may be offered one term of extended enrolment following consultation between the director/principal, centre staff, parents and, where applicable, DECS support services and/or specialist agencies.

Pre-entry term
One pre-entry session per week may be offered to children in the term prior to their eligible attendance at preschool. The session is usually between one and two hours and may be offered separately or within a preschool session. Pre-entry sessions are not funded and are only available where resources permit, and at the discretion of the director/principal.

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\(^1\) DECS designated “Rural Preschools” operate in communities where there are small or declining numbers of preschool aged children.
PRIORITY OF ACCESS GUIDELINES

Kapunda Kindergarten operates a priority of access procedure in times of high enrolments to support all local preschools and equitable access by families to a preschool service. When limited vacancies exist priority is given to enrolments in the following order:

**Priority 1**

1.a Children who live in Kapunda postcode.
1.b Children for whom this is the closest preschool.
1.c Children who use either the Kapunda Early Learning Centre or an approved Family Day Care provider for no less than the equivalent of 3 full days per week.

*An eligible child is a four year old child one year prior to school start or an Aboriginal or GOM child in their eligible years
*must attend child care for 3 full days per week (or equivalent)

Therefore, priority for a vacancy will go to an eligible child, who is living in the area described above, or is using FDC in the Priority Areas, or attends Kapunda early Learning Centre.

Waiting List Priority:
Priority one will always have first entry into the preschool. If you do not meet priority one criteria and still wish to attend this centre you will be placed on a waiting list for vacancies using the following criteria in the order listed below. Enrolments will be placed on the list according to when they enrol – however a child who meets higher criteria will have access to the preschool before a child in a lower priority – even if they enrol later.

**Priority 2**

2.a Siblings attend the closest school (Kapunda Primary School)

**Priority 3**

3.a No vacancies at your Priority of Access preschool.
3.b Any other reason.

NOTE:
DECS enrolment policy states children will receive a MAXIMUM of 4 ½ day sessions for a MAXIMUM of one year (with some exceptions. During peak periods children may be offered fewer sessions. Eligible priority one children will receive full sessions as soon as vacancies allow.
During extremely busy periods 2 waiting lists may exist – a primary list of those who meet priority one, and a secondary list of those who do not. Children on the second list will only be offered positions if and when there are vacancies after all the priority one children have their full entitlement.

Pre Entry sessions and Playgroups are not funded by DECS and are only available where preschool resources permit. Please refer to Pre Entry policy attached. Playgroup will only run when available time and capacity allows.

*This policy was formulated using DECS Preschool Enrolment Policy and Guidelines and has been prepared to support Gawler/Barossa Preschools to maintain National Quality Standards. Please direct any queries initially to the Director of your chosen preschool.
Kapunda Kindergarten values a pre entry program and understands the benefits it provides to children by providing initial experiences in:

- Separating from their main carer
- Building relationships with staff and peers
- Following kindergarten routines
- Engaging in early childhood activities

* Pre entry will only be offered when the centre is not at capacity and will run for a period of 2 hours a week from 9-11am for the last 4 weeks of term.
* Each term a minimum of 3 spaces need to be left available for unexpected new full time enrolments (5 in Term 1)
* When the kindergarten is able to provide pre entry the priority of access will be utilised.
* When pre entry is not able to be provided where possible, these children will maintain a booking in Occasional Care for the term prior to full time enrolment.

**PRIORITY OF ACCESS WHEN CAPACITY ALLOWS FOR PRE ENTRY PROGRAM**

1. Children on specialist referrals eligible for early entry who can attend without support will be offered a 3 hour session a week during their pre entry term for the entire term (early entry is the discretion of the Director).
2. Children who have not accessed any Occasional Care or Childcare: 9-11am for 4 weeks at end of term.
3. All other children: 9-11am for 4 weeks at end of term.
ENROLMENT PROCEDURE

1. Families listed on projection/waiting lists are contacted for a meeting with the Director prior to enrolment (refer to Priority of Access).
2. Families not on projection/waiting lists who make contact wishing to enrol negotiate with director a meeting time to enrol.
3. Enrolment meeting:
   - Distribute Kapunda Kindergarten enrolment package (located in enrolment box next to Director’s computer).
   - Guide through completion of enrolment form and other items in package.
   - Alert parents to policies and procedures.
   - Discuss kindergarten routines and times.
   - Discuss fees and payment options.
   - Provide tour for those families that have had no previous experience with the kindergarten.
   - Discuss health, custody issues & give/collection appropriate information.
   - Book children into their kindergarten sessions for the following term.
4. Director review all enrolment forms to ensure all information had been completed and sign to verify this.
5. Place enrolments onto the Early Years System.
6. Send confirmation of enrolment letter to family (addressed to child, letter proforma can be found on Directors desktop, ASally folder, Enrolments and Transitions).