



Enrolment & Orientation Policy

Policy Statement:

At Pennant Hills Before and After School Care Service, we are committed to providing an enrolment process that is efficient, transparent, and equitable for all families. We prioritise clarity and fairness throughout the procedure and ensure the confidentiality of all family and personal information at every stage.

Our service welcomes enrolments for primary school-aged children in accordance with current funding priorities and regulatory guidelines. To support families joining our community, we provide a comprehensive orientation process designed to:

- Allow educators and staff to warmly welcome children and their families.
- Share essential information about our daily operations and routines.
- Build the foundation for a strong, respectful, and caring partnership between families and the service.
- Support each child in developing a sense of belonging, acceptance, and trust in those who care for them – in line with *My Time, Our Place* Outcome 1.

Considerations:

- Network Record Keeping Factsheet
- Priority of Access Guidelines - Department of Education
- Family Assistance Law.
- Childcare Provider Handbook.
- Parent Handbook.
- Service Enrolment Form.
- Service Terms and Conditions.
- National Quality Standard:
 - Standard 1.1: Program is based on an approved learning framework
 - Standard 4.2: Management, educators, and staff work with mutual respect and collaboratively
 - Standard 5.1: Respectful and equitable relationships are maintained with each child
 - Standard 6.1: Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained
 - Standard 6.2: Collaborative relationships enhance children's inclusion, learning, and wellbeing
 - Standard 7.1: Governance supports the operation of a quality service
- Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations:
 - Section 175: Offence relating to false or misleading information
 - Regulation 91: Medical conditions policy
 - Regulation 155: Interactions with children
 - Regulation 156: Relationships in groups
 - Regulation 157: Access for parents
 - Regulation 158: Attendance records
 - Regulation 160-162: Enrolment and staff records requirements

- Regulation 168: Required policies and procedures
- Regulation 177: Prescribed enrolment and attendance records to be kept
- Regulation 181: Confidentiality of records
- Regulation 183: Storage of records and other documents

Definitions:

Re-Enrolment - The annual process by which families with existing permanent bookings confirm their child's place for the following year by completing a re-enrolment form before the specified deadline.

Complying Written Arrangement (CWA) - A formal agreement between the service and a parent/guardian outlining booked sessions and associated fees, required for families to access the Child Care Subsidy (CCS).

Child Care Subsidy (CCS) - A government payment that assists families with the cost of childcare, subject to eligibility and confirmation through Centrelink/myGov.

Allowable Absences - The maximum number of absences (42 per financial year) for which Child Care Subsidy can still be claimed.

Policy:

Eligibility and Priority of Access:

Access and eligibility will be subject to the Priority of Access Guidelines set down by the Department of Education, 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 enrolled at Pennant Hills Public School.

This supports the safety and well-being of children at risk in accordance with the Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009-2020.

As well as the above, the service policy is that children must be enrolled in Pennant Hills Public School to be eligible to attend the service.

Children of preschool age can be accepted into the service for the January vacation care period immediately prior to commencing attendance at Pennant Hills Public School. Enrolment will only be accepted upon receiving proof that the child is also enrolled at Pennant Hills Public School.

We are licensed to accept 200 children into care at each session; however, we cap our vacation care numbers at 90 children per day.

Enrolment Procedure:

When families want to enrol their child/ren, they should contact the centre. A link to register will be sent out and more information about the service is available on our website. Enrolments will only be accepted if the following enrolment procedure is completed in full:

1. The online enrolment form must be completed in full, containing all details outlined in Regulations 160, 161 and 162. These details include, but are not limited to, personal, medical, and custodial information for each child, parent/guardian and emergency contacts, billing details along with any special requirements relating to that child.
2. The joining fee and membership registration must be paid in full.
3. Once the enrolment has been completed, an offer of care will be sent out.
4. Families should accept the offer of enrolment and provide any additional information as required by the Childcare Software Provider.

Note: Information about fees is included in the Bookings & Fees Policy.

If any individual is having difficulties, or has any queries, while filling out the enrolment form, they are encouraged to contact the centre as assistance can be provided.

Enrolment details are to be updated annually or whenever there are changes to a family's circumstances/details. Families are advised that it is their responsibility to notify of any changes to current details on their enrolment.

Staff will use the enrolment information to find out information about the child including their individual strengths, interests, needs etc. The service will use this information to help the child feel safe and comfortable during their time at the service.

Failure to disclose any special needs or disability may impact upon acceptance of enrolment. Please see below regarding inclusion of children with additional needs.

A legal guardian must complete the child/ren's enrolment form containing relevant information and needs to have read and signed all attached documentation. Please provide a copy of court orders regarding custody, if applicable. If court orders are not provided in writing, they cannot be followed by the centre staff.

Allocation of places will be processed in order of receipt of completed enrolments.

If all available places for the session/s chosen are filled, children will be placed on the waitlist.

Confirmation of new enrolments for the following year (e.g. Kindergarten children) will be confirmed in October for all received enrolments via our Childcare Software Provider.

Any family who has concerns regarding their enrolment or re-enrolment and wishes to appeal their placement for a session, may do so in writing to the Parent Management Committee.

Re-Enrolment Procedure

For the month of September, all current families holding permanent bookings will be offered places for the following year. Re-enrolment offers will be based on session usage at the time and permanent bookings as of Term 4.

Parent/guardians must complete the re-enrolment process before October to ensure they secure their places for the following year. Failure to do so before the end of October may result in bookings not being available and child/ren waitlisted.

From October, all other enrolments may be allocated where available. Allocation of places will be processed in order of receipt of enrolment forms and payment of fees.

When demand for some sessions is greater than availability, once all available positions are filled, remaining children will be placed on the waitlist.

After Priority of Access guidelines, applications for bookings will be accepted in the following order:

- Currently enrolled children for permanent sessions they currently hold.
- New Kindergarten children with siblings that are already enrolled.
- New Kindergarten children.
- Current waitlist (if any).
- All remaining children and currently enrolled children with newly requested sessions not held at the time of re-enrolment.

Please note it is the parent/guardian's responsibility to make sure they re-enrol their child/ren for the following year correctly. The centre assumes no responsibility for the failure of parents/guardians to do so.

Childcare Subsidy (CCS):

It is a requirement under Family Assistance Law for all children who attend childcare to have an enrolment notice lodged with the Department of Education regardless of their Child Care Subsidy (CCS) eligibility status.

There are four steps to enrol a child into the Child Care Subsidy system:

1. The parent/guardian makes a claim for CCS with Centrelink.

Families need to create or access their Centrelink online account via myGov to lodge a CCS claim for their child. Where possible parents/guardians should start the claim process before enrolling their child/ren into the service. Centrelink will check and confirm the eligibility of the individual and child for Child Care Subsidy.

2. Creation of arrangement between Pennant Hills Before and After School Care Service and the individual (family).

The only type of arrangement that can enable families to receive the Child Care Subsidy is called a 'Complying Written Arrangement'. A Complying Written Arrangement is an agreement to provide care in return for fees. An agreement of the sessions and fees that your child is booked into care must be signed by a parent/guardian and recorded, in either hardcopy or electronic form and kept by the service.

3. Pennant Hills Before and After School Care Service submits an enrolment notice.

Once the service has arranged with an individual (family), a new enrolment notice is created with the Department of Education.

4. The individual (family) confirms the enrolment via Centrelink.

After Pennant Hills Before and After School Care Service submits an enrolment notice for a child, the individual (family) will be notified and asked to review and check the enrolment notice details. This will occur through their Centrelink account, accessed via myGov. Where an individual cannot access myGov, they can confirm their enrolment over the phone with Centrelink, or by visiting a Centrelink office. Pennant Hills Before and After School Care Service will be notified when the enrolment has been confirmed.

Orientation:

Families enrolling for the first time will receive the Family Handbook and Terms & Conditions before their child's start date. Where a medical condition is identified, relevant medical policies will also be provided. Families must read these documents to prepare their child and complete all required forms.

On the first day, educators will welcome new children. Parents are encouraged to advise staff that it is their child's first day. Educators will assist with sign-in/out, confirm forms are completed, show the child around the centre, and introduce them to peers. They will engage the child in activities, remain with them until settled, and monitor their adjustment. Additional orientation procedures apply for kindergarten children, who are introduced as a cohort at the start of the year.

Shared Care/Separated Families:

If a child's parents are separated, and either individual (or their partners) is liable for part of the cost of the child's fees, everyone will need to enrol their child into the centre separately and make their own claim for Child Care Subsidy to Centrelink.

It is the responsibility of each parent to:

- agree to their own 'Complying Written Arrangement' with Pennant Hills Before and After School Care Service.
- agree to be assessed separately for their entitlement to Child Care Subsidy, based on their income and activity levels.
- Receive separate billing and invoices for their share of care.

In all circumstances, including shared care arrangements, the allocation of 42 absences per financial year in which Child Care Subsidy can be paid relates to each child, not to each individual claimant.

Where families have separated after commencement of the Complying Written Arrangement, the parent who is the Child Care Subsidy claimant must notify Centrelink of this change in their circumstances.

Where the other parent who was not the Child Care Subsidy claimant wishes to receive Child Care Subsidy payments, they will be required to make their own claim, based on their individual income and activity levels.

If parents separate while care is being provided for their child under a single arrangement, they should advise the centre as well as Centrelink of the separation as soon as possible. The service will create a new enrolment notice for the parent who was not previously the Child Care Subsidy claimant for the child, if that parent is taking on liability for the cost of some of the childcare fees. Once parents have separated and have been separately assessed for Child Care Subsidy by Centrelink, entitlements will be calculated individually.

It is the responsibility of the service to ensure that each child's attendances are submitted under the enrolment for the parent with whom they have an arrangement and who is liable for paying the fees for those sessions of care.

If parents do not inform the service of their changed circumstances, then it is the parent's responsibility to resolve any disputes they may have regarding Child Care Subsidy payments and fees between themselves. The centre assumes no responsibility for any possible disputes if the above outlined procedure is not followed.

Waitlist:

Where demand for care exceeds the service's number of approved places, families will be placed on the service's waitlist. If placement on the waitlist is necessary, families will be advised of the Priority of Access Guidelines.

Waitlists will be refreshed as frequently as possible. If the service does not receive a reply when a space is made available, families will be removed from the list, as it is presumed the family is no longer requiring care.

Inclusion of Children with Additional Needs:

Provision of places for children with additional needs will be made wherever possible, with a regular review period. Access to care will be dependent on the needs of the child and the service's ability to meet these needs. Ongoing arrangements will be at the discretion of the Director/Nominated Supervisor in consultation with the Parent Management Committee, families and educators. Where children with additional needs have needs outside of the realm of daily service delivery, the service will seek assistance from their local Inclusion Support facility to access funding, resources and advice.

Full disclosure of all additional needs, disabilities or risks is imperative as it allows the centre to properly consult with families and develop the strategies necessary to provide appropriate care. Failure to disclose may result in enrolments being rejected/rescinded.

Any family who has concerns regarding their enrolment or re-enrolment and wishes to appeal their placement for a session, may do so in writing to the Parent Management Committee.

Attendance and Enrolment Records:

Attendance records will be kept, including:

- The full name of each child attending the service
- The date and time each child arrives and departs from the service
- Who records the child's arrival and departure whether that be someone authorised to deliver/collect the child or the Nominated Supervisor/an educator at the service (Regulation 158)

Enrolment information will be kept confidentially, in a safe and secure place, according to the services Privacy, Confidentiality & Record-Keeping Policy. This includes all details as outlined in Regulations 160, 161 and 162.

Attendance Requirements Once Enrolled:

The service's responsibility for the child begins when placed in the staff's care by an authorised nominee, or when they arrive from school for the afternoon session. If a child is absent on a day

they are booked into the service, the family must notify the service as soon as possible. The rules for Allowable Absences under CCMS will be followed in relation to all absences. Families are entitled to 42 allowable absences per child, per financial year, in line with CCS requirements.

If a child who is enrolled at the service but is not on the roll for a particular session, arrives at the service, the Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person in Charge for that session, will be contacted immediately. Our 'No Booking Procedure' will be followed as outlined in the Delivery and Collection of Children Policy.

If a child has not been enrolled, they must not be taken into care under any circumstances. In this case, immediate contact will be made with the school and/or the child's family (if possible).

Cancellation of Enrolment:

Cancellation of an enrolment may be initiated in two different situations:

- A guardian advises the service that no further care is required.
- The service identifies that care is no longer required or being provided (CCMS Ending Enrolments).

The family may terminate care, via email or written notification, with a notice period of seven days if care is no longer required. CCS guidelines will be followed once an enrolment is cancelled.

Should the need arise for a child's enrolment to be suspended or cancelled by the service due to extenuating circumstances such as behaviour issues, the service will follow the Behaviour Management policy and procedures.

Any family who has concerns regarding the services decision to suspend or cancel their child's enrolment and wishes to appeal, may do so in writing to the Parent Management Committee.

Version	Action	Date
V.1	Last revision	22 nd September 2020
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