

Waiting List Policy

Rationale

First impressions play a vital role in the confidence new families have in the centre. The procedure for placing a child on the waiting list will be the beginnings of the partnership between the centre and parents. Administering the waiting list is a very involved task and must be implemented clearly, fairly and in a friendly way.

Policy Statement

This policy details how Nought to Five Early Childhood Centre:

- manages its waiting list in a fair and responsible manner;
- upholds its legal responsibilities in relation to the *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*;
- provides prospective parents with relevant, accurate information with regard to the centre's waiting list in a polite, friendly and professional manner;
- ensures that this first contact with the centre is a positive experience.

Strategies and practices

Procedure for handling waiting list enquiries

- Wherever possible, the Director or Office Administrator are to handle all wait list enquiries in order to avoid miscommunications.
- All enquiries should be taken in a friendly and helpful manner - remember that this is the first contact for parents and the first impression is the most important one.
- If the caller/visitor needs to leave a message it must contain enough information to enable the Director or Office Administrator to return the call. It should include:
 - Date and time of call
 - Caller's name
 - Contact telephone number
 - Child's surname if already on the waitlist (we register the waitlist application by child's surname)
- Advise the caller/visitor that the centre operates a waiting list. It is not possible to give any precise details of when they may be expected to be enrolled.
- Invite parents to make an appointment to come and have a look around the centre prior to placing the child's name on the waiting list (preferably between 10.00am and 4.00pm). Appointments must be made through office staff.
- Refer the caller/visitor to our website www.noughttofive.com and *Application for Wait List* form. Explain there is a \$25 non-refundable Waiting List Fee that must be paid into our bank account, details of which are at the top and bottom of the website waiting list form.

Waiting List Applications

- Once the *Application for Wait List* form is complete, a non-refundable deposit of \$25.00 is required to secure a child's name on the waiting list.
- Families wishing to add more than one child to the waiting list must complete a separate form for each child, however we will only charge 1 deposit fee.
- Placement on the waiting list is in order of the application date for each form. This means if an application is made for a sibling at a later date, that child's place on the list will be different to their brother/sister.
- If we cannot successfully enroll a child, the parent cannot add another child to take their place in the waiting list for another time in the future.
- Siblings of children already enrolled at the centre are required to fulfill the same criteria for waitlist applications as stated above, however the waiting list fee will be waived. The centre will consider the needs of the whole family when offering placement to these siblings as long as it is equitable and complies with the centre's regulatory responsibilities.
- Making an application for the waiting list does not guarantee a placement.

Maintaining the Waiting List

- It is the responsibility of the person making a waiting list application to keep the centre updated by email with relevant information, such as correct address, phone number, email address.

- The centre will conduct a waiting list update once a year, usually in June. This ensures the waitlist is accurate when it comes time to fill vacancies. Families will be required to reply by return email advising us if they wish to remain on the waiting list or be removed. If the centre does not receive a response by the date outlined in the letter the child's name will be permanently deleted from the waiting list. It is therefore the family's responsibility to ensure the centre has correct contact details at all times.
- A child's name will stay on the waiting list until:- the family accepts a placement within the centre, the family asks to be removed from the waiting list or the family does not respond to our annual enrolment update letter. Once orientations have been scheduled the child's name will be removed from the waiting list. See *Enrolment Policy* for more detail about enrolment.
- If after accepting an offer of enrolment, the enrolment is cancelled prior to the child's starting date and the family wishes to be reinstated onto the waiting list, this will be effective from the date the centre was notified of the families intention to not start at the centre. This means the child will not be reinstated to the previous position they first had.
- After accepting a placement and paying the 2 week full fee security deposit, should the family choose not to commence, the following applies:- if less than or equal to 4 weeks notice is given (excluding centre closure periods) you will forfeit your entire deposit. If more than 4 weeks notice is given (excluding centre closure periods) you will forfeit half of your deposit. (Refer to *Enrolment Policy* on our website.)

Filling a place from the waiting list

- The process of managing enrolments is a complex one and is detailed in the Enrolment Policy. The Director takes into consideration regulatory obligations, budgetary issues, age/stage of children within the different play rooms, the needs of staff and children in maintaining high quality child care, the needs of families and the preferences waiting list applicants request.
- Each time a position becomes available the Director will start at the beginning of the list until someone accepts the vacancy.

Links to other policies

Enrolment Policy; Orientation Policy

Related Guidelines, Standards, Frameworks

National Quality Standard: Quality Area 7: Governance and Leadership – Standard 7.1

Sources and further reading

Parliamentary Counsel's Office. *Children's Services Regulation 2004*, NSW Government Information Service, Sydney.

Revision History

April 03 - accreditation committee general revision of entire policy; **January 04** - altered according to new fee structure; **January 08** - policy rewritten by admin staff to provide clearer guidelines; **October 11** - reviewed by Director and Office Administrator for inclusion on website, new Regs included; **June 13** - reviewed by Director; **July 14** – reviewed by Director and Office Administrator; **November 2019** Reviewed by Director and Office Administrator