



AIS Childcare Centre Waiting List and Enrolments

Purpose and Scope

The AIS Caretakers Cottage Childcare Centre is an employer-sponsored long day childcare centre, run specifically for the benefit of employees of the Australian Sports Commission (ASC). Therefore, in accordance with the Priority of Access Guidelines as set by the Australian Government's Department of Education, priority in allocation of places is given to ASC employees; and employees and athletes of a National Sporting Organisation (NSO) with long term presence at the AIS.

The Cottage is committed to supporting the implementation of Australia's Winning Edge, and this includes the provision of care for employees and athletes of a National Sporting Organisation (NSO) with long term presence at the AIS.

The Cottage maintains a higher number of applicants than available places. For this reason, a waiting list is necessary to ensure that the process of filling childcare places is fair and equitable.

Additionally, we aim to ensure that each child and family receives an enrolment and orientation process that meets their needs, allowing the family and child to feel safe and secure in the level of care that we provide.

Related Legislation and Documents

National Quality Standards 2011 (6.1.1, 7.3.5)

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: 177

Australian Government's Department of Education Priority of Access Guidelines

National Quality Framework – Quality Area 7: Leadership and service management

ASC Enterprise Agreement 2011-2014

Guidelines

In accordance with the ASC Enterprise Agreement 2011-2014 (at clause 41.1), *employees based in Canberra will be provided priority access to the childcare facility operated by the ASC at the Bruce campus.*

The Centre is funded by the ASC and therefore is committed to providing care to eligible applicants. The Centre does not accept waiting list applications from the general community.

The Commonwealth Government's priority of access guidelines underpin the allocation of places and ensures that the process is even-handed and concise. Places are offered to families in priority order and date of application.

Enrolment and orientation procedures form the foundation for strong relationships between families and the Centre; and promote a quality experience of education for the children.

Staff will follow documented procedures in relation to management of the waiting list, enrolments and orientation.

Enrolments will be accepted providing that:

- The maximum daily attendance does not exceed the approved number of places of the service.
- Child-educator ratios are maintained across the service.
- A vacancy is available.

Definitions

Eligible applicant – An eligible applicant is one within the following categories:

- Ongoing employee of the ASC
- Fixed term employee of the ASC
- Casual employee of the ASC*
- NSO staff and athletes staying on site long term**

*Where childcare supports the casual employee in their ASC employment.

** Long term means sports that choose to continue to make the AIS their base, with staff residing here on a continuing basis.

New applicant – An application that has been submitted by a family new to the Centre.

Existing applicant – An application that has been submitted by a family currently enrolled at the Centre.

Emergency care – Emergency care is defined as child care provided 'in response to a need that a relative or guardian of the child claims has arisen from an emergency or other circumstances unforeseen by the relative or guardian'; or 'in response to circumstances beyond the licensee's control'. Examples of emergency care are natural disaster, medical or illness and accident or injury. It may also include a child being in need of protection under a child protection order.

Procedure

Filling a vacancy

The following steps are followed in filling any vacancy:

- 1) The particular days available and age group are identified.
- 2) **1st Priority** is allocated to any child at risk of serious abuse or neglect currently enrolled or on the waiting list.
- 3) **2nd Priority** is allocated to children currently enrolled at the Centre who are due to progress into the next age group, or children who are currently enrolled and did not get original care days.
- 4) **3rd Priority** is allocated to children on the waiting list who currently have a sibling enrolled in the centre.
- 5) **4th Priority** is allocated to children on the waiting list (this includes both new and existing applicants).

Managing the Waiting List

- At all times the centre adheres to the Priority of Access Guidelines as set out by the Australian Government Department of Education. Please refer to Appendix A
- Priority status or category of applicant does not guarantee a childcare place will be available at the time it is required, nor for the number of days that are required.
- A place will not be offered to current families if fee accounts are in arrears or if there has been a history of non-fee payment or continual late fee payment.
- When vacancies occur, and after Priority 1 and 2 have been assessed, places are offered to applicants of 3rd and 4th Priority in order of the date that the waiting list application was received.
- When a family is offered a position at the centre, they will be given a maximum three working days to accept the position.
- Applications for unborn babies will be accepted however, the waiting list start date will be equal to the end date of the first trimester. It must also include an estimated date of delivery. In the event of a pending adoption, applications will be accepted from the date of the adoption application. Families must inform the Manager (Childcare) of the child's name and date of birth within 3 months of the child being born or the adoption being finalised. Where we do not receive notification, the waiting list application will be removed.
- It is the responsibility of the family to ensure that all details on the waiting list application form are correct and up to date.
- Once entered onto the waiting list it is necessary for the family to contact the service at six-month intervals to confirm their continued wish to remain on the list. Where families do not keep in contact with the Centre, their waiting list application will be removed.

Managing Enrolments

- Where an eligible applicant is engaged on a fixed term contract, a place will be available for the child/children for the term of employment only. This will be confirmed at the time of enrolment.
- Where an employee is engaged as a casual employee, care will be available to support the casual employee in their ASC employment only.
- If a fixed term or casual employee gains permanent employment during this period, the place at the centre will become a permanent place subject to the provisions below.
- Care is available for children from birth. Care is available until:
 - a family gives the required notice, or
 - the family is no longer eligible for priority care at the centre, or
 - the child will be going to school
- Families are required to provide two week's notice of withdrawal.
- Where a family is no longer eligible for care at the centre, for example, they cease employment with the ASC or NSO, their position/s at the Centre will also need to be relinquished.
- Families who are no longer eligible for care and have enrolled at the Centre prior to the implementation of these guidelines will have a period of 12 months from 1st January 2014 to relinquish their position/s.
- Families who are no longer eligible for care and have enrolled at the Centre subsequent to the implementation of these guidelines, will have a period of 4 months from the date they cease employment with the ASC to relinquish their position/s.
- Where a child will be attending school the following year, their enrolment will be deemed to finish on the last day of operation of the Centre in the year prior to attending school.
- The Centre is licensed for 48 approved long day childcare places. For this reason, we are unable to provide sporadic extra days of care, half days of care or "sell" days to other families. These types of care are considered to be occasional care and are not compliant with the Centre's licence to operate.
- To ensure that the Centre runs at optimum capacity and to provide a more consistent and stable environment for the children, the Centre limits its enrolments to 2, 3 or 5 days.

Emergency Care

- The Centre provides care for currently enrolled families who require emergency care.
- Under amendments made to the Education and care Services National Regulations in September 2013, a centre-based service may educate and care for an additional child (or 2 or more children from the same family) in emergency circumstances for up to 2 consecutive days. 2 consecutive days refers to operational days of the service. For example, this may include a Friday and the following Monday.
- In determining the allocation of emergency care places, the Nominated Supervisor adheres to the guidelines set down by the Children's Policy and Regulation Unit. Where the Centre utilises the emergency care provision, the Nominated Supervisor must notify the Children's Policy and Regulation Unit within 24 hours of the child commencing care.

Orientation

- When a family accepts a position at the Centre, an informal meeting is set up with the Manager. Where enrolling parents are not fluent in English, the enrolment interview will be conducted, where possible, in their primary language.
- Families are given an enrolment pack containing a parent handbook, enrolment form, agreement & consent to terms form and the educator profiles. The enrolment form and agreement & consent to terms form are to be completed and returned to the Manager.
- The Manager will take the family on a brief tour of the centre, introducing them to staff and outlining requirements such as signing in and out, fee payment and parent responsibilities. Any matters that are sensitive in nature, such as discussing a child's medical needs, Court Orders, parenting plans or parenting orders, will be discussed privately with the Manager at this time.
- If not already done so, families can also make a time to meet with the room leader to organise orientation visits for the child.
- Prior to the child's first day, educators will familiarise themselves with information about the child from the enrolment information provided. They will ensure that they are aware of any medical conditions and how to manage them if required.
- Should a child use English as a second language, or speak another language at home, we request that families provide us with some key words in the languages the child speaks at this time so that educators can learn the words.
- On the child's first day of attendance, educators will welcome the family, reassure and assist with separation if required. They will make themselves available for any questions the family may have and encourage them to keep the communication lines open throughout the day.
- Enrolment forms are updated annually or when a family's circumstances change, to ensure information is current and correct.

- Enrolment information will be kept in a confidential file. Access to this information is governed by the ASC Privacy Policy.

Further Reading, References and Contacts

Australian Government's Department of Education Priority of Access Guidelines
www.education.gov.au/priority-allocating-places

Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA)
www.acecqu.gov.au

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Version	Created By	Originating Program	Approved by	Date	Revision Date	TRIM reference
Version 1.0	<i>Manager, Childcare Centre</i>	<i>AIS Childcare Centre</i>	<i>Executive</i>	<i>18 Nov 2013</i>	<i>31 Oct 2015</i>	<i>2013/226327 /D</i>

Appendix A - Priority of Access Guidelines

- First Priority: a child at risk of serious abuse or neglect
- Second Priority: 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*'
- Third Priority: any other child.

Within these main categories priority should also be given to the following children:

- 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 \$41,902 for 2013-2014, or who or whose partner are on income support
- children in families from a non-English speaking background
- children in socially isolated families
- children of single parents.