

**ACT Public Schools Enrolment procedure**

Early Childhood School

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**ACT PUBLIC SCHOOLS ENROLMENT PROCEDURE – EARLY CHILDHOOD SCHOOL**(**00047/03)**

These procedures should be read in conjunction with *Compulsory Education:**Student Enrolment and Attendance Policy.*

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1. OVERVIEW
	1. The procedure provides guidance to ACT public school (schools) students, parents, school staff and the Education Support Office (ESO) about enrolling children into an ACT public Early Childhood School (Preschool to year 2).
	2. There are five Early Childhood Schools (Preschool to Year 2) operating in the ACT:
		1. Isabella Plains Early Childhood School;
		2. Lyons Early Childhood School;
		3. Narrabundah Early Childhood School;
		4. O’Connor Cooperative School; and
		5. Southern Cross Early Childhood School.
	3. The procedure applies to ACT public school students, parents, staff and ESO staff. They do not apply to children enrolled in ACT non-government schools or those registered for full time home education.
	4. The procedure should be read in conjunction with the *Compulsory Education: Student Enrolment and Attendance Policy* and other related procedures.
2. Rationale
	1. Under the *Education Act 2004*, it is compulsory for every child living in the ACT between the ages of six and 17 years old to be enrolled in and attending a school, or registered for [home education](https://www.education.act.gov.au/schooling/home-education) until they complete Year 10.
	2. Children who turn four on or before 30 April in that year can access 15 hours of free preschool a week at an ACT public school. This service is provided under the authority and oversight of the *Education and Care Services National Law (ACT) Act 2011* and the *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*.
	3. The [school age calculator](https://www.education.act.gov.au/public-school-life/enrolling-in-a-public-school/when-can-my-child-start-school-in-the-act) available on the Directorate website can be used to confirm when children are eligible to commence preschool.
	4. The ACT Education Directorate (the Directorate) recognises the importance of fair and transparent enrolment procedures which enable eligible children to become students at an ACT public Early Childhood School.

ACT families live in a diverse range of economic and social circumstances, including homelessness and temporary short-term accommodation, and that these should not be a barrier to enrolling in an ACT public school .

* 1. The purpose of this procedure is to provide clarity and transparency in the ACT public school Early Childhood School enrolment process by clearly setting out roles, responsibilities and requirements for both applicants and the Directorate.
1. Enrolment Procedure
	1. Applicants must complete an [Online Enrolment Form](https://forms.act.gov.au/smartforms/servlet/SmartForm.html?formCode=1087) on the Directorate website to enrol in an ACT public Early Childhood School.
	2. All ACT children are guaranteed a place in an ACT public school. However, applicants are not guaranteed a place at the Early Childhood School of their preference due to capacity constraints at some schools.
	3. Applications are prioritised according to the Early Childhood School prioritisation criteria:
		1. Individual circumstances, based on student wellbeing;
		2. child lives in the ACT and has a sibling attending the school;
		3. Child lives in the ACT and attends the long day care program at the school (this criterion does not apply to the O’Connor Cooperative School);
		4. Child lives in the suburb where the school is located; and
		5. Child lives elsewhere in the ACT up to the limits of available places.
		6. Where there are not enough places for all applicants, applications will be ranked by ‘proximity’, that is the distance the child lives from the school. The distance is measured ‘as the crow flies’.
		7. Every child from Kindergarten to Year 2 continues to be guaranteed a place at their [Priority Enrolment Area (PEA) public school](https://www.education.act.gov.au/public-school-life/enrolling-in-a-public-school/priority_placement_areas).
	4. At the end of Year 2, children from ACT public Early Childhood Schools are guaranteed a Year 3 place at their PEA school.
2. Allocation of preschool places AT EARY CHILDHOOD SCHOOLS
	1. In all cases preschool applications to Early Childhood Schools will be allocated by the schools according to the Early Childhood School prioritisation criteria at 3.3.
	2. The Directorate may also place Preschool applicants at Early Childhood Schools who did not apply to an Early Childhood School, where the applicant’s preferred or PEA Preschool has no capacity and the Early Childhood School is the nearest Preschool to the applicant’s home with capacity.
3. Allocation of Kindergarten to year 2 places AT EARLY CHILDHOOD SCHOOLS
	1. In all cases Kindergarten to Year 2 applications to Early Childhood Schools will be prioritised and allocated by the school according to the Early Childhood School prioritisation criteria at 4.3.
4. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS AND Individual circumstances related to student wellbeing
	1. An applicant who has demonstrated there are legal considerations or individual circumstances related to student wellbeing which require they be enrolled at a specific school will be prioritised at that school.
	2. In most cases the Principal of the applicant’s preferred school is responsible for assessing student applications on legal and wellbeing grounds. Where the Principal decides the applicant does not meet the criteria the application will be allocated according to the standard Early Childhood School prioritisation criteria at 4.3.
	3. Applicants whose wellbeing applications are declined may seek a Review and Appeal of the decision.
5. NSW PATHWAY SCHOOLS
	1. Students from NSW living in the region surrounding the ACT are eligible to be enrolled at designated NSW Pathway Schools. These students are guaranteed a pathway through the ACT public schooling system. Application to NSW Pathway School is via the Online Enrolment Form.
	2. An applicant’s designated NSW pathway school is determined by their place of residence. Applicants may apply to any NSW Pathway School, however are only guaranteed a place at their designated NSW Pathway School. NSW Pathway Schools are listed on the Directorate [website](https://www.education.act.gov.au/public-school-life/enrolling-in-a-public-school/nsw-resident-enrolments).
	3. In limited circumstances only, ACT schools that are not designated as NSW Pathway Schools can consider NSW student enrolments. These circumstances are:
		1. Where there are individual circumstances based on student wellbeing that mean the student cannot attend a NSW Pathway School; and
		2. Where the student lives in NSW and has a sibling concurrently attending the school (at ‘Category B’ schools only, and subject to capacity after meeting the needs of ACT residents).
	4. NSW-based applicants seeking to enrol at an Early Childhood School, can do so via the Enrolment Review Process. They should:
		1. apply to their NSW Pathway school and receive an offer of a place; and
		2. submit an Enrolment Review request via the online [Enrolment Review Request Form](https://forms.act.gov.au/smartforms/servlet/SmartForm.html?formCode=1622&appType=Review) setting out their individual circumstances related to student wellbeing.
	5. Non-NSW Pathway School Reviews will be assessed by Education Support Office, who will make a recommendation to the Early Childhood School Principal. The Principal will decide the Review outcome (accept or decline) and send a written Review outcome to the applicant.
	6. The offer of place at the NSW Pathway school will remain valid, until or unless the applicant is enrolled at the Early Childhood School, submits a new application, or declines the offer.
	7. Non-NSW pathway school enrolment decisions are subject to the Appeal process.
6. Enrolment Procedure FOR SPECIALIST SCHOOLS
	1. Refer to ACT Public Schools Enrolment Procedure – Preschool; or
	2. Refer to ACT Public Schools Enrolment Procedure – Kindergarten to Year 12
7. Enrolment Procedure FOR DISABILITY EDUCATION PROGRAMS
	1. Refer to ACT Public Schools Enrolment Procedure – Kindergarten to Year 12
8. Koori Preschool ENROLMENT PROCEDURE
	1. Refer to ACT Public Schools Enrolment Procedure – Preschool
9. Early Entry to Preschool AND KINDERGARTEN
	1. Refer to ACT Public Schools Enrolment Procedure – Preschool, or

Refer to ACT Public Schools Enrolment Procedure – Kindergarten to Year 12

1. THREE-YEAR-OLD GOVERNMENT PRESCHOOL ENROLMENT PROCEDURE
	1. Refer to ACT Public Schools Enrolment Procedure – Preschool
2. International students
	1. Refer to ACT Public Schools Enrolment Procedure – Preschool
3. DISAGREEMENT BETWEEN PARENTS
	1. Should there be disagreement between parents about an ACT public school application, it is a matter for the parents to resolve. If the child is already enrolled at an ACT school, then the child will be required to stay at that school until the school is directed otherwise by agreement of both parents, or through a legal document such as a court order.
	2. In cases where a child is living in the ACT and is not enrolled in an ACT school, the child may be enrolled by one parent, even if the other parent disagrees.
4. Offer of place
	1. Applicants will receive via email or letter a written offer of a place from the school to which they have been allocated.
	2. As set out in the *Compulsory Education (Enrolment and Attendance) Policy*, to accept an offer, applicants are required to provide original or certified copies of the child’s proof of identification and 100 points proof of residence documentation to the school made up from the following:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. A current Rates notice
2. A current residential lease agreement, through a registered real estate agent, of greater than six months’ duration
3. A current electricity or gas notice.
 | 50 points each |
| 1. A current residential lease agreement, through a registered real estate agent, of fewer than six months’ duration.
2. An expired lease where the tenant continues to reside at that address month-to-month after the lease fixed term has expired.
3. A current private residential lease agreement of any duration.
 | 20 points each |
| 1. Electoral Roll verification.
2. Current driver’s licence or other ACT Government issued ID showing home address.
3. Mobile phone statement (with current address details, not more than twelve weeks old).
4. Bank statement (showing current address details, not more than twelve weeks old; financial details are not required).
5. Current home building or home contents insurance correspondence showing the service address.
6. Most recent Tax Assessment Notice (showing current address details; financial details are not required)
7. Letter on ACT or Commonwealth Government Department letterhead (showing current address details; personal details are not required)
 | 1. points each
 |

* + 1. Applicants may provide these documents in digital form via email or in person at the school. It is recommended they supply electronic documents in a secured ZIP file, with a password sent separately.
		2. In some cases, applicants who provide documentation electronically may also be required to present original documentation in-person at the school (if requested) before enrolment can be confirmed.
	1. Schools will confirm that details on the child’s proof of identification and residence documentation match the details on enrolment application, and record on the student file that the documentation was sighted and was correct. Copies should not be made to be retained for student files, in accordance with the *Information Privacy Act,* (*2014)*.
		1. Where documents have been provided in digital form via email to a school enrolment inbox, the email will be deleted by the school when checking is complete. This includes deleting the email received as well as clearing it out of the deleted inbox
		2. No applicant will be disadvantaged if they are unable to provide the child’s proof of identification. Schools will work with Education Support Office to support the applicant to confirm enrolment in these cases.
		3. No applicant will be disadvantaged if they are unable to provide residence documentation due to individual circumstances. Schools will work with Education Support Office to support the applicant to confirm enrolment in these cases.
	2. Copies of documentation may be taken with the applicant’s permission for the purpose of checking details, to be destroyed when checking is complete.
1. Request a Review of an enrolment decision
	1. Where an applicant is not satisfied with the offer of a preschool to year 2 place, they have the right to request a Review of the enrolment decision.
	2. To request a Review, ACT-based applicants should write to the Principal of their preferred Early Childhood School via the [Review Request Form](https://forms.act.gov.au/smartforms/servlet/SmartForm.html?formCode=1622&appType=Review), and explain the reason they are requesting a Review with reference to the Early Childhood School prioritisation criteria at 4.3. Applicants should provide any documentary evidence in support of their request.
	3. To request a Review, NSW-based applicants should write to Enrolment Policy via the [Review Request Form](https://forms.act.gov.au/smartforms/servlet/SmartForm.html?formCode=1622&appType=Review)  and explain the reason they are requesting a Review with reference to the non-NSW pathway enrolment criteria (at paragraph 7.5). Applicants should provide any documentary evidence in support of their request. The request will be assessed by Enrolment Policy, with a recommendation provided to the Principal of the applicants preferred Early Childhood School (non-NSW Pathway school).
	4. ACT-based Preschool to Year 2 Reviews will consider the applicant’s claims against the Early Childhood School prioritisation criteria (at paragraph 4.3), as well as the process undertaken in the original enrolment decision with reference to the enrolment procedures.
	5. NSW-based Preschool to Year 2 non-NSW Pathway requests will consider the applicants claims against the non-NSW Pathway school enrolment criteria (at paragraph 8.3).
	6. Applicants will receive written advice from the decision maker on the outcome of the Review. These will be either to **Affirm** or **Overturn** the original decision. In either case the written advice will inform the applicant of their next steps and options.
	7. The Directorate aims to advise applicants of the Review outcome within ten business days of the request for review being received or longer during peak times.
2. Appeal an enrolment decision
	1. Where an applicant is not satisfied with the outcome of a Review, they have the right to Appeal the decision. Enrolment decisions must be Reviewed before they can be Appealed.
	2. To Appeal an enrolment decision applicants should submit an online [Appeal Request Form](https://forms.act.gov.au/smartforms/servlet/SmartForm.html?formCode=1622&appType=Appeal) . Appeal requests should set out the reason for the Appeal with reference to the Kindergarten to Year 12 out of area criteria at 3 above (ACT applications) or the non-NSW Pathway enrolment criteria at 7 above (NSW applications). Applicants should provide any documentary evidence in support of their request.
	3. Enrolment Appeals will be heard by a Panel comprising:
		1. A Director of School Improvement (Chair);
		2. A school Principal who was not involved in the original enrolment decision and Review; and
		3. A Representative from Clinical Practice, Student Engagement Branch.
	4. The Enrolment Appeals Panel will consider appeals against the Kindergarten to Year 12 out of area criteria (ACT applications) or the Non-NSW Pathway enrolment criteria (NSW applications), in the light of any supporting information provided by the applicant, the Review outcome documentation, and any and other circumstances relevant to the applicant of which they are aware.
	5. Applicants will receive written advice from the Chair of the Enrolment Appeals Panel on the outcome of the Appeal request. These will usually be either to Affirm or Overturn the original decision, however in some cases the panel may seek further information from the parties or attempt to broker a solution in the best interest of the applicant.
	6. The Enrolment Appeals Panel must aim to provide a written outcome to the applicant within sixty days of an enrolment appeal being requested, although during peak times this may be longer.
3. TRANSLATING AND INTERPRETING SERVICE
	1. Translating and Interpreting Service National (TIS) is the recommended interpreter service for ACT Public Schools.
	2. Phone interpreters can be accessed immediately or by making a booking in advance.
	3. Interpreter services should be used:
		1. Any time a parent requests an interpreter service; and
		2. To support enrolment processes for parents with English as an additional language or dialect (EAL/D) to ensure all enrolment questions have been answered fully and accurately.
4. Contact
	1. The Executive Branch Manager, Enrolment and Planning Branch, is responsible for this procedure.
	2. For support with general Early Childhood School enrolments contact Enrolment Policy on (02) 6205 5429 or at education.enrolment@act.gov.au.
	3. For support with international enrolment issues contact International Education Unit on (02) 6205 9178 or at ieu@act.gov.au.
	4. For support with Early Entry contact Early Childhood Education on (02) 6207 1106 or at EDU.Consultation@act.gov.au .
	5. For support with Koori Preschool contact Early Childhood Education on (02) 6207 1106 or at EDUKooriPre@act.gov.au.
	6. For support with accessing Specialist Schools and Inclusion Support Programs please contact Inclusive Education on (02) 6205 6925 or at disabilityeducation@act.gov.au.
	7. For support with Three-Year-Old Government Preschool and the Placement Pathway Group contact Early Childhood Policy at earlychildhoodpolicy@act.gov.au.
	8. For support with EAL/D services contact EALD@act.gov.au.
5. References

**Definitions**

In addition to the definitions detailed in the overarching Education Participation (Enrolment and Attendance) policy, the following definitions are specific to this procedure.

**Appeal** is the process whereby an applicant is dissatisfied with the outcome of a Review and is seeking further consideration of their claim. Appeals are heard be an Appeals Panel comprising a Director of School Improvement, a third-party Principal, and representative Clinical Practice.

A preschool’s **capacity** is the number of preschool students that can be accommodated within the school within the staff:student ratio prescribed by the National Quality Framework. This ratio is 1 staff : 11 students, which means a preschool class may not exceed 22 students. Individual school's preschool capacity is also impacted by physical building space and school design and usage factors.

**Enrolment** is the term used for the administrative procedure by which a person becomes a student of an education provider. For a government school, the enrolment of a student starts on the first day they are expected to attend school after they have been put on a class roll.

**English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D)** is the education acronym for students whose home language is a language or dialect other than English and require additional support to develop proficiency in English.

**Gifted** designates the possession and use of outstanding natural abilities, called aptitudes, in at least one ability domain to a degree that places an individual among the top 10% of age peers (Gagné, 2016).

**Mobility** recognises that children start school at different ages in different jurisdictions. Recognition of mobility allows children moving to the ACT from other jurisdictions to join a class with their age-cohort peers.

**Parents** includes carers, as defined in the Education Act 2004 section 6 (1)

**Placement** refers to the process of allocating a student to a particular school in accordance with the Compulsory Education (Student Enrolment and Engagement) Policy and this Procedure.

**Placement Pathway Group** refers to the placement group in ESO which supports placements into the 3 year old government preschool program.

**Proof of identity** of a child will be satisfied by presentation of a birth certificate or similar.

**Proof of residence**. Applicants are required to provide documentation to the school to demonstrate the child’s place of residence.

**Proof of immunisation status**. Where available an immunisation history statement should be provided to the school.

A **Review** is the process where an applicant is dissatisfied with the outcome of their enrolment application and asks the enrolment decision-maker to review their claim, including any additional information they may provide.

A **sibling** of a child or young person includes fostered siblings, adopted siblings, step-siblings and half-siblings as well as kinship care arrangements and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander kinship relationships.

A **Student** is a person enrolled in an ACT public school in accordance with section 33 of the Act.

**Related Policies and Documents** - Link to related policies or other documents.

[Child Protection and Reporting Abuse Policy and Procedure](https://www.education.act.gov.au/publications_and_policies/corporate-policies/wellbeing/child-protection/child-protection-and-reporting-child-abuse-and-neglect-policy)

[Compulsory Education (Student Enrolment and Attendance) Policy](https://www.education.act.gov.au/publications_and_policies/School-and-Corporate-Policies/student-administration/enrolment-and-attendance/compulsory-education-student-enrolment-and-attendance-policy)

[Early Years Learning Framework](https://www.education.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0007/1901086/What-is-the-EYLF.pdf)

[Early Entry for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children Procedure](https://www.education.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/1019808/Early-Entry-for-Aboriginal-and-Torres-Strait-Islander-Children-.pdf)

[Early Entry for Children with English as an Additional Language or Dialect Procedure](https://www.education.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/917437/Early-Entry-for-Children-with-English-as-an-Additional-Language-or-Dialect.pdf)

[Early Entry for Gifted and Talented Children Procedure](https://www.education.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0016/1540204/Early-Entry-for-Gifted-and-Talented-Children.pdf)

[Early Entry for Mobility Procedure](https://www.education.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0007/1019806/Early-Entry-for-Mobility.pdf)

[Education Options (other than school) Procedure](https://www.education.act.gov.au/__data/assets/word_doc/0018/810108/Education-Options-Other-than-School-Procedure.docx)

[Family Law Policy](https://www.education.act.gov.au/publications_and_policies/corporate-policies/wellbeing/child-protection/family-law-policy)

[Overseas Students Fees-charging Policy](https://www.education.act.gov.au/publications_and_policies/School-and-Corporate-Policies/access-and-equity/international-students/overseas-students/overseas-students-fees-charging-policy)

[National Quality Framework | ACECQA](https://www.acecqa.gov.au/national-quality-framework)

[Koori Preschools](https://www.education.act.gov.au/public-school-life/public-schools-in-the-act/koori-preschools)

[Engaging with families for whom English is an additional language or dialect](https://www.education.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0007/807433/150897-Engaging-with-EALD-families.pdf)

[Students with a Disability Meeting their Educational Needs](https://www.education.act.gov.au/publications_and_policies/School-and-Corporate-Policies/access-and-equity/disabilities/students-with-a-disability-meeting-their-educational-needs-policy) Policy

[Students with a Disability Meeting their Educational Needs Procedure](https://www.education.act.gov.au/__data/assets/word_doc/0007/2072599/Students-with-Disability-Meeting-their-Educational-Needs-Procedure-and-Hydrotherapy-Pools-Procedures.DOCX)

[Safe and Supportive Schools Policy](https://www.education.act.gov.au/publications_and_policies/School-and-Corporate-Policies/wellbeing/safety/safe-and-supportive-schools-policy2/safe-and-supportive-schools-policy)