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1. Purpose

This policy provides a clear set of guidelines and procedures for:

- Enrolling a child at a Meli Kindergarten Services (Meli)
- The orientation of new families and children into a Meli service.
- Ensuring compliance with Victorian and national legislation, including but not limited to disability discrimination, anti-discrimination, human rights laws, No Jab No Play and Department of Education (DE) Kindergarten Funding Guide.
- Ensuring access to participation, especially for vulnerable and disadvantaged children
- Ensuring early entry applicants (this includes children younger than three years and children younger than four years old on 30 April in the year they will attend kindergarten) are given equitable access to enrolment.
- Adhering to DE's priority of access requirements for both three and four-year-old children

2. Values

Meli is committed to:

- Families feeling respected, safe, and supported during the enrolment process
- Ensuring families experiencing barriers to accessing kindergarten are proactively engaged
- Being flexible and catering for unique family circumstances and needs
- Being transparent in the process and allocation of places through consistent communication and information sharing
- Ensuring that registration, allocation and enrolment processes that are easy to understand and implement
- Maintaining confidentiality in relation to all information provided for enrolment
- Promoting fair and equitable access to kindergarten programs

3. Scope

This policy applies to Meli as the Approved Provider, Persons with Management and Control, Nominated Supervisor, Persons in Day-to-Day Charge, early childhood teachers, educators, staff, students, volunteers, parents/guardians, children, and others attending the programs and activities of Meli Kindergartens, including during offsite excursions and activities.

4. Background

The *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011* require approved services to have policies and procedures that address enrolment and orientation (*Regulation 168(2) (k)*).

Immunisations are an effective means of reducing the risk of vaccine preventable diseases. Early childhood education and care services which are regulated under the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010* and *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011* have legislative responsibilities under the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* to only offer a confirmed place in their programs to children with a current Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) Immunisation History Statement.

5. Definitions

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy.

Access to Early Learning (AEL): a program for a child who is at least three years old on 30 April in the year of enrolment, providing intensive support to eligible families with multiple and complex needs, assisting them to access universal kindergarten programs.

Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) Immunisation History Statement: The AIR is a national register administered by Medicare that records all vaccinations given in Australia, including to children. In the case of medical contraindication, an authorised medical practitioner completes and signs a Medical Exemption Form and supplies it to the AIR (previous forms of documentation, for example a letter from a GP or local council, are no longer acceptable).

Authorised Nominee: (In relation to this policy) is a person who has been given written authority by the parents/guardians of a child to collect that child from the education and care service. These details will be on the child's enrolment form.

Children/Families Experiencing Vulnerability and/or Disadvantage: (in relation to this policy) children are vulnerable if the capacity of parents/guardians/family to effectively care, protect and provide for their long-term development and wellbeing is limited. Factors that may contribute to a child experiencing vulnerability include: disability; living in a family with a low income, insecure housing, domestic violence, substance abuse, or mental health; known to child protection; in statutory out-of-home care; Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, having a culturally and linguistically diverse background; having a young or sole parent, or a parent with a disability.

Children with Additional Needs: Children whose development or physical condition requires specialist support, or need additional support due to language, refugee or asylum seeker experience, complex trauma, cultural or economic circumstances (refer to *Inclusion, Equity and Anti Bias Policy*).

Central Registration and Enrolment Scheme (CRES): Meli CRES is a central point for families to apply for Meli kindergarten services, helping families secure a place that meets their needs.

Deferral: When a child does not attend in the year when they are eligible for a funded kindergarten place or is officially withdrawn from a service prior to the annual data collection date. In this instance, DE considers that this child has not accessed a year of funded kindergarten and is therefore eligible for DE funding the following year.

Eligible Child: (as defined by the *Kindergarten Funding Guide*)

- A child who is at least four years old on 30 April in the year of attendance; enrolled for at least 15 hours per week or 600 hours per year in a Four-Year-Old Kindergarten; and not enrolled at a funded kindergarten program at another service. Children who will turn 6 during the kindergarten year must meet the requirements for an exemption to school.
- A child who is at least three years old on 30 April in the year of attendance and is enrolled in a funded Three-Year-Old Kindergarten for 5 - 15 hours per week; and not enrolled at a funded kindergarten program at another service.
- Any child that is enrolled in an early childhood and education and care service must have an AIR Immunisation History Statement that indicates that the child is fully vaccinated for their age or who qualifies for the 16-weeks grace period

Enrolment Record: The collection of documents containing information on each child as required under the *National Regulations (Regulations 160, 161, 162)* including but not limited to parent details; emergency contacts;

authorised nominee; court orders; and health information including immunisation status. Enrolment records are stored securely due to their confidential nature.

Kindergarten Registration Form: Custom form for families to provide initial information about their child to confirm their intention to enrol in kindergarten, administered by Meli CRES. This includes collection of basic contact information, kindergarten preferences and any other details that may inform prioritised allocation in kindergarten (refer to **Attachment 3**)

Support/Grace Period: allows specific categories of children of families experiencing vulnerability and disadvantage to enrol and attend the service without an AIR Immunisation History Statement (refer to **Definitions**) or with a statement that has been assessed as not up to date. Services complete the grace period eligibility form with families during enrolment and keep a copy with the child’s enrolment record. The 16-week grace period starts on the first day of the child’s attendance at the service. During the grace period, the service is required to take reasonable steps to obtain the AIR Immunisation History Statement and to encourage families to access immunisation services.

Local Government Area (LGA): a geographic area governed by a local council or shire

Priority of Access: in instances where more eligible children apply for a place at a service than there are places available, the service must allocate spaces using the criteria outlined in the DE *Kindergarten Funding Guide* (refer to **Attachment 1** and **Sources**).

School Readiness Funding: funding provided by DE for programs and supports that builds the capacity of kindergarten services, educators, and families to support children’s learning and development outcomes.

Second Year of Funded 4yo Kindergarten: second year eligibility may be considered when a child shows delays in key outcomes of learning and development. An assessment is carried out for each child by an early childhood teacher in Term 4 (the year before the child is to attend school) when a second year is being considered.

6. Responsibilities

RESPONSIBILITIES	Approved provider (Meli) and persons with management control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	Early childhood teacher, educators, and all other staff	Parents/guardians	Contractors, volunteers, and students
R indicates legislation requirement					
Providing a free kindergarten program to children who turn four years of age by 30 April in the year they will attending, that is delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher, and offering at least: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15 hours per week for 40 weeks of the year, or • 600 hours per year 	R				
Providing a free kindergarten program to children who turn three years of age by 30 April in the year they will attending, that is delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher and offering between 5 to 15 hours a week or 200 to 600 a year	R				
Communicating to families the days and times the service will operate, planned closures (including public holidays and child-free days), details of any planned alternative sessions, and unplanned teacher absences or emergency situations	R				

Applying the Priority of Access criteria to funded programs at Meli, as described in the Department of Education's [DE] <i>The Kindergarten Funding Guide (refer to Attachment 1)</i>	R	✓	✓		
Communicating and providing advice to families regarding the best time to commence kindergarten for children born between January and April	✓	✓	✓		
Supporting inclusion and access through specific funding stream (for eligible families): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to Early Learning • Second year of funded four-year-old kindergarten 	R	✓	✓		
Supporting families whose children may be eligible for early entry to kindergarten or late entry to kindergarten and school exemption (<i>refer to Attachment 2</i>)	✓	✓	✓		
Providing communication to families explaining how they can only access one funded kindergarten program per child, per year.	R	✓			
Receiving written confirmation from families confirming they are attending one funded kindergarten program per child, per year	R	✓		✓	
Considering any barriers to access that may exist, developing procedures that ensure all eligible families are aware of, and are able to access a kindergarten program	R	✓	✓		
Working with the families to obtain an alternate form of identification if a birth certificate or other official documentation is not available	R	✓			
Complying with the <i>Inclusion and Equity Policy</i>	R	R	✓	✓	✓
Ensuring the collection of accurate, consistent, and timely kindergarten data, to monitor and proactively manage capacity, utilisation of services and to meet School Readiness Funding requirements	R	R	✓		
Ensuring families have access to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Parent information handbook</i> - <i>Child Safe Environment and Wellbeing Policy and/or Statement of Commitment to Child Safety</i> - <i>Fees Policy</i> - <i>Privacy Statement</i> - <i>Code of Conduct Policy</i> - <i>Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations</i> - <i>Dealing With Medical Conditions</i> - <i>Incident, Injury, Trauma, and Illness</i> 	R	✓	✓		
Appointing a person to be responsible for the enrolment process and the day-to-day implementation of this policy (<i>refer to Attachment 2 and 3</i>)	R				
Responding to enrolment enquiries on a day-to-day basis and referring people to the person responsible for the enrolment process as required	✓	✓	✓		
Where applicable; considering access and inclusion for children experiencing vulnerability/disadvantage in the allocation of places at the service (<i>refer to Attachment 1 and 2</i>)	R	✓			
Where applicable, providing families with consistent and transparent communication on waitlist management processes (<i>refer to Attachment 2</i>)	R	✓			
Complying with the service's <i>Privacy and Confidentiality Policy</i> in relation to the collection and management of a child's enrolment information	R	R	R	✓	✓
Providing opportunities for interested families to attend the open days to observe the program and become familiar with the service prior to their child commencing in the program	✓	✓	✓		
Seeking information from parents about any specific health care need, allergy, or medical condition, including whether a medical practitioner has been consulted in relation to a specific health care need, allergy, or relevant medical condition	R	✓	✓	✓	
Ensuring that medical management plan has been provided and that the risk minimisation plan has been developed and both documents are kept in the child's enrolment records	R	✓	✓	✓	

Providing any required authorisations, such as for the approved provider, nominated supervisor or an educator to seek medical treatment for the child from a registered medical practitioner, hospital, or ambulance service and, if required, transportation by an ambulance service				✓	
Assessing the child's immunisation documentation as defined by the Immunisation Enrolment Toolkit (<i>refer to Sources</i>) for early childhood education and care services prior to enrolment to determine if the child's vaccination status complies with requirements or whether the child is eligible for the 16-week grace period	R	✓	✓		
Ensuring that only children whose AIR Immunisation History Statements have been assessed as being acceptable or who are eligible for the grace period have confirmed places in the program	R	✓	✓		
Advising parents/guardians who do not have an AIR Immunisation History Statement and who are not eligible for the grace period that their children are not able to attend the service and referring them to immunisation services (<i>refer to Attachment 4</i>)	R	✓	✓		
Taking reasonable steps to obtain an up-to-date AIR Immunisation History Statement from a parent/guardian of a child enrolled under a grace period within 16 weeks from when the child begins attending (Note: the child can continue to attend the service if acceptable immunisation documentation is not obtained).	R	✓	✓		
Completing the enrolment record prior to their child's commencement at the service and providing all associated enrolment documents and AIR Immunisation History Statement of their child's immunisation status				✓	
Where a child is eligible for the 16 weeks grace period, ensuring that the child's immunisations are updated in line with the schedule and providing an up-to-date AIR Immunisation History Statement to the service				✓	
Taking reasonable steps to obtain an up-to-date AIR Immunisation History Statement from all parents/guardians after enrolment, timing reminders to comply with the maximum seven-month interval (<i>Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2019 107, Public Health, and Wellbeing Act 2008 Section 143E</i>)	R	✓	✓		
Ensuring all authorised nominees have been completed on the enrolment record (<i>Regulations 160 and 161</i>) as well as authorisations from parents relating to medical treatment, regular outings, health information and transportation	R	✓		✓	
Ensuring that the enrolment record both digital and/or hard copy complies with the requirements of <i>Regulations 160, 161, 162</i> and that it effectively meets the management requirements of the service	R	✓	✓		
Ensuring that enrolment record is kept up to date if family circumstances change, and that services are made aware if they become eligible for additional funding because of changed circumstances	R	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ensuring that enrolment records are kept confidential (<i>Regulations 181, 182</i>) are stored in a safe and secure place, and kept for three years after the last date on which the child was educated and cared for by the service (<i>Regulation 183 (1a) (2d)</i>)	R	✓	✓		
Discussing the individual child's needs with parents/guardians and developing an orientation program to assist them to settle into the service. The service should take into consideration barriers parents/guardians may have in disclosing sensitive information including communication and information barriers and the development of trusting relationships.	R	✓	✓		
Reviewing the orientation processes for new families and children to ensure the objectives of this policy are met	R	✓	✓	✓	
Ensuring that parents/guardians of a child attending the service can enter the service premises at any time whilst the child is being educated and cared for (<i>Regulation 157</i>), except where this may pose a risk to the safety of children or staff, or conflict with any duty of the approved provider, nominated supervisor, early childhood teachers or educators under the <i>National Law: Section 167</i>	R	R	✓	✓	✓

Taking reasonable steps to contact non-attending families prior to the cancellation of their enrolment (<i>refer to Attachment 5</i>)	✓	✓	✓		
Reviewing enrolment applications to identify children with additional needs (<i>refer to the Inclusion and Equity Policy</i>)	✓	✓	✓		
Encouraging parents/guardians to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> stay with their child as long as required during the orientation period contact educators at the service, when required 	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Assisting parents/guardians to develop and maintain a routine for saying goodbye to their child	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Sharing information with parents/guardians concerning their child's progress regarding settling into the service	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Discussing support services for children with parents/guardians, where required such as Pre School Field Officer, Early Intervention Programs, and Maternal Health Services	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Developing strategies to assist new families to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> feel welcomed into the service become familiar with service policies and procedures share information about their family beliefs, values and culture and feel culturally safe share their understanding of their child's strengths, interests, abilities, and needs value the voice of the child, ensuring they have opportunity to articulate their individual interests and needs discuss the values and expectations they hold in relation to their child's learning providing comfort and reassurance to children who are showing signs of distress when separating 	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Reading and complying with this <i>Enrolment and Orientation Policy</i>	R	R	R	✓	✓
Updating information by notifying the service of any changes as they occur, for example if the child or family becomes known to Child Protection				✓	
Notifying Meli in writing [if possible] if they wish to cancel their enrolment.				✓	

7. Evaluation

To assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, Meli will:

- Regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness
- Monitor implementation, compliance, complaints, and incidents in relation to this policy
- Keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research and best practice
- Revise the policy and procedures as part of Meli's policy review cycle, or as required
- Notify all stakeholders affected by this policy at least 14 days before making any significant changes, unless a lesser period is necessary due to risk (Regulation 172)

8. Attachments

- Attachment 1: Eligibility and priority of access criteria for 3 and 4yo funded kindergarten program
- Attachment 2: General kindergarten registration and enrolment procedures
- Attachment 3: Sample Kindergarten Registration Form
- Attachment 4: Letter for parents/guardians without acceptable immunisation documentation
- Attachment 5: Cancellation of enrolment and non-attendance

9. Related Meli Policies and Procedures

- Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations Policy

- Complaints & Feedback Policy
- Dealing with Infectious Disease Policy
- Kindergarten Fees Policy
- Inclusion, Equity & Anti-Bias Policy
- Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
- Complaints and Grievances Policy
- Code of Conduct

10. Relevant Legislation and Standards

The most current amendments to listed legislation can be found at:

- Victorian Legislation - Victorian Law Today: www.legislation.vic.gov.au
- Commonwealth Legislation – Federal Register of Legislation: www.legislation.gov.au

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)
- Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Education & Care Services National Regulations 2011: 160, 161, 162, 168, 170, 171, 177, 181, 183
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)
- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 6: Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities
- Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 (Vic)
- Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2019 (Vic)
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)

11. Sources

- Australian Childhood Immunisation Register: www.servicesaustralia.gov.au
- Australian Government Department of Health, National Immunisation Program Schedule: www.health.gov.au
- Department of Health and Human Services, Immunisation enrolment toolkit for early childhood education and care service: www2.health.vic.gov.au
- Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: www.acecqa.gov.au/
- Guide to the National Quality Standard: www.acecqa.gov.au/
- The Kindergarten Funding Guide (Victorian Department of Education): www.education.vic.gov.au

ATTACHMENT 1: ELIGIBILITY AND PRIORITY ACCESS CRITERIA

FOR A FUNDED KINDERGARTEN 3YO OR 4YO PROGRAM

The Approved provider must notify families of the Priority of Access Policy that applies when they enrol their child.

In instances where more eligible children apply for a place at a kindergarten service than there are places available, services must:

- prioritise children based on the Department of Education (DE) criteria listed below
- work with other local kindergarten services and the regional DE office to ensure all eligible children have access to a kindergarten place.

These criteria must be used by Meli as the Approved Provider when prioritising enrolments. Guidance is available from DE's regional offices if required.

Meli will first apply DE's Priority of Access (PoA) criteria and following this will apply locally developed criteria.

All information relating to PoA criteria should be respectfully collected from families, recorded in the child's confidential enrolment record and entered into the Kindergarten Information Management (KIM) system .

DE's PRIORITY OF ACCESS CRITERIA

HIGH PRIORITY CHILDREN	CRITERIA & PROCESS FOR VERIFYING
Children at risk of abuse or neglect, including children in Out-of-Home Care	<p>The child is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • eligible for ESK or AEL • family, carer, or legal guardian identifies the child as known to Child Protection or in out-of-home care • referred by one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Protection • Child & family services (family referral & support team, Child FIRST/integrated family services/Services Connect case worker) • Maternal and Child Health nurse • Out of home care provider
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	At enrolment, service providers must respectfully ask families ' <i>is your child Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander?</i> ' and record this in KIM.
Asylum Seeker and Refugee Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child/family holds a visa or supporting documentation and information, including an ImmiCard, identifying the child/parents, carers or legal guardians as a refugee or asylum seeker. • Referred as a refugee or asylum seeker by CALD outreach worker.
Children eligible for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy	A child or parent holds a Commonwealth Health Care Card, Pensioner Concession Card, Veteran's Affairs Card and/or Multiple birth children
Children with additional needs, defined as children who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • require additional assistance to fully participate in the kindergarten program • require a combination of services which are individually planned • have an identified disability or developmental delay 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is assessed as having delays in two or more areas and is declared eligible for a second funded year of kindergarten • holds a Child Disability Health Care Card • has previously been approved for Kindergarten Inclusion Support • the National Disability Insurance Scheme • Early Childhood Intervention Service • Preschool Field Officer, or • Maternal and Child Health nurse.

PRIORITY 2 CRITERIA

- Children who are enrolled and attending the 3 year old program at the same kindergarten

PRIORITY 3 CRITERIA

- Children one year before school
- Children turning 6YO at kindergarten who have been granted an exemption from school-entry
- Children who have a sibling that has previously attended the same kindergarten as their first preference
- Children who turn 4YO by 30 April in the year they will attend kindergarten, and;
 - will be attending school the following year
 - have not yet had their Year Before School kindergarten year
 - have prior association with the service
- Children who turn 3YO by 30 April in the year they will attend kindergarten
- Children who have a sibling that has previously attended the same kindergarten as their first preference

PRIORITY 4 CRITERIA

- Children who turn 3YO before 30 April in year of enrolment and have prior association with the service

PRIORITY 5 CRITERIA

- When all registrations are equal, places are allocated using a computer

Note: DE's POA guidelines are to ensure that kindergarten programs are available to those children who stand to benefit the most from attending early education. In mixed age groups, POA guideline will equally prioritise three and four-year-old children that are considered high priority. Where programs for three- and four-year old children are provided separately, the POA criteria will be applied separately for each age cohort.

ATTACHMENT 2: GENERAL KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION AND ENROLMENT PROCEDURES

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION PROCESS

Stage	CRES Role	Family Role	Kindergarten Role
1. Proactive engagement and awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensures families are aware of the importance of ECEC, the CRES and available assistance to help them engage with the CRES. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Searches for information about ECEC and CRES. Receives information from a service provider, MCH or support service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate info about ECEC and CRES Obtains consent for family contact details to be shared with the [CRES Provider].
2. Registration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obtain information about children to facilitate the place allocation process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completes a registration form. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supports families to complete registration forms or refers to CRES Provider.
3. Allocation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equitably allocate places and optimise the supply and demand of places. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receives an update on the progress of their registration. 	
4. Confirmation and communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clearly communicates with families/carers to confirm allocated place inform service providers of enrolment list. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accepts their offer of place or rejects the offer goes on a waiting list or removes their child from the database. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supports families to understand what an offer means what they need to do next.
5. CRES planning, maintenance, and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plans for success every year by evaluating and improving the CRES. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begins to engage with the service provider to start the enrolment process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supports families to enrol and begin kindergarten. Provides feedback to CRES Provider for continuous improvement

* If the kindergarten believes a family will need extra support completing a registration form or are likely to miss the first round registration date, refer them to the [CRES Provider] with the attached referral form. [CRES Provider] will follow up with this family or carer to offer support in getting their children into kindergarten.

1. KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION DATES

If families miss the registration close deadline, they can still register although they will be placed into a pool for second round (or even later rounds) allocations and are less likely to get their top preference. After second round offers are confirmed, Meli will continue to allocate children to kindergarten places where they are available. More places may become available as children move kindergartens or withdraw, or when kindergartens add capacity.

Date	Activity
"[insert date]"	Registrations open *NB: Families are encouraged to register at any time.
"[insert date]"	Registrations close for first allocation of kindergarten places. *
"[insert date]"	First round offers
"[insert date]"	Acceptance of first round offers due
"[insert date]"	Second round offers
"[insert date]"	Acceptance of second round offers due
"[insert date]"	Subsequent offers on an individual basis

2. REGISTRATION

The best way to register at Meli is online at <https://forms.enrolnow.com.au/211381798408968>

A separate registration form must be completed for each child.

Families cannot register directly with a kindergarten that is part of the CRES.

To fill out the registration form, families will need to provide information about themselves and their child. The registration form asks families for:

- Basic information about the child including name, date of birth, language spoken at home, previous kindergarten attendance and immunisation status.
- Additional support the child requires due to a disability (intellectual, sensory, or physical impairment)
- Contact details for the family/carer and additional adults that should be kept informed during the process (e.g., another family member, case worker or support service staff member the family or carer trusts).
- Whether the child is identified as fulfilling any of the following criteria:
 - Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
 - Multiple birth (triplet or greater)
 - Known to Child Protection
 - Lives in Out-Of-Home Care
 - Holds or has a family member who holds, a Commonwealth Health Care Card or Pensioner Concession Card, Department of Veteran's Affairs Gold or White Card, or a Refugee or Asylum Seeker Visa.
- Proof of identity: Where a birth certificate cannot be produced, other acceptable evidence includes:
 - Statement from the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR)
 - passport
 - citizenship documents or Australia visa documents or Immicard.
 - Subsidy card and immigration visas (where applicable).
- Proof of residence: a utility bill, rental agreement or rates notice with family name and address (this must be the main residence of the child).

It is strongly recommended that you **do not collect** documents proving the child's birth date, address, visa status, concession card status or similar at the registration stage. A statement at the end of the registration form that certifies the information provided is true can suffice as a legal declaration.

This will make accessing kindergarten as easy as possible for families, particularly those who are experiencing vulnerability or disadvantage. Gathering documentation can be a barrier for many families and carers attempting or completing the form and establishing contact with the CRES. Once registered, the CRES Provider, the kindergarten service, MCH or support service staff can assist the family or carer to gather documentation for the enrolment stage.

3. ENROLMENT

Once a kindergarten place has been accepted, the enrolment process can begin.

To enrol a child, families will need to provide copies of (if not already done so):

- Proof of identity: child's birth certificate, birth notice or passport
- Concession cards and immigration visas (where applicable).
- Documents from Family Support Services or a Maternal and Child Health nurse confirming high support needs and/or disability or letter from a doctor for complex medical needs (where applicable).
- Immunisation History Statement (unless experiencing vulnerability or disadvantage, at which point they can take advantage of a 16-week 'grace period'. More information is available at <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/immunisation/vaccination-children/no-jab-no-play/immunisation-enrolment-toolkit>)
- Documents detailing any medical conditions or requirements the child has.

***NOTE:** Where a birth certificate cannot be produced, other acceptable evidence of a child's full name and date of birth includes:

4. ENROLMENT RECORDS

Enrolment records form part of the enrolment procedure and are completed by families after they have been allocated a place, and before commencing attendance.

5. CANCELLATIONS

Families to notify Meli in writing of their intention to leave the service.

6. SECOND YEAR OF FUNDED 4YO KINDERGARTEN

All children in 3YO kindergarten will be expected to transition to 4YO kindergarten in the following year. A funded second year of kindergarten will only be available for children in the 4YO kindergarten program who meet the criteria. Criteria is weighted with the relevant points and allocated accordingly.

A Declaration of Eligibility Form for a second year of kindergarten must be completed and submitted to the relevant funding authority.

7. EARLY ENTRY TO KINDERGARTEN

Early entry to 4YO kindergarten may be appropriate for some gifted children where families are seeking an early entry to school for their child.

Early entry to school is approved only when exceptional circumstances apply and is subject to an application process and rigorous eligibility criteria.

It is the responsibility of the parent, carer, or legal guardian to obtain all relevant cognitive assessment/s and/or other reports and evidence to support their child's application, including written advice from a professional confirming the child is at risk of long-term educational disadvantage if early entry to school is not approved.

Should parents, carers or legal guardians decide to request early entry to 4YO kindergarten for their child, the following requirements must be met:

- The child must be at least 3 years and 6 months on or before 30 April in the year they attend the funded kindergarten program
- Parents, carers, or legal guardians must make a written request for early entry to school to their local Area Executive Director or directly to the principal of a non-government school dependent on whether the child is intending to attend a government or non-government school
- Parents, carers, or legal guardians must provide the kindergarten service provider with a written response from the department or the nongovernment school acknowledging the family has requested early entry to school
- The kindergarten service provider must keep a copy of the written response from the department or non-government school with the child's kindergarten enrolment records.

It is important to note that most children who enrol early in 4YO kindergarten are not approved for early entry into school because they did not meet the eligibility criteria.

8. CHILDREN OLDER THAN THE ELIGIBLE PRESCHOOL AGE

Children who will turn six during the preschool year must apply for an exemption from school from their local ECIB. Application is made by submitting an Exemption from school due to attendance in kindergarten program form to the appropriate departmental regional office by 1 November in the year prior to the child turning 6.

The kindergarten service must sight the approved exemption form from relevant education authority and note that it has been sighted on the child's enrolment record. Data on the number of children attending Kindergarten who are six years plus, and confirmation that the exemption was sighted for each child, must be provided as part of funding data collection process.

Children who will turn 6 while attending their second year of Four-Year-Old Kindergarten can be exempted from school if a Declaration of eligibility for a second year of funded kindergarten has been completed by the child's kindergarten teacher.

9. WITHDRAWAL

Some children who have commenced Kindergarten may benefit from withdrawing from the program to access Kindergarten in the following year.

A withdrawal can occur without any impact on government funding for that child's place the following year, only if it is implemented before the first funding data collection in early March each year.

Parents must advise Meli in writing that their child is withdrawing from kindergarten and are responsible for ensuring that children are registered to attend kindergarten the following year.

Adapted from the Kindergarten Funding Guide, 2023

ATTACHMENT 3 – KINDERGARTEN SERVICES REGISTRATION FORM

MELI KINDERGARTENS

Thank you for choosing a Meli for the care and education of your child. Meli kindergartens offer 3 and 4 year old kindergarten programs.

Please note, this is a **registration form only**. It is not confirmation of a kindergarten place.

1. ELIGIBILITY

Only complete below form if you are planning on sending your child to kindergarten in **20XX**. Your child will be eligible for kindergarten only if they meet the following age criteria:

- To be eligible for Three-Year-Old Kindergarten, your child must turn 3 by April 30 of the enrolment year.
- To be eligible for Four-Year-Old Kindergarten, your child must turn 4 by April 30 of the enrolment year.

2. IMMUNISATIONS

According to the No Jab, No Play law in Victoria, your child must be fully vaccinated to start kindergarten. An Immunisation History Statement from the Australian Immunisation Register is not required for this registration form, but you should ensure that your child's immunisations are up to date, and you have a copy of this statement before commencing the enrolment process in October.

A grace period applies for families who may find it difficult to provide an up-to-date statement by October.

Further information on immunisation requirements for enrolment in early childhood services is available through the DE website: www.education.vic.gov.au

3. PRIORITY OF ACCESS

Meli follows the Department of Education's Priority of Access criteria (*refer to Attachment 1*), that prioritises allocation of kindergarten places for children who:

- Are at risk of abuse or neglect, including out of home care
- Are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
- Are, or have parents or carers who are, asylum seekers or refugees
- Have additional developmental needs
- Hold or parent holds a Commonwealth Health Care Card, Pensioner Concession Card, Veteran's Affairs Card
- Child is living in a family experiencing vulnerability.

Children that fit one or more of the criteria above will be allocated to a priority place in kindergarten. This form will collect all the information required to determine eligibility.

If you believe you or your child are in exceptional circumstances which require prioritisation and are not covered by any of the above criteria, please contact Meli to discuss.

[Service Name]

For further information please speak to the Meli enrolments team by phoning +61 3 5273 0200.

I am registering my child for:

- 3YO Kindergarten to start in 20XX
- 4YO Kindergarten to start in 20XX

Please check the box that applies:

- This is the first registration form I am completing for this child this year
- I am re-submitting a child's registration form to change my preferences or details (only complete child's name and any fields for changed details)

4. CHILD DETAILS

Child's first name	
Child's last name	
Gender (optional)	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female Non-binary <input type="checkbox"/>
Date of birth	
Has this child already attended a kindergarten program?	<input type="checkbox"/> 3-Year-Old <input type="checkbox"/> 4-Year-Old <input type="checkbox"/> No
Is this child Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, Aboriginal <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, Torres Strait Islander <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander <input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the child a triplet or quadruplet?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the child meet any of the following criteria?	<input type="checkbox"/> Known to Child Protection <input type="checkbox"/> From refugee and asylum seeker backgrounds <input type="checkbox"/> Is in Out of Home Care <input type="checkbox"/> Been referred by a Maternal and Child Health nurse, Child Protection, Early Childhood Learning Advisor, Child FIRST, Orange Door Integrated Family Services or Services Connect <input type="checkbox"/> A child or parent holds a Commonwealth Health Care Card, Pensioner Concession Card, Veteran's Affairs Card
Does the child require any additional support due to a disability including intellectual, sensory, or physical impairment?	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes If yes, please provide details:

* An Immunisation History Statement is not required for this application form but will be requested when the child enrolls with the kindergarten.

5. PARENT OR GUARDIAN DETAILS

Please complete your contact details below. If you would like to enter details for a second parent /or guardian or if a court order requires another person must be kept informed about the registration and enrolment process, please do so here.

	First parent / guardian (required)	Second parent / guardian (optional)
Name	First name	First name
	Last name	Last name
Address		
Contact number*		
Email address*		
Language(s) spoken		
Interpreter required?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	

* Note that you will be sent communications via text message to this phone number or email.

6. DECLARATION

PRIVACY STATEMENT & AGREEMENT

Meli is collecting this information to comply with the Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 and Education and Care Services Regulation 2011 and for the purposes of enrolling your child in the Meli Central Enrolment System. Meli considers it necessary and important to collect this information to ensure that appropriate information is registered for your child. This information will be used for Meli administrative purposes and will be provided to relevant kindergarten staff as required for the enrolment of your child at the kindergarten listed on this form. This information will not be disclosed to any other party except as required by law. You may access this information by contacting Meli on 03 5273 0200.

ATTACHMENT 4: ENROLNOW EMAIL TEMPLATE FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS WITHOUT ACCEPTABLE IMMUNISATION DOCUMENTATION

Dear {Parent Name},

The No Jab No Play legislation requires an up-to-date Immunisation History Statement (IHS) be provided to Meli before a child can start kindergarten. We do not have an up to date IHS for {Child Name}.

{Child Name} will not be able to start kindergarten until an IHS which complies with the No Jab No Play legislation is provided to Meli.

An IHS from the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) lists the vaccines the child has received and, if applicable, which vaccines are due in the future and when. Medical exemption may also be listed, where applicable. The statement provided must show that the child is up to date with all vaccinations that are due for their age, or that they are able to receive.

An Immunisation History Statement from the AIR is the only immunisation record we can accept.

You can obtain an updated IHS:


- online – through [MyGov](#), once an account has been created
- [Medicare Express Plus App](#), once a MyGov account has been created
- over the counter – at a Medicare Service Centre
- by phone – call the Australian Immunisation Register on 1800 653 809
- by asking your GP/Immunisation Nurse if they can print the IHS (note; not all immunisation providers can do this)

Please provide us with an IHS showing that {Child Name} is up to date with all immunisations by uploading the IHS via the link below (note, the 'next vaccine due date' must be visible on this statement and must show a date in the future or indicate that no further vaccines are due.)

Please don't hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely,
Meli Kindergarten Services Enrolment Team

e. kindergartens@meli.org.au
p. (03) 5273 0200



Australian Government
Department of Human Services

medicare

Immunisation history statement

As at: 01 June 2019

For: ARMANDO D BOWERS

Date of birth: 01 Nov 2017

Immunisation status: up to date

Schedule	Immunisation	Date given	Brand name given	Provider type
Birth	Hepatitis B	01 Nov 2017	Engerix-B	Hospital
2 months	Diphtheria Tetanus Pertussis Hepatitis B	01 Jan 2018	Infanrix Hexa	GP
	Polio Hib		Prevenar 13	
	Pneumococcal		RotaTeq	
	Rotavirus			
4 months	Diphtheria Tetanus Pertussis Hepatitis B	01 Mar 2018	Infanrix Hexa	GP
	Polio Hib		Prevenar 13	
	Pneumococcal		RotaTeq	
	Rotavirus			
6 months	Diphtheria Tetanus Pertussis Hepatitis B	01 May 2018	Infanrix Hexa	GP
	Polio Hib		Prevenar 13	
	Pneumococcal		RotaTeq	
	Rotavirus			
12 months	Measles Mumps Rubella	01 Nov 2018	MMR II	GP
	Meningococcal C Hib		Menitorix	
18 months	Measles Mumps Rubella Varicella	01 May 2019	Priorix-Tetra	GP

Next immunisation/s due Diphtheria Tetanus Pertussis Poliomyelitis	Date due 01 Nov 2020
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How to tell if your child is up to date?

The 'next vaccine due' date on your current Immunisation History Statement from the Australian Immunisation Register needs to show a date in the future (or say 'All vaccines complete').

Vaccines are due at 2, 4, 6, 12 and 18 months of age and at 4 years of age on the National Immunisation Program Schedule or at a time advised by your immunisation provider if your child is on a vaccine catch-up program.

Why do we need the latest evidence of immunisation?

In Victoria, the law requires early childhood services to take steps to make sure we have the latest immunisation information for enrolled children. In the unlikely event of an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease, we may need to work with health authorities to quickly identify who could be at risk and what actions or precautions need to be taken to best protect children's' health.

ATTACHMENT 5: CANCELLATION OF ENROLMENT AND NON-ATTENDANCE

1. CANCELLATION OF ENROLMENT

Families MUST notify Meli Kindergartens and/or an Enrolment Officer in writing of their intention to cancel their child's enrolment. Meli

Note: This process does not apply to vulnerable children. Children and families that are experiencing vulnerability are to be supported according to their individual needs. Where children/families are linked to Child Protection and not attending; early childhood teacher or educator will need to inform their Case Officer.

2. NON-ATTENDANCE

2.1. Term One

Families that have accepted a placement and have not completed an enrolment form and not attended the service within the first 3 weeks of Term One will be contacted and informed their placement has been cancelled. This does not apply to children who have not started kindergarten due to not turning 3 years of age.

2.2. Families Traveling Overseas

Families are required to notify Meli in writing prior to extended periods of travel.

2.3. Non-contactable Families

After two/three weeks of a child not attending the service, early childhood teacher or educator to call the family. If there is no response, educator to log this attempt and place in the child's file.

After fourth week of the child not attending and the family has made no attempts to contact the service, early childhood teacher or educator to contact the family via phone/text and/or email. If there is no response, Educator to log this attempt and place in the child's file.

After fifth week of non-attendance, early childhood teacher or educator to inform nominated supervisor or Meli Central Support staff and cross check families contact details.

Meli Central Support staff email the family, advising that they are to contact either the kindergarten or Meli Central Support to advise if the kindergarten place is still required. If they do not respond to the email by a response date (one week) the kindergarten place will be cancelled.