

Waitlist Policy

Quality Area 6 – Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities

Policy Statement

Ambrose services must have established fair and transparent processes for managing waitlist applications whilst upholding the legal responsibilities in relation to the Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011) and relevant funding guidelines.

Goals

To ensure transparent procedures are in place for consistency and equity when filling vacant positions at Ambrose services.

Ambrose must work within the limits on the number of available services, licensed places or educators that are imposed as part of the approval by the Regulatory Authority.

Priority of Access

The Federal Government encourages providers to consider the following priority categories when vacancies arise:

- Children who are at risk of serious abuse or neglect
- A child of a sole parent/guardian who satisfy, or parents/guardians who both satisfy, the activity test through paid employment

Written documentation may be requested to support families' priority status. This meets the Australian Government's aims of helping families who are most in need and supporting the safety and wellbeing of children at risk.

The NSW Government has additional guidelines to be followed when enrolling children in an Early Learning service eligible for Start Strong Funding. Ambrose Early Learning Traditional services are required to give equal priority of access to:

- Children who are at least 4 years old on or before the 31 July in that preschool year and not enrolled or registered at a school
- Children who are at least 3 years old on or before the 31 July in that preschool year and are:
 - children from low-income families
 - children with an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background
 - children with disability or additional needs
 - children with English language needs
- Children who are at risk of significant harm (from a child protection perspective)

There is no order of priority assigned to the list of points above. Each service must give priority to the groups outlined above before any other groups.

Ambrose Early Learning Extended Hours services are required to give priority of access to:

- Children aged 4 and above who are:
 - from low-income families
 - from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families
 - with disability and/or additional needs

- with language needs
 - who are at risk of significant harm (from a child protection perspective)
- Children aged 4 and above who do not fall into above categories
- Children aged 3 who are:
 - from low-income families
 - from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families
 - with disability and/or additional needs
 - with language needs
 - who are at risk of significant harm (from a child protection perspective)
- Children aged 3 who do not fall into the above categories.

There is no order of priority assigned to the list of points above. Each service must give priority to the groups outlined above before any other groups.

Waitlist Applications

Parents/Guardians must complete a waitlist application for their child to be added to the waitlist. The application must include, as a minimum, the child's details, parent/guardian's details and contact numbers and/or valid email address. Vacant positions are offered from the waitlist. When there are no families on the waitlist at a service and positions available, services can enrol children without requesting the family to complete a waitlist application first. Parents/Guardians are to advise the service of their Priority of Access group.

Offering Vacant Positions

Ambrose services will offer positions based on the priority of access guidelines:

- the days available,
- the age of the child and
- the date a waitlist application is received by the service.

Vacancies will also be filled according to the service's approved license number and staffing ratios.

The service will provide written notice to the parent/guardian of when to respond to accept an offer of enrolment. If no response is received to an offer of placement within the timeframe, the vacant position is offered to the next family on the waitlist. Positions will not be held for families and fees are payable from when the vacant position is accepted.

A child will be removed from the waitlist if:

- an offer of placement is declined or
- no response received by the due date, unless the offer is made prior to the requested start date of the waitlist request.

If a family wants to return to the waitlist after being removed, a new waitlist application will need to be submitted with the date of application being the most recent date of the completed waitlist application form. Families will not be added back onto the waitlist into the same position they were in when they were removed.

It is the families' responsibility to ensure they keep their contact details up to date with the service.

Updating Waitlist Annually – Early Learning Extended Hours Services

Ambrose Early Learning Extended hours services conduct an annual waitlist update by distributing a form via email for parents/guardians to complete by the due date. Any parents/guardians not responding to the waitlist form update by the return date will be removed from the waitlist. Parents/Guardians are provided with at least 2 reminders to complete the waitlist update before being removed from the waitlist.

Internal Waitlist

Ambrose services may maintain an internal waitlist that is made up of children enrolled at the service who require any additional days or changes to their current days that the service cannot currently accommodate due to reaching the services maximum licensed approval. Priority for additional days will be allocated based on the priority of access category and positions are offered based on the date on which the child was placed on the internal waitlist, the days available, operational needs and the age of the child.

A child will remain on the internal waitlist until the preferred placement has been offered/accepted or written notice is received from the parent/guardian that the internal waitlist request is no longer required.

A child will be removed from the internal waitlist if an offer of placement is declined, unless the offer is made prior to the requested start date of the internal waitlist request.

Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Authority / Responsibility For
Approved Provider/ Delegates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure the service operates in line with the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations 2011. Ensure the service operates in line with all funding guidelines while filling vacant positions. Provide opportunities (in consultation with the Nominated Supervisor and educators/support staff) for interested families to attend the service during operational hours to observe the program and become familiar with the service prior to their child commencing in the program.
Nominated Supervisor/ Responsible Person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide waitlist links to prospective families to register their child's name on the waitlist. Offer vacant positions in accordance with this policy. Maintain waitlist in accordance with this policy.
Educators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer parent/guardians to the Nominated Supervisor/Responsible Person or support office if required in relation to this policy.
Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Register their child on the waitlist to be offered a position. Advise the service of their Priority of Access group. Read this policy and refer any questions, queries, or concerns to the Nominated Supervisor/Responsible Person.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide documentation upon request if required to confirm priority of access. Keep the service up to date with current contact details. Respond to offer of enrolment from the Ambrose service by the due date.
Students and Volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer parent/guardians to the Nominated Supervisor/Responsible Person if required in relation to this policy.
Support Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support services in the implementation of this policy.

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Review

This policy will be monitored to ensure compliance with legislative requirements and unless deemed necessary through the identification of practice gaps, the service will review this policy as per the policy schedule and/or as required.



To provide Feedback scan the QR code or click [here](#)

RELATED LEGISLATION

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010

Education and Care Services National Regulations: Regulation 168(2)(n)

Family Law Act 1975 (Cth), as amended 2011

Family Assistance Law

Start Strong Funding

RELATED GUIDELINES, STANDARDS, FRAMEWORKS

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

SOURCES/ USEFUL RESOURCES

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

CCS Information – <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/child-care-subsidy>

Child Care Provider Handbook <https://www.dese.gov.au/child-care-package/child-care-provider-handbook>

Start Strong Funding - <https://education.nsw.gov.au/early-childhood-education/operating-an-early-childhood-education-service/grants-and-funded-programs/start-strong-funding>

Definitions

Priority of Access	The order in which eligible applicants for places are offered in CDPSL services.
Early Learning Traditional services	Early Learning preschool services that operate during school terms only and 7.5 hours per day. They are not approved for childcare subsidy.
Early Learning Extended Hours services	Early Learning services that operate extended hours (eg. 6:30 am-6pm) and are approved for childcare subsidy.