

Sefton Infants School



Working Together

Preschool Enrolment Policy and Procedures

Updated June 2020

GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF ENROLMENT

Sefton Infants Preschool is one of 100 preschools operated by the NSW Department of Education. This policy and its procedures are in accordance with the [Department Preschool Enrolment Procedures](#).

Sefton Infants Preschool offers a two and a half-day program per week for two separate groups of children. One program operates Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday morning while the other program takes place on Wednesday afternoon, Thursday and Friday. There is a maximum of 20 children in each program, making a total of 40 enrolments.

Parents pay a fee set by the NSW Department of Education for their children to attend preschool. There are a range of fees. Families experiencing financial hardship are able to obtain fee relief or exemption.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Children are eligible to enrol in preschool classes from the beginning of the school year if they turn 4 years of age on or before 31 July in that year. It is strongly suggested that your child already be 4 years of age at the commencement of preschool so that they are ready for a prior to school setting. Enrolment of eligible children may be continued throughout the year as vacancies occur.

Most preschool children who are temporary visa holders enrol in departmental preschools under the same conditions as Australian citizens. However, holders of some temporary visas such as visitor/tourist visas are not eligible to enrol in Department of Education preschools. Details of visa subclasses and eligibility for preschool enrolment can be found on the [DE International website](#) or the Sefton Infants School Website.

In exceptional circumstances, children may attend preschool for an additional year. This can occur with the approval of the principal after discussions with the parents and in consultation with the preschool teacher. If it is decided that a child would benefit from a second year in the preschool, it needs to be understood that the child would be considered as a new application and prioritised in the same way as all new applications.

CRITERIA FOR PRIORITY OF ENROLMENT

Where the number of children applying exceeds the number of places available, names will be placed on a waiting list. Priority of enrolment will be given in the following order:

1. Children of families living within the boundary area for Sefton Infants School who have siblings enrolled at the school.
2. Children of families living within the boundary area of Sefton Infants School with no siblings enrolled.

If the number of in area applications exceeds the number of preschool placements for any year, priority will then go as follows:

- i) Children legally required to start school the following year, in order from eldest to youngest applications.
- ii) In order of applications received.

3. Children of families living outside the boundary area of Sefton Infants School who have siblings enrolled at the school.
4. Children living outside the boundary area for Sefton Infants School with no siblings enrolled. If the number of out of area applications exceeds the number of preschool placements for any year, priority will then go as follows:
 - i) Children legally required to start school the following year, in order from eldest to youngest applications.
 - ii) In order of applications received.

SPECIFIC ENROLMENT CRITERIA

Under each of the above eligibility criteria, specific enrolment criteria will give priority to:

- Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children
- children living in low socioeconomic circumstances
- children unable to access other early childhood services due to disadvantage or financial hardship.

PLACEMENT PANEL

When the number of applications exceeds the number of places available in the preschool, the children's names are placed on a prioritised waiting list. A placement panel is then formed by the principal to consider all applications and place into a priority order. The placement panel includes the principal, a staff member and a member of the school community nominated by the school parent organisation. Where there are a significant number of Aboriginal children seeking enrolment, the panel should include a nominee from the local Aboriginal Education Consultation Group (AECG). The placement panel operates in accordance with the procedures for enrolment in government preschool classes. All decisions reached by the panel are recorded and minutes of the meeting are to be made available on request by the School Education Director. Parents/carers are advised in writing of the placement panel's decision regarding the enrolment application.

WAITING LIST

After the 40 enrolment places have been filled, a prioritised waiting list will be established based on the eligibility criteria and the school's priority enrolment criteria. This waiting list is valid for the year prior to enrolment in the preschool class and for the preschool year. If a vacancy becomes available during the year, the position will be filled by the child with the highest priority on the waiting list.

APPLICATIONS FOR ENROLMENT

Applications for enrolment are accepted for the following year from the beginning of Term 2 of the current school year.

Parents/carers must complete the application to enrol in a NSW Government preschool form which can be collected from the school office during school hours or downloaded from the Sefton Infants School Website or the Department of Education website.

Applications for enrolment require all of the following original documentation:

- birth certificate and/or proof of identity and residency status
- immunisation documentation as specified by the Australian government
- proof of residential address (This could include evidence of current council rate notices, accounts for electricity, gas or water, telephone bills, lease documents or electoral enrolment confirmation. If there are no formal lease arrangements in place, a statutory declaration from the 'landlord' confirming the student's residential address during the school year needs to be provided.
- passport or immigration card and evidence of visa status for children who are not Australian citizens
- low-income health care card if applicable
- copies of any family law or other relevant court orders if applicable

Copies of these documents are made by the school office and kept with the application form.

If your child has special circumstances, allergies, health or medical conditions, it's important you tell the principal about these before your child starts preschool. The school may also complete a risk assessment.

IMMUNISATION REQUIREMENTS

Under the NSW Public Health Act 2010, immunisation procedures apply to children enrolling in department preschools. These procedures help to improve childhood health, immunisation rates and support the management of outbreaks of vaccine-preventable diseases. From 1 January 2018, children who are unvaccinated due to their parent's/carer's conscientious objection are not able to attend preschool.

A child cannot enrol in a preschool unless the parent/carer has provided an approved immunisation statement history or authorised medical documentation that shows the child:

- is fully immunised for their age
- has a medical exemption from immunisation
- is on a recognised catch-up schedule if their child has fallen behind with their vaccination.

Principals can only enrol children who have the appropriate and genuine forms. Fines of up to \$5,500 can apply if false or falsified documents are provided.

APPLICATION AND ENROLMENT TIMEFRAME

- **Beginning of Term 2 (Late April):** Preschool application forms for following year are available from school office. Applications can be lodged from 1 March. The date and order of submission will be noted.
- **31 August:** Last day for applications to be considered for first round of offers of preschool placement for following year.
- **September:** Offers of placement for following year commence. Parents/carers are contacted in writing whether they are offered a preschool place or if they have been put on the waiting list.
- **November:** Preschool orientation process takes place for the children and their families who have been offered and accepted an enrolment for the following year.

ENROLMENT AT SCHOOL FOR K-2

Enrolment in a Departmental preschool does not guarantee enrolment into Kindergarten in the school in which the preschool class is located. An application to enrol in a NSW Government school still needs to be completed and submitted to the school. Application for enrolment K-2 at Sefton Infants School follows the School's K-2 Enrolment policy and procedures.