

KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM ENROLMENT POLICY (VIC)

Our Service is committed to providing high-quality Kindergarten programs that prepare all children for school whilst minimising the financial burden to families by utilising all available funding opportunities. Our Kindergarten programs are delivered by qualified early childhood teachers and educators. We aim to identify children that require additional support and seek assistance through a range of initiatives to ensure inclusion of vulnerable children into our programs. This policy provides guidelines for enrolment in these programs and the criteria for enrolment to ensure compliance with legislative and Department of Education and Training requirements.

Our Service is committed to being a Child Safe Organisation with a zero tolerance for child abuse. At all times we act in accordance with the Victorian Child Safe Standards and related legislation.

(During 2021 Kindergarten programs for four-year-old and eligible three-year-old children in Victorian funded services will be free in 2021 as part of the investment by the Victorian State Gov't due to COVID-19. Some Kindergarten providers may have opted in to *Free Kinder* whilst others have not. Please adjust this policy to reflect your own service's funding agreement).

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/funding/Pages/freekinder2021.aspx>

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 1: EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM AND PRACTICE		
1.1	Program	The educational program enhances each child's learning and development
QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY		
2.2.3	Child Protection	Management, educators and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities to identify and respond to every child at risk of abuse or neglect.

QUALITY AREA 6: COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS		
6.1	Supportive relationships with families	Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role.
6.1.1	Engagement with the service	Families are supported from enrolment to be involved in their service and contribute to service decisions.
6.1.2	Parent views are respected	The expertise, culture, values and beliefs of families are respected, and families share in decision-making about their child's learning and wellbeing.

6.1.3	Families are supported	Current information is available to families about the service and relevant community services and resources to support parenting and family wellbeing.
6.2	Collaborative partnerships	Collaborative partnerships enhance children's inclusion, learning and wellbeing.
6.2.3	Community and engagement	The service builds relationships and engages with its community.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
84	Awareness of child protection law
89	Educators must be working directly with children to be included in ratios
90	Medical conditions policy
92	Medication record
93	Administration of medication
97	Emergency and evacuation procedures
99	Children leaving the education and care service premises
160	Child enrolment records to be kept by approved provider and family day care educator
161	Authorisations to be kept in enrolment record
162	Health information to be kept in enrolment record
168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
177	Prescribed enrolment and other documents to be kept by approved provider
181	Confidentiality of records kept by approved provider
358	Working with children check to be read

RELATED LEGISLATION

Child Care Subsidy Secretary's Rules 2017	Family Law Act 1975
A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999	See all related legislation for Child Care Provider Handbook in Appendix 1 https://www.education.gov.au/child-care-provider-handbook-0
Children, Youth and Families Act 2005	Children Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005
Disability Discrimination Act 1992	

RELATED POLICIES

Acceptance and Refusal Authorisation Policy Additional Needs Policy Anti-Bias and Inclusion Policy Arrival and Departure Policy Children’s Belongings Policy Child Safe Environment Policy Control of Infectious Disease Policy Educational Program Policy Family Communication Policy Immunisation Policy Kindergarten Policy (VIC)	Orientation of Families Policy Payment of Fees Policy Privacy and Confidentiality Policy Record Keeping and Retention Policy Sick Children Policy Sun Safe Policy Supervision Policy Staffing Arrangements Policy Transition to School Policy Withdrawal of a Child Policy
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PURPOSE

To ensure our Service accesses and meets all legislative requirements of kindergarten funding available from State and Federal Government for three- and four-year-old Kindergarten programs. We aim to ensure children and families receive informative and reliable information about enrolment in our funded kindergarten programs. We strive to establish respectful and supportive relationships between families and the Service to promote positive outcomes for children whilst adhering to legislative requirements. We are committed to equal access for all eligible children and adhere to the Priority of Access (PoA) criteria set out in the [Kindergarten Funding Guide](#).

SCOPE

This policy applies to management, educators, families, and children of the Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

The Victorian Government provides funding to Long Day Care Services to deliver high quality kindergarten programs for three-year-old and four-year-old children in addition to early childhood education and care for children aged between 0-6years.

KINDERGARTEN

Most children start kindergarten in the year before school, usually when they are four years old. This is sometimes called ‘funded kindergarten’. The kindergarten program for young children is delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher in the year before transitioning to primary school (Prep.). Subsidised kindergarten can be in:

- children’s centres
- long day care centres

- community kindergartens
- independent schools and
- some government schools.

From 2022, three-year-old kindergarten will be offered for a minimum of five hours per week in line with the Victorian Government's Early Years Reform through sessional kindergarten services and long day care services in Victoria.

See [Three-Year-Old Kinder Best Start Best Life](#)

The Victorian Government provides funding to early childhood services to contribute to the cost of running a funded kindergarten program to help keep fees affordable for families. Our kindergarten program provides eligible four-year-old children with access up to 15 hours per week or 600 hours per year of funded kindergarten delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher for free or at a low cost. This funding is part of the Universal Access to Early Childhood Education provided through a shared commitment by the State Government (10 hours funded) and the Federal Government (5 hours funded).

OUR FRAMEWORKS

Our kindergarten program adheres to the *Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF)* as the approved learning framework declared in the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations core funding agreement. We are also guided by *Belonging, Being and Becoming* - The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia.

CURRICULUM

The foundations we lay in kindergarten, become the building blocks for your child's success at school. Through our unique, age-appropriate programs, children can transition to school equipped with the familiarity of a structured learning environment and the support and encouragement of our educators. Tailoring our programs to children and their families, we can blend the formal requirements of the curriculum with the real-world needs of our community delivering a well-rounded learning experience for all. We help to lay the foundations for future learning through environments that are rich in numbers, words and creative activity.

ENROLMENT ELIGIBILITY

In accordance with the DET *Kindergarten Funding Guide*, the following children are eligible to access one year of funded kindergarten in the year before they go to school. Children **must not** be enrolled at a funded kindergarten program at another service.

- Children who are at least three or four years of age by 30 April in the year they are to attend Kindergarten (proof of birth is required on application in the enrolment process)
- Children born between 1 January and 30 April may attend in their eligible year, or families may choose to enrol in the following year but need to ensure they remain eligible as per the DET Kindergarten guide
- Children turning six years of age in their year of kindergarten who have been granted an exemption from school entry age requirements by their regional office of DET
- Children who are younger than the eligible age, but whose parents/guardians have submitted a written request to their regional DET office and have been approved for their child to attend Kindergarten the following year
- Children who are fully vaccinated for their age or on a recognised catch-up schedule or have a medical reason not to be vaccinated. Proof of vaccinations must be submitted before our Service can approve an enrolment in accordance with the *No Jab No Play* legislation.

PRIORITY ACCESS CRITERIA (PoA) Kindergarten Funding Guide

Our Service has [enter number of places] available for three-year-old kindergarten and [enter number of places] for four-year-old kindergarten.

In instances where more eligible children apply for a place at our Service for three-year-old and four-year-old kindergarten funding programs, we must follow the Priority of Access (PoA) criteria to prioritise specified cohorts of children and work with other local kindergarten services and the regional Departmental offices to ensure all eligible children have access to a kindergarten place.

Priority of Access (PoA) is provided for:

- children at risk of abuse or neglect, including children in out-of-home care
- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children
- asylum seeker and refugee children
- children eligible for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy (Commonwealth health care cards or veteran's affairs card, or multiple birth children- triplets, quadruplets)
- children with additional needs, defined as children who
 - require additional assistance in order to fully participate in the kindergarten program
 - require a combination of services which are individually planned
 - have an identified specific disability or developmental delay

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/funding/Pages/Priority-of-Access-Criteria.aspx>

PROGRAMS

Our Service offers the following high-quality programs for which the Victorian Government Department of Education offers 15 hours of funding for each eligible child each week. [Note: In 2021, some council areas will offer **Three-Year-Old Kindergarten**. Families will be able to access up to 15 hours of kindergarten.]

Information about our funded kindergarten programs is added and updated in the Kindergarten Information Management system (KIM).

SERVICE CLOSURES

There may be times when our scheduled kindergarten program cannot be delivered due to public holidays, unplanned teacher absences or emergency situations. Families will be provided with a schedule of planned public holidays at the beginning of each year. Communication will be provided with families as promptly as possible in the event of any other disruptions to our program.

[Complete the kindergarten program delivered at your service- sessional model, integrated into a long day care program; or using both sessional group AND integrated in a long day care program.]

PROGRAMS	DAYS	HOURS (e.g. 9.30-2.30)
Program 1	Monday <input type="checkbox"/> Tuesday <input type="checkbox"/> Wednesday <input type="checkbox"/> Thursday <input type="checkbox"/> Friday <input type="checkbox"/>	
Program 2	Monday <input type="checkbox"/> Tuesday <input type="checkbox"/> Wednesday <input type="checkbox"/> Thursday <input type="checkbox"/> Friday <input type="checkbox"/>	
Program 3	Monday <input type="checkbox"/> Tuesday <input type="checkbox"/> Wednesday <input type="checkbox"/> Thursday <input type="checkbox"/> Friday <input type="checkbox"/>	
Program 4	Monday <input type="checkbox"/> Tuesday <input type="checkbox"/> Wednesday <input type="checkbox"/> Thursday <input type="checkbox"/> Friday <input type="checkbox"/>	

EDUCATOR QUALIFICATIONS

Our educators delivering kindergarten programs have the following qualifications

(Masters or above, Graduate diploma, Dual bachelor qualifications (early childhood), Bachelor's degree, Pathway degree, Diploma)

EDUCATOR'S NAME	QUALIFICATION/S HELD	QUALIFICATION WORKING TOWARDS

EDUCATOR TO CHILD RATIOS

In accordance with the Education and Care National Regulations we ensure that the educator to child ratio is 1 educator to 11 children for children from 36 months up to and including kindergarten age are adhered to at all times.

PROGRAM	NO. OF EDUCATORS	NO. OF CHILDREN
Program 1		
Program 2		
Program 3		
Program 4		

KINDERGARTEN FEE SUBSIDY

Kindergarten Fee Subsidy is available for families who meet the following criteria for funded kindergarten. Eligible families will not be required to pay fees for a four-year-old kindergarten program or 5 hours of a three-year-old program. If your child attends a three-year-old program for longer than 5 hours, you will be required to pay a gap fee [enter fee schedule as applicable].

If your child:

- identifies as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
- is identified on their birth certificate as being a multiple birth child (triplets or more)

If you child or has a parent or guardian who holds one of the following:

- a Commonwealth Health Care Card
- a Commonwealth Pensioner Concession Card
- a Department of Veterans Affairs Gold Card or White Card
- Refugee or Asylum Seeker visa (200-204, 786, 866)
- Bridging visas for any of the above Refugee or Asylum Seeker visa

KINDERGARTEN FEES

[enter information here about your kindergarten fees and enrolment fees. As the Victorian Government has provided additional funding for services in 2021, some services may have opted in for 'Free Kinder' in 2021]. <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/funding/Pages/kinderfundrates.aspx>

PROGRAM FEES

The following fees are charged to families for our Kindergarten program

PROGRAM	WEEKLY FEE
Program 1	

Program 2	
Program 3	
Program 4	

SCHOOL READINESS FUNDING

School Readiness Funding supports children in our funded kindergarten program. To be eligible for this funding our Service will meet all legislative requirements, including the collection of parent’s occupation and education information (Student Family Occupation and Education data or SFOE) and enter this information into the Kindergarten Information Management system each August. This funding will be used to support the three School Readiness Funding priority areas:

- communication (language development)
- wellbeing (social and emotional) and
- access and inclusion.

Other programs and support may be accessed through [the Menu](#) to help improve outcomes for children.

SECOND YEAR OF KINDERGARTEN FUNDING

If a child at our Service is demonstrating delays in key outcomes of learning and development, a second year of funded kindergarten may be considered. In order to receive this funding, the child must show developmental delays in two key outcomes.

The five key outcome areas identified in the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development framework will be assessed:

- Outcome 1: Identity
- Outcome 2: Community
- Outcome 3: Wellbeing
- Outcome 4: Learning
- Outcome 5: Communication

In regard to Second Year of Kindergarten funding, educators will complete the following assessments with consent from the child’s parent/carer.

Complete all required documentation including:

- Ongoing child observations (as required)
- Term three learning and development plan
- Second year discussion
- Second year statement
- Second year checklist

Liaise with other professionals as required, including but not limited to:

- Preschool Field Officer
- Early Childhood Intervention Service Worker
- The child's Maternal and Child Health nurse
- Family doctor or other allied health professionals
- School principal of child's intended school

Liaise with families of individual children as required to remain eligible for funding.

INCLUSION SUPPORT AND ACCESS

The Kindergarten Inclusion Support Program (KIS) is available to support the participation of children in quality kindergarten programs in line with the National Quality Framework and the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework. Support is available through the KIS disability and complex medical needs programs. The program is designed to enhance our Service's ability to support the access and participation of children with a disability or developmental delay and high support needs.

Working in collaboration with the Victorian Inclusion Agency, our Service can also access the Commonwealth Inclusion Support Programs- 'Additional Educator Funding' once the Kindergarten Inclusion Support Program (KIS) has been thoroughly explored as a resource option.

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/professionals/needs/Pages/kinderinclusion.aspx>

ENROLMENT PROCEDURE

To apply for a kindergarten placement, families are required complete an enrolment/application form by **[insert date required for three-year-old and four-year-old kindergarten]**.

Families will be provided with a range of information about the Service which may include:

- the service philosophy, inclusion, kindergarten program, fees, policies, procedures, SunSmart requirements, signing in and out procedure, the National Quality Framework, routines, educator qualifications, and educator and parent communication strategies, Child Care Subsidy (if relevant for additional education and care provision)
- Families will be requested to submit any information related to Priority of Access with the enrolment application
- Families are advised that since January 2018 children who have not been immunised due to parent's conscientious objection cannot be enrolled at an early childhood education and care service

- If a child cannot be immunised due to a medical condition they may still be enrolled at the Service with supporting documentation (Medical Exemption Form).
- If a child is on a 'catch-up' schedule for immunisations they may still be enrolled at the Service. The child's immunisation history statement will indicate that the child is on a catch-up schedule.
- Parents must notify the Service if their child is not up to date with their immunisations for their age via the enrolment form and attach the required documentation on their *AIR immunisation History Statement*
- Information about gap fees and absences will be discussed

FAMILIES WILL BE ASKED TO PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION ON THE ENROLMENT FORM

1. Full name/s of parent/s (or the person legally responsible for the care of the child) residential address, place of employment and contact telephone number
2. The full name, residential address and contact telephone number of a person or persons, authorised by the parent who may be contacted in case of an emergency concerning the child if a parent is unable to be contacted (authorised nominee)
3. The full name, address and contact telephone number of any person authorised by the parent to collect the child from the Service (authorised nominee)
4. Full name of the child
5. Child's date of birth
6. Child's birth certificate or passport
7. Child's residency status
8. Child's address
9. Gender of the child
10. Languages spoken at home
11. Kindergarten Fee Subsidy eligibility-
 - a. identifies as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
 - b. identifies on their birth certificate as being a multiple birth child (triplets or more)
 - c. Commonwealth Health Care Card
 - d. Commonwealth Pensioner Concession Card
 - e. Department of Veterans Affairs Gold Card or White Card
 - f. Refugee or Asylum Seeker visa (200-204, 786, 866)
 - g. Bridging visa for any of the above
12. Immunisation History Statement

13. Any court orders or parenting agreements regarding the child
14. Any special requirements of the family, including for example cultural or religious requirements
15. The individual needs of a child with a disability or with other additional needs
16. A statement indicating parental permission for any medications to be administered to the child whilst at the Service. [Only a parent on the enrolment form can authorise the administration of medication.]
17. Authorisation and signature by parent/authorised person for the approved provider, nominated supervisor or educator to seek:
 - o medical treatment for the child from a registered practitioner, hospital or ambulance service
 - o transportation of the child by an ambulance service
18. Child's Medicare number (if available)
19. Specific healthcare needs of the child, including allergies and intolerances
20. Any medical management plan for a specific severe healthcare need, medical condition, or allergy, such as an Anaphylaxis Emergency Management Plan or Risk Minimisation Plan.
21. Details of any dietary restrictions for the child
22. The name, address and telephone number of the child's doctor

OFFER OF PLACES FOR FUNDED KINDERGARTEN

Places will be allocated according to the Priority of Access (PoA) criteria and available places at our Service.

Families will be advised of an offer for their child via [enter how your Service will communicate with families]

Families have two weeks to accept this offer and complete any required documentation.

Should families not wish to accept the offer, they are required to withdraw their enrolment application as soon as possible. We ask that families withdraw their application in writing to the Nominated Supervisor or Enrolment officer.

THE DIRECTOR, RESPONSIBLE PERSON WILL ENSURE:

- complete all mandatory service delivery and child enrolment data in KIM for all funding applications (including Free Kinder, three-year-old kinder, School Readiness Funding, Second Year Kindergarten Funding and any other funding available through the department)
- comply with Department of Education requirements as per the *Kindergarten Funding Guide* (2016) and *Kindergarten Funding Guide* key policy changes and updates

- verify eligible children for kindergarten fee subsidy and update children’s kindergarten fee subsidy throughout the year (until 31 October)
- submit annual ‘confirmation of data’ in KIM by required dates
- ensure attendance details for each child enrolled and information on fees paid is completed in KIM by August each year for annual National Kindergarten Census Week
- designate one person as organisation administrator for Kindergarten Information Management system (KIM)
- maintain current knowledge of funding available and eligibility requirements
- support educators in meeting their requirements regarding funding assessments
- meet all core requirements and operational requirements as per National Quality Standard and National Law and National Regulations
- before confirming a child’s enrolment, families must present an immunisation history statement as evidence that the child
 - is fully vaccinated for their age
 - is on a recognised catch-up schedule if the child has fallen behind with their vaccinations
 - or
 - has a medical reason not to be vaccinated
- ensure our kindergarten program is planned and delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher for at least:
 - 15 hours per week for 40 weeks of the year, or 600 hours per year
- provide families with details of public holidays and any other defined days of closure each year
- ensure timelines for allocation of places for three-year-old and four-year-old kindergarten are communicated clearly to families
- ensure Early Childhood Teachers are registered with the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT)
- ensure graduate teachers are provisionally registered with the VIT and provided with support of a mentor to help them achieve Proficient Teacher level of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers
- ensure all staff and educators hold current and checked Working With Children Checks (WWCC)
- read each person’s WWCC before engaging educators, staff and volunteers
- ensure the program delivered to children adheres to the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework and operates in accordance with Child Safe Standards at all times
- maintain educator to child ratios as per regulations (for children aged 36 months of age or over, one educator to 11 children)

FAMILIES WILL:

- complete enrolment/application forms in full
- submit required documentation with the application
- provide child's Immunisation History Statement at time of enrolment
- provide Medical Management Plans and Action Plans as required prior to their child attending the Service
- ensure they accept or withdraw their child's enrolment within given time frame
- provide updated information about their child by notifying the Service of any changes as soon as possible- medical, parenting orders, authorisations etc.

Source

Department of Education, Skills and Employment. (2009). *Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia*.

Department of Education and Training. (2016). *Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework. For all children birth to eight years*

[Education and Care Services National Regulations](#). (2011)

Victorian Government Department of Education and Training. Early childhood. (2021).

Victorian Government Department of Education and Training. (2016). [The kindergarten funding guide](#)

Victoria Government. Requirements for all early childhood services.

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/regulation/Pages/reqallservices.aspx>

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED	JUNE 2021	NEXT REVIEW DATE	JUNE 2022
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • policy rewritten to include specific enrolment information and procedures for families • additional information added re Priority Access criteria, Free Kinder (2021), Kindergarten Inclusion Support, Three-Year-Old Kindergarten • sources and resources checked for currency 		
POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS		NEXT REVIEW DATE
SEPTEMBER 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approved learning Framework added • Curriculum area added • Enrolment section added including priority access guidelines • National Quality Standard and Regulations added • Further sources added 		JUNE 2021
JUNE 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • additional information 'Kindergarten' • additional content added re: approved 		JUNE 2021

	learning framework <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • additional content re: Approved Provider responsibilities • additional information re: programs offered including Three-Year-Old preschool • Educator to child ratios added • small edits to spelling/layout resources and sources checked for currency	
JUNE 2019	New policy drafted	JUNE 2020

RESOURCES

Funding information and forms:

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/funding/Pages/kinderdatacollection.aspx>

Kindergarten Funding Rates:

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/funding/Pages/kinderfundrates.aspx>

Kindergarten Information Management System (KIM) access:

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/funding/Pages/kinderim.aspx>

The Kindergarten Funding Guide (2016):

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/childhood/providers/funding/The%20Kindergarten%20Guide%202016.pdf>

Kindergarten Funding Guide key policy changes and updates:

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/childhood/providers/funding/Kindergarten%20Funding%20Guide%20key%20policy%20changes%20and%20updates.pdf>

Types of kindergarten funding (for parents): <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/parents/child-care-kindergarten/Pages/kindergarten-programs.aspx>