

# Stonnington Central Registration Scheme (CRS)

## Kindergarten

### Why is kindergarten important?

Kindergarten is a strong base for your child's learning and development. It improves language skills and helps your child learn through play. It helps your child get used to new people, places and situations. Kindergarten also helps families and carers to meet each other, build connections in the community and find help.

Two years of kindergarten are even better than one. Starting kindergarten at a younger age boosts learning, development, health and wellbeing - especially for children who are vulnerable or need extra help.

For more information, visit

[vic.gov.au/when-start-kindergarten](http://vic.gov.au/when-start-kindergarten)

### What happens at kindergarten?

Your child will learn lots of things while having fun at the same time. Learning happens in lots of different ways, like solving problems, exploring nature and hearing new ideas.

#### Your child will:

- » learn to work with others and make friends through group activities and cooperative play
- » express their creativity (for example, through dance, movement and art)
- » build their communication skills by talking with educators and other children
- » develop the skills that they need for reading, writing and mathematics.

### What kindergarten services are available in Stonnington?

There are over 30 kindergarten providers in Stonnington which offer a range of timetable options for your child. Each kindergarten offers different kinds of programs hours, activities and learning styles.

There are two types of kindergarten programs that Early Years Services provide in Stonnington.

#### Sessional programs:

- » these have a set timetable and run two to five days per week within the school term only, charging fees per term.

#### Integrated programs:

- » offered as part of a long day care enrolment. These operate at least eight hours per day for 48 weeks per year, charging fees daily.

To see if a kindergarten is right for you and your child, and to learn more about session times and costs of each program, families should contact their preferred service directly to arrange a tour or attend an open day event.

You can visit the Department of Education's *Find a Kinder* website to start your search [findakinder.vic.gov.au](http://findakinder.vic.gov.au)

# Stonnington Central Registration Scheme (CRS)

## Kindergarten funding

The Victorian Government covers the cost of one year of funded three-year-old kindergarten and one year of funded four-year-old kindergarten/Pre-Prep at participating services. Kindergarten programs operate in both standalone (sessional) and long day care (childcare) settings. You can identify these services by the purple Kinder Tick:

**[vic.gov.au/kinder-tick](https://vic.gov.au/kinder-tick)**

Each child is eligible to attend one funded kindergarten program at a time. You will sign paperwork to specify which service your child will attend to access their funded place.

Children can be enrolled in more than one early childhood care program at a time, however only one can be claimed as a funded kindergarten place. For example, a child can be enrolled in both a funded sessional kindergarten program and a long day care program. In this example:

- » The funded kindergarten enrolment would be at the sessional service for part of the week.
- » Full fees will apply at the long day care for the remaining days (subject to any eligible Child Care Subsidy through Centrelink).

Some children can also access an additional year of funded kindergarten/Pre-Prep. Your child's teacher will assess your child's learning and work with you to confirm whether your child meets the relevant criteria.

**[vic.gov.au/sending-child-kinder](https://vic.gov.au/sending-child-kinder)**

### Is free kindergarten the same as funded kindergarten?

As part of the State Government's *Best Start, Best Life* initiative, free kindergarten is available to all funded kindergarten programs. However, individual services currently have the choice to opt-in or opt-out. Furthermore, free kinder funding is different in standalone (sessional) and long day care settings.

This may mean there are still out-of-pocket costs for families if:

- » the service has chosen not to participate in the free kindergarten program offered by the state government.
- » programs at the service are longer than the free kindergarten funded hours. In this instance, the service will charge fees to cover these longer hours.

From 2026, kindergarten funding rates are being simplified. This means that eligible children will have greater access to free kinder options in sessional services.

To know if your preferred kindergarten has opted into the Free Kinder initiative, you should contact them directly. For more information, visit:

**[vic.gov.au/kinder](https://vic.gov.au/kinder)**

# Stonnington Central Registration Scheme (CRS)

## Kindergarten eligibility

### When can my child start kindergarten?

Kindergarten eligibility dates are directly related to when your child is eligible to start primary school. Your child must turn three by 30 April of the year they start a three-year-old kindergarten program. Your child must turn four by 30 April of the year they start a four-year-old kindergarten/Pre-Prep program.

When your child was born	Year they will commence		
	Three-year-old kindergarten	Four-year-old kindergarten/Pre-Prep	Primary school
Between 1/5/2022 and 30/4/2023	2026	2027	2028
Between 1/5/2023 and 30/4/2024	2027	2028	2029
Between 1/5/2024 and 30/4/2025	2028	2029	2030

For more information, visit [vic.gov.au/when-start-kindergarten](https://vic.gov.au/when-start-kindergarten)

### What if my child is born between January to April?

If your child is born between 1 January and 30 April, you may have a choice for the year they start kindergarten as this determines their age when they start school. It is recommended that you look at the age you would like your child to be when they start school and work backwards to determine when to start kindergarten.

It is important to understand that children can only access one year each of funded three and four-year-old kindergarten /Pre-Prep programs. This means you will not be able to repeat three-year-old kindergarten if you later decide your child is not yet ready.

Additionally, the National Quality Framework (NQF) has strict educator-to-child ratios that are required to be met for all Early Years Services. For children who turn three years old between 1 January to 30 April in the year they commence three-year-old kindergarten, this may affect their starting date or fees associated with attendance.

### Does my child have to be immunised to go to kindergarten?

Yes. To go to kindergarten, your child must be up-to-date with their vaccinations. To enrol your child, you will need to give the kindergarten a current Immunisation History Statement from the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR). The statement must show your child is up to date with all vaccinations that are due for their age, or that they're up to date with the vaccinations they can have.

The Immunisation History Statement is the only document accepted for enrolments. Letters from GPs or local councils are not accepted.

Children experiencing vulnerability and disadvantage can be enrolled without an Immunisation History Statement for a short time while their immunisations are brought up-to-date. More information can be found at [health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/no-jab-no-play](https://health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/no-jab-no-play)

Frequently asked questions:

# Stonnington Central Registration Scheme (CRS)

## What is Pre-Prep?

Four-year-old kindergarten is transitioning to Pre-Prep from 2025 as part of the *Best Start, Best Life* reform.

Like Four-year-old kindergarten, Pre-Prep will follow the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework.

While the roll-out is underway, you will see both 'Four-year-old Kindergarten' and 'Pre-Prep' being used to describe 'the program children access in the year before school'. This is an administrative distinction as children eligible for Pre-Prep programs will have access to additional hours per week.

### Accessing extended Pre-Prep hours in Stonnington

From 2026, Pre-Prep will be available at local kindergartens for children:

- » who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
- » from a refugee or asylum seeker background
- » who have had contact with Child Protection or are in out of home care
- » were supported by Early Start Kindergarten or Access to Early Learning for Three-Year-Old Kindergarten.

From 2028, Pre-Prep will additionally be available at local kindergartens for children:

- » who have (or have a parent/guardian who has) a Commonwealth concession card
- » from a multiple birth (triplets or more)

As the roll-out continues, funded program hours will gradually increase for priority cohorts. Pre-Prep programs will be available up to 30 hours per week for all children in the year before school by full roll-out (2036).

More information can be found at [vic.gov.au/preprep](https://vic.gov.au/preprep)

# Stonnington Central Registration Scheme (CRS)

## Registering for Kindergarten in Stonnington

### What is the Stonnington Central Registration Scheme (CRS)?

The Stonnington Central Registration Scheme (CRS) is a program led by the City of Stonnington that aims to simplify access to kindergarten for families and carers. You can use one form to register your interest in several kindergartens, so you don't have to waste time filling out many forms.

The Stonnington CRS applies the Department of Education's priority of access criteria and local allocation criteria to all applications to allocate children to kindergarten places equitably. Once you accept your place, your details are provided to your accepted kindergarten who then help you to enrol your child and get them ready for kindergarten.

For a list of kindergartens participating in the Stonnington CRS visit [stonnington.vic.gov.au/kinder](http://stonnington.vic.gov.au/kinder)

### When does registration and enrolment happen?

The below timeline is for applications to providers participating in the Stonnington Central Registration Scheme (CRS) only.

For an updated list of participating providers visit: [stonnington.vic.gov.au/kinder](http://stonnington.vic.gov.au/kinder)

All other providers in Stonnington accept applications directly and have their own registration and enrolment timelines.

CRS cycle	In the year prior to child starting kindergarten
Registrations open	1 April
Registrations close*	31 May
First-round offers	Sent last week of term two
Acceptance of first-round offers due	Two weeks from offer date
Second-round offers	Sent second week of term three
Acceptance of second-round offers due	One week from offer date
Subsequent offers	Weekly or when vacancies become available

\* Registrations will still be accepted after 31 May but will only be considered after registrations received before this deadline. Priority applications will be accepted and prioritised at any time.

Frequently asked questions:

## Stonnington Central Registration Scheme (CRS)

### Can I contact kindergartens directly?

Yes, you can contact the kindergarten you are interested in to ask questions or organise a visit.

If your preferred kindergarten is participating in Stonnington's CRS, you can then apply via [stonnington.vic.gov.au/kinder](https://stonnington.vic.gov.au/kinder).

You will need to apply directly with the kindergarten for all other providers.

### How are kindergarten places given out?

All kindergarten providers (regardless of whether they participate in the CRS) are required to give first priority to children who meet the Department of Education's (DE) priority of access criteria.

From 2027, the Department of Education's Priority of Access criteria is being updated. These are now classified as Tier 1 and Tier 2 Priority of Access criteria.

These are intended to support children at risk of disadvantage in accessing kindergarten programs.

- » Tier 1: children who will benefit most from improved access and participation in kindergarten programs.
- » Tier 2: aims to support children in accessing two years of funded kindergarten within the same service.
- » For more information on DE's priority of access criteria, visit [vic.gov.au/priority-access-criteria](https://vic.gov.au/priority-access-criteria).

After first allocating children in Tier 1 and Tier 2, where demand exceeds availability within the service, the kindergarten provider may additionally apply their own allocation criteria.

- » Through the CRS, applications are allocated based on the same local allocation criteria. Refer to CRS Guidelines for further details [stonnington.vic.gov.au/kinder](https://stonnington.vic.gov.au/kinder)
- » Kindergarten providers that do not participate in the CRS, set their own criteria; this will differ between providers.

### More information

- » [stonnington.vic.gov.au/kinder](https://stonnington.vic.gov.au/kinder)
- » Visit your Maternal Child Health nurse.
- » If you use any other family or child support services, they can also help you.
- » Contact our Central Registration Officer on **03 8290 1690** or via email at [centralregistration@stonnington.vic.gov.au](mailto:centralregistration@stonnington.vic.gov.au)