Kindergarten inclusion support PROGRAM – COMPLEX MEDICAL NEEDS

Guidelines



 

Melbourne December 23

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# **Introduction**

The Kindergarten Inclusion Support (KIS) Complex Medical Needs program guidelines outline the objectives of the program and guide state funded kindergarten staff through the application process.

In addition to KIS Complex Medical Needs, the KIS Disability Program supports kindergarten services to include children with a disability or developmental delay and high support needs. If a child has a disability and complex medical needs, applications should be submitted on the KIS Disability application form.

For further information and application forms for KIS Complex Medical Needs and KIS Disability see: [kindergarten inclusion for children with disabilities](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/professionals/needs/Pages/kinderinclusion.aspx).

## **Objective of the Kindergarten Inclusion Support Complex Medical Needs program**

The KIS Complex Medical Needs program is funded by the Victorian Department of Education and Training (the Department).

The objective of the program is to enhance the capacity of funded kindergarten services to support the access and participation of children with complex medical needs, who do not have a disability, in inclusive kindergarten programs.

These children require a high level of individualised health care support without which they are unable to access a funded kindergarten program. Eligibility criteria for this support, included in these guidelines, specify that funded health care support procedures will be those which can reasonably be expected to be undertaken by the kindergarten team with specific training and ongoing monitoring.

The KIS Complex Medical Needs program provides a contribution to the support and training required and may not provide full coverage of all costs.

The KIS Complex Medical Needs program focuses on:

* providing assistance to complement the kindergarten team’s knowledge and skills, while acknowledging their expertise in supporting children’s learning and development with young children
* supporting the kindergarten team to enhance their capacity to develop and implement an inclusive program
* supporting the kindergarten team to contribute to positive outcomes for children, as defined in the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework
* responding to the child’s abilities and strengths, as well as their needs by supporting the kindergarten service to enhance their learning and development
* promoting collaboration between the families and professionals
* recognising that kindergarten teams require varying levels of additional support.

## **Support**

The KIS Complex Medical Needs program is designed to contribute to the provision of a quality kindergarten program by enhancing the kindergarten service’s capacity to provide a program that is responsive to the individual abilities, interests and needs of the child with complex medical needs in an inclusive kindergarten environment.

KIS program support is available when a kindergarten service has demonstrated they have made reasonable adjustments to support the child’s inclusion and the resources required to enhance the capacity of the kindergarten team are in addition to the existing resources available to the kindergarten service.

Existing resources available to a kindergarten service may include:

* Early childhood teachers, educators, family and community
* Professional development opportunities
* Preschool Field Officer Program
* Cultural Inclusion Support
* Capacity building from previous KIS support

Types of additional support available from the KIS program include:

* **Specialist consultancy** for early childhood teachers to support adjustments, adaptations and modifications of the kindergarten program
* **Specialist training** for the kindergarten team to meet the individual needs of the child with complex medical needs
* **Minor building modifications** such as ramps and grip rails, which would support the child’s attendance in the kindergarten program and participation in the activities
* **Additional staffing support**. An additional assistant funded through the KIS program works as a member of the team delivering the kindergarten program, developed by the early childhood teacher that is inclusive of all children in the group.

It is not appropriate that an additional assistant, funded through the KIS program:

* works exclusively with the child with a disability and ongoing high support needs
* increases staff levels to meet licensing requirements.

The resources allocated to kindergartens from the KIS program are intended to support the needs of the whole group during the kindergarten year.

## **Kindergarten program**

A kindergarten program is an early childhood education program that aims to advance each child’s learning and to optimise the development of key skills. In Victoria, the Government funded kindergarten programs are delivered to four-year-old children in the year before school. From 2020, the funded program will become available to three-year-olds, via a gradual roll-out to be completed in 2029, when every child in the state will have access to two years of a kindergarten program.

Kindergarten programs are guided by state and national frameworks and standards which promote high quality, inclusive education and care for all children. These include:

* The Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (kindergarten programs must follow this)
* The National Quality Framework
* Disability Standards for Education

A kindergarten program provides a supportive environment designed to engage each child in effective learning, and promote children to be connected with and contribute to their world, be effective communicators and have a strong sense of identity and wellbeing.

## **Creating an inclusive kindergarten service**

Inclusion is defined as every child has access to, participates meaningfully in, and experiences positive outcomes from early childhood education and care programs[[1]](#footnote-1). Inclusion fosters a sense of belonging, accepts and respects individuality and diversity and allows all children genuine opportunities to access and participate in a kindergarten program.

Organisations receiving kindergarten funding are required to have in place policies and procedures that promote inclusive practice and equality of opportunity for all children, including children with complex medical needs. This includes ensuring their enrolment, access and inclusion policies:

* promote fair and equitable access to kindergarten programs
* support all eligible children to access a kindergarten program, including those who face barriers to participation
* do not inadvertently present barriers to participation
* comply with Victorian and Commonwealth legislation, including the:
	+ *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Commonwealth)
	+ *Equal Opportunity Act 2010* (Victoria)
	+ *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* (Victoria)
	+ *Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities 2006*.

## **Children with medical conditions attending education and care services**

An important objective of the National Quality Framework is to ensure the safety, health and wellbeing of all children attending education and care services. When a child who has a diagnosed health care need or relevant medical condition is enrolled at an education and care service, additional requirements must be met to ensure the child’s safety, health and wellbeing is protected. As per the Education and Care Services National Regulations, education and care services must obtain a copy of the child’s medical management plan from the child’s parent and develop and document a risk minimisation plan in consultation with the parents of the child. These plans should be in place prior to the child commencing at the service and a copy of both plans must be attached to the KIS application.

If the child requires medication at a kindergarten service, a medication record is to be completed by the person administering the medication as per the Education and Care Services National Regulations. The record must include the authorisation to administer medication, signed by the parent or a person named in the child’s enrolment record as authorised to consent to administration of medication.

In some cases it may be necessary for one or more staff members to access additional professional development or training to assist in meeting a child’s needs. If training to meet the child’s health support needs is funded through the KIS Complex Medical Needs program, it is the responsibility of the KIS auspice organisation, together with the kindergarten service, to ensure that the required training is delivered to enable the child’s attendance at the service. It is recommended that training is undertaken by all members of the kindergarten team.

Get further information on the [additional requirements](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/regulation/Pages/medicalconditions.aspx) education and care services must meet to ensure the safety, health and wellbeing of a child with a medical condition.

## **The Auspice Organisation**

Across all departmental regions, the management of the KIS Complex Medical Needs program is under the auspice of community service organisations who administer the program.

The auspice organisation’s program or policy handbook details its roles and responsibilities and relationship with kindergartens in providing support. The auspice organisation is required to undertake an annual survey of parents to determine user satisfaction with the service.

# **Eligibility criteria**

| **To be eligible for the KIS complex medical needs program the criteria outlined below must be met.** |
| --- |

## **Criteria**

1. Funded Kindergarten Program:
* is funded by the Victorian government. A funded kindergarten program complies with the requirements of the Victorian kindergarten policy, procedures and funding criteria.
* demonstrates that that the resources required to enhance the capacity of the kindergarten team are in addition to the existing resources available to the kindergarten service, to support the inclusion of an eligible child with complex medical needs.
1. The kindergarten service is seeking support to enhance its capacity to provide for the access and participation of a child that:
* has complex medical needs which require a high level of supervision and individualised health care support during the kindergarten program and that have been assessed and documented by a medical practitioner and
* is unable to access a funded kindergarten program without provision of a high level of additional support and
* requires health support procedures during the kindergarten program that can reasonably be expected to be undertaken by the kindergarten team with specific training and ongoing monitoring

and the child

* is enrolled in a kindergarten program funded by the Department

or

* attends a kindergarten program delivered by a degree qualified early childhood educator and is eligible for Early Start Kindergarten funding. Early Start Kindergarten funding is available to three-year-old Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children and three-year-old children whose family have had contact with Child Protection.

The following list provides examples of procedures for which Complex Medical Needs program funding may be provided:

### **Oxygen**

* maintenance of oxygen supply and tube patency
* maintaining skin integrity, in the case of nasal cannulas and face masks
* ensuring appropriate humidification
* observation of child’s general health status and adjustment of oxygen level according to set criteria
* awareness of dangers of oxygen therapy and prevention of complications
* change of oxygen cylinders as required

### **Tracheostomy care**

* infection control
* use of correct humidification
* ensuring clear airway and using suction and saline as required
* ability to effect efficient tube change if unable to be cleared of blockage
* implementation of emergency procedures around respiratory needs as required

### **Suction**

* infection control
* knowledge of when to suction and why
* use of correct suctioning technique for specific child
* awareness of specific types of mucus to observe for and reporting of abnormalities to relevant people
* prevention of complications of incorrect suction procedure – vomiting, aspiration and damage to mucous membrane

### **Tube feeding (nasogastric or gastrostomy feeding)**

* infection control
* use of correct methods to check position of nasogastric tube
* administering correct volumes of feed at regular intervals, at correct rate and temperature, specific to individual child
* use of feeding pump as required
* ensuring stomach is empty of excess air
* cleaning of equipment

### **Management of faecal output**

* ileostomy and colostomy management
* regular emptying of pouch
* changing of pouch as required
* adequate protection of the stoma
* appropriate surrounding skin care management
* complete flange changes, as required.

# **The application process**

# the early childhood teacher meets with family to support child's enrolment in kindergarten

# **program support group**

A Program Support Group has an important and ongoing role in supporting the inclusion of a child with complex medical needs and may be established for any child with an additional need whether or not an application for KIS Complex Medical Needs is required.

## **Membership**

The Program Support Group plans for the child’s access and meaningful participation in the kindergarten program and is a partnership between:

* the parents/guardians/carers of the child
* early childhood teacher
* other professionals supporting the child, for example medical professionals, case coordinator, or educators from other children’s services
* other professionals supporting the kindergarten program, for example early years manager or a preschool field officer.

In consultation with the parent, guardian or carer, the early childhood teacher is responsible for:

* establishing the Program Support Group
* convening Program Support Group meetings. The initial meeting should be held before the child’s attendance at the service.

It is important that the early childhood teacher provides information to the child’s parent/carer/guardian on the purpose of the Program Support Group and the importance of sharing information about their child.

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## **Role of the program support group**

The Program Support Group is responsible for:

* identifying the child’s strengths and support needs
* determining what training is required by the kindergarten team
* considering any adjustments to be made to the program or environment
* deciding whether an application for KIS is required
* assisting the family in the transition to school. For further information refer to [Transition: A Positive Start to School resources](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/professionals/learning/Pages/transkit.aspx).

Members should respect each other’s views, knowledge and expertise and collaborate as a team to meet the best interests of the child. As parents and carers are likely to have the greatest understanding of the child, it is integral their meaningful participation is supported. Members should consider the language and terminology used during meetings to ensure that all members are informed, comfortable and have the capacity to equally participate.

**To improve access to and participation in a kindergarten program, it is important that information relating to the child is an accurate reflection of the child’s strengths and anticipated needs within a kindergarten setting.**

# **Submitting an application**

**The Kindergarten Inclusion Support** [**application forms are available online**](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/needs/Pages/kindersupportpackages.aspx)

The KIS application forms (Section 1 and 2) are completed by the early childhood teacher in consultation with the parent, guardian or carer, and with the assistance of Program Support Group members. The information provided is confidential (refer to the Privacy Notice in the Application form).

## **Privacy**

The Department is committed to protecting the privacy of personal information by complying with the Information Privacy Act 2000, the Health Records Act 2001 and other relevant legislation.

The Privacy Declaration by parents, guardians or carers that forms part of the application requires only one signature and can be signed by any of the following people:

* a person with parental responsibility for ‘major long term issues’ as defined by the Family Law Act 1975 (Commonwealth)
* an officer delegated to exercise the powers and functions of the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services under sections175(1)(b).(2) & (3) of the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Victoria)
* a carer authorised under a  Department of Health and Human Services Instrument of Authorisation to make decisions about ‘major long term issues’ as defined by the Family Law Act 1975 (Commonwealth).

If none of the above people are available, an informal carer may sign this form. An informal carer is a relative or other responsible adult with whom the child lives and who has day to day care of the child. Informal carers should sign an ‘[Informal Carer Statutory Declaration’](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/principals/spag/safety/informalcarerstatdec.pdf) to confirm their status.

The original completed KIS application must be placed on file at the kindergarten by the early childhood teacher lodging the application. The auspice organisation responsible for administering the KIS program and/or the Department will also keep a copy (refer to the Privacy Notice in the application).

## **General information**

A copy of the child’s medical management plan and the kindergarten’s risk minimisation plan must be attached to the application. The kindergarten must also document in section 2:

* what health support procedures are required during a kindergarten program
* when and how often the child will require this support at the kindergarten program
* who will provide the support
* what training early childhood educators have undertaken to support the child’s complex medical needs and if any additional training is required
* what adjustments will be made by the kindergarten program to support the child’s inclusion.

The KIS Complex Medical Needs program is designed to provide supplementary support and kindergarten services must demonstrate that the resources required to enhance the capacity of the early childhood educators are in addition to the existing resources available to the kindergarten service.

If more than one child with complex medical needs will be attending a particular funded kindergarten group, a separate KIS application should be submitted for each child. The application should consider the resources provided through the KIS program for other eligible KIS Complex Medical Needs or KIS Disability applications for the same kindergarten group. These resources will be taken into consideration by the Regional Advisory Group when considering eligibility and the level of additional resources required to support the whole group.

A copy of the **signed** application (section 1 and 2) is required for assessment of the application.

Section 1 must be signed by the early childhood teacher or person completing the application and, if applicable, the early years manager.

Section 2 must be signed by the early childhood teacher or person completing the application and the parent/guardian or carer.

A copy of the application should be posted to the KIS auspice organisation convenor, or emailed if possible. Details on where to send completed applications are available on page 13 of these guidelines, including email addresses for those organisations that will accept emailed applications. Applications that are emailed must be scanned to include signatures and sent as a secure PDF document from the kindergarten service’s @kindergarten.vic.gov.au email or the early childhood teacher’s kindergarten service email that is either encrypted or password protected. Applications that are emailed should not also be posted to avoid confusion.

Faxed applications are not accepted.

## **Checklist for the early childhood teacher**

Before submitting the application form, please ensure the following:

* The resources required to enhance the capacity of early childhood educators are in addition to the existing resources available to the kindergarten service.
* All sections of the application forms (section 1 and 2) have been completed.
* The application forms have been signed by the parent/guardian/carer, Program Support Group members, the early childhood teacher or person completing the forms and where relevant, the Early Years Manager.
* A copy of the child’s medical management plan and the kindergarten service’s risk minimisation plan is attached to the application.
* The original application forms have been filed at the kindergarten service.
* A copy of the application form has been provided to the parent/guardian/carer.
* If additional attachments are provided, all copies are initialed by the parent/guardian/carer and noted on the application form.

When all of the above have been completed, submit both sections of the application form to the KIS auspice organisation convenor.

# **Timelines**

Applications for KIS Complex Medical Needs can be submitted at any time and will be considered on a case by case basis.

# **How the application is considered**

Applications for KIS Complex Medical Needs will be forwarded by the KIS auspice organisation convenor to the Department’s regional office for consideration by the Department’s Early Years Inclusion and Intervention Unit. Applications will be approved as appropriate by the Director Early Learning Participation Branch.

The kindergarten service will be notified of the outcome of their application by the KIS auspice organisation convenor within four weeks of submission.

If the application is deemed ineligible, the kindergarten service may request an appeal (refer to Section 10).

The kindergarten service is responsible of advising the parent, guardian or carer of the outcome.

# **Applications requiring additional information**

The KIS convenor may request additional information from the kindergarten service if there is information missing from the application or more information is required by the Early Years Inclusion and Intervention Unit to determine the outcome of the application. Kindergarten services will be notified in writing if additional information is required.

The kindergarten service must respond to requests for additional information within 4 weeks of receipt of the request from the convenor. If the additional information is not received by the KIS convenor within 4 weeks, then the application will be deemed ineligible. If the application is deemed ineligible either as a result of the additional information not being provided or the additional information not supporting an eligible outcome, the kindergarten service may request an appeal (refer section 10).

# **transfers and withdrawals**

## **Transfer of application**

A transfer of application applies to:

* A child identified with complex medical needs in an approved KIS application, who enrols in and attends a different kindergarten from the kindergarten nominated on the original application.

## **Transfer of support**

When a child identified in a KIS application transfers to another kindergarten program, the kindergarten service is required to advise the KIS auspice organisation.

If the child is transferring to a kindergarten service in another region, the original KIS auspice organisation is responsible for transferring a copy of the application to the KIS auspice organisation in the new region.

The KIS auspice organisation responsible for provision of the support to the new kindergarten service is then required to contact the new service to advise:

* that the level of additional resources to support inclusion in the new kindergarten service will initially be at the same level as allocated to the original kindergarten service
* to maintain this level of allocation the early childhood teacher is required to:
	+ - * + establish a Program Support Group to support the child’s inclusion
				+ submit Section 1 and Part 1 and Part 3 of Section 2 of the KIS application forms to their Regional Advisory Group convenor for assessment **within four weeks** of the child’s commencement.
				+ submit a copy of the new kindergarten service’s risk minimisation plan

As resources allocated to kindergarten programs from the KIS program are intended to support the needs of the whole group during the kindergarten year, the Early Years Inclusion and Intervention Unit will consider the context and resources available to the group.

The kindergarten service will be notified by the convenor of the outcome of their submission of this additional information within four weeks of the information being received.

## **If a child withdraws from kindergarten program**

If a kindergarten service is advised that a child identified in an approved KIS application for their service will no longer be attending a state funded kindergarten program, the kindergarten teacher is required to inform the KIS auspice agency as soon as practicable. In these cases the KIS support allocation approved to support the inclusion of this child will cease.

# **Appeal process**

Applicants may request an appeal of decisions regarding eligibility or level of support approved.

Appeals will be considered at any time, but only on the basis of new or additional relevant information, which may not have been available or provided at the time of application, or if circumstances have changed.

All requests for appeals are to be in writing to the convenor and signed by the early childhood teacher, parent, guardian or carer and where applicable the Early Years Manager.

Appeals must contain:

* the name of the kindergarten service
* the name of the child and the **relevant new or additional information** provided in a separate attachment or highlighted in bold or a different coloured font within the original application

Appeals will be considered by the Early Years Inclusion and Intervention Unit and if supported, approved by the Director Early Learning Participation Branch. Notification of outcomes of appeals to the early childhood teacher will occur within a four week period of an appeal being received by the convenor.

**All appeals must be signed, marked confidential and addressed to the Regional Advisory Group convenor. For contact information, refer to Section 13.**

# **Where to send the application**

Regional Advisory Group convenor contact details are listed below.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **South Western Victoria Region** | **South Eastern Victoria Region** | **North Western Victoria Region** | **North Eastern Victoria Region** |
| **Uniting - Lentara** KIS ProgramPO Box 3217Broadmeadows 3047Email: kiswest@vt.uniting.orgTel (03) 9351 3600Covers the following local government areas:Brimbank, Hobsons Bay, Maribyrnong, Melbourne, Melton, Moonee Valley and Wyndham. | **Yooralla** KIS ProgramPO Box 5435Cranbourne 3977Email: KIS@yooralla.com.auTel (03) 5990 9640Covers the following local government areas:Bayside, Cardinia, Casey, Frankston, Glen Eira, Greater Dandenong, Kingston, Mornington, Port Phillip, Stonnington. | **Uniting - Lentara**KIS ProgramPO Box 3217Broadmeadows 3047Email: kisnorth@vt.uniting.orgTel (03) 9351 3600Covers the following local government areas:Banyule, Darebin, Hume, Moreland, Nillumbik, Whittlesea, Yarra. | **Uniting - Connections**KIS Program291A Maroondah Highway, Ringwood 3134Email: kisnevrapplications@vt.uniting.orgTel 1800 183 103Covers the following local government areas:Boroondara, Knox, Manningham, Maroondah, Monash, Whitehorse, Yarra Ranges. |
| **Gateways Support Services** KIS Program10-12 Albert StreetGeelong West 3218Email: KIS.Applications@gateways.com.auTel (03) 5221 2984Covers the following local government areas:Colac-Otway, Corangamite, Glenelg, Greater Geelong, Moyne, Southern Grampians, Surf Coast, Queenscliffe and Rural City of Warrnambool. | **Uniting – Gippsland**KIS Program3 Church StreetLeongatha 3953Email: kisse@vt.uniting.orgTel (03) 5662 5150Covers the following local government areas:Bass Coast, Baw, East Gippsland, South Gippsland, Wellington. | **Noah’s Ark Inc.**KIS Program10 Merino CourtEast Bendigo 3550Email:kisconvenor@noahsarkinc.org.auTel 0433 884 052Covers the following local government areas:Buloke, Campaspe, Central Goldfields, Gannawarra, Greater Bendigo, Loddon, Macedon Ranges, Mount Alexander, Swan Hill. | **Scope (Aust)** KIS ProgramPO Box 128Benalla 3672Tel (03) 5762 7121Covers the following local government areas:Alpine, Benalla, Greater Shepparton, Indigo, Mansfield, Mitchell, Moira, Murrindindi, Strathbogie, Towong, Wangaratta, Wodonga. |
| **Pinarc Disability Support** KIS ProgramPO Box 1841Bakery Hill 3354Tel (03) 5329 1300Covers the following local government areas:City of Ballarat, Rural City of Ararat and Golden Plains, Hepburn, Moorabool and Pyrenees. | **Latrobe City Council** KIS ProgramPO Box 264Morwell 3840Email: KIS@latrobe.vic.gov.au Tel (03) 5128 5645Covers the following local government area:Latrobe. | **Mallee Family Care**KIS ProgramPO Box 1870Mildura 3502Email:kisconvenor@malleefamilycare.com.auTel (03) 5023 5966Covers the following local government areas:Mildura, District of Robinvale in Swan Hill LGA. |  |
| **Uniting - Wimmera** KIS ProgramPO Box 442Horsham 3402Email: swrag.els@vt.uniting.orgTel (03) 5382 6789Covers the local government areas: Hindmarsh, Horsham Rural City, Northern Grampians, West Wimmera and Yarriambiack |  |  |  |

# **Appendices**

## **Appendix A: Department of Education and Training contacts**

Regional Offices

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **SOUTH WESTERN VICTORIA**swvr@edumail.vic.gov.au Phone: 1300 333 232 | **SOUTH EASTERN VICTORIA**sevr@edumail.vic.gov.auPhone: 1300 338 738 | **NORTH WESTERN VICTORIA**nwvr@edumail.vic.gov.auPhone: 1300 338 691 | **NORTH EASTERN VICTORIA**nevr@edumail.vic.gov.auPhone: 1300 333 231 |
| **Ballarat office**109 Armstrong Street NorthBallarat 3350 | **Dandenong office**PO Box 5Dandenong 3175 | **Bendigo office**PO Box 442Bendigo 3552 | **Benalla office**PO Box 403Benalla 3672 |
| **Footscray office** PO Box 2141Footscray 3011 | **Moe office**PO Box 381Moe 3825 | **Coburg office**Locked Bag 2001Coburg 3058 | **Glen Waverley office**Level 3, 295 Springvale RdGlen Waverley 3150 |
| **Geelong Office**75 High StreetBelmont 3216 |  | **Mildura Office**PO Box 10129Mildura 3502 |  |
| **Horsham Office**26 Darlot Street, Horsham 3400 |  |  |  |

## **Appendix B: Glossary**

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| --- | --- |
| Additional Assistant | An additional assistant funded from the Kindergarten Inclusion Support program works as a member of the team delivering the kindergarten program that is developed by the early childhood teacher that is inclusive of all children in the group.It is not appropriate that an additional assistant, funded from the Kindergarten Inclusion Support program:* works exclusively with the child with a disability and ongoing high support needs
* increases staff levels to meet licencing requirements.
 |
| Additional support | Is in addition to the existing resources available to the kindergarten service. It aims to enhance the capacity of the early childhood educators to provide a program that is inclusive of all children. This support may include:* specialist consultancy
* specialist training
* minor building modifications such as ramps and grip rails
* additional staffing.
 |
| Auspice organisation | This is a community service organisation that administers the Kindergarten Inclusion Support program. |
| Complex Medical Needs | Medical needs requiring a high level of supervision and individualised health support during the kindergarten session. Health support procedures require training for early childhood educators. |
| Early Start Kindergarten | Early Start Kindergarten provides eligible three year old children with access to up to 15 hours of kindergarten per week for free or low cost. This support is available in all settings where the kindergarten program is delivered by a qualified teacher. Early Start Kindergarten is available for children who are three years old by 30 April in the year they are enrolled to attend the program and who are either:* Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander or
* the child’s family has had contact with Child Protection
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| --- | --- |
| Early Years Management | Early Years Management (EYM) organisations manage services for community kindergartens and some early childhood services.EYM organisations work with their service partners to:* make sure services meet local needs
* handle strategic planning to manage the service
* manage and train employees
* manage finances for the service.
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| Funded Kindergarten Program | The Victorian Government provides contributory funding for all eligible children to access a kindergarten program in the year before school.Funded kindergarten programs are provided by a range of organisations, including local government, community based organisations, independent and government schools, and private child care providers, with programs offered in a variety of settings, such as long day care centres, stand-alone community-based settings and schools.Children attending a kindergarten program receive a developmentally appropriate program, planned and delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher. A funded kindergarten program complies with the requirements of the Victorian kindergarten policy, procedures and funding criteria.In 2020, three year olds in six council areas will be able to access up to 15 hours of subsidised kindergarten. These areas are: Buloke, Hindmarsh, Northern Grampians, South Gippsland, Strathbogie and Yarriambiack. In 2021 an additional 15 council areas will also have access to the program and from 2022, all three year olds across the state will have access to at least five hours in a funded kindergarten program. |
| National Quality Framework | The National Quality Framework aims to raise quality and drive continuous improvement and consistency in education and care services. The Framework helps providers improve their services in areas that impact on a child’s development and empower families to make informed choices about which service is best for their child.ACECQA, the national authority is responsible for providing oversight of the system, ensuring consistency of approach and supports the education and care sector to improve quality outcomes for children. |
| Preschool Field Officer Program | The Preschool Field Officer program enhances the capacity of state funded kindergarten programs to provide for the access and meaningful participation of children with additional needs.The Preschool Field Officer program is a locally responsive approach to providing kindergartens with practical advice and support in including children with additional needs into a quality kindergarten program. |
| School exemption | Children who will turn six during the kindergarten year must be granted an exemption from school by their regional office of the Department (refer to Appendix A).Parents are responsible for completing the exemption form, attaching any written evidence and submitting it to the Area Executive Director in the Department regional office. For more information refer to: [Going to kindergarten if your child is six years old](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/parents/child-care-kindergarten/Pages/kindergarten-school-age.aspx) |
| School readiness funding | School readiness funding provides extra support for kindergarten services to help children to get the most out of their early learning. All services with a funded kindergarten program, including long day care, are eligible to receive the funding. The amount of additional funding kindergarten programs will receive is based on the educational disadvantage levels of the services.School readiness funding will be rolled out to all Victorian kindergarten services over three years, beginning in 2019.  |
| Transition to school | Transition to school is a process, not a point in time. It is an individual experience for everyone involved. Sharing information between the child, the family, early childhood education and care services and the school in the Transition Statement is only one part of this process.The Transition: A Positive Start to School Resource Kit includes a section on enhanced transition planning for children with a disability or developmental delay and outlines strategies to support continuity of learning and development, including the role of the PSG in the transition process. A child’s Transition Learning and Development Statement (transition statement) summarises their abilities as they start school and identifies their individual approaches to learning. The information in the Transition Statement helps prep teachers get to know the children entering their classes, and to plan appropriate learning and teaching programs. It provides an opportunity for children, their families and all the professionals who work with them to support a child’s transition to school. It also helps Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) educators to plan for children’s learning continuity between settings.The transition statement includes section 1.2, which is enhanced transitions for children with a disability or developmental delay. This section:* captures information about other early childhood professionals supporting the family and child
* lists reports or assessments that have been done and are available to support inclusion planning.
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| Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework | The Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework is designed to advance all children’s learning and development from birth to eight years of age.The Victorian Framework provides early childhood professionals with a common language for describing outcomes for children, and describes practice principles to guide early childhood professionals to work together, with children and with families to achieve the best outcomes for every child. |

1. Early Childhood Australia and early Childhood Intervention Australia – Position statement on the inclusion of children with a disability in early childhood education and care 2012. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)