# Does my child need a second year of kindergarten?

In most cases, children make a successful transition to school after their Four-Year-Old Kindergarten year.

Even if your child’s year at kindergarten is interrupted and they are not able to physically attend their onsite kindergarten program for a period of time due to reasons such as chronic illness, family circumstances or COVID-19 restrictions, it does not mean that your child won’t thrive at primary school.

Children will be learning a lot of new things at kindergarten and even those of similar ages will grow and develop at different rates. Children will have varied experiences before they arrive at school, and this means they will all have developed a diverse range of skills and abilities that form the basis for further learning.

Schools provide environments that are flexible, adaptable and responsive to individual children, as well as access to additional supports or specialist staff where needed.

If you have specific concerns about aspects of your child’s development, please talk to your child’s early childhood teacher about these and how you can work together to support your child’s learning, both at kindergarten and as they prepare to transition to school.

During Four-Year-Old Kindergarten, your early childhood teacher will assess your child, plan for their move to school and identify any learning and development areas that may need particular attention.

There may be a small number of children for whom a second year of Four-Year-Old Kindergarten is appropriate. Your child may be eligible if:

* your child's early childhood teacher has found they have developmental delays in at least two key areas of learning and development, and
* your child will have better outcomes at kindergarten rather than going to school.

## Your child’s assessment

There are guidelines that early childhood teachers will follow to assess your child’s eligibility for a second year of kindergarten, which include considering the five areas of learning and development in the *Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework*. The guidelines help the teacher to identify your child's needs and plan individual learning goals.

The five learning and development areas in *Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework,* assessed by early childhood teachers, are:

* identity – the child’s sense of identity
* community – the child’s connection with and contribution to their world
* wellbeing – the child’s sense of wellbeing
* learning – the child’s confidence and involvement in learning
* communication – the child’s communication.

Other factors may also be considered.

## Your involvement

It's important that you and the early childhood teacher work together to achieve the best outcome for your child. With your consent, the teacher will:

* complete the assessment of your child
* in Term Two or Term Three, meet with you to discuss this assessment and talk with you about the second-year process and your options
* if delays in your child’s development are identified, develop a Term Three Plan for Learning and Development for your child
* get the support of other early childhood development professionals as needed.

The early childhood teacher will also encourage you in Term Two or Term Three to visit and talk with the school that your child will attend to find out about the school program and types of support available in Foundation.

If the early childhood teacher believes your child has a developmental delay in two or more key areas and would benefit from a second year of kindergarten, in Term Four they will complete a Declaration of Eligibility for a second year of funded Four-Year-Old Kindergarten. They will send a declaration to the Department of Education and Training, and you will also receive a copy. They will also complete what’s known as a Second Year Statement with your help during Term Four.

Talk to your kindergarten service for more information or advice.

## Get an exemption from school

If your child turns six in their first or second year of Four-Year-Old Kindergarten, you must get an exemption from school by 1 November. For more information, visit the website[: Going to kindergarten if your child is 6 years old](https://www.vic.gov.au/going-kindergarten-if-your-child-six-years-old).