

# Central Registration Scheme for Funded Kindergarten

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## 1 Document Information

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RESPONSIBLE GENERAL MANAGER	General Manager Community Sustainability
RESPONSIBLE MANAGER (Policy Owner)	Manager Family and Children's Services
ADOPTED BY	Council
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## 2 Purpose

The City of Kingston Central Registration Scheme for Funded Kindergarten (CRS) has been operating for approximately thirty years. The CRS administers the allocation process for funded sessional kindergarten places on behalf of participating kindergarten service providers. This includes funded three and four-year-old sessional kindergarten places.

## 3 Definitions

<b>ACECQA</b>	Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority.
<b>Allocation Criteria</b>	The criteria for the allocation of places to participating funded kindergartens within the Central Registration Scheme.
<b>Allocation Priority</b>	Allocation criteria assigned to applicants for whom protective concerns have been identified and substantiated e.g. children and/or families who are experiencing vulnerabilities and/or additional needs.
<b>Allocation Process</b>	The process for the allocation of places to participating funded kindergarten programs within the Central Registration Scheme.
<b>Alteration</b>	The adjustment of information provided to the Central Registration Scheme in the original Registration Form.
<b>Ballot</b>	A system in which applicants of equal ranking are selected using a random selection process.
<b>Children with Additional Needs</b>	Children whose development or physical condition requires specialist support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Within the kindergarten setting</li><li>• As defined by medical assessment</li><li>• As defined by DET assessment</li></ul>
<b>Committee of Management</b>	A volunteer committee of parents/guardians responsible for the day-to day management of a kindergarten service.
<b>Connection to the Service</b>	An allocation criteria that allows consideration for a child who has previously attended the service, and/or a sibling attended the service within the previous three years.
<b>Connection to the City of Kingston</b>	An allocation criterion that allows consideration to a child, whose parent/guardian works, volunteers, studies or is using childcare in the City of Kingston.
<b>CRS</b>	The Central Registration Scheme for Funded Kindergarten.
<b>Deferral</b>	Is where a parent/guardian chooses to delay an eligible child/ren’s start to funded kindergarten. Once the child commences kindergarten, this is considered their funded year of kindergarten.
<b>DET</b>	Department of Education and Training. The Victorian regulatory authority primarily responsible for the regulation and quality assessment of education and care services in Victoria.
<b>Early Start Kindergarten</b>	A DET program that provides free or low cost kindergarten to eligible three year old children to access 15 hours of funded kindergarten where programs are delivered by a qualified teacher.
<b>Early Years Manager</b>	Early years management brings individual kindergarten services together under a single employer. The major responsibility of early

	years managers are management and employment of staff, being the Approved Provider and ensuring compliance with licensing requirements, responsibility for the quality of the program through the management and support of the kindergarten staff and financial management for services.
<b>Eligible Child</b>	A child who is eligible for State Government kindergarten funding and can apply for a place in a participating kindergarten.
<b>EYLF</b>	The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia; Belonging, Being & Becoming – a framework to assist educators to provide young children with opportunities to maximise their potential and develop a foundation for future success in learning.
<b>Funded Kindergarten Health Care Card</b>	Also known as three and four year old kindergarten. A concession card that entitles the person to cheaper medicines and concessions.
<b>Kindergarten (also known as Preschool)</b>	The term kindergarten refers to both kindergarten and preschool. Kindergarten is a universal early childhood program funded by the Victorian Government for children in the two years prior to commencing primary school.
<b>Kindergarten Central Registration Officer</b>	The City of Kingston employee responsible for administering the CRS.
<b>National Quality Framework</b>	Derived from the National Legislative Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care, the National Quality Framework lists the National Standards and sets the national benchmark for the assessment of quality in education and care services.
<b>Protective Services</b>	A government agency that responds to reports of child abuse or neglect.
<b>Proximity to the kindergarten</b>	Based on residential address this criterion refers to children: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whose residential address is within a two-kilometer radius of the kindergarten service; or</li> <li>• Whose residential address is outside the borders of the City of Kingston municipality, yet the address falls in within a two-kilometer radius of the kindergarten service.</li> </ul>
<b>Registration fee</b>	Payment to contribute to the administration of the kindergarten registration and allocation process.
<b>Registration form</b>	The registration form for parents/guardians who wish to register their child/ren in a funded kindergarten participating in CRS.
<b>Resident</b>	A person living in the City of Kingston.
<b>Non-resident</b>	A person who does not live in the City of Kingston.
<b>Second Year</b>	A child is eligible for a second year of funded kindergarten if the family and teacher assess the child as having delay in at least two outcome areas of learning and development detailed in the VEYLDF and he or she will benefit from a second year of kindergarten.

<b>Service</b>	Includes the participating kindergarten or collocated care and or education program.
<b>2 Kilometre Radius</b>	Residential priority area for allocation purposes.
<b>VEYLDF</b>	Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework – Curriculum framework to guide the development of the educational program for children.

#### 4 Scope

This policy applies to kindergarten service providers who participate in the CRS, including:

- City of Kingston;
- Committees of management; and
- Early Years Managers.

This policy also applies to all parents/guardians who wish to register their child/ren for a place at a funded kindergarten program delivered by participating in the CRS.

Participating kindergartens should be aware of their legal obligations and responsibilities to comply with the CRS policy.

#### 5 Policy Details

##### 5.1 Objective

The City of Kingston recognises that supporting the healthy development of children has significant long-term benefits for building strong resilient communities. Council provides a CRS on behalf of participating kindergarten service providers within the municipality. The aim of this policy is to ensure that the CRS is transparent and is delivered in a fair and equitable manner.

The objectives of this policy are:

- To ensure the maximum number of children within the City of Kingston, receive an offer at their preferred sessional kindergarten;
- To support participating kindergarten committees of management and Early Years Managers, to offer funded sessional kindergarten places within the City of Kingston;
- To support each participating kindergarten committees of management and Early Years Manager with regular and current registration information in an accurate and timely manner;
- To provide a transparent and equitable process for allocation offers of sessional kindergarten places; and
- To ensure registration data is collated and monitored for effective future planning of kindergarten services.

This policy principle is to:

- Adhere to the relevant Legislation, Regulations and Policy;
- Promote fair and equitable access to funded sessional kindergarten programs; and
- Support all eligible children to access a kindergarten program, including those who face barriers to participation.

## 5.2 Priority Allocation

In accordance with State Government guidelines, children are eligible for allocation priority if they:

- Are at risk of abuse or neglect (including children in out of home care);
- Are an asylum seeker or refugee;
- Are eligible for Kindergarten Fee Subsidy;
- Identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander;
- Have an additional need;
- Are eligible for a second year of kindergarten; or
- Have deferred their kindergarten year.

## 5.3 Allocation Criteria

After children who are eligible for allocation priority are offered a place at their preferred kindergarten, all other children who are eligible for funded kindergarten are included in the allocation process.

There are six levels of criteria for the allocation of the remaining funded sessional kindergarten places that apply to all other eligible children:

Level 1 Residents of the City of Kingston, who live within a 2km radius of the service of their first preference and have a prior connection to the service.

Level 2 Residents of the City of Kingston, who live within a 2km radius of the service of their first preference or have a prior connection to the service.

Level 3 Residents of the City of Kingston.

Level 4 Non-residents of the City of Kingston, who live within a 2km radius of the service of their first preference and have a prior connection to the service.

Level 5 Non-residents of the City of Kingston, who live within a 2km radius of the service of their first preference or have a prior connection to the service.

Level 6 Non-residents of the City of Kingston.

## 5.4 Supporting sessional kindergarten services

In addition to the administration of the CRS, Council also plays a role in supporting sessional kindergarten services that are delivered by volunteer committees and early years managers more broadly through the provision of:

- Facility planning, provision and maintenance;
- Advocacy and community capacity building;
- Developing and supporting partnerships and networks, and
- Information and referral.

## 6 Delegation Authority and Decision Guidelines

Manager Family Youth and Children's Services

### 6.1 Exemptions

There are no general exemptions that apply to this policy. If a case by case exemption is required due to extraordinary circumstances, it can only be granted by the General Manager Community Sustainability in response to written recommendation by the Manager Family Youth and Children's Services.

## 6.2 Human Rights Charter

This policy has been reviewed against and complies with the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006.

## 7 Related Documents and Resources

This Policy is underpinned by the following legislation and policy documents:

**The National Legislative Framework, which is established through an applied laws system and consists of:**

- National Quality Framework;
- Education and Care Services National Law;
- Education and Care Services National Regulations;
- National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care and School Age Care;
- Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia; and
- National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education.

### **Commonwealth legislation and related documents**

- Age Discrimination Act 2004;
- Disability and Discrimination Act 1992;
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975; and
- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

### **State legislation and related documents**

- Equal Opportunity Act 2010;
- Privacy and Data Collection Act 2014;
- Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006;
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005;
- Local Government Act 2020;
- The Victorian Kindergarten Guide 2016;
- Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework;
- Early Childhood Reform Plan 2017
- Department of Education Training – Municipal Association of Victoria Partnership Agreement 2018-2023; and
- COAG Partnership Agreement.

### **City of Kingston documents**

- Family and Children's Services Strategy incorporating Municipal Early Years Plan (2020-2024); and
- Central Registration Scheme for Funded Kindergarten Procedure.

## 8 Transition arrangements

Version 3 of this Policy comes into effect on 1 May 2021. Version 2 of this Policy will remain in place until 30 April 2021.