


Central Registration Scheme for Funded Kindergarten - Allocation Procedure

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2 Purpose

The Kingston City Council Central Registration Scheme for Funded Kindergarten (CRS) administers the allocation of funded sessional kindergarten places on behalf of participating sessional kindergarten services. This includes funded three and four-year-old sessional kindergarten places.

The purpose of the CRS Procedure is to provide guidance regarding how funded kindergarten places are allocated to kindergarten groups.

3 Scope

This Procedure applies to all sessional kindergarten service providers who participate in the CRS, including services operated by:

- Kingston City Council;
- Committees of Management; and

- Early Years Managers.

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

This Procedure also applies to all parents/guardians who wish to register their child/ren for allocation to a funded sessional group at a kindergarten service participating in the CRS.

4. Procedure

4.1 Eligibility and Age Restrictions

4.1.1 In accordance with the Victorian Kindergarten Funding Guide, children are eligible for **two** years of funded kindergarten before they start school.

4.1.2 All children must be three years of age by 30 April in the year they commence kindergarten.

4.1.2.1 Eligible children are entitled to two years of funded Kindergarten, unless the child qualifies for an additional year of funded four-year-old kindergarten.

4.1.2.2 Children are unable to access a second year of funded three-year-old kindergarten and must proceed directly to four-year-old kindergarten in the following year.

4.2 Priority Allocation and Registration Classification

4.2.1 All registrations will be subject to a registration classification process. Classifications are based on selection criteria categorised between levels 0 - 6.

4.2.2 Resident and non-resident children who meet one or more of the following criteria will be prioritised and offered a place in their first option kindergarten group in line with State Government Policy (Level 0) in the first allocation round.

4.2.2.1 Children who have additional needs, are known to Child Protection, identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, are eligible for Early Start Kindergarten funding, are at risk of abuse or neglect, are in out of home care, are seeking asylum or are a refugee or are eligible for Kindergarten Fee Subsidy;

4.2.2.2 Children who have deferred commencing kindergarten; or

4.2.2.3 Children who are eligible for an additional year of funded four-year-old kindergarten;

4.2.3 Supporting documentation must be provided upon request.

4.2.4 An Allocation Criteria will apply to all other registrations. Allocation Criteria is as follows:

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

Level 6. Non-residents of the City of Kingston.

4.2.5 Multiple Births and Siblings

4.2.5.1 Children who indicate on their Registration Form that they have a sibling who will be attending funded sessional kindergarten in the same year, and want to attend the same service, will be considered jointly unless otherwise specified by the parent/guardian.

4.2.5.2 A separate Registration Form must be submitted for each individual child.

4.2.5.3 All efforts will be made to ensure siblings are placed at the same service.

4.3 Registration Procedure

4.3.1 Registration process

4.3.1.1 To register for a place in a group at a participating kindergarten, children must be eligible for kindergarten funding and the Registration Form must be completed and received by the Kindergarten Central Registration Officer either online or in person at a Kingston City Council Customer Service Centre.

4.3.1.2 Registration Forms for participating funded kindergartens will be accepted from 1 May the year prior to the child being eligible for funded kindergarten. For example, children eligible for funded kindergarten in 2024 will be able to register from 1 May 2023.

4.3.1.3 To be included in the first allocation round Registration Forms must be received by 30 June in the year prior to commencing funded kindergarten.

4.3.1.4 Registration Forms will only be processed when all required documentation has been provided.

4.3.1.5 The Registration form will only collect information required for the allocation of children to kindergarten places.

4.3.1.6 It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to keep the Kingston City Council informed of any changes to their child's Registration Form. For example, change of address, contact details or group options.

4.3.1.7 Only children who are planning to access their kindergarten funding at a participating sessional kindergarten service are able to register through the CRS.

4.3.2 Registration Submission

4.3.2.1 Registration Forms are available online at www.kingston.vic.gov.au/centralregistration or by requesting a print copy from the Kindergarten Central Registration Officer.

4.3.2.3 Registration information is available from the Kingston City Council Customer Service Centre, Kindergartens and Maternal and Child Health Centres. This information can be mailed or emailed to families by the Kindergarten Central Registration Officer on request, or viewed online at www.kingston.vic.gov.au/centralregistration

4.3.2.4 Support from the Kindergarten Central Registration Officer is available to help people complete the Registration Form if required.

4.3.2.5 Parent/guardians must provide the following documentation when submitting a Registration Form to demonstrate:

- Proof of the child's date of birth (E.g. copy of birth certificate, birth extract, or Immunisation Statement (MyGov), a copy of passport or a Statutory Declaration verifying your child's date of birth to be true and correct).

And where required or requested provide the following documentation:

- Current proof of child's residential address (Eg. copy of parent/guardian's license, rates notice or amenities bill [issued within the last three months] that includes the parent/guardian's name and address);
- Proof of registered child or sibling's prior connection to the service (Eg. acceptance or confirmation letter from the kindergarten, receipt for fees paid or a graduation certificate, statutory declaration);
- Copy of a valid concession card (Eg. Health Care Card or Pension) or visa;
- Proof of a child's additional need (Eg. a copy of your child's Disability Health Care Card, a referral from a NDIS Support Worker or Early Childhood Intervention Service or Preschool Field officer, or a letter from a pediatrician or specialist);
- Confirmation of child's eligibility for a second year of funded kindergarten (Eg. Term Three Plan for Learning and Development or a letter of support from their current 4-year-old teacher or a second year statement or a declaration of eligibility for a second year).

4.3.2.6 In the instance where incorrect information is supplied by the parent/guardian on the Registration Form, registrations may be re-classified against the criteria and or offers may be retracted prior to child commencing kindergarten.

4.3.2.7 Parent/guardians are required to nominate three group options on the Registration Form.

4.3.2.8 Parent/guardians are required to complete a declaration on the Registration Form to confirm all information provided is true and correct.

4.3.2.9 Parent/guardians will receive confirmation of the registration and registration details by email.

4.3.2.10 One Registration Form is required to be submitted for both years of funded kindergarten for each individual child. The Kindergarten Central Registration Officer will send an email to parent/guardians of all registered three-year-old children, to confirm if they wish to participate in the allocation process and advise group options for four-year-old kindergarten in the following year.

4.3.3 Deferring children

4.3.3.1 Parent/guardians who plan to defer their child's commencement of kindergarten are encouraged to register their children when they are eligible for kindergarten and then defer them.

4.3.3.2 Children must be registered with Kingston's CRS prior to deferment to be classified as a priority of access.

4.3.3.3 Children who have deferred their three year old kindergarten start will not be classified as a priority of access for four year old kindergarten allocation.

4.3.4 Procedure for Registrations received after each allocation round

4.3.4.1 Registrations that are received after the administrative cut off for each allocation round will be entered into the data system before subsequent round offers are made.

4.3.4.2 Registrations that are received after the allocation process has commenced will not be placed at a disadvantage to existing registrations regardless of submission date.

4.3.5 Registration Fee

4.3.4.1 All registrations, except for those who meet DE's Priority of Access criteria, require payment of a non-refundable registration fee that must accompany the Registration Form when submitted.

4.3.4.2 Refunds for over payments will be considered by contacting the Kindergarten Central Registration Officer by email at kindergartenrolment@kingston.vic.gov.au and providing evidence of the over payment.

4.3.4.3 Payment is made to Kingston City Council.

4.3.4.4 Registration fees will be reviewed annually through the Kingston City Council's budget process.

4.4 Allocation and Offer of Kindergarten Places

4.4.1 Allocations to kindergarten groups commence in late July of each year. Council will send out letters of offer to the families via email. To accept an offer, parent/guardians must respond by the date stated in their letter of offer to secure a place.

4.4.2 In the instance a family hasn't responded to their letter of offer within the date stated, a minimum of two reminders will be sent to them via email and/or SMS. Failure to respond to these reminders will result in the offered place being deemed as available for reallocation to another child.

4.4.3 In the instance a family, who has a child who qualifies as a Priority of Access, hasn't responded to their letter of offer within the date stated, a direct phone call will be made to them in addition to two reminder emails and/or SMS. Failure to respond to these reminders will result in the offered place being deemed as available for reallocation to another child.

4.4.4 Allocations for three and four-year-old kindergarten will be conducted in separate processes. Every effort will be made to place children at the same service for three and four-year-old kindergarten. Unfortunately, we are unable to guarantee this due to the National regulatory space and staff to child ratio requirements for kindergartens.

4.4.5 Kindergarten services can access Waitlists, offers and acceptances by accessing EnrolNow (registration and allocation software) as required.

4.4.6 Kindergarten allocation dates for three and four-year-old funded kindergarten groups will be provided to services in March of each year. All services will be sent a reminder of these dates in June.

- 4.4.7 Round 1: Offers will be made to Kingston residents only (except non-resident children who meet the Victorian Government's Priority of Access criteria); that is registrations that are classified Level 0 – 3 inclusive and will include all three group options. Council will send a letter of offer to successful families via email.
- 4.4.8 Round 2: Offers will be made to both Kingston residents and non-residents and will include all three group options. Round two allocations will commence within 5 business days after the response date of the first allocation round. All registrations received since the previous allocation round will be included in the second allocation round. Council will send a letter of offer to successful families via email.
- 4.4.9 Round 3: Offers will be made to both Kingston residents and non-residents and will include all three group options. Round 3 allocations will commence 5 business days after the response date of the second allocation round. Council will send a letter of offer to successful families via email.
- 4.4.10 Applicants who do not receive a kindergarten offer after the third allocation round will be contacted directly by the Kindergarten Central Registration Officer to discuss the options and seek advice from the family about how they wish to proceed.
- 4.4.11 Where a child does not gain access to one of their kindergarten group options, alternatives will be discussed.
- 4.4.12 Families who receive an offer will have the option to decline, decline and remain on the Waitlist, accept, delay commencement of kindergarten or accept and remain on the Waitlist for higher option group(s). The parent/guardian must respond by the date stated in their letter of offer.
- 4.4.13 To allow the processing of allocations, administrative cut off dates will apply for each allocation round.
- 4.4.14 All correspondence to families will be sent through email, SMS or Australia Post if required.
- 4.4.15 Only children who are eligible for kindergarten funding will be offered a kindergarten place.

4.5 Ballot System

- 4.5.1 Where the total number of registrations for a nominated kindergarten group is greater than the number of places available, registrations will be selected through an automated random numerical selection referred to as the Ballot System.
- 4.5.1.1 Each ballot round must include all unplaced registrations of equal classification, regardless of submission date.

4.6 Waitlist

- 4.6.1 At the completion of the three allocation rounds, children who have not secured a place in a kindergarten group, will be placed on the Central Registration Waitlist.
- 4.6.2 The Central Registration Waitlist:
- 4.6.2.1 Council will maintain a Central Registration Waitlist each year for any family unable to secure a place in a kindergarten group.

- 4.6.2.2 Registrations on the Central Registration Waitlist will be contacted by the Kindergarten Central Registration Officer to inform them of their status and seek advice on how the family would like to proceed.
- 4.6.2.3 Registrations shall remain on the Central Waitlist until a place is offered and accepted in line with the allocation procedure or the Kindergarten Central Registration Officer is advised the registration is no longer required
- 4.6.2.4 If a vacancy occurs at a kindergarten during the course of the year, the kindergarten will notify the Kindergarten Central Registration Officer who will make an offer to the next eligible registration in line with the allocation procedure.
- 4.6.2.5 Allocations from the Central Waitlist will be made utilising this allocation procedure.

4.6.3 Alternate Waitlist

- 4.6.3.1 Where a family accepts an offer for a kindergarten group not listed as their first option, parents/guardians are able to remain on an Alternate Waitlist until/if a place becomes available in their preferred kindergarten group.
- 4.6.3.2 Children on the Alternative Waitlist will not be disadvantaged, and places will be allocated in line with the allocation criteria and process.

4.7 Alteration of Registration Information

- 4.7.1 An Alteration of Registration Form will be available on request and on Council's website www.kingston.vic.gov.au/centralregistration for parents/guardians who wish to alter their information in relation to:
 - 4.7.1.1 Change of address or contact details;
 - 4.7.1.2 Change of kindergarten group options;
 - 4.7.1.3 Deferring kindergarten year; and
 - 4.7.1.4 Cancellation of registration.

4.8 Working together

- 4.8.1 Within pre-arranged dates kindergartens will provide the Kindergarten Central Registration Officer with information that includes, but is not limited to the following:
 - 4.8.1.1 Timetable details including days, start and finish times, and number of places being offered for each three- and four-year-old group or option advertised as part of the CRS;
 - 4.8.1.2 The names of children who are eligible for another year of funded four-year-old kindergarten; and
 - 4.8.1.3 Confirmation of children on the Waitlist with a prior connection to the kindergarten or service.
- 4.8.2 Changes to timetables

4.8.2.1 The Central Registration officer will contact services prior to the first allocation round to seek to confirmation of timetable details and seek any updates or changes.

4.8.2.2 In the instance a service provider seeks to make changes to their timetable after the allocation process commences the Central Registration Officer will work with services on a case-by-case basis to update the changes, notify families and reallocate families where required.

4.8.2.3 Allocation criteria will apply in the instance a family seeks to change group or service as a result of a timetable change.

4.8.3 Families wishing to move groups once allocated

4.8.3.1 In the instance a family seeks to move groups within the same service and there are no other children on the Waitlist for either group, the service is able to reallocate children and inform the Central Registration Officer.

4.8.3.2 In the instance there are children on the Waitlist for either group, the child seeking to move groups will be placed on the Waitlist for the other group and the allocation criteria will apply.

4.8.4 Unfunded places and wrap around care

4.8.4.1 The CRS will allocate eligible three- and four-year-old children to funded kindergarten hours only.

4.8.4.2 In the instance a service has vacancies and wishes to offer unfunded places or wrap around care, the service will be responsible to manage the allocation to these additional unfunded hours and are required to:

- Notify Council of the changes to group capacities.
- Ensure a minimum of three funded places are reserved for eligible three-year-old children and a minimum of three funded places are reserved for four-year-old children who register after the formal allocation rounds.
- Prioritise children who are eligible for funded kindergarten.

4.9 Communication and Promotion

4.9.1 Kingston City Council will provide kindergartens with key dates for allocation rounds and due dates for information collection in February of each year.

4.9.2 Kingston City Council provides regular networking and development opportunities for participating committees of management and early years managers to come together and share information.

4.9.3 Kindergartens can access waitlist, offer and accepted data via EnrolNow.

4.9.2 Kingston City Council will advertise the opening date for Registrations in April of each year and information regarding the registration and allocation process will be available on its website.

4.9.3 Kingston City Council provides an online community directory to assist community groups, including kindergartens, to advertise their service and events at www.mycommunitylife.com.au

4.10 Grievance and dispute resolution

- 4.10.1 In the first instance parents/guardians and participating kindergartens can discuss any concerns regarding the CRS with the Kindergarten Central Registration officer who will work to facilitate a satisfactory outcome.
- 4.10.2 If a satisfactory outcome is not achieved, the matter will be referred to the Team Leader Children's Services Partnerships to facilitate a satisfactory resolution.
- 4.10.3 If the matter remains unresolved the complainant may wish to refer the complaint to an appropriate external agency such as the Office of the Ombudsman or the Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission.

5 Responsibility

The areas or positions responsible for defined tasks in implementing, maintaining and approving these procedures:

Position/Team	Responsibility
Children's Services Partnerships	Administration of the Kindergarten Central Registration Scheme

6 Related Documents and Resources

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 Funding Guide 2016;
- Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework;
- Early Childhood Reform Plan 2017
- Department of Education – 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 Policy.

7 Definitions

Word/Term	Definition
ACECQA	Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority.
Administrative cut off	Is a date nominated prior to each formal allocation round that registrations need to be received to be included in that round.
Allocation Criteria	The criteria for the allocation of places to participating funded kindergartens within the Central Registration Scheme.
Allocation Priority	Allocation criteria assigned to applicants for who meet DE’s Priority of Access Guidelines
Allocation Process	The process for the allocation of places to participating funded kindergarten groups within the Central Registration Scheme.
Alteration	The adjustment of information provided to the Central Registration Scheme in the original Registration Form.
Ballot	A system in which applicants of equal ranking are selected using a random numerical selection process.
Children with Additional Needs	Children whose development or physical condition requires specialist support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within the kindergarten setting • As defined by medical assessment • As defined by DE assessment (as per Early Learning Association Australia (ELAA) (Additional Needs Definition)
City of Kingston	Defined geographical area.

Committee of Management	A volunteer committee of parents/guardians responsible for the day-to-day management of a kindergarten service.
Connection to the Service	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.
CRS	The Central Registration Scheme for Funded Kindergarten.
Deferral	Is where a parent/guardian chooses to delay an eligible child's start to funded kindergarten. Once the child commences the kindergarten year, this is considered their funded year of kindergarten.
DE	Department of Education. The Victorian regulatory authority primarily responsible for the regulation and quality assessment of education and care services in Victoria.
Early Start Kindergarten	A DE 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.
Early Years Manager	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.
Eligible Child	A child who is eligible for State Government kindergarten funding and can apply for a place in a participating kindergarten.
EYLF	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
Extended care	Is when a service provider offers additional group sessions to allocated children that are over and above the minimum number of hours funded by DE.
Funded Kindergarten	Also known as three and four year old kindergarten.
Health Care Card	A concession card that entitles the person to cheaper medicines and concessions.
Kingston City Council	Organisation responsible for delivering a range of vital services for people and businesses in a defined area.
Kindergarten (also known as Preschool)	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.
Kindergarten Central Registration Officer	The Kingston City Council employee responsible for administering the CRS.
Kindergarten Group	The defined days and times that children attend kindergarten each week to access the minimum funded hours.
National Quality Framework	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.
Non-resident	A child who does not live in the City of Kingston

Protective Services	A government agency that responds to reports of child abuse or neglect.
Proximity to the kindergarten	Based on residential address this criterion refers to children: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whose residential address is within a two kilometre radius of the kindergarten service; or • Whose residential address is outside the borders of the City of Kingston municipality, yet the address falls within a two kilometre radius of the kindergarten service.
Registration fee	Payment to contribute to the administration of the kindergarten registration and allocation process.
Registration form	The registration form for parents/guardians who wish to register their child/ren in a funded kindergarten participating in CRS.
Resident	A child who lives in the City of Kingston
Second Year	A child is eligible for a second year of funded four-year-old 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.
Service	Includes the participating kindergarten or collocated care and education program eg: Primary School or Child Care Centre
Sessional Kindergarten	A funded kindergarten program provides short days of education and care that are typically 5-7.5 hours in length.
2 Kilometre Radius	Residential priority area for allocation purposes. This does not act as a zone.
VEYLDF	Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework – Curriculum framework to guide the development of the educational program for children.
Wrap around care	Unfunded care that is provided before or after group sessions for allocated.