



Three-Year-Old Funded Kindergarten Frequently Asked Questions

Why is kindergarten important for three year olds?

Introducing kindergarten programs for three-year-olds is about giving children every possible opportunity to succeed. Currently, the Victorian Government subsidises 15 hours per week of kindergarten in the year before school. This is known as 'four-year-old kindergarten'. Research consistently shows that two years of kindergarten are better than one. That's why the Victorian Government is funding an extra year of kindergarten—ensuring our kids are ready for school, and set for life.

What does funded kindergarten mean?

The Victorian Government will be providing funding to support all children to access a high quality kindergarten program in the two years before they start school. The funding goes to the approved provider of the service and is a contribution towards meeting the costs of the kindergarten program.

Does this mean kindergarten is free?

No, three year old kindergarten will not be free unless your child is:

- Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
- a triplet or quadruplet
- covered by a Health Care Card
- holds an eligible concession card or refugee, humanitarian or asylum seeker visa, or their parent or guardian does

How much will three year old kindergarten cost?

Fees will be set in September once programs and enrolment numbers are confirmed. The price will depend on the number of hours provided by your service. You can expect to pay a similar amount to our 4 year old fees.

When will funded three year old kindergarten be available in Loddon?

From 2021, families in the Loddon Shire area will have access to funded three year old kindergarten programs.



At what age can my child attend?

To enrol in a funded three year old kindergarten program your child must turn 3 prior to 30 April in the year they will be attending kindergarten. Due to staffing ratios children cannot attend until they have had their third birthday.

Is my child ready to start kindergarten?

If you are unsure about the best time for your child to start kindergarten, please contact our Early Years Team for advice (03 5494 1201). A visit to one of our kindergartens or a meeting with a qualified teacher can be arranged. You can also contact your child's Maternal Child Health Nurse or any other professionals your child sees.

Please Note: It is important that you consider when to send your child to kindergarten as they will only be eligible for one year of funded 3 year old kindergarten.

When and how do I enroll?

Enrolments for kindergarten in Loddon open on 1 July 2020 forms can be completed online at <https://www.loddon.vic.gov.au/For-residents/Services-for-our-younger-residents/Kindergartens/Online-kindergarten-enrolment> Please ensure you complete all sections and provide documentation as requested. Incomplete forms will not be processed. Enrolments for 2021 will close on 31 August 2020. If you are unable to complete the form online please contact our Early Years Team on 03 5494 1201.

How many hours of three year old kindergarten will Loddon offer in 2021?

As 2021 is the first year Loddon will provide funded three year old kindergarten we are unable to predict how many enrolments will be received. Therefore the hours of kindergarten will be determined once enrolments have closed. We will notify parents and guardians in September of confirmed sessions.

Will three and four year old kindergarten be run as combined sessions?

It will depend on the number of enrolments we receive for each program. Kindergartens with small numbers will offer a combined program. For services with small numbers a combined program enhances the kindergarten experience for all children. Parents and guardians will be notified of the programs in September.