



Fact sheet for families

Why is kindergarten important?

Kindergarten is an important step in your child's learning journey where they will learn through play and develop lifelong skills, including:





- social and emotional skills
- independence
- self-awareness and respect for others
- language, literacy and numeracy abilities.

Central Kindergarten Registration Scheme

The City of Ballarat's Central Kindergarten Registration (CKR) Scheme aims to ensure the whole community has access to a fair, equitable and timely system for processing kindergarten registrations. Families can submit a single registration form and select up to three preferences to more than 30 participating kindergartens in Ballarat.

Registering for Kindergarten

There are four simple steps to get your child into kindergarten, and lots of help along the way!

| STEP 1. REGISTER  | STEP 2. WAIT FOR YOUR OFFER  | STEP 3. CONFIRM YOUR PLACE  | STEP 4. ENROL  |
|---|---|--|---|
| <p>You can register your child from the January of the year they turn 2 years old for both 3 and 4-year-old kindergarten.</p> <p>Register online at ballarat.vic.gov.au/kindergarten</p> | <p>Kindergarten offers are distributed by email in August the year before they begin at kindergarten.</p> <p>Kindergarten offers are prioritised in the order they are received. However, your child may be eligible for Priority of Access to kindergarten and or Early Start Kindergarten (ESK)</p> | <p>Kindergarten placement offers are emailed out during our August offer period. You must respond to your offer within 10 days. If the place is not right for you, you can say no and go on the waitlist for a place at another kindergarten.</p> <p>If you have registered after the offer period you will be offered a place as they become available.</p> | <p>Your kindergarten will contact you with more information once you have accepted your offer.</p> <p>For enrolment you will need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - child's birth certificate - immunisation record |
| <p>You may be eligible for Priority of Access or ESK more information can be found on the website: ballarat.vic.gov.au/kindergarten.</p> | | | |

At what age do children go to kindergarten?

In Victoria, kindergarten is typically the two years before school entry. Children are eligible to attend a fully funded, three- and four-year-old kindergarten program for up to 15 hours per week.

Children can attend kindergarten from the age of 3.

Families with children who are born between 21 December to 30 April can choose which year they would like their child to attend. Children must turn 3 years old before starting kindergarten.

When your child starts kindergarten directly relates to the age they will start primary school, and even secondary school. When registering your child for their first year of kindergarten, we encourage families to plan and consider the age they would like their child to start school.

Use the calculator on vic.gov.au/give-your-child-the-best-start-in-life and enter your child's birthdate to find out what year your child can start their first year or second year of kindergarten.

What is the cost of kindergarten?

Three-year-old and four-year-old kindergarten are fully funded by the Victorian Government. This funding is paid directly to the kindergarten. This means kindergarten is free for up to 15 hours a week in a sessional kindergarten setting.

Kindergarten fees are set by the long day care providers with varied costs across services. For example, some long day care programs offer sessional kindergarten and others charge long day care fees. For specific costs, contact the provider directly.

| Sessional kindergarten program | Long day care kindergarten program |
|---|---|
| Free kindergarten for up to 15 hours a week during school term | Free kindergarten for up to 15 hours a week during school term |
| Sessions can be over two 7.5hr days or three 5hr days. <i>*Kindergartens will advise families what sessions are available on enrolment</i> | Additional fees based on individual service daily fees. CCS rates apply for days of care required |
| Bring your own lunchbox | Can attend during service hours of operation |
| Closed during school holidays | Open during school holidays (kindergarten funding not available during this time) |
| Offer both 3-and 4-year-old programs | Meals provided |
| | Offer both 3- and 4-year-old programs |

Victorian Government No Jab, No Play legislation

Under the 'No Jab, No Play' law, before your child can start at a kindergarten/early childhood service they will need you to prove, with an immunisation statement, that your child:

- is fully vaccinated for their age, or
- is on a recognised catch-up schedule if they are behind with their vaccinations, or
- has a medical reason not to be vaccinated.

For more information, vic.gov.au/child-immunisation

Do you have questions or need support?



More information can be found on our website, ballarat.vic.gov.au/kindergarten or scan the QR code

Alternatively you can contact Family and Children's Services on **5320 5720** or email kindergarten@ballarat.vic.gov.au