



## Enrolments – Frequently asked questions

To set children up for success, give them the best start by considering when your child is likely to gain the most benefit from starting school, as this will help you determine when your child's kindergarten experience should commence.

Once a child starts 3-year-old kinder, their education journey has commenced with an expectation of moving into 4-year-old kinder the following year and then school the year after.

On this page, find the most frequently asked questions relating to kindergarten readiness, repeating and a second year of funded 4-year-old kindergarten.

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Children enrolling for a three-year-old program must turn three by the 30 April of the year they attend. (Due to staff:child ratios that are based on age, a child cannot commence at the service until they have turned three years old.)

Children enrolling for a four-year-old program must turn four by the 30 April of the year they attend. A child may start four-year-old kindergarten at the commencement of the kindergarten year even if they have not yet turned four.

### **My child turns 3 in February 2024 but we are not sure if we should submit their registration for 3-year-old kinder yet?**

Although every child's development is unique, observation and research suggest that children who turn 3 between January and April can benefit significantly from waiting a year and starting 3-year-old kindergarten the year they turn 4.

Anecdotal evidence from educators in Bayside indicates that children in this age-group cohort, enrolled in the year they turn 3, are those most likely to request a repeat.

### **Can my child just repeat 3-year-old kinder if we discover they are not ready to progress to 4-year-old kinder?**

**No.** From 2022 the Department of Education will no longer allow 3-year-old repeats. From 2022, both 3 and 4-year-old kindergarten programs will be funded by the State Government and therefore subject to funding conditions. A 'repeat year', more commonly referred to as a 'second funded year' will only be possible in the 4-year-old funded program but is subject to specific eligibility criteria based on identified delays in the child's development in two or more of the developmental domains. A second funded year is based on the recommendation of the child's teacher.

## **My child is already enrolled in 3-year-old kinder this year. Can they repeat 3-year-old kinder next year?**

No. When your child starts kindergarten, it commences their educational journey. Your child will progress from 3-year-old kindergarten to 4-year-old kindergarten to Prep. Repeating kindergarten is not an option.

If you do not think your child is developmentally ready to commence 3-year-old kindergarten, research suggests that waiting a year can be an invaluable option. Take the year as an opportunity to access occasional care programs, for example, where your child can attend short sessions in the care of an educator, and build on the skills your child needs to support taking the next step to kindergarten.

To help you make an informed decision about your child's readiness, talk to your Maternal and Child Health Nurse, do some research on-line, or attend a 'Kinder Readiness' session offered by Bayside Council.

## **What are the criteria for repeating 4-year-old kinder?**

Repeating 4-year-old kindergarten should not be assumed as an automatic entitlement. A repeat 4-year-old year occurs where a child is assessed by the teacher or another early childhood professional as having delayed development identified in 2 or more areas and has been approved as eligible for a second year of funded kindergarten by the Department of Education and Training. Note that a 'second funded year' is not applicable to 3-year-old kindergarten, as mentioned above.

Where a child is not approved as eligible for a second year of funded kindergarten the expectation is that the child will progress to primary school the following year.

## **What if I am prepared to self-fund?**

As kindergarten places are limited in community kindergartens, self-funded places are not available. If you are looking at additional hours to compliment your community kindergarten hours, Long Day Care services should be explored.

## **What if I decide to wait another year?**

There are other options to consider if you decide to wait a year.

[Playgroup, occasional care and family day care](#) are available in the Bayside area and provide opportunities to develop your child's readiness for kinder. Additionally, Long Day Care services offer unfunded childcare options.

You know your child best. However, to help make an informed decision about when to start your child's education journey, you can:

- Discuss your options with people whose judgement you trust such as your Maternal and Child Health Nurse, kindergarten educators, school teachers (especially foundation and prep) and other parents.
- Attend kindergarten information sessions and Open Day, and speak with the educators.
- Read up on kinder readiness.

If you would like to discuss your options please either contact the kindergarten Service, or the Bayside Council Early Years team on 9599-4733.

### **Kindergarten Funding**

When you enrol your child at Jack & Jill Kindergarten, your child will be attending our kindergarten program and will be counted as an eligible child when we submit our data as part of reporting requirements to the Department of Education – even if the child withdraws part way through the year.

Your child can attend only one funded kindergarten program in a single year. If your child is currently attending another children's service that offers a kindergarten program (such as a child care centre, long day care or a different kindergarten) please draw this to the attention of us and to the other service.

If you do not want your child to be counted as an eligible child for funding at Jack & Jill because your child is already receiving the funding elsewhere, please contact us immediately as this may affect their enrolment status.