



FAQ's

What does 'a community kinder' mean?

Grange Road Kindergarten is a not-for-profit Incorporated Association, also known as a 'community kindergarten'. A community kindergarten is a type of early childhood education program, offered through the Bayside community and Council.

The Committee of Management is elected to represent the kindergarten for an annual term, the Committee is totally comprised of parents of the children attending the service. The Committee of Management is elected each year at an annual general meeting.

Being involved in a community kinder is a rewarding experience, both for you and your child. Community connections give children a sense of belonging and help them develop social and other skills, so families playing an active role in the kinder community is really beneficial to them, in fact it's the main reason community kinders exist.

Grange Road Kindergarten provides children with an environment that encourages and stimulates their social, emotional, and physical development, and builds self-confidence and social skills in readiness for primary school as well as basic academic skills such as literacy and numeracy.

Indigenous perspectives are embedded into our programs. This includes using Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander pedagogies, based on the children's interests as a vehicle for learning and creating culturally inclusive play spaces.

Activities are play-based which is central to the lives of all children; it is a natural behaviour through which children learn most effectively. For play to develop, children need adults who respect, value, resource and facilitate their play.

Incursions & Excursions

3-year-old and 4 year groups participate in one incursion per term based on the interests of the children. Some examples of past incursions include Henny Penny Hatching, Australian Wildlife Encounter, Monarch Butterfly Lifecycle Program, Wiggly Worm Dance Company, Carp Productions Theatre Group, Holly's Bees and Pebble Time.

4-year-old groups participate in atleast one major excursion per year based on the interests of the children. Please note under 'Free Kinder' funding Excursion Fees may apply.

Our 4-year-old children are also learning Auslan with educator Catherine Berry, thanks to funding received from the Early Childhood Languages Program, Department of Education.

Enrolments

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.

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.

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

No. Children enrolled in a 3-year-old program in 2024 will not be able to repeat the year in 2025. From 2023, both 3 and 4-year-old kindergarten programs will be funded by the State Government and therefore subject to funding conditions. A 'repeat year' is only 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 repeat of a 4-year-old funded year is based on the recommendation of the child's teacher and an assessment by an Early Childhood Pre-School Officer.

My child is already enrolled in 3-year-old kinder this year. Can they repeat in 2024?

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 (or Foundation). 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 or do some research on-line

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 two or more areas and has been approved as eligible for a repeat 4-year-old kindergarten year by the Department of Education and Training. Note that due to funding conditions children cannot repeat a 3-year-old kindergarten year and must progress onto 4-year-old kindergarten.

Where a child is not approved as eligible for a repeat of 4-year-old 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 Days, and speak with the educators.
- Read up on kinder readiness.

If you would like to discuss your options, please contact our enrolments team at enrolments@grangeroadkinder.org.au or the Bayside Council Early Years team on 9599-4733.

Kindergarten Readiness Information Session

City of Bayside Council is hosting an online Kinder Readiness Information session on **16 May, 7pm-8pm**

Tickets \$12.25

Melinda Vander Reest from the Early Life Foundation presents an invaluable session about knowing when your child is ready to start kindergarten. Melinda provides an evidence-based session to help you make an informed decision.

Register at www.bayside.vic.gov.au/services/children-and-family/positive-parenting

Kindergarten Funding

In 2024, 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 and Training – 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 Grange Road Kinder because your child is already receiving the funding elsewhere, please contact us immediately as this may affect their enrolment status.

For more information www.vic.gov.au/give-your-child-the-best-start-in-life

Thank you for attending the Grange Road Kindergarten Open Day.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact our enrolments team at enrolments@grangeroadkinder.org.au