

## Benefits of starting kindergarten

Kindergarten programs are designed to improve your child's development in the following key areas:

- social skills - how to play and co-operate with other children in a calm and fun way
- self-awareness and respect for others
- emotional skills, for example understanding their feelings and ways to express these
- language, literacy and numeracy skills, such as reading stories, counting objects and building verbal communication skills
- a joy for learning and group activities, such as talking, drawing and making things together with other children their own age
- opportunities to make new friends
- exposure to new ideas and concepts.

## Kindergarten also provides families with access to:

- support and assistance for children with additional learning needs
- resources and links to community support services.

## Benefits of deferment

- extra time to mature and develop skills
- increased confidence in social situations
- greater control of their body
- better able to cope with peer conflict and frustration
- increased ability to follow instruction and direction

## Deferment options

Some children benefit from delaying entry for a year, while gaining more confidence through playgroup, childcare, Family Day Care or informal parent groups, kinder gym and music/movement programs.

### For Further Information

Please contact Council's Preschool Field Officers on **9932 1540** or visit [www.hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au/PSFO](http://www.hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au/PSFO)

Further helpful resources

<https://www.vic.gov.au/education-information-parents>

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/preschoolers/play-learning/preschool/starting-preschool>

For information on Kindergarten Registration, visit: <https://www.vic.gov.au/kindertick>

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### HOBSONS BAY LANGUAGE LINE

## 9932 1212

INTERPRETER SERVICE FOR ALL LANGUAGES

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## HOBSONS BAY

# READY FOR KINDERGARTEN?



## WHY IS KINDERGARTEN IMPORTANT?

Research shows that kindergarten improves children's health and wellbeing, helps them to develop strong social skills and encourages a love of learning. Children who attend a kindergarten program are more independent and confident and are more likely to make a smooth transition to primary school.

## When to start kindergarten

When to send your child to kindergarten is a very important decision. Once a child starts 3-year-old kindergarten, their education journey has commenced with an expectation of moving into 4-year-old kindergarten the following year and then school the year after.

Families with children born between 1 January and 30 April need to make an informed decision about which year they would like their child to commence school and therefore which year their child will attend a kindergarten program. A child must be enrolled in school by the year they turn 6.

Children attending 3-year-old kindergarten will transition to 4-year-old kindergarten the following year. A second year of funded 3-year-old kindergarten is not available.

If children require an additional year of a funded kindergarten program and meet the criteria, they will do

this at the end of the 4-year-old kindergarten year. This is not automatically granted even if you feel the child needs one. To be eligible, the child must be considered to have developmental delays or concerns in at least two developmental areas and be assessed by the kindergarten teacher and a full second year assessment process should be carried out. It is recommended that another professional including a Preschool Field Officer, Early Childhood Intervention Service worker or Maternal Child Health nurse contributes information and advice

## Ready for kindergarten?

**There are many factors to consider when deciding if your child is ready for kindergarten.**

These include:

- Can your child separate from you for a period of time long enough to attend the kindergarten sessions?
- Can your child generally be understood when he/she speaks?
- Can your child initiate play or activities for him/herself?
- Can your child take responsibility for his/her belongings?
- Will your child speak up when he/she needs help?
- Is your child able to socialise with other children?

Kindergarten group sizes can vary. Children will be expected to wait for turns, share materials and concentrate for a reasonable length of time. There will be times when they will have to wait to get attention from educators and also time spent sitting at group activities, playing games, singing, listening to stories and having discussions.

Some children benefit from more time to learn from life's experiences at home before entering more formal learning settings.

Studies consistently show that two years of kindergarten is better than one. The research points to better social and cognitive skills, exam performance and emotional outcomes for those who attended a kindergarten program for two years.

## Making your decision

To help you make a decision about kindergarten readiness it may be helpful to make a time to visit a service to see how the program operates, what the expectations of the children are and to see how they learn in the group. Many services also have orientation days for children who are enrolled to attend the following year.

**There are a range of things you can do to prepare your child for kindergarten:**

- talking to your child about what to expect
- reading to your child every day
- encouraging your child to be independent by giving them time by themselves
- packing a change of clothes for your child and labelling all belongings
- encouraging your child to dress themselves, so they can manage tasks like taking their jumper on and off
- having practice runs taking your child to the kindergarten before their first day
- developing a goodbye ritual. At first you may want to stay to make sure your child feels secure, but once they settle in, a short goodbye encourages independence
- keeping the service informed of changes in your child's life that might affect their experiences at the kindergarten program
- Consider practicing opening and closing lunch boxes, drink bottles and backpacks to build independence and autonomy

