

Bubup Womindjeka Family and Children's Centre
Kindergarten Information for Families

Our kindergarten programs foster the agency and capabilities of each child by providing a high quality, strength and play based approach to learning and development. All kindergarten programs are delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher. They're designed to improve and support your child's development in:

- language, literacy and numeracy skills, such as reading stories and counting objects
- social skills, like how to play with other children in a calm, sharing and rewarding way
- self-awareness, resilience building and respect for others
- emotional skills and self-regulation, for example understanding their feelings
- a joy for learning and group activities, such as talking, drawing and making things together with other children their own age
- ability to make new friends
- exposure to new ideas and concepts
- provides opportunities to build skills that are important for life and supports school readiness

BWFCC Kindergarten Groups

4-Year-Old Sessional Kindergarten Groups (Room 8)

Tiddlik Group operates on Monday and Wednesday, from 8.30am – 4.00pm during the school term only

Bunjil Group operates on Tuesday and Thursday, from 8.30am – 4.00pm during the school term only

28 children per group

4-Year-Old Long Day Care Integrated Kindergarten Group (Room 7)

Bouddi Group operates Monday – Friday 7:30am-6:00pm 50 weeks of the year

28 children per day

3-Year-Old Sessional Kindergarten Group (Room 8)

Koonwarra Group runs on Friday, from 8.30am – 4.00pm during the school term only

28 children per group

3-Year-Old Long Day Care Integrated Kindergarten Group (Room 6)

Birrarung Group operates Monday – Friday 7:30am-6:00pm 50 weeks of the year

22 children per day

School terms are determined by the Victorian Education Department and available via their website: [School term dates and holidays in Victoria](#).

Before and After Kinder Care and School Holiday Care

Before kinder care operates 7:30am-8:30am in room 8 during the school term only. Fees are currently \$14.28 per session.

After kinder care operates 4:00pm-6:00pm in room 8 during the school term only. Fees are currently \$28.56 per session.

School Holiday Care operates 7:30am-6:00pm in room 8 during the school holidays only. Fees are currently \$150 per day and includes meals.

Please note, families normal Child Care Subsidy entitlements apply to Before and After Kinder Care and School Holiday Care. All children who participate in a sessional kindergarten program can access Before and After Kinder Care and the School Holiday program.

Kindergarten Funding

The Victorian Government provides up to 15 hours kindergarten funding to each kindergarten service to support children to access a high-quality kindergarten program delivered by a registered early childhood teacher. The funding is a contribution towards meeting the running costs of the kindergarten program and is paid directly to the service, not to the families.

Children can only access a funded kindergarten place at one service in one program only. Children who are enrolled in the sessional kindergarten program will automatically have their kindergarten funding applied to that program. Please note, children can attend both sessional kindergarten and long day care integrated kindergarten however kindergarten funding will apply to the sessional kindergarten program only.

3 year old and 4 year old kindergarten are strictly one-year funded placements only however provisions for a funded second year of 4 year old kindergarten are available if the kindergarten teacher determines a child has developmental delays in two or more key areas of development. There are no provisions for a second year of funded 3 year old kindergarten.

Kindergarten Fee Structure

BWFCC is participating in the Victorian State government initiative of Free Kinder. Free Kinder applies to Sessional Kindergarten and Long Day Care Integrated Kindergarten however families are only entitled to Free Kinder in one program. Children who are enrolled in the sessional kindergarten program will automatically have their Free Kinder funding applied to that program. Free kinder in the long day care integrated kindergarten is in the form of a \$2,000 credit and is only for families not participating in a sessional kindergarten program. Please see Kinder fees below based on this.

3-Year-Old and 4-Year-Old Sessional Kindergarten

There are no fees for the sessional kindergarten programs.

3-Year-Old and 4-Year-Old Long Day Care Integrated Kindergarten

Daily fees apply to all booked days of care and are charged for all absences incurred by illness, family holidays and public holidays as per our fee policy. Families' Child Care Subsidy entitlements will apply to the daily fee and families continue to pay their usual gap fee. Families who are accessing the long day care integrated program as their funded kindergarten program will be entitled to a further credit of \$2,000 over the year that will be offset against fees accrued. The \$2,000 credit is paid to the service and is applied to families' accounts on a monthly basis.

What is the difference between long-day care integrated kindergarten and sessional kindergarten?

Long-Day Care Integrated Kindergarten and Sessional Kindergarten follow the same educational learning outcomes and requirements. There is no advantage or disadvantage of electing one format of kindergarten over the other. The three significant differences are the hours offered, financial structure and meal requirements. Both kindergarten programs are delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher, with the legislated educator to child ratio of 1:11 (BWFCC operates on a ratio of 1:6 for over 3 year olds).

The educational component of both programs is based on the Victorian Early Years Learning Framework and the program is designed to suit the needs of the individual children in each group. With our play-based approach to learning and development, sessional and integrated kindergarten do not offer a classroom style of learning.

For children in the sessional kindergarten program, they are required to bring a lunchbox and snacks.

For children in the Long Day Care Integrated Kindergarten, all meals and snacks are provided.

When should my child go to kinder?

Many parents wonder when to enrol their children into a kindergarten program. It is important that families assess their child's individual skills and needs when considering which year to start kindergarten. This may include your child's date of birth, ability to separate from caregivers, whether your child requires a rest in the afternoon, your child's communication skills, and the emotional and social maturity of your child. Families are encouraged to discuss this decision with their early childhood teacher, program coordinator, BWFCC Enrolment Officer, Maternal and Child Health Nurse, or other professionals involved in supporting the learning and development of their child.

3 year old kindergarten is a bridging program in to the 4 year old kindergarten and both programs are designed to be one-year placements only. We strongly encourage families to consider the year their child will go to school to then determine the appropriate years to enrol into kindergarten.

To determine the appropriate year for kindergarten and school, you can work backwards from when your child will be starting school. Schooling is compulsory for children by the age of 6 (unless an exemption has been granted). Your child must be enrolled to start their first year of school in the year they turn 6.

There is an exception for children born from January 1 to April 30. A child who turns 5 years old by 30th April may enrol in, or attend, a school in the year before they turn six. This means families have a choice of sending their child to school the year they turn five, or the year they turn six. Consider whether you would like your child to be amongst the oldest or youngest of the class.

If your child has a birthday between January 1 and April 30, they may attend:

- three-year-old kindergarten the year they turn three OR the year they turn four
- four-year-old kindergarten either the year they turn four OR the year they turn five

We understand there may be questions for families who have children born between January – April about which year their child should commence school. This is an individual family decision based on the points highlighted above, we would recommend any families who are unsure which year their child commence school to have a conversation with their early childhood teacher, program coordinator, BWFCC Enrolment Coordinator, Maternal and Child Health Nurse, or other professionals involved in supporting the learning and development of their child.

Is it compulsory for children to attend a 3 Year Old or 4 Year Old kindergarten program?

Participating in a funded 3 year old or 4 year old kindergarten program is not compulsory but strongly encouraged to support children's life-long skills and development and school readiness. 3 year old kindergarten is not a prerequisite to attend 4 year old kindergarten. 4 year old kindergarten is not a prerequisite to attend school. Please note, any child who is enrolled in either our sessional kindergarten (room 8) or long day care integrated kindergarten program (room 6 or room 7) is participating in a kindergarten program.

Second Year of Funded 4 Year Old Kindergarten

Children in a four year old kindergarten program who have developmental delays in two or more key areas of development and would benefit from another year of kindergarten can access an additional year of funded four year old kindergarten. This requires an assessment by an early childhood teacher only and cannot be requested by a family.

If a family chooses not to send their child to school following their child's 4 year old kindergarten year, they can continue accessing long-day care until their school year. Child Care Subsidy entitlements continue to apply to fees if a family remains entitled to the Child Care Subsidy.

What is the criteria for undertaking 3 Year Old Kindergarten?

Children must be aged 3 years old by 30 April in the year of commencement to be eligible for the 3 year old kindergarten program. The program is a one-year placement only and it is expected that children will transition in to 4 year old kindergarten the following year. If a family chooses not to send their child to 4 year old kindergarten the following year, they can continue accessing long-day care until their 4 year old kindergarten year.

Children will not be able to attend the 3 year old sessional kindergarten program until they turn 3 years old. If your child turns 3 between the commencement of Term 1 and April 30, they can only attend with a parent or guardian present until the time they turn 3 years old.

How Does the kindergarten program support school readiness?

Our 4 year old kindergarten programs, both sessional and Long Day Care integrated kindergarten, are focused on school readiness. The Tiddlik & Bunjil groups (sessional) and Bouddi Group (integrated) use the same transition to school plan. This has been developed by the kindergarten program coordinator in conjunction with our local feeder schools. Our transition plan for children consists of regular reciprocal contact with our closest feeder schools, opportunities to experience school settings through excursions and communication between kinder and prep educators, including a comprehensive transition report at the end of the year.

Our 4 year old teachers will continue to share observations and documentation of each child with their family and any concerns relating to school readiness are raised in the first term for further discussion on endorsing a second year of kindergarten.

For our 3 year old kindergarten programs, our focus remains on the learning and development specific to age, needs and interests of the children in the group.

If you have questions about your child's kindergarten program and school readiness, our kindergarten team are available to guide you. We will continue to work with families in selecting the program that is best suited to you and your child.

Waitlisting for Kindergarten

For sessional kindergarten, our waitlists open in advance and applications are recorded based on date of request. Our waitlists are advertised via the BWFCC [website](#) where families can view the specific years that our waitlists are open for. Families interested in sessional kindergarten are required to make a waitlist request to the Enrolment Officer via email. Families can contact the service directly for further information on the waitlist process if required.

The sessional kindergarten waitlist is reviewed each year to ensure all information is up to date and is purposeful in sharing further information on the offers process and the known days and hours of the kindergarten program for their specific year.

Families are notified of a successful sessional kindergarten placement via phone and email in July for the following year's program. Families are notified of an unsuccessful kindergarten placement via email only. Families who may have been unsuccessful in securing a placement at first instance will remain waitlisted until their child can be reached with an offer of enrolment.

For Long Day Care integrated kindergarten, our waitlist falls under our usual process of registering for long day care. Current families will be surveyed each September for their new-year care needs, with a confirmation of secured days sent shortly after. External families will be required to register with our long day care waitlist to be considered for a prospective offer. The process for external families commences each October.

Enrolling into school

It is the responsibility of each family to decide which school to choose for their child. The school enrolment application should be made to the school directly by the family, this usually occurs before July in the year before the child attends school. More information about applying for school can be found here: [Starting Primary School Victoria](#)

Local feeder schools to BWFCC include:

- Port Melbourne Primary School
- South Melbourne Primary School
- Middle Park Primary School
- Galilee Primary School
- Albert Park Primary School