

Southern Melbourne Area Early Childhood Improvement Branch

EARLY CHILDHOOD RESOURCE BOOKLET



Southern Melbourne Area Early Childhood Resource Booklet

Welcome to the Southern Melbourne Area.

The **Department of Education Southern Melbourne Area Early Childhood Improvement Branch** team have created this resource to support Early Childhood Professionals to find local contact information easily.

The document relates to the Southern Melbourne Area which includes the local government areas of *Greater City of Dandenong, City of Casey and Cardinia Shire*.

Contact Details:

Southern Melbourne Area Early Childhood Improvement Branch

Department of Education

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If any of the links within this document are unusable, please advise our branch earlychildhood.improvement.sm@education.vic.gov.au and our team will ensure to update the link/s.

This document is Version 1.4 and is current as of June 2026.

The Southern Melbourne ECIB team wishes to thank and acknowledge the hard work of the Inner Gippsland ECIB team who originated this idea and designed the first version.

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Early Childhood Improvement Branch (ECIB)

About the Early Childhood Improvement Branch

The Southern Melbourne Area Early Childhood Improvement Branch is dedicated to collaborating with Early Childhood services across the *Greater City of Dandenong, City of Casey and Cardinia Shire* to lift quality and improve outcomes for children.

The branch brings together a professional team of staff who are equipped to:

- provide you with advice and information on funding you are eligible to apply for from the Victorian Government,
- monitoring ongoing funding commitments and obligations,
- connect you to relevant programs and services,
- link you with professional practice opportunities, and
- take part in local network meetings.

Early Childhood Improvement Branch Funded Programs

The branch focuses on early childhood programs funded by the Victorian State Education Department, including:

- Delivery of the Best Start, Best Life reforms including 3-Year-Old Kindergarten and more hours for 4-Year-Old Kindergarten
- School Readiness Funding,
- Early Start Kindergarten,
- Koorie Kids Shine,
- Best Start program
- Kindergarten Inclusion Support
- Preschool Field Officer Program
- Early Years Management



Roles within Southern Melbourne ECIB Team

Early Childhood Improvement Branch Manager

The **Early Childhood Improvement Branch Manager** leads the early childhood improvement branch and has oversight of all department-funded early childhood programs and works alongside the team to support service providers. They engage with key stakeholders to discuss, analyse and address key challenges and lead innovation.

Early Childhood Performance and Planning Advisors (ECPAPA)

Early Childhood Performance and Planning Advisors work in partnership with service providers to develop capacity to deliver quality department-funded early childhood programs within the local community, particularly for vulnerable children and families. They manage and monitor contracts and service agreements across the majority of department funded early childhood programs and help services to meet their contractual obligations.

Kindergarten Improvement Advisors (KIA)

The **Senior Kindergarten Improvement Advisor** provides high level advice to the Early Childhood Improvement Branch team on complex matters within the Early Childhood sector. The Senior KIA works to build the capacity of funded kindergarten services and providers to continuously improve service quality, particularly through the implementation of the Early Childhood reforms and by identifying risks and leading change management and stakeholder engagement matters.

Kindergarten Improvement Advisors advise, support, and build the capacity of funded kindergarten services to continuously improve service quality. They have sound expertise in early childhood education and care and have had significant experience in the sector. They work in partnership with you to improve quality and practice and will support you to build relationships with other services, schools and networks across the Area.

They work with all funded kindergarten services in our Area to support the planning and implementation of school readiness funding, particularly assisting you to access, analyse and use key data and providing tools and advice to help services plan the best use of their school readiness funding.

They also manage local Early Years Learning Networks, Early Learning Leadership Forums, early childhood graduate teacher place-based programs as well as Yarning Networks in partnership with our KESO team.

Early Childhood Funding Advisor (ECFA)

Early Childhood Funding Advisors provide a range of supports to early childhood services around all aspects of kindergarten funding, processing funding applications and solving kindergarten funding related enquiries

Specific supports include assisting with funding applications, monitoring kindergarten program service agreements and supporting related tasks such as annual confirmation and solving kindergarten funding related issues.

Contact - SEVR.EC.Funding.Advisor@education.vic.gov.au

Other DE Early Childhood Support Teams

Additional services available for children aged birth to 6 years

Program	Age	Description	Access
Maternal and Child Health Service	Birth to 6 years	A free service which provides ten key ages and stages visits with a qualified nurse. Visits help promote healthy outcomes for children and their families as well as identify children's health and development concerns. Maternal and Child Health Service	Appointments can be made by directly contacting the relevant local government. Dandenong Maternal and Child Health Service Centre Greater Dandenong Council Maternal and child health City of Casey Maternal and child health (MCH) - Cardinia Shire Council
Community Playgroups	Birth to 5 years	Groups that provide a social opportunity for families with children to meet, play and learn. Home - Playgroup Victoria	Enrolments can be made by contacting the local community groups directly or through the local government. Playgroups Greater Dandenong Council Playgroups City of Casey Playgroups - Cardinia Shire Council
Supported Playgroups	Birth to 5 years	Supported Playgroups are a free program for families that may require extra support across Victoria with children from birth to school age. Supported playgroups - Playgroup Victoria Supported Playgroups for parents (youtube.com)	Referrals can be made by contacting the local government. Playgroups Greater Dandenong Council Playgroups City of Casey Playgroups - Cardinia Shire Council

LOOKOUT Education Centre

LOOKOUT centres are designed to:

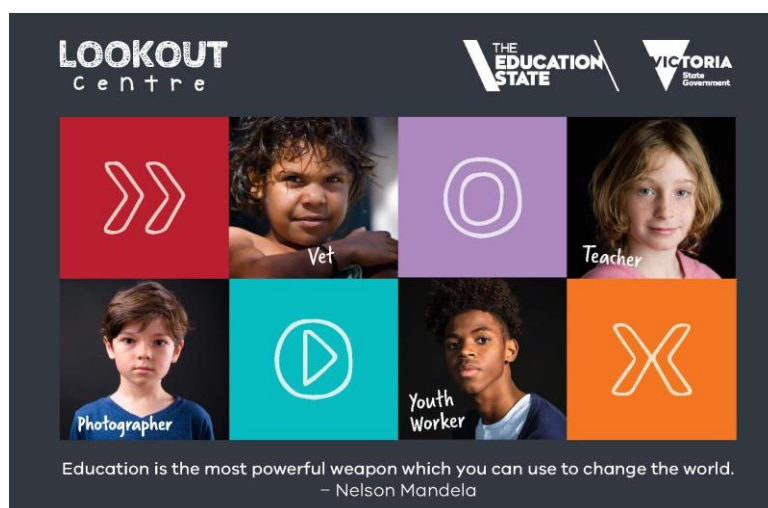
- **Lift** educational outcomes for children and young people in Out of Home Care (OoHC).
- **Increase** accountability of the Victorian Department of Education (DE) and Department of Families, Fairness & Housing (DFFH) systems and services for the educational achievement of children and young people in our care.
- **Build** the capability of early childhood education and care (ECEC), schools, services and case managers to effectively support learning.

LOOKOUT Early Childhood Learning Advisors (ECLAs)

- Facilitate and monitor children in out-of-home care's participation in two years of high-quality kindergarten
- Promote **Early Start Kindergarten** and a supportive transition to school.

Resources

- [LOOKOUT Education Support Centres | Victorian Government \(www.vic.gov.au\)](http://www.vic.gov.au)
- [Transition to School Resource for Carers of Children in Out of Home Care](#)
- [Early Childhood Agreement for Children in Out of Home Care](#)



Contact: lookout.sev@education.vic.gov.au

LOOKOUT Education Centre – Professional Learning for ECTs



LOOKOUT CENTRE PRESENTS

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD TEACHERS

Supporting Children in
Out-Of-Home Care

PURPOSE

To provide a suite of professional learning sessions to build capability in supporting the educational needs of children living in out-of-home care (OoHC).

TIME REQUIRED

1.5 to 2 hours online

REGISTER NOW

For more information about upcoming learning opportunities, please contact the SEV LOOKOUT centre lookout.sev@education.vic.gov.au

Victorian Early Childhood Regulatory Authority (VECRA)

In Victoria, responsibility for administering the National Quality Framework is shared between VECRA and the Australian Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA).

VECRA are the regulatory authority for Victoria and are responsible for:

- granting service and provider approvals
- carrying out the quality assessment and rating process
- making sure education and care services meet the requirements of the National Law and National Regulations.



Authorised Officers

Conduct the work of the regulatory authority including:

- Requirements of the Child Safe Standards, National Law Act and National Regulations
- Conduct assessment and rating visits and complete reporting
- Provide information and resources to the community in relation to their work and legislative requirements
- Monitor compliance of services
- Conduct approvals for providers and services
- Investigate allegations of non-compliance
- Provide tailored support and advice



Southern Metropolitan Region

Phone: 03 8904 2500

Email: vecra.southern.metro@education.vic.gov.au

Gippsland Region

Phone: 03 8904 2500

Email: vecra.gippsland@education.vic.gov.au

Monthly sector newsletter

The content is primarily related to regulatory issues and improving compliance and quality in education and care practice.

It is open to anyone interested in regulatory practice, evidence-based teaching approaches and general information about early years education.

Find out more about [how to subscribe to the monthly newsletter](#)

What are the differing roles of the ECIB and the Regulator?

The key roles of the Early Childhood Improvement Branch (ECIB) and the Victorian Early Childhood Regulatory Authority (VECRA) are outlined below.

Early Childhood Improvement Branch (ECIB)	Victorian Early Childhood Regulatory Authority (VECRA)
Kindergarten Funding	Service and Provider Approvals
Funding and support related to KIS, PSFO, AEL and ESK	Assessment and rating process
Service Agreements and Monitoring	Ensuring services meet the requirements of the National Law and Regulations and Child Safe Standards
School Readiness Funding (SRF)	Waivers relating to National Law and Regulations
Sector engagement	Complaints
Quality and Improvement Capacity building and support	Quality and Improvement Assessment and Rating
Practice support and Mentoring	

Koorie Engagement Support Officers (KESOs)

The Koorie Engagement Support Officers (KESOs) are an integral part of the Koorie Education Workforce who assist early years services and schools by providing guidance to enhance cultural inclusion practices, and to support the engagement, attendance, wellbeing and achievement of Koorie learners.

KESOs are area-based professionals who are members of the local Aboriginal community with an understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories. KESOs play an integral role to engage

families, communities, education and service providers to facilitate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander learners to participate fully in education.

The KESOs provide a range of supports and services available to early childhood service providers, schools and Koorie families including –

- Community Understanding and Safety Training (CUST)
- Resources and advice to incorporate Koorie Perspectives into the Education Curriculum
- Resources and advice to create culturally inclusive learning environments
- Support to improve child/student wellbeing, attendance, and engagement
- Support for students and families through transitions across all learning stages

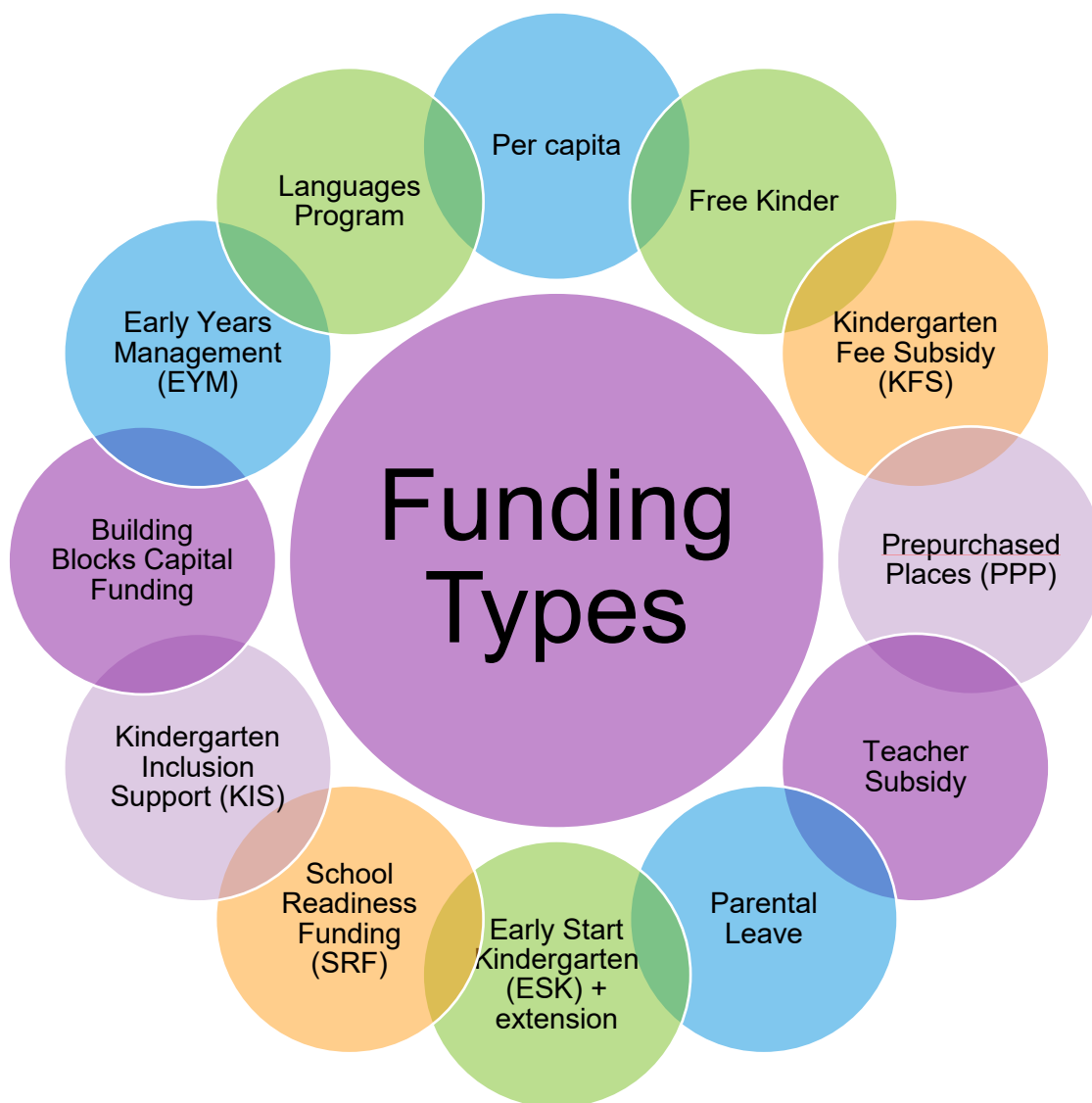
For KESO support and general inquiries, please email: sevr.koorie.SM@edumail.vic.gov.au



Kindergarten Funding Information

The Department provides different funding types to service providers to operate a funded kindergarten program.

For more information about Victorian Kindergarten Funding, please refer to the [Kindergarten Funding Guide](#)



Kindergarten Funding Guide

The Victorian government funds eligible early childhood services to operate kindergarten programs across the state.

For more information about Victorian Kindergarten Funding, please refer to the [Kindergarten Funding Guide](#)

Please note: The Kindergarten Funding Guide is currently being updated to reflect the 2026 funding and policy settings.

An updated version will be published on the DE website once it is finalised. In the meantime, please note that the current version may not reflect the funding and policy settings that will apply from 2026.



Kindergarten Information Management System (KIMS)

All funded service providers currently delivering a kindergarten program have access to the [KIM](#) system.

All applications for School Readiness Funding planning are logged in KIMS.

Frequently asked questions are available for all registered KIMS users via the [Helpdesk Portal](#).

For specific technical questions or for support in entering data, contact the dedicated helpdesk.



Email: help.helpdesk@education.vic.gov.au

Telephone: 1800 614 810

**** Please note KIMS will ceasing operations with all information and functions to be undertaken in Arrival. Further communications will be circulated at a later time, and the department will liaise with the profession regarding implementation advice.**

Arrival

Arrival is a new purpose-built system that will replace the Kindergarten Information Management System for mandatory kindergarten data reporting. Arrival will also include functionality to enable sessional services to collect and report attendance data.

ARRIVAL

Arrival will help drive our collective efforts to support kindergarten attendance, so that all Victorian children receive the full learning and developmental benefits of a quality early childhood education.

Find out more here: [Arrival | vic.gov.au](https://arrival.vic.gov.au)



Email: arrival.helpdesk@education.vic.gov.au

School Readiness Funding (SRF)

School Readiness Funding is a permanent and ongoing part of the Victorian kindergarten funding model. School Readiness Funding supports 3- and 4-Year-Old children in all early childhood education and care services delivering state-funded kindergarten programs in Victoria, including long day care.

[School Readiness Funding | vic.gov.au \(www.vic.gov.au\)](http://www.vic.gov.au)

[School Readiness Funding Menu | vic.gov.au \(www.vic.gov.au\)](#)

SRF Allied Health provider for Southern Melbourne

[Monash Health](#) is the allied health provider for Southern Melbourne. Monash Health professionals work in collaboration with the teaching teams responsible for delivering the funded kindergarten programs to build on existing skills and improve outcomes in the essential learning and development focus areas of:

- Communication (language, literacy and numeracy)
- Wellbeing (social, emotional and executive function), and
- Access, inclusion and participation.



Email: childandfamilyprogram@monashhealth.org

Telephone: 03 8558 9000

SRF Allied Health support line

An allied health support line is available for services that do not receive an allocation of allied health sessions through School Readiness Funding (i.e. services receiving under \$10,000).

The types of supports available include:

- case consultation (phone, email, video conferencing)
- coaching (phone, email, video conferencing)
- provision of resources (for both educators and families)
- referral pathway advice and connection to relevant local services
- online information sessions for educators and families on commonly sought topics
- facilitated Q&A sessions via video conferencing
- a quarterly newsletter with 'tips and tricks' on a range of allied health relevant topics.

The allied health support line provider is [DPV Health](#).



Email: srf.phoneline@dpvhealth.org.au

Telephone: 0409 295 039 or (03) 9020 9156

Networking and Learning Opportunities

Early Years Learning Networks (EYLN)

Early Years Learning Networks provide opportunities for *early childhood teachers and educators* to connect with other early childhood professionals across the local area four times a year. The networks are an opportunity to learn collaboratively, deepen understanding of evidence-based practice and early years reforms, and explore solutions to common problems of practice. They also intend to create a sense of professional identity amongst the early childhood teaching profession.

Network meetings are held each term in each local government area.

Registrations open at the beginning of each term and are undertaken through the [Early Childhood Hub](#), with details included in our termly updates email distributed to each funded kindergarten.

Contribution to Backfill - Services who deliver a funded kindergarten program can apply for contribution to backfill for **two (2) early childhood teachers or diploma qualified educators** per service to attend an Early Years Learning Network (EYLN) each term.

Please note: This contribution is paid for your time to attend the EYLN, regardless of whether you need to be replaced on the floor at your service.

Contact our team at Southern Melbourne Early Childhood Improvement Branch to find out more regarding the networks held in your local area.



Email: earlychildhood.improvement.sm@education.vic.gov.au

Telephone: 1800 338 663

Find out more here:

[Early Years Learning Networks for early childhood teachers | vic.gov.au](#)



Early Learning Leadership Forums

The **Early Learning Leadership Forums** are held twice each year and focus on bringing early childhood leaders and managers together to learn about and discuss ways to inspire and influence our workforce in quality practice, systems and policy.

Previous topics have included:

- Showing Up for Equity: Leading early childhood teams to enable a Best Start and Best Life.
- Building quality by supporting workforce wellbeing.
- Creating workplaces that foster professional growth.
- Sustaining teams through Change.

Leadership Forums are open to

- Committee of Management Members
- Executive Teams/Board Members
- Area Managers/Team Leaders
- Regional Managers
- Service Directors and Coordinators
- Centre Managers

Contact our team at Southern Melbourne Early Childhood Improvement Branch to find out more regarding the forums held in your local area.



Email: earlychildhood.improvement.sm@education.vic.gov.au

Telephone: 1800 338 663

Find out more here:

[Events for service and organisational leaders | vic.gov.au](https://www.vic.gov.au/events-for-service-and-organisational-leaders)



The Early Childhood Hub

The [Early Childhood Hub](#) is a service level resource developed to support teachers/educators and leaders working in Victorian funded kindergartens.

It is a highly interactive professional learning platform that allows early childhood professionals to **navigate, enrol, complete, and track their professional learning.**

Everything on the Hub is **Free, voluntary** and able to be **completed in stages when it suits you best.**

Learners can access a variety of different modes of learning, which address a variety of learning needs. **The Hub will deliver a variety of on demand eLearn programs but also deliver coaching and mentoring programs. Mentors and coaches will also have access to the LMS environment and will be able to interact with participants through the Hub.**

Over time, all existing professional practice supports will be migrated to the Hub, establishing it as a 'one-stop shop' for Kindergarten professional learning programs and supports and build our data insights to support sector needs.

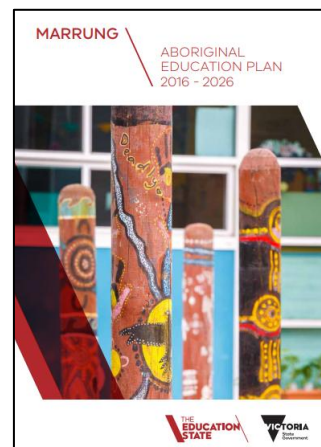
The screenshot displays the Early Childhood Hub website. The top navigation bar includes the Victoria State Government logo, 'EARLY CHILDHOOD HUB', and links for Courses, About, Help and support, and Contact us. A 'Login/Register' button is also present. The main banner features a photo of a teacher and children in a garden, with the text 'Early Childhood Hub' and 'Professional development courses and supports for early childhood professionals in Victoria'. Below this is a search bar and a section titled 'Explore courses' with filters for 'I am a' and 'Interested in'. A list of 9 courses is shown, including 'Early Years Assessment and Learning Tool (EYALT) Assessment', 'Induction Supports - Inductee', 'Induction Supports - Inductor', and 'Introduction to Intentional Teaching'. The right sidebar shows a course titled 'Three-Year-Old Kindergarten teaching toolkit' with a welcome message to Laura and instructions on how to get started with the course.

Marrung Supports and Resources

Marrung Aboriginal Education Plan 2016-2026

The [Marrung Aboriginal Education Plan](#) is a decade long strategy with a strong vision for Victorian First Nations people and our commitment to ensuring that all Koorie Victorians achieve their learning aspirations. SMA are active in providing support in cultural learning and engagement and bring about more opportunities and lifelong success for Aboriginal children through the work of the KESOs.

Find out more here: [Marrung | vic.gov.au](https://marrung.vic.gov.au)



Southern Melbourne Local Yarning Network Sessions

The Southern Melbourne Area Early Childhood Improvement Branch, in collaboration with the Koorie Engagement Support Officers (KESOs), local government and early years' service providers, delivers local government area-based yarning networks each term.

These provide valuable opportunities for early years educators to come together and deepen their understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.



Keep an eye on the termly ***Southern Melbourne Early Years Marrung Newsletter*** for details on upcoming Yarning sessions.

Southern Melbourne Area Invitations to Play

This guide was created by the Southern Melbourne Early Childhood Improvement Branch, in collaboration with Southern Melbourne Area early years' services and in consultation with our Koorie Engagement Support Officer (KESO) team.

The aim of the guide is to provide services with ideas and practical examples of different ways to explore, better understand and celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture in early years' services.

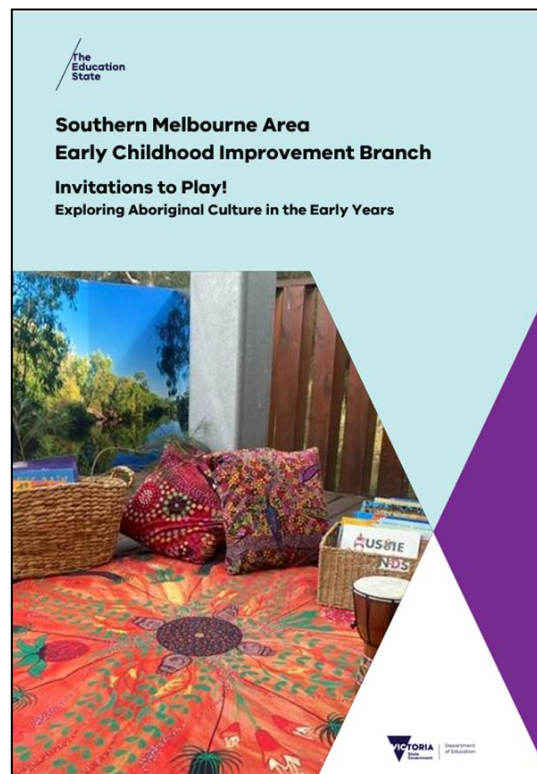
Through this resource we aim to:

- Increase awareness of the importance of embedding Koorie Perspectives in educational settings.
- Support Koorie children's sense of identity and belonging in services.
- Provide practical guidance on creating culturally inclusive learning environments for all young children.
- Encourage all children to deepen their knowledge and understanding of cultural differences and develop respect for identity and diversity.
- Increase Koorie children's participation in early learning services through inclusive practice.
- Showcase the amazing work of the dedicated educators in the Southern Melbourne Area!

This guide is for early years educators and teachers that work with children in an early childhood setting. This is inclusive of Long Day Care Services, Integrated Services and Sessional Kindergartens.

Throughout this guide we have included practical resources for educators of all skill levels and experience.

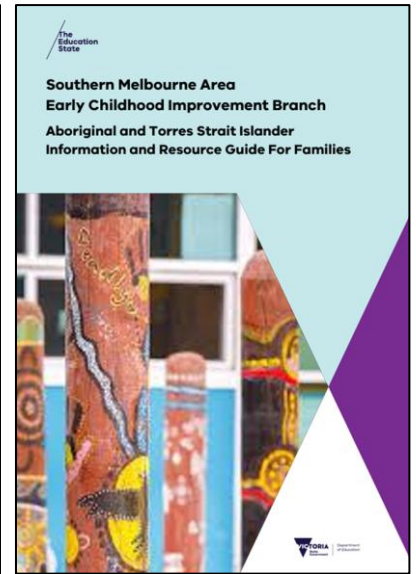
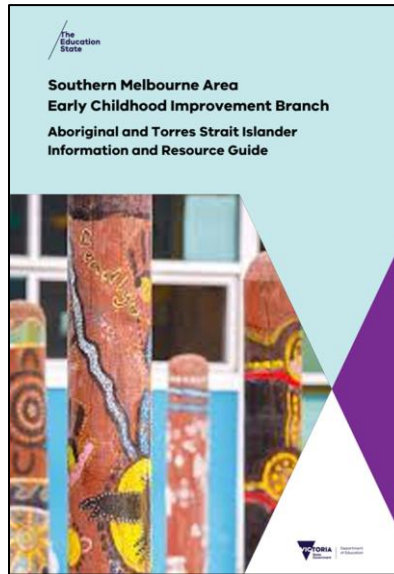
Please [download](#) this resource for use within your service.



Southern Melbourne Area Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Information and Resource Guides

The Guide is a comprehensive resource for services of the local community Koorie organisations and services that can support Koorie families. It also provides information on the Koorie Engagement Support Officer Program.

The Family Guide is a condensed version of the original resource Guide. It aims to inform families of the funding and supports that exist and to also provide them with an understanding of the various services and supports available within their local community.



Services can print and offer copies of the Guide to the families of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children attending their services.

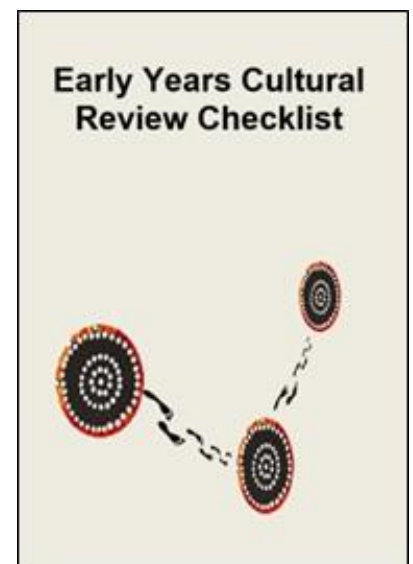
Please [download](#) a copy of The Guide

Please [download](#) a copy of The Family Guide

Early Years Cultural Review Checklist

This is a simple checklist tool early years services can use to self-assess their cultural understanding and safety and to quickly and easily identify areas for improvement. It can be a useful tool to use as a data source when SRF planning and also to measure and track progress.

Please [download](#) to a copy of the checklist.



bupup balak wayipungang initiative

The bupup balak wayipungang initiative is a Victorian Government early childhood initiative. It used to be called the Koorie Preschool Assistants initiative (KPSA). This initiative supports better outcomes for Koorie children from birth to transition to school.

It does this by:

- supporting Koorie children and families to access and be involved in their local kindergartens
- promoting inclusion and cultural safety in kindergartens
- supporting kindergarten services and programs to include Aboriginal perspectives in their practice and curriculum



New guidelines are available to support organisations funded by the Victorian Department of Education to deliver the bupup balak wayipungang initiative.

The use of a new name for the initiative in Dja Dja Wurrung Language has been approved.

Note: Dja Dja Wurrung words are not capitalised unless placenames or personal names. We commissioned artwork for the refreshed initiative. Victorian artist Emily Bell created this piece 'Life' and made it available for use to badge the initiative.

You can access guidelines to help you deliver this initiative - [bupup balak guidelines](#).

For further information contact the Koorie education coordinator:



Phone: 1800 338 663

Email: sevr.koorie.SM@edumail.vic.gov.au

VAEI Koorie Early Years: Best Practice and Protocols Guide – A Practitioners Guide

VAEI Koorie Early Years: Best Practice and Protocols – A Practitioners Guide, was produced in response to requests from early childhood educators on appropriate protocols for services to follow when seeking to provide a welcoming educational environment for Victoria's Koorie communities.

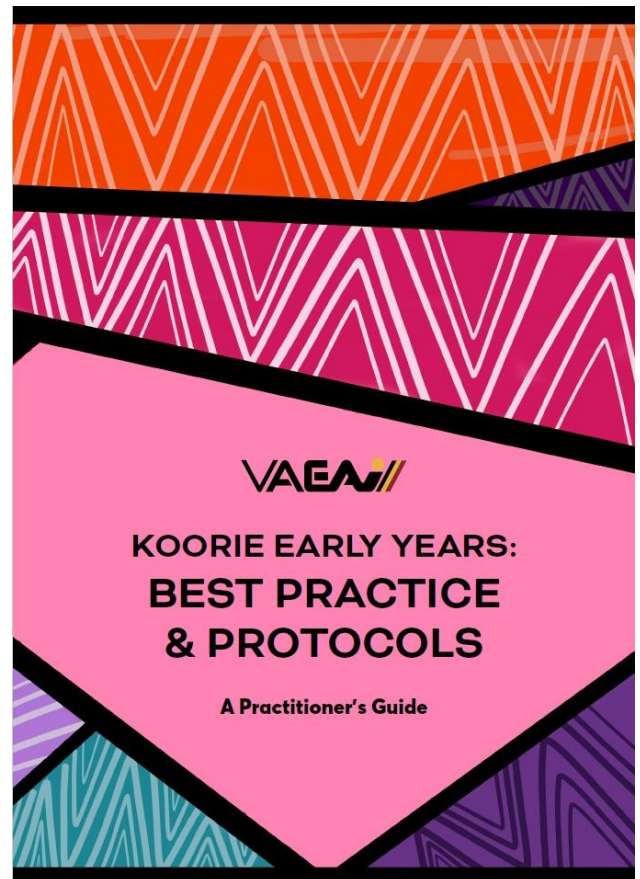
This document provides guidance on how best to incorporate guidance on how best to incorporate Aboriginal perspectives in early childhood services and increase inclusion of Koorie families through respectful use of protocols and local Koorie structures and community.

The Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated (VAEI) is an Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation focused on advocating for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities by providing advice from Koorie communities to Government on Koorie education and training priorities.

The Koorie community has an invaluable role in contributing to education today and into the future by imparting unique cultural knowledge and heritage to the broader community. Valuing Koorie culture and heritage in the Victorian education sector is a key step in the processes of reconciliation and self-determination.

This guide has been discussed and authorised by VAEI and representatives from Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Groups (LAECG's), the vehicles through which Koorie parents, carers and community members have a voice in education in Victoria. They represent local Koorie community perspectives and have Statewide coverage.

Please [download](#) a copy of the practitioner's guide to use at your service.



Continuity of Learning

Transition: A Positive Start to School

Transition: A Positive Start to School is a Victorian government initiative that introduces a consistent approach to guide families, early childhood services, outside school hours care services and schools to support a positive start to school for all children.

It outlines what all families can expect when participating in local transition to school programs and provides a shared understanding between early childhood services, outside school hours care services and schools about what is important for children and their families during this pivotal time.

The initiative also introduces a tool for families and educators to share information about a child's learning and development in the form of a Transition Learning and Development Statement (TLDS).

Find out more here:

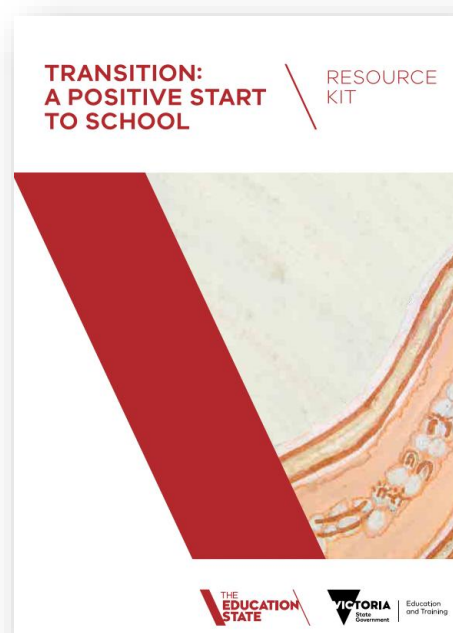
[Moving to primary school | vic.gov.au \(www.vic.gov.au\)](http://www.vic.gov.au)

Transition: A Positive Start to School Resource Kit

[Transition to school resource kit | vic.gov.au \(www.vic.gov.au\)](http://www.vic.gov.au)

Transition: A Positive Start to School Resources for Families

[Transition to school resources for families | vic.gov.au \(www.vic.gov.au\)](http://www.vic.gov.au)



Transition Learning and Development Statements (TLDS)

A child's TLDS summarises their abilities and approaches to learning. It promotes continuity of learning for children transitioning into primary school.

The Online Transition Learning and Development Statement (Online TLDS) tool reopens in July each year.

You will receive new login credentials through your registered service email address (as per NQAITS) when the Online TLDS tool reopens.

If you do not receive your login credentials, please contact the State Library of Victoria which has been engaged to provide IT support.

The helpdesk is open from Monday to Friday between 9 am and 5 pm.

To contact the State Library Victoria helpdesk:



Email: support@kindergarten.vic.gov.au

Telephone: 03 8664 7001 or toll-free: 1800 629 835

[Transition Learning and Development Statements](#) are completed online via the online Transition Learning and Development Statement (Online TLDS) tool hosted on the [Insight Assessment Platform](#).

For further information and to learn about available support for the Online TLDS tool, including professional development to support writing TLDS, visit [Complete an online Transition Learning and Development Statement](#).

Professional Learning to Support Transition to School

A pre-recorded *Learn to write effective Transition Learning and Development Statements (TLDS)* 90-min online workshop is available here - [Professional learning to support transition to school](#)

Additional Year Kindergarten Funding Information

An additional year of funded kindergarten may be considered appropriate when a child shows delays in at least 2 learning and development outcome areas from the [Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework \(VEYLDF\)](#) and when:

- the kindergarten program is deemed to be the most appropriate learning program
- the child will achieve better outcomes at 3-Year-Old Kinder than if they go to transition to 4-Year-Old Kinder the following year
- the child will achieve better outcomes at 4-Year-Old Kinder than if they go to school.

A child that is considered young and/or smaller but developmentally on track for their age **does not meet the eligibility requirement of an additional year of kindergarten.**

What is involved with an Additional Year of Kindergarten Application

Step 1	Term 2 Conversations with stakeholders – families and all stakeholders Development of Term Three Plan for Learning and Development
Step 2	Term Three Plan for Learning and Development • Implemented at the start of Term 3
Step 3	Additional Year Discussion Form • Completed to use in Term 3
Step 4	Additional Year Statement • Completed in Term 4
Step 5	Declaration of Eligibility • Completed by 30 November

For more guidance, support and information:

[Additional year of funded kindergarten or Pre-Prep from 2026 | vic.gov.au](#)

School Exemptions

Families are required to seek an exemption from school from DE by **1 November** if their child will turn **6** whilst attending kindergarten.

Find out more here:

[Going to kindergarten if your child is six years old](#)

Exemption from school enrolment due to attendance in a funded kindergarten program

Children who are turning 6 (compulsory school age) during the first or second year of funded kindergarten must be approved for kindergarten per capita funding and exempted from enrolling in school for the Department of Education (DE).

Please forward this completed form to the relevant DE regional office to request an exemption from school for your child.

Regional office addresses can be found at [www.vic.gov.au/office-addresses](#)

The following child seeks exemption from school enrolment for the year:

Family Details	
Parent/Care name:	Child's name:
Parent/Care address:	Child's address:
Parent/Care email:	Child's date of birth:
Parent/Care phone:	Child's gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Other
Children turning 6 during the 2022 year of funded kindergarten	
Complete the following for children turning 6 during the 2022 year of funded kindergarten	
Name and location of the early childhood service your child will be attending for their first year of funded kindergarten:	
An exemption from school is requested because (please select a reason):	
☐ The family has moved from interstate or overseas where the school entry age criteria is different to that applied in Victoria	

Disability Inclusion – Education for All

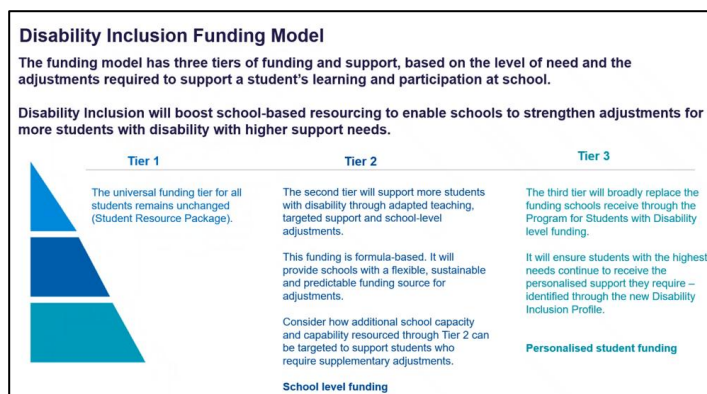
A new funding model has been rolled out with more investment to help schools support inclusive practices. It provides additional investment that schools can use to support groups of students like those with autism, ADHD and other learning difficulties.



Schools must make reasonable adjustments to ensure that students with disability can access and participate in education on the same basis as students without disability, **regardless of the availability of additional funding.**

Disability Inclusion Reforms have been rolled out to Southern Melbourne government schools.

- A kindergarten teacher may be invited to attend a meeting where the profile is completed. The school and the parent/carers must agree to their attendance.
- Transition Learning and Development Statements are likely to be considered evidence as a part of the Disability Inclusion Profile process.



- Kindergarten teachers may continue to be asked to complete a Vineland assessment.
- Kindergarten teachers should continue to identify children that would benefit from early intervention services and seek support. **However, a disability diagnosis is not required for a Disability Inclusion profile.**

Find out more here: www.education.vic.gov.au/disabilityinclusion

- Information for families - [Disability and inclusive education | vic.gov.au](http://Disability%20and%20inclusive%20education%20|%20vic.gov.au)
- Translated Information for families - [Disability Inclusion – information in your language | vic.gov.au](http://Disability%20Inclusion%20-%20information%20in%20your%20language%20|%20vic.gov.au)
- Disability Inclusion Profile Domain Table - disability-inclusion-functional-needs-domain-table-1417.pdf
- Disability Inclusion Levels of Adjustment - disability-inclusion-levels-of-adjustment-1421.pdf

Early Start Kindergarten (ESK)

Early Start Kindergarten (ESK) provides eligible children with 15 hours of free or low-cost kindergarten each week led by a qualified Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) registered teacher.

A child can be placed in a 3-Year-Old Kinder program, a mixed age program or where early start enrolments are incorporated into a 4-Year-Old Kinder program.

Who is eligible?

The ESK grant is available for children who are:

- three years old by 30 April in the year they are enrolled
- either:
 - from a refugee or asylum seeker background
 - Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
 - known to Child Protection.
- enrolled in a kindergarten program delivered by a Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) registered early childhood teacher.

Early Start Kindergarten, Free Kinder and 3-Year-Old Kinder

ESK continues to be available for eligible children, providing 15 hours of kindergarten each week for 2 years before school. Eligible children should be enrolled in ESK, even if Free Kindergarten or 15 hours per week of funded 3-Year-Old Kinder is available at the service.

Enrolling children through ESK ensures they have priority of access to kindergarten. It also means services can receive additional funding and support. For instance:

The number of ESK enrolments at your service contributes to how much School Readiness Funding (SRF) your service receives.

Your service will receive a full year's ESK funding upfront regardless of when a child starts or leaves the service. This supports you to plan for their access and inclusion.

Long day care services receive at least \$500 in extra funding for each child enrolled in ESK.

Services are encouraged to discuss eligibility for ESK with families and referrers directly, in addition to the information collected in enrolment forms.

Find out more here:

For families: [Early Start Kindergarten | vic.gov.au \(www.vic.gov.au\)](https://www.vic.gov.au/early-start-kindergarten)

For professionals: [Early Start Kindergarten information for professionals | vic.gov.au](https://www.vic.gov.au/early-start-kindergarten-information-for-professionals)

Access to Early Learning (AEL)

Access to Early Learning (AEL) is an early intervention program that helps young children to take part in early childhood education and care programs.

Access to early learning (AEL) is a targeted program for 3-Year-Old children from families with complex needs. It aims to make sure that vulnerable 3-Year-Old children get the full benefits of attending a quality kindergarten program.

Through AEL, degree-qualified facilitators can connect families to quality education and care services that are running kindergarten programs.

Facilitators also work with families in their homes to explore learning activities they can do with their children.

Eligibility

Children are eligible for AEL if they are referred by:

- an Enhanced Maternal and Child Health (EMCH) service
- family services
- The Orange Door or Child Protection professional.

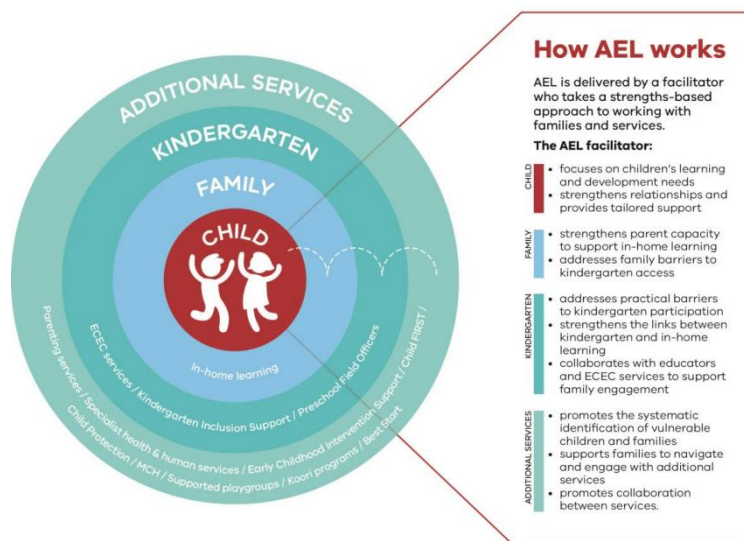
Services will refer children from families with two or more complex needs, including:

- being known to Child Protection
- child and/or parent with intellectual or physical disability
- family violence
- mental health issues
- sexual assault
- alcohol and drug abuse.

AEL Locations in Southern Melbourne

- Greater City of Dandenong
- City of Casey

The AEL provider for Dandenong and Casey is [Uniting](#) and has capacity to support 16 3-Year-Olds and their families each year.



Translating and Interpreting Services

All Graduates Interpreting and Translating

The department has engaged All Graduates to provide qualified and accredited onsite, telephone and video interpreters, and translation services for written information.

Early Childhood Language Services can help your service to strengthen engagement with parents and carers who speak a language other than English or use Auslan.

All interpreters are qualified and accredited, where National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) accreditation is available.

Victorian Government Department of Education funded kindergarten services and eligible early childhood support services can access free on-site, telephone and video interpreters.

All department funded kindergarten services can also access translation services for written information.

Keep reading to learn about Early Childhood Language Services to know if you are eligible and then contact [All Graduates Interpreting and Translating](#) to create an account or make a booking.



Find out more about [Early Childhood Language Services | vic.gov.au](#)

Supporting CALD families to engage in Kindergarten

Resources for services and providers to communicate with cultural and linguistically diverse (CALD) families about kindergarten and its benefits.

[CALD Outreach Initiative](#) directly supports families and services within City of Casey and City of Greater Dandenong local government areas.

Find out more here:

- [Supporting CALD families to engage in kindergarten | vic.gov.au](#)
- [Engaging-with-Multilingual-Families.pdf](#)
- [eLearning Series: Engaging with Multilingual Families about Kindergarten - fka Children's Services | fka Children's Services](#)

Child Link

Child Link is a digital tool that displays child information to key authorised professionals working with children, including early childhood teachers, MCH nurses, schoolteachers, and child protection practitioners.

The information sharing reforms remove barriers and make it easier for early childhood services to access information across the entire service system.

Early childhood services can use the Child Information Sharing Scheme (CISS) and the Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme (FVISS) to share or request vital knowledge to promote children's wellbeing or safety or manage and assess the risk of family violence.

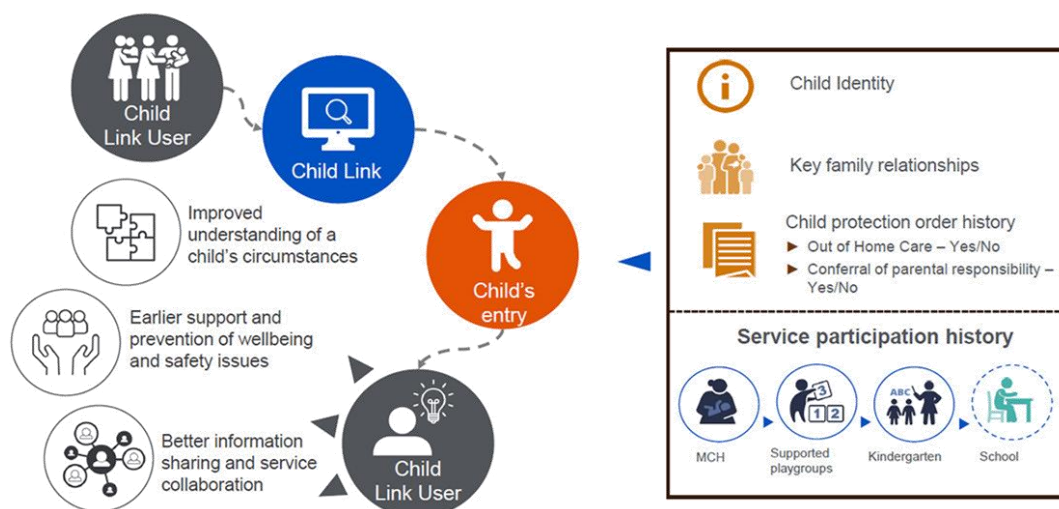
For example, services can share information when a child transitions to primary school. This builds on early childhood professionals' existing practice of sharing information to manage risks to children and encourages collaboration with other services.

Child Link is a READ ONLY tool. The information displayed on Child Link is drawn from various government source systems, including KIMS, and includes identifying child information like the child's name, date of birth, key family relationships including names of their parents, carers, and siblings, any current or historical child protection orders. It also shows the child's participation dates in key services like MCH appointments, kindergarten and school enrolments.

Child Link is a snapshot of child data and does not include detailed information like case notes.

Find out more here:

- [Child Link | vic.gov.au \(www.vic.gov.au\)](http://www.vic.gov.au)
- [Child Link Authoriser Induction Guide | vic.gov.au \(www.vic.gov.au\)](http://www.vic.gov.au)



Southern Melbourne Area Contacts

Preschool Field Officer Program (PSFO)

Victorian state-funded kindergarten programs are eligible for preschool field officer (PSFO) services to support the access and participation of children with additional needs in their kindergarten program.

Preschool field officers use a locally responsive approach that includes consultative support, resourcing and practical advice to assist kindergarten teachers. PSFOs also assist kindergartens to link families into supports and services available for children with developmental concerns and broader child and family supports.

The Department funds community service organizations and local councils to provide PSFO services across the state. There is no cost to the kindergarten program or families for the PSFO service.

Find out more here: [Preschool Field Officer Program \(education.vic.gov.au\)](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/preschool-field-officer-program)

Greater City of Dandenong

For further information
email the Kindergarten Enrolment
Team ChildrenServAdminSupport@cgd.vic.gov.au

Phone: 03 8571 1814 or 03 8571 1817



City of Casey

Noah's Ark
[Pre School Field Officer Program \(PSFO\)](#)



Cardinia Shire

Noah's Ark
[Pre School Field Officer Program \(PSFO\)](#)



Kindergarten Inclusion Support (KIS)

Support is available for funded kindergartens to plan and implement a program that is responsive to the individual abilities, interests and needs of children with a disability, developmental delay or complex medical needs.

The Kindergarten Inclusion Support Funding program provides assistance to complement early childhood teacher knowledge and skills, while acknowledging their expertise in supporting children's learning and development, including supporting early childhood teachers to build their capacity to develop and implement an inclusive program supports early childhood teachers to contribute to positive outcomes for children, as defined in the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework responds to the child's abilities and strengths, as well as their needs by supporting the kindergarten to enhance their learning and development.

For more information: [Kindergarten Inclusion Support \(KIS\) | vic.gov.au](#)

KIS applications are submitted by accessing the digital form located on the [KIS Program portal](#).

The KIS provider for the Southern Melbourne Area is [Yooralla](#).



Email Address: KIS@yooralla.com.au

Telephone: 03 5990 9640

Inclusion Support (IS) Funding

The Inclusion Support Program (ISP) assists education and care services to provide and embed quality inclusive practices into their delivery of early learning programs for all children, to address access and participation barriers and to support the inclusion of children with additional needs, with their typically developing peers.

Available for services who have children receiving *Commonwealth Childcare Subsidy* (Long Day Care services).

Under Commonwealth [Inclusion Support Program](#), the [Victorian Inclusion Agency](#) provides free support to [eligible education and care services](#). When a service cannot resolve a specific barrier to inclusion, they may be able to access [Innovative Solutions Support](#).

Southern Melbourne Area Best Start Partnership Contacts

Best Start is a prevention and early intervention program that aims to improve the health, development, learning and wellbeing of all Victorian children from conception through to transition to school (up to eight years old).

Vision: Communities work in partnership to improve the learning, health and development outcomes of young children and their families, particularly those in greatest need. **Best Start** supports the principle that participation and success in early childhood education should be equitable and should not depend on personal or social circumstances.

Best Start supports the principle that participation and success in early childhood education should be equitable and should not depend on personal or social circumstances.

Focus is placed upon ensuring that community voice is represented and that partnership meetings are culturally safe and responsive for Aboriginal and CALD community members.

Partner Groups include:

- Families and other community representatives
- Other government departments
- Local government
- Aboriginal community partners
- Early years education services
- Early childhood intervention services
- Maternal and child health services (MCH)
- Health services
- Government and non-government schools
- Family services
- Local community organisations

Find out more about [Best Start](#)



The Orange Door (formerly Child First)

[The Orange Door](#) is a free service for adults, children and young people who are experiencing or have experienced family violence and families who need extra support with the care of children.



Services offered:

- Adults, children and young people's family violence services
- Child and family services
- Aboriginal services
- Services for people who use violence

SOUTHERN MELBOURNE ORANGE DOOR CONTACT DETAILS

DANDENONG

311 Lonsdale Street Dandenong, 3175

1800 271 170

sma@orangedoor.vic.gov.au

PAKENHAM

18 Golden Green, Pakenham, 3810

1800 271 170

sma@orangedoor.vic.gov.au

Opening hours 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday (closed public holidays)

Services offered:

- Adults, children and young people's family violence services
- Child and family services
- Aboriginal services
- Services for people who use violence

Statewide, after-hours services:

- Safe Steps 1800 015 188
- Child Protection 1312 78
- Victims of Crime Helpline 1800 819 817 or text 0427 767 891
- Sexual Assault Crisis Line 1800 806 292
- Men's Referral Service 1300 766 491
- Kids Helpline 1800 551 80
- With Respect 1800 542 847
- MensLine Australia 1300 789 978
- Emergency 000

Child Protection in early childhood (PROTECT)

You should make a report to Child Protection if you have formed a reasonable belief that a child has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm as a result of abuse or neglect and their parent has not or is unlikely to protect them from harm of that type.

Responding to Suspected Child Abuse Template

This template aligns with this requirement, and it's strongly recommended that all early childhood service staff utilise this template for incidents, disclosures and suspicions of child abuse.

As an early childhood staff member, you must keep clear and comprehensive notes relating to incidents, disclosures and allegations of child abuse.

[EarlyChildhood_ReportingTemplate.pdf \(education.vic.gov.au\)](#)

Your aim should be to provide as much information within the template as possible. These records will be helpful in making a report of the abuse to the relevant authorities. If you require support to complete the template, you should seek support from your manager/service provider.

- If you have significant concern for the wellbeing of a child, but do not believe they are at risk of significant harm, and where the immediate safety of the child will not be compromised, a referral to The Orange Door may be appropriate.
- To report concerns that are life threatening, call Victoria Police: **000**
- To report concerns about the immediate safety of a child after hours, call the After-Hours Child Protection Emergency Service: **13 12 78**

Find out more here:

[Child protection in early childhood \(PROTECT\) | vic.gov.au \(www.vic.gov.au\)](#)

Child Protection in early childhood: Online Learning

Access the free online eLearning module [Protecting Children - Mandatory Reporting and Other Obligations Early Childhood](#)



Komak – Supporting the Afghan Community

Komak is designed to build relationships and resilience within the Afghan community living in south-east Melbourne.

“Komak” (meaning “help” or “support” in Dari) is a specialised service that champions the Afghan community.

Together with the Afghan community, the Komak team works to develop resilience and build community connections in Dandenong and South-East Melbourne.

With a focus on reducing isolation, Komak provides services to individuals, families, their peers, community leaders and professionals – everyone can reach out and receive support.

Services and activities

You can access a diverse range of services and activities, such as:

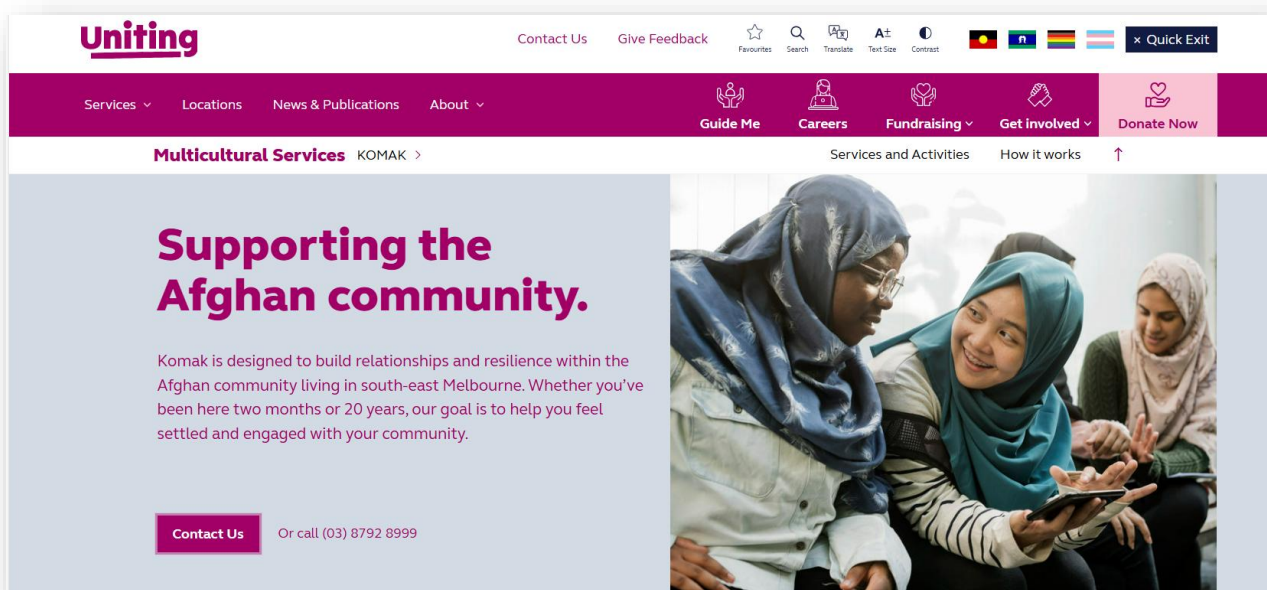
- Assessment, referral and support for people at risk of anti-social behaviour
- Activities to encourage community connection
- Case and service coordination for a range of issues
- Engagement and trust-building with local community members

Komak Dandenong

Address: 51 Princes Highway, Dandenong

Telephone: 8792 8999

Find out more: [Komak Afghan Support Service Program | Uniting Vic.Tas](#)

The image is a screenshot of the Uniting website. The header features the Uniting logo on the left and navigation links (Contact Us, Give Feedback) and utility links (Favourites, Search, Translate, Text Size, Contrast, and flags) on the right. A secondary navigation bar includes Services, Locations, News & Publications, and About. Below this is a row of icons for Guide Me, Careers, Fundraising, Get Involved, and Donate Now. The main content area has a breadcrumb trail: Multicultural Services > KOMAK >. The title 'Supporting the Afghan community.' is prominently displayed in a large, bold, purple font. Below the title, a paragraph states: 'Komak is designed to build relationships and resilience within the Afghan community living in south-east Melbourne. Whether you've been here two months or 20 years, our goal is to help you feel settled and engaged with your community.' A purple 'Contact Us' button is positioned to the left of the text 'Or call (03) 8792 8999'. On the right side of the page, there is a photograph of three women wearing hijabs, looking at a smartphone together.

Link Health and Community, partner of the NDIS

Link Health and Community is the community partner for the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Early Childhood Early Intervention (ECEI) in Southern Melbourne.

The early childhood approach helps children younger than 6 with developmental delay or children younger than 9 with disability and their families / carers. It supports families to help children develop the skills they need to take part in daily activities and achieve the best possible outcomes throughout their life.

The Role of Link Health and Community as the Early Childhood Partner

Link Health and Community is an experienced and qualified organisation with strong local knowledge and understanding of the needs of children and their families. As the Early Childhood Partner Link HC will be the first point of contact for families. You can contact Link Health and Community if concerns about a child's development have been identified.

Find out more: [NDIS Early Childhood Early Intervention - Link Health and Community](#)

Please [download](#) a referral form.

A NDIS EC site is in Southern Melbourne:

7 Bakewell Street, Cranbourne Monday – Friday, 9am – 5pm



Email: ECEI.LINK.LCHS@ndis.gov.au

Telephone: 1800 546 532



Please note: From 1 October 2026, children aged 8 and under with developmental delay and/or autism with low to moderate support needs will start to access support through Thriving Kids.

Thriving Kids will be fully rolled out by 1 January 2028. The Commonwealth, states and territories will continue to finalise the national and local services to be delivered to support children and their families in each jurisdiction.

Find out more: [Thriving Kids | NDIS](#)

Kindergarten Local Government Contacts

Greater City of Dandenong

[Families and Children | Greater Dandenong Council](#)

For kindergarten registrations:

For registrations visit the portal link:

[Kindergarten Enrolment](#)
(greaterdandenong.vic.gov.au)



City of Casey

[Kindergartens | City of Casey](#)

For kindergarten registrations:

Kindergarten Enrolment and Planning Officer

Telephone: 9705 5200

Email: kinderenrolment@casey.vic.gov.au



Cardinia Shire

[Kindergarten | Cardinia Shire Council](#)

For kindergarten registrations:

Contact the Central Registration Officer

Telephone: 1300 787 624

Email: mail@cardinia.vic.gov.au



Find out more: [Kindergarten Central Registration and Enrolment | vic.gov.au](#)

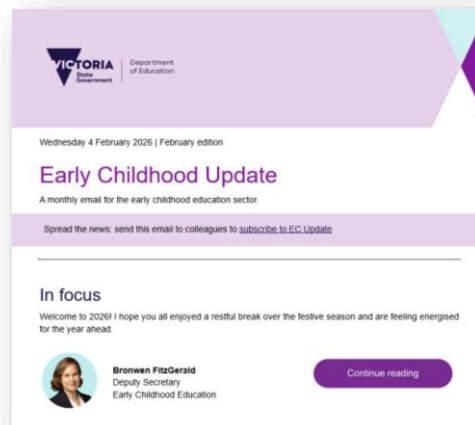
Department of Education Updates

Victorian Early Childhood Update

News, resources and information that supports the learning and development of young children in Victoria.

Find out more about [how to subscribe to the monthly newsletter](#)

Access previous editions of newsletters here [Early Childhood Update | vic.gov.au \(www.vic.gov.au\)](#)



Southern Melbourne Area ECIB Updates

Receive sector updates, invitations to events and resources relevant to the Southern Melbourne Area.

The Southern Melbourne Early Childhood Improvement Branch communicates with local professionals mainly through email.

Our termly updates email includes information about upcoming events and news relevant to our local community.

All funded kindergarten programs receive this email as well subscribers to our branch.

If you haven't already subscribed, please use the **QR code** to register your details.



Southern Melbourne Area Termly Branch Update

The **Southern Melbourne Area Early Childhood Improvement Branch Update** is sent to all SMA funded kindergarten services and subscribers to our branch.

This is an opportunity for our branch to communicate with our local early childhood profession about important updates, resources and upcoming events relevant to early years professionals who work in the Greater City of Dandenong, City of Casey and Cardinia Shire.

Included in the update

- Upcoming local events
- Need to know – important information about Department policies, reform agenda etc
- Community spotlight – specific information relevant to the local communities.
- Key Dates
- Early Childhood Education and Care Websites
- Local Contacts within SMA
- Information on how to contact us
- Stay Connected – links to DE updates and Regulatory updates

The updates email is sent 5 times a year in week 1 of each school term and at the end of the year.

- February
- April
- July
- October
- December

If local funded kindergarten services would like to communicate achievements in pedagogy and practice, please [contact our branch](#) and we would love to highlight these achievements through the community spotlight section of our updates email.



Department of Education

Friday 6 February 2026 | Term 1 edition

Southern Melbourne Area Early Childhood Update

Welcome to 2026

Whether you were able to take some time off over the summer period or worked through, we hope you all had a chance to relax and recharge, ready for the new kindergarten year.

Our quarterly **Southern Melbourne Area Early Childhood Update** provides sector updates, resources and details about upcoming events relevant to Early Years professionals who work in the City of Greater Dandenong, the City of Casey and Cardinia Shire.

Please forward this email to your team - To share this communication with all early childhood professionals at your service and to ensure the links that are contained within this email are accessible, [click here to access the online link](#) for this email that can be forwarded to team members.

Upcoming local events



Southern Melbourne Early Years Learning Networks (EYLN)

We invite early childhood professionals to join us for the **Term 1 Southern Melbourne Early Years Learning Networks**.

Support to attend your local Network

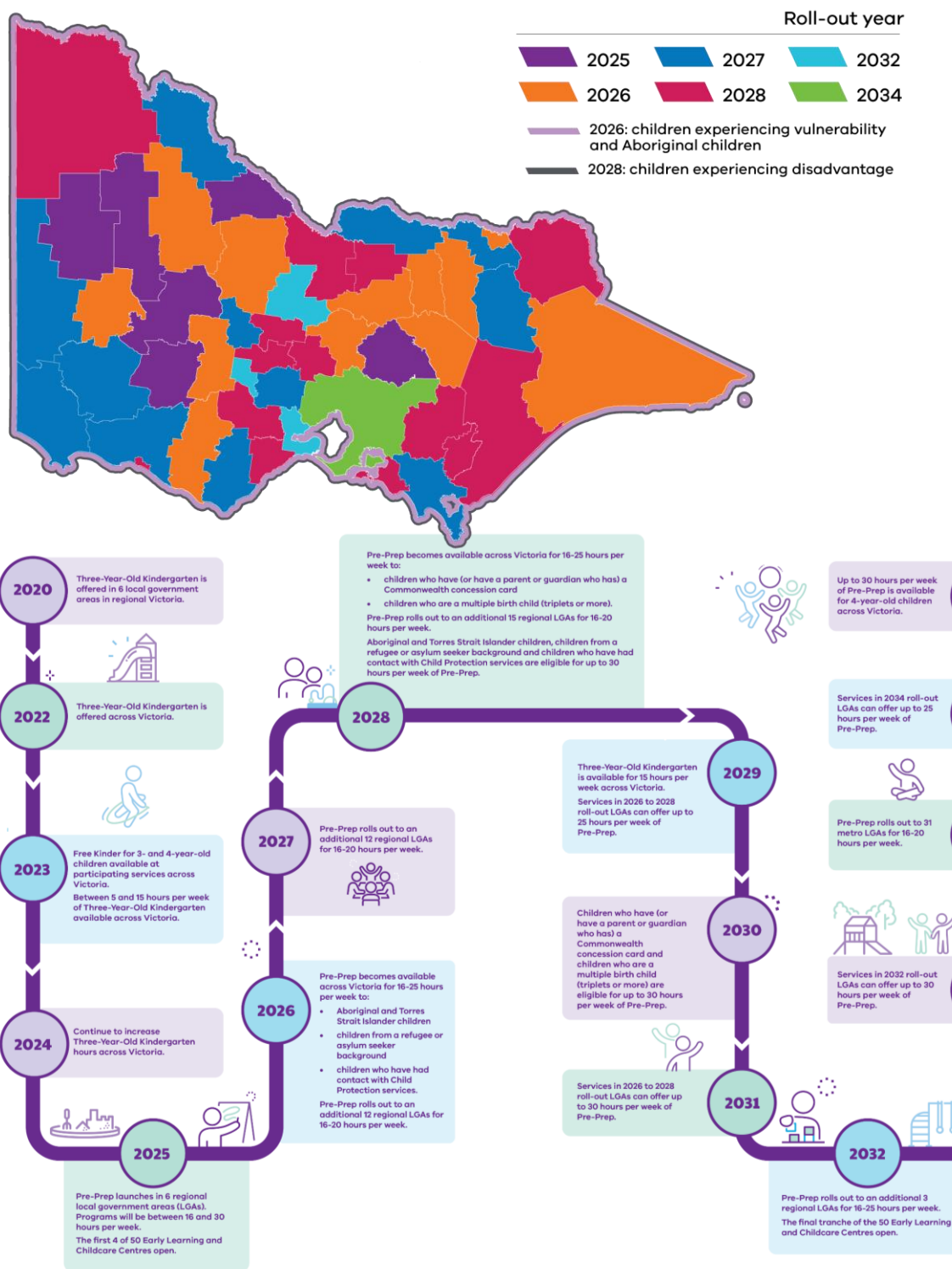
Services can claim a financial contribution towards backfill or additional hours for up to two teaching staff per service with a funded kindergarten program to attend a network meeting each term.

Registrations will open shortly on the [Early Childhood Hub](#) - an email will be distributed next week with registration details.

Best Start, Best Life Reforms

Learn more about the biggest changes to Victoria's early childhood education profession in a generation.

[The Best Start, Best Life reforms | vic.gov.au \(www.vic.gov.au\)](https://www.vic.gov.au)



Early access to more hours of 4-Year-Old Kinder from 2026

As planned, more hours of 4-Year-Old Kinder has become available in Southern Melbourne Area (*Greater City of Dandenong, City of Casey and Cardinia Shire*) for children from priority cohorts in 2026 and 2028, with maximum program hours increasing in stages.

2026	2028
Eligible for between 16 and 25 hours - In 2026 and 2027, 16 to 25 hours - From 2028, up to 30 hours	Eligible for between 16 and 25 hours - In 2028 and 2029, 16 to 25 hours - From 2030, up to 30 hours
Eligible Children - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. - Children from a refugee or asylum seeker background. - Children who have had contact with Child Protection services	Eligible Children - Children who have (or have a parent or guardian who has) a Commonwealth concession card. - Children who are a multiple birth child (triplets or more)

For the first 2 years of each roll-out, programs will be between **16 and 25 hours per week**. From the third year of each roll-out, hours can increase to **up to 30 hours per week**.



Find out more here: [More hours of 4-Year-Old Kinder | vic.gov.au](https://www.vic.gov.au/more-hours-of-4-year-old-kinder)

Communicating about Kindergarten

The DE website provides resources to help services communicate with families about kindergarten.

These include,

- Videos
- Infographics
- Posters
- Factsheets
- Communication resources for long day care services and sessional services
- Social Media Tiles
- Email Signature banners.



Find out more by [exploring the resources](#)

Please note: the website is currently being updated to showcase the new Free Kinder shapes young lives campaign resources.

Free Kinder shapes young lives.



General Supports in Career Progression

The following supports are available for teachers, including new graduate teachers (beginning teachers) to progress their career, building confidence and skills in their teaching and experience life satisfaction in the early childhood profession.

Supports for early career early childhood professionals

The early childhood education and care (ECEC) workforce are at the heart of Victoria's education system. Due to the range and scale of the Best Start, Best Life (BSBL) reforms, including funded 3-Year-Old Kinder and more hours for 4-Year-Old Kinder, it is important to recognize, develop and support the existing workforce.

The Victorian Government has invested over \$6 million as part of the BSBL reforms, to deliver a range of targeted professional development supports to early career teachers and educators when they need it most – in their first 5 years of work.

Support includes,

- Beginning Teacher Conferences
- Coaching
- Communities of Practice (CoP)
- Alumni Conference

Find out more about the [supports available for early career early childhood professionals](#)

Please note: the website is currently being updated and will be available shortly



Department
of Education



SEMANN &
SLATTERY



ANNE KENNEDY
CONSULTANCY

Early Childhood Career Incentives

There are additional supports for early childhood teachers and educators working in Victoria or wanting to work in Victoria. These supports include professional learning, guidance and support in the progression of moving from provisional to full registration and financial incentives.

Find out more here:

[Early childhood teachers and educators | Victorian Government \(www.vic.gov.au\)](http://www.vic.gov.au)

Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT)

The Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) is an independent statutory authority for the teaching profession, whose primary function is to regulate members of the teaching profession to ensure quality teaching and provide for the safety and wellbeing of children.

Service providers receiving kindergarten funding from the department **must provide a program delivered by a Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) registered qualified early childhood teacher.**

Provisional to Full Registration

A provisionally registered teacher (PRT) has two years to progress to full registration. PRTs must use an Inquiry process to

gather evidence that demonstrates they are meeting the 'Proficient' level of the [Australian Professional Standards for Teachers](#). They must also have taught for at least 80 days in one or more Australian or New Zealand early childhood services.

PRTs must be supported by a mentor through their Inquiry journey and present their evidence to a workplace recommendation panel. Once the panel has considered the evidence, they may make recommendations for the PRT to receive full registration.

More information on this process can be found here: [Document Workplace-recommendation-panel-guide.pdf \(vit.vic.edu.au\)](#)

How to find an early childhood education mentor

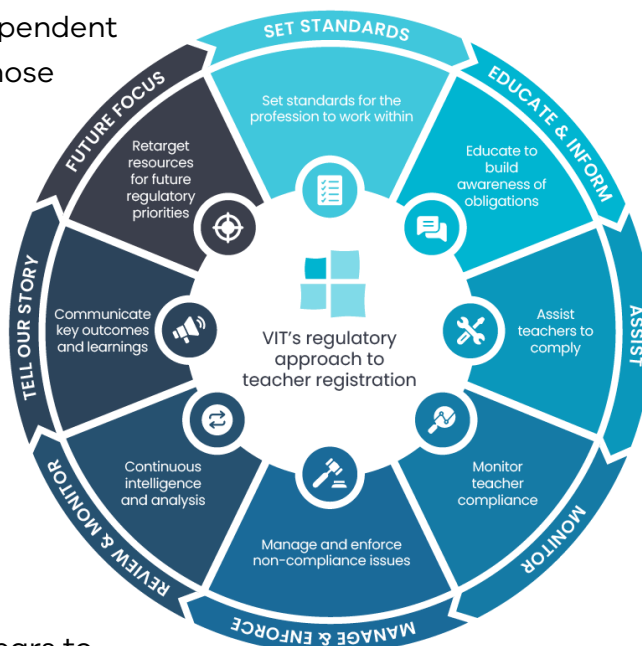
There are many ways early childhood provisionally registered teachers can find a mentor to support them to move to full registration with the Victorian Institute of Teaching.

[How to find an early childhood education mentor | vic.gov.au \(www.vic.gov.au\)](#)

Gowrie Mentoring

The department has partnered with Gowrie Victoria to provide free mentor support for PRTs to move to full teacher registration with the VIT.

[Mentoring for Provisionally Registered Early Childhood Teachers | Gowrie Victoria](#)



Funding Support for Services

The Department of Education is offering additional funding for early childhood services to support provisionally registered early childhood teachers (ECTs) who intend to move to full registration in the next 12 months.

Early childhood services and their approved provider can apply for funding of \$2,872 (excluding GST) per provisionally registered ECT.

See eligibility and processes here:

[Early Childhood Provisionally Registered Teacher \(PRT\) Grants Program | vic.gov.au \(www.vic.gov.au\)](https://www.vic.gov.au/early-childhood-provisionally-registered-teacher-prt-grants-program)

Effective Mentoring Program

Improve your mentoring skills with the Effective Mentoring Program (EMP). Learn how to support teachers and cultivate a strong mentoring culture.

The Effective Mentoring Program (EMP) enhances experienced teachers' mentoring knowledge and skills. Experienced teachers can then help graduate and returning teachers achieve full registration with the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT). These teachers can also act as the [VIT-trained mentor on workplace recommendations panels \(opens in a new window\)](#).

The program is delivered as a partnership between the Department of Education (DE) and the VIT.



Eligibility

The program is for experienced teachers who hold a current VIT registration and are mentoring provisionally registered teachers (PRTs) in:

- government, Catholic and independent schools
- early childhood and education care settings
- non-school education centres (e.g., hospitals and zoos).

Find out more here:

[Effective Mentoring Program](#)

Annual Kindergarten Calendar

Intended to provide kindergarten services and providers with a guide to due dates across the kindergarten year. Due dates may vary year-on-year & new obligations may change over time.

If you are unsure of a due date, please contact our branch

earlychildhood.Improvement.SM@education.vic.gov.au

Please note: A new National Early Childhood Worker Register came into effect on 27 February 2026. Visit the [National Early Childhood Worker Register](#) webpage for more information.

Victorian approved providers **no longer need to update the Victorian Early Childhood Workforce Register within the Arrival system.**

Term 1	
Annual Confirmation	Funded service providers must confirm data about the funded kindergarten program through the annual confirmation process. Data about the early childhood teachers, other educators, the program and enrolments must be submitted in Arrival to complete the annual confirmation process for a service. Once all required data is entered in Arrival, the data for the service can be confirmed. Actual annual funding will be calculated based on this confirmed data.
Kindergarten Inclusion Support (KIS) applications	First Round of applications closes on the last day of Term 1.
ESK Trackers	Due at the completion of each term for each ESK child.

Term 2	
SRF Pulse Check 2 (in second year of the 2-year cycle)	Services are required to complete Pulse Check 2, usually around May/June of the second year of the 2-Year planning cycle. This process provides an opportunity for services to reflect on how they are tracking in implementing their SRF plan, and to assess and communicate the likelihood they will experience an underspend. This enables the Department to provide support where required, address barriers to implementing SRF plans for services and address any risks of significant underspend. Leading up to the Pulse Check 2 period, services will be notified about the process and expectations for completion via the Kindergarten Funding Inbox.

Term 2	
Kindergarten Inclusion Support (KIS) applications - Second Round	Late applications open on the first day of Term 2 and close on 1 June. Applications submitted outside of these rounds will only be accepted where there are extenuating circumstances. KIS Complex Medical Needs applications may be submitted at any time.
Additional Year of Kindergarten process	Term 2 Conversations with stakeholders – families and the school Development of Term Three Plan for Learning and Development. Refer to page 27 for further information.

Term 3	
Kindergarten Census	All funded kindergarten services are required to complete the census for the first week of August with data required to be entered by the end of August. <i>This is a requirement of receiving kindergarten funding regardless of the kindergarten program type or delivery model.</i> The census will need to be completed in Arrival with further instructions on how to complete the census will be provided closer to August.
SRF Pulse Check 1 (in first year of the 2-year cycle)	Services are required to complete Pulse Check 1, usually around September/October of the first year of the 2-Year planning cycle. This process provides an opportunity for services to reflect on how they are tracking in implementing their SRF plan, and to assess and communicate the likelihood they will experience an underspend. This enables the Department to provide support where required, address barriers to implementing SRF plans for services and address any risks of significant underspend. Leading up to the Pulse Check 1 period, services will be notified about the process and expectations for completion via the Kindergarten Funding Inbox.
Transition Learning & Development Statements Online Portal Reopens	The Online Transition Learning and Development Statement (Online TLDS) tool will reopen during Term 3. Refer to page 26 for further information.
Additional Year of Kindergarten process	Term Three Plan for Learning and Development should be implemented at the start of Term 3. Additional Year Discussion should be completed to use in Term 3. Refer to page 27 for further information.
ESK Trackers	Due at the completion of each term for each ESK child.

Term 4	
Kindergarten Inclusion Support (KIS) applications – new year	First Round of applications for the following year opens on 1 October and closes on the last day of Term 1.
SRF Term & Conditions (in second year of the 2-year cycle for primary allocation)	Service providers will receive a letter from the Department advising of their funding allocation for the next 2-year cycle and outlining the terms and conditions of the funding. Terms and conditions must be accepted within 14 days. SRF is paid to the service provider, and the service provider is responsible for ensuring that all the terms and conditions of the funding are met.
SRF plans (new 2-year cycle plan for primary allocation)	Each 2-year cycle, approved providers are required to work with their local Early Childhood Improvement Branch to develop a School Readiness Funding (SRF) Plan for each of their services. These 2-year plans should use local and service-level data to determine the needs of each service.
SRF End of Cycle Reporting	The EOCR will collect: • information about planned and actual delivery of intended menu items, allied health and flexible funding. Including confirmation by services of the number of their allocated allied health sessions actually accessed across the year. • financial information related to purchased menu items, Department pre-purchased allied health sessions and flexible funding. • outcomes and reflection including evaluative questions relating to progress made against intended goals and, • a formal certification by the authorised delegate to confirm and finalise the acquittal before submitting to the Department. To support completion of the EOCR detailed instructions and guidance will be provided closer to this time.
Additional Year of Kindergarten process	Declaration of eligibility for an additional year of kindergarten are due by 30 November. Refer to page 27 for further information.
Exemption from School applications	School Exemption Applications due by 1 November for any child turning 6 years of age during their kindergarten year.
ESK Trackers	Due at the completion of each term for each ESK child.
KIMS/SAMS System Closure	From 31 October

Organisations should also be aware of the following **annual** obligations – due dates for these items may vary between organisations:

- Betrayal of Trust submission of proof of appropriate insurance through the Funded Agency Channel.
- Service Agreement Compliance Certification (SACC) submission through the Funded Agency Channel.

Acronyms and Abbreviations

Acronym	Explanation
AC	Annual Confirmation
ACARA	Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority
ATSI	Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
CALD	Culturally and linguistically diverse
CCB	Child Care Benefit
CoP	Community of Practice
CRES	Central Registration and Enrolment Scheme
DE	Department of Education
DFFH	Department of Families Fairness and Housing
DHHS	Department of Health and Human Services (Victoria)
DI	Disability Inclusion
DII	Disability Inclusion Implementation
DIP	Disability Inclusion Profile
ECIB	Early Childhood Improvement Branch
ECIS	Early Childhood Intervention Service
ECLA	Early Childhood Learning Advisor
ECPAPA	Early Childhood Performance and Planning Advisor
ECEC	Early Childhood Education and Care
ECT	Early Childhood Teacher
EIL	Education Improvement Leader
ELC	Early Learning Centre
ELLF	Early Learning Leadership Forums
ESL	English as a Second Language
ESK	Early Start Kindergarten
EYLF	Early Years Learning Framework
EYLN	Early Years Learning Network
EYM	Early Years Management
FSP	Flexible Support Packages
FVISS	Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme
IAP	Inclusion Access and Participation

ILP	Individual Learning Plan
KEC	Koorie Education Coordinator
KEM	Koorie Education Manager
KESO	Koorie Engagement Support Officer
KIA	Kindergarten Improvement Advisor
KIS	Kindergarten Inclusion Support
KQIP	Kindergarten Quality Improvement Program
LGA	Local Government Area
MARAM	Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Management (Framework)
MCH	Maternal Child Health
MEYP	Municipal Early Years Plan
NAPLAN	National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy
NDIS	National Disability Insurance Scheme
OCC	Occasional Child Care
OOHC	Out of Home Care
PPP	Pre Purchased Place
PSFO	Pre-school Field Officer
QIP	Quality Improvement Plan
SEIL	Senior Education Improvement Leader
SEVR	South East Victoria Region This is our region (one of four across Victoria). Map of regions available here
SMA	Southern Melbourne Area
SIP	Service Improvement Plan
SP	Supported Playgroups
SRF	School Readiness Funding
VCAA	Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority
VECRA	Victorian Early Childhood Regulatory Authority
VEYLDF	Victorian Early Years Learning Developmental Framework
VELS	Victorian Essential Learning Standards
VET	Vocational Education and Training
VIT	Victorian Institute of Teaching
VSBA	Victorian School Building Authority
WWCC	Working with Children Check

