

Kindergarten Central Registration and Enrolment Scheme (CRES) Policy

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1. Acknowledgement of Country

Monash Council acknowledges the Traditional Owners of this land, the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and Bunurong People, and recognises their continuing connection to the land and waterways. Monash Council pays respects to their Elders past and present and extend this to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.

2. Purpose

This policy:

- a. Outlines the Monash registration, allocation and enrolment processes and ensures that the Monash CRES is transparent, consistent, accessible, and equitable for families, service providers and support services.
- b. Details the organisational responsibility in adhering to the Victorian Government's Kindergarten Funding Guide and Central Registration and Enrolment Scheme.

3. Policy Statement

The Monash Kindergarten Central Registration and Enrolment Scheme Policy will ensure that Victorian Government funded sessional kindergarten places are allocated through a process which ensures equity of access and demonstrates a simple and transparent administrative process.

4. Scope

This policy applies to the registration, allocation, and enrolment processes for three- and four-year-old kindergartens who -

- a. choose to participate in the Monash Kindergarten CRES, and
- b. are operating community based sessional kindergarten in the City of Monash.

Two years of funded kindergarten is available for three and four-year-old children. Children must turn three on or before April 30 in the year of their three-year-old kindergarten attendance, and four by the 30 April in the year of their four-year-old kindergarten attendance.

5. Background / Context

The foundations of a child's long-term development are laid in early childhood. In these years, children develop crucial cognitive and emotional skills such as reasoning, problem solving, and how to get along with others.

A high-quality kindergarten experience sets up a child for a life full of learning and prepares them for school. In the long term, evidence shows that children who have positive early childhood experiences are more likely to grow up to contribute to a harmonious, healthy, and prosperous society.

Children's participation in early childhood education programs may also provide opportunities for social connection for parents, families, and communities. Social connection is known to be a strong protective factor for loneliness.

Council facilitates a CRES for community-based kindergartens offering a sessional kindergarten, to support families and carers to secure a kindergarten place for their child.

The Monash Kindergarten CRES:

- Provides a single point for families and carers to apply for multiple Monash kindergarten services, helping them secure a place that meets their needs.

- Provides a system for the placement of children into kindergartens through a streamlined enrolment system.
- Details the eligibility criteria for applications, the prioritisation process and allocation of kindergarten places.
- Facilitates the allocation of placements in alignment with
 - State Government policy directions, legislation, funding criteria and accountability (including fee subsidies); and
 - priority of access requirements detailed in the Kindergarten Funding Guide.
- Reduce the administrative burden on kindergartens and service providers.
- Helps identify and respond to community needs.

6. CRES Principles

The development and implementation of the Monash Kindergarten CRES is underpinned by the following principles:

- Simplicity**
 - The Monash Kindergarten CRES processes are simple to understand, follow and implement.
 - Support is available from Monash Kindergarten CRES staff, when needed.
- Inclusivity**
 - Families feel respected, safe, and supported when engaging with the Monash Kindergarten CRES process and staff.
 - Families who may experience barriers to access kindergarten are proactively engaged.
- Adaptability**
 - The Monash Kindergarten CRES is flexible to cater for unique family and carer circumstances and needs.
 - The Monash Kindergarten CRES can adapt to different types of service provision and the needs of service providers.
- Consistency**
 - The information collected from and distributed to families is consistent.
 - Monash Kindergarten CRES aligns with the Victorian Department of Education policy and guidelines.
 - Guidelines, practises, and policies are equitably and consistently applied to every family or carer, provider, or service.
- Transparency**
 - The Kindergarten CRES process is clear and easily understood by families, carers, and services.
- Collaboration**
 - Families, service providers and Monash Kindergarten CRES work in partnership to deliver the best outcome for children.
 - Monash Kindergarten CRES staff work in partnership with key stakeholders to identify and enrol vulnerable children.

7. Priority of Access

The Victorian Department of Education's priority of access criteria must be applied to all funded kindergarten places. These criteria (listed below) must be used prior to applying locally agreed criteria when prioritising enrolments.

- Children at risk of abuse or neglect, including children in out-of-home care.
- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children
- Asylum seeker and refugee children
- Children that meet the eligibility criteria for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy
- Children with additional needs

Additional priority of access questions set by kindergarten management groups in the City of Monash

- Does the child reside in City of Monash?
- Did the child attend 3-year-old kinder at the same service.
- Does the child have a sibling that attended the same kindergarten in the last three years?
- What is the proximity of the child's residence to kindergarten in a straight line? (measured by Geographic Information System - GIS)

8. Kindergarten CRES implementation

The Monash CRES is implemented by Council staff following the Kindergarten Central Registration and Enrolment Scheme Procedure.

9. Related Legislation or Policy

- [Kindergarten Funding Guide](#)
- [Victorian Government Kindergarten Central Registration and Enrolment Scheme – Development Guide](#)
- [Victorian Government Kindergarten Central Registration and Enrolment Scheme – Practice Guide](#)
- [Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010](#)
- [Education and Care Services National Regulations](#)
- [National Quality Standard](#)
- [Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework](#)

10. Communication

Monash Council commits to ensuring the Kindergarten CRES Policy is communicated on the Monash website at <https://www.monash.vic.gov.au/Community/Children-Family/Kindergartens> and the Policies and Procedures page.

11. Responsibilities

The Manager, Children Youth & Family Services is responsible for the development and implementation of this Policy. The Policy is presented to Council for endorsement.

The role and responsibilities of each entity in relation to the development and implementation of the Policy is detailed in the procedure document.

12. Monitoring and Review

This document will be reviewed at least every three years, after consultation with key stakeholders (including Committees of Management, Early Years Management groups and families). Some circumstances may trigger an early review, including (but not limited to) legislative changes, organisational changes, continuous improvement actions and other matters deemed appropriate by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and / or Executive Leadership Team.

The review of the policy will consider the following factors:

- Relevant legislation and Victorian Government Policy
- Gaps in policy
- Changes to related policies and procedures
- Whether the policy is still consistent with best practice
- Whether the policy meets stakeholders needs
- The level of compliance with the existing policy

13. Approval and Endorsement

Council’s Kindergarten Central Registration and Enrolment Scheme (CRES) Policy is endorsed by Council.

Reference	Date	Date Last	Date of Next	ST
Version 1	November 2023			Endorsed by: Council
Version 2	Date of next review: October 2026			

Appendix 1: Definitions

Term	Definition
Central Registration and Enrolment Scheme (CRES)	A best-practice model that streamlines the process of registering allocating kindergarten offers and enrolling children in kindergarten. The CRES ensures the process is simple, consistent, inclusive, and equitable.
Early Years Management / Manager (EYM)	Formerly “Kindergarten Cluster Management,” Early Years Managers are local government and community-based organisations that provide professional leadership and centralised management to a group of kindergartens as the authorised service provider. EYM is a key strategy to build a stronger, responsive universal kindergarten system

Term	Definition
Kindergarten	<p>An early childhood educational program delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher to children in the two years before school. The term “preschool” is used nationally and in some municipalities.</p> <p>In Victoria, a “funded kindergarten program” complies with applicable requirements as set out in the Kindergarten Funding Guide and provides a program in accordance with the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework.</p> <p>Funded kindergarten programs may operate in a variety of settings. This CRES policy relates to kindergarten enrolment for Monash providers operating community based sessional kindergarten.</p>
Kindergarten Committee of Management	<p>The legal entity responsible for the operation of a kindergarten service. Committees are generally comprised of volunteer executive and general members. Committees are responsible for the employment of staff, the operation of the service in accordance with legislation / regulation, quality frameworks and funding agreements. The legal entity enters into lease agreements with Council for kindergarten facilities.</p>
Registration	<p>The process of families and carers giving initial information about their child to confirm their intention to enrol in a kindergarten, who participates in Monash Kindergarten CRES. This includes collection of basic contact information, kindergarten preferences and any other details that may inform prioritised allocation in kindergarten.</p>
Offer	<p>Facilitated by Council.</p> <p>Using the priority of access criteria, an offer of a place is made to the parent/ guardian of a child. The offer can be accepted or declined. All accepted offers are then forwarded to the enrolment officer at each kindergarten to finalise enrolment.</p>
Enrolment	<p>Completed at a service level.</p> <p>Providing the kindergarten with all the legislative requirements associated with enrolling into an Early Childhood Education and Care service</p>
Vulnerable / disadvantage	<p>Access to early childhood education is particularly important for children experiencing vulnerability, or from a disadvantaged background.</p>