

Free Kinder for families at long day care

Free Kinder is a Victorian Government initiative for everyone. Children in Victoria can now attend and receive Free Kinder for the two years before school, giving them the best start in life.

Families can access Free Kinder for:

- Three-Year-Old Kindergarten — up to 15 hours a week
 - Four-Year-Old Kindergarten — 15 hours a week
- Pre-Prep (more hours of Four-Year-Old Kindergarten) — 16 to 30 hours a week depending on where you live, or if your child is in a priority group.

What you need to do

Complete the form on the next page to let us know where you are claiming Free Kinder in 2026.

You can only claim Free Kinder at one service.

How much will I save?

You will save around \$2,000 a year. This is based on 15 hours of kinder a week.

If your child is eligible for more hours through Pre-Prep, your Free Kinder savings will be higher (up to around \$4,000 per year for a maximum of 30 hours).

Use the Pre-Prep calculator to find out when your child qualifies for more hours: vic.gov.au/pre-prep

For Free Kinder information in your language, visit: vic.gov.au/kinder/translations

How will I see it on my invoice?

The savings will be applied to your fees regularly across the year.

The savings will be labelled as “Victorian Government Free Kinder Offset” on your invoice.

The savings are applied after the Australian Government Child Care Subsidy (CCS) on your invoice.

Quick Free Kinder facts

- ✓ Free Kinder reduces the cost of attending kinder at long day care.
- ✓ The cost of the kinder hours comes off your invoice. You’ll still need to pay for the other ‘childcare’ hours – this can be reduced through the CCS.
- ✓ Kindergarten programs are led by a bachelor qualified early childhood teacher.
- ✓ Free Kinder is for everyone – you don’t need a Health Care Card or Pension Card, Australian citizenship, proof of address or CCS.

More information: vic.gov.au/freekinder

Funded kindergarten place declaration

Your child can only access a funded kindergarten program and Free Kinder at one service. If you accept a funded kindergarten place at more than one service, you may be required to repay the funding and could lose your child's place in one program.

Please complete the form below and return it to your service. This will confirm where you are claiming your child's funded kindergarten place in 2026.

1. Which kindergarten program will your child attend in 2026?

- Three-Year-Old Kindergarten (they will start school in 2028)
- Four-Year-Old Kindergarten / Pre-Prep (they will start school in 2027)
- My child will not be attending kindergarten in 2026 (*Skip sections 2–4 and go straight to section 5*)

2. Will your child be attending any other kindergarten or long day care service in 2026?

- Yes, my child will also attend another service
- No, my child will only attend this service

3. Will your child be receiving their funded kindergarten program at this service?

Your child can only get kindergarten funding at one service at a time.

- Yes, my child will receive their funded kindergarten program at**

_____.
(nominated service name)

- I confirm that my child will not accept a funded kindergarten place at any other service.
- I understand that if I accept a funded kindergarten place at more than one service, I may be required to repay the funding and may lose my child's place in the kindergarten program.
- No, my child will receive their funded kindergarten program at another service.**

4. Privacy acknowledgement

- I acknowledge that I have read the *Information Sharing* statement (page 3) and understand how my child's information may be collected and shared.

5. Parent/carer/guardian declaration

Date:	Signature:
Child Name:	Parent/carer/guardian name:

Once completed, please return this form to your service as soon as possible.

Information Sharing

Information for families with children enrolled in funded kindergarten program

Each year, kindergarten providers collect information about the families and children enrolled at their services. This includes sessional kindergarten and long day care services that offer a kindergarten program. This information may be shared with the Department of Education (the department).

How the department uses your information

The department uses your information to:

- work out how much funding to pay to your service to help it deliver the kindergarten program.
- plan any changes to funding and supports for services and families and help local councils plan their early childhood services.
- link kindergarten information with other Victorian Government information to help plan supports for Victorians. Data linkage is done in a safe way to make sure that your child's name is **not** linked to the enrolment information used for analysis.
- complete the Annual Kindergarten Census and meet national reporting obligations. Some enrolment and attendance information is shared with the Australian Bureau of Statistics so that it can report on the numbers of children attending kindergarten in Australia each year. This information is anonymous, meaning your child's name is **not** shared.
- help academic researchers study part of the childcare or kindergarten system in Victoria. If those researchers are approved, they may have limited access to anonymous information. Identifiable information is only shared if parental consent has been provided.

Any agency or researcher, whether it's the Australian Bureau of Statistics, or a researcher at a university, must meet strict criteria on how they use and store this information, even when it's anonymous.

Information sharing

Occasionally, data needs to be shared without making it anonymous.

In Victoria, Free Kinder is available in funded kindergarten programs. Many children receive Free Kinder through their long day care service. Accessing Free Kinder means that those families will have their long day care out-of-pocket fees reduced.

To do this, some information about those children is shared with the Australian Government including the child's name, gender and Free Kinder funding amount received from the Victorian Government.

If you receive the Child Care Subsidy (CCS), the Australian Government already has most of that information. Sharing this information with the Australian Government simply lets them know that your child is attending a state-funded kindergarten program and the amount of Free Kinder offset applied to your fees.

Information may also be shared with an organisation engaged by the department to monitor and ensure that families are receiving the full benefit of Free Kinder.

The department must share information that is not anonymous where required by law.

Privacy policies

All information is handled in accordance with the Department of Education's [Privacy Policy](https://www.vic.gov.au/departments-of-education-privacy-policy) (see: [vic.gov.au/departments-of-education-privacy-policy](https://www.vic.gov.au/departments-of-education-privacy-policy)) and relevant privacy legislation including the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic)* and the *Health Records Act 2001*.