THE CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

CRES FAQs

CENTRAL REGISTRATION AND ENROLMENT SCHEME

Family Services Development
5-14-2026

CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

General Kindergarten Questions

Question	
What is Pre-prep?	From 2025, Four-Year-Old Kindergarten in Victoria is transitioning to Pre-Prep, with program hours progressively increasing from 15 to up to 30 hours per week. By 2036, all services will deliver between 16 and 30 hours of kindergarten for four-year-old children.
What is Kindergarten?	Kindergarten is a program for young children delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher in the two years before children start school.
When can my child attend kindergarten?	Three-Year-Old Kindergarten; if turning 3, prior to April 30 the year of Enrolment. Four-Year-Old Kindergarten; in the year before school, if turning 4 prior to April 30, in the year of enrolment.
Why should my Child go to Kindergarten?	Kindergarten is an important part of young children's growth and development and attendance is strongly recommended for all children. Attending kindergarten improves children's health and wellbeing, supports their development, helps them to develop strong social skills and encourages a love of learning.
What is the difference between session and Integrated programs	The key differences are hours and fees: • **Sessional kindergarten** runs during school terms for set hours and is free for three- and four-year-olds. • **Integrated kindergarten** operates up to 50 weeks per year with full-day care options and is subject to long day care fees, with Child Care Subsidy available.
What is 4year old Kindergarten?	Four-year-old kindergarten is a one-year program for young children delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher in the year before they begin school.
What is 3year old Kindergarten?	Three-Year-Old Kindergarten has been introduced across Victoria, which means families can now access two years of government-funded kindergarten for their children before they start school. Families with children born between January and April can choose which year to start at Three-Year-Old Kindergarten. These children can start in the same year they turn three, or in the year they turn four years of age.
What is Early Start Kindergarten? (ESK)	Early Start Kindergarten provides up to 15 hours of free kindergarten per week to eligible three-year-old children where programs are offered by a qualified teacher. **Is my child eligible?** To be eligible, your child must be 3 by 30 April in the year they start kindergarten and meet one of the following criteria: → are from a refugee or asylum seeker background, or → are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, or → have had contact with Child Protection, including children in out of home care.

CRES (Central Registration & Enrolment Scheme)

What is CRES?	CRES (Central Registration and Enrolment Scheme) makes it easier to apply for kindergarten. With one application, you can select your preferred participating kindergarten services, and we'll help allocate places fairly across Greater Geelong.
Do I apply through the CRES for 2027?	No, if you are applying in 2027, for a placement the same year, please contact the Service directly for availability. The CRES will only accept registrations for 2028.
Why do I need to apply through CRES	A number of sessional (or standalone) kindergarten services in Greater Geelong are members of the CRES, a full list can be found on our website. Applying through CRES means you only need to complete one application to be considered for multiple services. Using CRES helps: • Make the application process simpler for families • Consider your preferred kindergarten options • Allocate places fairly and consistently • Support priority access for children who need it most
When do applications open?	Applications (Expressions of Interest) usually open at the **end of Term 1**.
Can I apply after the deadline?	Yes. You can still apply after the closing date. However, many places may have already been offered, so late applications are considered as places become available.
Can I change my preferences after applying?	Yes. Families can contact the CRES team to update preferences before allocations are finalised
Do I need to submit a Registration Form for my child for 4-year-old kindergarten if they are already attending 3-year-old kindergarten?	Yes. A new application is required for your child's four-year-old kindergarten year, even if they are currently attending three-year-old kindergarten.
My child attended this kindergarten/service this year. Are they guaranteed a place next year?	No. Families must submit a new application each year, and places are allocated based on the Victorian Government's Priority of Access criteria and the City of Greater Geelong's local allocation process. From 2027, children returning to the same funded kindergarten service for their four-year-old kindergarten year may receive higher priority through Tier 2 of the Priority of Access criteria. However, this does not guarantee a place, as allocations are subject to demand and availability. For more information, visit the Victorian Government's Priority of Access page: https://www.vic.gov.au/priority-access-criteria.

Allocation & Offers

How are places allocated?	We aim to offer families a place at their preferred kindergarten wherever possible. When allocating places, we consider: • Whether your child meets the **Priority of Access** criteria • The kindergarten services you have selected as your preferences • Availability at each kindergarten • A random ballot where demand exceeds available places Our goal is to provide as many families as possible with a place at one of their preferred kindergartens while ensuring the process is fair for everyone.
What is Priority of Access (PoA)?	PoA is a government policy that prioritises access for children who may benefit most, including: • Children known to child protection • Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children • Children experiencing vulnerability or disadvantage
Does Priority of Access guarantee a place?	No. Priority of Access helps eligible children receive priority during the allocation process, but places are still subject to availability at each kindergarten.
When will I receive an offer?	Initial offers are usually sent during Term 3. If you don't receive an offer in the first round, you may still receive one in a later round if places become available.
What do I do if I receive an offer?	Families must **accept or decline by the deadline** provided in the offer email
What happens if I don't respond to an offer?	If no response is received during the offer timeframe, this will be treated as a "decline" of the kindergarten position.
What if I don't receive an offer?	Families remain on a **waitlist** and may receive an offer in later rounds or if places become available.

Support for Families

What if I need help completing my application?	We're here to help. If you need support with your application, you can contact: • The CRES team • Your Maternal and Child Health service • A supported playgroup
Can I get help if English isn't my first language?	Yes. Interpreters and support services are available to help families understand and complete the process.

Changes & Ongoing Enrolment

What if my circumstances change?	Families should contact the CRES team to update details, preferences, or discuss options
What happens after I accept an offer?	Once you've accepted your offer, the kindergarten service will contact you about the next steps, including any enrolment forms and documents that need to be completed.
Can I transfer to another kindergarten later?	Transfers may be possible, depending on availability. Families can discuss options with the CRES team.