

Brimbank Kindergarten Central Registration and Enrolment Policy

Preamble: The Brimbank Kindergarten Central Registration and Enrolment Policy aims to ensure that all children have equal opportunity to access a high quality sessional kindergarten placement. The process commences with a registration. In Brimbank, this can be a registration form or a notional registration through a Maternal Child Health Nurse.

1. Policy Aim and Objectives

The Brimbank Kindergarten Central Registration and Enrolment Scheme (CRES) aims to increase access to sessional kindergartens in Brimbank, particularly for vulnerable and at-risk children.

Council will provide a transparent, equitable, fair and accessible registration service for funded sessional kindergarten programs by:

- Offering parents/guardians a place for their child at one of their top three preferred centres. Where possible, the first preference will be granted.
- Collating and analysing registration data for future planning.
- Providing regular, timely registration updates to participating sessional kindergarten programs.
- Ensuring continuous improvement to the service.

2. Definition of Terms Used

2.1 Brimbank Kindergarten Central Registration and Enrolment Scheme (CRES)

CRES provides a single point for families to apply for multiple kindergarten services within a local government area, helping them secure a place that meets their needs. In Brimbank, all sessional/stand-alone kindergartens participate in this program. In Brimbank registration for integrated kindergarten programs is not included in the CRES.

2.2 Sessional vs. Integrated kindergarten

Both long day care centres and sessional kindergartens offer approved kindergarten programs.

Sessional kindergarten is offered on set days and times and is based on local community needs

Integrated kindergarten takes place within long day care services, and is sometimes called long day care kindergarten.

In Brimbank, registration for integrated kindergarten programs is not included in the CRES.

2.3 Three-Year and Four-Year-Old Programs

Three (3) Year Old kindergarten is currently offered from 5 – 15 hours depending on the Service for children two years before they start school. To be eligible, a child must be three years of age or older by 30 April in the year they will be attending kindergarten. Children cannot attend a session until they are 3 years old.

Four (4) Year Old kindergarten is a 15 hour program for children the year before they start school. To be eligible, a child must be four years of age or older by 30 April in the year they will be attending kindergarten.

2.4 Early Start Kindergarten

Early Start Kindergarten is a Victorian State Government initiative providing free or low cost kindergarten, currently offered from 5 – 15 hours depending on the Service, to eligible three year old children, delivered by a qualified teacher in a four year old program.

To be eligible for Early Start Kindergarten, a child must be three years of age or older by 30 April in the year they will be attending kindergarten, and:

- have had contact with Child Protection (or referred to Child FIRST by Child Protection), or
- identified by family or a guardian as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander or
- identified as a refugee or asylum seeker.

2.5 Priority of Access Criteria ¹

A Priority of Access Criteria defines how funded kindergarten places are allocated to registrants. Anyone meeting the Priority 1 criteria will be prioritised and offered a place at the earliest possible time. It is important as much information as possible is provided at the time of registration.

Priority of Access Criteria can be found below.

¹ As defined by the Victorian State Government Department of Education and Training (DET) in the *Kindergarten Funding Guide*
<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/childhood/providers/funding/The%20Kindergarten%20Guide%202016.pdf>

Priority	Description	Criteria
1	High Priority Children	Defined by the Victorian State Government Department of Education and Training (DET) as a child who is: The holder of, or whose parent(s) hold, a Child Disability Health Care Card, Commonwealth Health Care Card, Pensioner Concession Card or Veteran's Affairs Card Of a multiple birth of triplets or more Attending a 4 year old kindergarten program through Early Start Kindergarten or Access to Early Learning Identified by family or a guardian as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Identified, or whose parent(s) are identified, as a refugee or asylum seeker via a current appropriate visa Assessed by a health / support service or referred (see list below) by a service as requiring: • Additional support to fully participate; • A combination of individually planned support services, and/or • Has an identified specific developmental delay or disability Children may be referred by the following services: • National Disability Insurance Scheme • Family services referral and support team • Preschool Field Officer • Child FIRST / Integrated family services • Services Connect case worker • Maternal and Child Health Service; or • Out-of-Home Care provider • Child Protection • Early Childhood Intervention Service
2	Residents of Brimbank	Children and their parents / guardians who live in Brimbank
3	Non-Residents of Brimbank	No formal connection with Brimbank

3. Policy Statement and Principles

Council advocates on behalf of the Brimbank community with the Victorian State Government and service providers to ensure that kindergarten placements within the CRES are allocated in a fair, transparent and equitable manner.

Registrations are accepted at any time from birth up to, and including, the year starting kindergarten. Support can be provided for late registration.

3.1 Council's Role

The role of Council is to oversee registrations and placements of kindergarten programs in Brimbank participating in the CRES, by coordinating:

- Kindergarten registrations and placement offers for participating centres across Brimbank.
- The placement of children into sessional kindergarten programs, including registration support and placement support for early and/or deferred start.
- Registrations and support for enrolments of children eligible for Early Start Kindergarten.
- Community inquiries and referrals to the most appropriate kindergarten provider.

3.2 Offer Allocation Process

The CRES registration service will allocate offers of kindergarten places in an accessible and equitable manner, based on:

- A defined and transparent Priority of Access Criteria.
- Children who attend a 3 Year Old program will be given priority to attend a 4 Year Old Program at the same kindergarten, if places are available.
- A randomized computer generated allocation system.
- On-going allocation and re-allocation of any places becoming available as a result of registration cancellations and/or changes during the annual placement offers period.

As per the Victorian CRES Best Practice Guidelines, to ensure equitable access to kindergarten a randomized ballot is used for the first rounds of offer allocation until the start of October, thereafter by date of registration.

Offers are allocated from May each year for 3 year old programs and from July for 4 year old programs, via email or mail. Offers allocated by Council will be cancelled after two weeks if parents or guardians do not confirm their child's place after receiving the offer.

3.3 Preclusions

The Kindergarten Registration Service does **not**:

- Deliver kindergarten programs directly.
- Manage the number of available places within the municipality.
- Include funded kindergarten places available in long day care.
- Control the costs to families which are set each year by the individual funded kindergarten providers, although reduced as a result of the Victorian Government subsidy.
- Provide specific information with regard to service delivery of individual kindergarten providers.

4. Specific Requirements

The Brimbank Kindergarten Registration Service complies with the requirements set out by the Victorian State Government Department of Education and Training (DET).

Registrations are accepted at any time from birth up to, and including, the year starting kindergarten.

Council supports 'High Priority' registrants as defined by DET's Kindergarten Funding Guide. These registrants are defined as 'Priority 1' in the Brimbank Kindergarten Registration Priority of Access Criteria.

5. Related Reference Documents

Brimbank Kindergarten Registration Policy – Registration & Update Forms

Brimbank Kindergarten Registration Policy – Promotion

History of amendment

Review date	Reason for amendment	Next review date
1/06/2004	Introduction - Approved date	1/06/2006
2/06/2010	Review	2/06/2011
1/04/2011	Annual Review	1/04/2012
1/04/2012	Annual Review	1/04/2013
1/04/2013	Annual Review	1/04/2014
1/04/2014	Annual Review	1/04/2015
1/06/2016	Annual Review	1/07/2017
3/05/2017	Compliance Update	5/05/2018
16/4/2021	Updated	16/4/2022
09/03/2022	Updated	09/03/2023
09/03/2023	Annual Review	09/03/2024
Approved by EMT:	Yes	Date approved by EMT: 23 August 2017