



# Kindergarten Central Registration Policy and Procedures - 2022

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# **1. Purpose**

The purpose of Cardinia Shire Council's Kindergarten Central Registration Policy and Procedures is to ensure that all children eligible for a funded 3- and 4-year-old kindergarten place within Cardinia Shire can access a high-quality program in a fair, equitable and transparent manner.

This policy and procedure provide the framework for a kindergarten central registration process incorporating Victorian Government allocation and funding criteria that:

- Offers kindergarten places fairly, equitably, and transparently
- Supports children who meet 'High Priority' criteria as per the Victorian State Government's *Kindergarten Funding Guide*.
- Prioritises families who are Cardinia Shire residents/ratepayer, and
- Is developed based on local community needs, promoting local connection and continuity of learning.

# **2. Background**

Cardinia Shire Council recognises the importance of children accessing two years of kindergarten prior to school through a play-based curriculum. Engaging through play, supports children to become competent and independent learners. Exploring, discovering, and learning about themselves and the world around them are key components of a rich kindergarten program.

Cardinia Shire Council operates a kindergarten central registration process on behalf of community kindergartens within Cardinia Shire, which,

- supports kindergarten Early Years Managers and Committees of Management,
- applies an equitable, fair, and transparent process for families seeking kindergarten places,
- informs Council's Early Year's services and infrastructure planning,
- simplifies the process of kindergarten registration for Cardinia Shire families.

## **2.1 Kindergartens utilising the Central Registration System**

Cardinia Shire Council's Central Registration System is responsible for the allocation of places, for both 3 and 4-year-old kindergarten, for the following locations:

- Andrews Community Kindergarten
- Arena Child and Family Centre
- Avonsleigh Preschool
- Bayles Preschool
- Beaconsfield Kindergarten (O'Neil Road)
- Beaconsfield Kindergarten (Wood Street)
- Bridgewood Integrated Child and Family Centre
- Bunyip Kindergarten
- Cockatoo Kindergarten
- Emerald Preschool
- Garfield Kindergarten
- Gembrook Preschool
- Henry Family Children's Centre
- Hollins Children's Centre
- Homegarth Community Kindergarten
- Konewark Child and Family Centre
- Koo Wee Rup Preschool

- Kurmboon Child and Family Centre
- Lakeside Children’s Centre
- Lang Lang Preschool
- Nar Nar Goon Kindergarten
- Pakenham Heights Kindergarten
- Pakenham Kindergarten
- Pakenham Springs Children’s Centre
- St Clare’s Early Learning Centre
- Toun-nun Child and Family Centre (due to open in 2024)
- Upper Beaconsfield Kindergarten (Stoney Creek)
- Upper Beaconsfield Kindergarten (McBride)

Once a child has been allocated a kindergarten place through Cardinia Shire Council’s central registration process, the Early Years Provider is responsible for the enrolment of the child within their service.

### **3. Policy Statement**

Cardinia Shire Council is committed to ensuring the Central Registration process supports all children to access two years of kindergarten before commencing school. The Kindergarten Central Registration Policy and Procedures comply with human rights and anti-discrimination laws and Department of Education and Training priority of access criteria, as detailed in the *Kindergarten Funding Guide*. Cardinia Shire Council will store all information received on kindergarten registration forms securely and will only share relevant information to support kindergarten enrolment and internally with the defined Universal Services. It is intended that the registration fee will not be a barrier for families wishing to enrol their child into kindergarten.

### **4. Related Legislation, Guides and Policies**

The Kindergarten Central Registration Policy is underpinned by the following legislation, policies, and guidelines:

- a. National Quality Framework (NQF)
  - i. Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
  - ii. Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
  - iii. National Quality Standard (NQS)
- b. Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF)
- c. Kindergarten Funding Guide – Department of Education and Training (DET)
- d. Supporting Children and Families in the Early Years – A Compact between DET, DHHS and Local Government (represented by MAV) 2017-2027
- e. National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education
- f. Cardinia Shire Council Policies and Plans
  - i. Council Plan 2021-25
  - ii. Liveability Plan 2017-29
  - iii. Community Vision 2040
  - iv. Child, Youth and Family Strategy 2017-2021
- g. Disability and Discrimination Act 1992
- h. Racial Discrimination Act 1975
- i. UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- j. Equal Opportunity Act 2010
- k. Privacy and Data Collection Act 2006
- l. Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005
- m. Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006
- n. Victorian Auditor-General Early Childhood Development Services: Access and Quality 2011
- o. No jab, No play legislation – Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008

## 5. Definitions and Abbreviations

Word/Term/Abbreviation	Definition
Additional needs	<p>Children with additional needs, defined as children who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• require additional assistance to fully participate in the kindergarten program</li> <li>• require a combination of services which are individually planned</li> <li>• have an identified/diagnosed specific disability or developmental delay as defined by the DET <i>Kindergarten Funding Guide</i> (refer Section 6.5)</li> </ul>
Age Eligibility	<p>All children are eligible for two years of funded kindergarten.</p> <p>To commence 3-year-old kindergarten children must be 3 years of age by the 30 April in the year of attendance. To commence 4-year-old kindergarten children must be 4 years of age by the 30 April in the year of attendance.</p> <p>For children born between 1 January and 30 April, parents/guardians have a choice about whether their child commences school in the year they turn five, or in the following year. Therefore, when commencing two years of kindergarten before school, the child can begin their first year of kindergarten in the year they turn three or the year they turn four. This decision must take place before a child commences a funded year of kindergarten. Families are encouraged to consult with relevant early childhood professionals for guidance in making this decision. Early Childhood Teachers, Maternal and Child Health Nurse, family doctor and/or an allied health professional – Speech Therapist/Occupational Therapists can support families in this decision.</p>
Allocation	Allocation to a Kindergarten and group is based on family preferences and subject to priority of access criteria.
Central Registration System (CRS)	Database used by Cardinia Shire Council to process kindergarten registrations, reducing challenges for families, by providing consistency and transparency in kindergarten offers.
Child FIRST (See also Orange Door)	Child FIRST (Child and Family Information, Referral and Support Teams) is the entry point into family services. They are an easily accessible, community-based support service linking vulnerable children, young people, and their families into the relevant services they need.
Child Protection Service	The Victorian Child Protection Service supports children and young people at risk of harm or where families are unable or unwilling to protect them. Child Protection Services is a state government agency that responds to reports of child abuse or neglect.

Committee of Management	A Committee of Management is a group of volunteer committee members (usually parents) holding nominated official roles, who are the Approved Provider of the kindergarten. They are responsible for all obligations relating to the National Quality Framework as well as managing finances, employing staff, and setting kindergarten budgets. Kindergartens through Cardinia Shire Council's Central Registration System are managed by either an Early Years Manager or a Committee of Management.
Department of Education and Training (DET)	The Victorian regulatory authority under the National Quality Framework. Their responsibilities include funding, planning and policy direction, Quality Assessment and Rating (QAR) and operational guidance and support for education and care services.
Early Childhood Teacher (ECT)	A qualified educator who holds an approved early childhood teaching qualification and is registered with the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT). The Early Childhood Teacher is responsible for planning and delivering the kindergarten program to meet the needs of all children as per the National Quality Framework and the <i>Kindergarten Funding Guide</i> .
Early Start Kindergarten (ESK)	Early Start Kindergarten provides eligible children 15 hours of free or low-cost kindergarten a week for two years before starting school. To be eligible your child must be 3 years of age by the 30 April in the year they start kindergarten <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• from a refugee or asylum seeker background, or</li> <li>• identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, or</li> <li>• your family has had contact with child protection.</li> </ul> The relevant visa or letter of eligibility is required to be sighted by the Central Registration team.
Early Years Manager	An Early Years Manager is an organisation that oversees multiple early childhood services. The Early Years Manager is the Approved Provider and are responsible for all obligations relating to the National Quality Framework as well as the employment of staff. Kindergartens through Cardinia Shire Council's Central Registration System are managed by either an Early Years Manager or a Committee of Management.
Early Years Providers	Cardinia Shire Council has two types of Early Years Providers operating community kindergartens, Early Years Managers and Committees of Management. They are responsible for the day-to-day operation and management of a kindergarten service.
Enrolment Form	The paperwork families complete with their Early Years Provider, following an allocation of kindergarten place. The paperwork provided by an Early Years Provider contains further information to support the transition of a child into the kindergarten service.
First Round Offer	A First Round Offer is when a family receives a written offer of a kindergarten place, based on their selected preferences, in the first offer cycle. To be eligible to receive an offer in the first round, a fully completed Kindergarten Registration must be received by close of business on the 30 June in the year prior to kindergarten attendance. First round kindergarten offers are only provided to residents of

	Cardinia Shire and children identified as 'High priority' children under the DET Priority of Access Criteria (refer section 6.4)
Funded kindergarten	A funded kindergarten (also known as preschool) program meets the requirements of the <i>Kindergarten Funding Guide</i> in relation to kindergarten program hours, qualifications of educators and operational requirements. Funded kindergarten programs receive funding from both State and Federal Governments through the National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education.
Kindergarten Enrolment	After families accept an offer of a place at a kindergarten for their child, they will be contacted by the Early Years Provider to complete the kindergarten enrolment process.
Kindergarten Fee Subsidy	<p>The following children meet the DET priority of access criteria (refer section 6.4) for Kindergarten Fee Subsidy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the child is identified by a parent, carer or legal guardian as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander (note: the parent, carer or legal guardian should not be asked to provide verification of this)</li> <li>• the child is identified on their birth certificate as being a multiple birth child (triplets or more)</li> <li>• the child individually holds, or has a parent or guardian who holds one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a Commonwealth Health Care Card</li> <li>- a Commonwealth Pensioner Concession Card</li> <li>- a Department of Veterans' Affairs Gold Card or White Card</li> <li>- Refugee visa (subclass 200)</li> <li>- In-country Special Humanitarian visa (subclass 201)</li> <li>- Global Special Humanitarian visa (subclass 202)</li> <li>- Temporary Humanitarian Concern visa (subclass 786)</li> <li>- Protection visa (subclass 866)</li> <li>- Emergency Rescue visa (subclass 203)</li> <li>- Woman at risk visa (subclass 204)</li> <li>- Bridging visas A-E.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>The relevant concession card, visa, travel document or letter of visa status, with valid expiry date is required to be sighted by the Central Registration team.</p>
Kindergarten Funding Guide	The <i>Kindergarten Funding Guide</i> is developed by DET and provides operational guidance relating to policies, access and inclusion and eligibility criteria.
Kindergarten Registration	The process by which families register their child for a community kindergarten place using Cardinia Shire Council's Central Registration System.
National Quality Framework (NQF)	<p>The National Quality Framework (NQF) was introduced in 2012 to improve the education and care across Australia. The NQF includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Law and National Regulations</li> <li>• National Quality Standard</li> <li>• Assessment and rating process</li> <li>• Learning frameworks (in Victorian Kindergartens this is the VEYLDF)</li> </ul>

No Jab, No Play legislation (Immunisation)	The ‘No Jab, No Play’ legislation aims to reduce the risk of vaccine-preventable diseases through increased immunisation rates in the community. The legislation requires all children enrolling in early childhood education and care services to be up to date with their vaccinations or to meet the criteria for exemption at the point of enrolment.
Non-resident	A non-resident is defined as someone who lives in a property outside of the Cardinia Shire boundary. Applications received from non-residents will be processed in November of the year prior to kindergarten attendance.
Offer	Formal written notice from Cardinia Shire Council offering a kindergarten place in a specific kindergarten group.
The Orange Door (also see Child FIRST)	Child FIRST, as the access point for family services, is progressively transitioning to The Orange Door.  The Orange Door is the new access point for women, children and young people who are experiencing family violence, or families who need assistance with the care and wellbeing of children to access the services they need to be safe and supported.
Portal	Cardinia Shire Council’s online Central Registration System (CRS).
Priority of Access Criteria	The Department of Education and Training’s, <i>Kindergarten Funding Guide</i> stipulates the priority for allocating kindergarten places under the Priority of Access Criteria (refer section 6.4).
Preference(s)	Nominated kindergartens and/or groups in order of choice.
Preschool Field Officer	The Preschool Field Officer (PSFO) program is a targeted and time limited capacity building program available to all Victorian funded kindergarten programs. The PSFO works with the early childhood educators to enhance their capacity and confidence in providing an inclusive program that is responsive to the needs of all children. The PSFO does not deliver direct intervention to a child within the kindergarten program. PSFOs also assist early childhood educators to link families into supports and services available for children with developmental concerns and broader child and family supports.
Proof of Birth	A legal document showing the child’s name and date of birth. Birth Certificate or certified extract; Newborn Child Declaration; passport or Medicare immunisation statement are suitable proof of birth documentation.
Proof of residency	A rates notice or residential tenancy rental agreement together with a current utility bill in the name of the parent/guardian showing a Cardinia Shire address. If you are building within Cardinia Shire and currently residing outside of the Shire, please contact the Central Registration Team for further assistance.

Registration	An online electronic or hard copy registration form submitted to Cardinia Shire Council to register interest for a child to attend a kindergarten.
Resident	A resident is defined as living/residing within the boundary of Cardinia Shire. Proof of residency is required to ensure kindergarten places are allocated in a fair, equitable and transparent manner. Supporting documentation to prove residency will be required (refer Proof of residency). If you are building within Cardinia Shire and currently residing outside of the Shire, please contact the Central Registration Team for further assistance.
Universal Services	Universal Services are services such as General Practitioners, Maternal and Child Health, and the School Nurse Program. The role of a universal service is to provide support for all children and families within the community.
Victorian Early Learning and Development Framework (VELDF)	All funded kindergarten programs in Victoria are required to base their educational program on the Victorian Early Learning and Development Framework (VELDF).
Vulnerable children and/or family	Children and young people are vulnerable if the capacity of parents and family to effectively care, protect and provide for their long-term development and wellbeing is limited. Some factors which may contribute to a child being vulnerable include: living in a family with a low income, or one which is experiencing problems with housing, domestic violence, substance abuse, or mental health; having a culturally and linguistically diverse background; having a young or sole parent, or a parent with a disability or terminal illness.
Weighting Points	Allocation of points applied to each kindergarten registration based on the circumstances and preferences as outlined in Weighting Points (section 7.2)
Withdraw/withdrawal	If your child is offered a place at a kindergarten and you decide you do not want this place, you need to withdraw their application. You can then re-register if you wish to access a place in the future.

## 6. Kindergarten Registration and Enrolment Process

### 6.1 Summary of Registration and Enrolment Process

Step 1

- **Registration - Open from birth**
- Families register their child for Kindergarten using the Central Registration System <https://www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/kindergartenregistration>

Step 2

- **Confirmation of registration**
- Email confirmation sent to families

Step 3

- **Update existing registration by 30th June to be included in 'First Round Offers'**
- Reminder emails sent during May and June, with instructions on how to update/change your preferences
- Any changes to an existing registration to be completed by 30 June to be eligible for first round offers.

Step 4

- **Offers**
- Offers will be sent via email in accordance with the Kindergarten Central Registration Policy. (Refer to the website for Key dates)
- Families respond to the offer via the portal selecting, "accept"; "accept and wait"; "decline" or "withdraw" an offer.

Step 5

- **Enrolment and Orientation**
- Cardinia Shire Council provides our Early Years Providers with the details of each offer that has been accepted.
- Early Years Providers contact families to complete the enrolment and organise the orientation for your child to commence kindergarten.
- Please allow up to 8 weeks after accepting your offer for your child's Early Years Provider to contact you.

Step 6

- **Commencement - Term 1**
- Children commence Kindergarten

## **6.2 Kindergarten Eligibility**

In Victoria, children are eligible for two years of funded kindergarten, directly prior to school entry. Funding is provided by both State and Federal Government.

Parents/guardians of children born between 1<sup>st</sup> January and 30<sup>th</sup> April can elect to commence their child's two years of funded kindergarten in either, the year they turn 3 or the year they turn 4. As per the *Kindergarten Funding Guide*, once the kindergarten year has commenced, i.e., the child has started kindergarten, it is not permissible to change the year of attendance.

### **3-Year-Old Kindergarten**

Funded 3-year-old kindergarten commenced in Cardinia Shire in 2022. Children are eligible for one year of funded 3-year-old kindergarten under the Victorian Government's funding guidelines. To commence 3-year-old kindergarten, children must be three years of age by the 30 April in the year they are to attend. Due to the National Quality Framework minimum educator to child ratio, children must be three years of age before they can attend their first day of kindergarten. Children who turn three between the start of Term 1 and the 30 April, will have their kindergarten place held until they are three years old. No kindergarten fees will be charged during this period of time.

### **4-Year-Old Kindergarten**

In accordance with the Victorian *Kindergarten Funding Guide*, a child is eligible for one year of funded 4-year-old kindergarten. All children must be four years of age by the 30 April in the year they attend. Eligibility for a second year of funded 4-year-old kindergarten is subject to assessment of a child showing delays in learning and development outcome areas in the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF) and when:

- the kindergarten program is deemed to be the most appropriate learning program and
- the child will achieve better outcomes at kindergarten than if they go to school.

Where a second year of kindergarten is being considered for a child, an assessment process must be carried out by an early childhood teacher. This assessment process may also include input from other professionals e.g. Preschool Field Officer, Maternal & Child Health Nurse, Speech Pathologist, Occupational Therapist etc.

## **6.3 Kindergarten readiness**

Families are encouraged to carefully choose the year their child will commence accessing their two years of funded kindergarten. Once a child accesses funding by commencing, they are expected to complete that full year of kindergarten. Children can only access one year of funded 3-year-old kindergarten and then move the following year to access their one year of funded 4-year-old kindergarten. Strict criteria applies for a child to be eligible to access a second year of funded 4-year-old kindergarten (refer Kindergarten Eligibility section 6.2).

Advice can be sought from professionals such as Maternal & Child Health Nurse, GPs, current educators, or allied health specialists working with your child.

## **6.4 'High priority' children and families – Priority of Access Criteria**

Cardinia Shire Council supports the Department of Education and Training (DET) policy direction that prioritises the inclusion of children through the Priority of Access Criteria within the *Kindergarten Funding Guide*. High priority children under the criteria include:

- Children at risk of abuse or neglect, including children in Out-of-Home-Care;
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children;
- Asylum seeker and refugee children;

- Children eligible for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy and;
- Children with additional needs as defined by DET's *Kindergarten Funding Guide* (refer Section 6.5).

Families that demonstrate they have a child in one of these categories will be allocated to a kindergarten program as a high priority. Verification of eligibility can be through:

- Referral by:
  - Child Protection
  - Child and family services (eg. The Orange Door, case worker)
  - Maternal and Child Health Nurse
  - Out-of-Home Care provider
- An appropriate Visa identifying the child and/or parents as a refugee or asylum seeker
- A child or parent holds a Commonwealth Health Care Card, Pensioner Concession Card, Veteran's Affairs Card,
- A birth certificate for a multiple birth pregnancy (triplets or more)

Residents who are experiencing vulnerability are encouraged to contact the Central Registration Officer to ensure fair and equitable access to kindergarten (refer to vulnerable child and/or family definition).

## **6.5 Children with additional needs**

Cardinia Shire Council has a commitment to ensuring that kindergarten services are accessible to all children. We recognise that every child has individual needs, abilities, and interests. Children with additional needs are defined as children who:

- require additional assistance to fully participate in the kindergarten program
- require a combination of services which are individually planned
- have an identified specific disability or developmental delay.

Verification of eligibility can be through, the child:

- is assessed as having delays in two or more areas and is declared eligible for a second funded year of 4-year-old kindergarten
- holds a Child Disability Health Care Card
- has previously been approved for Kindergarten Inclusion Support Package
- or referred by:
  - the National Disability Insurance Scheme
  - Early Childhood Intervention Service
  - Preschool Field Officer, or
  - Maternal and Child Health nurse.

Children with a diagnosis or undergoing assessment may be eligible to receive funding through the Kindergarten Inclusion Support Scheme. These funding applications are completed by the child's Early Childhood Teacher.

A Preschool Field Officer provides services as part of the government's commitment to support the inclusion of children with additional needs in a kindergarten program.

## **7. Registration and allocation criteria**

Cardinia Shire Council provides a Kindergarten central registration process to ensure all children within the Shire have fair, equitable and transparent access to kindergarten. A child can be registered using the online portal from birth.

Processing of registrations will be on hold from 30th June each year until first round offers have been allocated. Any new registrations received after June 30 will be included in subsequent allocations. Children will be placed as per the Allocation of Preferences (section 7.1).

The following processes apply when selecting preferences:

- Preferences for 3 and 4-year-old kindergarten should be listed in order of preference on the registration portal. A minimum of 3 preferences is required.
- If a parent/guardian chooses to nominate one preference only and the nominated kindergarten has no vacancies, the child's name will remain on the kindergarten wait list (even if there are vacancies at other kindergartens).

In accordance with the DET *Kindergarten Funding Guide*, the following children are eligible for two years of funded kindergarten:

- Children who are three years of age or older by 30 April in the year they are to attend Kindergarten are eligible to commence their first year of kindergarten (3-year-old kindergarten). Proof of birth is required on application.
- Children who are four years of age or older by 30 April in the year they are to attend Kindergarten are eligible to commence their second year of kindergarten (4-year-old kindergarten). Proof of birth is required on application.
- Children turning six years of age in their year of kindergarten who have been granted an exemption from school entry age requirements by their regional office of DET. Approval does not guarantee access to primary school the following year.
- Children who are younger than the eligible age, but whose parents/guardians have submitted a written request to their regional DET office and have been approved for their child to attend kindergarten the following year (*Early Entry to kindergarten*).

**Note:**

For children born between 1 January and 30 April, parents have a choice as to whether they commence school in the year they turn five, or in the following year, and therefore whether they commence their two years of kindergarten in the year they turn three or the year they turn four (page 43, *Department of Education and Training, Kindergarten Funding Guide*).

### **7.1 Allocation of preferences and order of priority**

Cardinia Shire Council ensures that the allocation of kindergarten places is conducted in a fair, equitable and transparent manner. When allocating places, the order of priority is:

1. Children identified by educators as requiring a second year of funded 4-year-old kindergarten.
2. Children identified as high priority children (Section 6.4) as outlined in the current Department of Education and Training *Kindergarten Funding Guide*.

3. Remaining registrations are prioritised in accordance with the Weighting Points (section 7.2). A computer-generated selection process is applied to all registrations. The computer will randomly allocate offers to applicants who hold equal points.

## **7.2 Weighting points**

The following priority weightings will be applied to each registration received for the relevant kindergarten(s):

- 50 points - Resident/ratepayer of Cardinia Shire
- 40 points - Proximity to kindergarten
- 20 points – child attended 3-year-old kindergarten and wishes to attend 4-year-old at the same kindergarten
- 10 points - A demonstrated link to your preferred kindergarten through a sibling or parent involvement, e.g., sibling previously attended, personal involvement e.g., committee member, parent attended the kindergarten as a child

The following priority weightings will also apply for eligible families when selecting group sessions in the year prior to attending:

- 5 points - Work/study commitments
- 2 points - use public transport or walk to access kindergarten
- 2 points - Other childcare arrangements

## **8. Your information and privacy**

Privacy is important to your family. Cardinia Shire Council is therefore committed to protecting the privacy of your child's/family's information. The privacy of your information is also protected by law. We treat your information in the strictest confidence and store it securely. A copy of Council's Privacy Policy is available on our website [www.cardinia.vic.gov.au](http://www.cardinia.vic.gov.au)

### **8.1 What information is collected?**

Information collected will include contact details, country of birth, proof of birth and priority of access information as defined in our policy under High priority children and families. This information is stored securely in an electronic database; Central Registration System (CRS).

### **8.2 Why do we collect your information and who sees it?**

To enable eligible families to access additional support services, Cardinia Shire Council shares information internally with the defined Universal Services upon receiving a Kindergarten Central Registration application. All other data may be used to support future community planning and infrastructure – shared planning data contains no identifiable content of any individual. Information is also shared with kindergarten providers to facilitate placement and enrolment to the kindergarten service.

### **8.3 Can you access your information?**

Yes, you have the right to request your information under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* and ask for it to be corrected if necessary. You can email [mail@cardinia.vic.gov.au](mailto:mail@cardinia.vic.gov.au) for further information on how to go about this. You are also able to log on to your child's registration via the portal and change/update any of the personal information via your parent/guardian/carer login. Please contact the Kindergarten Central Registration Officer for assistance to access your child's details online.

## 9. Contact information and interpreter services

- The Cardinia Shire Council telephone number is 1300 787 624
- The National Relay Services (NRS) is an Australia-wide telephone access service available to everyone at no additional charge. If you are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment and/or use TTY or a computer with a modem, you can contact Council in the wider telephone network through the NRS
- TTY users phone 133 677 then ask for 1300 787 624
- Speak and Listen (speech-to-speech relay) users phone 1300 555 727 then ask for 1300 787 624
- Internet relay users connect to NRS (see [www.relayservice.com.au](http://www.relayservice.com.au) for details) and then ask for 1300 787 624
- Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) - If you need an interpreter, phone the Translator Interpretation Service on 131 450



- Multicultural Interpreting Service - Pre-recorded kindergarten information and an option to connect with an interpreter to have a three-way conversation with a Customer Support Officer.

### Interpreting Service Numbers

عربى	<b>9492 8780</b>	Arabic
Chin Hakha	<b>9492 8781</b>	Chin Hakha
普通话	<b>9492 8782</b>	Mandarin
دری	<b>9492 8783</b>	Dari
Filipino	<b>9492 8784</b>	Filipino
ہندی	<b>9492 8785</b>	Hindi
Italiano	<b>9492 8786</b>	Italian
ਪੰਜਾਬੀ	<b>9492 8787</b>	Punjabi
sQAhI	<b>9492 8788</b>	Sinhalese
Español	<b>9492 8789</b>	Spanish
For all other languages	<b>9492 8790</b>	

# **10. Registration Process**

Families wishing to register for kindergarten can do so via:

- Cardinia Shire Council's online web portal via computer and mobile devices (quickest and preferred method) <https://www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/kindergartenregistration>
- Please contact Cardinia Shire Council if you are unable to apply electronically via telephone on 1300 787 624
- We encourage families experiencing vulnerability and/or eligible for Early Start Kindergarten and/or Kindergarten Fee Subsidy to contact our Central Registration Officer to assist in completing your child's kindergarten registration.

Registrations are processed up to close of business June 30 for first round offers. Registrations received after this date, i.e., 1<sup>st</sup> July onwards will be processed after the first round of allocations has been processed and sent.

## **10.1 Registration Requirements**

- Completion of the Cardinia Shire Kindergarten Central Registration form via the online portal or manual form for families unable to access the form electronically.
  - Documentary evidence:
    - proof of child's age such as a copy of the child's birth certificate, immunisation history statement or passport
    - proof of Cardinia Shire residency will be required, such as rates notice/tenancy agreement and a current utility account
  - A once only non-refundable administration fee is payable per child per year for
    - 4-year-old funded kindergarten registration; and
    - 3-year-old kindergarten registration.
- These fees do not contribute to the annual kindergarten fees charged by the Early Years Provider.*
- Completed registrations must be lodged online via Cardinia Shire Council's website as the preferred option, or in person at Cardinia Shire Council Customer Service.

## **10.2 Confirmation of registration**

All families completing a kindergarten registration via Cardinia Shire Council's Central Registration system will receive confirmation via email within ten days of submission.

## **10.3 Changes to registration or personal details**

Any change of details concerning a kindergarten registration (for example: address, telephone number, kindergarten preference) can be updated via the online portal. Families have direct access to their registration(s) via the portal with their registered email address and password. New passwords can be created upon request on the log in screen. Changes of kindergarten preferences and information can be made all year round, except during July and August as we prepare for first round offers.

## **10.4 Cancellations**

Cancellations can be lodged at any time via the online portal, or by written communication/ correspondence from the family or kindergarten management to the Central Registration Officer. Registration fees are not refunded.

## **10.5 Kindergarten Transfers**

To transfer to another kindergarten within Cardinia Shire Council, families are required to:

- advise their current kindergarten service and,
- contact the Central Registration Officer to be placed on a waiting list for allocation as per the Priority of Access.

# **11. Allocation and Offer of Kindergarten Places**

Registration for Kindergarten is available from birth. If you opt to register your child at an early age using the Central Registration System you will receive an email notification asking you to select your choice of kindergarten and kindergarten program (up to 5 selections), in the year prior to your child being eligible to commence Kindergarten. This notification will be sent in May and preferences need to be updated by 30 June to be eligible for first round offers.

Kindergarten timetables for the following year, will be posted on Cardinia Shire Council's website in May of each year. Kindergarten allocations and offers to families will commence in August for 4-year-old kindergarten and September for 3-year-old kindergarten.

Lists of placed children for kindergarten will be forwarded to all Early Years Providers in September (4 year old) and October (3 year old) to enable the enrolment and orientation process to commence.

All kindergarten allocations and places are offered by Cardinia Shire Council on behalf of the community run kindergartens (see section 2.1).

## **11.1 Responding to an offer**

Families will need to respond to the offer online by making one of the following choices:

**Accept** – If you wish to accept the group session that has been offered.

**Accept and Wait** – If you wish to accept the group session that has been offered and remain on the wait list should a vacancy become available at a higher preference.

**Decline** – If you wish to decline the offer but remain on the wait list for future vacancies for your preferred group session (please note this option does not guarantee a place).

**Withdraw** – a kindergarten place is no longer required. Your application will be cancelled or, subject to your child's age eligibility, you can elect to change the year of commencement.

## **11.2 Offer Rounds**

### **First round offers:**

- 4-year-old funded kindergarten – on or before the third Monday in August
- 3-year-old kindergarten – on or before the third Monday in September

### **Additional offers:**

- 4-year-old funded kindergarten – during or before the last week of August
- 3-year-old kindergarten – during or before the last week of September

Additional offers of places will continue to be made on a regular basis, including offers of higher preferences and offers for applications received after close of business 30 June. Children will be offered a place as per the ‘Allocation of Preferences’ in order of priority.

### **Non-residents**

Applications from non- Cardinia Shire residents will not be assessed until the middle of November in the year prior to attendance and any offers will be determined based on the Kindergarten vacancies at that time. Non-residents who are experiencing vulnerability and/or meet the high priority access criteria will be included in first round offers if the application is received by close of business on the 30 June in the year prior to attendance. Applications received after 30 June, will be assessed and included in the relevant additional offer round.

## **11.3 Waitlists**

Despite growing demand, there will always be enough kindergarten places across all the Kindergartens in Cardinia Shire. Every effort is made to offer a place at the preferred kindergarten, but this is not always possible.

The following process applies to the waitlist for when a vacancy becomes available:

- places are allocated as per the Kindergarten Central Registration Policy and Procedures,
- we are unable to tell you where your child is on the waiting list, as the waiting list is constantly changing,
- if you are on the waiting list, we will only contact you if a place becomes available,
- if you have declined an offer you will automatically be placed on a waiting list for your higher preferences,
- if you have only listed one preferred kindergarten, or we are unable to offer you any of your other preferred kindergartens, we will attempt to offer your child a place at the next closest kindergarten with availability,
- if you would like to be removed from the waitlist, please let us know.

## **11.4 No response to offer**

Where no response to an offer of placement is received by the Kindergarten Central Registration Officer within the specified timeframe outlined in the offer email, a courtesy SMS and/or telephone call will be made prior to the child’s place being cancelled and reallocated.