

Definitions:

Acceptable immunisation documentation: Documentation as defined by the Immunisation Enrolment Toolkit for early childhood education and care services as acceptable evidence that a child is fully vaccinated for their age, or is on a recognised catch-up schedule if their child has fallen behind their vaccinations; or has a medical reason not to be vaccinated; or has been assessed as being eligible for a 16 week grace period.

Children with additional needs: Children whose development or physical condition requires specialist support or additional support.

Deferral: When a child does not attend in the year when they are eligible for a funded kindergarten place, or officially withdraws from a service prior to the end of Term 1. DET considers that this child has not accessed a year of funded kindergarten and is therefore eligible for DET funding in the following year.

Department of Education and Training (DET): The state funding body.

Early Start Kindergarten Program: Enables eligible 3 and 4 year old children to access a 15 hours a week kindergarten program two years before school where the child is Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander or for children known to Child Protection or, refugee and asylum seeker or referred to Child FIRST/Integrated Family Services.

Eligible child: A child who meets the criteria outlined in the *Victorian kindergarten policy, procedures and funding guide*.

Enrolment form: A form that collects contact details, and personal and medical information from parents/guardians about their child. This is completed after a place has been offered by the service and accepted by the applicant. The information on this form is placed on the child's enrolment record (see below) and is kept confidential by the service.

Enrolment record: Contains information on each child, as required under the National Regulations, including contact details, names of authorised nominees (refer to *Definitions*), names of persons authorised to consent to medical treatment or to authorise administration of medication, names of persons authorised to take the child outside the service, details of any court orders, personal and health information including specific healthcare needs, medical management plans and dietary restrictions etc. (Regulations 160, 161, 162). This information is kept confidential by the service. A child cannot commence at the service unless the enrolment form has been completed in its entirety.

Fees: A charge for a place within a program at the service.

Kindergarten Inclusion Support Programme: is a federal government funded program and is available to services, families and children to provide assistance to support the inclusion, learning and development of children with additional needs in the funded kindergarten program.

Kindergarten: Is a universal early childhood program which is partially funded by the State Government for 3-5 year old children. in the year prior to commencing primary school.

Preferences: List, in order of preference, kindergartens to send your child to.

Registration form: A form to apply for a place at the service.

	<p>Registration fee: A payment to cover administrative costs associated with the processing of a child's enrolment application for a place in a program at the service.</p> <p>Second Year: A second year of kindergarten is approved and funded by State Government for children who meet the eligibility criteria for a second funded year of 4 year old kindergarten.</p> <p>The Kindergarten Funding Guide – (The Guide) provides detailed information about the types of kindergarten funding available, eligibility criteria for funding, how to apply for funding and how to comply with the operational requirements once funding has been granted. The Guide currently has a publishing date of 2016. Whenever there is a new production, Council will use the most current version. Funding rates will generally change each financial year and be published accordingly.</p>
<p>References:</p>	<p>Victorian kindergarten policy, procedures and funding criteria: http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/funding/Pages/kinderfundingcriteria.aspx</p> <p>Australian Immunisation Register: www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/medicare/australian-childhood-immunisation-register</p> <p>Victorian Department of Health: www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation</p>
<p>Related Policies:</p>	<p>Service and Council policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations Policy • Complaints and Grievances Policy • Councils Debt Management Policy 2016 • Councils Fees and Charges Policy • Councils Financial Hardship Policy • Inclusion and Equity Policy • Councils Privacy Policy 2015 • Kindergarten Closure Policy

Related Legislation:**Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:**

- A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999
- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)
- Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)
- Child Wellbeing and Safety (Information Sharing) Amendment Regulations 2020
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: Regulations 160, 161, 162, 168, 177, 183
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)
- Family Assistance Legislation Amendment (Child Care Rebate) Act 2011
- Family Violence Protection Amendment (Information Sharing) Act 2017
- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 6: Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities
 - o Standard 6.1: Respectful and supportive relationships with families are developed and maintained
 - Element 6.1.1: There is an effective enrolment and orientation process for families
- The Privacy Act 1988 (Privacy Act)
- Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 (Vic)
- Public Health and Wellbeing Amendment (No Jab, No Play) Regulations 2015 (Vic)
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)

The most current amendments to listed legislation can be found at:

- Victorian Legislation – Victorian Law Today:
[HTTP://WWW.LEGISLATION.VIC.GOV.AU/](http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/)
- Commonwealth Legislation – Federal Register of Legislation:
[HTTPS://WWW.LEGISLATION.GOV.AU/](https://www.legislation.gov.au/)

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that kindergarten places are allocated in a manner which ensures equity of access and demonstrates a transparent enrolment administrative process. It also sets out processes for setting and payment of fees and eligibility for fee subsidies.

2. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- 2.1. Kindergarten is a universal early childhood program, which is partially funded by the State Government, for children in the year prior to commencing primary school and 3 year old children from 2022 onwards. In addition, the State Government provides funded kindergarten to eligible 3 and 4 year old children of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent and for 3 and 4 year old children known to Child First/Child Protection or refugee and asylum seeker, under the Early Start Kindergarten Program and vulnerable 3 year old children under the Priority of Access criteria.
- 2.2. Kindergarten programs engage children in quality learning experiences in a community and centre-based environment. Research shows that quality early childhood education exerts a positive influence on longer-term educational and social outcomes, particularly for children experiencing educational and social disadvantage.
- 2.3. Collaboration between Council, families and children enables Council to share knowledge and strengths and to plan and deliver seamless services.

3. SCOPE

- 3.1. 3 year old activity groups are provided for children who turn 3 years of age on or before April 30 in the year of attendance in 2021.
- 3.2. Children attending a funded 3 year old kindergarten program in 2022 will receive 5 hours of funded kindergarten and must turn 3 years of age on or before April 30 in the year of attendance. Children attending 3 year old funded kindergarten will not have the option to undertake a second year of funded 3 year old kindergarten.
- 3.3. In accordance with The Guide and its successive documents, one year of funded kindergarten is available to all children who turn 4 years of age on or before April 30 in the year of kindergarten attendance.
- 3.4. These children will not have attended 4 year old kindergarten previously unless approved by DET. As per the Guide and its successive documents, Early Start Kindergarten is available to eligible children who turn 3 and 4 years of age on or before 30 April of the year of kindergarten attendance.
- 3.5. Children enrolled as Early Start Kindergarten are still entitled to a year of funded 4 year old kindergarten following the year they attend a 15 hour program while enrolled in Early Start Kindergarten.

4. OBJECTIVE

- 4.1. To facilitate the placement of children into Council managed kindergarten programs through a central enrolment system.
- 4.2. To provide details of the eligibility criteria for applications, the prioritisation and reservation of places, timelines for lodging of applications and its procedures.
- 4.3. To ensure placements and procedures are in alignment with State Government policy directions, legislation, and funding criteria and accountability (including fee subsidies).

5. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

5.1. Funding and fees

- 5.1.1. The State Government provides funding to kindergartens for each eligible child attending the funded program (4 year old kindergarten program and 3 year old kindergarten program from 2022). Children cannot access more than one funded kindergarten program at the same time.
- 5.1.2. Macedon Ranges Shire Council sets program fees for families. Along with State and Federal Government funding, these fees contribute to meeting the cost of operating the kindergarten. These fees are reviewed when financial year budgets are set annually and are subject to change in July each year.
- 5.1.3. While current State and Federal Government funding is for 15 hours of kindergarten for each 4 year old child, and 5 hours of kindergarten in 2022 for 3 year old children, confirmation of this funding is subject to change.
- 5.1.4. Possible future funding changes within the sector may result in program hours changing from one year to the next. Information on current kindergarten programs and operations are suggestive only. Macedon Ranges Shire Council, as Early Years Manager, reserves the right to review and implement changes to program hours, session times, group sizes, fees and all aspects of the service operations.

5.2. No Jab No Play

- 5.2.1. From 1 January 2016, an early childhood education and care service cannot confirm enrolment of a child unless the parent/carer has provided their child's immunisation history statement from the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) that shows the child:
 - a) is fully vaccinated for their age; or
 - b) is on a recognised catch-up schedule and is on track with the catch up schedule; or
 - c) has a medical reason not to be vaccinated; or
 - d) is eligible for the 16 week grace period.

Further details can be found on the Department of Health website.

5.3. Eligibility criteria and fee payment for 3 year old activity groups in 2021 and funded 3 year old kindergarten in 2022

- 5.3.1. Children must be 3 years of age on or before 30 April in the year of attendance to be eligible to attend a 3 year old activity group or funded 3 year old kindergarten in 2022. Due to regulatory requirements and educator to child ratios, children cannot attend an activity group (or funded 3 year old group) until they have turned 3. Families wanting to reserve a place for their child can do so by registering their child and paying the term fee from when their child commences in the program. A place will be reserved for the child in the group until they attend.
- 5.3.2. 3 year old activity groups do not attract state government funding in 2021, therefore it is a user pay service. 2022 will see 3 year old kindergarten become a funded program. Council will review and amend programs annually or as required if enrolments are not sufficient to provide a financially viable service.

5.4. Eligibility criteria for 4 year old kindergarten

- 5.4.1. In accordance with The Kindergarten Funding Guide and its successive documents, one year of funded kindergarten is available to all children who turn 4 years of age on or before April 30 in the year of kindergarten attendance. These children will not have attended 4 year old kindergarten previously unless approved by the DET for a second year of kindergarten.

- 5.4.2. In accordance with The Kindergarten Funding Guide and its successive documents, Early Start Kindergarten and the Access to Early Learning Program is available to eligible children of 3 and 4 years of age on or before 30 April of the year of kindergarten attendance.
- 5.4.3. Families with children born between 1 January and 30 April need to make an informed choice about which year they would like their child to commence school and therefore which year their child will attend a funded 4 year old kindergarten program. All children learn and develop in different ways. The State Government offers one year only of funded kindergarten in the year before school to children who turn 4 prior to the 30 April in the year they will attend. The expectation is that once services have confirmed their funded enrolments to the DET in term one, this will be counted as the child's funded place. A child may have a second funded year of kindergarten if their Teacher determines they would benefit from a second year of kindergarten and the child meets the criteria as specified by the Victorian state government.

5.5. Enrolment timelines for 3 and 4 year old kindergarten

- 5.5.1. Kindergarten registrations can be made at any time however all applications will be reviewed and allocated as from 1 July the year prior to attendance.
- 5.5.2. To be eligible for consideration in the first round of offers, registrations must be lodged with Council by 5.00 pm June 30 (or previous business day) the year prior to attendance.
- 5.5.3. Advertisements to register will be widely advertised each year, via relevant Macedon Ranges Shire Council communication/promotional methods.
- 5.5.4. Allocation of placements will be made in accordance with priority categories and date of receipt if an application is received after 30 June.
- 5.5.5. Council cannot guarantee applicants will receive a kindergarten place.

5.6. How to apply

- 5.6.1 Registration for 3 year old activity groups in 2021, funded 3 year old kindergarten in 2022 and 4 year old kindergarten can be completed online via the Macedon Ranges Shire Council website.
- 5.6.2 Registration application must be accompanied by the following documents in order to be accepted and processed:
 - a) Proof of child's age (such as the child's birth certificate, immunisation history statement or passport) uploaded and,
 - b) Non-refundable registration fee, using a valid debit or credit card. (unless exemption applies)
 - c) If the child or family hold an eligible concession card as outlined in 5.21.7, the family is eligible to receive a fee subsidy from the State Government (funded Kindergarten only i.e. 3 year old funded kindergarten in 2022 and 4 year old funded kindergarten) and they are not required to pay the registration fee. A copy of the valid concession card must be uploaded.
 - d) If child is registering for Kindergarten and they are eligible for Early Start Kindergarten they are also exempt from paying a registration fee.
- 5.6.3 Children enrolled in a 3 year old activity group or a funded 3 year old kindergarten group from 2022 at Council's facilities are not automatically eligible for a place in 4 year old kindergarten. Families must submit a kindergarten registration application and enrolment will be determined through the kindergarten enrolment application process. Clause 5.6.2.c does not refer to 3 year old activity group registrations in 2021.
- 5.6.4 In the case of multiple births (such as twins, triplets or quadruplets), a registration application needs to be completed for each child and indicate that it is part of a multiple birth on the registration.

5.7. Application priorities – 3 and 4 year old kindergarten

5.7.1 For children who turn three years of age on or before 30 April for funded 3 year old kindergarten (2022 onwards) and four years of age on or before 30 April for funded 4 year old kindergarten in the year they are to attend funded kindergarten, places will be allocated based on the priority category - being:

Priority Number	Criteria
Priority 1 (all of equal priority)	a) Children who DET have approved for a second year of funded kindergarten (applicable to funded 4 year old kindergarten only).
	b) Children who were eligible to attend the previous year but deferred to the following year or who lodged a deferral form before their child completed term 1 of kindergarten the previous year.
	c) Children who are identified by parent, carer or guardian as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent.
	d) Children who are at risk or abuse or neglect, known to Child Protection or Child FIRST Services or children in Out-of-Home Care.
	e) Children who are eligible for Early Start Kindergarten or Access to Early Learning.
	f) Children who are identified as an asylum seeker or refugee.
	g) Children who are triplets or quadruplets.
	h) Children who are eligible for the kindergarten fee subsidy.
	i) Children with additional needs who have an identified specific disability or developmental delay or require additional assistance to fully participate in the kindergarten program.
Priority 2	Children of residents who reside in the Shire of Macedon Ranges or pay rates to Macedon Ranges Shire Council.
Priority 3	Children of non-Macedon Ranges' residents

5.7.2 Eligibility for Priority 1d can be advised verbally and/or in writing by a Child Protection, Integrated Family Services Worker, or Maternal Child Health Nurse. Families may also self-identify their eligibility on the registration form. An identified vulnerability includes a family known to child protection, Child FIRST, Integrated Family Services, newly arrived status, asylum seeker or refugee children, Children in Out of Home or Kinship Care, children referred by Early Childhood Intervention or hold a Child Disability Health Care Card.

5.8 Reserved places for 4 year old kindergarten

5.8.1 Each service will hold two reserved places that will be available for allocation until the end of December prior to the commencement of the first term of kindergarten in the following year. The purpose of the reserved places are to be able to offer Priority 1 or vulnerable children access to the service. The unallocated reserved places may then be released for those on the waiting list according to priority.

5.9 Late registrations

- 5.9.1 Registrations will continue to be received after June 30 the year prior to attendance, but will be deemed to be a late application.
- 5.9.2 Late registrations may be included in the first round of offers, in accordance with the priority of access and date of registration.
- 5.9.3 If no places are available, the applicant will be placed on the waiting list according to priority and date of receipt.

5.10 Changes to registration details

- 5.10.1 When applicants wish to alter their original kindergarten preferences after submitting the Registration Application should contact the Enrolment Officer and complete a change to kindergarten registration form should be completed and emailed Attention Enrolment Officer to mrsc@mrsc.vic.gov.au
- 5.10.2 Where a change to kindergarten registration form is lodged with Council after June 30 to change your kindergarten preference this will result in a new registration date being issued, which will be the date the change to kindergarten registration form was lodged with Council. Minor changes to registrations such as change of family address or contact details will retain the original application date.

5.11 First round allocations

- 5.11.1 All registrations will be allocated according to priority of access guidelines and the due date. Refer to clauses 5.7 and 5.5.
- 5.11.2 Refer to clause 5.5 in regard to lodgement date for first round offers and for late registrations refer to clause 5.9.
- 5.11.3 Where registration numbers exceed the number of places available at the first preference kindergarten, applicants will be allocated their second or third preference based on availability of places. If there are no places available at any stated preferences, then the applicant will be placed on a waiting list at the kindergarten of their first preference nominated on the registration form.

5.12 Review of the remaining places

- 5.12.1 Offers will continue to be made after round 3 and after the commencement of the kindergarten year.
- 5.12.2 Applications will be allocated to available places according to category of priority and date of receipt. If no places are available, applicants will be placed on a waiting list according to priority.

5.13 Offer of placement

- 5.13.1 Applicants will be notified of a placement offer to kindergarten in writing to applicants during September each year. A written response to the offer is required within a nominated time frame.
- 5.13.2 Applicants not offered a placement in the first round remain on the waiting list of their preferences in order of priority and receipt date. A review of available kindergarten placements will be conducted after first round offers and responses are processed.
- 5.13.3 Any applicants who remain on the waiting list after all places have been allocated; will be offered a placement appropriate to their priority as soon as a vacancy occurs at their preferred kindergarten.

5.14 Responses to offers

- 5.14.1 Applicants can select one of the following choices:
 - a) accept the kindergarten place that is on offer and select your group preference

- b) decline the offer of the kindergarten place and be placed on a waiting list for their preferred kindergarten or particular kindergarten group as listed on their registration form
 - c) cancel their application.
- 5.14.2 Applicants must select in writing one of the responses above and return the fee payment agreement (Refer attachment) in order for the response to be processed.
- 5.14.3 Where no response is received by Council within the specified timeframe as stated in the letter of offer, the child's place will be cancelled. When families contact Council later than the required response date, their child will be reinstated to the waiting list with the appropriate priority, and with their original registration date.
- 5.14.4 When an applicant requests to be placed on a waiting list of their preferred kindergarten, the child is placed on the waiting list of their preferred centre according to category of priority and date received order. Placement is not guaranteed at the preferred centre.

5.15 Deferral of funded kindergarten places

- 5.15.1 In accordance with The Kindergarten Funding Guide and its successor agreements, an enrolment may be deferred within Term 1, provided the registration has not been recorded on the Kindergarten Information Management System (KIM).
The expectation is that once services have confirmed their funded enrolments for the year to DET (before the end of Term 1), those children whose enrolment has been confirmed will "access their 600 hours of funded kindergarten in that calendar year" as per the current Kindergarten Funding Guide.
- 5.15.2 Families wishing to defer their enrolment should speak with their Early Childhood Teacher before the end of Term 1 to discuss their child's readiness for kindergarten.
- 5.15.3 Families should contact the Enrolment Officer and complete and submit a Change to kindergarten registration form, whereby their enrolment will be re-offered the following year, and the registration will maintain its original registration date.
- 5.15.4 Families may choose to submit a new 3 year old Activity Group registration or 3 year old funded kindergarten group registration (2022), if they have deferred their child for that year. A new registration date will be recorded for this application and there is no guarantee of a placement within this program.

5.16 Second year of funded kindergarten – 4 year old kindergarten

- 5.16.1 A second year of kindergarten is only available to children who meet the eligibility criteria as set and approved by the State Government and is only applicable to funded 4 year old kindergarten. Children who attend a 3 year old funded kindergarten program are not eligible to undertake a second year of funded 3 year old kindergarten.
- 5.16.2 Families identified as eligible to enrol their child in a second year of kindergarten must submit a registration form to be considered in the first round of offers. A second registration fee will not be payable in these circumstances.
- 5.16.3 Places will be reserved at the family's kindergarten of first preference.
- 5.16.4 Registrations received after 30 June will be treated as a late registration, however, will be given priority according to clause 5.7.

5.17 Children who will turn six years of age during the funded kindergarten year

- 5.17.1 Children who turn six years of age during the kindergarten year must have an exemption from attending school that year and need to provide the approval letter to the kindergarten with their child's enrolment form.
- 5.17.2 Parents need to apply for an exemption before the child starts kindergarten by filling in the appropriate State Government documentation.
<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/principals/participation/schoolexemption.pdf>

- 5.17.3 If an exemption has not been granted by the Victorian State Government, Council will not be in a position to accept the child into kindergarten.

5.18 Transfer of kindergarten places

- 5.18.1 Once a place has been allocated to a child, the child's place is not transferable between kindergarten centres unless there is availability. If an applicant believes their circumstances are exceptional, they may contact the Coordinator, Early Years Services asking for consideration of their request. Changing groups within the same service will only occur if vacancies exist in the group (this must be confirmed with the Enrolment Officer), and after consultation with the Teachers.
- 5.18.2 Each request will be taken on its merit and considered in relation to the available vacancies and current waiting lists. There is no guarantee of transfer.

5.19 Children with additional needs

- 5.19.1 Macedon Ranges Shire Council's kindergartens are inclusive of all children.
- 5.19.2 Additional support for funded kindergarten may be available to services, families and children with additional needs through the Kindergarten Inclusion Support Programme.
- 5.19.3 Applicants are required to notify Council of their child's additional needs on the registration form, so that, where required, appropriate assistance can be secured and provided, and planning can occur in advance. Disclosing you child's additional needs will not disadvantage your child's application.

5.20 Staff educating their child

- 5.20.1 Teachers and Educators who are also parents of children attending the Macedon Ranges Shire kindergartens cannot educate their children within the same group they teach. It is acknowledged that from time to time, personal circumstances may arise where this may not be possible and staff should apply in writing to the Early Years Coordinator for consideration.

5.21 Registration fees

- 5.21.1 An administration processing fee is payable when submitting the kindergarten registration form.
- 5.21.2 To reduce barriers to enrolment, there are no registration fees for children enrolling under priority 1 for funded 3 (2022) and 4 year old kindergarten and priority 1c, 1d, 1e, and 1f for 3 year old activity group (2021).
- 5.21.3 The registration fee will be reviewed annually when financial year budgets are set and are subject to change in July each year.

5.22 Fees

- 5.22.1 The annual fee is determined each financial year as part of Council's budget. Funded 4 year old kindergarten fees are charged over three instalments and funded 3 year old and activity group fees are charged per term.
- 5.22.2 Successful applicants (now service users) will be notified of fee changes in a timely manner.
- 5.22.3 The term fee is charged regardless of attendance of the child during the term. However the families wishing to present exceptional circumstances for consideration in a fee review can put their request in writing to the Coordinator Early Years Services for consideration.
- 5.22.4 Pro rata fees apply where a service user commences kindergarten part way through the term.
- 5.22.5 3 and 4 year old kindergarten fees are required to be paid prior to commencement in the program and at the commencement of each term. Due dates will be included on Council fee

invoices. Non-payment of fees may impact upon access to kindergarten and debts will be managed in accordance with the Debt Management Policy.

- 5.22.6 Families with twins or two children of different ages both attending 4 year old kindergarten in the same year shall be entitled to a fee discount for the second child.
- 5.22.7 In accordance with The Kindergarten Funding Guide and its successive documents, no fees for the funded 3 and 4 year old kindergarten program apply to families where the child individually holds, or has a parent or guardian who holds one of the following:
- a) Commonwealth Health Care Card
 - b) Commonwealth Pensioner Concession Card
 - c) Department of Veterans' Affairs Gold Card or White Card
 - d) Refugee visa (subclass 200)
 - e) In-country Special Humanitarian visa (subclass 201)
 - f) Global Special Humanitarian visa (subclass 202)
 - g) Temporary Humanitarian Concern visa (subclass 786)
 - h) Protection visa (subclass 866)
 - i) Emergency Rescue visa (subclass 203)
 - j) Woman at risk visa (subclass 204)
 - k) Bridging visas A-E
 - l) the child is identified on their birth certificate as being a multiple birth child (triplets or more)

Council requires a copy or photo of the relevant current concession card, visa, travel document or letter of visa status and record its expiry date. If any of the relevant cards expire, families will need to provide a current eligible card to the Enrolment Officer otherwise an invoice will be issued from the expiry date.

- 5.22.8 No fees for the kindergarten program apply to families where the child is:
- a) identified by a parent, carer or legal guardian as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
 - b) identified on their birth certificate as being a multiple birth child (triplets or more)
 - c) an Early Start Kindergarten enrolment
 - d) an Early Start Kindergarten Extension Enrolment
 - e) an Access to Early Learning Enrolment.

5.23 Overdue kindergarten fees and penalties for unpaid fees

- 5.23.1 Fee payment plans can be established in consultation with Council's Finance Department. Service users are required to adhere to these plans to continue to access the kindergarten program.
- 5.23.2 Families experiencing financial hardship and are having difficulties paying their fees must apply in writing to Council for deferral or waiver of fees. Applications will be managed in accordance with the Financial Hardship policy.
- 5.23.3 The Coordinator Early Years Services can make an adjustment to fees after proof of a valid concession card is provided.
- 5.23.4 Overdue fees will be managed in accordance with Council's Debt Management Policy, which may include suspension of service and the charging of interest on overdue fees.
- 5.23.5 If the service is suspended due to non-payment, Council may engage a debt collection service to retrieve the outstanding fees.
- 5.23.6 Fees outstanding do carry into future years and may hinder the family's access to Council services including sibling attendance to kindergarten or activity group's years later.

5.24 Refunds

- 5.24.1 Registration fees contribute to the cost of administering the application and are non-refundable.
- 5.24.2 Service users, who withdraw from their kindergarten placement once they have commenced, will forfeit the fees paid to Council for that term. If a change of registration form is submitted

two weeks' prior to withdrawing to the Enrolment Officer then a pro rata refund will be considered.

- 5.24.3 Requests for term fee refunds can be made and may be granted in exceptional circumstances. Requests must be made in writing with copies of receipts forwarded to the Coordinator Early Years Services. Requests will be considered in accordance with the Debt Management Policy.

5.25 Kindergarten sessions

- 5.25.1 Kindergarten sessions and enrolment numbers will be reviewed annually as part of the allocation process and DET funding confirmation as well as feedback from families and staff.
- 5.25.2 Sessions may vary from year to year at each centre. Council may make alterations to any kindergarten session dependant on applications or individual centre numbers at any time.
- 5.25.3 Consultations will take place from time to time to ensure services respond to the demand of the majority of applications.
- 5.25.4 Once enrolled each child will be able to access fifteen (15) hours of kindergarten per week for the 4 year old program and 5 hours of kindergarten per week for the 3 year old kindergarten program in 2022.

5.26 Sessions and groups within kindergartens

- 5.26.1 For offers made, applicants will be informed of the proposed kindergarten sessions and timetable at each centre and requested to indicate their preferred group/s.
- 5.26.2 For offers made after round 3, applicants may be allocated to the remaining places within groups; however, Enrolmentl officers will endeavour to consult with families where there are vacancies across the groups.
- 5.26.3 Enrolment officers will endeavour to give applicants their preferences; however it cannot guarantee applicants will receive their first preference or group within the centre.

ATTACHMENT 1

MACEDON RANGES SHIRE COUNCIL

3 YEAR OLD ACTIVITY GROUP FEE PAYMENT AGREEMENT 2021

Please complete this form and post in the reply paid envelope

Child's Name:

Surname:

Kindergarten:

Payment of: \$184 for the year for 2.5 hours per week – invoice will issued at commencement of kindergarten.

Kindergarten Fee Subsidy for Low-Income Families - Not applicable.

As per our Enrolment and Fee Policy* I/We acknowledge, agree and understand;

- The 3 year old activity group program is a service which is NOT funded by the State Government in 2020. The 3 year old activity group cannot operate without fees paid by parents/guardians.
- For children who are allocated a place but are not yet 3 years old, fees are still payable from the first day of term one in order to reserve the child's place at the service.
- The term fee is charged regardless of attendance of the child during the term. However the families wishing to present exceptional circumstances for consideration in a fee review can put their request in writing to the Coordinator Early Years Services for consideration.
- Pro rata fees or refunds do not apply where the service user withdraws from the program during the term.
- Service users, who withdraw from their kindergarten placement once they have commenced, will forfeit the fees paid to Council for that term. If a Change of registration form is submitted two weeks' prior to withdrawing to the Enrolment Officer then a pro rata refund will be considered.
- Pro rata fees apply where a service user commences kindergarten part way through the term.
- Term fees are required to be paid prior to commencement in the program and prior to each term, in order to continue to access the program. Non-payment of fees may impact upon access to kindergarten and other programs operated by Council.
- Fee payment plans can be established in consultation with Council's Finance Department. Service users are required to adhere to these plans to continue to access the 3 year old activity group.
- Council will charge interest on unpaid fees in accordance with section 172 of the Local Government Act.

Print Name of parent/guardian 1: _____

Signature of parent/guardian: _____ Date: _____

Print Name of parent/guardian 2: _____

Signature of parent/guardian: _____ Date: _____

Due to the Education and Care Services National Regulations, children are only eligible to attend the Macedon Ranges Shire Council 3 year old activity group program once they have turned 3.

Early Start Kindergarten

3 year old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children known to Child Protection are eligible to attend 15 hours a week in a kindergarten program that is planned and delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher. The service receives funding for children who meet the eligibility criteria and families are not required to pay fees. Contact the service for further information.

**Enrolment & Fee Policy is available at the centre and on line at www.mrsc.vic.gov.au/kindergarten*

ATTACHMENT 2

MACEDON RANGES SHIRE COUNCIL

4 YEAR OLD KINDERGARTEN FEE PAYMENT AGREEMENT 2021

Please complete this form and post in the reply paid envelope

Child's Name:

Surname:

Kindergarten:

Fees:

15 HRS OF KINDERGARTEN PER WEEK	
Families per child	Families with Twins
1 st Instalment Free	1 st Instalment Free
2 nd Instalment Free	2 nd Instalment Free
3 rd Instalment Free	3 rd Instalment Free

Invoice Issued and will be mailed via post

4 Year Old Kindergarten Fee Subsidy for Eligible Families

Please (✓) tick if you have a current concession cards, the number and expiry date:

- Health Care Card – (not medicare) Pensioner Concession Card
 Visa 866/785 – (not credit cards) Department of Veterans Affairs Gold Card

Card Number: _____ Expiry Date: _____

A photocopy of the Current Health Care Card/Pensioner Concession Card/Visa 866/785/Veteran's Gold Card must be sent to the Enrolment Officer when you are provided with an updated card to prove continuity of eligibility for the State Government subsidy. An invoice will be issued if you do not provide a current card.

As per our Enrolment and Fee Policy* I/We acknowledge, agree and understand;

- The annual fee is determined each financial year as part of Council's budget.
- Kindergarten operates over 4 terms and the annual fee is divided into three instalments and charged in Terms 1, 2 and 3.
- Fees are compulsory and are required to be paid prior to commencement in the kindergarten program and prior to each term, in order to continue to access the kindergarten program. Non-payment of fees may impact upon access to kindergarten and other programs operated by Council.
- Fees are dependent on the receipt of State Government grants and contributions and other influences on the service. Successful applicants (now service users) will be notified of fee changes in a timely manner.
- The term fee is charged regardless of attendance of the child during the term. However the families wishing to present exceptional circumstances for consideration in a fee review can put their request in writing to the Coordinator Early Years Services for consideration.
- Pro rata fees or refunds do not apply where the service user withdraws from the program during the term.
- Service users, who withdraw from their kindergarten placement once they have commenced, will forfeit the fees paid to Council for that term. If a Change of registration form is submitted two weeks' prior to withdrawing to the Enrolment Officer then a pro rata refund will be considered.
- Pro rata fees apply where a service user commences kindergarten part way through the term. .
- Families with twins or two children of different ages both attending 4 year old kindergarten in the same year shall be entitled to a fee discount for the second child.
- Fee payment plans can be established in consultation with Council's Finance Department. Service users are required to adhere to these plans to continue to access the Kindergarten program
- Council will charge interest on unpaid fees in accordance with section 172 of the Local Government Act.

Print Name of parent/guardian 1: _____

Signature of parent/guardian: _____ Date: _____

Print Name of parent/guardian 2: _____

Signature of parent/guardian: _____ Date: _____

**Enrolment & Fee Policy is available at the centre and on line at www.mrsc.vic.gov.au/kindergarten*

ATTACHMENT 3

MACEDON RANGES SHIRE COUNCIL

3 YEAR OLD KINDERGARTEN FEE PAYMENT AGREEMENT 2022

Please complete this form and post in the reply paid envelope

CHILD'S NAME: _____ SURNAME: _____

KINDERGARTEN: _____

FEES:

5 HRS OF FUNDED KINDERGARTEN PER WEEK PER CHILD	
Term 1 - \$141.70	Term 3 - \$141.70
Term 2 - \$141.70	Term 4 - \$141.70
Invoice Issued and will be mailed via post	

3 Year Old Kindergarten Fee Subsidy for Eligible Families

Please (✓) tick if you have a current concession cards, the number and expiry date:

- Health Care Card – (not medicare)
- Pensioner Concession Card
- Visa Number 866/785 – (not credit cards)
- Department of Veterans Affairs Gold Card

Please provide a photocopy of the current concession card if applicable. If your card has expired or you are issued with a new card you must provide a copy of updated card to the Enrolment Officer to prove continuity of eligibility for the State Government subsidy. An invoice will be issued if you do not provide a current card.

As per our Enrolment and Fee Policy* I/We acknowledge, agree and understand;

- The annual fee is determined each financial year as part of Council's budget.
- Kindergarten operates over 4 terms and the annual fee is charged in Terms 123 and 4.
- Fees are compulsory and are required to be paid prior to commencement in the kindergarten program and prior to each term, in order to continue to access the kindergarten program. Non-payment of fees may impact upon access to kindergarten and other programs operated by Council.
- Fees are dependent on the receipt of State Government grants and contributions and other influences on the service. Successful applicants (now service users) will be notified of fee changes in a timely manner.
- The term fee is charged regardless of attendance of the child during the term. However the families wishing to present exceptional circumstances for consideration in a fee review can put their request in writing to the Coordinator Early Years Services for consideration.
- Pro rata fees or refunds do not apply where the service user withdraws from the program during the term.
- Service users, who withdraw from their kindergarten placement once they have commenced, will forfeit the fees paid to Council for that term. If a Change of registration form is submitted two weeks' prior to withdrawing to the Enrolment Officer then a pro rata refund will be considered.
- Pro rata fees apply where a service user commences kindergarten part way through the term.
- Fee payment plans can be established in consultation with Council's Finance Department. Service users are required to adhere to these plans to continue to access the Kindergarten program
- Council will charge interest on unpaid fees in accordance with section 172 of the Local Government Act.

Parent/guardian 1: _____

Signature of parent/guardian: _____ Date: _____

Parent/guardian 2: _____

Signature of parent/guardian: _____ Date: _____

Early Start Kindergarten

3 year old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, refugee and asylum seeker and children known to Child Protection are eligible to attend 15 hours a week in a kindergarten program that is planned and delivered by a qualified Early Childhood Teacher. The service receives funding for children who meet the eligibility criteria and families are not required to pay fees. Contact the Enrolment Officer on 5422 0239 for further information.

*Enrolment & Fee Policy is available at the centre and on line at www.mrsc.vic.gov.au/kindergarten

ATTACHMENT 4

MACEDON RANGES SHIRE COUNCIL

4 YEAR OLD KINDERGARTEN FEE PAYMENT AGREEMENT 2022

Please complete this form and post in the reply paid envelope

Child's Name: _____ **Surname:** _____

Kindergarten: _____

Fees:

15 HRS OF FUNDED KINDERGARTEN PER WEEK	
Families per child	Families with Twins
1 st Instalment \$566.80	1 st Instalment \$850.20
2 nd Instalment \$566.80	2 nd Instalment \$850.20
3 rd Instalment \$566.80	3 rd Instalment \$850.20

Invoice Issued and will be mailed via post

4 Year Old Kindergarten Fee Subsidy for Eligible Families

Please (✓) tick if you have a current concession cards:

- Health Care Card – (not medicare) Pensioner Concession Card
 Visa Number 866/785 – (not credit cards) Department of Veterans Affairs Gold Card

Please provide a photocopy of the current concession card if applicable. If your card has expired or you are issued with a new card you must provide a copy of updated card to the Enrolment Officer to prove continuity of eligibility for the State Government subsidy. **An invoice will be issued if you do not provide a current card.**

As per our Enrolment and Fee Policy* I/We acknowledge, agree and understand;

- The annual fee is determined each financial year as part of Council's budget.
- Kindergarten operates over 4 terms and the annual fee is divided into three instalments and charged in Terms 1, 2 and 3.
- Fees are compulsory and are required to be paid prior to commencement in the kindergarten program and prior to each term, in order to continue to access the kindergarten program. Non-payment of fees may impact upon access to kindergarten and other programs operated by Council.
- Fees are dependent on the receipt of State Government grants and contributions and other influences on the service. Successful applicants (now service users) will be notified of fee changes in a timely manner.
- The fee is charged regardless of attendance of the child during the term. However the families wishing to present exceptional circumstances for consideration in a fee review can put their request in writing to the Coordinator Early Years Services for consideration.
- Pro rata fees or refunds do not apply where the service user withdraws from the program during the term.
- Service users, who withdraw from their kindergarten placement once they have commenced, will forfeit the fees paid to Council for that term. If a change of registration form is submitted two weeks' prior to withdrawing to the Enrolment Officer then a pro rata refund will be considered.
- Pro rata fees apply where a service user commences kindergarten part way through the term.
- Families with twins or two children of different ages both attending 4 year old kindergarten in the same year shall be entitled to a fee discount for the second child.
- Fee payment plans can be established in consultation with Council's Finance Department. Service users are required to adhere to these plans to continue to access the Kindergarten program
- Council will charge interest on unpaid fees in accordance with section 172 of the Local Government Act.

Parent/guardian 1: _____

Signature of parent/guardian: _____ Date: _____

Parent/guardian 2: _____

Signature of parent/guardian: _____ Date: _____

*Enrolment & Fee Policy is available on line at www.mrsc.vic.gov.au/kindergarten