

3 Year Old Kindergarten Readiness

Considerations for the families and educators of children entering a 3 Year Old Kindergarten Program

The Victorian Department of Education and Training (DET) is now funding two years of kindergarten with the expectation that all children will move directly on to school the following year.

Consideration should be given to what age a child should begin their education journey. A second year of 3YO will not be an option in the new model and a second year of 4YO would continue to be subject to set DET criteria with the need for determination of 2 areas of developmental delay, supported by the teacher of the child's funded 4YO group.

This may have increased relevance for those children who are born between January and April as they will be the youngest in their peer group. For those children who may present with additional needs or developmental delays, prior discussion with the kindergarten teacher would be of considerable benefit.

This list is a tool to support conversations between the parent/s and kindergarten teacher about the child. If parents have any additional questions about their child's kindergarten readiness they are encouraged to speak with a kindergarten teacher and/or their Maternal Child Health nurse.

This checklist can be used by educators or parents to facilitate discussion about a child's readiness to start 3YO kindergarten.

STRONG SENSE OF IDENTITY (Emotional development)	YES	SOMETIMES	NO
Separates from parent independently and/or with adult support			
Is beginning to have some control over emotions and can calm down with support from a familiar adult			
Has demonstrated the ability to form relationships with others outside the immediate family			
Can seek help or support from an adult through gesture or verbal communication e.g. when feeling upset or lonely; when cold or hungry; when injured or feeling unwell			
Beginning to cope with changes to familiar routines with adult support			
Will explore new and different activities and experiences with adult support			
Is beginning to appropriately express their feelings with gestures, actions or words			
Is beginning to share time and attention of adults			
Is beginning to show awareness of others and their needs			
Is beginning to celebrate themselves and their work			

CONNECTED WITH AND CONTRIBUTES TO THEIR WORLD (Social development)	YES	SOMETIMES	NO
Is able to move away from familiar adults to be with other adults and/or children			
Is beginning to share their ideas with others			
Listens to the directions of familiar adults and follows familiar routines			
Is beginning to take turns and share with adult support			
Is beginning to show awareness of the ideas of others			
Is beginning to appropriately assert their own rights			
Shows an interest in being near other children			
Is beginning to play alongside other children			

CHILD HAS A STRONG SENSE OF WELLBEING (Physical development)	YES	SOMETIMES	NO
Is beginning to maintain their energy throughout the whole day with appropriate rest time/s			
Is beginning to make choices, accept some challenges and take considered risks with adult support			
Is beginning to have the muscle coordination necessary to control their body, including balance			
Is beginning to have the fine motor coordination necessary to hold pens, snip with scissors and paint with brushes etc.			
Is beginning to demonstrate resilience when faced with a challenge, including with adult support			

CONFIDENT AND INVOLVED LEARNER (Cognitive development)	YES	SOMETIMES	NO
Is able to work and play independently			
Is beginning to persist at tasks with adult support			
Demonstrates curiosity and enthusiasm about what is happening in their world			
Uses play to investigate and explore new ideas			
Is able to maintain attention with a few other children for 5 minutes or more e.g. listening to a story, playing a ball game			
Is beginning to solve simple problems e.g. how to unzip their bag, how to join train tracks together			
Is beginning to sort and match objects according to colour			
Is showing interest in looking at picture books and uses a variety of toys and objects in their play			
Is beginning to think about and plan their play			

CHILD IS AN EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATOR (Communication development)	YES	SOMETIMES	NO
Is speaking in sentences of 4 or more words			
Is understood at least 75% of the time by unfamiliar listeners			
Understands and uses descriptive words e.g. big, blue, soft			
Understands spatial concepts such as in, on, out and off			
Is beginning to verbally express their ideas to others			
Is beginning to express their ideas through the creative arts			
Is beginning to share a personal experience with others e.g. about their play, a visit to the park or their swimming lesson			
Is beginning to recall the main parts of familiar short stories e.g. The Three Little Pigs			
Is beginning to watch and/or start to participate in music experiences and know some words to familiar songs e.g. Twinkle Twinkle Little Star			
Mainly answers questions on the topic of conversation and is also beginning to answer where, why and what questions			

Further information: <https://www.vic.gov.au/give-your-child-the-best-start-in-life>

Additional considerations for parents:

What age would you like your child to be as they enter key transitions in their education?

- **Starting 3-Year-old kindergarten:** at 2 years old turning 3
Consider: Will their attendance be impacted if they need to wait until their 3rd birthday to begin their year? How will this affect their transition to kindergarten? Will they be impacted by the reduced amount of time they will have at 3-Year-Old kindergarten? e.g. possibly missing much of Term 1
- **Starting 4-year-old kindergarten:** at 3 years old turning 4
- **Starting Prep/Foundation:** at 4 years old turning 5
- **Starting Secondary School:** at 11 years old turning 12 in Year 7
- **In Year 12:** at 16 years old turning 17

OR

- **Starting 3-Year-Old Kindergarten:** at 3 years old turning 4
- **Starting 4-Year-old Kindergarten:** at 4 years old turning 5
- **Starting Prep/Foundation:** at 5 years old turning 6
- **Starting Secondary School:** at 12 years old turning 13 in Year 7
- **In Year 12:** at 17 years old turning 18