



1. General information

Kindergarten programs for four-year-old and three-year-old children in Victorian Government funded services will be free as part of the Best Start, Best Life reform.

Free Kinder provides families with a free program in sessional services and a fee offset in long day care services.

DE also provides funding to assist eligible three-year-old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, Asylum seeker and refugee children and children known to Child Protection, to access kindergarten programs.

Operation hours	Session Times
Session Days and Times	<u>Aquamarine</u> (3 Year Old Kinder): Thursday 8:30 am – 4:00 pm & Friday 8:30 am – 4:00 pm <u>Cherry</u> (4 Year Old Kinder): Monday 8:30 am – 4:00 pm & Tuesday 8:30 am – 4:00 pm <u>Royal Blue</u> (4 Year Old Kinder): Monday 8:30 am – 4:00 pm & Wednesday 8:30 am – 4:00 pm <u>Bronze</u> (4 Year Old Kinder): Tuesday 8:30 am – 4:00 pm & Wednesday 8:30 am – 4:00 pm
Term 1	Thursday 28th January 2027 – Thursday 25th March 2027 Organisational Days and Group Starting Dates for children to be advised in December 2026
Term 2	Monday 12th April to Friday 25 th June 2027
Term 3	Tuesday 13th July to Friday 17th September 2027 Closure for Organisational Day: Monday 12th July Organisational Days for children to be advised
Term 4	Monday 4th October to Thursday 16th December 2027 Closure for Organisational Day: Friday 17th December
Planned Closures	To be advised in January 2027
Additional Hours account for closure	Not applicable

2. What Free Kinder means at our service

Progress Kindergarten has opted in to the Free Kinder initiative. Applicable parent fees are outlined below:

- Funded sessional kindergarten for 3-year-old children (15 hours per week) – no parent fee
- Funded sessional kindergarten for 4-year-old children (15 hours per week) - no parent fee

3. Pre-Prep (see Fee – Free Kinder policy Definitions)

From 2026, all Victorian funded early childhood education services will start to deliver Pre -Prep to eligible children from priority cohorts across the state. Pre-Prep will launch to eligible children from priority cohort groups in 2026 and 2028.

From 2026, between 16 and 25 hours of Pre-Prep will be available to:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children
- children from a refugee or asylum seeker background
- children who have had contact with Child Protection
- children who were supported by Early Start Kindergarten (ESK) or Access to Early Learning (AEL) in their Three-Year-Old Kindergarten year

4. Other charges (over and above the free kinder hours per week)

Other charges levied by Progress Kindergarten include:

- **Excursion/service event charge (outside of the 15 hours per week program):** At times throughout the year an additional excursion(s) or event(s) may be arranged where it is considered relevant to the service's program and the children's interests. At this time any additional costs to families are taken into consideration before a decision is made ([refer to Excursions and Service Events Policy](#)).
- **Late collection charge:** The Committee of Management reserves the right to implement a late collection charge when parents/guardians are frequently late in collecting a child from the service. This charge will be set at a level determined by the Committee of Management.

5. Fundraising and voluntary parent payment/donations

While **participation in fundraising/donation is voluntary**, the support of every family is encouraged. Fundraising activities are also an opportunity for families and communities to come together.

Progress Kindergarten accepts and welcomes donations from families and community members. These donations help us provide a supportive, high-quality and engaging environment for the children. All children will receive the same level of education and care, regardless of any voluntary contributions made by family. Any funds raised through fundraising or voluntary donations are allocated to expenses, resources and equipment that directly benefit the children and our educational program.

6. Support services

Families experiencing financial hardship often require access to family support services. Information on these services may be available from the kindergarten service provider or alternatively families may contact the local council.

