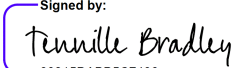




Kindergarten Central Registration Protocol

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DIRECTORATE	Communities	
PROTOCOL OWNER	Manager Family Health Support Services	
NEXT REVIEW	April 2027	
REVISION RECORD	VERSION	REVISION DESCRIPTION
April 2026	No.2	The Protocol has been revised following changes to the State Government Priority of Access framework. Updates ensure the Protocol remains compliant with current government priorities, clearly articulates revised access arrangements, and supports consistent implementation across services.

1. Purpose

The purpose of this protocol is to provide a clear and structured framework for the administration of the Kindergarten Central Registration Scheme for kindergartens delivered from Council owned facilities, operating under a Licence Agreement and kindergartens operating on school sites.

It outlines the eligibility criteria, roles and responsibilities, and related guiding documents to ensure consistent, transparent, and equitable management of kindergarten registrations.

This protocol aims to support families in accessing early childhood education through kindergarten placement and promoting a fair allocation of places in accordance with legislative requirements and local priorities.

2. Scope

This protocol applies to all aspects of the Kindergarten Central Registration Scheme and is intended to provide clarity and consistency in its implementation. It focuses on defining the key processes, decision-making points, and guiding principles that underpin the registration process.

The Central Registration applies only to sessional kindergarten programs delivered from Council-owned facilities operating under a Licence Agreement, and kindergartens operating on school sites.

Kindergarten services participating in the Frankston City Kindergarten Central Registration Scheme include:

- Aldercourt Kindergarten
- Baden Powell Kindergarten
- Ballam Park Preschool
- Banyan Fields Child and Family Centre
- Bayport Preschool
- Bayview Preschool
- Belvedere Park Preschool
- Botany Park Preschool
- Bowerbird Kindergarten
- Delacombe Park Preschool
- Erinwood Preschool
- Frankston Preschool
- Karingal East Preschool
- Karingal PLACE Kindergarten
- Langwarrin Park Preschool
- Langwarrin Preschool
- Montague Park Preschool
- Paratea Preschool
- Riviera Preschool
- Rowellyn Preschool
- Seaford Heights Preschool
- Seaford Kindergarten
- Skye Kindergarten (pending opening in 2027)
- Wonnai Kindergarten

3. Protocol

3.1. Background Information

Frankston City Council operates a Kindergarten Central Registration Scheme that supports 23 kindergarten services, located within Council owned infrastructure. The scheme facilitates the registration of children for both three- and four-year-old kindergarten programs. Each kindergarten is managed either by a Committee of Management or an Early Years Manager, with operational funding provided by the State Government.

While Council retains ownership of the facilities (with exception to facilities on school sites), these are licensed to the respective management bodies, and participation in the Central Registration Scheme is a condition of the Licence Agreement.

Registering for kindergarten is free of charge. The registration process is administered using a Kindergarten Registration Software Program, ensuring a streamlined and consistent approach.

3.2. Kindergarten Eligibility

To register for kindergarten, children need to meet the Department of Education's guidelines for three-year-old or four-year-old kindergarten funding. Children can only access one funded kindergarten program at a time.

A child is eligible for three-year-old kindergarten if they turn three by 30 April in the year they are attending.

Families of children born between January and April can choose whether their child will commence three-year-old kindergarten in the year they turn three or in the year they turn four.

Due to staffing requirements, some kindergartens may require that children begin attending after their third birthday. Where this applies, the child's place will be held until they reach the eligible starting age.

Families should contact the kindergarten for specific commencement arrangements.

A child is eligible for four-year-old kindergarten if they turn four by 30 April in the year they are attending. They can start at the beginning of that year.

3.3. Early Start Kindergarten (ESK)

Early Start Kindergarten gives eligible children 15 hours of free or low-cost kindergarten a week for two years before starting school.

A child is eligible for Early Start Kindergarten if they are three years old by 30 April in the year they are attending kindergarten and:

- Are from a refugee or asylum seeker background, or
- Identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, or
- If the eligible family has had contact with child protection.

Eligible children may be enrolled in a three-year-old group, four-year-old group, mixed-age group, or a combination of groups within the same service. Programs must be delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher to ensure children have access to 15 hours of funded kindergarten.

3.4. Pre-Prep

From 2026, Pre-Prep will provide eligible children with access to 16 to 25 hours of funded kindergarten per week in the year before school. Each kindergarten service will determine the number of hours offered within this range.

A child is eligible for Pre-Prep if they are four years old by 30 April in the year they attend kindergarten and meet one or more of the following criteria:

- The child or family is from a refugee or asylum seeker background;
- The child identifies as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander; or
- The family has had contact with child protection.

Eligible children may be enrolled in a three-year-old group, four-year-old group, mixed-age group, or a combination of groups within the same service. Programs must be delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher to support access to increased funded hours.

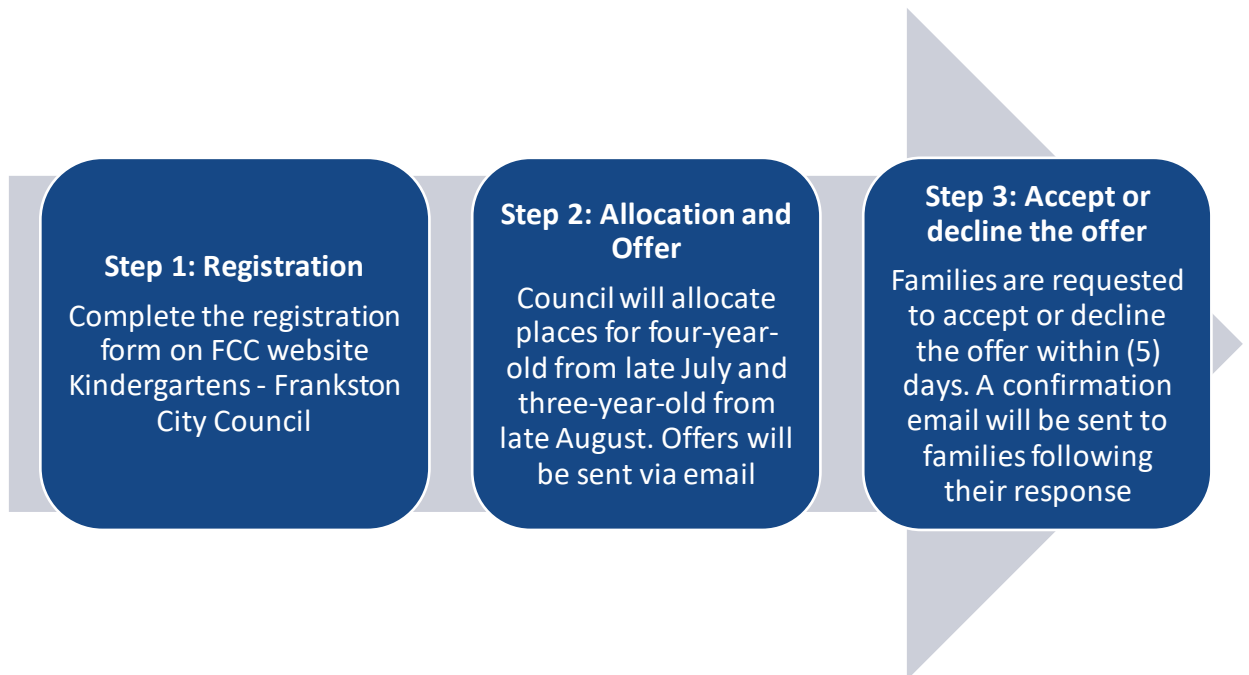
Pre-Prep timetables are available by contacting the kindergarten directly.

3.5. Promotion and Accessibility

Kindergarten registration open dates are promoted annually. Kindergarten is promoted through multiple channels to ensure broad community awareness. These include advertisements in *Frankston City News* (published twice per year), Council's website, Maternal and Child Health Centres, playgroups and local kindergartens. Whilst there is an **on-time** registration date, registrations are accepted throughout the year, with no closing date for submission.

3.6. Registration Process and Timeline

There are three steps in the registration process prior to enrolling a child in three or four-year-old kindergarten.



Step 1: Registration – complete the registration form on FCC website Kindergartens - Frankston City Council

Step 2: Allocation and Offer – Council will allocate places for four-year-old from late July and three-year-old from late August. Offers will be sent via email.

Step 3: Accept or decline the offer – families are requested to accept or decline the offer within (5) days. A confirmation email will be sent to families following their response.

Once an offer is accepted, the kindergarten will make contact with the family to proceed with the enrolment process.

Offers continue to be made throughout the year as vacancies arise.

3.7. Submitting a Registration

Families can register for three-year-old kindergarten and four-year-old kindergarten by completing the online registration form, available on Frankston City Council's (FCC) website at [Kindergartens - Frankston City Council](#) or by contacting the Kindergarten Registration Team. 1300 322 322 or email kindergarten@frankston.vic.gov.au

Families must submit forms by the 'on-time registration closing date' for first round offers. Specific dates for on-time registration can vary slightly each year. These dates will be available on the Kindergarten page on the FCC website.

Registrations will only be processed when all required documentation has been provided. This includes supporting documentation for Exceptional Circumstances.

For assistance with the online registration form, or to update or amend any information, the Kindergarten Central Registration Team can be contacted by phone 1300 322 322 or email kindergarten@frankston.vic.gov.au

Information needed to complete registration includes:

- Child's name, date of birth, language spoken at home, any previous kindergarten attendance and immunisation status;
- Parent / guardian contact details;
- Details of any additional support the child might need to participate in the kindergarten program due to diagnosed disability, development delay or complex medical conditions;
- Details of any priority category your child meets from Council's local allocation criteria eg, prior connection, siblings, exceptional circumstances;
- Two proof of address documents may be requested which clearly shows the applicants name: such as a recent utility bill, driver's licence, rental agreement or rates notice.

Selection of Preferences

When completing the kindergarten registration form, families will be asked to nominate up to three kindergarten options, in order of priority.

Listing multiple kindergartens does not guarantee a placement, as offers are dependent on availability. If all preferred kindergartens are oversubscribed, families will be notified that they can remain on a waitlist at one kindergarten or be offered a place at an alternative service with vacancies.

3.8. Priority of Access

Tier 1

Priority must first be given to:

- Children at risk or experiencing vulnerability, including those known to or referred by:
 - Child Protection
 - Family services
 - Maternal and Child Health
 - Out-of-Home Care providers
- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children
- Refugee or asylum seeker children
- Children and families holding valid concession cards, including:
 - Health Care Card
 - Pensioner Concession Card
 - Veteran's Affairs Card
- Children from multiple births (triplets or more)
- Children, parents or carers with additional needs that affect access or participation
- Children eligible for an additional year of Three-Year-Old or Four-Year-Old Kindergarten or Pre-Prep.

Tier 2

Once all Tier 1 children have been placed, services must give priority to:

- Children continuing at the same service for four-year-old kindergarten or Pre-Prep (includes resident and non-resident).

Where vacancies remain after the Department of Education's guidelines have been applied, the Frankston City Council Priority of Access and Local Area Criteria will be applied. This criteria is reviewed annually.

3.9. Allocation Process

Three-year-old and four-year-old kindergarten places are allocated separately. While Council aims to offer children a place at the same kindergarten for both years, this cannot be guaranteed. Each kindergarten is licensed for a maximum number of children and must comply with national regulations regarding enrolment limits. If registrations exceed available places, some children may need to attend a different kindergarten for their four-year-old year.

Allocation to kindergarten places occurs in accordance with the published allocation timeline. Current information about the allocation process and timeframes is available on Council's website.

Council uses a Central Registration software program to manage the allocation process to ensure it is carried out fairly and consistently, and in line with the Priority of Access and Allocation procedure.

If the number of registrations exceeds available places at a kindergarten, a computerised ballot process using Council's Software system is used to allocate remaining places. The Kindergarten Central Registration Scheme is managed through this system, which includes restricted access controls and secure record storage.

For information about the Department of Education Priority of Access Policy, visit: Priority of access for early childhood education | vic.gov.au (www.vic.gov.au).

3.10. Communication with Families

Families are informed individually whether they have received an offer at their preferred kindergarten or have been placed on a waiting list. If no offer is made, families may be provided with a list of available vacancies across the municipality. They may change their preferences at any time or choose to remain on the waiting list. Council's Central Registration and Liaison Officers maintain regular contact with families to support their needs.

3.11. Exceptional Circumstances

The registration process allows families to indicate if exceptional circumstances apply to their application. Exceptional circumstances are intended to capture situations that are not already addressed through the Victorian State Government Priority of Access (PoA) criteria.

All applications identified as exceptional circumstances are reviewed by the Exceptional Circumstances Assessment Team (ECAT) to determine an appropriate outcome.

Families who believe their circumstances may be exceptional are encouraged to contact the Kindergarten Central Registration Team to discuss their situation prior to, or at the time of, submitting a request.

Exceptional circumstances do not override the State Government Priority of Access requirements and are considered only after PoA criteria have been applied, where relevant.

Requests for exceptional circumstances must be emailed to the Kindergarten Central Registration Team at the time of registration, or as soon as practicable if circumstances change after an application has been submitted.

All requests must be supported by appropriate documentation to enable assessment by ECAT.

Exceptional circumstances submitted after kindergarten offers have commenced will be assessed by ECAT within 10 business days. Where approved, an application's priority

status may be updated; however, approval does not guarantee placement where a kindergarten is full.

3.12. Detailed Allocation Criteria

Where the number of registrations received exceeds the number of available kindergarten places, a waiting list is established. Offers continue to be made as vacancies arise in accordance with the Victorian State Government Priority of Access (PoA) guidelines, followed by Council's local allocation criteria.

Step 1 – State Government Priority of Access

In line with State Government requirements, the following Priority of Access criteria are applied first, and before any local criteria, regardless of whether a child is a resident or non-resident of the municipality.

Priority must be given to children who meet one or more of the current State Government Priority of Access criteria, including children who are identified as high priority due to vulnerability, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander status, refugee or asylum seeker background, concession card status, additional needs, eligibility for an additional year of kindergarten, multiple births (triplets or more), or continuation at the same service for four year old kindergarten or Pre-Prep, where applicable.

Step 2 – Local Allocation Criteria

Once all eligible children meeting the State Government Priority of Access criteria have been placed, remaining kindergarten places are allocated in accordance with Council's local criteria, in the following order:

Level 1 – Resident (on-time)

Children who registered on time and whose parent or legal guardian is a Frankston City resident or ratepayer, where the child:

- Is continuing from three-year-old to four-year-old kindergarten at the same service; and/or
- Is registering at a kindergarten within their local postcode area; and/or
- Has a sibling who previously attended the same kindergarten service within the past three years or is attending in the same year.

Level 2 – Resident (on-time)

Children who registered on time and whose parent or legal guardian is a Frankston City resident or ratepayer.

Level 3 – Resident (late)

Children whose parent or legal guardian is a Frankston City resident or ratepayer and who registered after the published registration closing date.

Level 4 – Non-resident

Non-resident children who are continuing from three-year-old to four-year-old kindergarten at the same service.

Level 5 – Non-resident

All other non-resident children.

Ballot process

If, after applying the above Priority of Access and local allocation criteria, there are still more eligible registrations than available places at a kindergarten service, remaining places will be allocated through a random computerised ballot process.

3.13. Privacy and Data Sharing

The registration form includes a Privacy Statement informing families that their information will be shared with the kindergarten provider in accordance with privacy laws and Frankston City Council policies. After offers are generated, each kindergarten receives a list of children who have accepted offers at their service, along with relevant registration information to enable them to process the enrolment.

4. Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Kindergarten Liaison Officers	Responsible for carrying out the registration process and responding to families as required.
Children's Services Coordinator	Responsible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overseeing the registration process; • Responding to families, as required; • Sending out the annual feedback survey and to incorporate changes, where appropriate for the following year; • Annually reviewing the Frankston City Council Priority of Access and Local Area Criteria; • Reviewing and updating this protocol.
Exceptional Circumstances Assessment Team (ECAT)	Responsible for assessing all applications for exceptional circumstances.

	Assessment officers are Best Start Facilitator, Coordinator Children's Services and the Manager Family Health Support Services.
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5. Definitions

Term	Definition
<i>Kindergarten Registration</i>	The process of applying for a place in a kindergarten program. Registration is carried out through a Central Registration and Enrolment Scheme (CRES) managed by local councils.
<i>Kindergarten Enrolment</i>	The process of accepting an offer of a kindergarten place and providing the required documentation (e.g. health, emergency, and legal information). Enrolment confirms a child's participation in the program and enables the service to plan for safe and inclusive delivery.
<i>Priority of Access</i>	A State Government policy that ensures children who are experiencing vulnerability or disadvantage are given priority when places are limited. More information here: Priority of access for early childhood education vic.gov.au
<i>Local Area Criteria</i>	Additional criteria developed by individual services or councils to guide enrolment decisions after applying the Priority of Access policy.
<i>Pre-Prep</i>	Pre-Prep is the new name for the four-year-old kindergarten program being introduced as part of the State Government Best Start, Best Life reforms. Other than more hours, there is no difference between four-year-old kindergarten and Pre-Prep programs. Pre-Prep will begin rolling out gradually from 2026 in Frankston City, becoming available to all children by 2036.
<i>Exceptional Circumstances</i>	Situations where a child or family may not meet standard eligibility or priority criteria but requires special consideration due to unique or urgent needs to ensure equitable access.

6. Related documents

6.1. Legislation

- *Children's Services Act 1996;*
- *Children's Services Regulations 2020;*
- *Local Government Act 2020.*
- *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*
- *Health Records Act 2001*

6.2. Documents and resources

- *The Kindergarten Funding Guide;*
- *Priority of Access for Early Childhood Education;*
- *Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYDF);*
- *National Quality Framework (NQF);*
- *Early Learning Association Australia (ELAA).*