

2023 Kindergarten Funding: Funding Category Guidelines

Funding declared under the *Community Services Act 2007*

Foreword

Every child, regardless of circumstance, deserves the best start in life. Access to a quality kindergarten program supports that start. It lays the foundation for every child in Queensland to thrive and achieve life-long success.

From 1 January 2023, the Queensland Government will introduce new kindergarten funding to give every child a great start.

This \$1 billion investment over five years means kindergarten is not only world class, but accessible and affordable.

The Department of Education will provide funding to eligible kindergarten service providers to ensure greater access to a quality kindergarten program for Queensland children and to reduce out-of-pocket fees for many families from 2023.

Kindergarten funding category

Kindergarten funding is provided to eligible services delivering an approved kindergarten program to support the cost of delivering kindergarten. The objectives of this funding are to:

- improve educational outcomes for children
- increase participation and attendance of all children in Queensland
- target funding to children who need it most
- improve inclusiveness of services
- improve affordability by reducing fees for families
- help children reach their full potential when they are at kindergarten.

Approved kindergarten program provider status

A kindergarten program may be delivered at a long day care service or sessional kindergarten (through membership with or an affiliate of a central governing body).

To be eligible for and receive subsidies/grants, each service provider must have obtained approved kindergarten program provider status.

Kindergarten funding eligibility criteria

To be eligible for funding, service providers must meet two sets of criteria.

1. **Child-eligibility criteria** – service providers may claim funding for eligible-age children only, and

- 2. Service-eligible criteria** – service providers must meet a range of criteria including, but not exhaustive of, holding a current service approval, be registered as an approved kindergarten program provider, deliver an approved kindergarten program and employ qualified early childhood teacher/s.

Kindergarten funding

Kindergarten funding is provided to services through one or more subsidies/grants. These include:

- **Base subsidy** – provided for each eligible child who is enrolled in an approved kindergarten program.
- **Affordability subsidy** – provided for each eligible child who meets one or more specified criteria.
- **Service location subsidy** – provided to service providers (for each eligible child) where the service is located in an eligible remoteness category using the ABS remoteness measure at the SA2 geographic level.
- **Educational need grant** – provided to eligible service providers, determined by the Department of Education, to respond to children’s learning and development needs through provision of evidence-based initiatives.
- **Inclusion subsidy** – provided to service providers to support inclusion of **all** eligible children in an approved kindergarten program irrespective of diversity of background and/or additional needs.

Kindergarten funding payments

Funding is provided to approved service providers collectively on behalf of sessional kindergarten members and affiliates to central governing bodies or to eligible individual long day care service providers.

Kindergarten Funding Essentials and fact sheets

Approved kindergarten program providers must comply with the requirements outlined in the *Kindergarten Funding Essentials* as published by the Department of Education.

Assurance

To obtain assurance that approved kindergarten program providers are expending funds in accordance with the intent of kindergarten funding, the Department of Education will conduct assurance reviews of service providers.

Measures

The kindergarten funding outcomes will be measured against improvements in:

- vulnerability data through the Australian Early Development Census; and
- kindergarten participation and attendance data through the Department of Education's annual Early Childhood Education and Care Census and QGrants.