

# Queensland Kindergarten Funding Essentials

## Sessional Kindergartens Quick Reference Guide

This document is for quick reference only. Please see the **2026 Kindy Funding Essentials** on the Department's Early Childhood Education and Care website for full details of funding requirements.

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# 1. Free Kindy in Queensland

Free Kindy is designed to ensure that Eligible Children receive 600 hours of fee-free kindergarten, removing cost as a barrier to access and relieving cost of living pressures for families.

The Department of Education (the department) will provide Free Kindy funding for a maximum of 40 weeks in a calendar year.

The 2026 Kindy Funding Essentials are available on the department's Early Childhood Education and Care [website](#).

For more information contact the Grants Management and Funding team on:

**Telephone:** 07 3035 2244

**Email:** [kindyfunding@qed.qld.gov.au](mailto:kindyfunding@qed.qld.gov.au)

## 2. Qualifying for Queensland Kindergarten Funding

### Opting in to provide Free Kindy

All Approved Kindergarten Program Providers (KPPs) in Queensland that deliver an Approved Kindergarten Program for:



**15 hours per week or  
30 hours per fortnight**



**at least 40 weeks**



**up to 600 hours per year**

are eligible to opt into Free Kindy, subject to meeting Eligibility Requirements and specified terms and conditions.

Sessional kindergartens that commence delivery of an Approved Kindergarten Program during the calendar year can opt in to Free Kindy.

### Funding Threshold

To opt in to Free Kindy, the annual fee charged for the Approved Kindergarten Program delivered by the sessional kindergarten must be below the Funding Threshold.

The department may allow a sessional kindergarten with fees above the Funding Threshold to opt in to Free Kindy where the service is in a rural or remote community and is the only Approved KPP in the community. This is exclusively at the discretion and with the explicit written consent of the department and will be managed on a case-by-case basis.

### Increasing fees

Opted in sessional kindergartens must maintain their fees so that they stay within the Funding Threshold for a 12-month period. Sessional kindergartens are permitted to increase their fees to take effect from the beginning of a calendar year but are not able to increase their fees during the kindergarten year.

If a sessional kindergarten is unable or unwilling to meet the Funding Threshold, they may opt out of Free Kindy and move to the Per Capita Kindy Subsidy.

### Per Capita Kindy Subsidy

Sessional kindergartens whose fees are higher than the Funding Threshold will not be eligible to participate in Free Kindy, and instead will be eligible for the Per Capita Kindy Subsidy.

Services will need to comply with KPP Eligibility Requirements, including early childhood teacher (ECT) requirements, and meet reporting requirements and criteria under the Preschool Reform Agreement (PRA) to qualify for Funding for each Eligible Child.

### Opting out

Services that opt out will have their Approved KPP status removed and will be ineligible for kindergarten subsidies and supports such as Kindy Uplift.

## 3. Central Governing Body model

### Roles and responsibilities

#### Central Governing Bodies

The department funds Central Governing Bodies (CGBs) to:

- support their sessional kindergartens to deliver quality and affordable Approved Kindergarten Programs
- distribute Subsidies to their sessional kindergartens
- comply with requirements of assurance and governance imposed by the department
- support the operations of their sessional kindergartens
- provide Volunteer Management Committees with professional development and advisory services (where relevant). This may include, but is not limited to, governance and support and other professional development opportunities and advice to enhance the delivery of an Approved Kindergarten Program.

#### Sessional kindergartens

In claiming and receiving Queensland Kindergarten Funding, sessional kindergartens agree to and must:

- maintain their KPP status through continuing to meet Eligibility Requirements
- ensure Funding is used to provide free kindergarten for Eligible Children (for opted in services), with the fees charged for Eligible Children being less than or equal to fees for non-Eligible Children attending the Approved Kindergarten Program
- ensure Claims are accurate and made for Eligible Children in one Approved Kindergarten Program only
- spend Funding for Eligible Children in the year for which the funding was claimed
- ensure fees are developed in consultation with the relevant CGB

- (for opted in services) maintain their Approved Kindergarten Program fees under the department's Funding Threshold for a calendar year to ensure they remain eligible for Free Kindy
- ensure enrolment policies and procedures are followed and that enrolment of Eligible Children in a single kindergarten program is prioritised prior to offering additional programs or enrolling non-Eligible Children after the beginning of February
- always display kindergarten program related information at the service
- only transfer from one CGB to another at the end of a calendar year
- develop Transition Statements for each Eligible Child's family in November of the calendar year
- adhere to the terms and conditions detailed in Service Agreements, including exclusively using the funds for a funded purpose and an Accepted Use
- immediately advise their CGB and the department should they become aware of a breach of the requirements for using the funds for a funded purpose or an Accepted Use, irrespective of whether the breach was intentional or not
- if operating via a Volunteer Management Committee, have a valid committee in place as required under the Associations Incorporation Act 1981, and must comply with the requirements of, and its duties under, the Associations Incorporation Act 1981 and regulations
- comply with all other relevant legislation, regulations and standards at all times
- retain and provide on request any evidence to demonstrate compliance with Queensland Kindergarten Funding for up to 3 years
- adopt their CGB's third party software to charge/apply kindergarten funding to families (affiliates only).

## Legal obligations

CGBs have legal obligations relating to Queensland Kindergarten Funding and must have financial oversight of the use of Funding provided to each sessional kindergarten.

CGBs are contractually bound to the terms and conditions in their kindergarten Service Agreements. Each CGB is the legal entity that enters into this contractual and legal relationship with the department.

Legal obligations include:

- reporting and governance requirements
- financial accountability
- compliance with the [Queensland Kindergarten Funding Essentials](#), including service eligibility and requirements.

Sessional kindergartens (affiliates only) are bound to the terms and conditions of their Affiliate Agreements with their CGB. Affiliate Agreements contractually bind each CGB's service to the department's kindergarten Eligibility Requirements.

## Joining a CGB

Approved KPPs that are sessional kindergartens may apply to become a member of any CGB for which they meet the membership criteria. A sessional kindergarten (affiliates only) will be asked to enter into an Affiliate Agreement with their chosen CGB.

See [CGB contact details](#).

## Transferring membership

A sessional kindergarten can choose to transfer its membership from one CGB to another at the end of a calendar year. The existing CGB must notify the department as soon as a sessional kindergarten terminates their Service Agreement with them (affiliates only). Once a sessional kindergarten has signed an Affiliate Agreement with the new CGB, this CGB must provide the department with confirmation of the new membership. The department will then confirm the transfer date with the new and previous CGBs.

## Distribution of Funding






Subsidies are allocated to CGBs by the department as a block grant to distribute to their sessional kindergartens to provide an Approved Kindergarten Program. Any type of funding that requires the CGB to distribute funds to a sessional kindergarten must be so distributed, with no Funds retained by the CGB or otherwise paid or payable to the CGB. Funding is distributed to CGBs by the department in accordance with their Service Agreement with the department.

## 4. Service provider eligibility

### Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible for, and to receive, Queensland Kindergarten Funding, a sessional kindergarten must have obtained Approved KPP status. To become an Approved KPP, sessional kindergartens must meet the following Eligibility Requirements.

#### Eligibility Requirements to become a KPP

-  Be a member or affiliate of a CGB.
-  Operate a service that has a current service approval under the **Education and Care Services National Law** (National Law) or the **Education and Care Services Act 2013** (ECS Act), and comply with legislation and requirements of any Commonwealth, State, Territory or local authority in relation to the Funding, the Services and the Service Agreement, including a Governing Act.
-  Have a rating of Working Towards National Quality Standard (NQS) or higher. Services waiting to be assessed by the **Early Childhood Regulatory Authority (ECRA)** against the NQS are still eligible for funding.
-  Deliver an Approved Kindergarten Program using the **Queensland kindergarten learning guideline** (QKLG) or an alternative kindergarten learning guideline accredited by the **Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority** (QCAA).
-  Offer and provide all Eligible Children at least 600 hours of an Approved Kindergarten Program, made up of at least 15 hours per week or 30 hours per fortnight for 40 weeks per year, consistent with the requirements of this document and the Service Agreement between the CGB and the department. Any other model must be approved by the department prior to commencement.
-  Employ a qualified Early Childhood Teacher (ECT) to deliver the Approved Kindergarten Program. Further information relating to exceptional circumstances for 'working towards' ECTs is outlined in **Section 8.1 of the Queensland Kindergarten Funding Essentials**.  
Qualifications must meet requirements of an ECT under the **National Quality Framework** (NQF) and be checked against Approved ECT Qualifications on the **Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority** (ACECQA) website.
-  Ensure that the fee charged for Eligible Children participating in an Approved Kindergarten Program is not more than the fee charged for any other age group at the service. Sessional kindergartens must also provide evidence that their Approved Kindergarten Program fees are below the department's Funding Threshold to opt in to Free Kindy.

## Maintaining KPP status

To remain an Approved KPP and be eligible for Queensland Kindergarten Funding, the sessional kindergarten must continue to comply with Queensland and national funding and regulatory Eligibility Requirements. In addition, sessional kindergartens need to meet the following requirements to maintain their Approved KPP status.

<b>Requirements to maintain Approved KPP status</b>	
<b>Assessment and Rating Process</b>	<p>A sessional kindergarten must maintain a rating of Working Towards NQS or higher to continue to be eligible to receive Queensland Kindergarten Funding.</p> <p>If a service receives a rating of Significant Improvement Required (SIR) during an assessment and rating process, the service must notify the department via <a href="mailto:kindyfundng@qed.qld.gov.au">kindyfundng@qed.qld.gov.au</a> within 10 working days. While the sessional kindergarten holds a rating of SIR, it will not be eligible to receive Queensland Kindergarten Funding.</p> <p>The sessional kindergarten must also cease to use the 'kindy tick' until it has achieved a rating of at least Working Towards NQS.</p> <p>In addition, the department may, wholly at its discretion, undertake further investigation, which may result in the service's Approved KPP status being suspended or revoked.</p>
<b>Displaying program information</b>	<p>A sessional kindergarten must always display the following information when an Approved Kindergarten Program is being delivered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Approved KPP certificate</li><li>• Approved Kindergarten Program 'kindy tick' identifier</li><li>• kindergarten program operating times</li><li>• name and qualifications of the ECT delivering the Approved Kindergarten Program</li><li>• fee structure clearly documenting how kindergarten will be made free for Eligible Children.</li></ul> <p>Sessional kindergartens must clearly document, display and publish their fee information on their website. This must include a written statement about the fees to be charged. Sessional kindergartens can use their own template or, alternatively, the <a href="#">Kindergarten Program Statement of Fees template</a> on the department's website. Refer to <a href="#">Appendix 2 of the Queensland Kindergarten Funding Essentials</a> for further information.</p>
<b>Kindergarten identifier</b>	<p>To help families recognise free kindergarten programs that have been officially approved by the Queensland Government, sessional kindergartens must display the 'kindy tick' on their signage and promotional material.</p> <p>If an Approved Provider or sessional kindergarten does not meet the Eligibility Requirements or has not delivered an Approved Kindergarten Program for a continuous period of longer than 3 months, it must cease the use of the 'kindy tick' until it recommences delivering an Approved Kindergarten Program.</p>

## Requirements to maintain Approved KPP status

<b>Fees</b>	<p>Approved Providers are required to have a comprehensive written fee policy at each of their services. The fee policy must provide information about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the total annual fee amount, including all non-refundable components and the out-of-pocket costs for parents/carers, which are not covered by Free Kindy</li> <li>• how each Subsidy component is applied.</li> </ul> <p>Sessional kindergartens that have opted in to Free Kindy must not increase their fees during a calendar year without approval from their CGB, to ensure that they remain under the department’s Funding Threshold and continue to be eligible for Free Kindy.</p>
<b>Transition Statements</b>	<p>The ECT is required to use the online application in the <a href="#">QCAA</a> portal to develop and upload a Transition Statement (with family permission) for each Eligible Child’s family in November of the kindergarten year, in preparation for the child moving from kindergarten to Prep. Further information on Transition Statements is available on the <a href="#">QCAA’s website</a>.</p> <p>A Transition Statement must be developed for children completing a second year of kindergarten, acknowledging their learning progress and strategies to support continuity of learning and transition into a new kindergarten group.</p>
<b>Contractual requirements</b>	<p>Sessional kindergartens receive funding in advance each term through their CGB, which is required to comply with its Service Agreement with the department.</p> <p>Sessional kindergartens have an ongoing obligation to advise the department of any change in circumstances, particularly if ECTs leave their service.</p> <p>Sessional kindergartens are required to comply with their Affiliate Agreement with their CGB to continue to be eligible to receive Kindergarten Funding.</p>
<b>Maintaining Approved KPP status without an ECT</b>	<p>To maintain Approved KPP status without an appropriately qualified ECT and/or delivering an Approved Kindergarten Program, a sessional kindergarten is required to provide evidence that it is actively recruiting for an ECT and submit a nil claim each term. The service will not be eligible to use the ‘kindy tick’ or be included on the Free Kindy Finder until it can meet the Funding Eligibility Requirements.</p>

## 5. Child eligibility

### Eligible Children

#### Eligible age cohort

Eligible Children, being children eligible for funding, must be 4 years old by 30 June in the year they participate in the Approved Kindergarten Program (generally the year before starting formal schooling or Prep). An Eligible Child is enrolled for 15 hours, 40 weeks or 600 hours a year and Funding is based on enrolment in an Approved Kindergarten Program, not attendance.

To check whether a child is of eligible age, enter their birthday into the [kindy eligible age calculator](#).

#### Delayed exit

The department will provide Queensland Kindergarten Funding for a maximum of 2 years, inclusive of delayed exit. A child who will reach the age of 6 years and 6 months on or before 30 June in the calendar year is ineligible for Funding, even if this would be their first year in kindergarten.

#### Unvaccinated children

Unvaccinated Eligible Children can participate in an Approved Kindergarten Program and receive funding. The decision to enrol an unvaccinated Eligible Child is for the Approved Provider to make in accordance with their enrolment policies.

### Children on visas

Eligible Children who are on a permanent resident visa are eligible for Free Kindy and families do not need to declare the visa when enrolling the child in an Approved Kindergarten Program.

If Eligible Children are not citizens or permanent residents of Australia, parents/carers must provide current visa information to sessional kindergartens when enrolling.

Visas are deemed eligible if they are exempt from state school fees or are a recognised Refugee or humanitarian visa.

### Non-Eligible Children

#### Non-eligible age cohort

A child who will turn 4 years old after 30 June in the year they are participating in kindergarten is not eligible to receive funding and the Approved Provider cannot claim funding for this child.

Sessional kindergartens can only offer a non-Eligible Child a place in an Approved Kindergarten Program from the commencement of Term 1 each kindergarten program year if places are available after finalising the enrolment of Eligible Children in the year that they are attending Prep. This is on the basis that they would not be participating in an Approved Kindergarten Program for a minimum of 40 weeks or 600 hours a year.

## 6. Managing enrolments

### Eligible Children

#### Prioritising access

Sessional kindergartens must prioritise the enrolment of Eligible Children into Approved Kindergarten Programs prior to opening additional programs or enrolling non-Eligible Children. Sessional kindergartens must implement a clear enrolment policy that states the Eligible Child cohort (based on age) for each year of enrolment (children turning 4 years old by 30 June in the year they participate in the Approved Kindergarten Program).

Non-Eligible Children can be enrolled in a kindergarten program from the commencement of Term 1 of each kindergarten program year. The enrolment of Eligible Children must always take precedence over non-Eligible Children.

Sessional kindergartens have a legal responsibility under the [Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992](#), the [Disability Standards for Education 2005](#), the [Queensland Anti-Discrimination Act 1991](#) and the [Human Rights Act 2019](#) to provide inclusive programs to ensure all Eligible Children can actively participate

in an education program, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and those who face barriers to participation and learning.

### **Enrolment in multiple programs at different services**

Each Eligible Child can only access Funding for one Approved Kindergarten Program at a time. Where a child attends multiple sessional kindergartens, the service must support parent choice regarding which service is to receive the Kindergarten Funding. Approved Providers must not influence parent choice.

For completeness, this should include providing parents of Eligible Children with a copy of the fee structure to assist them in making a choice on enrolment and application of subsidies at the sessional kindergarten of their selection.

Where a child is enrolled in an Approved Kindergarten Program in both a funded sessional kindergarten and a funded long day care service, the sessional kindergarten will receive Funding for the child.

An Eligible Child can be enrolled in 2 programs at 2 different services from the commencement of Term 1 each Kindergarten program year, provided there are places available. To avoid doubt, families can only receive funding for one Approved Kindergarten Program.

### **Early entry to Prep**

Early entry to Prep is possible under Part 4, Section 17 of the *Education (General Provisions) Regulation 2017* where a child turns 5 years old by 31 July in the year they propose to attend Prep, and the school principal is satisfied that the child is ready for education in the Prep year.

Sessional kindergartens need to seek approval for Queensland Kindergarten Funding for children eligible for early entry to Prep by emailing the department at [kindyfundings@qed.qld.gov.au](mailto:kindyfundings@qed.qld.gov.au) and providing evidence (for example, letter or email) from the school principal of unconditional early enrolment into Prep for the following year.

### **Children returning to Kindergarten from Prep**

Where a family requests that their child return to kindergarten from Prep after Term 1 (for example, if it has been identified by the school that it is in the best interest of the child), the sessional kindergarten must seek guidance and advice from its CGB in the first instance before approving the enrolment.

### **Out of cycle enrolments and pro-rata funding**

An Eligible Child can be enrolled in an Approved Kindergarten Program at any time during a calendar year and will receive funding for 15 hours per week on a pro-rata basis for a maximum of 40 weeks up to 600 hours a year, based on the date of enrolment.

### **Enrolment in multiple programs at the same service**

An Eligible Child can be enrolled in more than one Approved Kindergarten Program (offered for more than 600 hours annually) from the commencement of Term 1 in the kindergarten program year, but can only receive kindergarten funding for 600 hours annually, made up of at least 15 hours per week or 30 hours per fortnight for 40 weeks. The child will not be eligible for Queensland Kindergarten Funding for the remaining hours or receive funding for a second Approved Kindergarten Program.

### **Absences**

Sessional kindergartens must have a policy/procedure in place that includes the management of illness, holidays and long-term absences for Eligible Children enrolled in an Approved Kindergarten Program.

Sessional kindergartens should discuss with families if the policy/procedure impacts on children receiving Free Kindy.

## Cancellation of enrolment

Kindergarten funding is applied on a pro-rata basis for each Eligible Child based on their enrolment. No further funding will be paid for the Eligible Child where the enrolment is cancelled by the service or the family.

## Enrolment processes

### Enrolment policies and procedures

Sessional kindergartens must have clear and transparent kindergarten enrolment processes and must ensure their application and enrolment policies:

- promote fair and equitable access to Approved Kindergarten Programs
- support all Eligible Children to access an Approved Kindergarten Program, including those who face barriers to participation
- do not inadvertently present barriers to participation, especially for Eligible Children experiencing vulnerability or disadvantage.

To achieve these objectives, Approved Providers must ensure their enrolment policies:

- comply with the ***Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992***, the ***Disability Standards for Education 2005***, the ***Queensland Anti-Discrimination Act 1991*** and the ***Human Rights Act 2019***
- support Eligible Children who are experiencing disadvantage
- address issues of eligibility for funded places
- outline how waiting lists will be prioritised
- are effectively communicated to families and the local community.

## Fees

Approved Providers are required to group additional levies and fees into the standard kindergarten fee to ensure that kindergarten will be free for Eligible Children. Planned incursions and excursions should be part of the educational program and built into the service delivery model and fee structure for the service.

Families with an Australian Government Health Care Card should not be charged an enrolment fee to ensure that cost is not a barrier to participation in an Approved Kindergarten Program.

Where a sessional kindergarten's constitution requires a family to pay a membership fee, this fee is not required to be rolled up into the standard kindergarten fee. Other fees and levies (for example, building fund, maintenance and fundraising levies) must be voluntary. Sessional kindergartens cannot use non-payment of these fees as a basis to refuse an Eligible Child's enrolment.

## 7. Delivery of an Approved Kindergarten Program

### Kindergarten program delivery

Sessional kindergartens are responsible for the delivery of an inclusive quality education program for all children. They must:

- establish procedures for the inclusion of all children
- manage the Approved Kindergarten Program, activities and physical environment of their service to ensure they cater for all children and address the designed learning program
- have a documented approach to working with families to support the learning potential of each child in kindergarten
- ensure the Approved Kindergarten Program delivers the QKLG or an alternative kindergarten curriculum that is accredited by the QCAA
- consider Kindy Uplift, inclusion and workforce funding when developing their Approved Kindergarten Program.

### Program hours

Sessional kindergartens are required to deliver an Approved Kindergarten Program for at least 15 hours per week or 30 hours per fortnight for 40 weeks per calendar year, or 600 hours per calendar year, for each Eligible Child.

Approved Providers can only claim funding for Eligible Children who are enrolled in the Approved Kindergarten Program at a sessional kindergarten for a minimum of 15 hours per week or 30 hours per fortnight.

Eligible Children who are enrolled to participate in the Approved Kindergarten Program for less than 15 hours a week or 30 hours per fortnight are not eligible for funding and should be flagged in the CCMS as ineligible.

A staff roster must be available, and each sessional kindergarten must provide adequate evidence of the actual hours that the ECT delivers the Approved Kindergarten Program to the children at the sessional kindergarten. Evidence of all ECT non-contact periods must be clearly available, as this forms an essential part of the human resource recordkeeping component.

### Maintaining service delivery

There may be times when it is not possible to deliver the scheduled funded Approved Kindergarten Program hours in a given week due to:

- public holidays
- child-free days
- reduced session times
- teacher absences due to a range of factors, such as illness, professional development activities or attendance at compulsory practicums required to complete an approved ECT degree
- emergency situations.

Where possible, sessional kindergartens are encouraged to develop solutions to minimise the amount of disruption to normal service delivery.

When possible, sessional kindergartens should avoid cancelling sessions or changing session times during the year if the closure has not been planned and communicated to families at the beginning of the year.

### Non-funded hours

Sessional kindergartens can offer additional hours and charge parents/carers for program hours over and above the 15 funded hours per week (600 hours per year) for wraparound kindy care. The fees for these additional hours can be set by the sessional kindergarten in consultation with its community and are not subject to fee policies.

Wraparound kindy care can be provided at the discretion of a sessional kindergarten and does not attract any subsidies.

## 8. Managing ECTs

### Qualifications

An Approved Kindergarten Program is to be delivered by an appropriately qualified ECT who has a teaching qualification recognised by the **ACECQA**.

### Fully qualified ECTs

In Queensland, ECT qualifications for funding align with the NQF. Teacher registration is encouraged, but it is not a requirement unless relevant to the individual staff member's qualification, or to the process of undertaking an alternative pathway to being recognised as an ECT.

### ECT exceptional circumstances

An Approved Provider may be able to claim funding for an ECT who is 'actively working towards' completing an ACECQA approved qualification and delivering the Approved Kindergarten Program at the sessional kindergarten. To be eligible to claim funding, the ECT or approved 'working towards' ECT must be delivering the Approved Kindergarten Program.

### ECT special circumstances

The department will consider requests on a case-by-case basis for an exemption from Queensland Kindergarten Funding ECT Eligibility Requirements where special circumstances exist around why the Approved Kindergarten Program should continue to operate without a fully qualified ECT or a 'working towards' ECT.

### Contact and non-contact hours

An ECT can claim up to one hour per day of non-contact time as part of the Approved Kindergarten Program hours, which can be inclusive of programming time or the ECT's lunch break.

### Absences

If the ECT delivering the Approved Kindergarten Program is on a planned or extended absence, the allocation of the 40 weeks of the Approved Kindergarten Program should be planned around this absence.

If a qualified ECT cannot be recruited to relieve for a period of more than 10 consecutive working days, a sessional kindergarten must advise its CGB.

If the ECT delivering the Approved Kindergarten Program is ill or on unplanned leave, sessional kindergartens must make every effort to engage another ECT to replace them. In all circumstances, staff members must meet the requirements of the NQF.

If unplanned absences exceed 20 days in a calendar year, and a qualified ECT is not delivering the Approved Kindergarten Program, the Approved Provider will not be able to claim funding for the sessional kindergarten.

### Workforce programs

#### Qualifications Pathways Program (QPP)

The **QPP** provides scholarships with wraparound support to early childhood professionals to undertake further studies to upgrade qualifications.

Sessional kindergartens having trouble with recruiting qualified ECTs or educators should work closely with QPP organisations and kindy advisors to determine eligibility and opportunities.

### **Early Childhood Practicum Placement Grant (ECPG)**

The **ECPG** is available for eligible students not currently working in the sector who will complete their minimum consecutive 15-day practicum placement in an Approved Kindergarten Program (long day care or sessional kindergarten).

Financial support of up to \$5,000 is available for students studying an early childhood undergraduate degree or postgraduate qualification who complete their final work placement in a service delivering an Approved Kindergarten Program.

### **Early Childhood Guidance Program (ECGP)**

The **ECGP** builds educator and service capability in Protective Behaviours delivered by the National Association for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect, and in Positive Behaviour Guidance, delivered by Autism Queensland.

The program includes workshops, online training and personalised support for educators. It is available to all regulated early childhood services in Queensland.

### **Mandatory child safety training**

All regulated early childhood education and care services are required to ensure relevant staff complete mandatory child safety training in accordance with legislative and regulatory requirements.

Mandatory child safety training is provided free through the Australian Government Department of Education Geckko training portal.

From 1 July 2026 the Australian Government will be offering workforce funding grants to cover costs associated with workforce training expenses. This funding is administered separately and is not part of Free Kindy Funding.

Refer to the **Australian Government grant guidelines** to confirm eligibility, application processes and funding availability.

## **9. Kindergarten Funding**

### **Free Kindy Funding**

All sessional kindergartens have the choice to opt in to Free Kindy, provided their fee structure complies with the department's Funding Threshold. Funding is provided to sessional kindergartens through one or more subsidies.

**Base Subsidy** is provided for sessional kindergartens that have opted in to Free Kindy for each Eligible Child who is enrolled in an Approved Kindergarten Program. This funding is provided to offset the operating cost to deliver the Approved Kindergarten Program (600 hours per year).

Services receiving the Per Capita Kindy Subsidy are not eligible for the Base Subsidy.

**Free Kindy Funding** is provided for each Eligible Child enrolled in an Approved Kindergarten Program delivered by a sessional kindergarten that has opted in to Free Kindy, and covers the parent fee component of the kindergarten program for at least 15 hours a week for 40 weeks, or 600 hours a year.

Services receiving the Per Capita Kindy Subsidy are not eligible for the Free Kindy subsidy.

**Inclusion Ready Subsidy** is provided to sessional kindergartens that have opted in to Free Kindy to support inclusion of all Eligible Children in an Approved Kindergarten Program, irrespective of diversity of background or additional needs. Funding is provided to ensure all Eligible Children meaningfully participate in kindergarten on the same basis as their peers.

Services receiving the Per Capita Kindy Subsidy are not eligible for the Inclusion Ready Subsidy.

**Kindergarten Inclusion Support Scheme (KISS)** provides funding, by application, to approved sessional kindergartens that have opted in to Free Kindy to make reasonable adjustments for Eligible Children with disability or suspected disability to ensure they can access and participate in an Approved Kindergarten Program on the same basis as their peers. Services receiving the Per Capita Kindy Subsidy are not eligible for KISS.

The **Kindergarten Inclusion Service** increases access for Eligible Children with additional needs and improves the inclusiveness of kindergarten programs. The program is available to sessional kindergartens delivering an Approved Kindergarten Program.

Services can access universal and targeted support and advice to build educator capability and enhance the access, inclusion and outcomes of Eligible Children with additional needs.

**Service Location Subsidy** is provided to sessional kindergartens where the service is located in an Eligible Remoteness category using the Australian Bureau of Statistics remoteness measure at the SA2 geographic level. Services receiving the Per Capita Kindy Subsidy are not eligible for the Service Location Subsidy.

**Kindy Uplift Funding** is for building teacher and educator capability to improve the outcomes of children in kindergarten.

Sessional kindergartens that have opted in to Free Kindy can use Kindy Uplift to fund programs, resources, supports and professional development relating to capability improvement. Services receiving the Per Capita Kindy Subsidy are not eligible for Kindy Uplift.

Kindy Uplift encourages all participating sessional kindergartens to prioritise embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives within their Kindy Uplift Plans.

Enquiries regarding Kindy Uplift can be made to [Kindyuplift@qed.qld.gov.au](mailto:Kindyuplift@qed.qld.gov.au).

## Per Capita Kindy Funding

Where a sessional kindergarten's fees are higher than the Funding Threshold set by the department, the Approved Provider is not eligible to opt into Free Kindy, but is eligible for the Per Capita Kindy Subsidy, which will apply for each Eligible Child enrolled in an Approved Kindergarten Program. Sessional kindergartens will receive a Per Capita Kindy Subsidy of \$3,161 per child per year.

Sessional kindergartens receiving the Per Capita Kindy Subsidy will not be eligible for Base, Free Kindy, Service Location or Inclusion Ready Subsidies, nor will they be able to access Kindy Uplift and KISS.

**Detailed subsidy spending rules and financial obligations are outlined in [Section 9.3 of the 2026 Kindy Funding Essentials](#).**

**Subsidy amounts are provided at [Appendix 6 of the 2026 Kindy Funding Essentials](#).**

## 10. Claiming Queensland Kindergarten Funding

Sessional kindergartens (affiliates only) are funded collectively through an Affiliate Agreement with CGBs. Each CGB distributes funding to affiliate members in accordance with these agreements.

Payments from the department are made to CGBs by electronic funds transfer through 2 block grants in advance over a calendar year, with an acquittal process completed at the end of each term.

To facilitate claiming by their CGB, member services must use the CCMS prescribed by their CGB.

### Forecasts

CGBs are required to submit biannual forecast enrolment data to the department to inform Subsidy calculation and entitlements. Forecasts are submitted through the application programming interface (API) in advance at the beginning of each semester.

A forecast and acquittal are required to be submitted, regardless of whether there is an ECT delivering the Approved Kindergarten Program.

### Reconciliation of funding

After the completion of each term, CGBs are required to complete the reconciliation process on behalf of sessional kindergartens by providing actual data for each sessional kindergarten.

### Claim adjustments

If a CGB identifies an error in a forecast that has been submitted, adjustments are through the acquittal process at the end of the term.

Subsequent claim adjustments received after the acquittal can be undertaken up to 28 days after lodgement through the adjustment API. Any adjustments after this time must be negotiated with the department.



## 11. Data collection and reporting

All sessional kindergartens and CGBs are contractually bound to ensure that reporting requirements are met in accordance with the terms and conditions of their Agreements. Data should also be collected by each sessional kindergarten evidencing how the funds have been applied for an Accepted Use.

Approved Providers and CGBs must ensure that:

- all data submitted to the department is accurate and is submitted by the relevant due date
- up-to-date information is maintained about the number of children:
  - receiving a Transition Statement
  - for whom a Transition Statement was generated using the online application from the QCAA portal
  - where parental consent was not provided for a Transition Statement to be shared via the QCAA application portal

- the annual Early Childhood Education and Care Services Census conducted by the Queensland Government is completed
- biannual surveys issued by the department to collect fee information for the Approved Kindergarten Program are completed and submitted by the closing date.

In addition to the above, the department may give notice to the Approved Provider or CGB to provide information and the Approved Provider or CGB must comply with the request or be in material breach of the contractual duty to comply with the reporting requirements.

## 12. Governance and recordkeeping

CGBs are required to comply with the governance and assurance provisions in their Service Agreements.

Approved Providers and sessional kindergartens are expected to operate in accordance with good governance principles, including risk management, ethical decision-making, financial accountability and effective recordkeeping.

To satisfy these requirements, high-quality recordkeeping across all areas is essential and must be provided to the department when requested. This includes finance, human resources and resource management records.

Up-to-date records that demonstrate ongoing compliance with Eligibility Requirements and the terms and conditions for Queensland Kindergarten Funding must be available and provided on request to the department, including as part of an Assurance Review process.

## 13. Monitoring and compliance

CGBs are required to provide a range of data relating to their sessional kindergartens, as outlined in their Service Agreement, to enable the department to monitor funding and compliance with kindergarten Eligibility Requirements and ensure that CGBs are meeting their contractual obligations.

### Assurance Reviews

Under the terms of the CGB's Service Agreement, the department may undertake planned or unplanned Assurance Reviews of sessional kindergartens to monitor compliance against the Eligibility Requirements of Queensland Kindergarten Funding. This may include site visits to a CGB or its sessional kindergartens for the purpose of confirming compliance.

The department (or another party engaged by the department) may also conduct an audit of a CGB as part of the department's data collection and monitoring activities. The audit may examine accountability for the claiming and expenditure of government funds.

### Non-compliance

Evidence of compliance with all aspects of the funding must be made available from the Approved Provider to the department when requested, as well as evidence at the service delivery level, either through the sessional kindergarten, the Approved Provider or a centralised head office.

### Ceasing funding

When a sessional kindergarten no longer offers an Approved Kindergarten Program (e.g. if the service has a transfer of ownership or is no longer financially viable) or otherwise does not meet any Eligibility Requirements for the funds it receives, the Approved Provider must notify the department via [kindyfunding@qed.qld.gov.au](mailto:kindyfunding@qed.qld.gov.au).

### Misappropriation of funds

Approved Providers should be aware of their legal responsibilities and obligations under state and Australian government legislation with respect to the misappropriation of funds. In addition to the department's requirements, there are statutory obligations for corporations and incorporated associations, particularly in terms of financial management and accountability.

If the department becomes aware of misappropriation of government funds by a sessional kindergarten, the department's Reporting Fraud and Corruption Procedure will be applied.

For more information, please contact the Grants Management and Funding team on:

**Telephone:** 07 3035 2244

**Email:** [kindyfunding@qed.qld.gov.au](mailto:kindyfunding@qed.qld.gov.au)

