

# Children's Services

## Frequently Asked Questions

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## Frequently Asked Questions

### Central Registration System

#### What is CRS (Central Registration System)?

- Yarra's CRS is an easy and impartial way for families to register their children into a Council-operated or participating children's service, including:
- Long day care (and integrated kindergarten programs)
- Funded three-year-old kindergarten – sessional
- Funded four-year-old kindergarten – sessional and integrated kindergarten programs

#### How does CRS work?

- We take registrations on behalf of all Yarra managed childcare and kindergarten services and we have the capacity to accommodate community managed services in the municipality, who wish to participate. There are two forms – one for long day care and one for kindergarten – detailing the services you can choose to register for. For information and registration with other Early Childhood Education and Care services in Yarra, you will need to contact them directly.
- You can find all children's services in Yarra [here](#)
- You should only apply through the CRS after the birth of your child. It's important to contact and visit centres to understand the individual service models. This will help you to choose the centre that suits you best.
- Registration via the CRS does not guarantee placement and we strongly recommend you explore all options available to you within the municipality.
- For long day care, once your registration has been processed, the system places your registration onto a list. Your position is determined by priority of access, the age of your child, the date we received your registration and preference of chosen centres. When you are the next family to be offered a place, we will contact you if there is a vacancy at one of the centres you selected as a preference.
- Families living outside of Yarra may apply, however priority is given to Yarra residents.

#### Who do I speak to if I want to begin a new application, change my details or preferences, or ask questions?

- Contact the Customer & Business Support team today on 9205 5555

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### When can I register my child?

- When you register your child, please ensure you enter both a first and last name for your child as shown on your child's birth certificate.
- Registrations for long day care are accepted from birth
- Registrations for kindergarten are accepted in the year prior to kindergarten attendance.
- Yarra does not accept registrations for unborn children.

### Does Yarra charge a fee to register my child?

- No. Yarra no longer charges a registration fee.

### Can I register more than one child?

- Yes. A separate registration must be completed for each child.

### I need assistance to register my child

- Yarra's Customer & Business Support team at Collingwood Town Hall and Connie Benn Centre can meet with families between 10am-4pm on Tuesdays to assist with registrations. *Please note, there are currently restrictions on visitors attending Council sites – once families are able to attend we will update this information.*
- You must make an appointment. Please contact the Customer & Business Support team on 9205 5555 to book a time that suits you.

### Can I change my details once I have registered?

- Yes. You are responsible for keeping your information current. Please contact the Customer & Business Support team on 9205 5555 to update your details.

### What documentation do I need to provide?

- Before you get started, you will need to have some documentation (if relevant) ready to upload with your registration. You may be required to upload these documents, if applicable, during the registration process:
  - a copy of the refugee/humanitarian visa you hold (if applicable)

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- a copy of a current Health Care Card if you have one (for kindergarten registrations only)
- evidence/information supporting your situation if you answer 'yes' to questions relating to the health of your family and/or diagnosis of disability
- If you need further information and/or assistance, please contact the Customer & Business Support team on 9205 5555.

### Priority of Access at Yarra

#### What is Priority of Access?

- Priority of Access ensures that there is a clear and transparent process for the allocation of places in Yarra-managed children's services. You can read more about this in our [Priority of Access Policy](#).

#### What services does the Priority of Access policy apply to?

- The policy applies to all childcare (long day care, occasional care and outside school hours care) and kindergarten services delivered by Yarra.

#### Which children and families receive priority of access?

- We give priority to children and families facing various challenges and hardships, with the top priority going to children at serious risk of abuse or neglect.
- Our policy also prioritises people with disability or chronic illness, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people, and refugees and asylum seekers.
- Our policy also preferences families living in Yarra, and children with siblings already attending our services.
- View our [policy](#) to see the complete list of priority areas.

#### How do you decide what my child's priority is?

- If two children fall within the same priority area, the child with the highest priority score will be offered a place first.

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- Points are added for each of the main priority areas your child qualifies for (e.g. a child at risk of serious abuse or neglect) and extra points are added for any of the sub-tiers they qualify for (e.g. child with a disability or developmental delay).

### Will my child be asked to leave if a higher priority child requires a spot?

- No. Once your child has been accepted into one of our services, we will not ask them to make way for another child.

## Government Childcare Subsidy (CCS)

### What is Childcare Subsidy (CCS) and how do I know if I am eligible?

- The [Childcare Subsidy](#) is paid directly to services to offset against families long day care fees.

## Registering for long day care in Yarra

### I want to register for long day care – Should I visit the centres first?

- Prior to registering for centres families are encouraged to visit the centres/kindergartens for a tour. *Please note, Victorian Childcare and Kindergartens currently have restrictions on visitors attending – once families are able to attend we will update this information. (You can access videos of our centres [here](#))*
- Families should only nominate centres they are happy to accept, if offered. Nominating a centre does not guarantee an offer.
- Centres are not zoned to particular areas or residential locations.

### I have a child already attending a centre; do my other children get priority?

- Yes. Siblings of children already attending the **same** centre will be given priority in the allocation process. To ensure our Priority of Access Policy is followed, siblings must be allocated through Yarra's CRS. You will need to complete a CRS form for each child.

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### What is the activation date for long day care?

- Families should choose an activation date that is indicative of when they would be prepared to accept an offer for their child.
- The activation date cannot be in the past.

### I have been waiting for a place for a long time and a family who registered after me have received an offer.

- Access to children's services in Yarra is guided by [Federal Government guidelines](#) and/or [Yarra's Priority of Access Policy](#).
- Families who live in Yarra are prioritised. This is in addition to the criteria set by the Federal Government's Priority of Access Guidelines.
- You can always contact the Customer & Business Support team on 9205 5555 for an update on your registration. As long as your registration details are up to date, when you are the next family to be offered, we will contact you as soon as we have a vacancy to offer you at one of the centres you have selected as a preference.
- We offer places based on your priority of access, not in order of application. It isn't possible to suggest how long you will need to wait. We only consider the order of applications when two children qualify for the same priority area and have the same priority weighting. If you request a place at more than one centre, this may result in a reduced waiting time.

### How do I know if my residence or workplace is in Yarra?

- Yarra includes the suburbs of Abbotsford, Burnley, Carlton North, Clifton Hill, Collingwood, Cremorne, Fitzroy, Fitzroy North, Princes Hill, Richmond and parts of Alphington and Fairfield.

### Are Yarra's services zoned residentially?

- No. Services are not zoned to particular areas or residential locations.

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### Registering for Kindergarten in Yarra

#### My child already attends long day care, do I need to register for sessional kindergarten as well?

- Children registered for, or enrolled and attending, long day care must also register for kindergarten if they wish to be considered for a place in a sessional kindergarten program.
- If you would like your child to participate in a kinder program within the long day care setting, your child will automatically transition into that room.

#### When can my child go to kindergarten?

- Registrations for kindergarten can be made in the year prior to attending kindergarten. We accept registrations from **1 January** every year.
- For funded three-year-old kindergarten your child must be three years old on or before 30 April in the year that they are to attend the program. If your child turns three after the kindergarten year starts, you may be required to delay attendance until the child's third birthday. You may also need to pay Term 1 fees to hold the place.
- A child is eligible to attend a funded four-year-old kindergarten program when they turn four years of age on or before 30 April in the year before they attend school.

#### What is early start kindergarten?

- Early start kindergarten provides free or low-cost kindergarten to eligible three-year-old children where programs are offered by a qualified teacher.

#### Is my child eligible for early start kindergarten?

- Your child is eligible if they are aged three by 30 April in the year they will be attending kindergarten, and:
  - your family has had contact with Child Protection (or been referred to Child FIRST), and/or
  - your child is Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander (for more information, visit [Kindergarten for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children – Department of Education and Training](#)).

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### Where can I find more information about early start kindergarten?

- For more information visit [Types of kindergarten programs – Department of Education and Training.](#)

### My child attends a funded three-year-old kindergarten at a Yarra-managed centre, do I need to register for four-year-old funded kindergarten?

- No. Your Kindergarten teacher will talk to you about your plans for your funded kindergarten year.

### My child did not receive an offer for a place in a funded three-year-old kindergarten at a Yarra-managed centre, do I need to register for four-year-old funded kindergarten?

- Yes. If your child is not attending a council-managed funded three-year-old kindergarten program, you will need to register for four-year-old kindergarten to be considered for a place in one of our funded programs.

### Can my child attend more than one funded kindergarten program at the same time?

- No. You will need to attend the kindergarten you wish for funding to be allocated to. Yarra does not offer second funded kindergarten places in our sessional kindergarten programs (unless we are advised by the Department of Education). Please contact the Customer and Business Support team on 9205 5555 to find out if there is availability in our long day care integrated kindergarten programs.
- Families of children who are registered for, or who are enrolled and attending long day care, are encouraged to also register for kindergarten if they wish for their child to be considered for a place in a sessional kindergarten program. If your child is going to attend the long day care integrated kindergarten program, then you do not need to complete another registration form.

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## Frequently Asked Questions

### How long will I have to wait for a place?

- We offer places based on your priority of access, not in order of application, so it isn't possible to suggest how long you will need to wait. We only consider the order of applications when two children qualify for the same priority area and have the same priority weighting. If you request a place at more than one centre, this may result in a reduced waiting time.

### How do I know if my residence or workplace is in Yarra?

- The City of Yarra includes the suburbs of Abbotsford, Burnley, Carlton North, Clifton Hill, Collingwood, Cremorne, Fitzroy, Fitzroy North, Princes Hill, Richmond and parts of Alphington and Fairfield.

### Are Yarra services zoned residentially?

- No. Services are not zoned to particular areas or residential locations.

## Receiving an Offer

### How will I receive an offer?

- You will receive an offer via SMS. The offer message provides basic details of the centre being offered. A link will be provided with more detailed information about the centre.
- You are required to respond to the offer within three (3) business days or as advised. The SMS will advise how to respond.
- If there is no response to the offer, it will be withdrawn and the vacancy will be offered to the next eligible family. Your child's details will be removed from the system.
- An offer is considered to be declined if you fail to enrol and/or attend an appointment to orientate.
- Kindergarten offers are made around July of the year prior to attendance. Offers will continue to be made until the service is full.
- You are required to respond to the offer within three (3) business days or as advised.

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### Family Day Care

#### Does Yarra offer family day care?

- No. We do not offer any family day care services in Yarra.

### Immunisation requirements

#### Does my child need to be immunised to attend one of Yarra's children's services?

- Yes. Under the 'No Jab, No Play' Victorian Government laws, your child needs to be immunised to attend occasional care, long day care, and/or kindergarten.
- You will need to provide an up-to-date Immunisation History Statement (IHS) when you have accepted a place so that you can enrol your child in the service prior to commencement.
- Your child must be up to date with their immunisation schedule or on an approved catch up schedule. Children are eligible for free vaccines, provided they have a Medicare card or are eligible for a Medicare card, and are Australian citizens, have permanent Australian visas or are asylum seekers or refugees. Due to the introduction of the 'no jab no play' policy there is a free vaccine catch-up program for children up to 19 years of age who may have missed any childhood vaccinations.
- [Immunisation sessions](#) are offered by Council's Maternal and Child Health service.