

Three and Four-Year-Old Kindergarten at Glen Iris



KINDERGARTEN AT GLEN IRIS CHILDCARE & KINDERGARTEN

Flexibility for Busy Families

Fitting traditional sessional kindergarten into a full working day can be a challenge. At Glen Iris Childcare and Kindergarten, we offer **both 3- and 4-year-old kindergarten programs** within our **long day care setting**. This gives families the flexibility and convenience of extended hours, all in one place.

A Flexible Approach to Learning

We follow an **emergent curriculum**, meaning our programs are built around each child's interests, needs, and developmental stage. This child-led approach:

- Encourages creativity and independence
- Allows children to learn at their own pace
- Provides open-ended experiences that support skill-building and confidence
- Adapts regularly to meet changing interests while also offering consistency when needed

Our educators work closely with each child, helping them become confident, capable learners who are well-prepared for the transition to school.

Funded Kindergarten – Free for Families

As part of the **Free Kinder** initiative from 2023, families enrolled in our 3- and 4-year-old kindergarten programs will receive **government funding of \$2,100 per year** to reduce the cost of the program.

How it works:

- Families receive up to **\$50 per week**, credited directly to their account
- Available during **school terms only**
- To be eligible, your child must:
 - Attend a **minimum of 2 days per week**
 - Not be enrolled in another funded kindergarten program

We provide a **minimum of 15 hours per week** of funded kindergarten for every child enrolled.

3-YEAR-OLD KINDERGARTEN (KINDER 3)

Our funded **3-Year-Old Kindergarten program** is delivered in the **Kinder 3 Room** by our qualified kindergarten teacher, **Naduni**. The program runs **Monday to Friday, all day**, and is designed to support each child's learning in a warm, nurturing environment. Families can choose which day(s) their child attends (subject to availability), but to meet the **15-hour funding requirement**, children must be enrolled for at least **2 days per week**.

Who Can Attend 3-Year-Old Kindergarten?

To be eligible for the funded 3-year-old kindergarten program, your child must:

- Be turning **three by April 30th** of the kindergarten year
- Be enrolled in the program for **at least 15 hours per week** (minimum 2 days)

Children can move into the **Kinder 3 room** once they turn three. However, orientation may begin before their birthday to ensure a smooth transition.

If your child is enrolled in the **year before their funded kinder year** (e.g., already turned three but not eligible for funding until the following year), they are still welcome in the kinder room and will benefit from additional learning time.

Educator Ratios & Staffing

- Our **educator-to-child ratio is 1:11**, the same as in sessional kindergartens
- All kindergarten programs are led by a **university-qualified Early Childhood Teacher**
- Classroom sizes and staffing are tailored to meet group and individual needs

4-YEAR-OLD KINDERGARTEN (KINDER 4)

Our funded **4-Year-Old Kindergarten program** is delivered in the **Kinder 4 Room** by our qualified kindergarten teacher, **Jezza**. The program runs **Monday to Friday, all day**, and is designed to support each child's school readiness in a warm, nurturing environment.

Enrolment & Eligibility

To be eligible for 4-Year-Old Kindergarten funding, your child must:

- Be turning **four by April 30th** of the kindergarten year
- Be enrolled for at least **15 hours per week** (a minimum of **2 days**)

Families can choose which days their child attends (subject to availability).

Moving Into Kinder 4

- Children typically move into the **Kinder 4 Room** when they turn four
- If your child is enrolled in the **4-year-old kindergarten year**, they will transition to the Kinder 4 Room in **January**, even if they haven't turned four yet
- If your child is already four but is not eligible for funded 4-year-old kinder until the following year, they are still welcome in the Kinder 4 Room and will benefit from **extended pre-school experience**

We also transition children into this room throughout the year to keep them with **peers of similar age**, depending on developmental readiness and availability.

4-YEAR-OLD KINDERGARTEN (KINDER 4)

Transition to School

As children prepare for school, we support their transition with:

- A focus on social, emotional, language, and cognitive skills
- A flexible, play-based curriculum tailored to individual learning
- **Transition Learning and Development Statements** written towards the end of the year for children moving on to school
 - These statements are shared with your child's future primary school to ensure a smooth, informed transition

Our Approach & Staffing

- The program is guided by a **university-trained Early Childhood Teacher**
- We maintain a **1:11 educator-to-child ratio**, in line with sessional kindergarten standards
- Classroom sizes and staffing are tailored to meet the needs of the group and individual children
- The curriculum is flexible and supports a range of ages and developmental stages
- It is common for some children to spend **two years in pre-school**, depending on their individual school readiness

A Play-Based Kindergarten Program That Nurtures Real Learning

At Glen Iris Childcare and Kindergarten, **play is at the heart of everything we do**. For young children, play is their work—how they explore the world, develop relationships, and make sense of their experiences.

Child-Centred, Interest-Led Learning

Our **play-based curriculum** is designed around each child's emerging interests, developmental needs, and natural curiosity. We know that children learn best when the program reflects their lives and allows them to engage deeply with the world around them.

The curriculum includes:

- **Hands-on, open-ended experiences**
- **Real-life activities**, like woodwork, cooking, threading, and dramatic play
- **Opportunities to explore, imagine, question, and create**
- Educator-led intentional teaching moments that arise organically through play

Learning through Exploration

Our program supports children to:

- Make choices and decisions
- Solve problems and experiment
- Develop independence and confidence
- Express themselves creatively
- Learn at their own pace through meaningful play

We don't rely on worksheets or formal testing. Instead, we assess your child's progress through **daily observations** of their engagement, growth, and learning in play.

A Play-Based Kindergarten Program That Nurtures Real Learning

Literacy, Numeracy, and STEM—Naturally Embedded

Early literacy, numeracy, STEM, and creative arts are all embedded in our daily play experiences. Children are introduced to these concepts through:

- Storytelling, singing, and conversations
- Building, sorting, counting, and measuring
- Exploring science and nature
- Drawing, painting, music, and imaginative play

Our educators intentionally introduce new ideas and vocabulary in ways that are **age-appropriate, engaging, and fun**.

Indoor–Outdoor Learning Environment

Children have access to **both indoor and outdoor environments** throughout the day. Outdoors, children enjoy:

- Gross motor challenges (climbing, balancing, running, etc.)
- Nature-based play and interactions with plants and animals
- Space to move, explore, and build resilience

Indoors, the focus is on fine motor activities, creativity, imaginative play, and quieter explorations.

Creative Development

Children are encouraged to explore various materials and techniques at their own pace.

- They are never told how their artwork should look
- Educators support their **individual artistic journeys**
- Creativity and self-expression are valued over adult-imposed expectations

Deep Learning through Uninterrupted Play

We provide long stretches of **uninterrupted play time**, so children can fully immerse themselves in their ideas, investigations, and interactions. This allows for:

- Deeper engagement with peers
- Independent problem-solving
- The development of focus and persistence

Supporting School Readiness

We help children build the confidence, skills, and resilience they'll need for the transition to school. Our **Transition Learning and Development Statement**, written in collaboration with families and children, provides a clear picture of your child's strengths, interests, and learning style for their future prep teacher.

10 Lasting Benefits of Kindergarten

1. **Two years of kindergarten is better than one** – Research shows it leads to better outcomes.
2. **Brain development peaks early** – Early learning experiences lay strong foundations for life.
3. **Play-based learning supports the whole child** – Social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development.
4. **Supports teamwork, communication, and self-regulation.**
5. **Early identification of additional needs** – Teachers are trained to offer support and referrals.
6. **STEM and literacy concepts are embedded through play.**
7. **Fuels creativity and innovation** through imaginative and artistic expression.
8. **Maths and logic are introduced in playful, meaningful ways.**
9. **Smooth transition to school** – Programs prepare children for the next big step.
10. **Tailored learning experiences** – Programs are adjusted to suit each child's unique needs and interests.

What We Focus On at Glen Iris Childcare and Kindergarten

Children learn more in the **first five years of life** than at any other stage. Our kindergarten programs provide a nurturing, play-based environment where children develop the skills, independence, and confidence they need to thrive in school and life.

To support this important transition, our educators focus on six key areas of development:

1. Independence

We encourage children to confidently explore their environment and take ownership of daily tasks, helping them build self-reliance and resilience.

Children are supported to:

- Enter kindergarten confidently and independently
- Take responsibility for their own belongings
- Dress and undress themselves
- Use the toilet independently
- Serve their own meals and pour drinks
- Explore the environment confidently, both indoors and outdoors
- Pack up after themselves and respect shared equipment
- **Lunch Box Days (Term 4, 4-year-old kinder only)** help children practise opening packaging, peeling fruit, and managing their lunch independently—great preparation for school!

2. Social Interactions

Social and emotional skills are essential to a child's success and wellbeing. We foster:

- Communication, active listening, and cooperation
- Group participation (both small and large groups)
- Conflict resolution and problem-solving
- Sharing, turn-taking, and building friendships
- Positive relationships with peers and educators
- Understanding behaviour expectations and social boundaries
- Mentorship opportunities with younger children

What We Focus On at Glen Iris Childcare and Kindergarten

3. School Readiness

Our goal is to prepare children holistically for the transition to school by nurturing their academic, social, and emotional skills through play-based learning. We focus on:

- Extending attention span and focus
- Name recognition
- Early literacy: phonics, language, word recognition, pencil control
- Early numeracy: numbers, counting, patterns, shapes, and sizes
- STEM learning (science, technology, engineering, maths)
- Exposure to creative arts, music, drama, and movement
- Practical skills: using scissors, glue sticks, sticky tape, etc.
- Developing curiosity and a love of learning
- Celebrating achievements with an **end-of-year graduation** ceremony for prep-bound children

4. Sustainability & Community Engagement

We encourage children to care for the environment and connect meaningfully with their community. Activities include:

- Gardening and growing edible plants
- Cooking with ingredients from our garden
- Recycling and water-saving projects
- Community involvement and group initiatives
- Celebrating multicultural events and holidays
- Regular interaction with the natural world

5. Skill Development

Children develop essential life skills that support their ongoing learning and daily functioning:

- **Fine motor:** hand and finger control for writing and tool use
- **Gross motor:** balance, coordination, and body awareness
- Concentration and memory
- Problem-solving and reasoning
- Following instructions
- Speech, language, and communication development
- Cognitive development: cause and effect, visual processing, memory

6. Health, Safety & Emotional Wellbeing

We care deeply about every child's physical and emotional health. We support children to:

- Understand healthy eating and personal hygiene
- Practice mindfulness and relaxation techniques
- Participate in **yoga and wellbeing activities**
- Engage with visitors through the **Responsible Pet Ownership** incursion
- Enjoy movement and rhythm in our **weekly Happy Feet incursion**
- Build self-worth, emotional awareness, and empathy

What We Focus On at Glen Iris Childcare and Kindergarten

- Develop **resilience, self-esteem, and self-regulation**
- Express their feelings in healthy ways and respect others' emotions
 - Develop an increased attention span
 - Name recognition
 - Early literacy, *e.g., language, sounds, letter and word recognition, pencil control*
 - Early numeracy, *e.g., number recognition, counting, size, shape, patterns, colour*
 - Early STEM (science, technology, engineering, maths)
 - Creative art experiences
 - Music, movement and drama experiences
 - Develop a love for learning and eagerness to learn about the world around them
 - Using school equipment, *e.g., scissors, sticky tape, glue sticks, hole punchers*
 - An end-of-year graduation ceremony for children moving off to prep
- **Sustainability and Community**
 - Gardening and growing edible gardens
 - Cooking experiences
 - Recycling and water saving activities
 - Community projects
 - Multicultural events and celebrations
 - Interaction with the natural environment
- **Skill Development**
 - Fine motor skills, *e.g., developing finger and hand control*
 - Gross motor skills, *e.g., developing balance and coordination*
 - Concentration
 - Problem solving
 - Remembering instructions and following directions
 - Speech development
 - Cognitive skills, *e.g., cause & effect, reasoning, memory, visual processing*
- **Health and Safety**
 - Nutrition and healthy bodies
 - Mental health and wellbeing
 - Yoga and mindfulness
 - Yearly *Responsible Pet Ownership* incursion
 - Fortnightly "Happy Feet" Incursion
- **Emotional Development**
 - Develop self-worth and confidence
 - Build self-awareness and respect for others
 - Recognise, convey and express their emotions
 - Self-discipline
 - Show concern and empathy for others
 - Build resilience and self-esteem
 - Maturity level
 - Self-regulation (being able to manage their own feelings and behavior)

How Does Kindergarten in Long Day Care Differ from Sessional Kindergarten?

At **Glen Iris Childcare and Kindergarten**, families can access a **funded kindergarten program** within a **long day care environment**, offering greater flexibility and consistency for working and studying families. Our kindergarten program runs throughout the entire day and is integrated into our broader early learning setting, ensuring children have access to quality education and care all day long.

Key Benefits of Long Day Care Kindergarten

- **Longer, more flexible hours:**
Our centre is open **up to 11.5 hours per day**, giving children access to an extended high-quality learning environment—not just short sessions a few times a week.
- **Flexible attendance:**
Families can choose which days their child attends and for how long, offering flexibility that suits each family's routine.
- **All-in-one care for siblings:**
Parents can drop off and collect **all children together**, as our centre caters to multiple age groups in one location.
- **Learning through the year:**
Our kindergarten program runs **all year**, including during school holidays, except public holidays and weekends.
- **Meals provided:**
We provide **nutritious meals and snacks throughout the day**—breakfast, morning tea, lunch, afternoon tea, and a late snack—unlike sessional kindergartens, where meals are usually packed by families.
- **Mixed-age interactions:**
Kinder children have opportunities to mentor younger peers, supporting their social development and empathy.
- **Smooth transitions:**
Children often start with us as babies or toddlers and progress into the kindergarten program, forming strong relationships and a consistent sense of belonging.
- **Qualified educators:**
Our program is delivered by **university-trained Early Childhood Teachers**, supported by experienced educators, just like in sessional kindergarten settings.

The Kinder Tick

Glen Iris Childcare and Kindergarten proudly displays the **Kindergarten Tick**, meaning:

- The program is led by a **qualified early childhood teacher**
- Children benefit from **play-based learning**
- The program is **funded and approved** by the Victorian Government
- We meet all **National Quality Framework** standards

How Does Kindergarten in Long Day Care Differ from Sessional Kindergarten?

Fees & Subsidies

- **Long Day Care Kindergarten** is eligible for the **Child Care Subsidy (CCS)**, which:
 - Subsidises **the full day of care**
 - Varies based on **family income, activity levels, and number of children**
 - Includes **all meals and consumables**
 - Offers **higher CCS for second and subsequent children** under 5 (from March 2022)
- **Sessional Kindergarten** is eligible for the **Kindergarten Fee Subsidy**, which:
 - Applies only to **short session times**
 - Offers **lower fees overall**, but **limited flexibility**
 - May be **free for eligible families**, depending on income and other criteria

Summary: Long Day Care vs Sessional Kindergarten

Long Day Care Kindergarten	Sessional Kindergarten
3 & 4-year-old funded programs led by qualified teachers	3 & 4-year-old funded programs led by qualified teachers
Supported by a team of educators and assistants	Supported by assistants for each session
Run by professional early learning centres	Often run by schools or not-for-profits
Open Monday–Friday, 52 weeks/year	Runs school terms only, ~40 weeks/year
Open 7:00am–6:30pm	Sessions are school-hours only
Choose your days & times (subject to availability)	Set session days and times
Meals & snacks provided	Families provide meals/snacks
CCS subsidised – weekly payments	Kindergarten Fee Subsidy – term/yearly payments
Siblings attend together	Only the enrolled child attends
Toileting support & nappy changes included	Children must usually be toilet trained
Must be fully vaccinated	Must be fully vaccinated
Individual learning plans & transition statements	Individual learning plans & transition statements

In Summary

Both long day care and sessional kindergarten offer **quality early childhood education**, delivered by qualified teachers and guided by national frameworks. The key difference lies in the **flexibility, hours, and additional services** that long day care offers—making it a popular choice for busy families seeking consistency and convenience alongside excellent education.

How Families Can Support Their Child's Transition to Primary School

Starting school is a big step in a child's life—and in a family's too. At Glen Iris Childcare and Kindergarten, we believe a smooth transition to primary school begins with **strong support at home**.

Here are some simple, meaningful ways families can help their child feel confident and ready:

Talk & Reassure

- Chat regularly about school—what it might be like, the friends they'll make, and the fun things they'll learn.
- Share **positive stories** from your own school days to build excitement.
- Reassure your child that they can **ask for help** anytime—from teachers or school staff.
- Talk about **how to stay safe** at school and what to do if they're ever unsure.

Build Independence

- Encourage your child to **put on their shoes**, carry their own bag, and manage their belongings.
- Practise **dressing skills**, like taking off and putting on jumpers or jackets.
- Involve them in **labelling uniforms and belongings**, so they can recognise their things if misplaced.
- Teach them how to **wrap and unwrap food**, open containers, and **refill their drink bottle**.
- Help your child feel confident using school facilities like **toilets, taps, and lockers**.

Familiarise & Explore

- Walk or drive past the school to help your child recognise it.
- Attend school **transition or orientation sessions** and **meet their teacher**.
- Visit together to locate key areas:
 - Prep classrooms
 - Lockers
 - Toilets
 - Playgrounds
 - Lunch and drink areas
- Show your child **where you'll pick them up**, and talk about what to do if you're running late.

Support Daily Routines

- Start practising a **school-day routine**, including set wake-up, meal, and bedtime times.
- Five-year-olds need around **10–12 hours of sleep each night**—a consistent bedtime helps.
- Create a **"goodbye" routine** in the mornings to make drop-offs easier.
- Provide **nutritious meals** to support energy, focus, and wellbeing.

Build Social & Practical Skills

- Encourage your child to **share, take turns, and work with others**.
- Visit the library and **read books together** about starting school.
- Introduce words like **"recess" and "lunch"** so they're familiar with school language.
- Give your child opportunities to **solve small problems independently** and praise their efforts.

INFORMATION FROM THE VICTORIAN STATE GOVERNMENT

What you need to know



Over the decade, the Victorian Government is investing almost \$5 billion to introduce funded Three-Year-Old Kindergarten. Children across the state will benefit from 2022. This will mean another year of learning, playing and making friends for all Victorian children.



What is the difference between a kindergarten program in a long day care (childcare) centre and a standalone kindergarten?



Children can attend a 3-year-old program at either a long day care (childcare) centre or at a standalone kindergarten. These are places that might also offer a 4-year-old kindergarten program.

No matter where your child goes to kindergarten, teachers and trained educators will lead the program.

A long day care centre can offer a full day of education and care, including a kindergarten program. The teacher-led kindergarten program is integrated with additional hours of education and care. At a standalone service, a kindergarten program will only run on certain days and at specific times. These days and hours are set by the kindergarten service.



Standalone Kindergartens



Kindergarten Programs



Children attend kindergarten programming for set days and hours



Long Day Care Services



Kindergarten Programs



Children attend a kindergarten program as part of their time in long day care

Education and Care



Long Day Care services offer early childhood education and care for children aged between 0 and 6 years

What will my child experience at kinder?



Young children learn about the world through play. It gives children the opportunity to use their imagination and practise important skills. It also helps their social and emotional development, and wellbeing.

In a kindergarten program, children use play to build their language skills and learn about numbers and patterns. They also learn how to get along with others, share, listen, and manage their emotions. Teachers and educators help children become curious, creative and confident about learning.



Educational and social benefits

Research shows that play-based learning is a powerful way to support children's development. These benefits last into the school years and beyond.

The evidence also shows that 2 years are better than one when it comes to early learning.

A quality kindergarten program will have more of an impact for children who start at age 3 rather than 4. The benefits are even greater for children who are in vulnerable circumstances.

Two years of kindergarten are better than one



Starting a quality kindergarten program at an **earlier age** leads to even more **positive effects** on child development



Children who attend a kindergarten program are **less likely** to be **developmentally vulnerable** at school



Quality play-based learning is a powerful way to support learning and development



At kindergarten, children learn key skills for life, including **creative thinking, social and emotional skills, and early literacy and language skills**

Children in Year 3 who attended kindergarten were **15 to 20 weeks ahead** of those who did not¹



At age 16, students who had attended **two to three years** of kindergarten had **higher scores** in English and maths²

For every **\$1** invested in early childhood education, Australia receives **\$2** back over a child's life – through higher productivity and earning capacity, and reduced government spending on health, welfare and crime³



¹E4 KIDS, UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE ²EFFECTIVE PRE-SCHOOL, PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION PROJECT, DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION, UNITED KINGDOM ³A SMART INVESTMENT FOR A SMARTER AUSTRALIA, PRICEWATERHOUSECOOPERS & THE FRONT PROJECT

The Victorian Government is making it easier for families to find funded and approved kindergarten programs. For kinder you can count on, just look for the Kinder Tick.

