



Starting kindergarten is a big step for children including those that have attended childcare since a young age.

Once a child commences 3-year-old kinder, their education journey begins meaning they will move on to 4-year-old kinder the following year, and school the year after.

Each child's development is unique; however, **research shows that children that turn 3 between January and April of the kinder year can significantly benefit from waiting a year and starting 3-year-old kinder in the year they turn 4.**

Considerations to help guide your decision:

- **Independence**
 - Is your child an independent toilet user? Can they attend to their own belongings? Pack their own bag, open and close their lunch box, manage their own clothing (hat, coat, shoes and socks).
- **Emotions**
 - Will they be able to manage their emotions through a long day of learning?
 - Will they manage being younger than their peers at kinder and then school? Will they 'keep up'?
- **Stamina**
 - It is our experience that children that have attended childcare find kinder more demanding and tiring than childcare. Will your child be able to cope with a 5 or 7.5-hour day without a nap?
 - Will they be able to manage when attending five days of school filled with learning, new expectations, and socially demanding situations when they are four?
- **Readiness for secondary school** (starting school at 12 rather than 13)
 - Secondary school may be hard to consider when your child is so young but starting kindergarten early means they will commence secondary school early. Secondary school-aged children may be required to catch public transport to school, to have a mobile phone, and social media. Will they be ready at 12?
 - How will they handle navigating peer relationships and big decisions at a less mature age? Consider their ability to deal with difficult emotional and social situations – getting into a car, alcohol, puberty, subject and career choices – when they are a year younger than many of their peers.

It is important to understand that **accessing a second year of 4yo kinder is not a parent/carer choice**. Children must show a developmental delay in at least two areas and an application lodged to the Department of Education by your child's teacher. Only if approved can a child access a second year of 4yo kindergarten. *Please note, as 3yo kindergarten is now funded by the government, children cannot access two years of 3yo kindergarten at all.*

We understand that for some children starting kinder and school younger may be the right decision. If, however, this information has left you reconsidering your child's start year and you would like to defer it to the following year or, you would like further guidance or support, please don't hesitate to email or call the centre.