

Kindergarten – frequently asked questions

Q: How and why was Taralye started?

Taralye Kindergarten is a community kindergarten that provides 3 and 4 year old kindergarten programs for the local and hearing impaired communities. We have a commitment to providing high quality, best practice programs for all children that is reflected in our low staff/child ratios, experienced and qualified staff, and perhaps most importantly, in the emphasis we place on building meaningful relationships with kindergarten children and their families. We have two kindergarten rooms in operation.

The kindergarten programs provide a unique educational setting that encourages individual learning and interests as well as developing respect for self and others regardless of gender, disability and ethnic background.

In the kindergarten approximately half the group hearing impaired children are included in a group. We find this has a two-way advantage as the hearing children become familiar with hearing impairment and the hearing impaired children learn to communicate as they are immersed in age-appropriate language.

Q: How old does my child have to be to start kindergarten?

Your child must turn 3 by 31 December to begin 3 year old kindergarten, and must turn 4 by 30 April to begin 4 year old kindergarten.

Q: What is the difference between the 3 year old and the 4 year old program?

There are a number of differences between 3 year old and 4 year old kindergarten programs. Three year old kindergarten programs are not government funded and therefore fees are more than 4 year old programmes. Our 3 year old kindergarten programs are five hours over two sessions per week, and cater for 16 children of whom 50% can be hearing impaired. Our 4 year old kindergarten programs operate for 15 hours per week spread over 3 or 4 days. We can take up to 22 children in Room 1 and 20 children in Room 2.

Q: What are the ratios when working with children of different ages?

Our kindergarten has a well-supported program and we pride ourselves in having a lower than required ratio. Because we have hearing impaired children in the groups we have an inclusion aide, as well as the teacher and assistant.

Q: If my child doesn't attend 3 year old kinder, can they attend 4 year old kinder?

Yes! There are fewer three-year-old places available as we have smaller group sizes at Taralye. An enrolment form must be submitted to the Whitehorse Pre-school Association when your child turns two. Details can be found at the [WPSA website](#). Note: when applying for 3 year old you may also apply for 4 year old at the same time.

Q: Can my child attend 2 years of Preschool in the 4 year old program?

In Victoria a child is funded, by the government, to attend a 4 year old program for one year. Should the need arise for a child to attend a second year the kindergarten the teacher will make a submission for a second year of funding. Funding will be granted if certain criteria regarding development are met. Immaturity is not an eligible, standalone reason for a second funded year. Please discuss with your teacher for advice about the most appropriate starting age for your child.

Q: How do educators utilise the National Early Years Learning Framework (NEYLF 2009) and Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF 2009) when planning for children?

Our kindergartens approach to early childhood learning and development is reflected in the Early Years Learning Framework's vision to provide children with a sense of Belonging, recognise and celebrate their Being & support their Becoming. When documenting children's learning and development, educators consider what they NOTICE about what children are engaged in; they RECOGNISE what learning is occurring by reflecting on the National and Victorian Frameworks (NEYLF & VEYLDF) and they RESPOND to children by adding resources, providing guidance as needed and considering further planning opportunities.

Q: What will my child learn and experience?

Your children will learn and experience many things, such as:

- social skills and creative expression
- learning to get along with others
- emotional and language skills
- positive attitudes of self-respect
- initiative
- negotiation
- co-operation and respect of others
- fine and gross motor skills
- play skills
- art
- music, dance and movement

Q: What type of feedback will I receive about my child's learning and development?

Each child has their own individual portfolio, which is regularly updated with information about their learning and participation in the program. Each group class also has a Reflections Folder which enables children, families and educators the opportunity to revisit, discuss and reflect on their work. Families are invited arrange a time to meet with educators to discuss their child's progress as the need arises.

Q: Can parents get involved?

Yes, there are many ways to get involved. You can volunteer to be a parent helper for some of your child's kindergarten sessions you can join in on working bees, you can join the volunteer Parents and Friends Committee and you can support us by taking part in fundraisers and social events such as Market Day. Or you might like to organise your event or even take part in a running challenge and raise funds for us.