



Second Year of Kinder Fact Sheet

This fact sheet has been developed to explain the benefits and practicalities of children repeating 3 or 4-year-old kinder. Children are eligible to attend 3/4-year-old kindergarten if they turn 3/4 years of age by the end of April in their respective kindergarten year. Some families choose to delay entry of children born in Jan, Feb, Mar and Apr and have them attend 3-year-old turning 4 and 4-year-old turning 5. It's not uncommon for a few children to repeat each year.

Attending a second year of 3 or 4-year-old kindergarten is not a reflection of children's intelligence. Children get the most out of kinder when they can connect with peers on a similar level and develop mutually satisfying, reciprocal relationships. It's important that children are equipped with the tools that they need to hold them in good stead in the following year. Staff observe children interacting with peers, adults and in a range of different types and stages of play and use these to discuss options with families.

Examples of some of the age appropriate developmental levels and skills staff look at when recommending a child attend a second year of kinder are

- self-care/independence** - not being able to take care of their toileting needs and caring and looking after their belongings.
- communication** - not asking for help when it is needed or being able to communicate ideas with peers and educators.
- social development** -not being able to initiate or enter play with their peers.
- **emotional development** - not being able to regulate their emotions or cope with frustrations in play.

These come with time and practise and cannot be hurried. At Yarralea we typically see benefits in the above areas during a second year of kinder. We see children increasing their confidence and engagement in learning at kinder.

Discussing and Assessing for a Second Year

Teachers support and document children's learning and development through the play-based program and draw links with the Victorian Early Years Learning Framework Outcomes Identity, Communication, Learning, Community and Wellbeing. During the year teachers and parents informally talk about children's learning and development. If parents have a concern or query, they can make an appointment to meet with the teacher in their planning time. If a teacher has a concern or query, they will make an appointment to speak with the parent.

In the middle of the year teachers write a summative assessment which is a summary of the children's "distance travelled". This is a good time to assess and discuss readiness for the following year as offers for each year are arranged in July. Doing a second year of 3 or 4-year-old kinder is available as an option when parents and teachers agree that an additional year would be beneficial to the child. Yarralea recognises that this is a big decision to make and is available to provide professional expertise but ultimately it is the parents decision.

Practicalities

Attending a **Second year of 3-year-old kinder** is relatively straightforward and requires no additional paperwork. Families are encouraged to work closely with the 3-year-old teacher in assessing readiness and if unsure to enrol in both 3 and 4-year-old until a decision is made at the end of Term 3.

In order to attend a **Second year of 4-year-old kinder** a Department of Education process is required to be followed as in Victoria each child is entitled to 15 hours funded kinder in the year before school and in order to get a second year of funded kinder there has to be two areas of developmental need identified.

If a family would like external/independent assessment and support to make the decision they can do so independently or teachers can engage the City of Yarra Preschool Field Officer which is a free service.

If the family is unsure, they will be encouraged to enrol in 4-year-old kinder and school until a decision is made at the end of Term 3. The teacher will complete a Term 3 plan which includes goals for Term 3 which is provided to the parent. At the end of Term 3 the Term 3 plan will be evaluated by the teacher and the parents and a decision made.

Question and Answer

Q- Wont they get bored?

A-The second year is a very different year from the first. As children grow in confidence and ability so too does their play, learning, development and fun!

Q-Can they repeat grades at school?

A-Repeating school years is rarely done these days.

Q-Are teachers qualified to give this advice?

A-Teachers hold degrees in Early Childhood Education and are specialists with preschool children. At Yarralea they also hold many years of experience.

Q-What do I tell my child?

A-There are always a few children that come back to kinder to be “big kinder helpers”. We are very open and proud of this and children respond positively as a result.

Q-Isn't the first year of school play anyway?

A-The first year of school is formal education and is not play

Q-What about their friends?

A-After a brief adjustment, children quickly make new friends and often become leaders in the group

Quotes

“It’s extremely rewarding to see a child who has been a passive follower in play in their first year of kinder become an active leader in their second year”

- Stephanie Willey Coordinator

"It's wonderful to see children grow and transform after attending a second year of kinder."

- Melissa Samartzis 3yo Teacher

"At first I was resistant to the idea of repeating a year. After much patience and support from Mel & Steph (and a million questions from me) I decided to trust their advice, since it was centred around what was best for Lachie. I'm so grateful they took the time. He's found his confidence, has strong connections with his friends and will definitely be ready to thrive next year at school and beyond."

- Sophie (parent)

"When we were first approached about repeating a year, it was initially difficult for us to not to associate repeating a year with our child's intelligence. But after talking to teachers at Yarralea, doing our own research and talking to other parents, we grew to understand that Alec having more time to develop his social and emotional skills made it so much easier for him to be ready to learn and enjoy it. He also found a wonderful group of friends that he cherishes. I say often it was the best thing we could have done for him and his confidence."

- Rachael (parent)