



Our Kindergarten Programs

Imagination Garden operates an 'integrated' kindergarten program for children in the two years before school.

When can my child start Kindergarten?

A child is eligible to attend their first year of kindergarten (3yo kindergarten) if they turn 3 years before 30 April. A child is eligible to attend their 'year before school' kindergarten year (4yo kindergarten) if they turn 4 years by 30 April.

You can use the [Victorian Government Kindergarten Age Calculator](#) to see when your child can start kindergarten.

How does the Imagination Garden Kindergarten program work?

- We operate approved kindergarten programs for all children in the two years before school.
- Our kindergarten programs operate all day, every day.
- Our kindergarten programs operate throughout the year - not just during school term times.

What is the difference between the Imagination Garden kindergarten programs and 'sessional' kindergarten programs?

Imagination Garden's kindergarten programs are:

- not closed during school holidays
- integrated into the regular service, so your child attends kindergarten within our 7:00AM to 6:00PM operating hours, in the same room, with the same educators they see every day
- approved for the Child Care Subsidy
- all inclusive (eg meals, bedding, open all day)

What about the fees?

- The Victorian Government 'free kindergarten' initiative is passed on to Imagination Garden families with children enrolled in our approved kindergarten program as discount of \$2,050 per child per year. Normal Imagination Garden fees and Child Care Subsidy apply for children attending our kindergarten programs, and then the fees will be discounted by a further \$2,050 per year. The discount is applied to family accounts every week.

How many hours of kindergarten/ school readiness will my child get at Imagination Garden, compared to a 'sessional' kindergarten program?

- Typically, sessional kindergartens will operate for 15 hours per week, for 40 weeks per year, for a total of 600 hours per year.
- Imagination Garden kindergarten programs operate for 8 hours per day (9AM to 5PM), and children can attend for 11 hours per day. If your child attends for three days per week, they will be participating in a kindergarten program for 24 hours per week. We are open for 51 weeks per year, so a child attending three days per week will participate in an approved kindergarten program for up to 1,224 hours per year.

What about the children's program/ curriculum?

In 2012, the National Quality Framework was introduced across Australia to improve education and care across all long day care and sessional kindergarten services. We all operate under the same framework.

In Victoria, all kindergarten programs also operate under the same learning framework as 'sessional' kindergartens - the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF)

The VEYLDF identifies five learning and development outcomes for all children from birth to eight years:

1. identity
2. community
3. wellbeing
4. learning
5. communication

The VEYLDF provides practice principles to guide early childhood professionals to work together, with children and with families to achieve the best outcomes for every child.

What about quality and accreditation?

The National Quality Framework includes the National Quality Standard (NQS). Imagination Garden kindergarten programs and 'sessional' kindergarten programs are both required to meet the National Quality Standard.

The National Quality Standard sets a high national benchmark for early childhood education and care and outside school hours care services in Australia. The NQS includes seven quality areas that are important outcomes for children. Services are assessed and rated by their regulatory authority against the NQS, and given a rating for each of the 7 quality areas and an overall rating based on these results. These are the seven quality areas:

1. Educational program and practice
2. Children's health and safety
3. Physical environment
4. Staffing arrangements
5. Relationships with children
6. Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
7. Governance and leadership



Imagination Garden was assessed in July 2022 and received an assessment of 'Meeting National Quality Standard'.

In all services (including Imagination Garden and 'sessional' kindergarten programs), educators draw on their pedagogy, knowledge of individual children, the approved learning framework, the National Quality Standard and the underpinning law and regulations, when designing the children's programs.

Educators take a planned and reflective approach to implementing the educational program by using an assessment and planning cycle and engaging with critical reflection to improve the program and practice and overall quality for all children.

If you have any questions about the Imagination Garden kindergarten programs, please don't hesitate to contact Sue Down on 03 4216 0600 or info@imaginationgarden.com.au. We love talking about our kindergarten programs!