

Kindergarten Inclusion Support Program 2025 Information Session



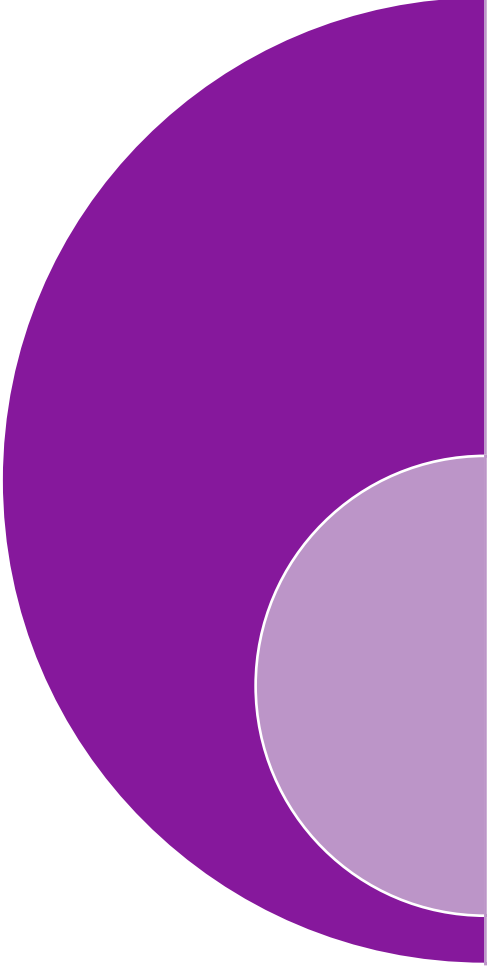
Department
of Education



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Objective of the KIS Program



To **enhance the capacity** of funded kindergarten services to develop and implement an inclusive program that supports the access and participation of children with:

- disability or developmental delay and high support needs
- and/or complex medical needs

It is important to recognise that:

- KIS program support will not always be required to include a child with a disability
- A diagnosis of a disability or complex medical need does not in itself meet the KIS eligibility requirement

Kindergarten Inclusion Support (KIS) Program Streams

KIS Program Streams

Disability

Eligibility - You must include at least one child who is accessing a Victorian funded kindergarten place and meets all below criteria:

- has a diagnosed disability OR is undergoing continuing assessment of a disability (**as defined by Disability Act 2006**)

and

- is at significant risk of serious injury to self or others *and/or*
- extremely restricted in their capacity for movement *and/or*
- has exceptional support needs that require immediate medical intervention for life threatening situations

Complex Medical Needs

Eligibility – the child must be accessing a Victorian funded kindergarten place and the service is seeking support to enhance its capacity to for the participation of the child that:

- has complex medical needs which require a high level of supervision and individualised health care support during the kindergarten program

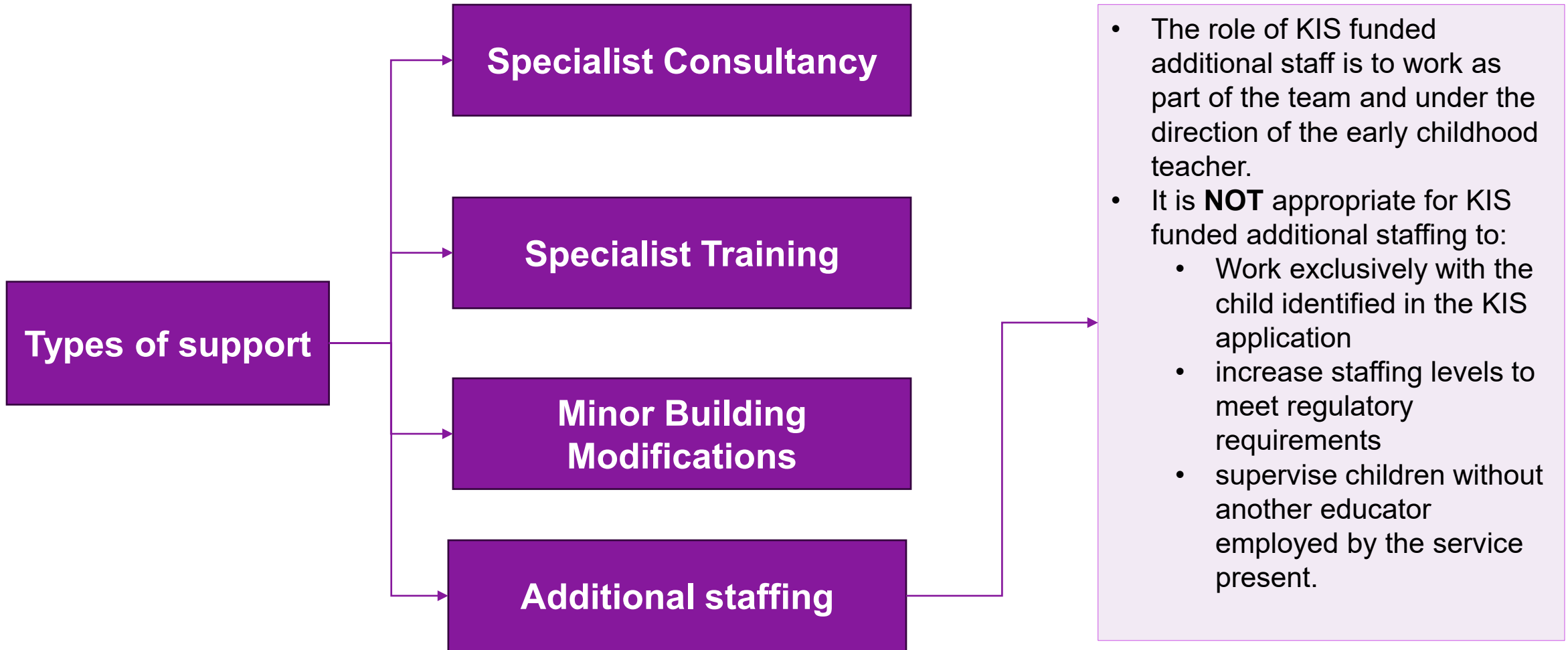
and

- is unable to access a funded kindergarten program without provision of a high level of additional support

and

- requires health support procedures during kindergarten program that can reasonably be expected to be undertaken by early childhood educators with specific training and ongoing monitoring.

Types of Support Available



KIS –Eligibility

The kindergarten service must include at least one child who meets all of the following criteria:

1. Has a diagnosed disability **OR** is undergoing continuing assessment of a disability (as defined by Disability Act 2006)

Evidence that the child meets the disability criteria must be attached. This could include:

Evidence the child is a participant of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)

Evidence the child has been assessed eligible for Early Childhood Intervention Services Continuity of Support (ECIS CoS)

A letter or report from the child's paediatrician, specialist medical practitioner or registered psychologist clearly outlining the child's diagnosis

Or

a child is **undergoing continuing assessment** for a disability, you will need to provide evidence that a paediatrician, specialist medical practitioner or registered psychologist is engaged in **continuing assessments for the purpose of diagnosis of a disability.**

2. Is at significant risk of serious injury to self or others **and/or** is extremely restricted in their capacity for movement **and/or** has exceptional support needs that require immediate medical intervention for life-threatening situations

You must indicate which criteria/on the KIS application is submitted under.

and

and

3. is enrolled in a kindergarten program funded by the Department of Education or is eligible for Early Start Kindergarten

The application must be for a child accessing a state funded kindergarten place

Timelines

First Round

- 1 October to the last day of Term 1

Second round -
late
applications

- First day of Term 2 to 1 June

Extenuating
circumstances

- Applications accepted only where there are extenuating circumstances

Complex
Medical Needs

- Applications may be submitted at any time

Completing the KIS application



KIS Application Process

Application process/steps	The early childhood teacher (ECT)
All ECTs are encouraged to attend KIS information sessions, where possible, or access/familiarise themselves with the KIS Program Guidelines before submitting a KIS application.	
Meeting with family	The ECT meets with the family to support the child's enrolment in the kindergarten.
Program Support Group (PSG)	In consultation with the family, the ECT establishes and convenes the PSG group before the child's attendance at kindergarten.
Determine if additional support is required	PSG identifies the child's support needs and the existing resources available to the kindergarten and determines whether additional support is required.
Submit KIS application	If additional support is required, with the assistance of the PSG, the ECT submits a KIS application: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• before 7 October 2024: to the KIS auspice organisation (no change in current process)• from 7 October 2024: to AHA KIS assessor at www.kisapplications.com.au
Application is assessed and service is notified of outcome	For applications submitted before 7 October 2024, the KIS auspice organisation will inform ECT of outcome, as per current processes. For applications submitted from 7 October 2024, to the KIS assessor, Australian Healthcare Associates (AHA) will notify you of the outcome.

Incomplete applications (this includes applications without required signatures) will not be assessed and may be deemed ineligible.

New submission process as of 7 October 2024

New process

The Department of Education has engaged Australian Healthcare Associates (AHA) to take on the assessment of all KIS applications from 7 October 2024.

AHA, as the KIS assessor, will manage the submission and assessment process.

Turnaround times

- Acknowledgement of receipt of lodgement within 4 days. If application is incomplete, ECTs will be contacted for additional information.
- ECTs have up to 4 weeks to provide the requested additional information.
- Application outcome will be provided in 10 business days **after acknowledgement of a complete application**. This may take a bit longer during year end/holiday period.

New lodgement point

From 7 October 2024

All applications, including **new, appeals and transfers** (PDF or word format) must be submitted at: www.kisapplications.com.au

Contact the AHA KIS application support team/help desk (telephone: 1300 564 149) if assistance is required or to discuss alternative submission arrangements.

The help desk (above) can also be used by ECTs to follow up on application status.

Submitting the application

- Before 7 October 2024: kisadmin@vt.uniting.org
- From 7 October 2024: to the AHA KIS assessor at www.kisapplications.com.au

Submit a copy of:

Section 1 – Kindergarten Service Details

Section 2 – Child Information and Support Plan

The original completed KIS application must be placed on file at the kindergarten service by the early childhood teacher.

Section 2 must be signed by the parent/carer/guardian and a completed copy provided to them.

Parents should not be given a copy of Section 1, Kindergarten Service Details, as it may contain information about other children in the kindergarten group.

Process for emailing applications

If you are submitting a KIS application via email, please ensure:

- The email is sent from the kindergarten service's @kindergarten.vic.gov.au email or the early childhood teacher's or early years manager's service email.
- The application is attached as a scanned PDF document, which includes signatures. Do not send photographs of the application.
- The kindergarten service takes reasonable steps to ensure the security of information in the application. This may include sending the message as a secure or protected message or password protecting the PDF.
- Passwords can be added to PDF documents by downloading a software program like 7zip or Acrobat Pro DC. For instructions on how to add a password through 7zip, refer to:

<https://www.eduhk.hk/ocio/content/faq-how-password-protect-my-documents-7-zip>

- *If emailing, do not also post a copy of the application to avoid confusion.*

Core components of the application

Section 1 – Disability

- Kindergarten structure
- Kindergarten team's experience
- Kindergarten's physical environment
- Kindergarten program
- Group dynamics/context of the group

What support is being requested:

- Additional Assistant
- Specialist Consultancy
- Specialist Training
- Minor building modifications

Section 2 – Disability

- Parent/guardian/carer consent and PSG information
- Child and family details
- Criterion/criteria you are applying under
- Kindergarten year KIS is applied for and other early childhood programs the child has attended/s
- Evidence of disability
- Context of the child
- KIS Plan (for the child identified in the KIS application)
- Existing resources and additional support requested
- CMN information (applicable only if the application is for a child who has a disability and complex medical needs)

Section 2: Complex Medical Needs

- Parent/guardian/carer consent and PSG information
- Child and family details
- Kindergarten year KIS is applied for and other early childhood programs the child has attended/s
- Context of the child
- What health support procedures are required during the kindergarten program
- When and how often the child will require this support at kindergarten
- Who will provide the support
- What training early childhood educators have undertaken to support the child's complex medical needs and if any additional training is required
- What adjustments will be made by the kindergarten service to support the child's inclusion.

Things to consider before/when applying for KIS

- The [Disability Standards for Education 2005](#) outlines legal obligations for educational services under *The Disability Discrimination Act 1992*. This legislation ensures the right of every child who experiences disability to education on the same basis as children without disabilities. **This includes kindergarten services.**
- What existing resources can you access?
- Has the service made reasonable adjustments?
- Have you accessed available resources to help you plan an inclusive program?
- Be descriptive – the assessment panel cannot make assumptions and can only consider information you provide.
- Check the KIS eligibility criteria.
- Be clear with families about the KIS application process, including what the support will look like, if approved.

Appeals, Transfers, Withdrawals and Transition to School

Appeals

- The kindergarten service must consult with the parent, guardian or carer regarding the decision to submit an appeal.
- Appeals will be considered at any time, but only on the basis of **new or additional relevant information**, which may not have been available or provided at the time of application, or if circumstances have changed.
- Applicants may request an appeal of decision regarding **eligibility** or **level of support** approved.

All requests for appeals are to be in writing to the KIS assessor and **must be signed** by the early childhood teacher, parent/guardian/carer and where applicable the Early Years Manager.

What happens if a child transfers or withdraws from a service?

When a child identified in an approved KIS application transfers to another kindergarten, the KIS assistance transfers to the new kindergarten and will initially be at the same level as allocated to the original kindergarten.

It is important that the kindergarten teacher from the original kindergarten notifies their KIS auspice organisation of this change in circumstances to enable this support to transfer.

To maintain KIS assistance the kindergarten teacher in the new kindergarten service is required to:

- Establish a Program Support Group to support the child's inclusion
- Submit an updated Section 1 and Part 1 and Part 5 of Section 2 (including the KIS Plan) to the AHA KIS assessor.

If a kindergarten service is advised that a child identified in an approved KIS application for their service will no longer be attending their state funded kindergarten program, the kindergarten teacher is required to inform the KIS auspice organisation as soon as practicable. In this case, the KIS allocation approved to support the inclusion of this child will cease.

Transition to School

Approaches to successful transitions may include:

- starting transition planning early
- using [Program Support Groups \(PSG\)](#)
- completion of a [Transition Learning and Development Statement](#) gathering extra information about the child that needs to be given to the school. For example, [Early ABLES](#) learning reports and advice from allied professionals
- sharing other relevant information to support the school to promote the child's wellbeing or safety by using the Information Sharing Schemes.
- developing a relationship with the child's new primary school.

The Transition and Learning Development Statement (TLDS) includes section **1.2, enhanced transition for children with a disability or developmental delay** which:

- captures information about other early childhood professionals supporting the family and child
- lists reports or assessments that are available to support inclusion planning

Transition to school information is available at <https://www.vic.gov.au/transition-primary-school-children-disability>

Questions

**Thank you for your attendance.
If you require additional information
about the KIS program or application
process, please contact:
Michele.collings@vt.uniting.org**

**From 7 October 2024: contact AHA
Assessor for application status updates or
submission process/issues: 1300 564 149**

Index of support materials

- Role of the ECT in the KIS application process
- PSG
- Role of the KIS Additional Assistant
- Other available supports

Role and Responsibilities of the Early Childhood Teacher

The early childhood teacher is responsible for:

1. Establishing and convening the Program Support Group (PSG) in consultation with the parent, guardian or carer.
2. determining if additional resources are required from the KIS program to support the child's inclusion.
3. facilitating the completion of the application form and Inclusion Support Plan, which are informed by consultation with the parent, guardian or carer and with assistance from the PSG members.
4. providing a high quality program that is inclusive of all children as required under the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework.



Role of the KIS Funded Additional Assistant

The role of the **KIS funded additional assistant** is to work as a member of the team to assist in the delivery of an inclusive program that is developed by the early childhood teacher.

Under the direction of the early childhood teacher, an additional assistant shares everyday team responsibilities to ensure all children have the opportunity to engage with each other and with a range of experiences.

It is **not** appropriate for an additional assistant funded from the KIS program to:

- work exclusively with the child identified in the application
- increase staff levels to meet regulatory requirements
- Supervise children without another educator employed by the kindergarten present

Existing resources provided by the KIS program will be taken into consideration in the allocation of support.

The Program Support Group

The focus of the Program Support Group (PSG) is on planning and monitoring the child's progress to facilitate quality learning and development outcomes.

- A PSG should be established to support the inclusion of any child identified with additional needs whether or not an application for KIS is required.
- The PSG has an ongoing role that begins before the child commences the kindergarten program and meets at least once per term.
- The PSG brings together key people to plan for the child's inclusion in the kindergarten and develops a kindergarten inclusion support plan for the child.
- The PSG supports families to feel confident their child's interests, abilities and needs are understood.

Additional PSG resources are available at: <https://www.vic.gov.au/program-support-groups-kindergarten>

Other available supports for inclusion of children with additional needs

- **Kindergarten Inclusion Support Specialised Equipment Program** - specialised equipment is available for loan, at no cost, to Victorian Government funded kindergarten programs to support children with significant disabilities, <https://www.vic.gov.au/kindergarten-inclusion-support-kis-program-specialised-equipment-trial-set>
- **Preschool Field Officer (PSFO) Program** - provide short-term guidance and coaching to early childhood educators, <https://www.vic.gov.au/preschool-field-officer-program>
- **Flexible Support Packages** - Provide short-term assistance that act as bridging, immediate support as longer-term inclusion is determined for children who have a background of trauma and adversity, <https://www.vic.gov.au/flexible-support-packages-funded-kindergarten>
- **Inclusion Support Program** – for Commonwealth funded long daycare (LDC) services only, noting that LDCs offering funded kindergarten programs can apply for KIS, for the state funded kindergarten hours <https://www.education.gov.au/early-childhood/inclusion-support-program>

Further information on KIS in long daycare and centre-based services is available
<https://www.vic.gov.au/kindergarten-inclusion-children-disabilities>

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