

# Kindergarten Partnership Strategy

2024 - 2036



## **Acknowledgement of Country**

*Frankston City Council acknowledges the Bunurong people of the Kulin Nation as the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters in and around Frankston City, and value and recognise local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, heritage, and connection to land as a proud part of a shared identity for Frankston City.*

*Council pays respect to Elders past and present and recognises their importance in maintaining knowledge, traditions, and culture in our community.*

*We acknowledge that the education of children has been occurring on these lands for thousands of years.*

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## Glossary

**Kindergarten** – Refers to the government funded program for children delivered by qualified early childhood teachers. Council facilities host 23 approved education and care services delivering this program. Kindergarten programs may also delivered by long day care centres, private schools and not-for-profit organisations.

**Infrastructure** – Refers to the physical structure and its components that keep it standing and operational.

**Feasibility Study** – A feasibility study is a preliminary exploration of a proposed project or undertaking to determine its merits and viability. It is an assessment of the practicality of a proposed plan or method to determine if it is viable, identify options, and helps develop business cases and project plans.

**The Community Infrastructure Plan (CIP), October 2022** – The CIP is an evidence-based tool to help guide the integrated planning of Council’s community infrastructure, and open space provision to better meet the current and future needs of the community across the municipality.

**Priority Assessment** – A gathering of information that assists in determining priority of action. This includes functional and physical assessment of buildings, community demographics, existing and predicative population numbers, municipal infrastructure planning and guiding policy.

**Long Term Infrastructure Plan** – This is Frankston City Council’s 10-year Plan for Building Frankston’s Future. It guides Council and shapes Frankston City’s future in line with the Community Vision and Council Plan.

**Statistical Area Level 2 (SA2)** – The smallest area for the release of Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) non-Census and statistics. They are medium sized general-purpose areas.

**Engagement & Consultation** – The act of exchanging information and opinions about something to inform a better understanding and make informed decisions.

**Pre-Prep** – The State Government initiative aiming to give Victorian children the best start in life. Four-year-old kindergarten will gradually transition to Pre-Prep over the next decade from 2025. Funded kindergarten hours will double from 15 to 30 hours a week per child.

**Universal Access** – From 2022, three-year-old children across Victoria can access at least five hours of a funded kindergarten program each week. These program hours will increase to 15 hours a week for 40-weeks of the year by 2029. This change provides opportunity for all children to access a funded kindergarten program in the two years before they commence school.

**Department of Education (DE)** – Victorian government department which implements government policy on early childhood services; regulates and provides funding to a range of early childhood programs, including kindergartens, kindergarten central registration and enrolment scheme, and Preschool Field Officers.

**Best Start, Best Life** – The Victorian Government initiative that incorporates Pre-Prep and Universal access.



**Licensed Places** – This is the number of children permitted to attend a kindergarten service at any one time under the license. Measurements of indoor and outdoor spaces are used to determine this number using the National Education and Care Regulations.

**Australian Early Development Census (AEDC)** – A national program that tracks children’s early development. A tool is used to collect data showing the number and percentage of children with vulnerability across five domains – physical health and well-being; social competence; emotional maturity; language and cognitive skills; and communication skills and general knowledge.

**Profile i.d.** – A demographic resource used by Councils to gather community profiles, both current and projected.



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# 1. Introduction

Kindergarten programs are delivered by committees of management, early years managers, long day care providers and private schools. In Frankston City Council the infrastructure from which kindergarten programs are delivered by committees of management and early years managers, are provided and maintained by Council. Council is the owner of 21 kindergarten facilities and operates under a lease agreement for two further facilities (Aldercourt and Riviera). The service providers operate under a licence and service agreement with Council. This document refers to these services as kindergartens.

Infrastructure for the majority of kindergarten programs delivered through long day care centres and private schools is owned and maintained by the providers. The one exception being Mahogany Rise Child and Family Centre where Council manages both the infrastructure and service operations.

In some instances, the infrastructure is owned by the Department of Education with Council as the tenant. In these instances, Council undertakes to provide an early years program and operates a sub-lease with the designated provider. As Council undertakes to maintain the buildings, they are viewed as Council facilities for the purpose of this plan.

The purpose of this plan is to define Councils' commitment in the kindergarten space, with a focus on infrastructure provision and to establish the way forward by bringing stakeholders together to examine current realities and define a direction for the future.

## 1.1. Review of Infrastructure

The Victorian Government has announced significant changes to the Early Childhood sector. In 2022 the Best Start, Best Life reform was announced. This reform includes:

- Free kindergarten programs for all three- and four-year-old children at participating services from the start of 2023.
- Four-year-old Kindergarten transitioning to 'Pre-Prep' over the next decade, becoming a universal, 30-hour-a-week program of play-based learning available to every four-year-old child in Victoria.
- From 2026, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from a refugee or asylum seeker background, and children who have had contact with Child Protection services can access to up to 25 hours of Pre-Prep a week, increasing to up to 30 hours a week from 2028.
- Commencing from 2028, children or their parent or guardian, who holds a Commonwealth concession card; and children who are a multiple birth child (triplets or more), will have access to up to 25 hours of Pre-Prep a week, increasing to up to 30 hours from 2030.
- The Frankston roll out schedule for Pre-Prep is between 16-20 hours from 2034, increasing to up to 25 hours from 2035 and up to 30 hours from 2036.

These changes will have a significant impact on staffing and infrastructure. The number of children participating in a kindergarten program is determined by the number of licensed places. Whilst the number of hours for four-year-old children will double, from 15 to 30 hours a week, the licensed places will be limited by infrastructure capacity.

Additional infrastructure is required, and a workforce plan will need to be developed and implemented at a service level.

## 2. Objectives of the Strategy

This plan aims to provide:

- Social Infrastructure Principles of equity, accessibility, sustainability, adaptability and integration are applied;
- Sufficient supply of Council owned infrastructure to support family choices;
- The transition of single room stand-alone facilities to multi room integrated services supporting the community preference for children to participate in two years of kindergarten in the same facility ;
- A geographic spread of facilities to support accessibility and respond to population trends for three and four-year-olds;
- A pathway for infrastructure development from 2026 to 2036; and
- Effective utilisation of Council Infrastructure.

## 3. Policies, Frameworks and Legislation

### 3.1. Frankston City Council

**The Frankston City Council Community Vision 2040<sup>1</sup>** has an aspirational goal of:

- Empowering everyone to improve their health and wellbeing through access to green space, quality health services, social supports, education, and opportunities to be physically active.
- Families with young children will be provided health and childhood development education to support long-term health and wellbeing.

**The Council Plan, 2021-2025<sup>2</sup>** lists 6 key outcomes. A priority under the Healthy and Safe Communities outcome is:

- Long term health and learning outcomes established in early childhood.

**The Council Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025<sup>3</sup>** has six priority areas. The second priority area, 'Building fair and inclusive communities' list three target areas, the first two being of particular relevance to planning for kindergarten infrastructure:

- Partner and advocate to reduce health inequities, poverty and disadvantage.
- Partner and advocate to improve equitable access to education, employment and housing.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.frankston.vic.gov.au/Community-and-Health/Community-development-and-engagement/Community-engagement-and-planning/Community-Vision-2040>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.frankston.vic.gov.au/Council/Policies-plans-and-strategies/Council-Plan-and-Budget>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.frankston.vic.gov.au/files/assets/public/v/1/our-community/health-and-wellbeing/health-and-wellbeing-plan-pdfs/a4561153-health-and-wellbeing-plan-2021-2025-final.pdf>



**The Municipal Early Years Plan (MEYP) 2021-2025<sup>4</sup>** together with the **Community Infrastructure Plan (CIP), October 2022** set the policy framework to meet the visionary goals.

The guiding Principles outlined in these two documents are:

- All young children are engaged, confident and creative learners (MEYP).
- Vulnerability, location, disconnection and disadvantage do not determine outcomes for children (MEYP).
- Families feel well supported by high quality, inclusive services for children and families in the early years (MEYP).
- The need to make better use of existing infrastructure in established areas (CIP).
- Frankston residents have access to a range of facilities which meet current and future needs and aspirations and deliver the best possible social, economic and environmental returns to the community and Council (CIP).

*Investment in early learning can have significant benefits for society, including greater social cohesion, reduced inequality, and a healthier, happier and more resilient community.<sup>5</sup>*

*Governments are long-term beneficiaries of the provision of early childhood education. They benefit from higher taxes paid by parents and carers who are able to work more and children who earn more over their lifetimes. Early childhood education also reduces unemployment.<sup>6</sup>*

### **3.2. National Standards and Regulation**

Kindergarten programs and infrastructure in Victoria are governed by the Children’s Services Act and Regulations, and the National Quality Standards. The regulations stipulate the floor and playground space required per child and are built into the Building Code of Australia. In addition to space, they outline requirements for bathrooms, staff to child ratios, staff space and other standard spaces.

The National Quality Standards are established through the Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority (ACEQA) and are monitored through the Department of Education, Quality Assessment and Regulation Division (QARD).

The aim of Quality Area 3 under the National Quality Standard is to:

- Ensure that the physical environment is safe, suitable and provides a rich and diverse range of experiences that promote children’s learning and development.

When planning for kindergarten and early years infrastructure, in addition to the National Standards and Regulations, the following Acts, Standards and Guidelines inform decision making:

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.frankston.vic.gov.au/files/assets/public/v/1/our-community/family-services/pdfs/municipal-early-years-action-plan-2021-2025.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> Department of Education <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/childhood/professionals/profdev/two-years-of-quality-Preschool-evidence-fact-sheet.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> PricewaterhouseCoopers Australia. (2019). A Smart Investment for a Smarter Australia. Melbourne, Victoria: The Front Project.

- **Child Safe Standards**<sup>7</sup> Child Safe Standard 9 – ‘Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed’ needs to be reflected in infrastructure and building planning, particularly in areas such as privacy.
- **Disability Discrimination Act**<sup>8</sup> Ensuring community facilities, buildings, infrastructure and open spaces support disability access and inclusion.
- **Maternal and Child Health Service Framework** This framework provides service delivery design, supporting best practice for the Victorian MCH Service.
- **The Convention on the Rights of the Child** created as a commitment to ensure all children and young people feel safe, supported and valued. We use these rights to make sure that every child and young person can learn, play, grow and live safely.

## 4. Funding and the Building Blocks Partnership

### 4.1. Building Blocks Partnership Agreements

Frankston City Council and the Department of Education have entered into a Building Blocks Partnership Agreement. These agreements are a strategic, in-principal agreement between State Government and Council to deliver funded kindergarten places via infrastructure investment projects. The primary objectives of Building Blocks Partnership Agreements are to:

1. Provide greater funding certainty for both State Government and partners about co-investment intentions in a forward pipeline of kindergarten infrastructure.
2. Support State Government and partners to forward plan their infrastructure budgets and deliver facilities in line with kindergarten enrolment growth.
3. Support the successful roll out of the reform by identifying projects that will facilitate the delivery of additional kindergarten capacity over a multi-year period.

The Building Blocks Partnership Agreements form part of the Victorian Government’s Best Start, Best Life Infrastructure Strategy.

### 4.2. Council Contribution to Funded Projects

To maximize utilisation of Council facilities and increase societal outcomes from the building developments, Council’s contribution to funding supports the development of family centres that have provision to co-locate other child and family services. The Frankston Kindergarten Strategy Community Engagement Survey demonstrated local resident’s desire for facilities to include space for children’s interest groups, playgroups, allied health services and Maternal and Child Health (MCH) services.

In some instances, the level of funding provided by the State Government does not fully cover the completion of the building and associated playground and car park. In these instances, Council becomes a co-contributor to the project, allocating funding through the Long Term Infrastructure Plan.

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<sup>7</sup> Child Safe Standards, Commission for Children and Young People <https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards/>

<sup>8</sup> Disability Discrimination Act <https://www.humanrights.vic.gov.au/for-individuals/disability/>

### 4.3. Kindergarten on School Sites (KOSS)

Over the next decade, the Department of Education will be building kindergartens on school sites across the State. Every new Victorian government primary school set to open from 2021 will have a kindergarten on-site or next door, making kindergarten programs easier to access, drop-off time simpler and more convenient for parents – and ensure the transition from kindergarten to school is smoother for children.

These kindergartens will, in the first instance, be offered to councils to provide the kindergarten service and, if declined, offered to early years managers, or selected approved kindergarten providers.

In Frankston, there are two kindergartens on public school sites and plans are being explored for more.

In considering the development of a kindergarten on a school site the Department considers:

- Demand to make sure they build where they are most needed;
- The schools' future needs in relation to enrolment pressure and a need to expand;
- The space capacity for a new development and whether the plan will leave sufficient open space; and
- An assessment of street access and parking.

A decision whether to build a kindergarten on a school site is made by the Department of Education.

### 4.4. Kindergarten Infrastructure and Service Plan (KISP)

The Victorian Government works with Local Government to discuss and agree upon a Kindergarten Infrastructure and Service Plan for the Local Government Area (LGA).

The purpose of the plan is to estimate demand for kindergarten programs in each LGA and provide an overview of infrastructure needs across the State. Funding decisions are expected to align with the relevant KISP. The first Frankston KISP was completed and signed off by Council in 2021.

The KISP data is a combination of profile.id and Victoria in Future data. Capacity gaps are determined by the number of approved funded kindergarten places and licence capacity across all services in a local area.

An updated plan is currently under development and is due for completion in 2024.

The provisional data collated for 2024 shows the unmet demand has increased across Frankston municipality. Further review of data projections will be undertaken annually in collaboration with Department of Education.

The local knowledge and context further support the development of the KISP. This information includes:

- Frankston Kindergarten Strategy Community Engagement Survey responses and family preferences;
- The condition and fabric of a building;
- Feasibility of the service to expand; and
- Social demographics informed by a community profile.

Given the length of time it takes to plan and build a new kindergarten, Council plans are focusing on being able to provide 15 hours a week for three-year-olds *and* preparation for 30 hours a week for Pre-Prep.

## 5. Councils' Current Role in Kindergarten Services

Council is currently responsible for the maintenance of 23 facilities where community kindergarten programs are delivered. These programs are operated by an early years manager or committee of management under a Licence and Service Agreement with Council. This agreement includes clauses that ensure services maximise their operating capacity.

Through the Department of Education (DE), in addition to this:

- Council is the approved provider of one long day education and care service providing a kindergarten program.
- Council manages a centralised registration process for the 23 community-based, sessional kindergartens.
- Council plan and work with other providers of early years education and the Department of Education.

### 5.1. Council Provided Affiliated Services

The Family Health Support Services department also provide a range of programs that are often co-located or form part of the early years education profile. These include:

- Playgroups, including, supported playgroups and pop up playgroups. Playgroups lease facilities through a range of providers, including Council;
- First time parents groups delivered through the Maternal and Child Health Service;
- Maternal and Child Health and Immunisation services which are often co-located with a kindergarten. These services play a vital role in the early education space working with families and children from birth to school age.

### 5.2. Facilities and Operations

The Facilities Management and Operations teams have a critical role in the provision of the kindergarten infrastructure. Maintenance requests are submitted by tenants through a centralised system.

Playgrounds are an essential part of a kindergarten and often contain equipment or areas that require regular maintenance and mowing and require an annual schedule of works.

The Facilities and Operations Management teams undertake regular assessment of council assets, and as new facilities are built and older buildings are replaced, the maintenance requirements will need to be considered in the allocated budget.

Details relating to the type and level of maintenance are outlined in the Kindergarten License Agreement that providers sign on a three-year basis.

### 5.3. Fit for Purpose

In 2022 all kindergartens were assessed against a set of “Fit for purpose” criteria. Buildings were assessed on a one (dysfunctional) to five (excellent) scale.

**Functional assessment criteria**

Report Criteria	Explanation
<b>Access</b>	Access focuses on the way staff, families and visitors of the kindergarten can come and go. It assesses whether there is adequate parking for staff and users and whether there is a clear and safe route in to and out of the kindergarten.
<b>Use</b>	Use is concerned with the way the building enables and supports the provision of kindergarten services.
<b>Space</b>	Space is concerned with the spaces/rooms in the building and whether they are adequate in terms of their size, layout, and relationship with other areas.

Table 1: Functional assessment report criteria

The final scores showed six facilities on the lower end of the scale with none exceeding 3.5 as a total score. Three of the facilities with a low score will have been redeveloped by 2026, this includes Riviera, Baden Powell and Seaford.

**Fit for purpose – functional assessment score**

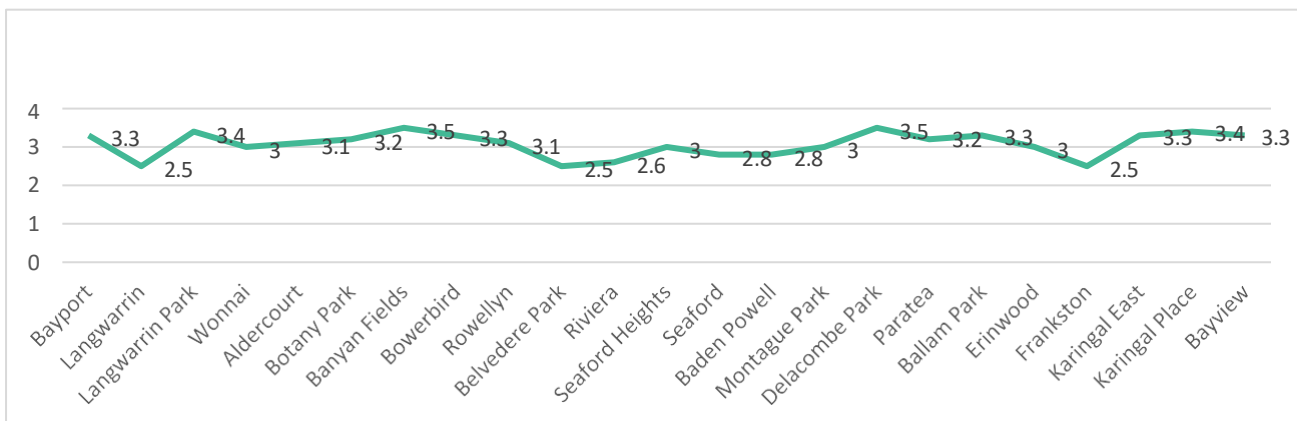


Table 2: Functional assessment score

### 5.4. Children’s Services

The Children’s Services team support families and service providers in a variety of ways. The primary role of the team in relation to kindergartens are:

- Monitor and negotiate licence and service agreements for kindergartens operating out of Council managed facilities.
- Liaise and work with facility services on building maintenance requirements and requests.
- Support kindergarten management with a range of matters including support for grant applications; support and provision of information pertaining to registration and enrolment



numbers and roles and responsibilities through registration offer process.

- Central Registration for kindergarten enrolments to support access to funded kindergarten programs. This process includes negotiating and planning for operational capacity numbers; liaising with families to manage placement requests and support alternate options where a preferred placement is unsuccessful; providing timely information to families and kindergartens; monitoring adherence with kindergarten funding requirements; and evaluating process to identify opportunities for improvement.
- Provision of central registration data to Department of Education regional staff to monitor demand across the municipality and address as required.

## 6. Resident Informed Building Preferences

The Frankston Kindergarten Strategy Community Engagement Survey<sup>9</sup> commenced from July 2023. Frankston City residents were asked to indicate preferences in several areas affecting the placement and design of kindergarten infrastructure.

- A significant 89.14 % of respondents indicated they would prefer their child access three and four-year-old kindergarten at the same place.

**Impact:** kindergartens will need a minimum of two, with a preference for three rooms to offer two four-year-old and two three-year-old groups on one site. The recommendations in this plan reflect this.

- 79.5% prefer a community based, dedicated kindergarten building with 39% preferring a kindergarten on the grounds of a public school.

**Impact:** This strategy is planning to maintain the same level of commitment to early years education for eligible child attendance at a dedicated, community-based kindergarten. This supports families choosing different models to align all of their commitments.

- When looking at co-located or shared facilities, 56.59% requested playgroup space; 47% requested space for children's interest groups; 47.29% requested space for allied health services and 42.38% requested space for MCH.

**Impact:** Where space allows, building plans will include a multi-purpose room that can be booked and used by multiple services. To provide adequate space for all programs the room will need to be a minimum of 40sqm.

- 43.3% of respondents indicated that working hours impacted on their ability to send their child to sessional kindergarten.

**Impact:** The extension of available kindergarten infrastructure will support longer hours of education for children, supporting working families. Once the Pre-Prep initiative of 30 hours of free kindergarten a week is implemented it is anticipated that this percentage figure will drop, increasing the demand on kindergarten places. This plan is focussed on the provision of more places.

- 87% would like to be able to access a kindergarten within five kilometres of their home with 89.9% of respondents preferring to walk to kindergarten.

**Impact:** This supports the Councils commitment to the 20-minute neighbourhood and provides guidance on where future services should be located.

- 23.5% indicated that they could not attend kindergarten due to a shortage of spaces, this was primarily reported by respondents living in Frankston, Langwarrin and Seaford.

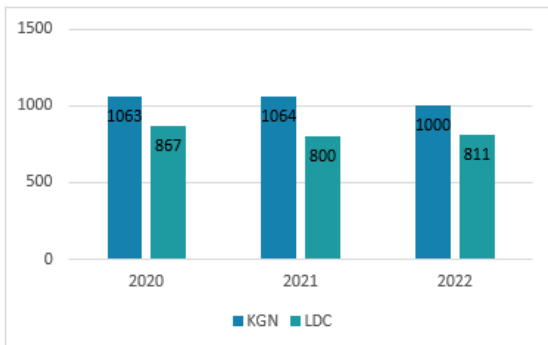
**Impact:** New and expanded facilities currently under planning/construction in Seaford and Langwarrin will address shortage in these areas. Enrolment data shows vacancies across Frankston/Karingal and the dichotomy between the two will be explored in location recommendations.

<sup>9</sup> Frankston Kindergarten Strategy Community Engagement Survey, 2023 <https://engage.frankston.vic.gov.au/kinder-strategy>

## 7. Current Kindergarten Infrastructure and Operational Management

Kindergarten programs are operated from a range of settings and operational structures. The Department of Education fund children who attend a kindergarten program in a registered/licensed service, where they are in line with the National Quality Framework. Providers need to be approved and registered.

**Children enrolled by service type**



**Enrolment share by service type**

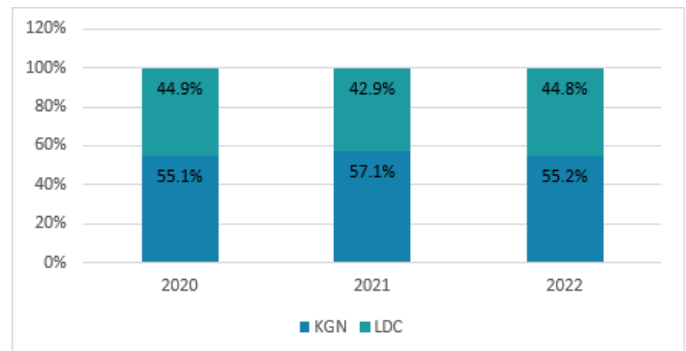


Table 3: Children enrolled by service type

Table 4: Enrolment share by service type

Data Source for table 3 & 4: Department of Education 2022 Frankston (C) ECE Profile

### 7.1. Kindergarten Settings is a Family Choice

The decision when and where to enrol a child into a kindergarten program is complex for many families. In Frankston City there are a range of settings provided by Council, private schools and long day care (commercial and not-for-profit).

As noted in table 3, in 2021, 57.1% families chose stand-alone kindergartens for their child’s kindergarten program. The Frankston Kindergarten Strategy Community Engagement Survey (attachment 1) provided the following information:

- The balance between working parents and attendance at a community kindergarten was highlighted with 43.15% of respondents recognising inconsistent work hours or the length of the workday as the prime factor effecting enrolment in a kindergarten program;
- A significant 89.14% of respondents indicated they would prefer their child access three and four-year-old kindergarten at the same place; and

- When asked to indicate a preferred location respondents showed a strong preference for a community based dedicated kindergarten building:
  - 79.5% - A community based, dedicated kindergarten building
  - 39% - A dedicated kindergarten space within a public school
  - 9% - An early learning centre in a private school
  - 31% - A kindergarten program in private long day care
  - 37.9% - A dedicated kindergarten space within a community centre or hub
  - 8% - Will seek options with fewer than 30 hours a week for their child
  - Other 1.99%

### Preferred location for attendance at kindergarten

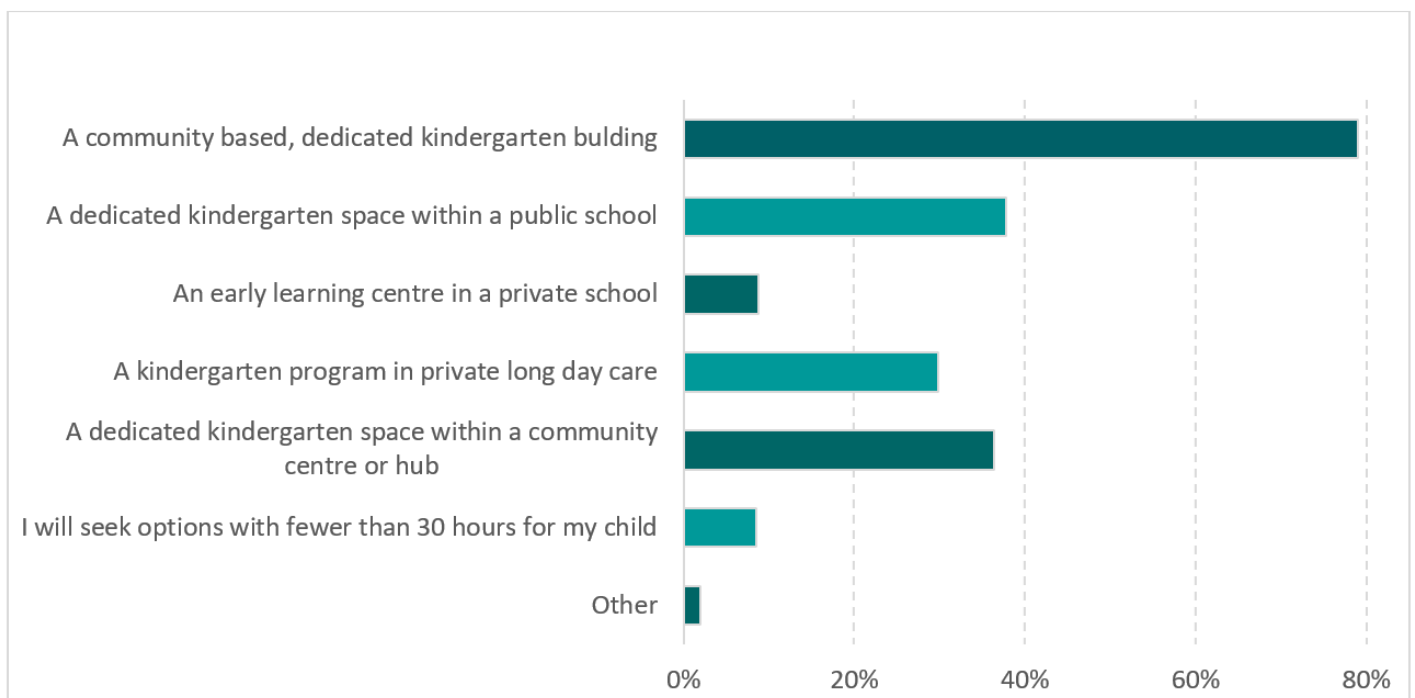


Table 5: Preferred location for attendance at kindergarten

Council acknowledges the strong role private schools and long day care centres have in the provision of kindergarten programs and the importance of families having a choice in the type and location of service that meets their needs.

Data shown in the 2021 Department of Education Early Childhood Education and Care Profile for Frankston, along with the Frankston Kindergarten Strategy Community Engagement Survey, demonstrate that families are choosing a range of providers. Accordingly, Council is focusing on the development of kindergartens in Council provided infrastructure to maintain the same level of services.

# 8. Kindergarten Programs: Operation and Infrastructure Management

A single licensed place can accommodate multiple kindergarten places over the course of a week (for example, where separate groups attend the service on different days of the week, or at contrasting times of the day).

Kindergarten programs and/or infrastructure are delivered through a range of providers and operational managers.

**Current provision of kindergarten infrastructure and operational management (service delivery) 2024**

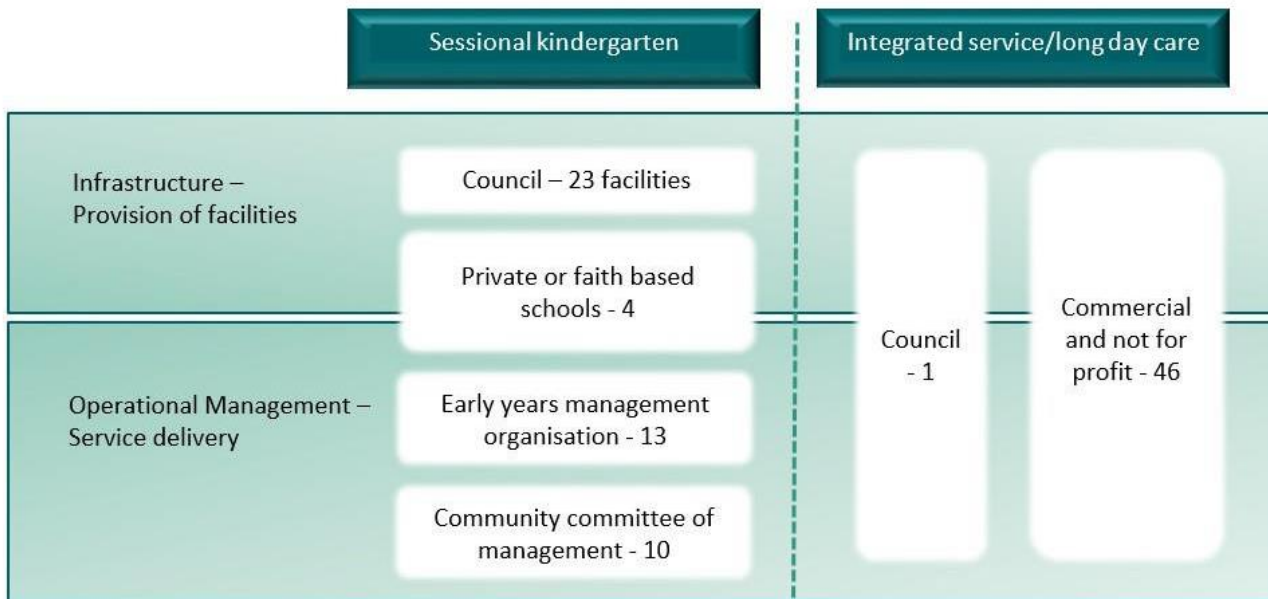


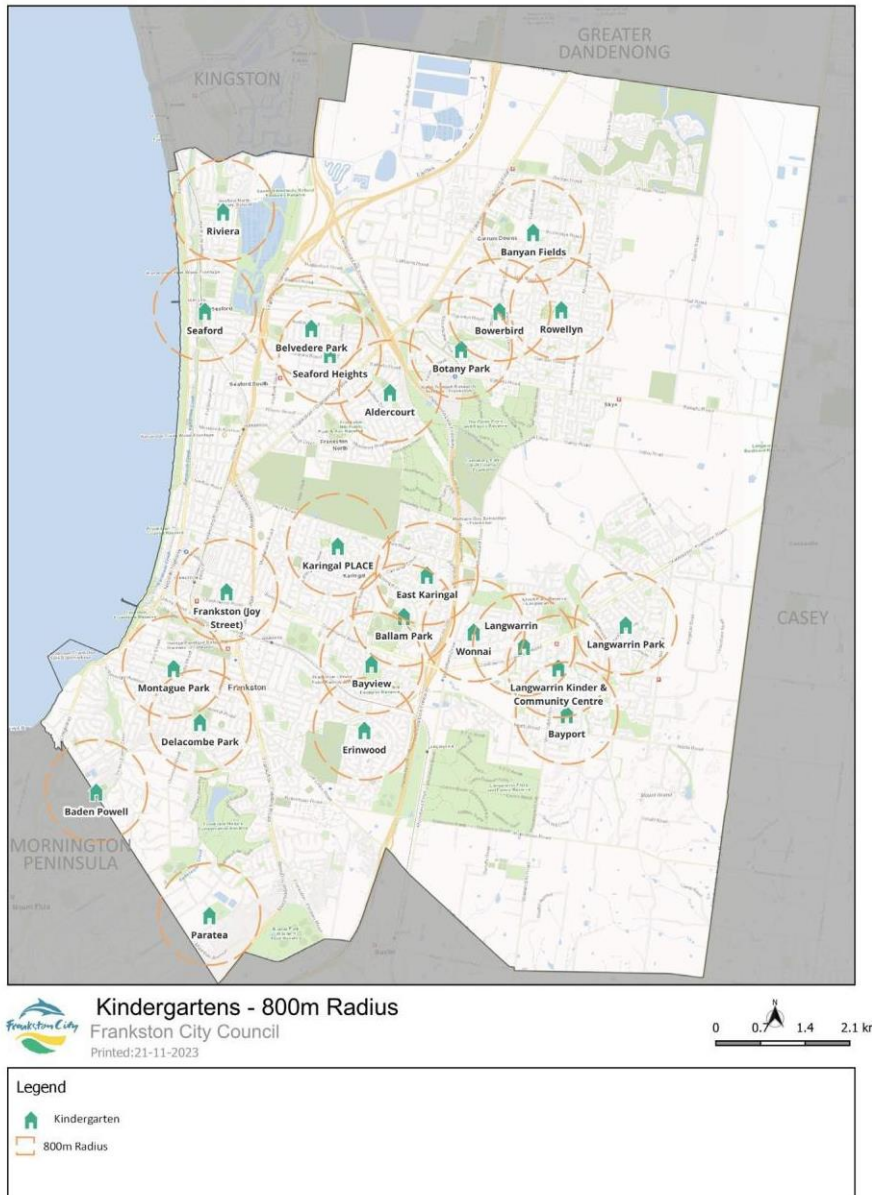
Table 6: Provision of infrastructure and operational management (February 2024)

The establishment of Pre-Prep and the availability of free kindergarten programs for all three- and four-year-olds will have an impact for all providers. Enrolment data for 2024 shows increases in three-year-old enrolments at some centres following the implementation of ‘free’ kindergarten and fifteen hours a week. The infrastructure and space requirements, along with staffing needs, are challenges that all operation and infrastructure providers must address when a need is identified.

## 8.1. Location of Council Owned/Managed Buildings

In 2023 Council owned and managed the infrastructure for 23 kindergartens. Current locations as per table 7.

**Council kindergarten facility location map 2024**



*Table 7: Council kindergarten buildings location map 2024*

The circles indicate a 20-minute walking circle. This reflects the 20-minute neighbourhood principle as adopted by Council and outlined by Planning Victoria.<sup>10</sup>

The new Langwarrin Early Years and Community Centre is shown on the map, opening 2026.

<sup>10</sup> Planning Victoria 20 Minute Neighbourhoods <https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/guides-and-resources/strategies-and-initiatives/20-minute-neighbourhoods>



## 9. Kindergarten Operational Models

Kindergarten programs have evolved significantly over the last 20 years in response to community need, government policy, the National Standards and varying pedagogical approaches informed by research.

Kindergartens are part of the education system and intricately linked to school and student success. Australian and international evidence shows that quality play-based learning helps lay the foundation for success throughout a child’s education and life. *Neuroscience shows that early brain development is critical in shaping the learning, development, health and wellbeing of children, and impacts on their future life opportunities.*<sup>11</sup>

Today programs are dynamic and community-responsive, and the models of operation include:

- Mixed-age approach: Three- and four-year old children attend the same session/s.
- Rotational model: where a number of smaller sub-groups are brought together to create a larger group. The larger group is made up of a mix of different sub-groups for each session.
- Long days: Several kindergartens currently offer full day programs that run for 7.5 hours.
- Sessional groups organised by age: These can vary in length and are usually organised by age, with three- year-old and four-year-old groups run separately.
- Off-site programs: This involves having days scheduled to operate at an alternate venue. In recent times the most common off-site venue is a Bush Kinder.
- Team teaching: A strategy that involves two or more teachers working together to plan, implement and evaluate an educational program for a group of children.

The introduction of Pre-Prep will lead to changes in daily program hours, offering either four 7.5-hour days or five 6-hour days. Providers operating single-room kindergartens will need to explore options for delivering programs for three- and four-year-olds. They may be limited to running one group of four-year-olds and two groups of three-year-olds, or they might consider mixed-age group options.

## 10. The Process for Planning

There have been several steps undertaken by Council to ensure a depth to the planning process. These include:

- The Frankston Kindergarten Strategy Community Engagement Survey focussed on obtaining community views relating to operation and location of kindergartens;
- Assessed demographics to map current and future need;
- Functional and fabric assessments to determine if current buildings are “fit for purpose” and the overall condition of the infrastructure;
- Feasibility assessments of all single room kindergarten buildings (including land capacity and future opportunities); and
- Mapping the impact of the increase to 15 hours a week for three-year-olds and the space requirements of the Pre-Prep program.

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<sup>11</sup> McCain, M.N., Mustard, J.F. & Shanker, S. (2007). Early years study 2: Putting science into action. Toronto, ON: Council for Early Child Development. Moore, T.G. et al. (2017).

These actions, together with current and past utilisation rates, location of services and resident feedback have informed the recommended actions and their priority.

### 10.1. Demographic Data

The introduction of the Pre-Prep program and the continuing implementation of 15-hour weeks for three-year-olds will increase the level of infrastructure and workforce required to deliver these policies. In some areas the demographic data indicates there is currently sufficient space within existing kindergartens, however the gaps will occur as the hour’s children attend increase. Areas with immediate need have been prioritised in the planning process.

Data has been calculated using the Profile id.<sup>12</sup> figures for three- and four-year-olds from 2023 to 2035. Whilst the goal is to have 100% of eligible children attending kindergarten, participation rates have been calculated based on 90% attendance, and for Council to provide community kindergarten space for up to 60% of the total.

**Demographic data reflecting 60% of projected three and four-year-old children**

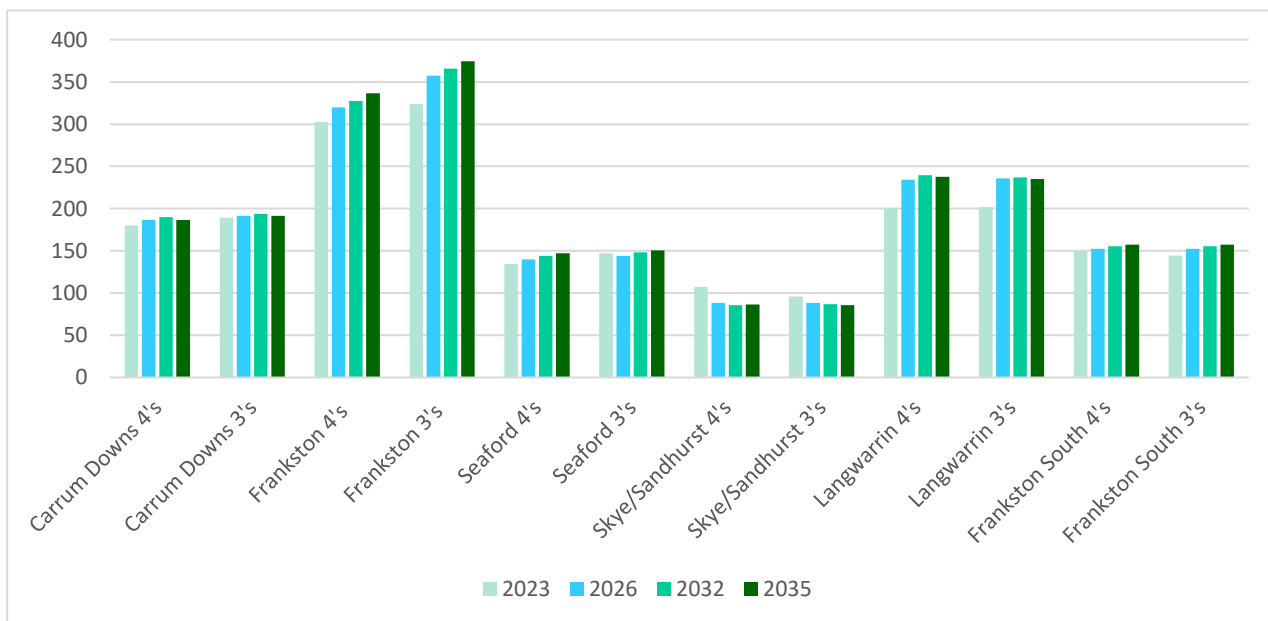


Table 8: Demographic data reflecting 60% of projected three and four-year old children by year

The above demographic data analysis, undertaken in 2023, has been compared to the CIP data collated in 2022 and there has been some shift in population and kindergarten room requirements.

<sup>12</sup> <https://profile.id.com.au/> - a business dedicated to providing suburb based community profiles to Councils

## Additional rooms required for kindergarten by 2034

	Frankston	Karingal	Frankston North	Frankston South	Seaford	Carrum Downs	Langwarrin	Skye	Total
*3 & 4 year old population data	650	293	175	520	490	636	794	290	<b>3848</b>
60% population attending community kindergarten at 90% participation rate	351	158	94	281	265	344	428	157	<b>2078</b>
Current rooms	5	4	3	4	6	6	5	0	<b>33</b>
Approved and funded additional rooms to be built by 2026				2	1		3		<b>6</b>
Additional rooms required	4	1	0	0	1	2	2	4	<b>15</b>

Table 9: Additional rooms required based on Council analysis of the demographic data sourced through Profile.id

\*Based on data obtained May 2024

## 11. Planning for Kindergartens in Council Infrastructure

Each local area in the municipality has a unique character with associated needs and expectations. To endeavour to provide choice for families in every area and plan for specific needs this strategy addresses development on both an individual centre basis and overall area.

The Frankston Kindergarten Strategy Community Engagement Survey returned a significant 89.14% of respondents indicating they would prefer their child access three- and four-year-old kindergarten at the same place. To achieve this, and to maintain the minimum existing enrolment numbers for three and four year old children, kindergartens will require a minimum of two rooms, ideally three to four rooms in the highly populated areas. In 2022 a survey regarding the central enrolment process indicated that having attended a kindergarten as a three-year-old is the strongest criterion relating to a family's relationship with their preferred kindergarten.

### 11.1. Priority Criteria for Development

Recommendations on timelines and the type of centre for development will be informed by the following criteria, along with the guiding principles for future development.

- The availability and variety of kindergarten programs in the area. Facilitating family choice and proximity to residence;
- Proximity to other stand-alone or community kindergartens;
- Demographic data demonstrating current and future demand;
- Social demographics relating to vulnerability and disadvantage as reported by AEDC<sup>13</sup>; and
- Enrolment patterns for the last 3 years.

### 11.2. School Enrolment Data

The Department of Education<sup>14</sup> provide data reports that show total school enrolments and prep enrolments for all schools, private and public. The data demonstrates a pattern of relatively stable prep enrolments across the Council with notable growth in Langwarrin, Seaford and Skye/Sandhurst.

<sup>13</sup> Australian Early Development Census, 2021. [www.aedc.gov.au](http://www.aedc.gov.au)

<sup>14</sup> All Schools FTE enrolments - Feb 2020 - Dataset - Victorian Government Data Directory

The 2023 data shows a slight decline in numbers in Carrum Downs and Frankston. A full report by individual schools can be found at the Victorian Government Data Directory.

### Primary school prep enrolments for public and private

Primary school prep enrolments - (public and private)				
Frankston City Council				
	2020	2021	2022	2023
<b>Carrum Downs</b>	304	317	303	289
<b>Frankston</b>	244	319	298	268
<b>Frankston North</b>	194	190	161	188
<b>Frankston South</b>	182	189	179	187
<b>Langwarrin</b>	375	384	383	413
<b>Seaford</b>	253	256	227	244
<b>Skye/Sandhurst</b>	84	62	87	91

Table 10: Primary school prep enrolments for public and private schools by area

### 11.3. Australian Early Development Census Data (AEDC)

The AEDC is a national assessment conducted every three years to examine how children have developed by the time they start school. The AEDC highlights what is working well and what needs to be improved or developed to support children and families.

The data in the following table notes the domain(s) where children are more likely to be on track, at risk and/or developmentally vulnerable, how the local community results compare to the National and State AEDC results and the local communities faring better or worse than the comparison groups.

Of particular note are:

- The percentage of children with a vulnerability is higher across all five domains in Carrum Downs and Frankston North than the State average;
- The percentage of children with a vulnerability is higher than the State average across four of the five domains in Skye; and
- Frankston South has the lowest level of vulnerability in the Frankston municipality.

The five domains are: physical health and wellbeing; social competence; emotional maturity; language and cognitive skills (school-based); communication skills and general knowledge.

This data aligns with the SEIFA data relating to disadvantage where Frankston North, Carrum Downs and Skye show a high level of disadvantage and Frankston South showing the lowest level of disadvantage in the municipality.

## Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) data by area 2021



Community results table, Frankston community

Frankston community	Number of children	Number and Percentage of children developmentally vulnerable (N (%))						
		Physical health and wellbeing †	Social competence	Emotional maturity	Language and cognitive skills (school-based)	Communication skills and general knowledge	Vulnerable on one or more domains of the AEDC	Vulnerable on two or more domains of the AEDC
<b>Australia</b>	305,015	28,341 (9.8%)	27,788 (9.6%)	24,271 (8.5%)	21,107 (7.3%)	24,064 (8.4%)	63,264 (22.0%)	32,718 (11.4%)
<b>Victoria</b>	73,492	5,604 (8.1%)	6,253 (9.0%)	5,342 (7.7%)	4,993 (7.2%)	5,134 (7.4%)	13,777 (19.9%)	7,085 (10.2%)
<b>Frankston community</b>	1,755	142 (8.8%)	149 (9.2%)	129 (8.0%)	130 (8.0%)	119 (7.3%)	321 (19.8%)	164 (10.1%)
<b>Local Community</b>								
Carrum Downs	266	47 (18.8%)	47 (18.8%)	39 (15.6%)	44 (17.6%)	50 (20.0%)	86 (34.4%)	55 (22.0%)
Frankston	435	25 (6.3%)	30 (7.6%)	25 (6.3%)	25 (6.3%)	23 (5.8%)	69 (17.5%)	34 (8.6%)
Frankston North	89	14 (18.4%)	11 (14.5%)	13 (17.1%)	8 (10.5%)	6 (7.9%)	26 (34.2%)	17 (22.4%)
Frankston South	261	7 (2.8%)	9 (3.7%)	10 (4.1%)	4 (1.6%)	6 (2.4%)	20 (8.1%)	8 (3.3%)
Langwarrin/Langwarrin South	321	24 (8.1%)	26 (8.8%)	16 (5.4%)	22 (7.4%)	13 (4.4%)	62 (20.9%)	18 (6.1%)
Seaford	220	9 (4.4%)	10 (4.9%)	13 (6.4%)	11 (5.4%)	11 (5.4%)	28 (13.8%)	15 (7.4%)
Skye	163	16 (10.3%)	16 (10.3%)	13 (8.4%)	16 (10.3%)	10 (6.5%)	30 (19.4%)	17 (11.0%)

Table 11: Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) data by area 2021

## 12. Geographical Area Summary

### 12.1. Carrum Downs

Carrum Downs is a high priority area.

Carrum Downs rate in 84 percentile in the SEIFA ratings and has 14 long day cares centres offering a kindergarten program. The area is an established residential area with medium to high population density. There is a shortage of public open space.



Banyan Fields Kindergarten, located on the primary school site, is a three-room kindergarten with MCH services and is one of the highest demand kindergartens in the municipality.

Rowellyn Kindergarten is a single room centre located adjacent to Rowellyn Park Primary School and Sandfield Reserve. There is no capacity for the centre to be extended; there is no space on the school site and Sandfield Reserve is in the process of a major recreation redevelopment.

Botany Park Kindergarten is adjacent to the Botany Park Recreation Reserve and the current pocket of land is not suitable for extension.

AEDC data indicates the level of vulnerability for five-year-olds across the five reported domains is above the State average (10.2%), with 22% of five-year-olds being vulnerable across two or more domains.

Department of Education data shows an 83% participation rate in kindergarten the year before school which is lower than the average rate across Frankston.

## 12.2. Frankston

Frankston is an area of high priority for development.

There are 12 long day care centres or private schools offering a funded kindergarten program in Frankston.

Frankston Centrals SEIFA percentile of 20 and Karingal's of 22, demonstrates this area has high disadvantage.

The area is a mix of residential and commercial precincts primarily in the Frankston Municipal Activity Centre (FMAC) and Karingal areas. There is also a strong health and education precinct with the Frankston Hospital and allied health services, Monash University and Chisholm TAFE all within proximity to one another on the southern side of the suburb. There is a gap in community kindergartens in the Nepean Boulevard area, FMAC area 5<sup>16</sup>, extending to the Kananook Station. There is the potential for developers to include early years services in new FMAC developments for the area.

The kindergarten registration review process, the Best Start Partnership and the Maternal Child and Health services highlights that Frankston has a high proportion of single parent families who do not drive or use public transport. Kindergarten within walking distance is essential.

The Frankston Kindergarten Strategy Community Engagement Survey showed that 23 families in Frankston felt the lack of places hindered their ability to attend kindergarten.

The demographic and needs based information identified through the KISP development are not supported by current enrolment patterns. In the survey the barriers to attending kindergarten noted were:

- Not enough kindergarten places in the area; and
- Sessional kindergarten is not compatible with work hours.

In the broader consultation discussions, it was also identified that vulnerable and disadvantaged families benefit from having easy access to a range of services, particularly when families are faced with a number of complex issues and barriers.

The CIP, Children's Services and the Department of Education all highlight Frankston as needing more kindergarten rooms. The Karingal area is over supplied for community kindergartens. The shortfall is in the FMAC area 5, Central and Frankston Heights.

The Department of Education is building a new Government owned and operated long day care centre in the area, close to Ballam Park. The centre is planned to open in 2026.

### 12.3. Frankston North

Frankston North is a low priority area.

There are three long day care centres in Frankston North<sup>15</sup> and the SEIFA percentile score of 4, meaning 96% of the population have greater advantage.

AEDC data indicates the level of vulnerability for five-year-olds across the five reported domains are above the State average in Frankston North.

The Aldercourt Kindergarten is a 3 room kindergarten on the school site and has capacity to meet the reform requirements.

### 12.4. Frankston South

Frankston South is a medium priority area.

There are five long day care centres in the area and there is a high Socio-Economic Indexes For Areas (SEIFA) percentile at 85%, meaning only 15% of the population have a higher advantage. Parts of the area are listed as rural, and a high proportion is in a fire management zone.

Baden Powell Kindergarten is being extended from a single to three room centre, opening in 2025. Delacombe Park is an existing two room centre and Paratea is a single room centre.

Demographic data indicates that the extension on the Baden Powell centre will provide adequate rooms for the immediate to medium term.

Paratea is in a high value flora and fauna reserve and there is no capacity to expand. This is the only community kindergarten in the southeast quadrant of Frankston South.

### 12.5. Langwarrin

Langwarrin is a medium priority area.

It is to be noted that DE, through the KISP process list Langwarrin as one of the top three areas of need. The current KISP data does not include the new 99 place Langwarrin Early Years and Community Centre development due for completion in 2026.

Langwarrin is an established suburb currently experiencing growth through subdivision. There is a mix of residential and commercial property. Open space is a premium in the area with little available for development.

There are 13 long day care centres offering kindergarten programs in the area. Whilst the demographic data indicates there are insufficient kindergarten places, the 2024 enrolment data does not support this with most centres having vacancies.

The planned development of the Langwarrin Early Years and Community Centre with a new three-room kindergarten will have an impact on other centres in proximity and increase capacity in the local area.

<sup>15</sup>Department of Education Dashboard Data for KISP planning August 2023

<sup>16</sup>Frankston Metropolitan Area Activity Centre, Structure Plan, June 2023 pg 14

There are three single room kindergartens, Bayport, Wonnai and Langwarrin in this area. Bayport can readily be extended, and through early feasibility assessment it was determined that Wonnai may only be extended to a two-room facility. It is important to note that further, more detailed assessment will be required to determine suitability. All can continue operating as they are in the short term and will need to be reviewed once the impact of earlier developments is understood.

With the new Langwarrin Early Years and Community Centre opening in 2026, along with existing centres there will be sufficient places pending the full 30 hour implementation of the Pre-Prep program in 2036 for all children. A review of the remaining three single room kindergartens and potential plans for the area should be undertaken from 2027.

## **12.6. Seaford**

Seaford is a low priority area.

There are four long day care centres in Seaford.

Riviera Kindergarten opened as a three room, 99 licensed centre in 2024. Seaford Kindergarten will open as a two room, 66 licensed centre in 2026. The remaining kindergartens in Seaford are Seaford Heights and Belvedere Park, both single room centres.

Belvedere Park has no capacity to expand on the existing site.

The Seaford Heights centre could be expanded to a two or three-room kindergarten which will support the implementation of the Pre-Prep program and will provide adequate capacity across the Seaford local area.

## **12.7. Skye**

Skye is a high priority area.

There is currently no community kindergarten in Skye and one registered long day care centre offering kindergarten programs located in Sandhurst.

Anecdotally, it is reported that most prep enrolments for Skye Primary School have attended kindergarten in Carrum Downs.

There are 203 eligible children in 2023. The CIP identifies a need to develop long day care, MCH and kindergarten services in the area in the short term and multi-purpose community centres in the medium term.

Demographic data shows that by 2034 there will be 182 children eligible for kindergarten in the area.

AEDC data indicates a level of vulnerability for five-year-olds in the area above the State average in four of the five domains.

## 13. Guiding Principles for Future Developments

- Commence planning for the redevelopment of kindergartens on exiting sites that can be expanded in accordance with demographic data
- Prioritise the redevelopment of sites in areas of higher vulnerability
- Assess the overall demand and capacity in each local area
- Continue to utilise the Building Blocks Partnership to advocate for higher funding allocation and or alternative solutions to facilitate Council's ability to meet the Reform requirements
- Seek opportunities to partner with Department of Education, not-for-profit and or the private sector in relation to delivery of new buildings and their ongoing maintenance, and service delivery.

## 14. Kindergarten Redevelopment Plan

**Retain:** These kindergartens can continue operating in their current form. The existing structure, curriculum and educational approach, including offering increased program hours can be maintained. No re-development of these sites is required.

**Note:** Retained single room kindergartens will be subject to review throughout the reform roll out.

**Expand:** These kindergartens can be expanded, there is capacity within the existing site to increase the number of rooms thereby facilitating longer program hours and additional kindergarten places.

**Note:** planning and feasibility must be carried out on each site. Projects proceeding are subject to, grant funding allocation, community engagement, demographic data and endorsement by Council.

**Review:** A review aims to identify strengths, barriers, opportunities and threats to inform decision-making regarding potential upgrades, renovations, or future use of the facility and the impact these decisions will have.

Council will consider the following for each facility marked to be reviewed:

- Physical infrastructure condition and fit for purpose, including learning environment
- Ability to expand within existing site boundaries, or the impact on bordering property or land
- Location and accessibility and proximity to other kindergartens
- Utilisation of kindergarten and spaces available within the immediate local area
- Families and children are not disadvantaged or significantly impacted through change.

## Kindergarten Redevelopment Plan

Early Years Facility	Future Development
<b>Carrum Downs</b>	
Banyan Fields	Retain
Botany Park	Retain & Review
Bowerbird	Expand
Rowellyn	Retain & Review
<b>Frankston / Frankston North</b>	
Aldercourt	Retain
Ballam Park	Expand
Bayview	Retain & Review
Erinwood	Expand
Frankston	Review & Expand
Karingal East	Retain & Review
Karingal PLACE	Retain
Montague Park	Expand
<b>Frankston South</b>	
Baden Powell	Retain
Delacombe Park	Retain
Paratea	Retain & Review
<b>Langwarrin</b>	
Bayport	Review & Expand
Langwarrin	Retain & Review
Langwarrin – LCC site	Retain
Langwarrin Park	Retain
Wonnai	Review & Expand
<b>Seaford</b>	
Belvedere Park	Retain & Review
Riviera	Retain
Seaford	Retain
Seaford Heights	Review & Expand

Table 12: Kindergarten Redevelopment Plan

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## 16. References

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<https://discover.data.vic.gov.au/dataset/all-schools-fte-enrolments-feb-2020>
- XIV. Frankston Metropolitan Area Activity Centre, Structure Plan, June 2023 pg 14
- XV. Department of Education Dashboard Data for KISP planning August 2023