

Kindergarten funding model review

Invitation for Written Input

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This form is designed to help you prepare your written submission. It provides some background information on the kindergarten funding review and outlines a series of questions, with space provided for you to type your responses.

Please email this completed form to kindergartenfunding@deloitte.com.au no later than 5.00pm on Friday 30 September.

Background

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (the Department) has engaged Deloitte Access Economics to review the Victorian Government's kindergarten funding model and develop options for reforming the funding framework.

The strength of the early childhood education and care sector in Victoria is underpinned by a diverse and committed mix of providers, from not-for-profit organisations and local councils to independent schools and private businesses, which deliver programs in a range of integrated and stand-alone settings.

The current kindergarten funding model has not changed significantly since its introduction in 1994. With the recent increase in births, the introduction of Universal Access to 15 hours of kindergarten, and the changes being introduced through the National Quality Reform Agenda, it is timely to consider how best to use our resources to position the early childhood education and care sector for future growth and sustainability.

The purpose of this review is to examine how best to allocate funding in a way that supports this diversity and enables the sector to deliver on the challenges ahead. In support of this, Deloitte Access Economics on behalf of the Department is seeking your input during the options development stage of this review. This is an opportunity for you to have direct input into the review.

Confidentiality

Deloitte Access Economics recognises that information provided in your submission may be confidential. All submissions will be treated confidentially and appropriate measures will be taken to protect your privacy.

Our reporting to the Department will not attribute information provided in submissions to individual services and the information will be presented in a way that ensures individual services cannot be identified.

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Scope of the review

Deloitte Access Economics' review focuses on Victorian Government funding for the universal kindergarten program for children in the year prior to school. Kindergarten service providers are currently funded through a range of grants and payments, including:

- Kindergarten per capita grant
- Kindergarten fee subsidy
- Kindergarten cluster management grant
- Early childhood teacher supplement
- Travel allowance
- Parental leave reimbursement
- Small rural kindergarten grants initiative

Please refer to the *Victorian kindergarten policy, procedures and funding criteria update 2010* for an overview of these funding mechanisms, available at:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/ecsmanagement/careankinder/funding/default.htm>

Other types of funding are not specifically included within the scope of the review (e.g. Early Start funding, Kindergarten Inclusion Support funding, capital grants funding and Commonwealth funding such as the Child Care Benefit).

Written input

To assist you in providing feedback, a number of key questions are outlined below. These are provided as a guide only and you are welcome to submit a response on any issues you wish to raise. Please also feel free to answer only those questions you would like to respond to.

If you would like to use this format for providing feedback, please type your responses in the spaces indicated below. Where possible, please provide no more than half a page response in relation to each question.

All feedback should be emailed to kindergartenfunding@deloitte.com.au no later than 5.00pm on Friday 30 September. Please ensure the following details are provided:

Contact name:	Click here to enter text
Contact phone number:	Click here to enter text
Organisation: <small>Please complete if this submission has been prepared on behalf of an organisation or service.</small>	Click here to enter text

Note: All submissions will be treated confidentially and appropriate measures will be taken to protect your privacy. We ask for your contact details only so we can clarify any information with you where required.

Key Questions

The questions below relate to the principles which will underpin the development of options for a new kindergarten funding model: participation and affordability; quality; certainty; simplicity and transparency; fiscal sustainability; efficiency; choice; flexibility; accountability; incentive; and neutrality.

1. Core funding for services

1.1. Overall, does Victorian Government funding provide services with the capacity to deliver high quality and affordable kindergarten programs to all children? What changes would you suggest?

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1.2. The early childhood teacher supplement provides additional funds to services that employ an early childhood teacher classified at Level 2.2 or above. Is this an effective way of meeting the cost of employing a more experienced early childhood teacher? What else should be considered?

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2. Kindergarten fee subsidy and children experiencing disadvantage

2.1 Do current funding arrangements provide appropriate support for children experiencing disadvantage?

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2.2 Is the kindergarten fee subsidy (which supports eligible children to attend a kindergarten program free of charge or at minimal cost) an effective way of making kindergarten programs more affordable? What challenges (if any) does this create?

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2.3 Is the subsidy appropriately targeted? This is, is it appropriate that eligibility is primarily based on the holding of a Health Care Card?

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2.4 Children that have approved Child Care Benefit applied to the fee paid for the time spent in the Victorian Government funded kindergarten program are not eligible for the subsidy (as is usually the case in long day care settings). What impact does this have on families and/or services?

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3. Kindergarten Cluster Management

3.1. The purpose of the kindergarten cluster management grant is to support the delivery of professionally managed kindergarten services that demonstrate leadership in governance and pedagogy. In your view, is the current grant effective in achieving this aim?

[Click here to enter text](#)

4. Access to Child Care Benefit

4.1. Do services offering a sessional kindergarten program face barriers which prevent them from moving towards a model that enables families to access Child Care Benefit? If so, please outline.

[Click here to enter text](#)

5. Long day care

5.1 Are the current funding arrangements for long day care services that offer a kindergarten program sufficient to deliver quality services? Are there any areas that could be improved?

[Click here to enter text](#)

6. Independent Schools

6.1 Are current funding arrangements for independent schools that offer a kindergarten program sufficient to deliver quality services? Are there any areas that could be improved?

[Click here to enter text](#)

7. Rural Services

7.1 Do current funding arrangements create any specific challenges for rural services (particularly small rural services)? How could these arrangements be improved?

[Click here to enter text](#)

8. Simplicity
8.1 Are current funding arrangements suitably easy to understand? How could they be improved?
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8.2 Is the level of administration required to manage the receipt of Victorian Government funding for kindergarten programs reasonable (e.g. adjustments to funding)? Are there particular areas of funding administration that are too complex and/or time consuming?
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8.3 Is it easy to tell how much funding has been provided to services for particular activities? How could this be improved? Is it easy to predict future funding and to plan ahead?
Click here to enter text

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