

# Kindergarten Cluster Management

Why become a kindergarten cluster manager?

## What is kindergarten cluster management?

Kindergarten cluster management brings together a group of community managed kindergartens under the management of a single organisation. It is a key strategy to building a stronger, responsive universal kindergarten service system. Kindergarten cluster management is actively supported, promoted and funded by the Victorian Government through the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD).



## Why become a kindergarten cluster manager?

Kindergarten cluster management is one of the platforms in early childhood education and care from which the integration of services, partnerships with communities and reform of the early childhood education and care workforce can be realised.



- Kindergarten cluster management can provide a platform for your organisation to effectively implement Early Childhood reforms, such as implementation of universal access to 15 hours of kindergarten by 2013.
- For some organisations, kindergarten cluster management will formalise an existing arrangement. Kindergarten cluster management funding provides for greater flexibility in the management of kindergarten services.
- Kindergarten cluster management provides an opportunity for your organisation to contribute to improved local planning and service delivery.

## Who can become a kindergarten cluster manager?

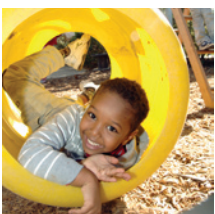
Any existing community based, not-for-profit organisation or local council can take on the role of kindergarten cluster management.

## How much funding do kindergarten cluster managers receive?

**From July 1st 2010 kindergarten cluster managers will receive an annual grant of \$7,662** for each location in their cluster. This funding is additional to per capita grants that all funded kindergarten services receive.

New kindergarten cluster management organisations receive a \$5,000 Governance Establishment Grant to support the establishment of strong internal governance practices.

Kindergarten cluster management organisations also receive a one-off payment when adding a location to a new or existing cluster arrangement. The payment is calculated at 15 per cent of the annual kindergarten cluster management grant. In 2010–11, the 15 per cent payment is \$1,149. This payment is intended to assist organisations with the cost of integrating the service into the kindergarten cluster arrangements.



Every  
child,  
every  
opportunity



## What other resources are available to support kindergarten cluster managers?

DEECD funds Kindergarten Parents Victoria (KPV) to provide enhanced support for the kindergarten cluster management initiative across the state. Primarily, KPV will provide support to Committees of Management in stand alone kindergarten services to enter kindergarten cluster management arrangements and to provide support and guidance to existing kindergarten cluster management organisations.

The Government recognises the importance of kindergarten programs and the need for effective management arrangements. Kindergarten cluster managers are supported through a range of funded initiatives. During 2010 these initiatives will include:

- **Best Practice Awards** to acknowledge excellence among existing kindergarten cluster managers.
- **Online Policy Bank** — a web based, kindergarten cluster management information portal to support strong governance.
- **Mentoring** to provide support for existing kindergarten cluster managers to improve governance.
- **Kindergarten Cluster Management Forums** to support collaboration among kindergarten cluster management organisations.

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## Kindergarten cluster managers are seeing the benefits in their community...

‘City of Wodonga sees kindergarten cluster management arrangements as an opportunity to invest further in the early years. The council saw cluster management as providing opportunities to action staff initiatives and provide more training for kindergarten staff.’

*City of Wodonga*

‘The community benefits when effective management takes place as families receive consistent and appropriate services, children at risk are identified more quickly and parents become involved when their roles are less onerous. Finally there is greater integration between local early childhood services which leads to more effective planning and delivery of quality education.’

*Early Childhood Management Services*

Why did we get involved in kindergarten cluster management?

‘In many ways we were already operating as a co-ordination and resource point for all the preschools in the Shire, not just the ones where we were already the Licensee. If they needed assistance or support, it was the Shire who would see them through. So it was just formalising and recognising an arrangement that was already largely in place.’

*Moyné Shire Council*

## Who do I contact for further information?

Contact the Regional Office of DEECD to discuss the submission process. Regional staff will also be able to inform you of the interest expressed by local kindergartens in joining a cluster management arrangement.

Regional Contact Details		
Region	Office	Contact number
Eastern Metropolitan Region	Glen Waverley	9265 2400
Northern Metropolitan Region	Fitzroy	9304 0799
Southern Metropolitan Region	Dandenong	9096 9576
Barwon South Western Region	Geelong	5225 1000
Grampians Region	Ballarat	5337 8444
Gippsland Region	Traralgon	5177 2500
Hume Region	Shepparton	5832 1500
Western Metropolitan Region	Footscray	9275 7000
Loddon Mallee Region	Bendigo	5440 3111