

KIS Program Streams

- **KIS – Disability**
- **KIS – Complex Medical Needs**
- **KIS – Specialised Equipment Trial (SET)**

The guidelines and application forms for each stream are available on the Department of Education (DE) website:

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/professionals/needs/Pages/kinderinclusion.aspx>

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/professionals/needs/Pages/Specialised-Equipment-Trial.aspx>

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:

- diagnosed disability or undergoing continuing assessment of a disability **with ongoing high support needs** (specific criteria define these high support needs)
- and/or complex medical needs that require a high level of individualised health care support without which they would be unable to access a funded kindergarten program

Specialised Equipment Trial assists kindergarten services to support ongoing inclusion of a child with a significant disability in a kindergarten program. Specialised equipment is available for loan, at no cost, to all services delivering Victorian Government funded kindergarten programs – please note the different link for this program as applications are not accepted locally – Yooralla is the administering organisation – application forms and guidelines can be found via the above link.

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

When can I apply for KIS?

The early childhood teacher is responsible for:

- Establishing and convening the Program Support Group (PSG) in consultation with the parent, guardian, or carer
- Determining if additional resources are required from the KIS program to support the child's inclusion
- Completing the application form/s and Inclusion Support Plan in consultation with the parent, guardian, or carer and with assistance from PSG members

Applications for 2024 can be received from the 1st October 2023. We encourage you to apply for children known to you as early as possible.

New applications can be submitted up until the last day of term one 2024 and will be assessed by the Regional Advisory Group (RAG).

Applications received after this date **MUST** meet extenuating circumstances and the regional **KIS Coordinator must be contacted before submission**. Applications eligible for late assessment will be assessed by the Department of Education.

The most current KIS fact sheets are an excellent support for your initial conversations with families and teaching team. Please make sure that families understand the purpose of KIS. Families need to be aware that KIS funding does not provide an Additional Assistant (KAA) for 1:1 support for their child. Our KAAs have a clear understanding that they are additional support for the group. The Pinarc KAA will be part of the teaching team that supports all children within the group. Not all children with a diagnosis will also be eligible for KIS support

Completing a KIS application

Please ensure that the **child is eligible** before you start writing an application. Refer to Department of Education (DE) website (link on page one of this fact sheet) and **read the Kindergarten Inclusion Support Guidelines before commencing an application**.

This includes checking that the child meets the disability criteria. You need to provide **ONE** of the following:

- **Current NDIS plan or documentation evidence** that the child has been assessed as eligible for NDIS and is waiting for the first plan to be developed
- **Letter from Specialist Medical Practitioner or Paediatrician or Registered Psychologist** stating that the child has a diagnosis and/or areas of developmental delay
- **Letter stating that the child will be going through an assessment for a diagnosis** and/or areas of developmental delay ***Please note that Allied Health documentary support is not evidence of meeting the disability criteria without supporting evidence from a Paediatrician, Specialist medical practitioner or registered psychologist***
- You may have children attending your group who have a disability diagnosis, but they may not fit the **additional criteria**:
 - 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 tick at least one of these boxes, however you can apply under more than one criterion

Key points to consider when writing and submitting a KIS application

Submit application/s **early where possible**. This ensures time for your application to be assessed and for KAAs to be arranged for your placement before the commencement of the kindergarten year where possible. Please apply for children having a second year or those who are known to you as soon as you can.

For children attending a funded 4-year-old kindergarten program - It is the role of the four-year-old teacher to write and submit the KIS application, with the support of the three-year-old teacher if applicable and/or families.

For children attending a funded 3-year-old kindergarten program - it is the role of the three-year-old teacher to write the application with the support from families and any other early childhood supports the child may have accessed eg childcare services

The KIS application has been developed to be a working document to not only assess eligibility for KIS but to also be a document for the 2024 teacher and teaching team to understand the child's needs, strategies for transition and support plans for the teaching teams and Parent Support Groups to be guided by.

If a child will turn 6 while attending the kindergarten program, school exemption declarations must be submitted to DE via Kindergarten Information Management System (KIMS). **KIS applications will not be assessed until school exemption is submitted to DE.**

If you are submitting a second-year application, acknowledge that there has been an KAA for 2023 and describe how this has prevented risk from occurring.

If your application is based on the **significant risk criteria**, please reflect on how you provide information of the serious risk of injury to self or others within the behaviour management plan.

Tips to writing a strong application in the behaviour management section:

1. Be very descriptive about the behaviour. The RAG needs to be able to develop a visual understanding of the child and their behaviours within the context of the kindergarten group. While you can see the impact and seriousness of a child showing at risk behaviours, the RAG cannot, so you need to provide a visual description and the impact the behaviour has on the child or children and/or adults
2. Remember the behaviour/s needs to be **'significant'**
3. Avoid using generalised terms like 'becomes frustrated' or 'overwhelmed', or 'challenging' behaviours. A lot of young children can feel this way. Be very descriptive re what this looks like and why it is significant risk of injury to self or others
4. Provide the facts, avoid 'might' or 'could' hurt others. All children might hurt someone. If you are preventing risk, then describe what risk you are preventing and how. Always provide frequencies and duration for behaviours. Avoid using often or sometimes. Your definition of 'often' will differ from others

Electronic signatures are not accepted for KIS applications. **All signatures must be provided on the applications and the front page of each report attached to the application must be initialled by a parent or carer.**

Admin Tips

Always access new application forms from the DE website to ensure you are using the most up to date form

KIS Guidelines – we recommend services download, print, read and highlight the relevant information, before completing the application. Please refer to the guidelines throughout the application process. Seek guidance and support from your manager, director, PSFO or colleagues

Ensure the completed application is provided to your **early years management for signature** if applicable – page 2. **Ensure ECT has signed - page 2**

If child is attending a funded 3-year-old kindergarten program – ensure you have indicated how many hours per week you are offering for the 3-year-old program in 2024

Ensure **parent/carer has signed** the privacy notice – page 3

Ensure all PSG group members information is **completed with signatures**

Type information into application and email to: kis@pinarc.org.au as a **PDF document** – not a word document

In email subject line please identify – ‘New application’ or ‘Appeal’ or ‘More information’ along with kindergarten name and child’s first name

Before emailing, open the PDF document/s and check all pages have been scanned facing up the right way, are in numerical order, no pages are missing, and all pages are legible

Email one attachment – Section 1, Section 2 and Supporting Evidence (collated); or Email three separate PDF attachments – Section 1, Section 2 and Supporting Evidence – **must be PDF not word documents**