



Merri-bek
City Council



Merri-bek City Council's
**Preschool Field
Officer Program**



The Preschool Field Officer Program

The program provides practical support and advice to State-funded kindergarten programs in long day care centres and sessional kindergartens, supporting the inclusion of children with additional needs.

Preschool Field Officers work within the context of the early childhood program, acting as a consultant to the early childhood teacher and educators.

The program is provided by Merri-bek City Council and funded by the Victorian Department of Education at no cost to families or kindergartens.

Preschool Field Officer Key Roles

- Observing children with diverse needs and providing specialised and practical advice
- Consultancy support to kindergarten staff with planning, implementation and review of developmentally appropriate programs for all children
- Supporting and building capacity of early childhood teachers and educators with strategies and resources to ensure inclusive practices, such as providing specialised information on children's specific additional needs and identifying appropriate training
- Supporting referrals and linkages to specialist services for children and their families
- Assisting the application process for additional funding (Kindergarten Inclusion Support Program) if required
- Providing an independent opinion as required when considering an additional year of funded kindergarten



**Referral forms
are available
from:**

[merri-bek.vic.gov.au/
children-with-additional-needs](https://merri-bek.vic.gov.au/children-with-additional-needs)

The program assists children:

- Of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin
- With a disability or developmental delay – including children with mild language delays, diverse needs and children with multiple disabilities
- With additional needs from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Who have experienced trauma
- Who have diverse learning needs
- Who are experiencing social and/or emotional difficulties at kindergarten

Other support for kindergarten teachers and educators

- Resources
- Guidance on inclusion practices
- Information on specific additional needs
- Meeting with staff
- Program support: working with services to strengthen principles and practices embedded in the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework and National Quality Standards
- Identifying appropriate professional development opportunities
- Assistance to implement recommendations
- Linking with other agencies
- Early years network meetings

The referral can be made by:

- Parent/Guardian
- Kindergarten teacher
- Paediatrician
- Allied Health (Speech, Occupational Therapy)
- Maternal and Child Health Nurse
- Inclusion Professional
- Family Support agencies

The Preschool Field Officer Program referral form is completed jointly by the professional and the parent/guardian and signed by both parties (where applicable).

For more information please refer to refer to the **Department of Education (DE)** website vic.gov.au/preschool-field-officer-program

Early Start Kindergarten (ESK)

Early Start Kindergarten (ESK) provides up to 15 hours of **FREE** kindergarten each week to eligible children.

Is my child eligible for ESK?

Your child is eligible if they are at least three years old by 30 April in the year they are enrolled to attend the kindergarten program and are:

- from a refugee or asylum seeker background, or
- identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, or
- family has had contact with child protection

Contact

Merri-bek City Council

Postal Address:

Locked Bag 10
Brunswick Victoria 3056

Phone 03 9240 1111

Email psfo@merri-bek.vic.gov.au

Web merri-bek.vic.gov.au

Child Safety Commitment Statement

Merri-bek City Council is committed to being a Child Safe Organisation and has zero tolerance for child abuse. We believe children and young people have the right to be and feel safe and that their safety and wellbeing is the responsibility of everyone. You can read more about our Child Safety Commitment Statement at merri-bek.vic.gov.au/child-safe

Speak with us in your language



Per maggiori informazioni nella tua lingua, chiama il numero **9280 1911**

如需了解更多您语言版本的信息, 请致电 **9280 0750**

Για να μάθετε περισσότερα στη γλώσσα σας, καλέστε το **9280 1912**

Para saber más en tu idioma llama al **9280 1916**

لمعرفة المزيد بلغتك، اتصل
بالرقم **9280 1913**

Để tìm hiểu thêm bằng ngôn ngữ của bạn, hãy gọi **9280 1915**

اپنی زبان میں مزید جاننے کے لیے
9280 1917 پر کال کریں۔

अपनी भाषा में अधिक जानने के लिए,
9280 1918 पर कॉल करें

तपाईंको भाषामा थप जान्नुको लागि,
9280 1910 मा कल गर्नुहोस्

To speak with us in a language not listed here,
please call **9280 1919**

Kendi dilinizde daha fazla bilgi edinmek için **9280 1914**'ü arayın

For more information visit merri-bek.vic.gov.au/your-language