Foundation (Prep) Enrolment Information Pack for Parents and Carers

Guidance for parents and carers of children starting Foundation (Prep) in a government school in 2025

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VICTORIA State Government | Department of Education

From the Department of Education

Enrolling your child into Foundation (Prep) in 2025

Dear Parents and Carers

Starting school is an exciting and important time for you and your child or children. We want to help make the enrolment process as easy as possible for you.

If your child is turning 5 years old by 30 April 2025 and is eligible to start school next year, it is time to decide where they will go to school.

In Victoria, your child has the right to attend their designated neighbourhood government school (your 'local school'). This right is set out in the Education and Training Reform Act 2006.

The department's Find my School website allows you to find your local school based on your permanent residential address. The website is the official and most up to date source of information on school zone maps.

As the Victorian Government supports school choice, you can also apply for a place at a government school that is not your local school. The school should enrol your child if there is a place available, in line with the department's Placement Policy.

The Foundation (Prep) enrolment timeline and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) in this information pack, will help you understand when and how to enrol your child into Foundation at a government primary school for the 2025 school year.

The Foundation enrolment timeline only applies to government primary school enrolment. If you wish for your child to attend a non-government school (Catholic or Independent school), please contact individual non-government schools for their enrolment processes.

What you need to do

1. Locate your local school and other nearby government schools on findmyschool.vic.gov.au.
2. Contact a government primary school to book a school tour and learn more about the school and the enrolment application process.
3. Submit an enrolment application to a government primary school **by Friday 26 July 2024**. You can use the application form in this pack to apply. The school may also provide you with a copy of the form to complete.

You will be notified of the outcome of your application **between Monday 29 July and Friday 9 August 2024**. If you receive an enrolment offer, you should accept the offer **by Friday 23 August 2024**.

More information

Contact a government primary school if you require more information about the application process or if you need help completing the form.

We wish your child well as they start their school journey and trust that primary school will be a richly rewarding experience.

Foundation (Prep) enrolment timeline 2024-25

2024 Dates	Activity
Term 2: Monday 15 April 2024 – Friday 28 June 2024	
Terms 1 and 2, 2024	Primary schools conduct tours, information sessions and other activities for families seeking Foundation (Prep) enrolment for their child for 2025.
By the start of Term 2, 2024	School zones for the 2025 school year go live on findmyschool.vic.gov.au Parents and carers should go to findmyschool.vic.gov.au to locate their designated neighbourhood school (local school) for 2025. The Enrolment Information Pack for Parents and Carers is available to download from Enrolling in Foundation (Prep): vic.gov.au/enrolling-foundation-prep.
From Week 1, Term 2 2024	Primary schools may distribute the Enrolment Information Packs to prospective families and their school community.
From Week 1, Term 2, 2024	**Enrolment applications open** – parents and carers submit their completed enrolment application to a government primary school from this date.
Term 3: Monday 15 July 2024 – Friday 20 September 2024	
By Friday 26 July 2024	**Enrolment applications due** – parents and carers submit their completed enrolment application to a government primary school by this date.
Between Monday 29 July and Friday 9 August 2024	Primary schools notify parents and carers in writing of Foundation (Prep) enrolment outcomes, as per the department's Placement Policy. This may include a letter of offer, a letter confirming enrolment, or an unsuccessful application letter. Parents and carers sent an unsuccessful application letter may start submitting written appeals to the primary school.
By Friday 23 August 2024	Parents and carers sent a letter of offer indicate acceptance of their child's place by this date.
By Friday 23 August 2024	**Closing date** for parents and carers to submit a written appeal to a primary school.
By Friday 6 September 2024	Primary schools notify all parents and carers, in writing, of the outcome of their appeal by this date.
By Friday 20 September 2024	**Closing date** for parents and carers to submit a written appeal with the relevant Regional Director, where they have been unsuccessful with their appeal to the primary school.
Term 4: Monday 7 October 2024 – Friday 20 December 2024	
During Term 4, 2024	Primary schools host transition sessions.
By Friday 1 November 2024	Regions notify all parents and carers in writing of the outcome of Regional Director appeals by this date. This only applies to appeals received by the closing date of Friday 20 September 2024.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

NOTE: Your designated neighbourhood government school is referred to as your 'local school' in this section of the document. Your local school is the school your address is in the school zone for and the school for which you have a guaranteed right to enrol. Find your local school on the Find my School website.

Foundation enrolment timeline and resources

1. What is the Victorian government school statewide enrolment timeline for Foundation (Prep)?

The first year of primary school is called Foundation or Prep. The Department of Education has released a Foundation enrolment timeline for all Victorian government primary schools to follow (see page 4). The timeline will help you understand when and how to enrol your child into Foundation at a government primary school for the 2025 school year.

2. When should I enrol my child for Foundation?

Your child must be 5 years old by 30 April in the year that they start school.

Schooling is compulsory for children who have turned 6 years old.

To enrol your child in a Victorian government primary school for the 2025 school year, submit an enrolment application to the school by 26 July 2024.

3. How do I enrol my child in their first year of primary school?

Take these steps to enrol your child in their first year of primary school:

1. Find your local school on the Find my School website findmyschool.vic.gov.au (see question 12).
2. Contact a government primary school to book a school tour or to learn more about the school and the enrolment application process.
3. Submit an enrolment application for Foundation **by Friday 26 July 2024**.
4. You will be notified of the outcome of your application **between Monday 29 July and Friday 9 August 2024**. If you receive an enrolment offer, you should accept the offer **by Friday 23 August 2024** (see question 7).
5. Take part in information and transition sessions **during Term 4 2024**.
6. Your child will start Foundation from **Wednesday 29 January 2025**.

4. How do I submit an application?

Complete the application form supplied in this pack and submit the form to the school by Friday 26 July 2024.

You may submit a completed application form to more than one school.

5. What happens if I miss the enrolment timeframes?

You can apply to enrol your child into Foundation for the 2025 school year at any time from Term 2, 2024.

It is important to follow the statewide timeline to enrol your child in Foundation. The timeline allows schools to plan their classes, staffing and transition activities to ensure your child has the best start to school.

While you are asked to apply by Friday 26 July 2024, applications after this date will still be accepted from those families who miss enrolment timelines, move permanent residence or newly arrive to Victoria. Applications submitted after 26 July 2024 will be processed by the school as they are received, in accordance with the department's Placement Policy.

6. Who do I contact for help or more information?

The Enrolment Officer or Principal of the primary school you want to apply to can help you with any questions you may have about the enrolment process.

Enrolment offers

7. How do I accept my child's Foundation enrolment offer?

Schools will send offers between Monday 29 July 2024 and Friday 9 August 2024. The letter will include instructions on how to accept your child's offer.

If you receive multiple offers, you should only accept one and then contact those schools that your child will not be attending to let them know you will not be accepting the offer. This is an important step as it impacts schools' staffing, planning and transition activities.

8. What happens if I receive a letter saying my application was unsuccessful?

Your unsuccessful letter will include the next steps, including contacting your local school or nearby government schools to start the enrolment process. You can also appeal the decision (see questions 26-28).

9. What happens if our residential address details change after my child's Foundation enrolment has been accepted?

You must contact the primary school that offered your child a place as soon as possible to inform them of your updated address.

If your new address is out of zone, the offer may be formally withdrawn. In this instance, you will need to contact your new local school or other government schools to seek enrolment.

Designated neighbourhood schools and school zones

10. What is a designated neighbourhood school (referred to as your local school)?

Your local school is generally the government school closest to your child's permanent residential address.

For children residing in metropolitan Melbourne, Ballarat, Bendigo or Geelong, their local school is usually the nearest government school in a straight line from their permanent address. If you live in another area, it is usually the nearest school by the shortest practical route by road.

For more information, please visit: vic.gov.au/school-zones

11. Is my child guaranteed a place at their local school?

Yes, children of compulsory school age are guaranteed the right to enrol at their local school.

12. How can I find my local primary school and other schools in my area?

Find your local school, and other schools in your area, on the Find my School website by following the steps below.

1. Enter findmyschool.vic.gov.au into your browser
2. Enter your address under 'Enter your address to get started'
3. Select 2025 under 'Enrolment year'
4. Select Primary under 'School type'

The map will then show your address, your local school, and on the left the contact details for the school. If you scroll down, it will also show you the five closest schools to your address.

You can also search by school name under 'Search for school'.

To start a new search, simply replace the address or school name.

13. My property sits across two or more school zones. Which is my local school?

Your child has a right to attend any of those schools as your local school.

14. If my child has two permanent addresses, how is their local school decided?

If your child resides at multiple addresses, their 'permanent residence' is the address at which they spend most of their weekdays.

If your child spends the same amount of time at two addresses, both addresses are considered their permanent residence. They can enrol in either one of the local schools.

For more information and help to determine your address for enrolment, please visit: vic.gov.au/how-choose-school-and-enrol

15. Can my child apply to a government primary school that is not our local school?

Yes, you can apply to schools other than your local school. The school should enrol your child if there is a place available, in line with the Placement Policy (see question 17).

Children are not guaranteed a place at a school that is not their local school.

16. What address do I put down if I have bought or am building a property at a different address to my child's current address?

Complete the form with your **current** address. Once you have moved into your new property, you are entitled to enrol at your new local school, subject to verification of permanent residence.

For more information about determining permanent residence, please see: vic.gov.au/how-choose-school-and-enrol

The department's Placement Policy

17. What is the department's Placement Policy and priority order of placement?

The Placement Policy is an important tool that schools use to manage enrolments. It:

- sets out the legal right for students to enrol at their local school
- provides schools guidance on how to prioritise students when they have limited places available (the priority order of placement).

The priority order of placement only applies where parents and carers are seeking enrolment in a school other than their child's local school, and where that school does not have sufficient accommodation to offer places to all who apply for entry.

In exceptional circumstances, a child may be enrolled in a school based on compassionate grounds. This is an overarching consideration and does not form part of the priority order of placement.

For more information, refer to: vic.gov.au/how-choose-school-and-enrol

18. How are applications from outside the school zone prioritised?

Where schools cannot offer a place to all children who live outside their school zone, schools will prioritise out-of-zone applications in the following order:

1. students with a sibling at the same permanent address who are attending the school at the same time
2. all other students in order of closeness of their home to the school.

In exceptional circumstances, a child may be enrolled in a school based on compassionate grounds. Compassionate grounds is an overarching consideration and does not form part of the priority order of placement.

For more information regarding the Placement Policy, please refer to the Enrolment FAQs for parents and carers available at vic.gov.au/school-zones

19. I can see that siblings are prioritised for enrolment. How is a sibling defined?

The definition of a sibling reflects modern family living arrangements. It includes, but is not limited to:

- both younger and older siblings
- step-siblings residing together at the same permanent address
- students residing together at the same permanent address as part of statutory out-of-home care arrangements, including foster care, kinship care and permanent care
- students permanently residing together in the one residence as part of multiple family cohabitation.

To enrol on sibling grounds, the siblings should be residing together at the same permanent address and must be attending the school at the same time.

Enrolling in a primary school

20. What is the difference between an application form and an enrolment form?

The application form is a short, expression of interest form. It only seeks information related to enrolment eligibility and supports schools to make enrolment offers in line with the Placement Policy. A school may request that you provide proof of your address as part of your application.

The enrolment form requires additional personal and health information to finalise your child's enrolment for Foundation in the 2025 school year. You will need to supply an Immunisation History Statement and any relevant supporting documentation such as medical plans or court orders. The enrolling school must also sight evidence of your child's name and date of birth (e.g., birth certificate).

It is recommended that you only complete an enrolment form for the school your child will attend. By completing an enrolment form, you are indicating your acceptance of a place for your child at that school (subject to any further checks or information required by the school).

21. Who may sign the application and enrolment forms?

Where practical, all parents and carers with parental responsibility for a child should sign the application form and enrolment form.

For the purposes of these forms, a parent and carer includes:

- the parents as set out on the child's birth certificate or as described in a court order
- an informal carer, with a statutory declaration.

Where it is not possible for parents and carers to sign the same form, you should communicate this to the school who will allow separate forms to be completed by each parent and carer.

22. Where can I find schools in my area?

To find a full list of schools in Victoria, please see:

- Victorian government schools: findmyschool.vic.gov.au
- Catholic schools: cecv.catholic.edu.au/School-Directory-Search
- Independent schools: is.vic.edu.au/independent-schools/

23. How do I register my child for home schooling in 2025?

For information on home schooling please visit the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) website at: vrqa.vic.gov.au/home/Pages/homeeducation.aspx

24. Where can I find information about enrolment for International students?

If you are a parent or carer of a child holding a fee-liable visa (for example a dependent student visa, visitor or tourist visa, or a bridging visa in some instances) you should apply for enrolment in a government school at study.vic.gov.au or apply directly to non-government (Catholic or Independent) schools. International students holding fee-exempt visas should submit the application form to a government school directly.

If you have any further questions regarding international student enrolments, or wish to confirm whether your child's visa is fee-liable or fee-exempt, you can find further information at study.vic.gov.au, or can contact the International Education Division directly at international@education.vic.gov.au.

25. My child has a disability. How can I ensure their primary school will support them?

Every Victorian government school has established programs and practices to support a wide variety of student needs, including students with disability and additional needs. Schools must make reasonable adjustments to ensure students with disability have the same learning opportunities as children without disability.

More information about disability support at school and disability rights and adjustments is available on the department's website: vic.gov.au/disability-and-inclusive-education

Appeals

26. How do I make an appeal about my child's unsuccessful Foundation enrolment for 2025?

In the first instance, parents and carers should lodge a written appeal with the primary school who has issued the unsuccessful application letter. Accompanied with this letter should be the **Appeal Form** which provides additional information on appeals and a detailed timeline. If this appeals form is not included with your letter, please request this from the primary school.

This appeals form should be lodged with the primary school by **Friday 23 August 2024**.

It will be considered by the school's enrolment committee and/or Principal and you will receive written notification of the outcome by **Friday 6 September 2024.**

27. What happens if my appeal to the primary school is not successful?

Your unsuccessful appeals letter from the school will outline the next steps in detail.

If you are not satisfied that the school has correctly applied the Placement Policy or adequately considered your circumstances in the assessment of your appeal, you may lodge a further written appeal to the relevant Department of Education Regional Director by **Friday 20 September 2024.**

You should re-use the Appeal Form from your school-level appeal for this stage. Appeals to the Regional Director will not be considered if you have not appealed to the primary school in the first instance.

It is still important you contact your local school, or another school that is able to accept your enrolment, during the appeals process. This will ensure that your child does not miss out on any important transition activities.

Appeals to the Regional Director are considered by a panel of senior department staff that assess the appeal against the Placement Policy. This panel provides a recommendation to the relevant Regional Director who will notify you of the final decision by **Friday 1 November 2024.** This outcome **concludes** the appeal process.

28. Can I lodge an appeal to the relevant Regional Director after the closing date of Friday 20 September 2024?

This date is set to ensure all children can participate in transition activities, which is a vital step in a child's successful start to school.

Any appeals received after this date will only be considered if the relevant Regional Director considers there to be exceptional circumstances. If you wish to lodge an appeal after the closing date, you should contact your regional office for advice.

29. How do I find the contact details of my regional office?

You can find the regional office contact details and locations on the department's website, here: vic.gov.au/office-locations-department-education

Useful links

Please find some useful links below that may be helpful for you as your child starts primary school in 2025:

Find my School – findmyschool.vic.gov.au

Information on school zones – vic.gov.au/school-zones

Enrolling in Foundation (Prep) – vic.gov.au/enrolling-foundation-prep

Enrolling in school – vic.gov.au/how-choose-school-and-enrol

Disability and inclusive education – vic.gov.au/disability-and-inclusive-education

Regional office contacts – vic.gov.au/office-locations-department-education-and-training

Application to Enrol in a Victorian Government School

Enter school name here

This form has been designed to support students to apply for a place at a Victorian Government School. If a student is offered a place at a school, a School Enrolment Form, with attached supporting documentation, may need to be completed to finalise enrolment.

Your child's right to enrolment

Your child is guaranteed a place at the school they are zoned for, as shown on the Find My School website.

This means that if your child lives within the school zone, they must be offered a place when seeking enrolment. To find the school you are zoned for (referred to as your local school) visit www.findmyschool.vic.gov.au

Going to a school outside your zone

You have the choice to seek enrolment at a school that is not your local school. Your child should be offered a place if the school has sufficient accommodation.

If the school has limited accommodation, applications are considered using the priority order of placement. The priority order of placement prioritises out-of-zone siblings and then students in order of closeness of their home to the school.

In exceptional circumstances, a student may be enrolled in a school based on compassionate grounds. Family and student privacy will be maintained when considering applications on compassionate grounds.

To find out more, visit www.vic.gov.au/how-choose-school-and-enrol

Student tests and interviews

Enrolment offers are not dependent on a satisfactory report or interview. Student tests or interviews may only occur after an enrolment offer has been accepted.

Students with disability

Every student has the right to attend their local school. Students with disability have the same right to enrol in their local school as students without disability.

All schools must make reasonable adjustments so that students with disability can learn and achieve on the same basis as students without disability.

You also have the option to seek enrolment for your child at a government specialist school for students with disability.

International students

Fee-paying international students should apply through the Victorian Student Program at www.study.vic.gov.au

STUDENT DETAILS

Surname:	
First Given Name:	
Second Given Name: *(if applicable)*	
Preferred First Name: *(if applicable)*	
Date of Birth: *(dd-mm-yyyy)*	**Gender:** ☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Self described:_____

Which year are you seeking to enrol this student?

☐ Foundation(Prep) ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10 ☐ 11 ☐ 12 ☐ Ungraded

Intended start date:	
☐ Day 1, Term 1	☐ Other (dd-mm-yyyy): _____ / _____ / _____

Are you seeking to enrol the student at this school full-time?	☐ Yes (move to next section)	☐ No			
If No, how many days a week would the student be attending this school?					
If No, provide a reason why you are seeking part-time enrolment:					
Other school name:		***Days / week:***		***Has enrolment been accepted?***	☐ Yes ☐ No
Other school name:		***Days / week:***		***Has enrolment been accepted?***	☐ Yes ☐ No

Do you live in the school's zone? *Go to www.findmyschool.vic.gov.au to find your local school*	☐ Yes	☐ No
If this school has multiple campuses, what campus is the student applying for?		

Student's Permanent Residence

Your child's permanent residence is the address where they spend the majority of their days during the school week. If they spend an equal amount of time at two addresses, both are considered their permanent address and your child will be entitled to enrol in the designated neighbourhood school for either address. **Please provide proof of permanent residence to the school as part of your application. The school will let you know what proof is required**. For more information, please refer to the Residential Address Checklist, available at: www.vic.gov.au/how-choose-school-and-enrol. When assessing your application, the school may make enquiries to verify the information provided, such as checking the electoral roll at an Australian Electoral Commission office or the Victorian Electoral Commission head office; checking with a real estate agent; or checking whether there are any regulations/codes limiting the occupancy, for example if a rental property is a studio or one bedroom unit.

No. & Street Address:			
Suburb:			
State:		**Postcode:**	
How often does this student live at this address?			
☐ Always	☐ Mostly	☐ Balanced (50%)	
If the student lives at another address during the school week, please provide further details including the address, who they reside with, and how many days a week the student lives there:			

Siblings

A sibling is defined broadly and can include step-siblings and students residing together as part of a multiple family cohabitation or out-of-home-care arrangements, including foster care, kinship care and permanent care.

Does the student have any siblings at this school?		☐ Yes	☐ No *(move to next section)*	
Name		**Current Year Level**	**Reside at same residential address as the student**	
1			☐ Yes ☐ No	☐ Sometimes
2			☐ Yes ☐ No	☐ Sometimes
3			☐ Yes ☐ No	☐ Sometimes
4			☐ Yes ☐ No	☐ Sometimes

PARENT/CARER DETAILS

This form should be completed by parents or carers who are responsible for enrolling their child in school. It is the responsibility of the person completing this form to consult with all other adults that need to be involved in the enrolment process. If required information is not provided or there is a dispute between parents about a child's enrolment, the enrolling principal is required to consider the student's education and wellbeing when deciding whether to defer or accept the enrolment.

Enrolling Adult 1

Surname:				
First Given Name:				
Contact Mobile Number:				
Contact Home Phone:				
Contact Email Address:				
Correspondence Address:				
Student lives with Adult 1:	☐ Always	☐ Mostly	☐ Balanced(50%)	☐ Occasionally
Adult 1 Relationship to Student:	☐ Parent ☐ Relative	☐ Step Parent ☐ Friend	☐ Foster Parent ☐ Self	☐ Host Family ☐ Other: _____

Enrolling Adult 2

Surname:					
First Given Name:					
Contact Mobile Number:					
Contact Home Phone:					
Contact Email Address:					
Correspondence Address:					
Student lives with Adult 2:	☐ Always	☐ Mostly	☐ Balanced(50%)	☐ Occasionally	☐ Never
Adult 2 Relationship to Student:	☐ Parent ☐ Relative	☐ Step Parent ☐ Friend	☐ Foster Parent ☐ Self	☐ Host Family ☐ Other:_____	

Declaration

Information is collected and handled in accordance with the Schools' Privacy Policy, available here: www.education.vic.gov.au/Pages/schoolsprivacypolicy.aspx.

Please also refer to the Victorian Government School Privacy Collection Notice for details on handling of personal and health information in schools: www.education.vic.gov.au/Pages/Schools'-Privacy-Collection-Notice.aspx

I/We confirm that:

- **I am/We are the person/people named as completing this form.**
- **The information in this form is true and correct.**
- **I/We agree to authorise this form by electronic means with an electronic signature.**

Signature of Enrolling Adult: Type name here _____ Date: _____ / _____ / _____

Signature of Enrolling Adult (if applicable): Type name here _____ Date: _____ / _____ / _____