

Media Release

The Hon Ingrid Stitt MP

Minister for Early Childhood & Pre-Prep

Minister for Environment



Tuesday, 4 April 2023

EARLY CHILDHOOD INFRASTRUCTURE PROVIDING THE BEST START

The Andrews Labor Government is giving Victorian families better access to Kinder and Pre-Prep, with planning underway to deliver infrastructure right across the state to support the *Best Start, Best Life* reforms.

Minister for Early Childhood and Pre-Prep Ingrid Stitt today announced the \$5.2 million Kindergarten Infrastructure and Services Support Grants program, which will support LGAs across the state to identify when and where investment in early childhood infrastructure is required – ensuring more families can access services near them.

Crucial data is already shared across state and local government through the Kindergarten Infrastructure and Services Plan (KISP), highlighting local needs and guiding delivery of educational infrastructure.

KISPs have been agreed with all local governments and are publicly available. Currently, these plans estimate the new kindergarten places required to deliver Three-Year Old Kindergarten, but now need to be updated to incorporate Pre-Prep.

These new grants will further assist local governments to undertake the necessary work to ensure KISPs remain a current and key planning document for the whole early childhood sector, ensuring more facilities are delivered to communities where and when they need them.

The grants will be provided in three tiers to align with broadly projected demand for Pre-Prep: Growth local government authorities (\$105,000), Metropolitan, Interface and Regional City local government authorities (\$82,000) and Rural local government authorities (\$42,000).

The Labor Government's \$14 billion *Best Start, Best Life* has made kinder free across Victoria from this year, delivering a new year of universal Pre-Prep for 4-year-olds and from 2025 establishing 50 government-operated, affordable early learning centres.

Four-Year-Old Kindergarten will gradually transition to Pre-Prep over the next decade and children across Victoria will have access to 1,800 hours of funded kindergarten, comprising 600 hours of Three-Year-Old Kindergarten and 1,200 hours of Pre-Prep.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Early Childhood and Pre-Prep Ingrid Stitt

"Ensuring the best start for the littlest Victorians means they have better educational outcomes and opportunities later in life, that's why we've made the biggest reforms to early education in a generation – to deliver just that."

"The Best Start, Best Life reforms will change the face of early childhood education in Victoria and we're backing our local government partners in planning for that reform and meeting future demand."