

Flying Start for kids



Fact sheet for families and communities

Preschool for 3-year-olds

Here's what it means for your child

The Government of South Australia is rolling out **3-year-old preschool** from 2026, to give every child a flying start in life. This means that all 3-year-old children across the state will have access to **15 hours per week of teacher-led preschool by 2032.**

How it works

If your child attends a long day care that has partnered with the government to deliver 3-year-old preschool, they will receive their program there.

If your child is not enrolled in a long day care that has partnered with the government to deliver 3-year-old preschool, you may be able to attend a government or non-government preschool or long day care service offering this program.

More places will become available as the reform rolls out.

Why it matters for your child

More than 90% of a child's brain development occurs before the age of 5. These early years are the perfect time to build a child's confidence, curiosity and important life skills.

What to expect from 3-year-old preschool

The new teacher-led 3-year-old preschool program is designed around play-based learning.

This may include:

- fun, purposeful activities that encourage social skills, exploration, and curiosity
- opportunities for child-led discovery that help children become confident communicators and involved learners
- a safe and supportive environment for developing self-identity and emotional resilience
- outdoor play to support health, wellbeing and exploration
- celebrating Aboriginal and other cultures.





Access to quality teachers and educators

A quality early childhood education starts with great teachers and educators. This is why the government is investing **\$118 million** to support quality teaching and learning, alongside the critical work of the Education Standards Board.

This investment will provide teachers more planning time, professional learning, and support to lift the quality of all services.

Partnering 3-year-old preschool services will also have access to Preschool Boost funding, supporting quality, evidence-informed programs and resources that best support the needs of children and families at their services.

Overview of the 3-year-old preschool roll-out

From 2026 to 2032

Where

Universal 3-year-old preschool will roll out in stages from 2026, starting with partnering long day care services across the state, and government and other sessional preschools in regional areas.

Hours

3-year-old preschool will offer anywhere from 6 to up to 15 hours a week* from 2026, depending on preschool capacity (including staffing and infrastructure).

Program

Quality, teacher-led, play-based and age-appropriate learning.

Cost

Fees will be individually set by the provider.
If you access preschool through a partnering long day care preschool program, you can claim the Commonwealth Childcare Subsidy (CCS).**

From 2032 and beyond

3-year-old preschool will be available across South Australia for all families.

15 hours a week*, 600 hours per year.

Quality, teacher-led, play-based and age-appropriate learning.

Fees will be individually set by the provider.
If you access preschool through a partnering long day care preschool program, you can claim the Commonwealth Childcare Subsidy (CCS).**

*Up to 30 hours will be available for children who need it the most.

**Eligibility for the childcare subsidy is determined by Commonwealth policy.



Learn more about the roll-out of 3-year-old preschool on the Office for Early Childhood Development website.

Visit earlychildhood.sa.gov.au



Government of South Australia

