

EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES

Background

HPSD provides Early Childhood Services (ECS) to support children in reaching emotional, social, intellectual and physical development milestones in inclusive, literacy rich, and play-based environments. ECS is a voluntary program designed to prepare children for transition to Grade 1.

Definitions

Early Childhood Programs: are those programs that support the developmental needs of children before they enter grade one. Young children participate as active partners in learning, build a set of shared experiences and develop knowledge, skills and attitudes that prepare them for subsequent learning. Early Childhood Programs may provide additional support for children with identified needs to assist their access to learning by removing barriers.

Kindergarten: one (1) component of the total Early Childhood Programs as funded by Alberta Education and referring to the year immediately prior to grade one.

Procedures

1. Early Education Programs

- 1.1. Each child accessing Early Childhood Programming will have developmentally appropriate programs with supports and services as needed.
- 1.2. A child, identified with a severe disability or moderate language delay, must be at least two (2) years and eight (8) months of age to access Early Childhood Programming.
 - 1.2.1. Children who meet criteria for Program Unit Funding must enter ECS at minimum age of 2 years 8 months to be eligible for the maximum two years of funding.
- 1.3. A child, identified with mild/moderate disability(s) or delay(s), must be at least three (3) years and eight (8) months of age to access Early Childhood Programming.
- 1.4. The child's individual program plan will be developed collaboratively, engaging parents in a meaningful way.
- 1.5. Current provincial and divisional regulations with respect to safety standards, programs, policies, teachers, records, finance, and insurance will be strictly maintained.

2. Kindergarten Programs

- 2.1. Any child being enrolled in a Kindergarten program must have attained the age of five (5) years, on or before the last day of December of the school year in which the child is enrolled.
 - 2.2. HPSP shall provide a Kindergarten program designed to enhance children's abilities and skills, and address their developmental needs.
 - 2.3. Kindergarten programs shall utilize an integrated, play-based approach to learning, which involves parents, staff and community.
 - 2.4. The program shall be consistent with the *Kindergarten Program Statement* prescribed by Alberta Education.
3. Evaluations of child participation in the ECS program shall address the social, emotional, physical, and intellectual growth of each child. Progress reports will be made periodically to the parent.
 4. The ECS/Kindergarten teacher shall be responsible for assessing each child for readiness into the next program or grade. If, in the opinion of the teacher, the child is deemed not to be ready for entry into the next program or grade level, the protocols in Administrative Procedure 360 – Curriculum Planning, Assessment, and Reporting shall be followed.
 5. The programs for children with special needs, including those who have severe disabilities, shall be organized in accordance with Administrative Procedure 212 – Inclusive Education.

References

Education Act Sections 3, 21, 32, 41, 52, 53, 197, 222

Early Childhood Regulation (87/2019)

Early Childhood Services Policy 1.1.3

Standards for the Provision of Early Childhood Special Education

Cross Reference

[Administrative Procedure 212 – Inclusive Education](#)

[Administrative Procedure 301 – Entrance Age](#)

[Administrative Procedure 360 – Curriculum Planning, Assessment, and Reporting](#)