



# Inquiry into Annual and Financial Reports 2023–2024

## Answer to question on notice

---

Asked by: Ms Chiaka Barry MLA

Addressed to: Minister for Children, Youth and Families

Redirected to: Minister for Education and Early Childhood

Reference: Education Directorate

Hearing: 18 February 2025

In relation to: Three-year-old preschool initiative

Question received: 20/02/2025

Answer Due: 28/02/25

I refer to the three-year-old preschool initiative and note the quota was 500 places, with 100 reserved for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

Can you advise in relation to both the total quota Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander quota:

- a) Were all places filled in the 2024 school year?
- b) Have all places been filled for the 2025 school year?
- c) How many applications were made for positions?
- d) If more applications were received than places available, how were placements prioritised?

Are there any impediments Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to access this initiative?

**Ms Yvette Berry MLA:** The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

The 100 places for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are available across 5 Koori Preschool sites and are in addition to the 500 places available to children experiencing vulnerability or disadvantage provided through the 3 year-old initiative.

- a) In 2024, 373 children participated in the 3 year-old initiative. This includes 40 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

In 2024, 49 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 3 year-old children were enrolled at a Koori Preschool.

- b) As of 19 February 2025, 175 priority children were accessing the 3 year-old initiative. This includes 20 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

2025 Enrolment data for Koori Preschools is not currently available as the 2025 Census collection is not yet complete.

Enrolments in Koori Preschool and the 3 year-old initiative are accepted throughout the school year. It is possible for children participating in the 3 year-old initiative to engage across more than one calendar year.

- c) Applications for the 3 year-old initiative are made through a warm referral model. In 2024, 334 referrals were received. As of 24 February 2025, 48 referrals have been received. All Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children referred into the initiative were provided a placement in 2024 and 2025.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families enrol in Koori Preschool via the Online Enrolment Form. Eligible enrolments for Koori Preschool are accepted by the respective School based on enrolment capacity.

- d) Enrolments in 2024 and 2025 did not exceed the number of available places for both Koori Preschool and the 3 year-old initiative.

The potential barriers to accessing Koori Preschool include proximity to the child's residence and transport limitations of the family. Families select which Koori Preschool site they would like to attend based on their family's circumstances (Priority Enrolment Areas do not apply).

An offer of place at a service participating in the 3 year-old initiative is developed in collaboration with the family and takes proximity and transport limitations into consideration.

Additionally Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 3 year-old children may also access preschool at one of 143 partnering early childhood services across the ACT as part of the ACT Government's Three Year Old Preschool Program.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Social Policy

Signature:

By the Minister for Education and Early Childhood, Ms Yvette Berry MLA

Date:

27/02/25