

Sooner or Later: School starting age in Fawkner



A research project: Extent and implications of early school starting age in Fawkner

Objectives:

- 1 Determine the extent of early starting age in Fawkner
- 2 Recognise community and stakeholder perspectives on school starting age

Key findings

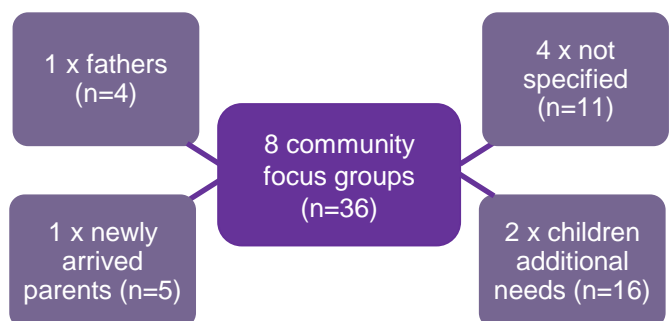
- Students start school at a statistically significant earlier age in Fawkner than the Victorian and Moreland average
- Early school starting age is associated with:
 - Language Other Than English (LOTE) background
 - Additional needs

Data analysis

Enrolment data
4/5 schools
(n=182)

Consultation

Informal service
consultation
(n=20+)



Influential factors

- Parents are motivated to make the best decisions about school readiness based on their existing understanding of education and child development, which may be influenced by their country of origin, with different social norms and systems to Australia
- Kindergartens and maternal and child health services are important sources of understanding about school readiness
- Parents desire additional support in understanding school readiness and school systems in the Victorian context
- Concern about child development prompts some families to consider an earlier, rather than later, start to school
- Many carers of children with additional needs do not access carer support services

Areas of recommendations

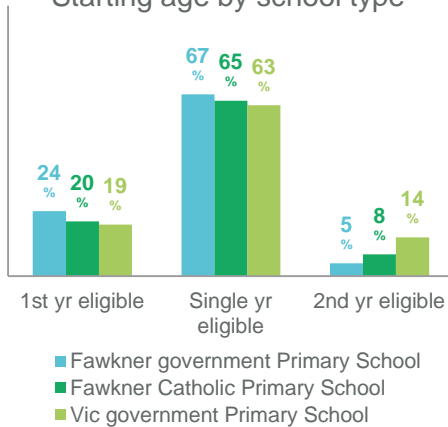


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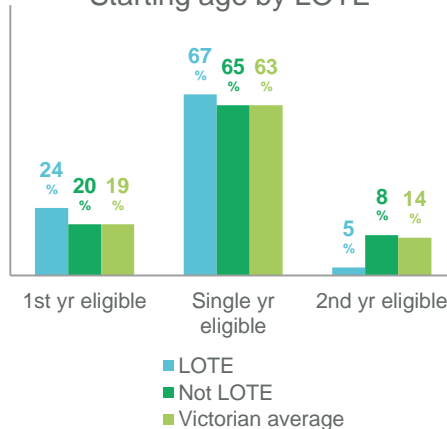


Findings

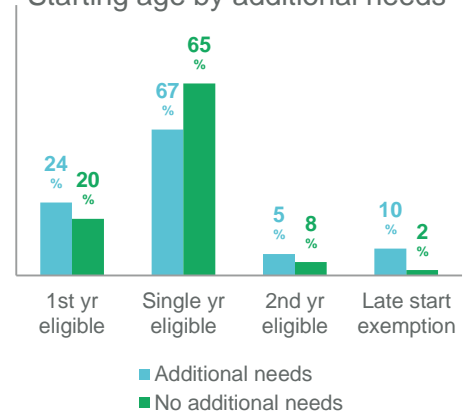
Starting age by school type



Starting age by LOTE



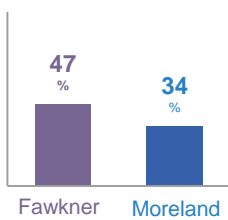
Starting age by additional needs



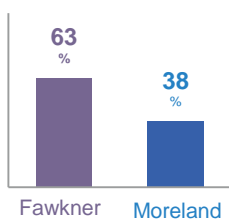
Note: Results that do not add to 100% are due to exemptions

Context

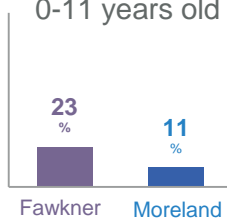
Overseas born



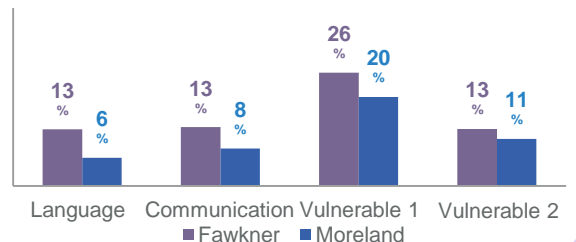
LOTE background



Population growth
0-11 years old



2018 AEDC results



Definitions:

Early school starting age: The Victorian Government mandates a compulsory school starting age. To start primary school children need to turn five years old by 30 April in the year that they start school. Children must also be at school in the year that they turn six years of age. Therefore, this means that children can start school as young as 4 years and 9 months, up to age 6. For children born between January and April, parents make the choice for their child to start school the year they turn 5 or the year they turn 6.

First year eligible: start age 4 or 5, birthday 1 Jan –30 April (year they turn 5)

Single year eligible: start age 5, birthday 1 May –30 Dec (year they turn 6)

Second year eligible: start age 5 or 6, birthday 1 Jan – 30 April (year they turn 6)

Late start exemption: start age 6, birthday after 1 May (year they turn 7)

Language Other Than English (LOTE) background: language spoken at home other than English, or English spoken at home by child with at least one parent speaking a language other than English at home.

Additional needs: a disability, additional need or developmental delay such as social and emotional, cognitive, speech impairment, physical impairment.