

Starting Kindergarten early. Frequently asked questions on derogation.



I am sure my child is ready to start kindergarten next year. But, my child will not be 5 years old by September 30. Can an exception be made?

Yes, you can apply for a derogation if your child:

- is very advanced in his or her development
- will be 5 years old by December 31

What is a derogation?

A derogation means that you are requesting the school board to exceptionally authorize your child to start kindergarten before they reach the required age of 5 years old.

To obtain a derogation for your child, you must follow this procedure:

- 1** Submit a request in writing to your school principal before April 15. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this deadline has been extended to May 22, 2020.
- 2** Your request must explain your child's strengths and how not being able to attend kindergarten would be damaging to your child.
- 3** Make sure your child is available to complete an in-person test. Generally, the test is administered between April 15 and May 15. The exact date will be communicated to you by the school principal. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this deadline has been extended to May 22, 2020. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and travel ban currently in place, your child can only be tested if there is a local resource available. As of May 13, 2020, derogation tests can only be offered in four communities: Inukjuak, Kangiqsualujjuaq, Kuujjuaq

and Salluit. Depending on when the travel ban is lifted, the school board will be looking at options to offer derogation tests before the start of the next school year.

4 Following the test, you should receive a response in writing within a month, from the Complementary and Compassionate Services department based in Kuujuaq.

What is the role of the school principal in this process?

The school principal is responsible for receiving requests and forwarding them to Complementary and Compassionate Services.

What happens after I submit my derogation request to the school?

If you apply for a derogation for your child, the school will acknowledge that your request was received (in writing or verbally). The next step will be for your child to take an in-person test.

What is the purpose of the derogation test?

The objective of this test is to determine if your child is ready to attend school. This is done by assessing your child in 4 developmental areas:

1. Language and speech: the way he or she speaks, what he or she can understand, etc.
2. Non-verbal reasoning: his or her ability to think, solve problems, etc.
3. Motor skills: the way they handle a pencil and scissors, move etc.
4. Socio-emotional development: his or her ability to do things independently, maturity level, attention, behaviour, ability to play well with others etc.

Which children are eligible to apply and be tested for derogation?

Children turning 5 between October 1 and December 31 can be tested for a derogation. If your child is turning 5 after December 31, you will be able to register your child for kindergarten the following year only.

Will my child be assessed in Inuktitut?

Your child will be tested in his or her mother tongue (Inuktitut, French or English).





Can a parent take part in the test?

A parent cannot be present in the room during the assessment.

Who is responsible for testing my child if I apply for derogation?

The test is conducted at the school, by the Special Education Teacher. If a local Special Education Teacher is not available, a Complementary and Compassionate Services pedagogical counsellor will complete the assessment.

When will my child be tested if I request a derogation?

Typically, the assessment happens between April 15 and May 15. This year, the deadline has been extended to May 22, 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. You need to make sure your child will be available to take the test in person.

Where is the test administered?

The test is administered at the school.

Can I prepare my child for this test?

No, there is no preparation required before the test.

What happens after the test?

Complementary and Compassionate Services will analyze the test results.

If your child passes, the derogation request will be approved. Your child will start kindergarten at the beginning of the following school year.

If your child does not pass the test, the derogation request will be rejected. Your child will have to wait another school year to start kindergarten.

In both cases, you will be informed in writing.

How does the school board make its final decision?

The approval process is strictly based on the results of your child's test. The results are analyzed by the Complementary and Compassionate Services department, and not by the school.

What are the remedies available to appeal this administrative decision?

If you don't agree with the decision, you can appeal to the Ministry of Education. You can also contact Complementary and Compassionate Services by email (cc.services@kativik.qc.ca) or by phone at 1-866-964-1136, ext. 230 to get more information about the outcome of your derogation request.

With the COVID-19 pandemic, can I still ask for a derogation and will my child be tested?

The deadline to submit a derogation request this year is May 22, 2020. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and travel ban currently in place, your child can only be tested if there is a local resource available. As of May 13, 2020, derogation tests can only be offered in four communities: Inukjuak, Kangiqsualujjuaq, Kuujjuaq and Salluit. Depending on when the travel ban is lifted, the school board will be looking at options to offer derogation tests before the start of the next school year.

How can my child benefit from starting kindergarten at 4 years old?

Research has found that an early kindergarten start can benefit children that are exceptionally advanced in all aspects of their socio-emotional, communication, physical, and cognitive development. These children are also referred to as "gifted children". There are not many of them. The kindergarten derogation is an exceptional measure put in place to allow gifted students to continue their development with the right support.

What are the downsides to my child starting kindergarten early?

If your child is not ready, an early kindergarten start can cause damage to their socio-emotional, communication, physical and cognitive development. They risk repeating grades, which can lead to self-esteem issues.

Who can I contact for more information?

Complementary and Compassionate Services
1-866-964-1136, ext. 230
cc.services@kativik.qc.ca

