

Starting Kindergarten early. When should parents request a **derogation** for their child?



A child will normally start kindergarten when he or she is 5 years old on or before September 30.

Some parents may want their child to start kindergarten even if the child has not attained age 5 by September 30. They may feel that their child is very bright, mature and ready for school.

The Quebec government allows **children who are very advanced in their development** and have the required skills to be admitted a year early at the kindergarten level. This exceptional measure is allowed when it is **demonstrated that it is detrimental for the child NOT to attend school**. For example, if the child is exceptionally gifted, not going to school early could be harmful to its development.

To determine if a child is very bright and mature, the child must pass a **derogation test**.

To be allowed to start Kindergarten a year early, the child must be **much more advanced** than children of his or her age **in each of the following 4 developmental areas**:

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

These 4 areas of development encompass the essential skills a child needs to feel confident and succeed at school.

If a child is not ready for school when starting kindergarten, this can lead to **serious learning, behaviour and self-esteem issues.**

If you believe that your child is very bright and mature compared to children of his or her own age, you can request a derogation for your child.

Here is the procedure to follow:

1 Complete the derogation request available at your school.

2 Submit the derogation request before April 15 (May 22, 2020 this year only), to the school principal or by email to cc.services@kativik.qc.ca.

3 Make sure your child takes the assessment test that will be administered at your local school between April 15 and May 15 (May 22, 2020 this year only).

4 Due to the CODIV-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.

After your child completes the test, the results will be sent to the Complementary and Compassionate Services office in Kuujjuaq. Once a decision has been made, you will be informed of the decision by mail.

It is very important for parents to understand that when a child is not accepted to start Kindergarten early, it is not a failure.

In fact, it most likely means that your child is developing normally, and that he or she will benefit from another year at home before starting school. The school will be pleased to welcome your child for the following school year.

