

## **Bakery Hill Kindergarten Philosophy**

### **We believe.**

“Consistently warm and secure relationships are essential if children are to feel a sense of belonging, contribute to a community, be valued for their uniqueness, be respected and cared for and connected to others”

### **This requires.....**

**Time.** Allowing children long periods of uninterrupted time at play, whether amongst nature or indoors, nourishes their spirit, wellbeing and their relationships with people and the environment. It makes them physically stronger, provides opportunity for wonder and curiosity to flourish, and for their ideas to grow and deepen.

**Open ended experiences.** We are educating children for an unknown future. Arming them with the tools research tells us they require is the role of education. Thinking skills, resilience and the creativity that comes from daily immersion in **open ended experiences with time to develop and refine theories is a child’s right and need.**

**Beautiful environments.** Our extensive natural outdoor environment complete with fire pit, billabong and creek as well as trees for climbing and shade, cultivates an abiding respect for nature and our place in it. Our large light filled rooms with bay and floor to ceiling windows ensures we are warmed by the sun and that the garden, seasons and birds are ever visible to the children.

**Children’s voices.** Children have ideas and thoughts to share, theories to test and relationships to build. They have fresh ideas about the world around them because they see it through new eyes and have many ways of showing what they understand and see. We, as educators, want to listen to them, defend their right to be heard and their right to learn in a way that is meaningful for them, because they are part of the educative process.

**Spirit of place.** Whilst the chestnut trees planted many years ago and the preserved wooden furniture remind us of those who came before us at this kindergarten, the Eureka flag flying nearby on Bakery Hill tells another story about our city’s history. Through learning Wadawurrung language and connecting to knowledge and cultural practices we honour our First Nations People and enrich our own lives.

**A sustainable lifestyle.** Growing vegetables, keeping chickens, collecting their eggs, composting, harvesting rain water and living seasonal change in our outdoor environment connects us to the earth and sustainable practices.

**Community.** In keeping with tradition, the caretakers of the kindergarten are the families who attend from year to year represented by a committee. Together the families, ECKA, committee and educators work for the greater good of the children and their kindergarten. Our neighbourhood and city have riches to share on our journey of learning. Giving back to our community is important as well and money raised from egg sales is donated to “Edgars Mission Animal rescue farm”.

**Bakery Hill Kindergarten** was established in a church hall in Ballarat in 1911. It was one of the first Victorian kindergartens, a pioneer in early childhood education.

Seeking a permanent building for the children, the people of Ballarat fundraised and the current kindergarten, which was architect designed, opened debt free in 1931.

The effort and actions of that community made a strong statement about the importance of young children and their place in their city which underpins our philosophy to this day.