



ECKA acknowledges Wadawurrung and Dja Dja Wurrung as the Traditional Owners of the lands, water and resources of the countries that ECKA reside upon. We say thank you for sharing your connections and pay respects to their elders of the past, present and emerging. ECKA pays respect to the central place in education that Aboriginal cultural holds and says thank you.



Daylesford Preschool

# 2023 Handbook

*'It's time to return to childhood, to simplicity, to running and climbing and laughing in the sunshine, to experience happiness. It is time to let children be children again.'*

*L.R. Knost*



Enriching children's lives through learning

# Welcome to Daylesford Preschool

Once you walk through the gates you become a part of the wonderful world of kindergarten. Our team of educators look forward to working in partnership with you throughout the year in your child's learning and development.

This handbook provides valuable information about the preschool and it will help you prepare for this important time in your child's life.

## History

The history of the preschool dates back to 1956, when it was known as the Daylesford Free Kindergarten. However old articles show that building works had been in discussion since 1953. The kindergarten was run by a committee with Mr Bill Ogden as president and directress Mrs Joan Endacott. In 1981 the service celebrated 25 years, with current children and staff and people who were a part of the original establishment.

In 2007 the service celebrated 50 years and a dinner was held to mark the occasion at the Royal Hotel Daylesford.

The preschool has a long-standing history of being supported by its community and was committee run for many years.

In 2010 Eureka Community Kindergarten Association (ECKA) took over its management, supporting the continued upkeep of building and grounds, providing professional staff and establishing strong relationships in the community.

## Contact Information

Address: 64 Central Springs Road, Daylesford, VIC 3460  
Ph: 5348 2011                      Mobile: 0419 297 983  
Email: [daylesford.kin@kindergarten.vic.gov.au](mailto:daylesford.kin@kindergarten.vic.gov.au)



Enriching children's lives through learning

Our Preschool is proudly managed by ECKA Inc. ECKA is called the Approved Provider and is responsible for all aspects of the management of the preschool including employment of staff. Information about ECKA can be found at [www.ecka.org.au](http://www.ecka.org.au) and you will receive an ECKA policy and procedure booklet when you commence.

ECKA is a not-for-profit community based Early Years Management Service for kindergartens and early childhood care services in Ballarat and surrounding areas, proudly managing 28 services. While all kindergartens operate within Legislative guidelines, each kindergarten operate an individual program to meet the needs of the children and families attending their service. ECKA values the role the kindergarten in building local support networks with families, often contributing to lifelong friendships between the families and children who have shared their kinder years together.

### **Our Purpose**

Enriching children's lives through learning.

### **Our Values**

**Respect • Courage • Collaboration • Compassion**

### **Our Guiding Principle**

In order to deliver on 'Our Purpose', ECKA is committed to being a sustainable organisation that maximises its impact on the lives of children.

### **We commit to:**

- Provision of high-quality education and care services that enhance the learning and development of all children
- Advocating for children and the early education and care sector - being an influential voice for high quality early years services
- Planning and partnering for effective, sustainable and supported early years services both now and in the future.

### **Contact ECKA**

ECKA Office

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E: [admin@ecka.org.au](mailto:admin@ecka.org.au)

## 2023 Term Dates

- Term 1: 31<sup>st</sup> January - 6<sup>th</sup> April  
Term 2: 24<sup>th</sup> April - 23<sup>rd</sup> June  
Term 3: 10<sup>th</sup> July- 15<sup>th</sup> September  
Term 4: 2<sup>nd</sup> October - 20<sup>th</sup> December

During the year, the preschool will close for 2 days for staff professional development. Families will be notified in advance of this closure.

Kindergarten is closed on all public holidays.

Kindergarten will be closed on **Code Red & Extreme** days. Parents will be notified via text.

## 2023 Session Times

Integrated 3 and 4-year-old group

Monday - 9.00am -2.00pm

Tuesday - 9.00am -2.00pm

Thursday -9.00am -2.00pm

## Program

The kindergarten program is on display in our foyer and available for parents and visitors to read. The program is updated fortnightly and parents are encouraged and welcomed to provide feedback throughout the year. It is also available to view when uploaded to our communication platform Story Park.

## Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework

The Department of Education and Early Childhood and the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority developed the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework in 2009. The framework brings together the national Early Years Learning Framework and the Victorian Essential Learning Standards. It identifies what children should know and be able to do from birth to eight years. The framework supports a partnership between families and all professionals who support the children's learning and development over this period and is designed to assist families and early childhood professionals to guide children's learning and development in the first eight years.

The Victorian Framework uses five outcomes to describe the key elements of children's learning and development. These are:

1. Children have a strong sense of identity
2. Children are connected with and contribute to their world
3. Children have a strong sense of wellbeing
4. Children are confident and involved learners
5. Children are effective communicators

The framework is used by educators to both design the types of experiences and opportunities that enable enrich children's development and access children's progress towards these outcomes.

## **Communication**

We use different methods of communication to ensure parents are kept informed throughout the year. We have displays in our foyer relating to Community news and events, Schools and Kindergarten news.

Parents are provided with individual pockets in the foyer to receive any paper handouts.

We invite families to register with Story Park when they enrol, a platform used to share children's learning, photos and feedback. Story Park is used by staff to communicate program planning, community news and events, fundraising and reminders, health and nutrition articles and more.

## **Arrival and Departure**

On arrival at the preschool please sign your child in, in the 'Sign in' book. It is a requirement that all children in attendance are signed in and out.

Children will only be released into the care of the person whose name is in the sign in book and if they have been authorised on the enrolment form.

Parents are to inform staff if an authorised person will be collecting their child. Photo identification will be requested should staff not have met them before.

On Arrival: Write time, sign name, and write who will be collecting child. On departure: Write time, sign name. Please make note of starting and finishing times and ensure those person's picking up are aware. Ensure staff are aware of any changes for the security of your child and to prepare child and reduce anxiety. Picking up on time helps children to feel safe and secure in the knowledge you will be there at the end of each day.

## Commencing Preschool

The first few days, settling in to a new environment can be daunting for children. It is to be expected that most children will require support to feel safe and secure and need time to develop relationships with educators.

Please take the time to reassure your child they will have a great day and always say goodbye.

It is important that parents understand that kinder is about their child developing new relationships independently. It is quite normal that anxiety may be present, and some children may take longer to settle than others. If you have any concerns, please do not hesitate in speaking to one of our staff.

## Medications

If children require medications or have specific medical needs, please ensure staff are advised. Medication will only be given to children after the parent has filled in the Medication book. Please note that all medication sent to kinder must be in the original container and in date, with the child's name and dosage clearly labelled.

Under no circumstances should medication of any kind be left in your child's bag.

## Immunisation

A child must be up to date with vaccinations for their age or on a catch-up schedule or have a medical condition preventing them from being fully vaccinated. Enrolment cannot be finalised until the kindergarten is provided with an immunisation status certificate.

## Children's Records

Children's enrolment forms and developmental records remain confidential and are available for you to view on request. Daylesford preschool provides an open-door approach to communication and staff welcome you to chat about your child's learning and development at any time, or for longer discussions, an appointment can be made after session.

## General Information

### Morning Fruit and Lunch

We actively participate in the Smiles 4 Miles program and encourage your help and support to model and promote healthy eating and drinking practices.

Each child is to bring a healthy snack each day to kindergarten. This may consist of a piece of fruit, cut up vegetables, cheese or dried fruit.

Lunch is to include sandwich/wrap, dry biscuits, fruit, vegetable sticks, dips, cheese and yoghurt.

A water bottle is required for each session. Water is available at all times.

Please refrain from sending sweet treats and be mindful of processed and packaged foods. We encourage children to understand the importance of the 3 'R's - reduce, reuse and recycle and develop lifelong sustainable practices.

### Allergies

NOTE: Some foods may be prohibited if a child at risk of Anaphylaxis is enrolled at the preschool.

### Birthdays

Children love celebrating their special day alongside their peers. We sing 'Happy Birthday' and parents are welcome to bring in cupcakes for the children to share. Please check with staff for any food allergies or intolerances.

We are happy to freeze cupcakes for children who may have intolerances, so no one feels left out on the day and ask that parents provide these cakes with their child's name.

## Clothing

Please dress children in clothes that they can get messy in without concern, and clothes they can manage themselves. The kindergarten program offers children the ability to explore using all their senses and messy play encompasses water, sand, paint, goop, mud to name a few. Smocks are provided by the preschool.

Clothes appropriate to the weather conditions should be worn:

Term 1 & 4: Broad brimmed sun hat, ***no singlet tops or sleeveless dresses please.*** We are a Sun Smart Centre and from mid-August through to the end of April hats need to be worn and sunscreen applied. Sunscreen is available in the foyer for parents to apply to ensure children are protected from harmful UV rays.

Term 2 & 3: A winter coat and warm clothing is recommended. Gumboots are great for wet weather play and slippers are welcome for use inside.

**A spare set of clothes must be in your child's bag every day.**

## Footwear

Shoes should be worn to and from kindergarten. Thongs are not permitted as when the children are climbing the thongs can become a hazard and are not safe for running/active play and children can suffer injury. Shoes should have a good grip. Joggers, sandals and lace-up shoes are recommended.

## Belongings

While toys can provide comfort for children when they first commence kindergarten, they soon become a distraction, can become lost, damaged or broken, causing undue stress for the child. Please discourage children from bringing toys from home.

All children are required to bring a kinder bag. Each child will be provided a locker to store bags and belongings in. Please name your child's clothing, food containers and drink bottle.



## Parent Involvement

Each year we are asked by families how they can help support the kindergarten and contribute to both our community and the educational programs we provide to the children.

There are many different ways that families may contribute in and out of kindergarten sessions. Some of the activities in the kindergarten session may include; attending an excursion, helping the children plant in our vegetable garden, cutting up the shared fruit platter or coming in to read a story, or out of session by supporting social events and providing your feedback and ideas.

If you are interested in volunteering some time to help, please speak directly with the educators or message us via the Storypark app. We understand that people have busy lives and lots of commitments and if you are not able to indicate support right now, we completely understand, however if your circumstances change, please feel free to speak with educators as we will be happy for your help.

Please note that our parent volunteers do not need a working with children's check provided that the volunteering is in the group with your own child. Staff will fully supervise all volunteers in accordance with our volunteer and visitor policies.

## Volunteer Sign in Folder

Parents/Volunteers are required to sign the Volunteer Sign-In Folder when they are helping out at kinder, which is located in the foyer.

## Recycled Materials

We love receiving clean recyclables for box construction. (paper, cardboard, boxes, lids, ribbon etc). We have many older members of our community who often stop by and donate. Often, we request special items for use in children's play, so before you throw out, please speak to staff - one person's trash is a kindergarten's treasure!