

THE HEPBURN KINDERGARTEN



INFORMATION BOOK 2023

2 Gold Links Rd, Hepburn Springs, VIC 3461

Phone: (03) 5348 3750

Mobile: 0417 539 531

Email: hepburn.kin.teacher@kindergarten.vic.gov.au

Website: ecka.org.au



Enriching children's lives through learning

The Hepburn Kindergarten's Philosophy on Early Childhood Education

WE VALUE

A holistic approach that responds to children learning through play and is based on their strengths and interests. We are guided by the principles and practices of the Victorian Early Years Learning Framework, Belonging, Being and Becoming and the learning outcomes of Identity, Wellbeing, Community, Learning and Communication.



WE BELIEVE

That the child is at the heart of everything we do. We view children as competent, capable, unique individuals and seek to guide them to reach their full potential, by providing high quality education and care that builds a strong foundation for lifelong learning.



Belonging means that children feel safe, secure and supported. Partnerships with children, families and community are essential. We recognise that families are the child's first and most influential teacher and connect to local community to

enhance children learning and provide a feeling of belonging and social acceptance.

Through Being we foster children's self-worth and freedom of expression, in a secure and responsive environment that encourages kindness, resilience and social and emotional intelligence. Where all children have the right to learn in an inclusive, positive and nurturing environment.



Children experience Becoming when teaching is intentional, and experiences are open ended, hands on and allow children to learn at their own pace and level of development. Literacy and numeracy are embedded in meaningful ways throughout the program and service to foster these emergent skills.

The indoor and outdoor environment are of equal importance, fostering curiosity, wonder, inquiry and exploration and the natural world is highly valued.

The program fosters children's cultural competence, and diversity and uniqueness are recognised and celebrated.

Why is Play so important to Learning?

Through play children engage in and interact with the world around them. Play allows children to use their creativity; develop their imagination; build physical and intellectual strengths; and understand their social and emotional world.

Play helps children to find out who they are. It helps them to feel good about themselves and develop a positive sense of self.



Play helps children to make their own decisions, problem solve a myriad of situations; learn about their own ability and how to master skills; build resilience and confidence. Play is essential to successful healthy development.

Meeting your Child's Educational needs

A Child's Educational needs are met:

- Through the provision of a rich and challenging learning environment, where positive reinforcement and enthusiastic involvement is the main technique used to encourage learning through play.
- Educators encourage children to construct their own knowledge and understanding at their own pace, building directly on their individual strengths and interests.
- Educators always provide a happy, caring and safe environment, where each child is free to express, explore and be an integral part of the Kindergarten environment.





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 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

11 Grandview Grove, Wendouree VIC 3355

P: 5339 5055

E: admin@ecka.org.au

OVERALL RATING FOR HEPBURN KINDERGARTEN

- **QA1 Educational Program and Practice** Meeting NQS
- **QA2 Children's Health and Safety** Meeting NQS
- **QA3 Physical Environment** Meeting NQS
- **QA4 Staffing Arrangements** Meeting NQS
- **QA5 Relationships with Children** Meeting NQS
- **QA6 Collaborative Partnership with Families and Community** Exceeding NQS
- **QA7 Leadership and Service Management** Meeting NQS



ENROLMENT PROCEDURE

FRI 28th OCT – All online enrolments must be completed

All current children will have an interview booked in after session, before the end of the year.

ALL FAMILIES WILL RECEIVE AN ENROLMENT PACKAGE

This will include:

- 2023 Parent Information Book
- Childs 'My Kinder' Picture Storybook
- Storypark Letter
- Letters from Teachers
- DET Funding Acknowledgement Information
- Parent and Friends and Uniform Information
- Required forms to be signed and bought to Interview

INTERVIEWS



INTERVIEWS FOR 3 & 4 YEAR OLD PARENTS for 2023 will be held on WEDNESDAY 1ST FEBRUARY, THURSDAY 2ND of FEBRUARY and FRIDAY 3rd of FEBRUARY

If not provided earlier, at this Interview you must bring required certificates/ documents – Australian Immunisation Record, Birth Certificate, any medical plan (eg asthma, anaphylaxis), court orders and signed photo permission, arrival and departure and DET acknowledgement forms.

PLEASE BE AWARE THAT WITHOUT THESE DOCUMENTS YOUR CHILD WILL NOT BE ABLE TO START KINDER



2023 Calendar

2023 School/Kindergarten Term Dates

Term 1 - Monday 6th February – Thursday 6th of April

Term 2 - Monday 24th April - Friday 23rd June

Term 3 - Monday 10th July - Friday 15th September

Term 4 - Monday 2nd October - Wednesday 20th December



2023 SESSION TIMES

3 YEAR OLDS MIXED GROUP:

Group A – Tue/Wed/Fri

4 YEAR OLDS MIXED GROUP:

Group B – Mon/Tue/Thur

Group C – Mon/Wed/Thur

Group D – Mon/Thur/Fri

Monday to Thursday: 9.15 – 2.15

Note: Monday and Thursday are straight 4-year-old days

OUR DAILY PROGRAM TIME TABLE

Each Day:

- **9.15am-9.30am**- Morning Meeting
- **9.30-11.00am** - Inside Play
- **11.00-11.30am** – Group Time
- **11.30am – 12.00pm** - Morning Tea
- **12.00-1.30pm** - Outside Play
- **1.30-2.00pm** - Lunch Time
- **2.00-2.15pm** - Pack Up and Book

Note: Morning Meeting will not start until Term 2. Times are approximate

Documenting Learning Storypark

We use Storypark for our documentation. It is an easy-to-use private online space that helps teachers, parents and families work together to record, share and extend children's learning and development.



Your Child's Portfolio

- Provides an ongoing individual record of your child's learning and participation in the Educational Program.
- Containing printed individual learning stories that will also be available on Storypark and examples of your child's artwork
- The Portfolios are always accessible to children and their families to view and share.



What to Bring & Wear to Kindergarten

What to bring:

- A bag.
- Healthy Morning Tea (fruit) and Lunch in a named lunch box.
- A Drink Bottle (named). Water only please
- Spare clothes in case of toileting accidents.

What to wear:

- A named Sun Hat during Term 1 and Term 4 according to our Sunsmart Policy.
- A named coat and hat in Term 2 & 3 (Winter) is essential in our cold climate.
- It is essential that your child is dressed in comfortable play clothes that allow them to run, climb and take part in messy activities.
- Please do not send your child in singlet tops/dresses as this is a regulation of our Sunsmart policy
- Sensible footwear

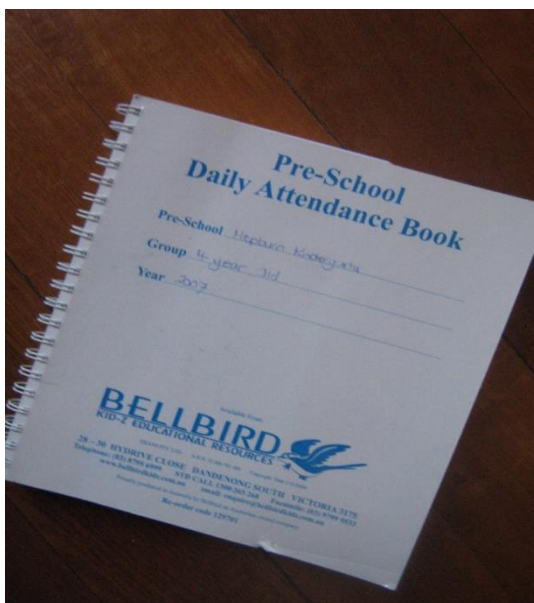


Settling in and Separation

Some Pre-schooler's are overwhelmed by their first day at Kindergarten and may be hesitant to stay:

- Be patient and give them time to familiarise themselves with their new surroundings.
- Stay with them for as long as you feel necessary (but not TOO long)
- Wait until they are happily involved in an activity.
- When you decide that it's time to go, always tell them that you are going and reassure them that you will return soon.
- Ask for staff support if necessary.
- Remember that long, drawn out 'good byes' can make things much worse .
- Do not worry, children settle very quickly with little distress once you have gone.
- Remember if you are worried when you leave, a phone call will alleviate your concerns.

Arrivals and Departures



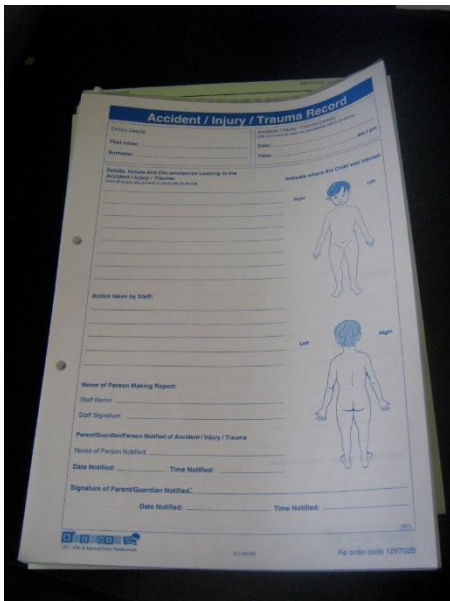
- Regulations state that the Attendance Book must be signed by a parent on arrival and departure from Kindergarten every day your child attends.
- In the case of an emergency the Attendance Book is used to check off children in attendance.
- Please inform staff if there is a change of plan for child pick-up. Staff are not permitted to allow a child to leave with another person unless they have the parent's authorisation.

Immunisation

Regulations state that all children must be fully immunised to attend an Early Education facility and official proof must be given before a child can start.

Please provide a copy of your child's Australian Immunisation Record at the Interview Session

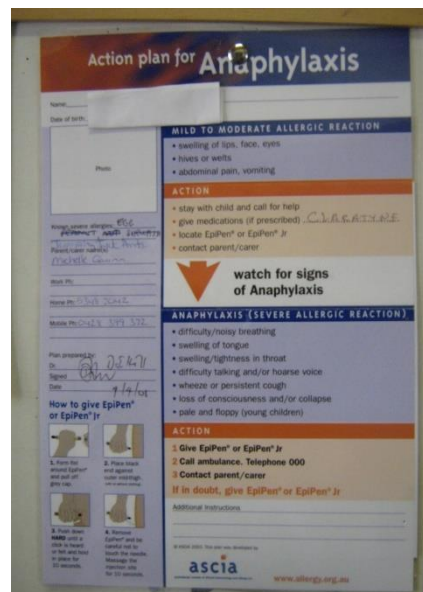
Injury, Illness & Medication reporting



- If there are any Injuries or Illnesses that occur to your child during a Kindergarten session you will be notified verbally at the end of the day or by phone (if necessary). These incidents are always written on the Medication/Accident Sheet, which the teacher/assistant will ask you to sign.
- If your child is unwell, we strongly advise that you keep your child at home. If your child suffers the symptoms of vomiting or diarrhea, they must be excluded from kindergarten for 24 hours after the last episode of the symptom.
- For any ongoing Medication that is needed to be administered during kinder hours, a parent MUST fill out our Medication Book. Please see Catherine.

Special Health Concerns

- Medical Action Plans for children with on going medical problems such as asthma, anaphylaxis, epilepsy, diabetes MUST be provided by your GP. Parents and Teachers will work closely to ensure that the child's medical needs are being looked after at all times.
- Anaphylaxis is a serious medical illness associated with allergic reactions to specific substances that are found in everyday life. If our group does have a child with this condition, we ask for the full support of all the parents and children of our group to follow procedures that will support the child. We will inform all families if there is a need.





Healthy Eating and Drinking Policy

- To support the National Health concern regarding obesity in children the Hepburn Kindergarten has realised the importance of educating everyone on the importance of Healthy Eating and drinking, therefore, we have developed a Healthy Eating and Water Only Policy.
- This means that children's lunch food should always be healthy, and children will only drink water when at kinder. Please avoid processed packaged food as they contain large amounts of sugar.



Sun Smart Policy

- Hepburn is an accredited 'Sun Smart' kindergarten; therefore, children are required to wear either a broad-brimmed or legionnaire-style hat from September to April or when the UV level is above 3, with a winter hat during the cooler months.
- Sunblock is provided and we ask parents to apply the sunblock when they arrive at kinder, if not before
- Clothing must always be suitable; therefore, children should not be dressed in singlet dresses or singlet tops.



Excursions & Incursions

Throughout the year the children will be involved in several Incursions (Educational Programs coming into the Kindergarten e.g. Victoria Museum, Australian Animals, Pet Awareness, Holly's Bees)

We sometimes go out on excursions and parental permission must be given on these occasions and strict regulations and procedures must be adhered to.

We have recently started up a regular Bush Kinder across the road at Hepburn Primary and hope to restart our once a month Intergenerational Project visiting the elderly care unit at the Daylesford Hospital as there are so many benefits for our community.

Art Work Crates, Pockets & Notice Boards

- All of your child's Artwork is placed in the large coloured crates behind your child's name card.
- Newsletters from Staff and Committee will be placed in the pocket with your child's name on.
- Important daily notices are attached to notice boards (front door, foyer, verandah)
- Please ensure that you check all these areas regularly.



Assessment and Reporting on your Child's Progress

- **STORYPARK** - Your child's learning will be shared with you via this online portal
- **PORTFOLIOS** - Learning stories printed from Storypark and examples of work
- **OBSERVATIONS & GOAL SETTING** - By staff in consultation with families
- **FORMAL TESTING** may be carried out if a child requires assistance in the areas of oral language or fine or gross motor skills development.
- **MID YEAR SUMMARIES & PARENT TEACHER INTERVIEWS** are offered to all families mid year (July).
- **TRANSITION STATEMENTS** are developed to help your child and their new school get to know each other and make that transition into school much smoother (November).



Family 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.



EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

PLEASE NOTE that ECKA and the DET have made the decision to close Hepburn Kindergarten on ALL TOTAL FIRE BAN DAYS as we are in a declared 'extremely dangerous' area and there is no safe place to evacuate to. ECKA will inform/telephone all families 1 to 2 days before this occurrence. You should also make yourself aware through media notification

In case of any emergency situation, i.e.: fire threats, we have an Emergency Management Plan which is followed by all staff and children. Each term the children practice the Emergency Evacuation Procedure and the Lock Down procedure. Parents will be telephoned if an emergency occurs as soon as practical.



CHILD SAFETY

- OUR GATE - We need all adults to be vigilant at all times to ensure that no child moves through our exit gates without the direct supervision of their parent or guardian. Please be aware
- OUR CAR-PARK - All parents / guardians must ensure that they have constant supervision of their child/children within the car-park area at all times. Please drive into car park at a safe speed.
- PHOTOGRAPHY - Please consult with Catherine if you wish to take a photo. And please be aware of this when posting anything on social media (privacy).



START of 2023

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FRIDAY 27 JANUARY – Staff Professional Development Day

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MONDAY 30 JANUARY – Set Up and Team Inductions Day

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TUESDAY 31 FEBRUARY - Staff Planning Day

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WEDNESDAY 1 FEBRUARY – Interview Day

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THURSDAY 2 FEBRUARY - Interview Day

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FRIDAY 3 FEBRUARY – Interview Day

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MONDAY 6 FEBRUARY - 4-Year-Old Group First Day

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TUESDAY 7 JANUARY – 3-Year-Old Group First Day Half session

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WEDNESDAY 8 FEBRUARY - 3-Year-Old Group Half session

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FRIDAY 10 FEBRUARY - 3-Year-Old Group Half session

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MONDAY 13 FEBRUARY – 3-Year-Old Group First Full Day



On a Final Note

We warmly welcome you, your child and your family to the Hepburn Kindergarten and we sincerely hope that your time with us is one of wonderful experiences that will provide many future happy memories.

