



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

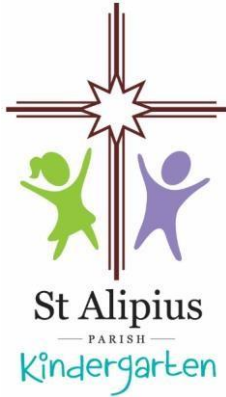


# St Alipius Kindergarten 2023 Information Booklet



Enriching children's lives through learning

## WELCOME



Staff welcome your association with St Alipius Kindergarten. This information booklet has been compiled so you may have a better understanding of your Kindergarten - the how's and why's of its operation.

We hope your association with the kindergarten will be a happy and rewarding one. You will soon become aware that your Kindergarten is not just a centre that your child attends, but more so, a community of staff and families, all working together with the common goal of supporting children to be happy, confident and capable. It is a place where you can share positive experiences with your child, his/her peers and their families.

We welcome your support in maintaining a high standard of educational programming, pleasant and safe facilities active participation in the kindergarten.

## PHILOSOPHY

**NATURE PLAY** – We Value outdoor and nature play for children to explore, investigate, have the courage to take risks and build resilience in the natural environment in all weather conditions. We believe that by spending time in the outdoors, children develop deeper connections to the natural world and begin to understand their impact and have the **courage** to care for and respect it for years to come.

**KINDNESS**- We acknowledge that all children learn and develop at their own pace with different strengths, skills and experiences. We strive to create a kindergarten culture based around kindness, **compassion** and respect. Exploring emotional regulation and providing children with strategies to express themselves in positive ways.

**RELATIONSHIPS**- We understand positive relationships are key to learning and wellbeing. We value and **respect** our relationships with children and families, being present in the moment taking the time to get to know them. Through nurturing relationships, we encourage to share their thoughts and ideas in a safe secure and supportive environment.

**LEARNING**- We offer children an engaging learning environment where every child is given the time and space to share their knowledge and ideas. We encourage and challenge children's thinking through deep conversations, questioning and hands on learning through play.

**PARTNERSHIPS**- We understand positive relationships to be the centre of children's learning and wellbeing. Through trusting relationships and **collaboration** with families and community supports we foster children's learning journeys. We value family input to maintain consistency between kinder and home to ensure children thrive.

**INCLUSIVENESS**- We acknowledge the Wadawurrung People as the traditional owners of the land on which we learn and play. We create inclusive environments that celebrate diversity and provide learning opportunities that reflect the backgrounds, cultures and abilities of every child. All children are encouraged to express themselves, respect one another, develop self-confidence and a sense of belonging.

## CENTRE INFORMATION

**Address:** 78 Victoria St, Ballarat 3350

**Phone:** 5331 4272 / 0408 276 830

**Email:** [alipius.kin@kindergarten.vic.gov.au](mailto:alipius.kin@kindergarten.vic.gov.au)

**Website:** [ecka.org.au](http://ecka.org.au)

## THE STAFF

Employment of staff within the St Alipius Kindergarten is the responsibility of the Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA)

The staff employed at the kindergarten are responsible for the planning and implementation of the three and four-year-old programs. They are required and supported to have a continuing professional development plan.

All staff employed at the kindergarten must have VIT registration (teachers only) and working with children check, a current first aid certificate and have specialist training in CPR, asthma and anaphylaxis.

Voluntary workers/students assist at times.

## KINDERGARTEN EDUCATION

The aim of kindergarten education is to learn through play. The value of play for the child gives him/her the opportunity in their own way, and in their own time to come to grips with problems and find solutions. It is the method through which the child builds upon basic attitudes, skills and knowledge.

### Play is a child's work!

Kindergarten provides a happy relaxed atmosphere in which your child will:

- (a) Increase his/her self-esteem, confidence and ability to cope with new situations.
- (b) Build relationships with adults and children.
- (c) Be encouraged to make his/her own decisions.
- (d) Develop a sense of achievement.
- (e) Learn to accept strong feelings and channel them into acceptable outlets.
- (f) Further develop his/her co-ordination and maintain physical health.
- (g) Gain knowledge about him/herself and the world around him/her.
- (h) Enjoy being him/herself while learning to function within a group.

The Kindergarten program is flexible, focusing on the development of the whole child. Parent involvement is an integral part of this program. Your participation in the children's activities strengthens the link between home and kindergarten and fosters positive learning in your child. The role of Early Childhood Education could be viewed in this way:

**The principal goal of education is to create men and women who are capable of doing new things, not simply repeating what other generations have done, men and women who are creative and inventive and will be discoverers."**

*Piaget (Swiss educator) in the role of Education*



## **Enriching children's lives through learning**

Our Kindergarten 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

11 Grandview Grove, Wendouree VIC 3355

P: 5339 5055

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

## 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 assess children's progress towards these outcomes.

<b>2022 Term Dates</b>	
Term 1	Tuesday 1 <sup>st</sup> February- Friday 3 <sup>rd</sup> Feb Parent interviews- times TBA Tuesday 7 <sup>th</sup> February-Friday 10 <sup>th</sup> February staggered start (10hrs per child) allocated days TBA Tuesday 14 <sup>th</sup> February- normal sessions commence 9-2pm Thursday 6 <sup>th</sup> April- Last day of term
Term 2	Wednesday 26 <sup>th</sup> April to Friday 23 <sup>rd</sup> June
Term 3	Tuesday 11 <sup>th</sup> July to Friday 15 <sup>th</sup> September
Term 4	Tuesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> October to TBA

N.B During the year, kindergarten will close for 1 day of Professional Development, date to be confirmed. Parents and Guardians will be notified in advance of this closure day.

Kindergarten is closed on all Public holidays

## KINDERGARTEN PROGRAMS

3 & 4 yr old groups will attend kinder together.

### SESSION TIMES:

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday 9-2

**Red Group**-Tues, Wed, Thurs

**Green group**-Tues, Thurs, Fri

**Orange group**- Wednesday, Thursday, Friday

**Blue Group**-Tues, Wed, Friday

### GENERAL INFORMATION

#### SNACK:

Each child is asked to bring a healthy snack each day to Kindergarten. A healthy snack must include fruit, vegetables as well as things like cheese, hard-boiled eggs, dried fruit.

#### LUNCH:

A healthy lunch is to include a sandwich/roll/dry biscuit in addition to fruit, vegetables, cheese, and yogurt and other healthy snacks. Please try to avoid processed or packaged food such as chips and chocolates.

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

#### WHAT TO BRING:

- A drink bottle, filled with water only please
- Healthy lunchbox as mentioned above
- A whole spare change of labelled clothes including socks, undies, tops, pants, jumper. Extra pants, undies, socks, shoes for those toilet training. Not only can toileting accidents occur but the children may get wet/messy playing outside.
- Appropriate footwear- Shoes should be worn to and from Kindergarten. Thongs are not permitted as when the children are climbing the thongs can become entangled in the climbing frames and the children can suffer injury. Shoes should have a good grip. Joggers, sandals and lace-up shoes are recommended.
- A wide brimmed sun hat

From September through to the end of April and on days with high UV hats and sunscreen need to be worn to ensure children are protected and is re-applied as necessary.

**Please make sure shoulders are covered- No singlet tops or sleeveless dresses please!** We are a Sun Smart Centre. – Please let staff know if your child needs their own sunscreen.

#### CLOTHING/BELONGINGS:

All children are required to bring a kinder bag. Each child will be given a locker to house their belongings (coats, hats, bags etc.) Please name your child's belongings and remember to pack weather appropriate clothing for your child such as a coat, gumboots, beanie for colder months as we value outdoor learning and will be spending time all year round. Gumboots can be left at kinder on the shelf outside if you choose.

### ALLERGIES:

Please note that some foods may be prohibited if a child at risk of Anaphylaxis is enrolled at the Kindergarten.

If your child has an allergy please speak to staff and ensure your child has an allergy action plan signed by your doctor.

### BRINGING CHILDREN:

Please note the appropriate starting times for your child's sessions at kinder. 9am

You are asked not to bring children earlier as staff are preparing for the session. We like to greet the children as they come in, so we would appreciate if you could wait until staff open the doors. This is also a time for you to chat with other families and get to know each other better.

### COLLECTING CHILDREN:

Please note the appropriate finishing times for your child's sessions at kinder. 2pm

If someone else is to collect your child, please inform staff ahead of time so your child can be prepared, and also for security. All persons collecting children must be indicated on your child's enrolment form. Children can only be collected by those authorised by the parent/guardian(s). When exiting the kinder, please hold your child's hand in the carpark and when exiting the gate.

**More information on drop off/pick up to come depending on current covid restrictions, parents may not be allowed to enter the building.**

### RECORD BOOK/Signing in & out:

When dropping off and picking up children, it is **essential** for the Record Book to be signed and the exact time of drop off and pick up recorded. You should also indicate if a person other than yourself will be picking up your child or any other children that you have dropped off. **An adult must collect and drop off kindergarten children.**

### BIRTHDAYS:

On your child's birthday, you might like to bring something to share. Small cupcakes prove to be popular and easy to eat. Please check with staff around any allergies or covid restrictions.

### MEDICATION:

There is a Medication and Accident book that is required to be filled in when needed. Please note that all medication sent to the kinder must be prescribed by a doctor with your child's name on, in the original container and in date. Only a parent/guardian can sign the related documentation to have medication administered to a child unless you have nominated others on your enrolment form. If a parent is needed to sign or form or information needs to be shared with families, your child's name will be highlighted in the sign-in book.

### 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.

### EXCURSIONS:

The Teacher will always notify parents if children are to be taken on an excursion. Parents will be asked to sign an authorisation form for your child to attend. Smoking is not permitted on excursions.

### **PROGRAM:**

We will be using Storypark to document and share our planning, your child's learning journey and keep you updated with what's happening at kinder. It will outline planned learning and goals using the five outcomes described in the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework. Parents are welcome to contribute & provide input throughout the year. Storypark will also be used as a kind of online noticeboard to share reminders and notices. Storypark can be used to contact staff but please note that if you have any concerns, queries or would like to check in with how your child is going you can always make a time to speak to staff in person.

### **TRANSITION LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT STATEMENTS:**

In 2009 'Transition to Learning and Development Statements' were introduced as a tool for families and educators to share information about a child's learning and development with the school they will be going to. Every child who is going to school next year will have a transition statement to pass on to the school. The transition statements provide opportunities for families and children to make comment on the child's learning and development and information they think might help the child's transition to school. Early childhood staff are required to provide information based on the five outcomes of the VEYLDF referred to above. The statement can only be forwarded to a school when the parent/guardian consent has been provided. Statements are completed in term 4 to be passed onto schools. Parents are always welcome to speak to the Teacher in regard to their child's progress. You are asked to make an appointment with the Teacher to do this at a mutually convenient time. Please be assured that the Teacher will approach you, as parents, if she has any concerns at all regarding any matters to do with your child.

### **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.

### **GARDEN ROSTER**

We will send out a roster at the beginning of the year encouraging families to take the gate key and soft plastic recycling home each week. We ask that you come in on the weekend to help with some jobs in the outdoor environment. The children really enjoy helping with this responsibility.

### **VOLUNTEER SIGN IN BOOK**

Parents/Volunteers are required to sign the Volunteer Sign-In Book when they are helping out at kinder. The book is kept in the locker room.





## NATURE KINDER

Our Nature Kinder program takes place at McKenzie Reserve, located in walking distance just behind the kindergarten, which provides the children with many amazing learning opportunities within the natural environment.

Nature Kinder can often be misinterpreted as a free time or a break from learning however this is not the case. By entering the natural environment, the children will simply be leaving one classroom and entering another, the outdoor classroom. There is so much that children can learn from being out in the natural world and it is our job as educators to support, encourage and guide the children in getting the most out of this time.

Before we commence nature kinder, we will be discussing the guidelines and safety measures such as boundaries, animal habitats, snakes, mushrooms etc. Through these discussions the children will learn why we have guidelines in place and how to explore safely and avoid dangers- these are important skills they can also transfer into outside scenarios.

During the colder/wet months, we will provide wet weather pants and coats- there's no such thing as bad weather, only bad clothing!- We will be trying on our wet weather gear at kinder so that the children can get used to the way it looks and feels.

We will begin by going for short walks to become familiar with the setting, work up to spending whole sessions here, the children will carry their own backpacks, allowing them to share meals together, we will bring our own toilet to give us uninterrupted time to explore

### Why do we go to Nature kinder?

- Studies show that nature play builds resilience in children, eliminates stresses, builds social skills and interactions, and has a positive impact on children's overall wellbeing.
- It provides children with different physical challenges as they navigate their way across the natural landscape, enhancing spatial awareness, balance, coordination, and the ability to take assess risks in their play.
- Time in the natural world builds confidence and supports discovery.
- Through play and other opportunities children learn to make sense of and construct ideas about the social and natural world – the people, places, objects and experiences they encounter every day.
- Children become familiar with and develop an understanding of local flora and fauna, life cycles and habitats.
- We aim to instil a sense of awe and wonder in the children as they take in the natural world around them, we will encourage them to observe, question, imagine and create.
- We hope that by allowing children the opportunity to experience and connect with the natural world they will develop an awareness of how to care for and respect it.



