

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.



Welcome to



Phoenix Kindergarten

Information Booklet
2023



Enriching children's lives through learning

Contact Us

Phoenix Kindergarten
32-48 Hertford Street, Sebastopol, Vic 3356
Phone: 03 5335 8459
Mobile: 0457 809 020 (excursions only)
Email: phoenix.kin@kindergarten.vic.gov.au
Internet: www.ecka.org.au

Hours

3yr Old: - Year 1

Kuwarrk – Kookaburra

Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday 9.30am-2.30pm

4yr Old – Year 2

Djirnap – Cockatoo

Week 1 9am – 3pm	Week 2 9am – 3pm
Monday, Tuesday, Friday	Monday, Tuesday

Porrgil – Rainbow Lorikeet

Week 1 9am – 3pm	Week 2 9am – 3pm
Wednesday, Thursday	Wednesday, Thursday, Friday

Office Hours: Monday to Friday 8.30am-4pm

Term Dates 2022

Term 1: Friday 27th January – Thursday 6th 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

There will be 2 child free days during the year for Staff to attend Professional Development Sessions.



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

Welcome to Kindergarten

We welcome all families at Phoenix Kindergarten!

Phoenix Kindergarten is located on Wadawurrung Land and we pay our respect to the Traditional Custodians of this land and to Elders, past, present and future.

At Phoenix Kindergarten we encourage your child to grow, develop and learn in a warm, caring and safe environment.

We are a community kindergarten offering quality kindergarten programs for children in their first years before formal schooling. All our Kindergarten programs are planned and delivered by a Bachelor qualified Early Childhood Teacher in collaboration with Educators, Children and Families. Both 3 and 4 year old kinder is free in 2023.

The Eureka Community Kindergarten Association (ECKA) looks after our operational needs, with a Family & Community Group organising fundraising and social events.

We offer a broad range of experiences and activities to meet every child's educational, developmental and enjoyment needs. Families are encouraged to share their culture, experiences and skills with us and work together to achieve the best learning outcomes for your child.

The program is both play based and teacher led, allowing each child to follow their interests and grow and develop at their own pace. The programs are guided by our Kindergarten Philosophy, the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF) and the National Quality Standards.

Thank you for choosing Phoenix Kindergarten to continue your child's learning journey. We look forward to sharing a wonderful year with you and your child, full of learning, discovery, wonder and fun.

Please keep this handbook to refer to throughout the year.



Our Philosophy

Phoenix Kindergarten is a special learning environment for young children and their families. Our kindergarten has a happy and relaxed atmosphere where all are welcomed.

We recognise the unique status of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People as Australia's First Peoples, and we seek to enrich our whole community with an improved knowledge, understanding and appreciation of Koori history and culture.

Children come first

- High expectations are held for every child
- A sense of belonging is valued
- Individuality can shine
- Children of all abilities are treated equally and with respect
- Children are supported to build language and social skills
- Relationships are based on care and respect

Families

- Develop secure and respectful relationships
- Positive partnerships
- Open communication
- We value families as the child's first teacher

Learning Environment

- Children are safe and supported
- Encourage a joy of lifelong learning
- Reflects individual interests and needs
- Positive attitudes to learning are nurtured

Outdoor Play

- Find meaningful ways to develop respect for and connection with the natural environment
- Instil a sense of awe and wonder of their world
- Promote physical and mental wellbeing

To achieve this Educators will:-

- Assess and support the individual learning, development and wellbeing of children through positive and meaningful interactions, observations and individual goals
- Plan experiences and activities to support children to become lifelong learners
- Communicate openly and frequently with families about children's learning and development
- Be approachable and professional
- Provide engaging and challenging play based curriculum guided by the Early Years Learning and Development Framework, Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework and the National Quality Standards

The Environment will:-

- Be safe, accessible and creative
- Be challenging and evolving
- Be welcoming and encourage the involvement of parents and community members

Meet Our Educators

Neisha Watt – *4yr Old Teacher - Service Leader - Nominated Supervisor*



Hello Everyone,

I have previously worked in Child Care and Kindergarten for over 20 years in Ballarat and Melbourne.

Together with my husband Ben, I have three children; Rohan 17, Henry 15 and Ruby 13.

I look forward to meeting your family and thank you for the lovely opportunity to teach and guide your child through their kinder year.

Kylie Ellen – *3yr Old Teacher – 4yr Old Team Teacher (Friday)*



I am married to Pete and we have a 4yo daughter Mira, our family is also made up of my 26yo daughter Nikeesha, Pete's son Peter 18 and daughter Crystal 15. I am also a Nana to 6yo Elaina. On the weekends, I am busy training and competing in Flyball, with my border Collie, Koda.

I have worked in Child care and Kindergartens for the past 28 years and I am still as passionate with working with children as my first day. I am looking forward to meeting and teaching the 3yo and a 4yo group at Phoenix Kinder during 2023, and working alongside their families throughout the year.

Mandy Mulheron – *3 & 4yr Old Educator*



My name is Mandy and my husband Chris and I have four adult children ranging in ages from 19 to 23. They are Brady, Ryan, Toni and Mia and they are the reason I work in Early Childhood as having them sparked a passion in me to work with children. I have worked in the industry for over 14 years and have been at Phoenix since it opened. I look forward to being a part of your child's kinder journey.

Cathie Shelton – *4yr Old Educator*



I have worked for ECKA for the past 17 years at many of the kinders around Ballarat and have completed my Diploma in Children's Services during that time.

My husband Chris and I have two adult daughters, Clare and Rachael as well as a dog named Mabel. I am passionate about Early Childhood Education and really enjoy watching the children learn and grow each year.

Chanelle Linane – 4yr Old Educator – SRF Support Staff



Hello, I am a qualified Primary School and Kindergarten Teacher. I worked as a grade 3/4 Teacher in 2018 and started working in Early Childhood in 2021 at Mt Pleasant Kindergarten. I have been working at Phoenix Kindergarten since the middle of 2021 and have loved my time here! I am so excited to see some of the children and families from last year and meet all of the new children and families too. I love dressing up, playing ukulele, and using my imagination to make up silly songs or games. I can't wait to meet you all and have a wonderful year together.

3yr Old SRF Support Staff TBA

School Readiness Funding

School Readiness Funding (SRF) is a permanent and ongoing part of the Victorian kindergarten funding model. The funding supports 3-year-old and 4-year-old children in all early childhood education and care services delivering state-funded kindergarten programs in Victoria, including long day care.

The amount of School Readiness Funding each service receives is based on the level of need of the children enrolled at their service. This is informed by parental occupation and education data (also known as Student Family Occupation and Education (SFOE data) as this is considered an accurate predictor of educational disadvantage.

At Phoenix Kindergarten we are able to use the funding to;

- hire additional educators to build relationships with children
- access a speech therapist, occupational therapist and psychologist to upskill staff
- attend professional development and training to increase the capacity of staff to support children and families in our community



Early Childhood Program

In developing our Kindergarten Curriculum, we are guided by the Practice Principles and Learning & Development Outcomes outlined in the Victorian Early Years Learning & Development Framework (VEYLDF) and refer to the Australian Early Years Learning & Development Framework (AEYLDF). The frameworks are designed to assist families and staff in guiding children's learning and development from birth to eight years.

The Australian Early Years Learning & Development Framework describes the early years as a time of;

- **Belonging:** knowing where and with whom you belong is integral to human existence
- **Being:** childhood is not solely a preparation for adulthood or for the future, recognising the significance of the 'here and now' in children's lives
- **Becoming:** reflecting on the process of rapid and significant change that occurs in the early years as young children learn and grow.

The VEYLDF has 5 outcomes to describe the key elements of the child's learning:

Identity – *Children have a strong sense of identity*

- ✿ children feel safe, secure and supported
- ✿ children develop their emerging autonomy, inter-dependence, resilience and sense of agency
- ✿ children develop knowledgeable and confident self-identities
- ✿ children learn to interact in relation to others with care, empathy and respect

Community – *Children are connected with and contribute to their world*

- ✿ children develop a sense of belonging to groups and communities and an understanding of the reciprocal rights and responsibilities necessary for active civic participation
- ✿ children respond to diversity with respect
- ✿ children become aware of fairness
- ✿ children become socially responsible and show respect for the environment

Wellbeing – *Children have a strong sense of wellbeing*

- ✿ children become strong in their social, emotional and spiritual well being
- ✿ children take increasing responsibility for their own health and physical wellbeing

Learning – *Children are confident and involved learners*

- ✿ children develop dispositions for learning such as curiosity, cooperation, confidence, creativity, commitment, enthusiasm, persistence, imagination and reflexivity
- ✿ children develop a range of skills and processes such as problem solving, inquiry, experimentation, hypothesising, researching and investigating
- ✿ children transfer and adapt what they have learnt from one context to another
- ✿ children resource their own learning through connecting with people, place, technologies and natural and processed materials.

Communication – *Children are effective communicators*

- ✿ children interact verbally and non-verbally with others for a range of purposes
- ✿ children engage with a range of texts and get meaning from these texts
- ✿ children express ideas and make meaning using a range of media
- ✿ children begin to understand how symbols and pattern systems work
- ✿ children use information and communication technologies to access information, investigate ideas and represent their thinking

Learning through Play

The Kindergarten Program is developed by the Kindergarten Teacher, reflecting the individual needs and interests of each child and the whole group. Each child is an unique individual who is a capable and competent learner, learning in their own time and with their own learning style. The program has a strong emphasis on play based learning where children are viewed as active participants and decision makers in their learning. A range of play based experiences are offered for children to explore and discover and to extend their interests and abilities in all areas of development.

Play is a context of learning that:

- ◆ allows for the expression of personality and uniqueness
- ◆ enhances dispositions such as curiosity and creativity
- ◆ enables children to make connections between prior experience and new learning
- ◆ assists children to develop relationships and concepts
- ◆ stimulates a sense of well being

Belonging, Being & Becoming – The EYLF for Australia, 2009, pg 9

Educators regularly record individual written observations on all children. The observations are then assessed with the guidance of the Victorian Early Years Learning Outcomes and future activities and experiences are planned. These are the activities and experiences you can see on the Curriculum plan and in the room.

Discussing your Child's Progress

We encourage families to keep us up to date with your child's needs, interests and development. A quick chat at pick up and drop off times is welcome, however if you need a longer discussion time, please contact the teacher to arrange a mutually convenient time. We offer family & teacher meetings towards the end of term 1 to discuss how your child has settled in and plan goals together for your child to work on at kinder and again in term 3 to discuss transition to 4yr old or school. Checking Storypark will keep you informed of your child's individual and group learning.

Enrolment & Fees

Enrolments are made through the Ballarat City Council when a child turns 2 years of age. Applications can be completed online at;
<https://kinder.ballarat.vic.gov.au/apply>

4 Year Old Group

An eligible child will be at least 4 years of age on or before the 30th of April in the year of attendance at kinder. Enrolments are taken in order from the waiting list.

Children who turn 4 between January and the end of April, in their eligible kinder year have the option of delaying their entry to the following year. Children can only access a 2nd year of kindergarten if they meet the eligibility criteria and two areas of development delay as assessed by the early childhood teacher.

Please discuss with the teacher your child's readiness to begin kindergarten and school.

3 Year Old Group

An eligible child will be at least 3 years of age on or before the 30th of April in the year of attendance at kinder. Enrolments are taken in order from the waiting list.

Children who turn 3 between January and the end of April, in their eligible kinder year have the option of delaying their entry to the following year.

As per the new funding of 3yr old kindergarten, children will not be able to complete 2yrs of 3yr old kinder.

Please discuss your options with the kindergarten teacher.

Parent/guardians of children accepted for kindergarten the following year, will be emailed an invitation to join Storypark. All enrolment information, interviews, start dates, group selection etc will be sent through Storypark.

At the interview parent/guardians will need to bring; -

- All completed and signed forms
- Immunisation Certificate
- Health Care/Pension Cards
- 3 ½ and/or 4 year old Assessment from the Maternal Child Health Nurse (In health centre book)
- Asthma/Medical/Allergy/Anaphylaxis Action Plan (if needed)
- Any assessments or information of additional needs eg; Speech, OT

*****Parent/guardians are requested to notify the Kindergarten when any of this information changes.*****

Fees 2023

As part of the Victorian Government's *Best Start, Best Life* reform 3yo & 4yo Kindergarten programs will be free in 2023. This means there will be no fees payable by parents. For more information on the Best Start, Best Life reform please visit <https://www.vic.gov.au/kinder>

Immunisation Certificate

To enrol at any early childhood service, families must provide the child's Immunisation Certificate issued by Medicare. It must show that the child is;

- Fully vaccinated for their age
- Is on a registered catch-up schedule
- Has a medical reason not to be vaccinated

Certificates can be downloaded from the Mygov website and emailed to kinder.

Helping Your Child Settle in and Enjoy Their Year

- Talk to your child about Kinder. Drive by and point it out. Use the Educators names. Let children know staff are there to help them. Discuss the routine and what is expected of them.
- Practice opening lunchboxes and containers. Try snack foods to make sure your child likes them.
- Have shorter sessions if you feel your child is tired or not yet ready for the longer day.
- Help your child to put their bag away and settle on the mat.
- Stay with your child until you feel they are settled and ready to say goodbye.
- Always say goodbye to your child. Leaving when they are not looking can be very distressing for young children.
- Ask about their day and remember lots more happens at kinder than the work children may or may not bring home
- Take the time to meet other families and children so you can know your child's friends.
- Arrive on time to collect your child. Children can become distressed quickly if they are left waiting.

What to Bring

- A named back pack, big enough to hold children's lunchbox, spare clothing and art work.
- A healthy snack for morning tea and a healthy lunch.
- A **complete change of clothes** including underwear, socks, singlet, t-shirt, jumper and pants. Please name all clothing.
- A named coat, beanie and gumboots in colder months.

Arrival & Departure

- Upon arrival: - Sign the Attendance book located in the foyer. Include time and who will collect the child
- Upon departure: - Sign the Attendance Book located in the foyer. Include departure time
- If for any reason you need to drop your child off late or pick them up early please notify us.
- Children will only be released to those on the Enrolment Form, authorised to collect by the parent/guardian. If for any reason someone other than those listed on the form will be collecting your child, please notify us asap and we will have you fill in the appropriate paperwork.
- If staff have not met the person collecting the child, photo identification will need to be shown

Emotional Support and Guidance

Staff are trained in child development, trauma support and emotional guidance for children and work closely with families and other professionals to develop plans and strategies to best support children develop resilience, self-regulation, executive functioning and care for self and others.

Kindergarten is a safe space for all children to explore their identity and develop skills to be responsible and empathetic community members.

Meals and Drinks

During a Kinder session children will need enough nutritious and filling food to give them energy for their busy kinder day. All children will need a drink bottle with water only.

A sandwich or small meal such as pasta salad and a healthy snack such as; fruit, vegetables, dried fruit, rice crackers, cheese slices, yoghurt or dry biscuits are some suggestions.

As we encourage children to make healthy food choices, we ask that snacks or lunches that are high in sugar, fat or salt are NOT brought to kinder eg:

- Jam, honey or nutella
- Nutra grain bars, Milo Bars, LCM, muesli bars, pureed fruit, Roll Ups or other high fat/sugar bars
- Chips, chocolates, lollies, sweet biscuits
- Cordial, soft drink, juice, flavoured milk

**** Families will be notified if there are any allergies and which foods are not to be brought to kinder****

Morning Tea Routine

Morning tea is a relaxed and social time for children. It may occur seated at tables or outside on a picnic mat. Children are invited to eat when they are ready. This allows the children uninterrupted periods of play and encourages them to develop their independence to decide when they are hungry and ready to eat.

Some children are really hungry at this time and like to have lots to eat, sometimes an extra sandwich helps to fill children up. Staff will talk to you about your child's individual needs.

Lunch Routine

We have lunch as a group around 1pm. We eat outside on picnic mats or inside at the tables. Children are encouraged to eat their main meal; sandwich, pasta, salad etc., first and then finish any snacks in their lunchbox.

Special Dietary Requirements

Please discuss with staff if your child has any special dietary needs, including anaphylaxis, allergies or intolerances.

Smiles 4 Miles Program

Our 4yr old group participates in the Smiles 4 Miles program which promotes healthy eating and lifestyles and oral health in young children

The *Smiles 4 miles* program aims to improve the oral health of preschool aged children in Victoria. It is an initiative of Dental Health Services Victoria which works in partnership with local organisations to improve the oral health of the youngest children in the community.

The program is based on the World Health Organisation's Health Promoting Schools Framework and is delivered predominantly in kindergartens

The key messages promoted in the program are:

- **Drink Well:** children are encouraged to drink water instead of sugary drinks
- **Eat Well:** children should eat a variety of nutritious foods
- **Clean Well:** children are taught good tooth cleaning technique to maintain healthy teeth and gums, with a focus on brushing twice a day and using toothpaste with an appropriate amount of fluoride.

As part of the program a dental team from Ballarat Health Services visits each 4yr old kinder group to promote dental hygiene and encourage regular dental check-ups. With parent/guardian permission a dentist looks at the child's teeth and provides feedback to families.

Bush Kinder Program

The 4yr old kinder children participate in our Bush Kinder Program in terms 2 & 3. One day a week on alternating days, we go to Pax Hill Scout Camp in the Woowookarung Regional Park. During our Bush Kinder sessions, children are free to explore the natural environment.

Storypark

Storypark is an online platform allowing us to share the kinder curriculum, photos, stories, newsletters etc with families. Upon enrolment you will receive an email inviting you to join. Please check regularly as this is our main form of communication with families

Toileting

We encourage children to toilet independently. However, we recognise that all children are not ready to do this at the same time. Please provide nappies or pull ups if your child requires these and/or several changes of clothes (including shoes) if your child is just beginning to toilet train.

Staff are happy to support all efforts to assist families in this process. Please discuss with staff your child's needs.

Health and Safety

Covid 19

The kindergarten has a Covid Safe Plan and a Covid Response Plan in place to support the health, safety and well being of all children, staff, families and others entering the premises. We continuously update families of our procedures as they evolve and adapt to the changing circumstances.

Anaphylaxis, Asthma, Medical Conditions & Allergies

Please let staff know if your child has Anaphylaxis, Asthma, a Medical Condition or Allergy. An **Anaphylaxis/Asthma/Medical Condition or Allergy Management plan must be filled out by your doctor before starting kindergarten** and kept in your child's file at Kinder.

Staff will complete a Risk Management and Communication plan with you.

Please bring the required medication each day, or leave a clearly named supply at Kinder.

**** Children will NOT be able to start kindergarten without a completed Management Plan and Medication at kinder each day.****



Accidents & Injuries

The Kinder environment is planned to ensure the safety of all children; however, accidents can still occur. If your child is injured at Kinder an Accident and Injury form will be filled out detailing the nature of the injury, time, date and action that was taken. You will be asked to sign the report when collecting your child.

In the event of a minor accident during a session staff will:

- Treat the injury as required (wash area, apply band aid etc.)
- Fill out an accident form
- Inform the parent/guardian of the accident upon collection of the child and have the parent/guardian sign the accident form

In the event of a major accident or illness staff will:

- Apply first Aid
- Contact the parent/guardian (or emergency contact if parent/guardians cannot be reached) to collect the child OR contact the Ambulance Service to take the child to hospital and immediately inform the parent/guardian or emergency contact
- Fill out an accident/illness form and have the parent/guardian sign the form
- If required make a report to ECKA and the Department of Education & Training

Emergency Evacuation Procedure

In the event of an emergency necessitating the evacuation of the Kindergarten, the Teacher and Staff will immediately take appropriate action to ensure the safety of the children, volunteers and staff. The procedure and evacuation map is displayed on each exit of the kinder.

All staff and children practice the emergency procedure each term.

Illness and Infectious Diseases

We ask all families to help us minimise the risk of spreading infections and diseases by keeping children home and notifying the Kinder when your child is ill or diagnosed with an infectious illness. If your child is too unwell to participate in the whole program, both indoors and out, or have taken paracetamol or ibuprofen in the morning, then they should be kept home until they are feeling better.

In the case of an infectious disease the child should be kept away from Kinder as per the "Recommended Minimum Periods of Exclusion from School, Pre-School and Child Care Centres for Cases of Contact with Infectious Diseases." (See Appendix)

In the event of illness staff will:

- Make the child comfortable and moved away from other children
- Contact the parent/guardian (or emergency contact if parent/guardians cannot be reached) to collect the child
- Fill out an illness form and have the parent/guardian sign the form upon collection of the child.

Medication

If your child requires medication while at Kinder, the parent/guardian will need to fill in a medication sheet detailing the name of the medication, when it was last given, the dosage last given, the time, circumstances and dosage to be given while at Kinder. Two staff will check all details of the medication before giving it to the child. Medication should be given to staff and placed on the medication cupboard or in the fridge.

Please note: Medication must be in the child's name and must be within the use by date. The child can only be given the recommended dosage as per medication or doctors written instructions.

**** Please make sure all medications including creams and ointments are removed from your child's bag****

Sun Care

We are a sun smart centre and as such follow recommendations from the Anti-Cancer Council. Children will be given their own broad brim hat that will stay at Kinder. Coles brand sunscreen will be supplied. If your child requires a different brand you will need to supply it.

Please ensure your child is dressed appropriately for outside play. **No singlet tops are to be worn**; children's shoulders and upper arms should be covered. If children are not clothed properly their play will be restricted to shady areas. During first and fourth term and when the UV is 3 or higher, children will be required to wear their hat and sunscreen at all times.

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.

Little Free Pantry

In the foyer is a table with food items for families to take what you need and leave what you can. Please speak to staff if you need further support



General Information

Asthma, Anaphylaxis and Medical Conditions: If your child has been diagnosed with Asthma, Anaphylaxis or a Medical Condition you **must provide the Kinder with a Management Plan signed by your Doctor BEFORE starting kinder.** Children will not be able to start kinder without a plan and all medication at kinder

Before and After Sessions: Parent/guardians are asked to supervise their children at all times before and after sessions. Please be mindful of traffic and carpark safety at drop off and collection and that children are supervised at all times.

Birthdays: Children are welcome to bring along a birthday cake to share with the Kinder group. Or may prefer to make one with teachers and friends at kinder. Before bringing in any food items, please check with staff if there are any allergies. We usually have the birthday cake after lunch.

Bush Kinder: The children will attend Bush Kinder once a fortnight, during Terms 2 & 3. Waterproof clothing is provided. An information session will be held towards the end of Term 1.

Children's Possessions: It is preferred children do not bring in items from home, however at times children may want to show or may be attached to particular items. If possible, please clearly name the item. Inform staff that the child has brought something in. Although all care is taken with children's possessions accidents can happen, for this reason we suggest very special items are left at home or given to staff to put in the office.

Clothing: Children should wear comfortable clothing that they are able to move freely in and get dirty in. Some paints do stain clothing (and we love mud and water!) A complete change of clothing including socks, underwear, singlet, t-shirt and pants should be packed in the child's bag. Check the kinder bag after each session for any wet or dirty clothing. Please name all items of clothing including hats, coats and jumpers. As we go outside in all weather, children will require a coat during colder months.

NOTE: children should not wear thongs, crocs, slip ons or party shoes as these are too dangerous for running and climbing activities. Runners and gumboots are best for kinder play. SINGLET TOPS ARE NOT TO BE WORN children's shoulders must be covered

Communication: Parent/guardians are welcome to talk to the teacher about their child, the program, concerns and suggestions. As drop off and pick up can be very busy times, parents/guardians are invited to make an appointment at a mutually convenient time. Families can phone, email or contact staff on storypark.

Excursions/Incursions: The children enjoy a wide range of excursions away from the kinder and visitors to the kinder during the year. To ensure we can safely go on excursions we will require parent/guardians to come along and help supervise children. Please note not all excursions are suitable for siblings to attend.

Gate: The gate is to remain closed at all times. **Only let your child out of the gate.** Please do not let children climb or swing on the gate.

Immunisation Certificates: We must have a copy of your child's Immunisation Certificate before they start kinder. **No child will be allowed to start without one.** Certificates can be downloaded from the Mygov website and emailed to the kindergarten or printed from the Medicare office

Junk and 2nd Hand Materials: Children enjoy all sorts of items to use in the art area including; boxes, tubes, cardboard, paper, off cuts, corks, plastic, lids etc. Please feel free to bring these items in. We especially enjoy unusual items you may be able to source from your

work place such as; plastic rings, cylinders, laminate squares, milk crates, samples, paper, envelopes, cards etc. We can also use items such as pots and pans, spoons, trays, utensils, school uniforms, tyres, toys, dress ups, outdoor equipment etc. For our tinkering area we love old DVD player, clocks, computers, radios etc. If you are unsure, please talk to staff.

Library: At the beginning of the year each child will decorate a library bag. Children are then able to borrow up to 2 books at a time. We encourage all children to borrow a book at least once a week. Library bags are placed in the basket in the foyer to be changed. If a book is lost or damaged parent/guardians are asked to replace the book with either a new book or one from the op shop or pay \$10 to replace the book.

Lost Property: All effort is made to ensure property and clothing is returned to the right child. You can assist us by:

- making sure all clothing, lunchboxes, drink bottles etc are named
- returning any items that don't belong to your child

Notice Board: Please read the notice board in the foyer regularly as it displays upcoming events, important dates, changes to the program, items of interest and reminders.

Notice Box: Each child has a file in the Notice Box in the foyer with their first name on it. Notices, Fee Invoices and artwork are all placed in the box. Please check with staff before putting anything such as birthday invites, party plans or advertisements into the pockets.

Parking: The kinder carpark provides limited parking for kinder families. Please be patient when entering and exiting through the gate. There is limited vision when exiting, so please move slowly and watch for pedestrians.

Photos: We take photos of children to display around the room and create stories for Storypark. Families have the opportunity to purchase a USB for \$15 at the end of the year with the photos staff have taken of their child.

A professional photographer takes individual photos and a group photo during the year, which are available for families to purchase.

Families are usually permitted to take photos and video recordings of their child during sessions and at events. Please check with staff first.

Policies: Are available online at the ECKA website: <https://ecka.org.au/>

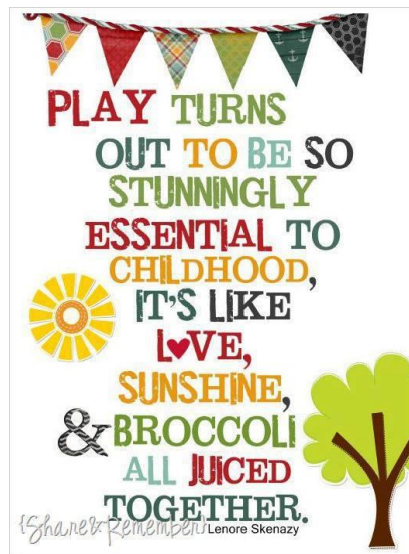
Scholastic Book Club: Parent/guardians can purchase books from the catalogues given out every few months. A percentage of sales are given back to the Kinder to purchase books and equipment from scholastic.

Security: The front door of the kinder will always be locked. Please ring the doorbell or phone the kinder on 5335 8459 and a staff member will meet you at the door. **Never let a child (other than your own) out of the kinder doors.**

Siblings: Siblings are welcome at the kindergarten however they must be supervised at all times by the parent/guardian. **Staff are not responsible for siblings.**

Storypark: Storypark is an online platform allowing us to share photos, stories, newsletters etc with families. You will receive an email in November inviting you to join.

Sunscreen: Coles brand sunscreen is used at kinder. If your child requires a different brand, it will need to be supplied.



Complaints and Compliments

From time-to-time issues may arise with staff, children, other families, the program etc. We strongly encourage all families to speak to the Teacher as soon as possible. Often many issues can be resolved quickly when addressed straight away. We have an open-door policy and welcome all feedback.

Or you can lodge a compliment or complaint with ECKA:

Office: 11 Grandview Grove Wendouree, 3355

Email: ceo@ecka.org.au

Ph: 5339 5055

Mobile: 0400 089 143

Alternatively:

Department of Education and Training (DET)

Manager Quality Assessment and Regulation Division

109 Armstrong Street North

Ballarat, VIC., 3350

ph: 03 5330 8606

All complaints will be dealt with promptly and confidentiality will be maintained in accordance with the ECKA Complaints Policy which is available on the ECKA website