



Family Information Booklet 2024

Enriching children's
lives through learning

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A member of





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



Indigenous Preschool Advancement Strategy (IPAS) Artwork “Cared for”

Painting created by Albert Fagan, Wadawurrung Traditional Owner

Painting description:

The lines within the painting represent the individual journey the children and teachers have taken to get here today. In the middle of the painting is a camp fire where the teachers provide food and water for the children. The symbols on either side represent the teachers and the learning that occurs with the children

Contents

WELCOME TO BEAUFORT EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTRE	4
CONTACT INFORMATION.....	5
TERM DATES FOR 2024	5
KINDERGARTEN SESSION TIMES FOR 2024	5
OUR PHILOSOPHY	6
LEARNING FRAMEWORKS	6
LONG DAY CARE HOURS OF OPERATION.....	6
DEFINING LONG DAY CARE	6
SETTLING IN	7
ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE.....	7
COMMUNICATION	7
POLICIES	7
FAMILY INVOLVEMENT	7
WHAT TO BRING.....	8
HEALTH, MEDICATION, ACCIDENTS AND EMERGENCIES	8
EVACUATION PROCEDURES	9

WELCOME TO BEAUFORT EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTRE

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 unique combination of interested staff and families, all working together with the common goal of producing happy, confident and well-adjusted children.

This centre is bound by the Education and Care National Law 2010 (National Law) and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2012, (National Regulation) and the National Quality Standard (NQS) and is responsible to the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. Our Kindergarten premises are leased from the Pyrenees Shire.



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 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 29 services. While all kindergartens operate within Legislative guidelines, each kindergarten operates 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 INFORMATION



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TERM DATES FOR 2024

2024	Start Date	Finish Date	Public Holidays
Term 1	5 th February *	28 March	Labour day 11 th March
Term 2	15 April	28 June	ANZAC Day 25 th April Kings Birthday 10 th June
Term 3	15 July	20 September	
Term 4	7 October	19 December	Melbourne Cup 5 th November

* Children commence after the meet and greet interview in early February. Start times can vary so please check Storypark for details on your child's starting date and times.

KINDERGARTEN SESSION TIMES FOR 2024

1st Years (3yos) & 2nd Years (4yos)

Group	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Red	9:00 – 2:00	9:00 – 2:00	9:00 – 2:00		
Green	8:30 – 4:00	8:30 – 4:00			
Blue	8:30 – 4:00	8:30 – 4:00			
Yellow			8:30 – 4:00	8:30 – 4:00	

OUR PHILOSOPHY

We are a passionate community and family focused centre. We collaborate and have a strong working partnership with families and foster respectful relationships with both our families and the community. Our service provides a play based curriculum that fosters children's individual developmental needs and interests.

Our educators provide a learning environment that supports and promotes our image of the child, as we believe that children are confident, capable, curious and creative learners. Our educators observe, listen, record, respond and reflect on each child's learning, giving the children the opportunities to reach their fullest potential.

We acknowledge and support the importance of transitions, both within our service and into the wider school community.

As a service, we believe that young children learn through play, as it allows children to explore, identify, negotiate, take risks and create meaning within a social and secure setting.

As educators we create an inclusive, respectful environment that adheres to the Code of Ethics, Child Safety Standards and advocates the Rights of the Child. Our learning environments and curriculum are underpinned by the VEYLDS and EYLF.

LEARNING FRAMEWORKS

The National and Victorian learning frameworks provide a guide for educators to “extend and enrich children’s learning from birth to five years and through the transition to school” (EYLF, p.5). It’s emphasis is on play based learning that allows children to develop the skills they need for future success in learning.

It also emphasises the important role families play in the learning and development of their children and promotes partnership between the service and families. “The framework conveys the highest expectations for all children’s learning” which are expressed through five learning outcomes.

Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity

Outcome 2: Children are connected with and contribute to their world

Outcome 3: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing

Outcome 4: Children are confident and involved learners

Outcome 5: Children are effective communicators

LONG DAY CARE HOURS OF OPERATION

Monday - Friday 8am – 5.30pm. In addition to the Online confidential Enrolment form, Parent/Guardians are required to fill in the BECC LDC Booking Form.

DEFINING LONG DAY CARE

Long Day Care is primarily aimed at 0-6 year olds and is provided by a mix of early childhood qualified staff. Education and care programs are based on each child’s development, interests and experience.

Beaufort Long Day Care also offers wrap around care. This type of care allows enrolled LDC children to attend the Kindergarten program at the Beaufort Early Childhood Centre. We also offer casual care - this is not a permanent booking and is not always available on the same days each week.

The Long Day Care program runs throughout the year including school holidays. The centre is closed from December 22nd and re-opens on Monday 15th January.

SETTLING IN

For some children, the first day of Kindergarten or Long

Day Care may evoke many mixed emotions ranging from excitement to anxiety. This maybe the first time they have had to separate from a parent or caregiver and come to terms with the demands of being in a group environment.

Some children cope better than others with separation anxiety and the educators are trained to support both the child and their parents during this stressful time. Please be reassured that this is a normal part of emotional development for young children and you may ring the Centre at anytime to hear how your child has settled. A familiar teddy or toy from home may help to comfort your child in the early days.

Should you require further information or support with regards to separation anxiety, please feel free to speak with one of the educators in your child's room.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Please be mindful of the hours of operation of the centre. It is important that children are not left in the care of educators outside of these hours. We do understand however that unexpected things happen that may cause a late pick up. Please contact the centre if this is the case so we can reassure your child if needed. A late fee will apply.

Each room has an Ipad that needs you to log your child in and out at drop off and pick up. Please ensure any person collecting your child has been authorised on their enrolment form.

COMMUNICATION

If you are on Facebook, we also have our own page called **Beaufort Early Childhood Centre** that you can join. This is a great way to keep up to date with information and newsletters.

Our service is also on Storypark, which you will be invited to join once your child is enrolled. This is a great platform for updates on your child's progress, programs at the service, special days and information.

POLICIES

Our Centre is governed by a number of policies that cover issues such as collection and delivery of children, enrolment, parental access, privacy of information, sun protection, inclusion of children with additional needs and much more. Copies of these policies are kept in a folder in the foyer and are accessible on the ecka website (ecka.org.au)

Please note that new regulations require that an official print out of your child's immunisation record is to be provided prior to commencing in any of our programs. This can be accessed through Medicare or through a MyGov account.

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.

WHAT TO BRING

All children will be required to bring:

- Morning and afternoon snack, lunch, bottles/formula
- Nappies
- A complete set of clean clothing
- Sun Hat (from September - April) The centre does provide hats, that are labelled with your child's name and kept at the service, but if you would prefer to send your own you are welcome to.
- Warm clothing (Winter months)
- Comforters or special items

Please ensure all items are clearly labelled with your child's name. Your child requires a bag or backpack which is large enough for their lunch box, drink bottle and a change of clothing. This is to be placed on your child's locker upon arrival at the centre. For older children, comfortable, non-restrictive clothing which allows children to toilet independently is advised.

We do provide messy play experiences during both indoor and outdoor play. Please ensure your child is dressed suitably for this kind of play. Children also need to wear footwear that provides good protection for gross motor play such as climbing, running and jumping. Long dresses are inadvisable for the same reason. During Sunsmart months children are also required to wear tops with sleeves.

Due to children's allergies, **we ask that you do not pack nut products in your child's lunchbox.** We encourage healthy, nutritional eating habits and ask that your child's lunch box contents reflect this practice.

Birthday's: We enjoy celebrating your child's special day at the Beaufort Early Childhood Centre and a cake or an alternative option (e.g.; balloon) are always a welcome treat!

(Please check with your child's teacher regarding group numbers and allergies prior to sending a cake along.)

Celebrations: There are important celebrations in early childhood that are meaningful to children & families, and become an integral part of our centres own culture. 'Sometimes' foods may be part of such celebrations but children will be educated that these foods are to be consumed in moderation as endorsed by the smiles for miles program.

HEALTH, MEDICATION, ACCIDENTS AND EMERGENCIES

Please do not bring your child to either Kindergarten or Long Day Care if he/she is not well. We appreciate that many children will want to come regardless of sickness, but it is unfair to expose other children to possible illness and unreasonable to expect your unwell child to cope with the demands of the programme.

We also need to be notified of any infectious disease, as we are required to inform other families of any contactable illness. This includes head lice.

Medication may be required by your child during their time at the centre. Staff are able to administer the

medicine providing you fill out an authorisation form. Please note that by law, we can only administer medication that is in its original container, prescribed specifically for your child and the dosage requested by you must not exceed the recommended dosage on the container.

Children with asthma, anaphylaxis or any other medication condition are required to have an action plan signed by their doctor before they begin which will be activated in an emergency.

Accidents do happen despite our care and attention and should your child require urgent medical attention, an ambulance will be called and you will be notified immediately. This will be recorded in the *accident & emergency book* for you to read and sign and the Department of Early Childhood Education and Care will be notified.

Mild injuries are treated by staff qualified in the delivery of first aid and recorded in the *accident and emergency book* for you to read and sign at the end of the session.

The staff are trained to know what to do in the case of an **emergency** such as fire. Evacuation drills are held once a term to familiarize the children with the procedure.

EVACUATION PROCEDURES

The first staff member alerted to an emergency needs to blow the whistle (that's located on a hook near each room's telephone). This will alert all staff and children in the Centre that they need to evacuate the building.

Kindergarten Room

- **Teacher:**
 - Collects emergency pack (located on the hook by the bathroom door)
 - Collects keys (hanging on around neck of educators)
- **Staff member 2** (Additional Qualified or Co-educator)
 - Collects attendance book
 - Helps gather and reassure children

Echidna Room

- **Room Leader:**
 - Collects emergency pack (located under drink trolley)
 - Collects keys (hanging on cord with whistle)
- **Staff member 2** (Additional Qualified or Co-educator)
 - Collects ipad and clip board with attendance
 - Helps gather and reassure children (all children to hold onto length of the rope, located near the storeroom door)

Long Day Care Kookaburra Room 2

- **Room Leaders/ Teacher:**
 - Collects emergency pack (located on shelf above the microwave)
 - Collects keys (hanging on cord with whistle)
- **Staff members 2** (Additional Qualified or Co-educator)
 - Collects ipad and clip board with attendance
 - Helps gather and reassure children- children are placed in one cot.

Any additional staff/volunteers/students/parents, helps gather and reassure children and direct them to necessary exit.

All staff to take their personal phone where possible and centre mobile, located by sink in kinder room. Phone also located on bench in echidna room.

Evacuation points are the car park or the oval behind the centre. It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure that all children are accounted for.