



# **Bakery Hill** Kindergarten

## **Family Information Booklet 2025**

Enriching children's  
lives through learning

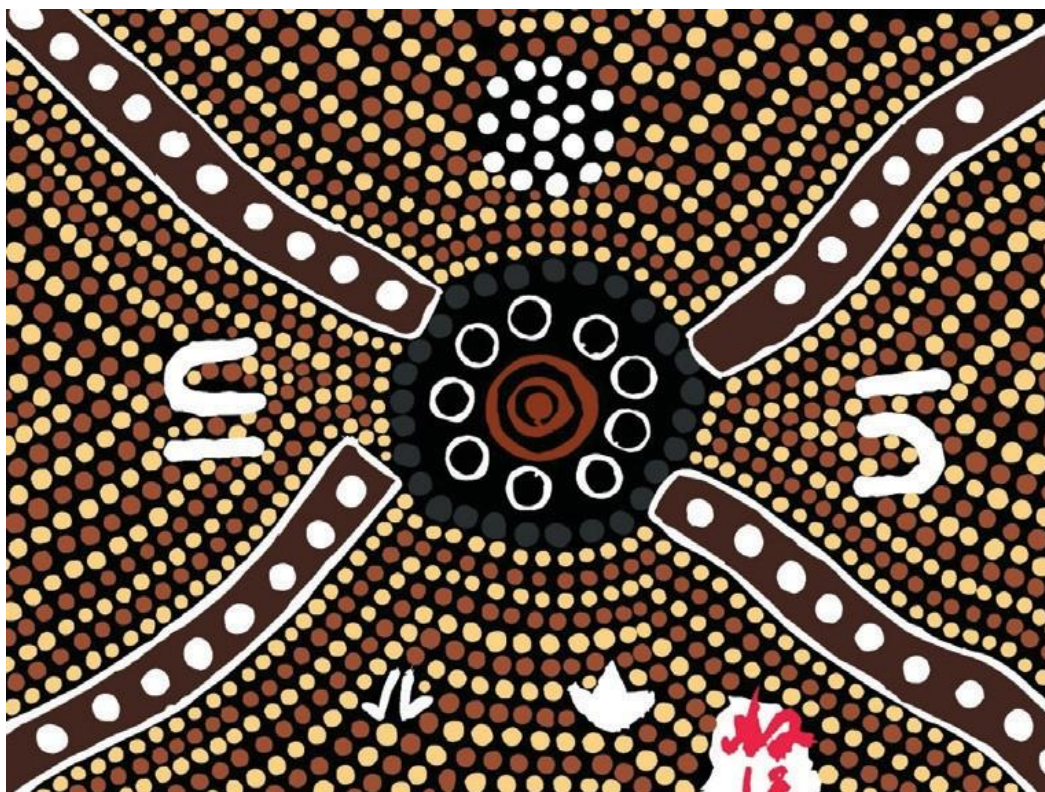
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A member of





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

## WELCOME TO BAKERY HILL 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 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.



**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 29 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.

## CHILD SAFE STATEMENT

ECKA's purpose, Enriching children's lives through learning, can only be achieved where children are in education and care environments that are safe, welcoming and inclusive for children and their families; and ensure that children's health safety and wellbeing is protected at all times. Importantly, children must not only be safe but also feel safe. The welfare of children in ECKA services is at all times our priority and ECKA has a zero tolerance to child abuse.

ECKA operates under a range of legislative, policy and procedural requirements that prioritise the safety of children as paramount at all times, and these are available on the ECKA website, ECKA office, and ECKA Services

ECKA encourages all children, families, employees and others involved with ECKA services to participate in regular evaluation and review of policies and practices, or at any time provide feedback, anonymously if desired, via the ECKA website, ECKA office or ECKA service. At all times, any complaints or concerns about child safety will be treated with the highest priority.

### STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

#### ECKA:

- is committed to the rights of all children to feel safe, and be safe at all times, including:
  - promoting the cultural safety of Aboriginal children
  - promoting the cultural safety of children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
  - promoting the safety of children with a disability
  - promoting the safety of trans and gender diverse children and their families in ECEC settings
  - Ensuring that LGBTIQ+ children and families feel included
- values, respects and cares for children
- empowers children's voices by fostering opportunities for each child to participate, express their views, and to learn and develop
- always acts in the best interests of each child and has zero tolerance of child abuse
- takes all reasonable steps to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of children at all times, whilst also promoting their learning and development
- actively manages the risks of abuse or harm to each child, including fulfilling our duty of care and legal obligations to protect children and prevent any reasonable, foreseeable risk of injury or harm
- continuously improves the way our service identifies risks of and responds to child abuse and encourages reporting and improved responses to allegations of abuse.
- proactively sharing information with relevant authorities to promote the wellbeing and/or safety of a child or a group of children, consistent with their best interests

## CONTACT INFORMATION



**Bakery Hill**  
Kindergarten

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## TERM DATES FOR 2025

2025	Start Date	Finish Date	Public Holidays
Term 1	3 February *	4 April	Labour day 10 <sup>th</sup> March
Term 2	22 April	4 July	ANZAC Day 25 <sup>th</sup> April Kings Birthday 9 <sup>th</sup> June
Term 3	21 July	19 September	
Term 4	6 October	18 December	Melbourne Cup 4 <sup>th</sup> 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.

## SESSION TIMES FOR 2025

**All groups are combined (3yos & 4yos)**

Group	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<b>Group 1</b>	9:00 – 2:00	9:00 – 2:00	9:00 – 2:00		
<b>Group 2</b>		9:15 – 2:15	9:15 – 2:15	9:15 – 2:15	

## INTERVIEWS

Interviews for all families will be held on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> and Friday 31<sup>st</sup> January.

## FOOD

Children require **fruit snack** and **lunch**. (Sandwich, salad, vegetable snacks) and a **water bottle**. We encourage “nude food” – lunch boxes instead of glad-wrap, and healthy sugar free food.

**Please note: - The Kindergarten is a NUT FREE ZONE.**

**NO** Peanut butter or Nutella due to allergies.

**NO** Egg sandwiches also due to allergies.

Thank you for your cooperation.

The kindergarten does not have the facilities to refrigerate sandwiches so please ensure the sandwich has the appropriate filling or a cold pack is included in the lunch box to keep it cold.

Please help your child help themselves by providing lunch and snack containers that they can open themselves.

**Allergies – Parents, please supply educators with your child's allergy management plan including your child's photo and their doctor's signature.**



## CLOTHING

**Bag, spare clothes** - Children are encouraged to bring a **bag** to kindergarten containing their food and **spare clothing**. Each child is allocated his/her own hook in the bag room. Please remember to name your child's bag and belongings.

**Hat** – Provided by the Kindergarten.

**Sunscreen** – Should be applied by parents/carers **before** each session from September to April or when the UV is 3 and above.

**We are a nature play kindergarten. Children require appropriate clothing all year round.** During winter or inclement weather children require a **warm hat and coat** as the children spend most days in the outdoor learning environment.

Smocks are provided by the Kindergarten for the children to use during painting and clay experiences however it is not always possible for the children to stay clean, so please dress them in clothing that is easily washed and comfortable.

**Closed toe sandals/runners** are suitable – Thongs, crocs and open toe sandals are not suitable footwear in the outdoor environment which includes tree climbing.

Please include spare clothing in your child's bags in case a change is required.

Please support the children towards independence by dressing them in clothes that are easily managed at the toilets (avoid belts, tricky studs)

All clothing items need to be labelled clearly with the child's name, especially if the child has a windcheater with the Kindergarten logo printed on it. **Logos are available to order during term 1 and 3.**

## TOYS

We do not encourage the children to bring toys to kinder as they can be lost or damaged, and can also be a disruption to the program. Gifts from nature are welcome in our program at any time.

## CELEBRATIONS

As an inclusive service we celebrate families and cultures everyday through the embedded program and we respect and promote a child's right to uninterrupted play and learning.

Childrens birthdays are celebrated as they are members of our community but not with food. If you choose to invite children from the Kindergarten to an external party, please ensure that you do this discretely.

## COOKING

Occasionally as part of the program the children will be involved in some simple cooking experiences. If your child has any dietary restrictions, please include the details on your confidential enrolment form and advise the staff.

## KINDERGARTEN COMMITTEE

The Kindergarten committee consists of parents who volunteer their time to assist with the running of the Kindergarten. The Committee is responsible for such things as the management of the building, grounds and fundraising.

The Eureka Community Kindergarten Association (ECKA) is the employer of staff and Govt Approved Provider of the kindergarten services. Meetings of the Committee are held monthly at the Kindergarten or Via Zoom and usually start at 7.30 pm and are open to ALL families.

## 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.

## A SUSTAINABLE SERVICE

As much as possible environmentally friendly (Tri-nature) cleaning products are used throughout the service.

The children compost their fruit scraps and waste paper, tend vegetable gardens. We harvest rainwater and the pump encourages children to work for and be mindful of water consumption as does the tank gauge.



**Luka, Aged 5. "My kindergarten"**

**A few notes about safety:** Please be careful when entering and exiting the gate to **ONLY** let **YOUR** child in /out and ensure that the gate closes firmly behind you.

Please discourage your child from standing on the gate.

***If a 4-year-old session is in progress, we ask that 3-year-old families enter and exit the outdoor environment quickly to avoid disruption to the program. The outdoor environment is a learning environment.***

The Department of Education require us to inform parents that **children are not to play** in the outdoor environment before or after Kindergarten sessions.

**Thank you for your cooperation. We look forward to having you as part of our Kindergarten community.**



## OUR KINDERGARTEN

**Bakery Hill Kindergarten** was established in a church hall in Ballarat in 1911. It was one of the first Victorian kindergartens, a pioneer in early childhood education.

Seeking a permanent building for the children, the people of Ballarat fundraised and the current kindergarten, which was architect designed, opened debt free in 1931.

The effort and actions of that community made a strong statement about the importance of young children and their place in their city which underpins our philosophy to this day.

### **We believe**

“Consistently warm and secure relationships are essential if children are to feel a sense of belonging, contribute to a community, be valued for their uniqueness, be respected and cared for and connected to others”

### **This requires.....**

**Time.** Allowing children long periods of uninterrupted time at play whether amongst nature or indoors nourishes their spirit, wellbeing and their relationships with people and the environment. It makes them physically stronger, provides opportunity for wonder and curiosity to flourish, and for their ideas to grow and deepen.

**Open ended experiences.** We are educating children for an unknown future. Arming them with the tools research tells us they require is the role of education. Thinking skills, resilience and the creativity that comes from daily immersion in **open ended experiences with time to develop and refine theories is a child's right and need.**

**Beautiful environments.** Our extensive natural outdoor environment complete with fire pit, billabong and creek as well as trees for climbing and shade, cultivates an abiding respect for nature and our place in it. Our large light filled rooms with bay and floor to ceiling windows ensures we are warmed by the sun and that the garden, seasons and birds are ever visible to the children.

**Children's voices.** Children have ideas and thoughts to share, theories to test and relationships to build. They have fresh ideas about the world around them because they see it through new eyes and have many ways of showing what they understand and see. We, as educators want to listen to them, defend their right to be heard and their right to learn in a way that is meaningful for them, because they are part of the educative process.

**Spirit of place.** Whilst the chestnut trees planted many years ago and the preserved wooden furniture remind us of those who came before us at this kindergarten, the Eureka flag flying nearby on Bakery Hill tells another story about our city's history. Through connecting with Wadawurrung language, knowledge and cultural practices we honor our First Nations People and enrich our own lives.

**A sustainable lifestyle.** Growing vegetables, composting, harvesting rain water and living seasonal change in our outdoor environment connects us to the earth and sustainable practices.

**Community.** In keeping with tradition, the caretakers of the kindergarten are the families who attend from year to year represented by a committee. Together the families, ECKA, committee and educators work for the greater good of the children and their kindergarten. Our neighbourhood and city have riches to share on our journey of learning.