



K I N D E R G A R T E N

Family Information Booklet 2024

Enriching children's
lives through learning

ecka.org.au  

A member of

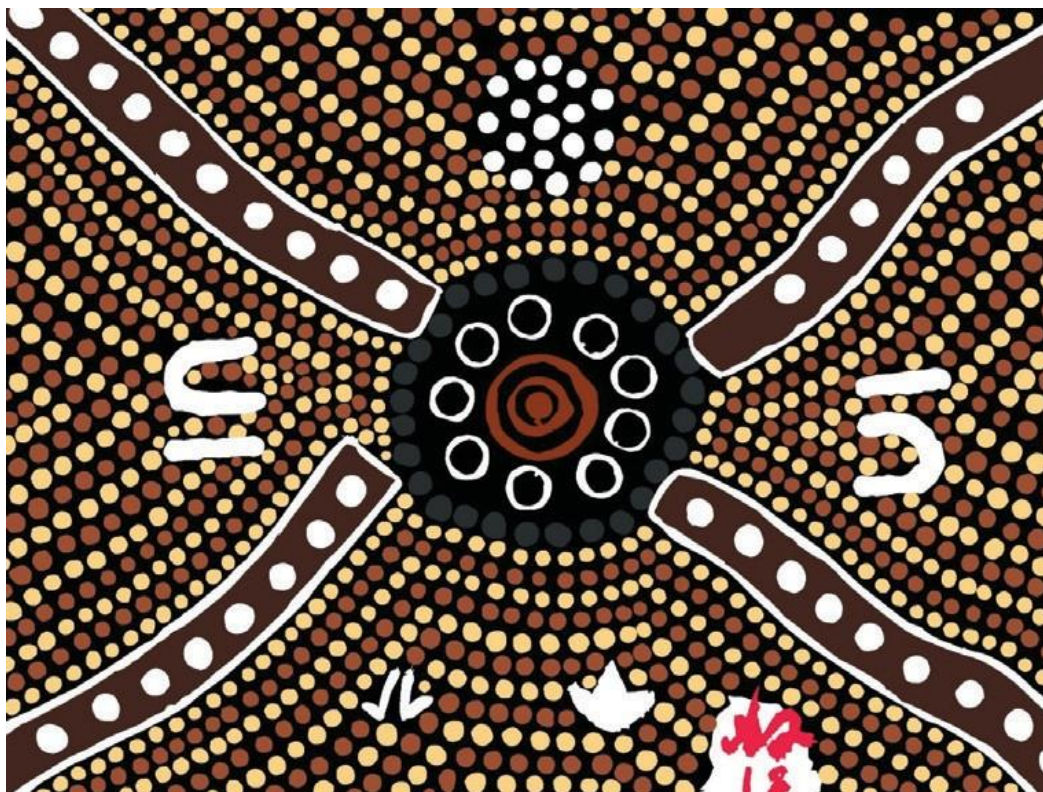




Brown Hill Kindergarten is beside the Yarrowee River and adjacent to parks and bushlands.

The Brown Hill Kindergarten community acknowledges that the kindergarten is on Wadawurrung land and respectfully acknowledges the Wadawurrung people, as the traditional custodians of the land.

We pay our respects to the elders, past and present and young leaders of tomorrow. We will endeavour to protect, respect and care for the land, animals and people for generations to come.



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

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WELCOME TO BROWN HILL KINDERGARTEN

The Eureka Community Kindergarten Association (ECKA), Brown Hill Parents Group and the staff of the kindergarten welcome you and your child to Brown Hill Kindergarten. Brown Hill Kindergarten offers preschool (for children in their year before school) and pre-kinder groups.

Kindergarten is a wonderful place for children to interact and learn from one another. It provides countless opportunities to discover, think, create, explore, plan, play and have fun. It is also a great place to meet and talk with other parents of children of similar ages and interests.

This booklet contains important information about your child's attendance at the kindergarten. Please take time to read the information. If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact us at kindergarten to discuss these.

We hope you and your child enjoy your experiences at Brown Hill Kindergarten.



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 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.

CONTACT INFORMATION



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ecka.org.au



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(03) 5339 5055

info@ecka.org.au

ecka.org.au

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.

SESSION TIMES FOR 2024

1st year (3yo) groups

Group	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Green			8:45 – 4:15		
Purple				8:45 – 4:15	
Orange					8:45 – 4:15

2nd year (4yo) groups

Group	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Red	8:45 - 4:15	8:45 - 4:15			
Yellow				8:30 - 4:00	8:30 - 4:00
Blue A	8:30 - 4:00	8:30 - 4:00			
Blue B	8:30 - 4:00		8:30 - 4:00		
Blue C		8:30 - 4:00	8:30 - 4:00		

OUR PHILOSOPHY

At Brown Hill Kindergarten, we value strong partnerships with children, their families, and their right to rich and stimulating environments.

We believe that, as educators, our role is to view children as confident and capable learners, valuing their voice in guiding the direction of the education program.

Our kindergarten philosophy is inherent in our beliefs about children and guides our everyday practice and principles.

We believe that children learn best:

- In a safe, secure and positive environment where they can actively contribute to their learning.
- Where they are supported to develop resilience, creativity, kindness and friendship with educators who understand their needs and respond respectfully and compassionately.
- Placing high value on children's innate sense of wonder. Educators demonstrate and model positive dispositions to learning and intentional teaching experiences.
- Establishing strong community connections through our Nature Program which offers children to connect with nature, developing increased respect for the natural world.
- When everyone is recognised and respected for their individuality, culture, heritage, and level of ability. High expectations are held for all children to support them reaching their full potential.
- Where the physical environment promotes decision making, taking measured risks and variety within the bounds of safe and healthy practices.
- Where children develop knowledge of the local community and Wadawurrung land, learning to take only what they need.

KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

Brown Hill kindergarten offers a play-based program for both the preschool and pre-kinder groups. A play-based program is one where children have the opportunity to learn through play. The kindergarten program offers a variety of open-ended activities that encourage the children to develop at their own pace. The program is tailored to the children's needs, interests and experiences and is guided by the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework & National Quality Framework.

NATURE PROGRAM 2024

In previous years, the Brown Hill Kindergarten has undertaken a Bush Kindergarten program. In 2023 we transitioned to a Nature Program. This program supports us to access the community more regularly and provide opportunities for uninterrupted time outdoors. Children have access to our current Bush Kinder site, nature walks and provide a great area for children to explore.

We believe the Nature Program is important for children to experience, explore and engage with the natural environment. This provides them with opportunities to develop physical, social and emotional skills, and knowledge of the natural environment.

More information to come during Term 1, 2024



FEES

As part of the Victorian Government's Best Start, Best Life reform 3yo & 4yo Kindergarten programs will be free in 2024. 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

New legislation commenced on January 2016. From this date all children enrolling in an early childhood education and care service need to be up to date with their immunisations or have an approved exemption. Evidence of up to date immunisation must be provided within the two months prior to the child commencing at the kindergarten. An Immunisation History Statement from the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register can be used as evidence of up to date immunization.

Immunisation History Statements are available on request at any time by contacting Medicare:

Phone: 1800653809

Email: acir@medicareaustralia.gov.au

Online: www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/medicare/medicare-online-accounts

in person at your local Medicare service centre. If you are experiencing difficulties accessing vaccinations or required related documents, please talk to the kindergarten staff for assistance.



BEGINNING KINDERGARTEN AND SAYING GOODBYE

Beginning kindergarten can be an exciting experience for your child. All children are individuals and will react to the kindergarten experience in varying ways.

Some children will confidently handle the new situation and others may be reluctant to say goodbye to parents and caregivers. We encourage parents and caregivers to stay a little while until the child is more settled if that is what you feel is appropriate. Parents and caregivers should always say goodbye when they leave rather than slipping away without telling the child, and reassure them you will be back to pick them up. If you have concerns about how your child will settle please talk to staff and we can discuss how best to manage your child's start at kinder so it is a positive experience for everyone.

ARRIVALS & DEPARTURES

It is a Children's Services Centre's regulation that each child is signed in with the time of arrival and signed out again on departure. On arrival at the kindergarten please ensure you sign the attendance book located on the table in the foyer. **Please sign the actual time you arrive and depart rather than the normal session start and finish times. Please do not allow children to draw or write in the sign in book.**

If you are not collecting your child, please notify the teacher. **Staff cannot allow children to leave the kindergarten unless the person collecting them is authorised to do so on the original enrolment form, or staff have been given written notification by parents or guardians.** This is for the safety of your child and it is a Children's Services Centre Regulation. Please collect your child promptly at the end of each session as staff have cleaning and preparation to do after each group. If you are running late please give the kindergarten a call so we can reassure your child.

To ensure our compliance with the Children's Services Regulations we are unable to accept children prior to the start of the session and children must be collected promptly at the end of the session. The centre has a late pick-up policy which sets out procedures for children who have not been picked up promptly.

When entering and leaving the kindergarten please ensure no child other than those for whom you are responsible leave the kindergarten. **DO NOT HOLD THE FOYER DOOR OR GATE OPEN.** Please talk to your children about the importance of staying with you in the foyer and leaving the building only when accompanied by you.

WHAT TO BRING TO KINDERGARTEN

A large bag that includes:

- Lunchbox- *Healthy and nutritious snacks, lunch and a drink bottle of water each day.* The kindergarten has a healthy eating policy and we encourage and support the children to make informed choices about what they eat. We kindly ask that you support us by providing healthy and nutritious food in the lunchboxes. Snack ideas could include, fresh fruit, vegetables, grains, cheese, sandwiches with nutritious fillings etc.
- Change of clothing- t-shirt, jumper, pants/shorts, socks and underwear which are all clearly named.
- Nappies or Pull ups- (If applicable) Please pack enough nappies, pull ups and wipes for the whole session for your child if they are not toilet trained or currently are toilet training. If you have any concerns please contact a staff member.
- From the start of September to the end of April, under our Sun Smart policy, all children are required to wear a hat for outdoor play. The kindergarten will provide a hat for each child in the 4-year-old groups. Children in the pre-kinder groups will need to bring their own hat every session to the end of April and then again from the start of September. Sunscreen is needed when the UV level is 3 or above and will be available at kinder. Please ensure your child is wearing sunscreen prior to arrival at kindergarten during these times. You can check the daily UV level rating on the SunSmart app or via the ECKA website. We will also display this information for families at the kinder.



BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays are an exciting time for many of our children and families. Both the preschool and pre-kinder groups celebrate birthdays by lighting a candle and singing 'Happy Birthday'. We prefer you do not bring in cake or treats to share for birthdays due to allergies and our healthy eating policy, however we will ensure your child's day is extra special.

APPROPRIATE CLOTHING

Please name all belongings carefully

Please dress the children in clothes which they can manage themselves, especially when going to the toilet. Thongs, crocs and slip on shoes are not suitable footwear as they can be dangerous when climbing. At kindergarten, the children are actively involved in fun, but often messy activities. Whilst every effort is made to protect their clothes by providing smocks, sometimes the children still get messy so please send your children to kindergarten in easily washable clothes. It is also a good idea to send a spare set of clothes.

In winter, please make sure children are dressed warmly and send a coat, as we do access outdoor play each session.

UNIFORM

We have polo shirts and windcheaters printed with the kindergarten logo. These are not compulsory, but many families find they are a great idea to save other clothes from kinder stains. Some children like to wear their 'kinder uniform' to be like older brothers and sisters going to school. Polo shirts and Windcheaters can be purchased directly through Edu Threads.

Polo Shirts	\$23
Windcheaters	\$24.5



ASTHMA, ALLERGIES AND MEDICAL CONDITIONS

Please ensure that the kindergarten teacher is informed of any allergies, sensitivities or medical conditions. Parents need to provide a new asthma and allergy management plan each year, completed and signed by a doctor. **If any new allergy or asthma condition is diagnosed or changes during the kindergarten year, parents need to immediately notify staff.** Kindergarten staff are trained in asthma and anaphylaxis management.

- Asthma –Children with asthma must have an asthma management plan and a spacer and inhaler must be provided and kept at the kindergarten (not in the child's bag) all the time the child is in attendance.
- Allergies – Children at risk of anaphylaxis must have an epi-pen at kindergarten at all times they are in attendance. Individual emergency management plans will be developed for each child.
- Specific medical conditions - if children have specific medical needs please ensure staff are informed of relevant information and any management plans.



Medication

If children require medication or have specific medical needs please ensure the relevant information is handed to staff. Medication will only be given to children if the medication book has been completed appropriately. Medication must be in the original container, clearly labeled with the child's name, required dose and expiry date, and must be handed to staff, not left in the child's bag.

Illness

Within a small community such as a kindergarten, colds, tonsillitis, vomiting and diarrhea, chicken pox etc. are easily transmitted. **We kindly ask to please keep your child at home if they are unwell and please notify us if your child is going to be away.** If your child has been vomiting please do not send them to kindergarten for 48 hours after the vomiting has stopped. We have attached an exclusion period chart for the most common illnesses.

If your child becomes ill at kindergarten you will be asked to come and collect them. In case of an emergency, an ambulance will be called immediately. A child cannot be enrolled and attend the kindergarten unless the child's guardian has authorised the centre to seek emergency medical, hospital or ambulance assistance. If an ambulance is called the parent/guardian will be notified immediately and families are liable for any costs.

Injuries or serious accidents

The kindergarten staff all maintain current First Aid Certificates and are trained in asthma and anaphylaxis management.

In the event of a serious injury, one staff member will carry out any first aid required and another will phone an ambulance and parents/guardians or emergency contacts.

For less serious injuries the staff will carry out any necessary first aid and fill out an accident incident report, outlining details of the accident and injury and actions taken. Parents/guardians must sign this report to acknowledge awareness of the accident.

SMOKE FREE ENVIRONMENT



The kindergarten building, foyer and entire fenced area is smoke free at all times. Smoking is prohibited within 4 metres of the kindergarten.

NOTICES & INFORMATION

Notices are an important way for parents/guardians to be kept informed about what is happening in the kindergarten. We will be updating families through the Storypark platform. Any notes that need a signature as well fee notices (physical copy) will be handed directly to parent guardians at arrival/dismissal time.

STAFF ABSENCE AND KINDERGARTEN CLOSURE

In accordance with the Children's Services Regulations kindergartens can only run sessions with the appropriate number of staff to children ratio. This means that if any staff are absent and appropriately qualified replacements are unavailable, the kindergarten session must be cancelled. This will only happen as a last resort and every attempt will be made to find replacement staff.

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.

EXCURSIONS AND VISITORS

Throughout the year, as part of the program, we may go on excursions outside the kindergarten. Parents will be notified of the destination, mode of transport, adult/child ratio, and other relevant information. Written parental permission must be received for each child to attend the excursion. We may also have special visitors or activities at the kindergarten. Parents will be notified ahead of time.

LOST PROPERTY

Any lost property found at the kindergarten will be placed in a box in the front foyer for you to identify and claim. Please check regularly. Please ensure all items are named as this will make it easier to have lost items returned to you.

PARKING

The parking area can become very congested at drop off and pick up times - please consider parking near the cricket club and pipe band rooms and walking around the court. There is NO PARKING in Reid Court. Please obey all signs including no standing signs. We encourage you to hold the children's hands at all times when outside the centre, stay on the paths (do not walk behind parked vehicles) and be conscious of other vehicles and pedestrians. Please consider our neighbours when parking and driving into the court.

FIRE DRILL AND EMERGENCY EXITS

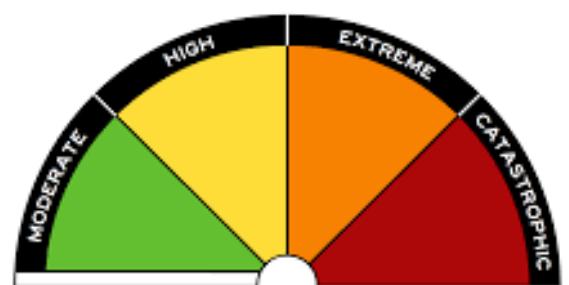
A copy of the emergency exits in the kindergarten is attached. Each term we practice our fire drill/emergency evacuation procedures with the children.

PROCEDURES FOR THE BUSHFIRE SEASON

Brown Hill Kindergarten has been identified as being in a very high-risk fire area – the Kindergarten will be closed on Catastrophic fire danger Rating Days.

Where possible, we will provide parents with up to three days' notice of a planned closure. We will contact you directly with advice on planned closures and will confirm the decision to close by 12 noon the day before the planned closure. Where it is not practical to confirm the closure in writing, you will be contacted via telephone or text.

Once confirmed, the decision to close will not change, regardless of improvements in the weather forecast. This is to avoid confusion and help your family plan alternative care arrangements for your child.



No staff will remain on site when the facility is closed by the threat of fire. A sign will be displayed on the kindergarten door to explain that the service is closed due to the declaration of a Code Red or Extreme Fire Danger Rating for that day.

In the event of an emergency the kindergarten will respond in accordance with current emergency management procedures, which includes the requirement to follow direction from fire authorities. A current Emergency Management Plan is located at the kindergarten.

Please make sure kindergarten staff have your current contact details, including your mobile phone numbers, and an email contact. Keep in touch with us by reading both Storypark, kindergarten and ECKA newsletters, and speaking to your kindergarten staff.

More information about bushfires and children's services is available on the Department of Education and Training website – www.education.vic.gov.au/bushfires.

If at any time you have concerns about sending your child to kindergarten on a high fire danger day that has not been declared a Code Red or Extreme Fire Danger day, please remember that you are able to keep your child at home with you. There is no obligation for you to send your child to kindergarten if you are uneasy about the weather conditions on the day. However, please ensure you do let the staff at your kindergarten know if your child will not be attending kindergarten on any given day.



Should you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to speak to your kindergarten teacher or contact ECKA on 53395055, or 0400 089 143.

POLICIES

Kindergartens managed by ECKA are governed by a number of policies that cover such issues as Fees, Collection and Delivery of Children, Enrolment, Parental Access, Privacy of information, Sun Protection, Inclusion of Children with Additional Needs, and many others. Copies of these policies are available for parents at any time in a folder in the foyer. Please feel free to look through. Policies can also be accessed on the ECKA website.

Some examples of the policies we have include:

- SunSmart Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Anaphylaxis Policy

Minimum period of exclusion from primary schools and children's services¹ for infectious diseases cases and contacts

Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2019

Schedule 7

Column 1 Number	Column 2 Conditions	Column 3 Exclusion of cases	Column 4 Exclusion of Contacts
1	Chickenpox	Exclude until all blisters have dried. This is usually at least 5 days after the rash appears in unimmunised children, but may be less in previously immunised children	Any child with an immune deficiency (for example, leukaemia) or receiving chemotherapy should be excluded for their own protection. Otherwise not excluded
2	Conjunctivitis	Exclude until discharge from eyes has ceased	Not excluded
3	Cytomegalovirus (CMV) infection	Exclusion is not necessary	Not excluded
4	Diarrhoeal illness*	Exclude until there has not been vomiting or a loose bowel motion for 24 hours	Not excluded
5	Diphtheria	Exclude until medical certificate of recovery is received following at least two negative throat swabs, the first not less than 24 hours after finishing a course of antibiotics and the other 48 hours later	Exclude family/household contacts until cleared to return by the Chief Health Officer
6	Glandular fever (Epstein-Barr Virus Infection)	Exclusion is not necessary	Not excluded
7	Hand, Foot and Mouth disease	Exclude until all blisters have dried	Not excluded
8	Haemophilus Influenzae type b (Hib)	Exclude until 48 hours after initiation of effective therapy	Not excluded
9	Hepatitis A	Exclude until a medical certificate of recovery is received, but not before 7 days after the onset of jaundice or illness	Not excluded
10	Hepatitis B	Exclusion is not necessary	Not excluded
11	Hepatitis C	Exclusion is not necessary	Not excluded
12	Herpes (cold sores)	Young children unable to comply with good hygiene practices should be excluded while the lesion is weeping. Lesions to be covered by dressing, where possible	Not excluded
13	Human Immuno-deficiency virus infection (HIV)	Exclusion is not necessary	Not excluded
14	Impetigo	Exclude until appropriate treatment has commenced. Sores on exposed surfaces must be covered with a watertight dressing	Not excluded
15	Influenza and influenza like illnesses	Exclude until well	Not excluded unless considered necessary by the Chief Health Officer
16	Leprosy	Exclude until approval to return has been given by the Chief Health Officer	Not excluded
17	Measles	Exclude for at least 4 days after onset of rash	Immunised contacts not excluded. Unimmunised contacts should be excluded until 14 days after the first day of appearance of rash in the last case. If unimmunised contacts are vaccinated within 72 hours of exposure with any infectious case, or received Normal Human Immunoglobulin (NHIG) within 144 hours of exposure of any infectious case, they may return to the facility
18	Meningitis (bacterial—other than meningococcal meningitis)	Exclude until well	Not excluded
19	Meningococcal infection	Exclude until adequate carrier eradication therapy has been completed	Not excluded if receiving carrier eradication therapy
20	Mumps	Exclude for 5 days or until swelling goes down (whichever is sooner)	Not excluded
21	Molluscum contagiosum	Exclusion is not necessary	Not excluded
22	Perussis (Whooping cough)	Exclude the child for 21 days after the onset of cough or until they have completed 5 days of a course of antibiotic treatment	Contacts aged less than 7 years in the same room as the case who have not received three effective doses of pertussis vaccine should be excluded for 14 days after the last exposure to the infectious case, or until they have taken 5 days of a course of effective antibiotic treatment
23	Poliovirus infection	Exclude for at least 14 days from onset. Re-admit after receiving medical certificate of recovery	Not excluded
24	Ringworm, scabies, pediculosis (head lice)	Exclude until the day after appropriate treatment has commenced	Not excluded
25	Rubella (German measles)	Exclude until fully recovered or for at least four days after the onset of rash	Not excluded
26	Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS)	Exclude until medical certificate of recovery is produced	Not excluded unless considered necessary by the Chief Health Officer
27	Shiga toxin or Verotoxin producing Escherichia coli (STEC or VTEC)	Exclude if required by the Chief Health Officer and only for the period specified by the Chief Health Officer	Not excluded
28	Streptococcal infection (including scarlet fever)	Exclude until the child has received antibiotic treatment for at least 24 hours and the child feels well	Not excluded
29	Tuberculosis (excluding latent tuberculosis)	Exclude until receipt of a medical certificate from the treating physician stating that the child is not considered to be infectious	Not excluded
30	Typhoid fever (including paratyphoid fever)	Exclude until approval to return has been given by the Chief Health Officer	Not excluded unless considered necessary by the Chief Health Officer

Regulation 111

A person in charge of a primary school, education and care service premises or children's services centre must not allow a child to attend the primary school, education and care service premises or children's services centre for the period or in the circumstances:

- * specified in column 3 of the Table in Schedule 7 if the person in charge has been informed that the child is infected with an infectious disease listed in column 2 of that Table; or
- * specified in column 4 of the Table in Schedule 7 if the person in charge has been informed that the child has been in contact with a person who is infected with an infectious disease listed in column 2 of that Table.

* Diarrhoeal illness includes instances where certain pathogens are identified including *Amoebiasis (Entamoeba histolytica)*, *Campylobacter* spp., *Salmonella* spp., *Shigella* spp. and intestinal worms, but is not limited to infection with these pathogens.

Further information

Please contact the Communicable Disease Prevention and Control Section on 1300 651 160 or visit www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/infectious-diseases/school-exclusion

¹ Children's services cover the terms 'education and care service premises' or 'children's services centre' used in the regulations. It includes centres such as childcare centres and kindergartens.