

Clunes & District



Pre-School

# Family Information Booklet 2024

Enriching children's  
lives through learning

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

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 CLUNES PRESCHOOL

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 Hepburn Shire Council.



**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 of 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**

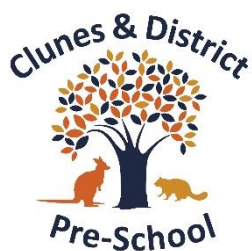
### **Our Guiding Principle**

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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(03) 5339 5055

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## TERM DATES FOR 2024

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

We will be closed for two staff professional development days, dates to be announced

## SESSION TIMES FOR 2024

### 1st Years (3yo) & 2nd Years (4yo)

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
9:00 – 2:00	9:00 – 2:00	9:00 – 2:00		

## 2024 STAFF

Charissa Dubbeld: Early Childhood Teacher and Service Leader

Lee Swanson: Early Childhood Educator

Sam Gull: Additional Early Childhood Educator (SRF)

## OUR PHILOSOPHY

At Clunes and District Kindergarten we believe that children are strong and capable individuals who learn through interacting with their environment and through relationships with others. We share the ECKA values of respect, compassion, courage and collaboration and aim to embed these into our professional practice every day.

When interacting with children, families, the wider community and each other, we strive to:

### Be Respectful

We work and play on Dja Dja Wurrung land and pay respect to the past, present and future Elders of this nation. We endeavour to embed the cultural, spiritual and educational practices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples into our curriculum.

We are committed to providing a positive learning environment built on kindness and respect. This is the basis of our program, promoting respect for each other, the environment and our community.

We are underpinned by The National Quality Framework and the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework and our curriculum is play based supported by intentional teaching moments.

### Be Compassionate

We embrace diversity and difference and understand that children develop at their own pace.

We believe that each child is a unique and valued member of our Kinder community.

We advocate for the safety and wellbeing of children and recognise this as crucial for all learning and development.

### Be Courageous

We believe that all children are competent and capable learners.

Each child develops independence, self-identity and an ability to safely question the world around them at their own pace. This is possible in our open ended, play based learning environment. Children are therefore encouraged to take risks in their learning, to be themselves and to develop a can-do attitude.

We see taking risks as an important part of the learning process.

We recognise the courage and trust families place in us as we support children to become global citizens on their education path.

We acknowledge that the health and wellbeing of each child is crucial. Child Safe Standards guide our practice and we strive to advocate for all children.

We are courageous in our critical reflection. It informs our practice and we continually draw on evidence-based research, theories and perspectives to challenge our understandings.

### Be Collaborative

We recognise families as children's first and most influential teachers

Our School Readiness Funding connects us with Allied Health professionals, enabling opportunities to engage in professional learning by aligning with external stakeholders and actively reflecting upon our practice to achieve best outcomes for all children.

We are linked in with community groups including the Primary School, Smiles for Miles and community health.

We engage with external providers to support children and families, ensuring continuity of care is achieved across an individual's learning environment.

We prioritise respectful relationships with children, families, colleagues and communities. This is achieved through active listening, positive interactions and seeking clarification when required.

At Clunes and District Pre-School, we see that best outcomes are achieved for our Kinder community when we work together towards a common goal.



## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Our program is informed by the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF) along with our Philosophy, the National Quality Framework (NQF) and Child Safe Standards. You will see references to these in our program, documentation and planning wall. We are also supported by our Early Education Advisor and Pedagogical Leader, Emma Manton. Please speak to Charissa if you would like more information on our planning and documentation process.

## ASSESSMENT AND RATING

The National Quality Standard (NQS) sets a benchmark for early childhood education and care services across Australia. Services are assessed and rated in the following areas:

Overall Rating for Clunes & District Preschool:		EXCEEDING
QUALITY AREA 1	Educational program and practice	Exceeding
QUALITY AREA 2	Children's health and safety	Exceeding
QUALITY AREA 3	Physical environment	Exceeding
QUALITY AREA 4	Staffing arrangements	Exceeding
QUALITY AREA 5	Relationships with children	Exceeding
QUALITY AREA 6	Collaborative partnerships	Exceeding
QUALITY AREA 7	Governance and leadership	Exceeding

## ADMISSION AND ENROLMENT PROCEDURES

Children must be 3 by the 30th April in their Pre-School year to be eligible for a government funded place at Kinder. The children are offered positions at the Pre-School according to their order of enrolment. Children must be 3 years old before they can begin their Kinder journey.

## INTERVIEW DAYS

Interview Days will be held on Thursday 1st to Monday 5th February. We will let you know your interview time. This is to ensure all documents are up to date and signed where appropriate including: Australian Immunisation Record, any medical plan (eg asthma, anaphylaxis), court orders and signed photo permission, arrival and departure and DET acknowledgement forms. Without these documents, your child will not be able to start at Kinder.

## The A to Z of useful information:

### ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

#### Signing in and out

The Attendance Book is essential to knowing which children are in the centre at any one time. All children must be signed in and out with the exact time of arrival and departure recorded by the person who delivers and collects the child. In the event of a parent/guardian running late, please let us know as early as possible.

#### Arrival

**If you are unwell, please do not attend the kindergarten.**

To assist with the settling of children and their independence, we will continue with gate drop off in 2024. A staff member will meet families at the gate and children will enter. While waiting, please maintain active supervision of your child. You are welcome to enter if your child requires comfort or assistance.

#### Departure

Collection of a child must be by a person who has lawful authority to do so, authorised on the enrolment form. If anyone other than the parent/guardian or those authorised are collecting a child, prior notification must be provided. Authorisations can be amended throughout the year by parents / guardians. Please speak to Charissa to add or remove authorised persons on your child's enrolment record. The entrance door will be unlocked at around 1.45 for the purpose of collecting children. Please ensure all doors and gates are closed behind you and only allow your child to exit the building.

### ATTENDANCE INFORMATION

All absences are recorded in both the Attendance book and an online portal. Please let staff know if your child will be away by either a phone call (feel free to leave a message after hours), email or StoryPark notification. It is in the children's best interest that they participate in the full Kinder session and arriving on time assists with this. If an emergency arises and you are going to be late, please let us know as early as possible. We don't always make it to the phone during session but do keep an eye on messages and StoryPark.

### ACCIDENTS

**The safety and wellbeing of the children is our first priority.** All staff are trained in First Aid including CPR, Asthma and Anaphylaxis training.

Minor accidents (grazes, bumps, small cuts and scratches) will be treated at the pre-school and recorded in the accident record. Charissa or Lee will prepare an incident form for you to sign and return.

For accidents requiring medical attention or if children cannot be comforted, the parent or emergency contact will be called immediately.

In cases of a medical emergency, the ambulance will be called first and parent/guardian notified as soon as possible.

All medical details, including ambulance cover should be documented on the enrolment form.

Please note that an ambulance will always be called when staff deem this to be necessary.

## BIRTHDAYS

We love to celebrate birthdays at Kinder! As a group we will always sing Happy Birthday to your child, unless you request that we refrain. Please inform Charissa or Lee if you would like to provide birthday cupcakes. **We do request that these are store bought, to assist us with being allergy aware.** If you choose to invite children from the kindergarten to an external party, please ensure that you do this discretely.



## CLOTHING

We encourage and assist children to manage their clothes in hot weather, cold weather and when going to the toilet. By letting the children wear clothing that is easy to manage and easily laundered you are supporting them to develop confidence and independence. Please provide a bag that is easy to open and close along with a change of clothes. Kinder can be messy! **Please name every item.**

Have your child wear strong sturdy shoes with non-slip soles so that climbing running and moving will not be restricted. Thongs, clogs, loose fitting shoes and open-toe sandals are not recommended as they hinder movement and may cause accidents.

**When warm:** appropriate clothing that covers shoulders and hats are required. Please provide a wide brimmed hat that can be left in children's Kinder bags. We follow a **Sun Smart** Policy which requires children to wear hats and sunscreen on UV 3 and + days and between September and April.

**When cold:** Please send a warm coat, hat and gumboots for outside play. A pair of slippers to prevent the carpets from getting muddy are also helpful.

## EXCURSIONS AND INCURSIONS

These are an important part of the Pre-School program. Incursions and excursions expose children to many different experiences, further extending their development and learning. Prior to their approval, a risk assessment is conducted and made available for your viewing. You are also welcome to attend.

## ILLNESSES & MEDICATIONS

### Infectious Disease

Parents must contact the Pre-School if their child contracts an infectious disease. Examples include but are not limited to measles, chicken pox or mumps. Once an infectious disease has been diagnosed, the child cannot attend Kinder until Children Services guidelines have been met. Children are to be kept home from Kinder while their condition is contagious. Please let us know if children are unable to attend a session. This can be a phone call, email or StoryPark message.

### Immunisations

Under the Victorian governments No jab, no play regulation, all children are required to have a record of immunisation for enrolments to be finalised. See [www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/campaigns/no-jab-no-play](http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/campaigns/no-jab-no-play) for more information.

### Medical Action Plans

Children with a diagnosed medical condition including asthma, anaphylaxis, epilepsy, diabetes MUST have a Medical Action Plan signed by a doctor. Children are unable to attend Kinder until these signed documents are provided.

### Sickness

In the interest of all children if your child seems unwell, please keep them home. If a child becomes unwell and is unable to participate in the Kinder program, the parent/emergency contact will be called.



## MORNING SNACKS AND LUNCHES

It is expected that children eat fresh fruit or vegetables at snack time.

The food that children bring to Kinder should be nutritious to sustain their energy levels throughout our busy days. We promote healthy eating habits for optimum health and wellbeing. Food should be packed in a lunch box that is easy for your child to handle, clearly named. The Kinder promotes water as the healthy drink option. Please provide a named drink bottle for your child. We have refrigerated water for top ups throughout the day.



Yoghurt and other food needing refrigeration can be stored in the fridge until lunchtime or make sure to pack an ice brick. Please ensure any food placed in the fridge is clearly labelled with the date and child's name.

Please do not send chocolates, chocolate biscuits, chips, lollies etc.

## NO SMOKING OR VAPING



Smoking and vaping is prohibited on kindergarten grounds and within 4 metres of the kindergarten entrance.

## NOTICE BOARD AND STORYPARK

Please regularly check StoryPark notifications and the White Board at the entrance of Kinder for notices. This will ensure your family is up to date with what is happening in the Kinder community.

## 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 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.

## PHOTOGRAPHS, VIDEOS AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Please respect the rights of other children and families by checking with the Teacher in Charge before taking any photographs or videos of children. You will be required to sign a photographic permission form as part of your enrolment process to allow the preschool to use images of your child. Some parents may request that their child not be photographed. Families have a right to privacy. We ask parents to be mindful of maintaining confidentiality when dealing with social media. **It is not appropriate for parents to place photos or comments that include children other than their own on to any social media or websites.**

## POLICIES

A copy of the Pre-School Policy Book is available for you to view in the foyer. This book contains policies that are relevant to the running of the Pre-School. They are also available on the ECKA website at [www.ecka.org.au](http://www.ecka.org.au)

## PORTFOLIOS AND DOCUMENTATION

We keep a record of your child's personal development throughout the year. Please speak to staff to arrange a time if you wish to view and discuss these. In preparation for school, a Transition Report will be sent home to each family towards the end of their final Kinder year. The Transition Report details your child's strengths and competencies and is a learning document that will assist your child's transition into their first year of primary school.

## ROUTINE

We have a flexible daily routine that integrates the indoor and outdoor learning environments, music and movement, intentional teaching and ample time for unrushed play.

## SAFETY

We take every precaution to protect all children at the preschool from any hazard likely to cause injury. We have an evacuation procedure and an emergency drill is practiced by the children and teachers each term. Evacuation plans are on display at the Pre-School.

## SUNSMART



To ensure that we remain SunSmart, children are required to wear:

**A broad brimmed Hat:** During term 1 and 4, and when the UV rating is 3 or above.

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

## TOYS

Where possible, we discourage children from bringing toys to kindergarten. We understand that some children might have a comfort toy that they like to keep in their bag or occasionally carry when upset however we cannot be responsible for toys from home that become broken or lost. Please discuss this with Charissa.

We do encourage children to bring nature items, or other items of interest to share with the other children.

## VISITORS

Please sign the Visitors Register if you are entering the Kinder. This is situated in the foyer. Visitor registers allows staff to quickly check who is in the building in the case of an emergency. You will also be required to complete a volunteer induction with either Charissa or Lee.

## WHAT TO BRING

Children will be required to bring a bag containing a broad brimmed hat, healthy Morning Tea (including fruit) and Lunch in a named lunch box, a named Drink Bottle (water only please) and spare clothes. It is a good idea to pack more food than you think is required as children can get hungry!