



Hepburn
Kindergarten

**Family Information
Booklet 2025**

Enriching children's
lives through learning

ecka.org.au  

A member of



eckka



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 HEPBURN 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. 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 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



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hepburn.kin.teacher@kindergarten.vic.gov.au

ecka.org.au



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(03) 5339 5055

info@ecka.org.au

ecka.org.au

TERM DATES FOR 2025

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

1st Years (3yos mixed group)

Group	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Group A		9:15 – 2:15	9:15 – 2:15		9:15 – 2:15

2nd Years (4yos mixed group)

Group	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Group B	9:15 – 2:15	9:15 – 2:15		9:15 – 2:15	
Group C	9:15 – 2:15		9:15 – 2:15	9:15 – 2:15	
Group D	9:15 – 2:15			9:15 – 2:15	9:15 – 2:15

KEY DATES FOR 2024

MONDAY 29th JANUARY	Staff Professional Development Day
TUESDAY 30th JANUARY	Set Up and Team Inductions Day
WEDNESDAY 31st JANUARY	Staff Planning Day
THURSDAY 1st FEBRUARY	Interview Day
FRIDAY 2nd FEBRUARY	Interview Day
MONDAY 5th FEBRUARY	4-Year-Old Group First Day
TUESDAY 6th FEBRUARY	3-Year-Old Group First Day Half session
WEDNESDAY 7th FEBRUARY	3-Year-Old Group Half session
THURSDAY 8th FEBRUARY	4-Year-Old Group Full Day
FRIDAY 9th FEBRUARY	3-Year-Old Group Half session
MONDAY 12th FEBRUARY	3-Year-Old Group First Full Day

OUR PHILOSOPHY

WE VALUE

A holistic approach that responds to children learning through play and is based on their strengths and interests. We are guided by the principles and practices of the Victorian Early Years Learning Framework, Belonging, Being and Becoming and the learning outcomes of Identity, Wellbeing, Community, Learning and Communication.

WE BELIEVE

The Child

That the child is at the heart of everything we do. We view children as competent, capable, unique individuals and seek to guide them to reach their full potential, by providing high quality education and care that builds a strong foundation for lifelong learning.

Belonging

Belonging means that children feel safe, secure and supported. Partnerships with children, families and community are essential. We recognise that families are the child's first and most influential teacher and connect to local community to enhance children learning and provide a feeling of belonging and social acceptance.

Being

Through Being we foster children's self-worth and freedom of expression, in a secure and responsive environment that encourages kindness, resilience and social and emotional intelligence. Where all children have the right to learn in an inclusive, positive and nurturing environment

Becoming

Children experience Becoming when teaching is intentional, and experiences are open ended, hands on and allow children to learn at their own pace and level of development. Literacy and numeracy are embedded in meaningful ways throughout the program and service to foster these emergent skills.

Environment

The indoor and outdoor environment are of equal importance, fostering curiosity, wonder, inquiry and exploration and the natural world is highly valued.

The program fosters children's cultural competence, and diversity and uniqueness are recognised and celebrated.



WHY IS PLAY SO IMPORTANT TO LEARNING?



Through play children engage in and interact with the world around them. Play allows children to use their creativity; develop their imagination; build physical and intellectual strengths; and understand their social and emotional world.

Play helps children to find out who they are. It helps them to feel good about themselves and develop a positive sense of self.

Play helps children to make their own decisions, problem solve a myriad of situations; learn about their own ability and how to master skills; build resilience and confidence. Play is essential to successful healthy development.

MEETING YOUR CHILD'S EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

A Child's Educational needs are met

- Through the provision of a rich and challenging learning environment, where positive reinforcement and enthusiastic involvement is the main technique used to encourage learning through play.
- Educators encourage children to construct their own knowledge and understanding at their own pace, building directly on their individual strengths and interests.
- Educators always provide a happy, caring, and safe environment, where each child is free to express, explore and be an integral part of the kindergarten environment.



NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARDS ASSESSMENT & RATING

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

INTERVIEWS

INTERVIEWS FOR 3- & 4-YEAR-OLD PARENTS for 2024 will be held on THURSDAY 1ST FEBRUARY and FRIDAY 2nd FEBRUARY

If not provided earlier, at this Interview you must bring required certificates/ documents – Australian Immunisation Record, any medical plans (eg asthma, anaphylaxis), court orders and signed photo permission, arrival and departure and DET acknowledgement forms.

PLEASE BE AWARE THAT WITHOUT ALL THESE DOCUMENTS YOUR CHILD WILL NOT BE ABLE TO START KINDER

OUR DAILY PROGRAM TIMETABLE

9.15am - 9.30am	Morning Meeting
9.30 - 11.00am	Inside Play
11.00 - 11.30am	Group Time
11.30am – 12.00pm	Morning Tea
12.00pm - 1.30pm	Outside Play
1.30pm - 2.00pm	Lunch Time
2.00pm - 2.15pm	Pack Up and Book

Note: Morning Meeting will not start until Term 2. Times are approximate

DOCUMENTING LEARNING

Storypark

We use Storypark for our documentation. It is an easy-to-use private online space that helps teachers, parents and families work together to record, share and extend children's learning and development.

Your child's Portfolio

- Provides an ongoing individual record of your child's learning and participation in the Educational Program.
- Containing printed individual learning stories that will also be available on Storypark and examples of your child's artwork
- The Portfolios are always accessible to children and their families to view and share.

Other methods of Assessment & Reporting on your child's progress

- OBSERVATIONS & GOAL SETTING - By staff in consultation with families
- FORMAL TESTING may be carried out if a child requires assistance in the areas of oral language or fine or gross motor skills development.
- MID YEAR SUMMARIES & PARENT TEACHER INTERVIEWS are offered to all families mid-year (July).
- TRANSITION STATEMENTS are developed to help your child and their new school get to know each other and make that transition into school much smoother (November).

WHAT TO BRING TO KINDERGARTEN

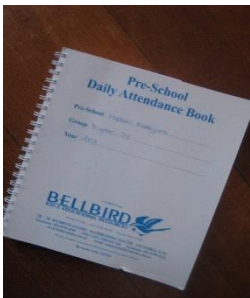
- A bag.
- Healthy Morning Tea (fruit) and Lunch in a named lunch box.
- A Drink Bottle (named). Water only please
- Spare clothes in case of toileting accidents.
- A named Sun Hat during Term 1 and Term 4 according to our SunSmart Policy.
- A named coat and hat in Term 2 & 3 (Winter) is essential in our cold climate.



WHAT TO WEAR TO KINDERGARTEN

- It is essential that your child is dressed in comfortable play clothes that allow them to run, climb and take part in messy activities.
- Please do not send your child in singlet tops/dresses as this is a regulation of our Sunsmart policy
- Sensible footwear

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE



- Regulations state that the Attendance Book must be signed by a parent on arrival and departure from kindergarten every day your child attends.
- In the case of an emergency the Attendance Book is used to check off children in attendance.
- Please inform staff if there is a change of plan for child pick-up. Staff are not permitted to allow a child to leave with another person unless they have the parent's authorisation.

Settling in and Separation

Some Pre-schooler's are overwhelmed by their first day at Kindergarten and may be hesitant to stay:

- Be patient and give them time to familiarise themselves with their new surroundings.
- Stay with them for as long as you feel necessary (but not TOO long)
- Wait until they are happily involved in an activity.
- When you decide that it's time to go, always tell them that you are going and reassure them that you will return soon.
- Ask for staff support if necessary.
- Remember that long, drawn out 'good byes' can make things much worse .
- Do not worry, children settle very quickly with little distress once you have gone.
- Remember if you are worried when you leave, a phone call will alleviate your concerns.



IMMUNISATION

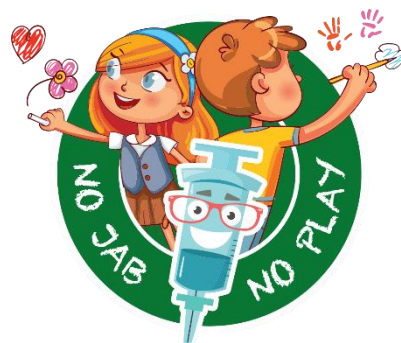
By law, to finalise enrolment of your child in kindergarten you must provide the service with an Immunisation History Statement from the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR).

It must show that your child:

- is up to date with vaccinations for their age OR
- is on a recognised vaccine catch-up schedule OR
- has a medical condition preventing them from being fully vaccinated.

Parents and carers can print a copy of their child's Immunisation History Statement from:

- MyGov account
- Call the AIR on phone 1800 653 809
- visit a Medicare or Centrelink office



INJURY, ILLNESS & MEDICATION REPORTING

If there are any Injuries or Illnesses that occur to your child during a Kindergarten session you will be notified verbally at the end of the day or by phone (if necessary). These incidents are always written on the Medication/Accident Sheet, which the teacher/assistant will ask you to sign.

If your child is unwell, we strongly advise that you keep your child at home. If your child suffers the symptoms of vomiting or diarrhea, they must be excluded from kindergarten for 24 hours after the last episode of the symptom.

For any ongoing Medication that is needed to be administered during kinder hours, a parent **MUST** fill out our Medication Book. Please see Catherine.

SPECIAL HEALTH CONCERNS

- **Medical Action Plans** for children with ongoing medical problems such as asthma, anaphylaxis, epilepsy, diabetes **MUST** be provided by your GP. Parents and Teachers will work closely to ensure that the child's medical needs are being looked after at all times.
- **Anaphylaxis** is a serious medical illness associated with allergic reactions to specific substances that are found in everyday life. If our group does have a child with this condition, we ask for the full support of all the parents and children of our group to follow procedures that will support the child. We will inform all families if there is a need

HEALTHY EATING & DRINKING POLICY

To support the National Health concern regarding obesity in children the Hepburn Kindergarten has realised the importance of educating everyone on the importance of Healthy Eating and drinking, therefore, we have developed a Healthy Eating and Water Only Policy.

This means that children's lunch food should always be healthy, and children will only drink water when at kinder. Please avoid processed packaged food as they contain large amounts of sugar



SUNSMART POLICY



The Kindergarten has a Sunsmart Policy which requires that between September and April and also when the UV rating is 3 or above all children must wear a broad brimmed hat.

Sunblock is provided and we ask parents to apply the sunblock when they arrive at kinder, if not before.

Clothing must always be suitable; therefore, children should not be dressed in singlet dresses or singlet tops.

EXCURSIONS & INCURSIONS

Throughout the year the children will be involved in several Incursions (Educational Programs coming into the kindergarten e.g. Victorian Museum, Australian Animals, Pet Awareness, Holly's Bees)

We sometimes go out on excursions and parental permission must be given on these occasions and strict regulations and procedures must be adhered to.

We hope to undertake regular Bush Kinder across the road at Hepburn Primary or down in Doctor's Gully. We are also looking at restarting our once-a-month Intergenerational Project visiting the elderly care unit at the Daylesford Hospital as there are so many benefits for our community.

ARTWORK CRATES, POCKETS & NOTICEBOARDS

- All of your child's Artwork is placed in the large coloured crates behind your child's name card.
- Newsletters from Staff and Committee will be placed in the pocket with your child's name on.
- Important daily notices are attached to notice boards (front door, foyer, verandah)
- Please ensure that you check all these areas regularly.



UNIFORMS

edU THREADS
EASY ORDERING . SUPER FAST DELIVERY . FREE AND FAST EXCHANGE

T-Shirt \$14.00 Windcheater \$24.00 Adjustable Bucket Hat \$11.75

Want to try it on?
See your office or uniform facilitator to test and try on any item.
If you order the wrong size we offer free & fast exchanges so you have the right fit.

JUMP ONLINE
WWW.EDUTHREADS.COM.AU

Uniforms are available to purchase online from EduThreads

- Go to the Eduthreads Website at www.eduthreads.com.au
- Select Shop Kinder and ELC and then enter Hepburn Kindergarten to place an order.
- Free Delivery! It will be delivered to the kindergarten

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

PLEASE NOTE that ECKA and DE have made the decision to close Hepburn Kindergarten on **ALL TOTAL FIRE BAN DAYS** as we are in a declared 'extremely dangerous' area and there is no safe place to evacuate to. ECKA will inform/telephone all families 1 to 2 days before this occurrence. You should also make yourself aware through media notification

In case of any emergency situation, i.e.:fire threats, we have an Emergency Management Plan which is followed by all staff and children. Each term the children practice the Emergency Evacuation Procedure and the Lock Down procedure. Parents will be telephoned if an emergency occurs as soon as practical.

CHILD SAFETY

- **OUR GATE** - We need all adults to be vigilant at all times to ensure that no child moves through our exit gates without the direct supervision of their parent or guardian. Please be aware
- **OUR CAR-PARK** - All parents / guardians must ensure that they have constant supervision of their child/children within the car-park area at all times. Please drive into car park at a safe speed.
- **PHOTOGRAPHY** - Please consult with Catherine if you wish to take a photo. And please be aware of this when posting anything on social media (privacy).

ON A FINAL NOTE

We warmly welcome you, your child and your family to the Hepburn Kindergarten and we sincerely hope that your time with us is one of wonderful experiences that will provide many future happy memories.

