

Soldiers Hill

Kindergarten

Family Information

Booklet 2025

Enriching children's
lives through learning

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 SOLDIERS 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 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



506 Armstrong Street North, Ballarat VIC 3350

(03) 5332 6668 / 0457 806 619

soldiers.hill.kin@kindergarten.vic.gov.au

ecka.org.au



11 Grandview Grove, Wendouree VIC 3355

(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

Mixed groups - 1st Year (3yos) & 2nd Years (4yos)

Group	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Lorikeets	8:30 – 4:00	8:30 – 4:00			
Rosellas		8:30 – 4:00	8:30 – 4:00		
Kookaburras	8:30 – 4:00		8:30 – 4:00		
Galahs				8:30 – 4:00	8:30 – 4:00

WELCOME TO KINDERGARTEN

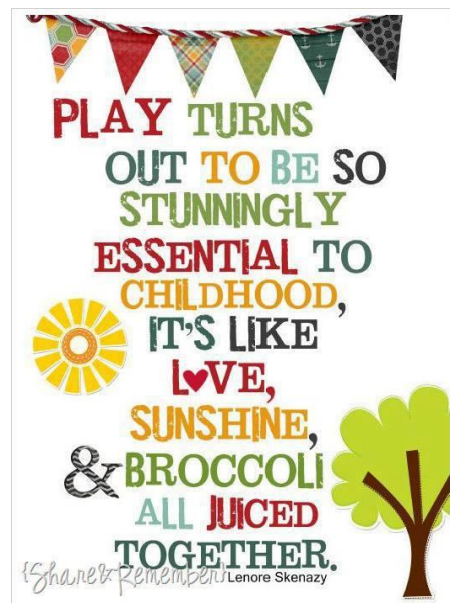
At Soldiers Hill Kindergarten we encourage your child to grow, develop and learn in a warm, caring and safe environment. The kindergarten program is planned and delivered by a qualified Early Childhood Teacher and is eligible for funding by the Victorian Government.

We are a community kindergarten offering quality kindergarten programs for four- and three-year-old kinder. The Eureka Community Kindergarten Association looks after our operational needs, with a Parent & Community Group organising fundraising and social events.

We offer a broad range of experiences and activities to meet every child's educational, developmental and enjoyment needs. The program is both play based, and teacher led, allowing each child to follow their interests and grow and develop at their own pace.

Thank you for choosing Soldiers Hill Kindergarten for your child's kindergarten year. We look forward to sharing a wonderful year with your child full of learning, discovery, wonder and fun.

Please keep this handbook to refer to throughout the year.



EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM

"We don't stop playing because we grow old; we grow old because we stop playing."

- George Bernard Shaw

Learning through Play

The Kindergarten Program is developed by the Kindergarten Teacher, reflecting the individual needs and interests of each child and the whole group. Each child is a unique individual who is a capable and competent learner, each learning in their own time and with their own learning style. The program has a strong emphasis on play based learning where children are viewed as active participants and decision makers in their learning. A range of play based experiences are offered for children to explore and discover and to extend their interests and abilities in all areas of development.

Play is a context of learning that:

- allows for the expression of personality and uniqueness
- enhances dispositions such as curiosity and creativity
- enables children to make connections between prior experience and new learning
- assists children to develop relationships and concepts
- stimulates a sense of well being

Belonging, Being & Becoming – The EYLF for Australia, 2009, pg 9

Educators regularly record individual written observations on all children. The observations are then assessed with the guidance of the Victorian Early Years Learning Outcomes and future activities and experiences are planned. These are the activities and experiences you can see on the Curriculum plan and in the room.



HELPING YOUR CHILD SETTLE IN AND ENJOY THEIR YEAR

- Talk to your child about Kinder. Drive by and point it out.
- Let children know staff are there to help them. Discuss the routine and what is expected of them.
- Practice opening lunchboxes and containers. Try snack foods to make sure your child likes them.
- Have shorter sessions if you feel your child is tired or not yet ready for the longer day.
- Provide a confident goodbye to your child at the door when the educator arrives. When your child observes your positive trust in the educators, it supports them building good relationships with us earlier in the term.
- Ask about their day and remember lots more happens at Kinder than artwork.
- Take the time to meet other parent/guardians and children so you can know your child's friends.
- Arrive on time to collect your child. Children can become distressed quickly if they are left waiting.

WHAT TO BRING

- A named backpack, big enough to hold children's lunchbox, spare clothing and artwork.
- A healthy snack for morning tea, a healthy lunch and afternoon tea.
- A **complete change of clothes** including underwear, socks, singlet, t-shirt, jumper, and pants. Please name all clothing.
- A named coat, beanie, and gumboots in colder months.

SMILES 4 MILES PROGRAM

Our 4yr old group participates in the Smiles 4 Miles program which promotes healthy eating and lifestyles and oral health in young children.

The Smiles 4 miles program aims to improve the oral health of preschool aged children in Victoria. It is an initiative of Dental Health Services Victoria which works in partnership with local organisations to improve the oral health of the youngest children in the community.

The program is based on the World Health Organisation's Health Promoting Schools Framework and is delivered predominantly in kindergartens.

The key messages promoted in the program are:

- **Drink Well:** children are encouraged to drink water instead of sugary drinks
- **Eat Well:** children should eat a variety of nutritious foods
- **Clean Well:** children are taught good tooth cleaning technique to maintain healthy teeth and gums, with a focus on brushing twice a day and using toothpaste with an appropriate amount of fluoride.



MEALS AND DRINKS

During a Kinder session; all children will need

- Morning tea, lunch, afternoon snack and a drink bottle of water.

A sandwich or small meal such as pasta salad and a healthy snack such as; fruit, vegetables, dried fruit, rice crackers, cheese slices, yoghurt or dry biscuits are some suggestions.

As we encourage children to make healthy food choices we ask that snacks or lunches that are high in sugar, fat or salt are NOT brought to kinder eg:

- Jam, honey or Nutella
- Nutra grain bars, Milo Bars, LCM, muesli bars, pureed fruit, Roll Ups or other high fat/sugar bars
- Chips, chocolates, lollies, sweet biscuits
- Cordial, soft drink, juice, flavoured milk

**** Families will be notified if there are any allergies and which foods are not to be brought to Kinder***

Special Dietary Requirements

Please discuss with staff if your child has any special dietary needs.

TOILETING

We encourage all children to toilet independently. However, we recognise that all children are not ready to do this at the same time. **Please provide nappies (or pull ups) and wipes** if your child requires these and/or several changes of clothes (including shoes) if your child is just beginning to toilet train.

Staff are happy to support all efforts to assist families in this process. Please discuss with staff your child's needs.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Anaphylaxis, Asthma, Medical Conditions & Allergies

Please let staff know if your child has Anaphylaxis, Asthma, a Medical Condition or Allergy. An **Anaphylaxis/Asthma/Medical Condition or Allergy Management plan must be filled out by your doctor before starting kindergarten** and kept in your child's file at Kinder.

Staff will complete a Risk Management and Communication plan with you. Please bring the required medication each day, or leave a clearly named supply at Kinder.

**** Children will NOT be able to start Kindergarten without a completed Management Plan and Medication at Kinder each day****

Accidents & Injuries

The Kinder environment is planned to ensure the safety of all children, however accidents can still occur. If your child is injured at Kinder an Accident and Injury form will be filled out detailing the nature of the injury, time, date and action that was taken. You will be asked to sign the report when collecting your child.

In the event of a minor accident during a session staff will:

- Treat the injury as required (wash area, apply band aid etc.)
- Fill out an accident form

*****Parent/guardians are requested to notify the Kindergarten when any of this information changes.*****