



St Alipius

— PARISH —

Kindergarten

# Family Information Booklet 2025

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

Staff welcome your association with St Alipius 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 community of staff and families, all working together with the common goal of supporting children to be happy, confident and capable. It is a place where you can share positive experiences with your child, his/her peers and their families.

We welcome your support in maintaining a high standard of educational programming, pleasant and safe facilities active participation in the 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](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



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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

\* N.B During the year, kindergarten will close for 1 day of Professional Development, date to be confirmed. Parents and Guardians will be notified in advance of this closure day.

Kindergarten is closed on all Public holidays

## SESSION TIMES FOR 2025

Group	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Group 1	9:00 - 3:00 <i>(Alternating)</i>		9:00 - 3:00	9:00 - 3:00	
Group 2		8:30 – 4:00			8:30 – 4:00

## OUR STAFF

Employment of staff within the St Alipius Kindergarten is the responsibility of the Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA)

The staff employed at the kindergarten are responsible for the planning and implementation of the three and four-year-old programs. They are required and supported to have a continuing professional development plan.

All staff employed at the kindergarten must have VIT registration (teachers only) and working with children check, a current first aid certificate and have specialist training in CPR, asthma and anaphylaxis.

Voluntary workers/students assist at times.

## OUR PHILOSOPHY

At St. Alipius Kindergarten we value secure, respectful and reciprocal partnerships with children, families and our community.

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

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



We believe that children learn best when:

- Supported to explore, investigate and have courage to take risk and build resilience in the natural environment in all weather conditions.
- Creating a kindergarten culture based around kindness, compassion and respect.
- Understanding that all children learn and develop at their own pace. Each child is celebrated for their uniqueness, strengths, skills and experience.
- Building positive caring relationships within our setting and providing children with a safe environment to explore and build new relationships.
- Positive partnerships that create a genuine foundation to respect each other's perspectives, expectations and values. We build on the strength of each other's knowledge and skills.
- Trusting relationships and collaborations with families and community supports children's learning, development and wellbeing.
- Embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives encourages openness to diverse understandings.
- Intercultural space is created when diversity and learning opportunities reflect the backgrounds, cultures and abilities of every child.

## KINDERGARTEN EDUCATION

The aim of kindergarten education is to learn through play. The value of play for the child gives him/her the opportunity in their own way, and in their own time to come to grips with problems and find solutions. It is the method through which the child builds upon basic attitudes, skills and knowledge.

### Play is a child's work!

Kindergarten provides a happy relaxed atmosphere in which your child will:

- Increase his/her self-esteem, confidence and ability to cope with new situations.

- Build relationships with adults and children.
- Be encouraged to make his/her own decisions.
- Develop a sense of achievement.
- Learn to accept strong feelings and channel them into acceptable outlets.
- Further develop his/her co-ordination and maintain physical health.
- Gain knowledge about him/herself and the world around him/her.
- Enjoy being him/herself while learning to function within a group.

The Kindergarten program is flexible, focusing on the development of the whole child. Parent involvement is an integral part of this program. Your participation in the children's activities strengthens the link between home and kindergarten and fosters positive learning in your child. The role of Early Childhood Education could be viewed in this way:

**The principal goal of education is to create people who are capable of doing new things, not simply repeating what other generations have done, people who are creative and inventive and will be discoverers."**

*Piaget (Swiss educator) in the role of Education*

## VICTORIAN EARLY YEARS LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

The Department of Education and Early Childhood and the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority developed the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework in 2009. The framework brings together the national Early Years Learning Framework and the Victorian Essential Learning Standards. It identifies what children should know and be able to do from birth to eight years. The framework supports a partnership between families and all professionals who support the children's learning and development over this period and is designed to assist families and early childhood professionals to guide children's learning and development in the first eight years.

The Victorian Framework uses five outcomes to describe the key elements of children's learning and development. These are:

1. Children have a strong sense of identity
2. Children are connected with and contribute to their world
3. Children have a strong sense of wellbeing
4. Children are confident and involved learners
5. Children are effective communicators

The framework is used by educators to both design the types of experiences and opportunities that enable enrich children's development and access children's progress towards these outcomes.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

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**SNACK:** Each child is asked to bring a healthy snack each day to Kindergarten. A healthy snack must include fruit, vegetables as well as things like cheese, hard-boiled eggs, dried fruit.

**LUNCH:** A healthy lunch is to include a sandwich/roll/dry biscuit in addition to fruit, vegetables, cheese, and yogurt and other healthy snacks. Please try to avoid processed or packaged food such as chips and chocolates.

If your child is in a 8:30 – 4pm session, they will need to bring in an additional snack for afternoon tea.

A water bottle is required each session. Water is available at all times.

## **WHAT TO BRING:**

- A drink bottle, filled with water only please
- Healthy lunchbox as mentioned above
- A whole spare change of labelled clothes including socks, undies, tops, pants, jumper. Extra pants, undies, socks, shoes for those toilet training. Not only can toileting accidents occur but the children may get wet/messy playing outside.
- Appropriate footwear- Shoes should be worn to and from Kindergarten. Thongs are not permitted as when the children are climbing the thongs can become entangled in the climbing frames and the children can suffer injury. Shoes should have a good grip. Joggers, sandals and lace-up shoes are recommended.
- A wide brimmed sun hat

From September through to the end of April and on days with high UV hats and sunscreen need to be worn to ensure children are protected and is re-applied as necessary.

Please make sure shoulders are covered- No singlet tops or sleeveless dresses please! We are a Sun Smart Centre. – Please let staff know if your child needs their own sunscreen.

**CLOTHING/BELONGINGS:** All children are required to bring a kinder bag. Each child will be given a locker to house their belongings (coats, hats, bags etc.) Please name your child's belongings and remember to pack weather appropriate clothing for your child such as a coat, gumboots, beanie for colder months as we value outdoor learning and will be spending time all year round. Gumboots can be left at kinder on the shelf outside if you choose.

**ALLERGIES:** Please note that some foods may be prohibited if a child at risk of Anaphylaxis is enrolled at the Kindergarten.

If your child has an allergy please speak to staff and ensure your child has an allergy action plan signed by your doctor.

**BRINGING CHILDREN:** Please note the appropriate starting times for your child's sessions at kindergarten.

You are asked not to bring children earlier as staff are preparing for the session. We like to greet the children as they come in, so we would appreciate if you could wait until staff open the doors. This is also a time for you to chat with other families and get to know each other better.

**COLLECTING CHILDREN:** Please note the appropriate finishing times for your child's sessions at kindergarten.

You are asked to collect your child on time, to ensure staff can clean and prepare for the following session. This also ensures that we have time to discuss your child's day and any important information we may need to relay.

If someone else is to collect your child, please inform staff ahead of time so your child can be prepared, and also for security. All persons collecting children must be indicated on your child's enrolment form. Children can only be collected by those authorised by the parent/guardian(s). When exiting the kinder, please hold your child's hand in the carpark and when exiting the gate. More information on drop off/pick up to come depending on current covid restrictions, parents may not be allowed to enter the building.

**RECORD BOOK/Signing in & out:** When dropping off and picking up children, it is essential for the Record Book to be signed and the exact time of drop off and pick up recorded. You should also indicate if a person other than yourself will be picking up your child or any other children that you have dropped off. An adult must collect and drop off kindergarten children.

**BIRTHDAYS:** On your child's birthday, you might like to bring something to share. Small cupcakes prove to be popular and easy to eat. Please check with staff around any allergies.

**MEDICATION:** There is a Medication and Accident book that is required to be filled in when needed. Please note that all medication sent to the kinder must be prescribed by a doctor with your child's name on, in the



original container and in date. Only a parent/guardian can sign the related documentation to have medication administered to a child unless you have nominated others on your enrolment form. If a parent is needed to sign or form or information needs to be shared with families, your child's name will be highlighted in the sign-in book.

**IMMUNISATION:** A child must be up to date with vaccinations for their age or on a catch-up schedule or have a medical condition preventing them from being fully vaccinated. Enrolment cannot be finalised until the kindergarten is provided with an immunisation status certificate.

**EXCURSIONS:** The Teacher will always notify parents if children are to be taken on an excursion. Parents will be asked to sign an authorisation form for your child to attend. Smoking is not permitted on excursions.

**PROGRAM:** We will be using Storypark to document and share our planning, your child's learning journey and keep you updated with what's happening at kinder. It will outline planned learning and goals using the five outcomes described in the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework. Parents are welcome to contribute & provide input throughout the year. Storypark will also be used as a kind of online noticeboard to share reminders and notices. Storypark can be used to contact staff but please note that if you have any concerns, queries or would like to check in with how your child is going you can always make a time to speak to staff in person.

**TRANSITION LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT STATEMENTS:** In 2009 'Transition to Learning and Development Statements' were introduced as a tool for families and educators to share information about a child's learning and development with the school they will be going to. Every child who is going to school next year will have a transition statement to pass on to the school. The transition statements provide opportunities for families and children to make comment on the child's learning and development and information they think might help the child's transition to school. Early childhood staff are required to provide information based on the five outcomes of the VEYLDF referred to above. The statement can only be forwarded to a school when the parent/guardian consent has been provided. Statements are completed in term 4 to be passed onto schools. Parents are always welcome to speak to the Teacher in regard to their child's progress. You are asked to make an appointment with the Teacher to do this at a mutually convenient time. Please be assured that the Teacher will approach you, as parents, if she has any concerns at all regarding any matters to do with your child.

**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.

**GARDEN ROSTER** We will send out a roster at the beginning of the year encouraging families to take the gate key and soft plastic recycling home each week. We ask that you come in on the weekend to help with some jobs in the outdoor environment. The children really enjoy helping with this responsibility.

**VOLUNTEER SIGN IN BOOK** Parents/Volunteers are required to sign the Volunteer Sign-In Book when they are helping out at kinder. The book is kept in the locker room.