

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 WOODY YALOK KINDERGARTEN

The staff and ECKA welcome you and your child to Woody Yalok Kindergarten. This handbook contains important information about the kindergarten and your child's attendance. This year is going to be a fun and memorable experience for both you and your child and we want to thank you for giving us the opportunity to be a part of their growth and development. We hope your association with the Kindergarten will be a happy and rewarding one.

'Children's learning is dynamic, complex and holistic. Physical, social, emotional, personal, spiritual, creative, cognitive and linguistic aspects of learning are all intricately interwoven and interrelated. Play is a context for learning'.

(Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia, P.9)



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

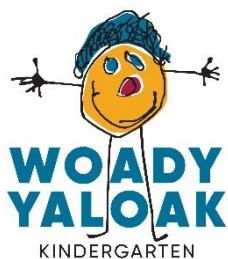
ECKA encourages all children, families, employees and others involved with ECKA services to participate in regular evaluation and review of policies and practices, or at any time provide feedback, anonymously if desired, via the ECKA website, ECKA office or ECKA service. At all times, any complaints 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



25 Pitfield Road, Scarsdale VIC 3351

(03) 5342 8615 / 0427 143 464

Woody.yaloak.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)

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

VICTORIAN EARLY YEARS LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

We recognise and respect the Dja Dja Wurrung people of the Kulin Nation as the traditional custodians of Our programming is guided by the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework to ensure that each child's learning and development is supported, encouraged and extended. The (VEYLDF) identifies five Early Years Learning and Development Outcomes for all children.

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.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Upon arrival at the kindergarten

Please sign your child in, in the 'Sign in' book. It is a requirement that all children in attendance are signed in and out. All people dropping off children must:

- Write the time
- Sign their name
- Write who will be collecting the child

Encourage your child to place his/her bag on the appropriate named hook, to apply sunscreen (the 15th of August to the 30th of April each year).

Please note:

Children will only be released into the care of the person whose name is in the sign in book and if they have been authorized on the enrolment form.

If someone other than the person in the sign in book is to collect the child a phone call to the Kinder to inform staff is required. If the Kinder has not been informed of the change, we will contact parents to confirm collection arrangements.

If someone not on the enrolment form is to collect the child, the parent will be required to add them onto the enrolment form in the specific section regarding child's collection.

Departure

All children must be brought to and collected from the room: The door will remain closed until staff open it at the beginning of session as this allows us to ensure the room is fully set up for the day. Parents must remain with and supervise their children (including siblings) until they have entered the room. Upon collection the door will be closed until staff dismiss the children. The children are asked to wait on the mat until their name is called, this will not happen until the staff member has had visual confirmation that the child's parent/carer is present and the child is going safely.

Photo Identification will need to be shown to staff if someone we have not met is collecting your child. For Example: grandparents, aunts, uncles, family friends

Please be on time

Late arrival and departure can cause undue stress and anxiety for your child, is disruptive to the program and also means your child is missing valuable intentional teaching and learning opportunities. If you are going to be late, please call us so that we can reassure your child.

Attendance

It is important that your child attends pre-school regularly. Please let us know if your child will be absent. This is your child's first and most important year of formal education and if frequently absent they risk missing out on valuable learning.

Enrolment Changes

Please ensure you make staff aware of any changes to your enrolment details such as address, phone numbers or medical information as necessary. It is important that these details are up to date.

Separation at Arrival

Often parents and children can become anxious about separating from each other.

This is quite natural, and we have some great tips to help you and your child move through this difficult stage. It is important that parents understand that kinder is about their child developing new relationships independently as they attend kinder. Your child will require positive guidance from you to settle.

Always say goodbye to your child and acknowledge at least one staff member so we are aware that your child is here.

Some further useful websites with information about separation are:

- Kathy Walker: earlylife.com.au
- Department of Education and Early Childhood Development: www.education.vic.gov.au

IMMUNISATION

By law, to finalise enrolment for your child in kindergarten you must provide the service with an immunisation status certificate that shows your child is:

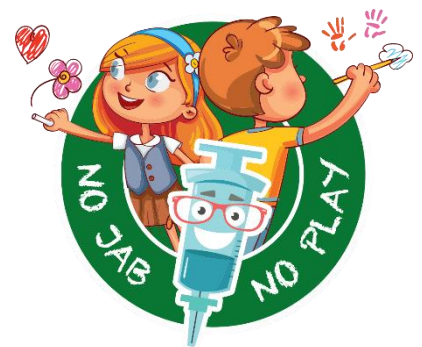
- Up to date with vaccinations for their age OR
- On a vaccine catch up schedule OR
- Has a medical condition preventing them from being fully vaccinated.

An immunisation status certificate is a statement showing the vaccines your child has received. The most common type of immunisation status certificate is an **Immunisation History Statement** from the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register.

Please see 'Starting childcare or Kindergarten' pamphlet in enrolment pack for more information.

Your child can not legally commence until you have provided the service with an Immunisation status certificate.

If you have any concerns or questions, please speak to the Educators.



MORNING FRUIT AND LUNCH

We are a Smiles 4 miles accredited service and we encourage your help to model and promoting healthy eating and drinking practises.

Each morning the children are given the opportunity for a progressive morning tea. This enables each child to enjoy their healthy choice snacks when they are feeling hungry.

Please provide your child with a healthy lunch. As lunch is such an important meal of the day, ensure it is nutritious and satisfying, thus enabling your child to be able to get through the rest of what is always a very busy day.

Fresh water is always available for your child to access. Please ensure your child brings a water bottle every day to kinder, with fresh water only, **please do not send any sugary drinks**. It is important that your child can access water when they need it.

Some suggestions for healthy eating are:

- Fresh fruit (Children should and need to have at least 1 piece of fresh fruit per day)
- Carrot, Cheese and celery sticks
- Yoghurt (natural or Natural fruit flavoured)
- Salads
- Homemade soup – In thermos from home
- Dips and bread
- Salad sandwiches with tuna or cold meats



Please refrain from sending lollies, chocolate, chips and juice packs

(During the kinder year there will be opportunities for special days where as a special treat, chips, lollies and chocolate may be included in program).

We are an Anaphylactic Aware Service: This means we encourage you NOT to bring ANY NUT PRODUCTS into the Service such as Nutella, Peanut butter or nut bars.

CLOTHING

Please dress children in clothes that they can get dirty without concern, and clothes that they can manage themselves – be aware of buttons, straps, shoelaces etc. No thongs or strappy dresses.

Clothes appropriate to the weather conditions should be worn:

- A winter coat –Scarsdale gets very cold in winter; Gumboots & slippers are recommended in Terms 2 & 3.
- Broad brimmed sunhats, bucket or legionnaires (no caps please) that protect child's face, head, neck and ears from the 1st of September to the 30th of April and days when the UV rating is 3 or above.

A SPARE SET OF CLOTHES MUST BE IN YOUR CHILD'S BAG EVERY DAY.

BIRTHDAYS

We celebrate the children's birthdays by singing "Happy Birthday" and are happy for parents to bring along a cake or cupcakes to share with all the children to make it a special day for your child. If the cake is home-made we need a list of ingredients, please check with staff for any food allergies or intolerances and how many children are in the group to ensure there is enough for everyone. As we are an ANAPHYLACTIC AWARE ENVIRONMENT any cakes, biscuits or party food brought into kinder to celebrate a birthday is required to be nut free. Please speak to staff if you do not want your child to participate in these celebrations.



The Anaphylactic policy is available for you to read on the ECKA website or upon request.

BAG LOCKER

Each child will be allocated a Locker, which will be clearly named, to place their bag, hats and coats during each session. These Lockers may be used by other children, so we ask that you please take your child's belongings home at the end of the program day or week.

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.

ILLNESS AND MEDICATIONS

Within a small community such as a kindergarten, colds, tonsillitis, vomiting and diarrhea, chicken pox etc are easily transmitted. Please keep your child at home if they are unwell and please notify us if your child is going to be away. The staff will not hesitate to call parents (or those listed on the enrolment form) if a child is not well at kinder, or if an injury occurs. Please inform staff if your child has been unwell. Children with live lice and nits must not come to kinder. Please inform staff if your child has been treated for nits so that parents can be informed to be extra vigilant. **This table will be displayed at the kindergarten or found at <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/infectious-diseases/school-exclusion/school-exclusion-table>**

If children require medication or have specific medical needs, please ensure that the relevant information is handed to staff. Medication will only be given to children after the parent has filled in the Medication Book. Medication must be in the original container with the child's name and dosage clearly marked. **Under no circumstances should medication of any kind be left in your child's bag.**

Accident/Illness:

If your child becomes unwell or has an accident at Kinder, staff will fill in an incident/ illness report describing the incident or illness and what action was taken. Parents will be required to sign the sheet upon collection of the child.

Allergies/Intolerances/Medical Conditions:

Please let staff know if your child has an allergy or intolerance to anything as an Action Plan/Medical Plan and communication plan will need to be filled out by your family Doctor and kept at the kindergarten. Please bring the required medication each day, or leave a clearly named supply at Kinder.

SLEEP

Kinder is a big day for your child and it is essential that they have enough sleep-in order to manage and enjoy all that kinder has to offer. Please ensure your child's bedtime allows them adequate sleep and advise staff of any sleep requirements.

BREAKFAST

A healthy breakfast is a must for children before commencing their busy kinder day. Breakfast is essential to aid your child's concentration, energy, mood and general coping skills. Please ensure your child eats a nutritional breakfast so they can get the most out of their kinder day.

RECYCLED MATERIALS

We love clean recycled things and odd stuff!

It is amazing the things that we could use - old bike wheels for weaving, old crates for garden beds, cut up trees for stepping stones. Please check with staff if you or someone you know have anything to donate as it would be greatly appreciated.

Please note we are unable to accept any items which have contained any nut products or toilet rolls.

DELICATE TOPICS

Life will throw many varied challenges our way at times. Please feel reassured that we are trained in dealing with a wide range of family experiences and circumstances. Our role includes the provision of a safe and secure environment for you and your child. To assist us in this, we would very much appreciate you speaking confidentially with us about any personal family circumstances which may affect the wellbeing of your child.

HOUSEKEEPING

- Nappy changing facilities are available, please see educators if you need to use these facilities. Please do not use the floor.
- Adults often find the tables comfortable to sit on we ask that you please use the chairs – there are some adult-sized ones around the room also. The children use the tables to work and eat on.