



Kindergarten & Pre-kindergarten

Information Booklet

2019

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“We, Greater Shepparton City Council, acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land which now comprises Greater Shepparton. We pay respect to their tribal elders, we celebrate their continuing culture and we acknowledge the memory of their ancestors”



Alexandra Street Kindergarten is a stand-alone kindergarten situated in the Centre of Mooroopna close to local schools & shops. We pride ourselves on providing a welcoming & inclusive practice for all members of the community. Educators are highly qualified & create a family friendly service which provides the best possible start to your child's learning and development.

Here at Alexandra St Kinder we offer Kindergarten (4/5 year olds) as well as a Pre-Kinder program (3/4 year olds). Our program provides structure and routine whilst maintaining flexibility to build upon each child & families experiences and interests. We believe building upon the 3 R's: Respect, Resilience & Responsibility – to help children develop their sense of belonging.

Our service believes that families & the community are extremely valuable tools in the learning & development of children, thus our service engages with our local community at every opportunity. We have developed strong links with local schools, other kindergartens and local businesses.

Alexandra Street offers children a wide & varied program, including centre and community based Music & Movement (Auditory Sensory Experience) which includes a meet & greet 'Hello Song' each morning, Finger Gym, Brain Gym ,ELLA , Fine & Gross Motor skill development, Independence & Self Identity, Literacy & Numeracy Programs, Group Time Activities, Story Telling, Excursions & Community Visits which promotes a holistic curriculum supporting wellbeing, social, emotional and physical needs of all children.

Educators continually seek new & innovative ideas for programming through various sources including families, continued and improved training opportunities, local events, collaboration with outside educators & specialists

Early Years Learning Framework

BELONGING, BEING & BECOMING

The Early Years Learning Framework conveys the highest expectations for all children's learning from birth to five years and through transition to school. It communicates these expectations through the five following learning outcomes:

- Children have a strong sense of identity
- Children are connected with and contribute to their world
- Children have a strong sense of well being
- Children are confident and involved learners
- Children are effective learners

The Framework provides broad direction for teachers/educators to facilitate children's learning. Children's learning is ongoing and each child will progress towards the outcomes in different and equally meaningful days.

At Alexandra Street Kindergarten, we support the practice principles of the framework and encourage all families to share what they know about their child with the educators, including your child's strengths, challenges and goals. Our program will be based on the 5 key outcomes of the framework. Some examples of goals you will see implemented in the program may include:

Identity:

- Participating in routines to help feel safe and secure within the Kindergarten environment
- Building warm and trusting relationships with staff and peers

Community:

- Working cooperatively with others
- Being a valued member of a group and sharing experiences with others

Wellbeing:

- Managing self-care routines such as eating, dressing and toileting
- Using their body with strength and control
- Expressing and managing emotions

Learning:

- Being a curious, active and enthusiastic learner ~ maths, science, literacy
- Expressing creativity using a variety of mediums
- Being a resilient and persistent problem solver

Communication:

- Expressing emotions, ideas and thoughts using effective communication and speech
- Enjoying a wide range of books, including stories, non-fiction

If you would like further information regarding your child's educational program, please discuss this with the educators, Toni and Kerry at Alexandra Street Kindergarten.

The National Quality Framework

The National Quality Framework (NQF) provides a national approach to regulation, assessment and quality improvement, where it raises quality and drives continuous improvement and consistency for early childhood education and care services across Australia.

The NQF includes:

- National Law and National Regulations
- National Quality Standard
- Assessment and quality rating process
- National learning frameworks.

Further information can be accessed at the following websites:

<https://www.acecqa.gov.au/>

<https://www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/national-law-regulations>



Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF)

At Alexandra Street Kindergarten learning is supported by experienced Early Childhood Professionals who implement the 8 Practice Principles of the VEYLDF

Reflective Practice:

Children's learning and development is advanced when they experience interactions with highly effective early childhood professionals. Early childhood professionals become more effective through critical reflection and a strong culture of professional enquiry.

Partnerships with Family

Children learn in the context of their families and families are the primary influence on children's learning and development. Professionals engage in family-serviced practice by respecting the pivotal role of families in children's lives.

Respectful Relationships & Responsive Engagement:

From birth, secure attachments formed through warm and respectful relationships with familiar adults are fundamental to children's learning and development.

Equity & Diversity:

Children's personal, family and cultural histories shape their learning and development.

Assessment for Learning & Development:

Assessment is designed to discover what children know and understand, based on what they make, write, draw, say and do.

Integrated Teaching & Learning Approaches:

Learning is an active process that must involve children's engagement. Play is essential for its ability to stimulate and integrate a wide range of children's intellectual, physical, social and creative abilities.

Partnerships with Professionals:

Early childhood professionals are from diverse professional backgrounds. They use multidisciplinary approaches to provide better support to families and draw on the skills and expertise of their peers.

Theorist that impact our practice:

The Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) and the National Quality Standards (NQS) explain how educators bring together many different elements such as values, beliefs, professional knowledge, skills and experience which they use to support children's learning.

At Alexandra Street Kindergarten the educators also base their professional knowledge on a variety of theories about children and early learning.

The theories help us understand what we do and why, and how often draw upon different theorists each day when planning our program.

- Maria Montessori inspires our circle time and greeting songs at the beginning of the day.
- Jerome Butler inspires our key signing, board makers and social stories.
- John Dewey inspires the idea of scaffolding children's learning and the importance of play.
- Robert Owen inspires us to have a warm, welcoming environment.
- Friedrich Froebel which inspires our outdoor play space.
- John Comenus inspires us to provide sensory experiences such as sand, water, ice, play dough, slime, goop, shaving cream into our programme.

These theoretical approaches, with the guidance from the EYLF underpin our work in providing a great program.



Alexandra Street Kinder Values

Respect Responsibility Resilience

- ✚ *Inclusive environment that is respectful to each child's individual cultures, beliefs, interests and rights.*
- ✚ *A program uses a holistic approach to all five areas within the National and Victorian Frameworks.*
- ✚ *We promote a strong partnership between families and educators and the community.*
- ✚ *The Educators:*
 - *extend and build on children's thoughts and ideas*
 - *provide a positive environment that is safe and supportive*
 - *provides a program that offers and supports children's agency, intentional and spontaneous learning*
- ✚ *We promote "manners Matter" & "make good choices" (Especially regarding other people)*



At Alexandra Street Kindergarten we believe that children thrive best when the learning environment:

- Has agreed boundaries, limits and consequences
- Has familiar routines and expectations
- Encourages children to participate in both planned and self-initiated learning experiences
- Provides rich literacy and numeracy experiences daily
- Provides opportunities to enjoy special days and events at Kindergarten with peers and family
- Introduces children to a wide range of individuals or groups working within our community
- Promotes and values teachers, children and their families as lifelong learners and researchers

Children in our Kindergarten benefit from developing and extending their communication skills, beginning to understand social studies and science, using technology, developing skills that assist with reading, writing and maths, building confidence, learning to be creative and, most importantly, learning to be an engaged and an effective learner – skills that are important in school, work and life.

Our Kindergarten programs also support the ongoing development of social skills, including:

- Showing respect and caring for others
- Learning to see beyond differences to similarities
- Developing and demonstrating self-control
- Identifying and expressing emotions appropriately
- Being increasingly independent and giving and seeking help from others
- Balancing his/her own needs, rights and responsibilities with those of others
- Resolving conflicts in peaceful and constructive ways
- Working with others and learning to appreciate that collaboration
- Learning to apply these skills effectively



Children's Portfolios

Portfolios are documents recording and assessing your child's progress and achievements throughout the year. Educators write their observations about each child by including photos, dialogue, art work and records of special days. The portfolio is a valued keepsake which is always available for viewing by children and their parents, and is used when discussing your child's challenges and successes during parent-teacher interviews.



Alexandra Street Kindergarten Educators: Qualifications and Experience



Kerry Miller
Diploma of Children's Services

Toni Phillingham
Bachelor of Education
Bachelor of Early Childhood

Alexandra Street Kindergarten educators are a team who challenges and supports each other's strengths and beliefs. We are extremely fortunate to have highly qualified and experienced teachers who view their professional development and growth as paramount in understanding how our Kindergarten can continue to represent the best practices in early childhood education to date. Each year all educators attend professional development and training sessions regarding early education, health and safety, including allergies, such as asthma and anaphylaxis. We are always keen to share and reflect on the practices we believe, to ensure a genuinely successful and happy learning environment for our children and their families.

Educator – Professional Development Days

During the year there will be Staff Professional Development Days for the improvement of the service provided to your groups. There will be **no kinder** session running on this day.

Families will be notified as soon as possible regarding this date.

Alexandra Street Kindergarten Timetable

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Groups A, B & C 9am - 2pm	Groups A, B & D 9am - 2pm	Groups B, C & D 9am - 2pm	Groups A, C & D 9am - 2pm	Pre-Kinder 9am – 12pm

Term Dates

Term 1	29 January	5 April
Term 2	23 April	28 June
Term 3	15 July	20 September
Term 4	7 October	20 December

Public Holidays

Date	Day	Public Holiday
01st January	Tue	New Year's Day
26th January	Sat	Australia Day
28th January	Mon	Australia Day Holiday
11th March	Mon	Labour Day
19th April	Fri	Good Friday
20th April	Sat	Day following Good Friday
21st April	Sun	Easter Sunday
22nd April	Mon	Easter Monday
25th April	Thu	Anzac Day
10th June	Mon	Queen's Birthday
5th November	Tue	Melbourne Cup Day *
25th December	Wed	Christmas Day
26th December	Thu	Boxing Day

Starting Kindergarten / Pre-kindergarten

Each child is unique and will react to new situations in a different way. Some children are quiet and timid, taking time to warm up and feel comfortable, while others may start Kindergarten/Pre-kindergarten full of confidence and excitement at the new opportunities. At Alexandra Street Kindergarten we understand these differences and will implement a range of strategies to assist each individual child to settle in and feel welcome at the kinder, this may include bringing a security item to kinder such as a soft toy, family photo etc. or it may mean giving a child certain jobs to make them feel important.



When starting kinder for the first time we suggest parents stay for a few minutes with their child while they are all on the mat during greeting time. If you are concerned about your child's possible separation anxiety please contact the educators to discuss various ways in which to settle your child. Ideas maybe, alternative drop off times or pick up times, shorten sessions etc.

What to bring to Kindergarten/Pre-kindergarten

A bag

A bag is needed for your child to carry his/her belongings to and from Kindergarten. Any kind will do as long as it **large** and strong enough to contain an assortment of personal treasures, extra clothing and art work. **Please ensure your child's bag is named.**



Snacks/Lunch

Parents are required to provide a snack for their child each day at Kindergarten. We encourage children to try a variety of fruits and vegetables, dried fruit and cheese.

Healthy food is encouraged – such as fruit (peeled if necessary), cheese, cucumber, mushrooms, beans, dried fruit and sandwiches. The teacher will advise each group about particular requirements for their group's snack routine.

Healthy lunches and snacks are important for children and help with concentration and learning. Healthy eating changes are not always easy to make. Try and set a good example with your own lunches. Encourage children to be involved in their own lunch preparation, and their choices about what foods to include. Praise your child when they choose healthy foods for the lunch box.

At Alexandra Street Kindergarten we promote healthy eating and we often use terminology such as ‘everyday food’ and sometimes food.” Please send snack and lunch **boxes clearly labelled**, and a one which your child recognizes and is able to open independently (this is very important for self-help skills and confidence.)

Although water is available at all times, children are encouraged to bring a **labelled** water bottle. Snack/lunch boxes and drink bottles can be left in their bag or put into the fridge at the Kindergarten.

Recommended items to put in a lunch box:

Vegetables	Fresh fruit	Dairy food – cheese/yogurt
Protein food – sliced meat, hard-boiled egg or beans		
Starchy food – bread, roll, pitta or flat bread or crackers		
Water		

Foods best left out:

Muesli and chocolate bars	Sweet drinks	Donuts/cakes
Potato crisps	lollies, honey, jams	
Fatty meats such as salami		

NOTE: Chips and lollies are strongly discouraged. We do not allow children to share food due to other children’s allergies.

Food Safety

Include a frozen ice block, insulated lunch box or use the fridge provided in the Kindergarten kitchen to keep food safe.

Drink Bottles

Please ensure your child comes to kinder each day with a clearly named drink bottle (which they can recognise), with fresh water **ONLY**. We are a ‘water only’ service.

Clothing

Please dress your child in play clothes – clothes which your child can move in easily, clothes that wash easily, as it is not possible for them to stay clean at all times. We will do our best to protect children’s clothing by providing smocks when they paint, play with clay etc.

- Please ensure children are dressed in clothes they can manage themselves. For example trousers that pulls down easily when they go to the toilet. Thongs, —croc shoes and long dresses are not suitable for Kindergarten.
- In winter, children will need a **named** coat and beanie as we have an outdoor session – even when it is cold.



NOTE: Please apply sunscreen before they come to kinder. Sunhats are provided

Tips for busy families:

Foods should be simple and easy to prepare, 'ready to eat' and appetizing after several hours of storage in the lunch box.

Foods such as sandwiches can be prepared the night before or on the weekend, frozen then taken for each day's lunch box. Suitable foods to freeze are: bread, cooked meat, cheese, baked beans, and vegemite.

Routines and Regulations

Families are asked to wait outside of the building until the educator opens the door at 9.00am. Parents and child/ren will come in, hang bags up, get lunch boxes out for fridge etc. Parents are legally required to complete the Sign In section of the Attendance book, noting the time of arrival. This book is used in case of emergency to help account accurately for all children present at Kindergarten or Pre-kindergarten.

Kindergarten

When dropping children at Kindergarten, please take the child/ren inside where the educators are waiting on the mat. (The children will find their name/photo & sit down in the space allocated.)

9.00-9.10:	Meet and greet/Hello song and group time will commence.
9.10-9.30:	Mat Time
9.30-10.50:	Outside Play or Inside Play
10.50-11.00:	Pack Up
11.00-11.30	Morning Tea
11.30-12.50	Inside or Outside Play
12.50-1.00	Pack Up
1.00-1.30	Lunch
1.35-1.50	Group Time
1.50-2.00	Story/Goodbye Song

NOTE: This program is flexible & often changes due to weather, excursions, incursions and spontaneous events.

Pre-kindergarten:

9.00am	Children arrive Meet & Greet/mat session
9.20 am	Indoor or outdoor activities
10.15am	Pack Up
10.25am	Group Time
10.30am	Morning Tea
10.50am	Outdoor or indoor Activities
11.40am	Pack Up
11.45am	Songs/Story Time
12.00 noon	Children leave

NOTE: This is a flexible program that can change according to the children's interests and the weather.

At the end of the session, parents should wait in the foyer until the door to the room is opened. Parents must sign out the child/ren writing the exact time they collect the child.

Educators are unable to hand over a child to any person other than the parent, unless written authorization has been made on the enrolment form. If a different person is to collect any child, verbal notification should also be given to staff and persons should be made aware if they are not known previously to staff Photographic Identification will be requested.

The time before sessions is valuable preparation time for teachers. Children benefit from this preparation and we ask for your co-operation by not arriving early.

If your child needs medication administered to them during a session, the information needs to be recorded in the Medication folder before the parent leaves the child in our care. All medication is to be given to the teacher and NOT left in your child's bag.

Arrival & Departure

In accordance with the Education and Care National Regulations, children must be brought into the Kindergarten and picked up by a parent, guardian or authorised person. There is an attendance book, which needs to be signed, with the **EXACT TIME** recorded on **arrival and departure**. If you are on duty for the day, please ensure you write and sign yourself (and toddler if you bring he/her along) in the attendance book as you would for your kinder child. As there is a considerable amount of preparation of activities before session, we would appreciate that if you arrive early, you wait with your child in the foyer until starting time.

It is very important that children ARRIVE ON TIME at kinder each day. This ensures they —feel part of the group and do not miss out on essential information. Punctuality also avoids disrupting the remainder of the group.

Please advise your child's teacher as soon as possible if you feel your child may be anxious in separating from you. Always say good-bye to your child, as this is a way of maintaining their trust.

When collecting children at the end of a session it is important to be on time. Being late can cause them to feel anxious and insecure. If you are unavoidably delayed, please phone us as soon as possible so we can reassure your child that you are coming. Please notify staff if a person other than yourself is to collect your child from kinder. This adult must be nominated on your child's enrolment form, and be responsible for ensuring the attendance book is signed when collecting children. Photo ID will be required

Birthdays and Celebrations

As birthdays are a special time for children, parents are welcome to bring a birthday cake (preferably single cupcakes, patty cakes, chocolate crackles etc.) to Kindergarten to help their child celebrate their birthday. All birthday foods must have the ingredients clearly labelled or will not be given out to children (this includes cupcakes/cakes made by families)



Please let us know in advance if you will be providing something, to allow the parents of children with allergies or special beliefs to provide an alternative for their child.

Sun Protection

Children are required to wear broad-brimmed or legionnaire style hats to kinder from **when the UV reaches 3 or above.**

Children are also required to wear suitable clothing to provide as much protection as possible. Therefore, singlet tops or strappy dresses, which do not cover shoulders and the back, are **inappropriate** for Kindergarten. Sunscreen should be applied before attending kinder; however sunscreen is available at the service. Please advise staff upon arrival if you need to apply sunscreen to your child.



Parents and siblings are encouraged to follow these sun smart principles when attending sessions at kinder.

Children's Services Policy, Practices and Procedural Guidelines

The National Quality Framework requires all children's service's to have policies that inform daily practice and operation of the service. These policies and practices can be found in the front foyer.

Flexi Buzz

Flexi Buzz is a mobile app that notifies families about Kindergarten news, events and other communications. Visit www.flexibuzz.com and sign up. Search for Alexandra Street Kindergarten in Schools, Early learning. You will need **FlexiBuzz** to obtain a password from the Kindergarten Educator.



Communication with Families

There will be a variety of methods by which educators will communicate your child's progress throughout the year including, parent teacher interviews, portfolios, reflections, newsletters each term, individual meetings on request & emails.

Other relevant news and information will be placed on the sign in table or noticeboard. Please check your child's file/pocket regularly service information. Regular newsletters and Flexi Buzz and via mobile messages will inform you of what is happening within the service. If you have any questions/comments relating the day to day running of the Kindergarten, don't hesitate to approach Educators. We are also happy to set up a time to meet with you after session time to discuss how your child is going.

Enrolment Details

The enrolment form is to be completed by the parent/guardian preceding your child's Kindergarten year. Your child **is not able to** stay at Kindergarten without a parent until this form is completed.

In accordance with the Education and Care National Regulations, **please remember to notify educators of any change of:**

- Phone number
- Home Address,
- Emergency contacts
- Doctor Etc.
- Childs health

This information MUST be current in case your child has an accident or becomes ill

Evacuation Drill/Lock Down

In case of an emergency evacuation our service will follow the emergency situations policy which is available in our policy folder or staff are able to provide you with a copy. Evacuation procedures are practised with the children each term.

Medication

Educators will only administer medication to children if the parent has completed the Kindergarten medication form. For further information refer to the Medical Conditions Policy statement.

Allergies

Alexandra Street Kindergarten implements an Anaphylaxis Policy, as a response to the growing number of children in our community with life threatening allergies. Each year all educators are trained in the treatment of anaphylaxis.

As part of our “risk minimization plan’, we are asking families to be aware of **ANY** nut/egg/gluten products including food and food packaging, being brought into the service. Please let us know if your child has any of these foods in their lunch box.

Immunisation – Illness - Exclusions

Immunisation is compulsory for children attending an Early Childhood Service unless the child meets the exemption criteria. It is a requirement that families notify the service when their child’s immunisation status is updated. It is important that families keep their children home if they are unwell. Families are to notify the service educator of any infectious disease nominated on the Victorian Department of Health Communicable Infectious Disease Chart as displayed in the service. Children suffering from any of the Infectious Diseases listed on the Chart must not attend the service for the period specified. Confidentiality will be maintained at all times.

The health and well-being of the children is the highest priority at Kindergarten. During the year it is quite probable that your child may contract any of the usual children’s illnesses – colds, flu, gastric problems, chicken pox, measles, etc. **If your child has been vomiting or had diarrhoea in the past 24 hours please do not bring him/her to Kindergarten.**

If your child has a cough or fever, please keep them at home to help reduce the risk of spreading infection to others.

Please remember to ring to let us know if your child will be away, either due to illness or if going on holidays.

Accidents

Children who receive minor injuries at kinder will be supported and cared for and basic first aid administered. The details of the accident treatment will be recorded in a specific accident register and parents will be informed and asked to sign at the end of the session. In case of more serious injury, parents will be immediately informed and medical assistance will be sought.

If a child becomes ill the parent will be contacted immediately and if unavailable the emergency contact will be notified. Please ensure your emergency contact is aware that this may occur. All costs incurred are the responsibility of the parents/guardians.

If a child becomes seriously ill or involved in an accident the Greater Shepparton City Council Emergency Procedures will be followed (see Greater Shepparton City Council Policy and Procedure document)

Parent Advisory Group

Now your child is enrolled at our Kindergarten you automatically become a member of our Parent Advisory Group. Your participation is essential in the smooth operation of our service. You may be able to contribute through;

- Fundraising
- Joining us on Excursions
- Participating in events at the service
- Snack/lunch roster
- Laundry roster
- Kindergarten/Pre-kindergarten activities
- Sharing special talents e.g. craft, cooking, music
- Special events/days e.g. mother's day, father's night, BBQ
- Input to kinder program etc.
- Policy reviews
- Helping us with going shopping, catalogue surfing
- Attending meetings or special events
- Supporting fundraising events
- Small maintenance jobs like mending toys or dress up cloths
- Have a chat with the Kindergarten team and let them know how you would like to participate.

Donations

If families have excess of the following items at home we would appreciate any donations: toilet paper, tissues, envelopes or copy paper, spray wipe, Glen 20, Disinfectant, sponges/cloths, detergents, cotton balls, cotton buds, etc.

We also love to recycle! So bring in:

Cereal boxes	Corks	Egg Cartons	Washed milk lids
Magazines	Wool/String etc.	Paper cups	paper plates
Muesli/Wrap boxes	Cotton balls	Pegs	CD's
Margarine Lids	Easter/Christmas wrapping		
Ice cream containers	Washed yogurt/ fruit containers		



Fees

- Kindergarten fees
 - \$1500.00 annual fee paid in full by 23 February **or**
 - \$150.00 per month - February to November direct debit
- Pre-kindergarten
 - \$660.00 annual fee paid in full by 23 February **or**
 - \$ 66.00 per month February to November direct debit

Kindergarten and Pre- Kindergarten families are required to complete a Direct Debit form on enrolment unless full annual fee has been paid by 23 February or family is eligible for Kindergarten Fee Subsidy. Outstanding balances will be deducted from your nominated account on the last Wednesday of each month. You can pay the amount at any time prior to the last Wednesday of the month if you wish to avoid your account being direct debited.

Concession Card holders or Early Start to Kindergarten (ESK) are eligible for free or low cost funded kindergarten. Your card must be presented to the kindergarten teacher prior to 23 February to avoid full fees being charged for the kindergarten program.

For further information on kindergarten subsidies:

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/childhood/providers/comms/kinderfeesub.pdf>

Support – Queries - Concerns

Alexandra Street Kindergarten is a Greater Shepparton City Council service and regulated in accordance with the National Quality Framework. If you would like additional information or support, have queries or a concern; please speak to the Service Leader. If you require further information please don't hesitate to contact:

- Councils Children's Services Leadership Team
 - Phone 58329783 or
 - Email Address: council@shepparton.vic.gov.au

- Department of Education and Training Regional Offices Benalla –
 - Phone 1300 333 231
 - Email Address: nevr@edumail.vic.gov.au

PRIVACY

Greater Shepparton City Council complies with the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic) and the Health Records Act 2001. The information recorded on these enrolment forms complies with the above Acts and relevant regulatory requirements. A copy of the Greater Shepparton City Council Privacy Policy and Records and Information Management Policy are available on request

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