

PARENT INFORMATION BOOKLET

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About this Booklet

Welcome to North Kew Kindergarten. We hope to share a happy and rewarding year with you and your child. This booklet contains some basic information for parents that we hope will answer many of your questions.

Our Policy Folder is available for review at any time in the kindergarten foyer.

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About our Kindergarten

Our kindergarten is a friendly community-based organisation where many lasting friendships are formed for families and children.

We offer:

- Parent participation in the program
- Special events for children and families
- Highly qualified experienced staff
- Natural outdoor play area with large tree canopy, shade cloth, grass area and climbing area
- A large sunny north-facing indoor playroom which is light and bright all year round
- A multi-purpose site with a maternal and child health centre, and the Kew Toy Library

We operate in line with the Victorian School Term Calendar. Term dates are listed on our website and we observe all Public Holidays. The first two days of Term 1 are pupil free days to allow for Staff preparation. We may take an additional pupil free day throughout the year which will be communicated to you in advance.

At the commencement of each year we run on an Orientation schedule, details of which are provided at, or sent following, our AGM.

Our staff are committed to providing a positive environment that facilitates each child's individual learning and fosters curiosity through exploration. We endeavour to create warm, caring and respectful relationships with each child and their family.

We aim to:

- Build and foster partnerships between families and educators
- Build children's confidence, sense of wellbeing, safety and willingness to engage in learning
- Educators respect diversity
- Educators strive for ongoing learning and reflective practice

Our kindergarten uses the Victorian Early Years Learning Framework as the foundation to develop our play based program curriculum. The program is flexible and creative and aims to enhance the unique abilities of each child by offering experiences based on their interests and developmental levels. We provide time in an unhurried environment for the children to share their ideas and be listened to. Play-based discovery learning has important educational benefits as young children learn best through direct experience. "When children play they are showing what they have learned and what they are trying to understand." Through experimental play, children can practice and master newly-learned skills and behaviours.

Through this approach children are learning to:

- Make decisions
- Make choices
- Make plans

Play is central to the learning program. As Joy Lubawy says, "Play is cognitive and social, it is emotional and physical, it encourages language and literacy, it gives avenues for science and maths concepts to develop, it has subtle rules, great worth and leads a child's development in all areas."

Information and ongoing reflections about the program are located in folders in the foyer and are emailed out to families on a regular basis to enable you to stay connected with what is happening at kinder. A newsletter is also distributed by email to all families once a term with important information along with key dates.

We display the children's work including anecdotes around the room at the kindergarten or at times building a book that may be borrowed by the children/families attending the kindergarten.

Individualised Programming

Each child develops at a different rate through various stages. Our kindergarten program aims to offer children experiences based on their interests and developmental needs.

We aim to provide opportunities for the child to interact socially, make choices, and to experience success and enjoyment in learning. We provide a variety of stimulating experiences to encourage curiosity, exploration, experimentation and opportunities for creative expression through art, music, movement and dramatic play.

Teachers seek information about your child both formally, through questionnaires and informally, through conversations, phone calls and emails. This helps to build a relationship with your child and to promote partnerships with parents in understanding and sharing the learning which is happening at kindergarten. We value your enriching contributions to the program and each child's learning.

Staff compile individual portfolios for each child using – observations, both written and visual (photos/videos), learning stories and a collection of creative works which document your child's progress while they are attending our service.

These pictures may also be inclusive of other children within the group.

Parents are welcome to have discussions with teachers at an organised time about your child's individual development.

Coming to Kindergarten

Starting Kindergarten

Each child is an individual and will react in different ways to different situations. Some children come to kindergarten full of confidence, while others are timid. Please feel free to stay with your child for a few minutes in the morning to help them settle into the room. If your child is tentative, it could take more than one session.

For the first few sessions of the first term, the children will attend for shorter periods and in smaller groups. This helps all children to become familiar with each other and the staff more quickly.

Some children need this period of adjustment more than others. Even if your child doesn't appear to need this time to settle in, it is important for the whole group.

Elements of a Session

A typical kindergarten session is flexible and allows for a maximum of child-selected activities. For example:

9.15 - 10.30: Children choose from selected indoor activities.

- Painting and collage develops eye/hand coordination, fine motor coordination, colour recognition, language extension, and creative skills and is a foundation for reading and writing.
- Dramatic play develops imagination, sensitivity, language, concept development and socialisation skills.
- Block play develops mathematical and perceptual skills, spatial awareness and problem solving skills.
- Construction sets develops fine motor skills and perceptual skills, encourages imagination and language.
- Books stories stimulate an interest in reading, broaden knowledge, understanding and language, develop imagination and listening skills.

10.30 - 10.50: Tidy up and group time on the mat.

This may involve stories, songs, movement, poems, games or discussion. The group may be split into two at the beginning of the year, especially for discussion and stories. (There is less waiting time for children to have their turn to talk.) Group time is usually short, especially at the beginning of the year. Group time develops a feeling of cohesion as the children begin to identify as being part of the kindergarten group.

11.00 - 1.30: Children choose selected outdoor activities.

• Climbing activities - develop gross motor skills, spatial awareness, physical strength and muscle tone, balance skills, socialisation skills.

- Sand play develop eye/hand coordination, fine motor coordination, creative skills, socialisation skills, and dramatic play.
- Water play develop eye/hand coordination, fine motor, mathematical, scientific and socialisation skills.
- Wheel toys develop gross motor skills, coordination, sharing, taking turns, dramatic play, eye/hand coordination.

1.45–2.15 Tidy up and group time on the mat.

At the end of the session, we usually come together again as a group for a story or song. We will sometimes recall a specific event in the day.

Children must remain seated on the mat until their parent or carer has signed them out and their name is called to be collected prior to leaving.

Please Note: Our program is flexible depending on the weather and the needs of the children i.e. outdoor and indoor sessions may be switched.

Hats and Bags

Children should bring their own personal bag to kindergarten with snacks, lunch, drink, spare clothes and to take work home. Each child needs to provide their own sun hat to comply with our sun safety policy. This hat will need to be broad brimmed or a legionnaire style.



SunSmart

Children are expected to bring hats with them for every day of kindergarten and to wear their sun hats for outdoor play, or they will have to stay in the shade. We are a <u>SunSmart</u> kindergarten and wear hats whenever the UV level is 3 or above. A small number of spare hats are available. These hats need to be taken home, laundered and returned to kindergarten if they are used.

Please put sunscreen on your child before coming to kindergarten. A minimum of factor 30 sunscreen is recommended as it maintains protection for the duration of a session.

Clothing

Children should be dressed in comfortable (preferably labelled) play clothes which they can manage by themselves. Despite our use of smocks, they will get messy at times, so please don't send them in

clothes they are not allowed to get dirty. We appreciate it if you pack a spare set of clothes and a plastic bag in your child's bag in case they are required during the session.

Long dresses are difficult to climb in. Children can trip on the hems when using the A frames or scramble net. Trackpants, leggings, short skirts and shorts do not impede climbing and are suitable for kindergarten.

Sturdy footwear is needed for outdoor play - no thongs or 'crocs' please.

Boots, parkas and a warm hat are a good idea for winter.

What to Bring

The kindergarten supplies all the educational materials that children need. However, children need to bring their hat and bag to every session. We do not encourage children to bring their own toys to kindergarten as these can easily be lost, damaged and the child often finds them difficult to share.

Snack and Lunch

The food children bring to kindergarten sessions provides opportunities for learning, as children sit and eat together, however the kindergarten has a no-food sharing policy because of allergies.

Children need to bring their own healthy snack, lunch and drink to kindergarten; fruit, sandwiches, dry biscuits, etc. It may be helpful to put the lunch and snack in separate labelled containers so your child does not eat everything at snack and have nothing left for lunch.

Due to the potential for serious life-threatening complications for some children if eaten or touched, we ask that families not bring any egg or nut products for snacks and lunch at kindergarten.

We cannot guarantee that our centre is free from these products but appreciate your cooperation with this issue. A further list of disallowed foods may be provided upon commencement, based on the individual allergies of the children enrolled. This list may be added to and changed at any time depending on the specific needs of any child attending the kindergarten.

Because we are concerned that food be healthy and safe, remember that many processed foods, even those which are labelled as 'healthy', contain large amounts of fat, salt and sugar.

Drink

A labelled drink bottle filled with water can be left in the bottom of each child's locker for use throughout the session.

Arrival and Departure

Here is a step-by-step guide to assist with your arrival and departure at kindergarten:

- 1. Please ensure that all gates are closed properly behind you on arrival and departure. Never let anybody else's child out of the kindergarten unless accompanied by an adult.
- 2. Complete the SIGN IN & SIGN OUT book for your child at the start and end of the program every day. The Victorian Child Protection Service regulations require that we have a book in the

entrance foyer which must be signed on your child's arrival and departure. Please note, the teacher is unable to hand a child over to any person other than the parent unless authorisation is given. Such authorisation should be listed on the enrolment form and confirmed in the attendance book. Please advise staff of changes to your list of authorised persons.

- 3. Check your child's pigeon hole daily for any important notices that need to be taken home.

 This is also a great time to put your name down on the Kindergarten Duty Roster (once per term is a great start) & Maintenance Roster helping around the kindergarten and with general gardening helps to keep kindergarten costs at a minimum.
- 4. Your child is to wash their hands in the bathroom at the start of each kindergarten session. We have reviewed our risk minimisation strategies for children with allergies and have implemented a 'washing of hands' routine as the children arrive as part of this strategy.

Starting and finishing times MUST be observed: the time before sessions begin is used to set up the program, and children become anxious if not picked up on time. If you are held up, please ring the kindergarten mobile 0401 304 724 so we can reassure your child. When a parent/guardian is late in collecting their child, a late fee may be charged of \$5 for each 10 minutes (or part thereof).

Staff are unable to supervise children in the outdoor play area either before or after session times. Please note that the childrens' supervision and safety is the responsibility of the parent/carer before a child is signed in, and after a child is signed out.

Security Gate

The kindergarten has an electronic security gate which requires a 4 digit pin to gain access to the kinder. All families will be emailed prior to the start of Term 1 with security gate instructions and new pin code.

Other People Collecting Your Child

If a person other than those listed in your child's enrolment documents will be collecting your child you must give your consent in writing to the kindergarten prior to pick up time. You may do this by completing a 'collection consent' form available in the foyer near the sign in sheets. In the case of an emergency if you have not had an opportunity to complete the collection consent form then you should email the kindergarten and advise:

- the name of the person collecting your child
- a mobile phone number
- if the person has permission just for this pick up or ongoing

This information will be kept in your child's file for future reference.

Health and Absence

Children should not attend kindergarten when they are unwell. If your child will be absent for several days, it would be appreciated if you could let us know.

All infectious diseases should be reported to kindergarten as soon as possible. A list of infectious diseases and the length of time your child should not have contact with other children is located in the kindergarten foyer.

No Jab No Play – Immunisation

All offers of placement and enrolments are subject to the 'No Jab, No Play' legislation.

The only documentation accepted by The Victorian Child Protection Service will be the Immunisation History Statement from the Australian Immunisation Register. It must show your child is up to date with vaccinations for their age or that the child is on a recognised catch-up schedule or they have a medical condition preventing them from being fully vaccinated.

Conscientious objection is not an exemption under the legislation. Documents produced by GP's or other immunisation providers will not be accepted as proof of immunisation.

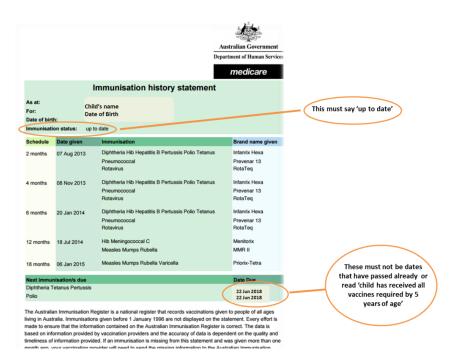
All families will be required to submit their child's Immunisation History Statement from Australian Immunisation Register BEFORE they can accept a position at North Kew Kindergarten (or at any early childhood education or care service within Victoria).

You can get a copy of your child's Immunisation History Statement by:

- Visiting a Medicare or Centrelink Office
- Calling the Australian Immunisation Register on 1800 653 809 and requesting a copy
- Through your myGOV account

North Kew Kindergarten will also request updated copies of your child's immunisation status throughout the year as they become due.

Example of Acceptable Immunisation Evidence



Please note that a photocopy of your child's health book is not acceptable evidence.

Children's Art Work Constructions

Some children will produce great quantities of creative work each day to take home, and others use materials such as the kindergarten's manipulative equipment, blocks or dough to create with and then have to dismantle their work when materials are packed away.

With any of these activities, it is the process, or the 'doing', that is more important to your child than the finished product, so it is a good idea to acknowledge your child's involvement. 'Who did you work with today?' or 'What did you work at today?' rather than 'Have you got anything to take home?'.

How do you respond to your child's artwork?

Be realistic - know your child and his or her capabilities. Enjoy it for what it is and share this enjoyment with your child. If there isn't anything visibly representative in the picture, perhaps comment on the colours, shapes, size, placement, etc. Perhaps you could say, 'Would you like to tell me about it?' at a suitable moment when quietly by yourselves. Above all, encourage your child, and delight in their use of imagination; encourage them to experiment; gently 'stretch' horizons by suggesting a further addition; and take time to see how they view the world.

What can you do with the work at home?

Kindergarten work can be displayed or used. It can be shared with grandparents, friends, the office and of course, at home. It can be displayed on a pinboard in your child's room or family room, or on doors with suitable paint surfaces - even the fridge door!

Make sure your child understands that the work will be rotated, and the old work will be suitably disposed of, e.g. boxes recycled back to kinder. Paintings can be laminated for gifts, or used as wrapping paper, or sections used as gift tags or cards. Box creations can be used for dramatic play with cars, dolls, etc, or can be taken further by painting them or even decorating them with materials or paper (good for rainy days).

How our Kindergarten Works

Committee of Management

The kindergarten is managed by a voluntary Committee of Management elected each year from the parents of children enrolled. The Committee exists to ensure that our Centre provides a quality service, not only for our children, but also for those who attend in the future.

The Committee is legally responsible for running the kindergarten, employing staff, paying invoices, etc. without this Committee the kindergarten can not operate.

Specifically, the role of the Committee is to:

- promote the kindergarten within the community;
- maintain policies which are consistent with legislative and industrial requirements, and meet the needs of the community;
- be responsible for the management of all aspects of the service, including the kindergarten's finances;
- employ the staff.

Parents are elected to the Committee at the Annual General Meeting held in November. The names of the people taking on different roles within the Committee can be found on the foyer notice board.

Executive Members

- President
- Vice-President
- Secretary
- Treasurer

General Members

- Maintenance Manager
- Website Manager
- Fundraising/Social (3YO & 4YO)
- Grants Officer

The pigeon holes in the foyer can be used if you wish to communicate with committee members. Please mark the envelope 'Committee' and include your name.

Committee meetings are held twice a term. Dates of meetings are posted on the notice board.

Information to Parents from the Kindergarten

We recognise that parents are keen to share their child's progress throughout the year.

- Teachers will keep you up to date with your child's progress informally as you bring or collect your child. Alternatively, a meeting can be arranged outside the normal session times. Teachers will be pleased if you ask directly about any specific concerns and will appreciate knowing about anything happening at home which may affect your child's progress
- Program information is available on the notice board and this is regularly changed and updated
- We have regular updates of photos and learning stories documenting the children's development in the program book/emailed reflections

- Each child has their own pigeon hole in the foyer for take-home information
- A noticeboard located at the kindergarten's entrance is used to communicate general information. Reminders and special events are also recorded here
- A kindergarten newsletter is distributed every term

Communicating with the Kindergarten

Please see the list of contacts below to assist with communicating with our service, however any general enquiries please contact the kindergarten on 9853 8294 or email northkewkinder@outlook.com

	northkewkinder@outlook.com						
		3 year old georgienkk@outlook.com					
		855181	4 year old juliankk@outlook.com clairenkk@outlook.com				
				president@ northkewkinder.org.au			
					mainte u	maintenance@northkewkinder.org.a u	
Pick up permissions	1	√	√				
Discussion with teacher about my child		√	√				
Changes to my information	1						
Updated enrolment information for my child	√						
Questions about / during the enrolment process	√						
Fee receipts or fee questions	1						
Concerns or comments regarding the program or kindergarten in general	√	√	√	√			
Maintenance communication/ Refunds	√				√		

Visiting Entertainers and Incursions

The teachers plan these when they feel it is beneficial to the educational program over the course of the year. For example, we have had a visit by a wildlife expert, a musician, a puppet theatre, the responsible pets program, chicks hatching, and the outreach museum program.

Birthdays

Children love to celebrate their birthdays at kindergarten. We do this by singing 'Happy Birthday' and giving your child the opportunity to talk about their special day with the kindergarten group. In accordance with our risk minimisation strategies please check with teachers prior to bringing any celebration food and refrain from bringing gifts. If your child is having a party, children love to get a letter

in the post. Please do not hand out birthday invitations at kindergarten. Contact details are available for parents who have consented to being on our contact list.

Parental Involvement in Sessions

Parents are very welcome to contribute to the program with any particular skills or interests, for example, cooking, playing musical instruments, bringing interesting pets, craft activities. The children also really enjoy a visit from a parent or grandparent who may be a nurse, policeman, mechanic, builder, etc. Please consider your talents and share them with us.

Each family is asked to be a "Parent Helper" during a kindergarten session at least once or twice per term (roster is on the notice board and depends on COVID restrictions at the time). This includes helping prepare for and clean up after lunch/snack time. It is an opportunity for you to be with your child in the playroom and see them among friends. We encourage communication and the building of connections with families in our kindergarten community. We welcome parents who may on occasions have free time to spend with their child at kindergarten. Please remember the playroom is the children's workroom and parents should chat with each other outside. Children can find lots of adults in the room overwhelming as the noise level increases.

Complaint Management

We aim to deliver a high quality service to our families. To help achieve this we welcome your feedback both positive and negative.

Parents may provide their feedback to Executive Committee members (names and titles listed in the kindergarten foyer) or if they so wish directly to the regional office of the Department of Education, details below:

Phone: 1300 333 231 Fax: 03 8392 9333

Location: Level 3, 295 Springvale Road, Glen Waverley, Victoria 3150

Kindergarten Policies

The kindergarten has a set of policies available for parents to read: covering various areas of the program and operation of the Centre. All parents/guardians are expected to be aware of and abide by all policies passed by the North Kew Kindergarten Committee of Management.

The policies can be found in a folder in the foyer. This folder must not be removed from the premises.

Photo Policy

This photo policy is available for viewing in full in the kindergarten foyer. In summary we have adopted the policy suggested by the Early Learning Association Australia with an amendment specifically to our kinder. This amendment states that parents/guardians may only take photos or videos of their own child at special services events. We ask that photos and videos are not taken at any other time.

Special service events are limited to:

The 1st day of kindergarten for the year

- Special celebrations (Chinese New Year/Easter Celebrations/Footy Colours Day/Crazy Hair Day etc.)
- Special Person Family Day
- End of Year Concert
- End of year celebration (usually at the traffic school)
- The last day of kindergarten

Where photos or videos are taken that contain children other than your own we ask that you are sensitive and respectful to the privacy of these children and their families by not sharing on social media, the internet or via email.

If you have any concerns regarding the policy you may contact the kindergarten Committee of Management.

Affiliations

Our kindergarten is a member of the following associations:

Boroondara Kindergarten Central Enrolment Scheme (BKCES) sets the enrolment policies for its members.

Early Learning Association Australia (ELAA) represents all member kindergartens in matters involving the State Government and unions or professional bodies, and provides support and advice.

Department of Education

http://www.education.vic.gov.au/earlychildhood/

Fees and Levies

Fees

Term fees were set in accordance with our financial budget and agreed upon by the Committee of Management. The fees are charged in addition to the funding received and assist in keeping our kindergarten viable.

From 2023 the Victorian Government has announced 'Free Kinder' to all families as part of their 'Best Start Best Life' reform. Kindergartens had the option to 'opt in' or 'opt out' of this initiative and it was agreed that for the benefit of our families North Kew Kindergarten would OPT IN for Free Kinder in 2023.

While this initiative is a financial relief for all families, the increased funding provided does not fully cover the expected operating expenses for most kindergartens, for example: Sessional Kinder, such as ours, will receive an additional \$2,500 pa for each student enrolled in a 15hr 4-year old program, but we are not allowed to charge a gap fee or any levies.* Our Term fee for our 4 year old program in 2022 was \$795 per child (an annual fee of \$3,180) with a \$200 levy – a difference of \$880 per child enrolled.

This will result in 2023 becoming a bit of a trial year to see how we can reduce our overhead costs while still providing the high quality service we strive for. There will be an increase in fundraising and Grant applications with a higher expectation on family involvement with maintenance and working bees.

* Levies: 3 & 4 year-old groups - \$200 per family upfront redeemable fee. This levy was refunded at the end of the year to families who earnt 2 participation points per semester (total of 4 points) by completing set tasks.

Separately, kindergartens can accept voluntary contributions from their enrolled families. While we are a registered Not-For-Profit Charity, we are not eligible as 'Tax Deduction Gift Recipients'. If you would like to contribute to the financial running of North Kew Kindergarten donations can be made via EFT to:

North Kew Kindergarten Bendigo Bank BSB 633 000 Account 163 487 911

Acceptance Deposit

Upon commencement into our service, we are allowed to charge families an administration fee. This fee is fully refunded upon your child's commencement into the program. If you do withdraw your placement offer during the enrollment process the \$100 acceptance deposit can be retained by North Kew Kindergarten to cover the administration costs involved in the enrollment process.

Withdrawal of Placement After Commencement

The kindergarten requires weeks notice from a parent/guardian if you intend to withdraw your child's position. Written notification of the withdrawal is to be sent to northkewkinder@outlook.com as well as informing Boroondara Kindergarten Central Enrolment Scheme on Ph) 03 9278 4444.

North Kew Kindergarten Fee Information

The Fees policy was adopted by the North Kew Kindergarten Committee. This policy is reviewed annually.

Guiding Principles

North Kew Kindergarten is committed to providing high quality preschool educational programs for both the 3 & 4 year old children in accordance with government policy.

The purpose of this policy is to inform parents of the financial needs at North Kew Kindergarten.

Our expected budget projection includes:

- The overall running costs of the centre, the major component of which is salaries. (North Kew Kindergarten employs only qualified and experienced teachers).
- The annual subsidy paid by the State Government for each child enrolled for an initial year of 4
 Year Old kindergarten and subsidised second year. (Small increases are generally made to cover
 rises in teachers' award salaries).
- From 2022 3 Year Old kindergarten places are funded for 5hrs, From 2023 3 year old kindergarten will be fully funded with programs increasing in length up to 15hrs by 2029.

Participation - Working Bees, Gardening Rosters etc.

The kindergarten is run by a group of volunteer parents and one of our areas of responsibility is the ongoing maintenance of the kindergarten. Maintenance encompasses working bees, gardening, lawn mowing, repairs and one off projects. Our aim is to provide a pleasant environment for our children and to meet the required safety standards.

To minimise our costs in employing workers to do the maintenance for us, we rely on families to help with the various maintenance tasks required. Please put your name on the online Volunteer Sign Up sheet, emailed at the start of each term, next to the tasks that you intend on completing.

Please notify teaching staff or Office Manager once your job has been completed

Type of maintenance tasks include:

- Mowing lawn, nature strip & sweeping paths
- Weeding garden & sweeping around sandpit
- Cleaning outdoor equipment & building
- · Foyer cleaning & lost property sorting

- Laundry
- Indoor toy cleaning
- Blowervac of leaves etc of the concrete area and covered outdoor play space
- Splash Pond maintenance and water filtration
- Indoor cleaning, window cleaning and storeroom sorting
- Cleaning of boxes where the sand toys are kept
- One-off jobs to be allocated by teachers or maintenance committee members