



**Macedon
Ranges**
Shire Council

**Early Years
Services**

Parent information booklet

Kindergarten



Welcome



Our kindergartens are places of learning and community. Led by some of the finest Early Childhood Teachers and Educators, they provide a welcome, supportive community for families and an environment rich in nature-based and creative learning.

Our kindergartens are assessed at intervals by the Department of Education. We strive to achieve that all Macedon Ranges Shire Council kindergarten services have a standard of meeting quality standards, with some rated as exceeding those standards.



Our kindergartens

Kindergarten	Address	Phone
Kyneton Kindergarten	49A Edgecombe Street, Kyneton 3444	(03) 5422 1463 Golden Wattle (03) 5422 2157 Silver Banksia
Lancefield Kindergarten	16 Dunsford Street, Lancefield 3435	(03) 5429 2547
Macedon Kindergarten	55 Bruce Street, Macedon 3440	(03) 5426 1877
Manna Gum Family and Children's Centre	71 Robertson Street, Gisborne 3437	(03) 5421 9516 White Gum (03) 5421 9517 Ribbon Gum
Riddells Creek Kindergarten	23 Mahoneys Road, Riddells Creek 3431	(03) 5428 7207
Romsey Kindergarten	32-48 Main Street, Romsey 3434	(03) 5429 5294 Bunjil (03) 5429 6076 Waa
Swinburne Avenue Children's Centre	8 Swinburne Avenue, Gisborne 3437	(03) 5428 3731 Burrow (03) 5428 3697 Blue Gum
Woodend Kindergarten	10 Nicholson Street, Woodend 3442	(03) 5427 1421 Pin Oak (03) 5427 2730 Banksia

Philosophy



Macedon Ranges Shire Council is on Dja Dja Wurrung, Taungurung and Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Countries. We respect their elders past, present and emerging and welcome Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people who attend or visit our services.

Macedon Ranges Shire Council is a child safe organisation. Council understands that child safety is everyone's responsibility and prides itself on being a child safe organisation with zero tolerance for child abuse. This means creating environments where all children and young people are heard, valued and protected from harm and abuse.

We aim to:

- embrace the rights, values, cultures and uniqueness of each child
- provide a play-based curriculum that is responsive to the environment, and children's needs and interests
- advocate for the children, early childhood services and our profession
- communicate openly, maintain confidentiality and provide support to children and their families
- encourage educators' strengths, knowledge and expertise in the development of programs
- create team efficiency, working together consistently and collaboratively
- seek opportunities to continually improve our programs, facilities and the development of our educators
- improve outcomes for all children through the delivery of accessible and inclusive programs
- use technology in the program to enable children to connect to their world
- work towards more environmentally sustainable facilities and programs
- promote the importance of parent helpers and volunteering, and being involved in the kindergarten community to kindergarten families and provide advice and support to parent helpers and volunteers.



Funded kindergarten



The Victorian Government provides funding to support children to access a high quality kindergarten program in the two years before they start school. For more information, visit the Department of Education website education.vic.gov.au/childhood

When you see the Kinder Tick, you can be confident;

- the program will be led by a qualified Teacher
- children will benefit from play-based learning
- the kindergarten program is funded and approved by the Victorian Government
- the program complies with government guidelines and the National Quality Framework.

The Victorian Government only funds one year of 3-year-old kindergarten, and one year of 4-year-old kindergarten. There isn't an opportunity to complete a second year of funded 3-year-old kindergarten. For a child to repeat 4-year old-kindergarten they need to be assessed as being delayed in two or more development areas by their Early Childhood Teacher, and have a second year approved by the Department of Education.

Fees

Kindergarten is free for all Victorian children in 2024. A \$42 non-refundable registration fee will still apply. Eligible pension and health care cardholders are exempt from the registration fee.



Early Start Kindergarten Program

Early Start Kindergarten Program (ESK) – This program enables eligible 3-year-old children to access 15 hours of Kindergarten two years before school where the child is Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander or for children known to Child Protection, or from a Refugee or Asylum Seeker background.

For more information and eligibility, talk to our Enrolment Officer by calling (03) 5422 0239.

Important dates

To view the kindergarten timetable, visit mrsc.vic.gov.au/Find-a-Kindergarten

2024 Timetables will be available in early 2024

2024 Term dates

Period	Start	Finish
Term 1	29 January (30 January for Government Schools) * you will be advised of your child's exact start date by email	28 March
School holidays	29 March	14 April
Term 2	15 April	28 June
School holidays	29 June	14 July
Term 3	15 July	20 September
School holidays	21 September	6 October
Term 4	7 October	20 December

2024 Public holidays and child free days

Date	Day	Holiday
26 January	Friday	Australia Day
29 January	Monday	Set up day (child free day)
30 January	Tuesday	Professional development (child free day)
2 February	Friday	Planning day (child free day)
11 March	Monday	Labour Day
29 March	Friday	Good Friday
1 April	Monday	Easter Monday
25 April	Thursday	Anzac Day
10 June	Monday	King's Birthday
27 June	Thursday	Professional development (child free day)
TBC	TBC	Friday before AFL Grand Final - TBC
5 November	Tuesday	Melbourne Cup – all kindergartens except Kyneton
6 November	Wednesday	Kyneton Cup – Kyneton Kindergarten only
20 December	Friday	Pack up day (child free day)

Preparing your child for kindergarten



What to bring

Broad brim hat



Jacket



Drink



Gumboots



Change of clothes



Beanie



Backpack



For easy identification, please clearly name all items that your child will bring to kindergarten.

What to wear



Clothing should be comfortable and easy to manage for your child. The kindergarten provides smocks for messy activities, but clothes still get dirty. We ask that no singlets, long or sleeveless dresses, thongs or crocs be worn.

Our kindergartens also have uniforms which are not mandatory. Uniforms can be ordered through:

Beleza School Uniforms - Gisborne
42C Aitken Street
Gisborne VIC 3437
Ph. (03) 5428 1285

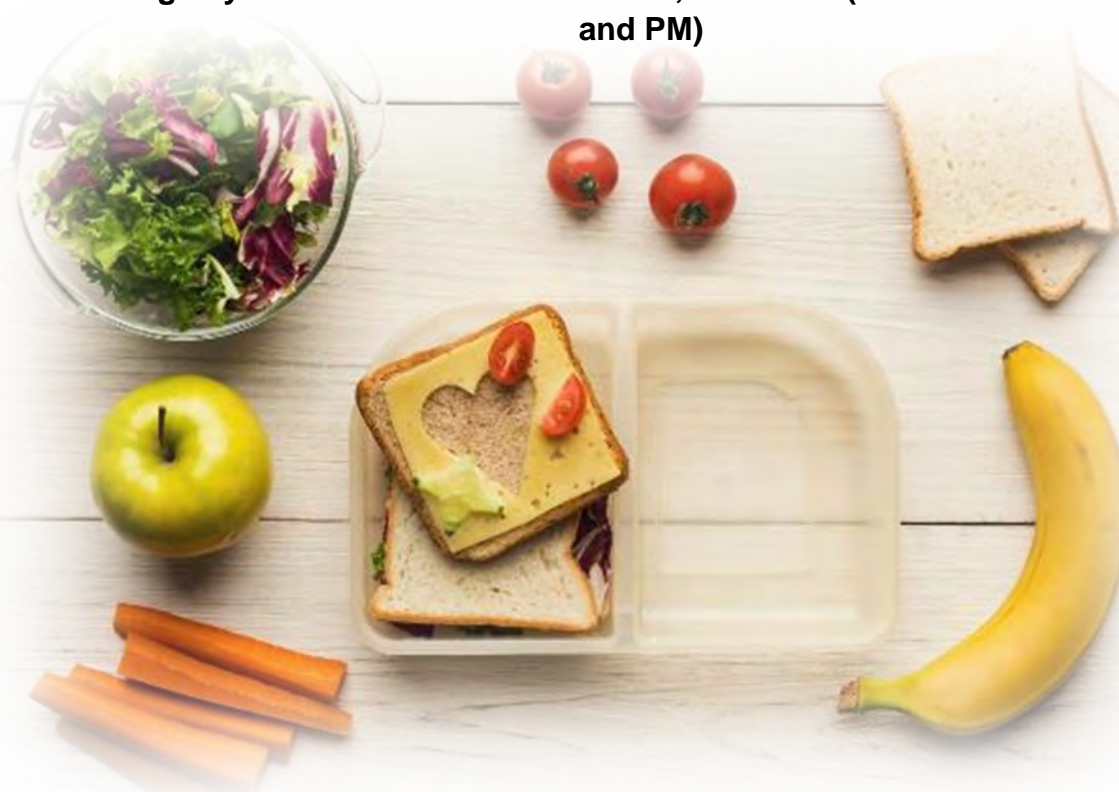


What to eat

We promote a healthy lifestyle to children, including eating nutritious food, maintaining oral health and participating in physical activity. We recommend that you provide healthy snacks, lunch and water for your child.

Long day 7.5 hour session

Lunch, snack x 2 (AM and PM)



Nut-free aware

Due to the increase of children with allergic reactions, we ask that you do not send any products which may include nuts (especially peanuts) and includes peanut butter, Nutella, all nuts and any food containing nuts. You will be notified if there is a severe anaphylactic child within your kindergarten group.

Daily tasks



Toilet Training

Helping your child learn to use the toilet is a big step. If you stay positive and calm, your child will be more likely to settle into things. Below are some tips to help:

- teach your child some words for going to the toilet like 'wee', 'poo' and, 'I need to go'.
- let your child try sitting on the potty or the small toilet seat to help them feel comfortable with using a toilet.
- use positive encouragement if the child attempts to use the potty/toilet.
- in summer start trialing putting cloth underpants on your child to help them understand the feeling of wetness.

Visit Raising Children Network for more tips and advice, raisingchildren.net.au/preschoolers/health-daily-care/toileting/toilet-training-guide

Attempting to dress themselves, using tissues, handwashing and being able to manage bags and lunchboxes are skills that children can develop at a young age. Getting dressed is about more than just putting on or taking off clothes. It helps your child develop other skills like:

- ✓ fine motor skills as they learn to fasten buttons and zips
- ✓ gross motor skills such as standing on one leg to pull on a pair of pants
- ✓ cognitive skills such as remembering what bits of clothing go on first, build patience and attention to finish the task
- ✓ language such as naming types of clothes, colours and sizes
- ✓ awareness of time and space as they learn to dress for certain occasions and weather conditions.



SunSmart kindergarten



Sun protection is used whenever UV levels are 3 or higher. All children are required to wear a SunSmart approved hat that protects their face, neck and ears.

These include:

- ✓ **Legionnaire**
- ✓ **Broad brim**
- ✓ **Bucket hat**

Peak caps and visors are not considered a suitable alternative.

SPF 30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen is provided at the service, however, families can provide an alternative sunscreen to be left at the service if their child has a particular sensitivity to the sunscreen provided. Visit the SunSmart website for more information sunsmart.com.au



Single-use plastics



Reduce, Reuse and Recycle

Did you know our kindergartens are committed to reducing waste and looking after our precious planet?

At each of our kindergartens, we are:

- no longer using single-use plastics
- choosing sustainable products where available
- buying in bulk to reduce packaging
- encouraging reuse and upcycling
- using the four bin system correctly, just like at home
- recycling our soft plastics, stationery, art & craft items
- committed to finding more sustainable solutions.

All of our families can get involved by considering things like:

- what food and snacks are packaged in
- choosing plastic free when possible
- using reusable and not single-use plastics. For example reusable yoghurt pouches, beeswax wraps or foil for snacks.

Learn more about reducing waste by visiting mrsc.vic.gov.au/waste-reduction or downloading the MRSC waste app



Communication and Getting involved



How we communicate with you

For enrolment and registration matters we will primarily communicate with you by email. Please note, if you have a Hotmail email account our emails to Hotmail accounts may go to trash folders so please check these folders regularly.

Your child's Teacher or Educators will also use Storypark which offers families real-time communication on their child's progress and ease of contact with the Educator. You will be set up with a Storypark account closer to your child's start date.

Opportunities for parent/guardians and teacher meetings can also be arranged for one on one discussions and parents are always welcome and encouraged to ask about the progress of their child at any stage.

Transition statements are developed for each child attending a 4-year-old kindergarten program in preparation for their primary school orientation in term four. Visit the Department of Education website for more information, education.vic.gov.au/childhood

There are also a range of ways parents and/or guardians can get involved in our kindergarten community, such as social activities and becoming a parent/carer helper. Talk to your child's teacher to find out how you can be involved.

Please note, all kindergarten parent/carer helpers, are required to have a Victorian Working with Children's Check (WWCC) or Victorian Teachers Registration (VIT), and adhere to Child Safe Standards and Child Safety and Wellbeing Policies, and sign the Safety Wellbeing Code of Conduct. Parent/carer helpers participating in the program with their child (stay and play) e.g. reading, playing outside, sitting with your child during activities, and for no more than once a term, are not required to have a WWCC/VIT.

Kindergarten drop-off and pick-up

Parents/guardians/carers are responsible for:

- completing the authorised nominee section of their child's enrolment form before their child attends the service. You can add authorised nominees at any time of the year, just contact your child's Teacher.
- ensuring teachers are aware that their child has arrived at or has been collected from the service
- collecting their child on time at the end of each session or day
- alerting teachers if they are likely to be late collecting their child
- supervising their own child before signing them into the program and after they have signed them out of the program
- supervising other children in their care, including siblings, while picking up and dropping off their child at the service or while attending the service.



Updating your information



Please ensure your kindergarten is kept up-to-date with your and your child's details and contact your child's Teacher or our Enrolment Officer at kinderenrolment@mrsc.vic.gov.au or on (03) 5422 0239 to update. You may also need to advise other areas of Council as outlined on our website, mrsc.vic.gov.au/kindergarten

Please note, it is the family's responsibility to ensure contact details are kept up-to-date with Council.

Change to kindergarten applications

Please contact our Enrolment Officer at kinderenrolment@mrsc.vic.gov.au or on (03) 5422 0239 to amend any registration details if you or your child's circumstances have changed.

Children with additional needs

We are committed to supporting any child that has additional needs. If your child needs assistance, please ensure that your enrolment form clearly identifies this and that you add supporting documentation. For further information, call our Enrolment Officer on (03) 5422 0239.



Illness, immunisation and policies



Under the 'No Jab, No Play' legislation an early childhood education and care service cannot confirm enrolment of a child unless the parent and/or guardian has provided an up-to-date copy of the child's Immunisation History Statement from the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR). The statement shows the child:

- is fully vaccinated for their age
- is on a recognised catch-up schedule and is on track with the catch up schedule
- has a medical exemption not to be vaccinated.



Accessing your child's immunisation history

Parents and/or guardians can print a copy of their child's Immunisation History Statement by:

- accessing their myGov account
- calling the AIR on phone 1800 653 809
- visiting a Medicare or Centrelink office.

Illness and absences

It is important to have a plan in the event your child is not well enough to attend kindergarten or needs to be collected during the session. Teachers and families need to follow their service's infectious disease policy for the exclusion of ill children, in the interests of all children's health.

Please call your child's kindergarten service / Educator directly if your child will not be attending their session. Please see Page 1 of this booklet for kindergarten contact details.

Policies



Our policies reflect our vision and are in place to ensure high quality education and care for the children who attend our services. Full copies of the policies can be provided upon request and are available on our website <https://www.mrsc.vic.gov.au/Live-Work/Children/Kindergarten/About-Kindergarten>

Contacts and queries

Enrolment and Registration

Early Years Enrolment Officer

(03) 5422 0239

kinderenrolment@mrsc.vic.gov.au

Regional Team Leader
Romsey, Lancefield, Kyneton & Macedon
Kindergartens

(03) 5422 0271 or 0418 511 052

amaglicic@mrsc.vic.gov.au

Regional Team Leader
Swinburne, Manna Gum, Riddells Creek &
Woodend Kindergartens

(03) 5421 9514 or 0408 113 604

kmcdermott@mrsc.vic.gov.au

Coordinator Early Years Services

(03) 5422 0251 or 0448 238 894

swaymouth@mrsc.vic.gov.au

Department of Education

(03) 5440 3111

7-15 McLaren Street, Bendigo 3552

Reporting suspected child abuse

Commission for children and young people

North Division Intake 1300 664 977

After hours 131 278

Maternal & Child Health Services

(03) 5422 0281

mchadmin@mrsc.vic.gov.au

Concerns and complaints

Please inform your child's Teacher at your service with any concerns or complaints as the first point of contact. Contact the Regional Team Leader in your area if you are unable to discuss your concerns with the Teacher of the service your child attends.

Keeping children safe



Our role as an organisation

Zero tolerance

Council recognises that protecting children, preventing and responding to child abuse is an organisation wide responsibility. We commit to regularly review our policies, procedures and documentation to ensure that all principles of a 'Child Safe Organisation' (as outlined in the Victorian Child Safe Standards) are embedded in the everyday thinking and practice of Council.



In line with Council's commitment to child safety, all kindergarten volunteers are required to have a Victorian Working with Children's Check.

Council follows the Child Safe Standards and the Reportable Conduct Scheme, which create distinct sets of responsibilities for organisations, but have been designed to complement one another. For more information visit

ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards/ or refer to our [Early Years Child Safe Environment and Wellbeing Policy](#).

Privacy of complaints is maintained and information is only disclosed as required by legislation. Permission is not required from parents and/or guardians of a child to make a report where any abuse is suspected.

Reporting child abuse

To make a report to Child Protection, a person needs to have formed a reasonable belief that a child has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm as a result of abuse or neglect, and that their parent has not protected or is unlikely to protect the child from harm of that type.

The Victorian Child Protection Service is specifically targeted to those children and young people at risk of harm or where families are unable or unwilling to protect them. The main functions of Child Protection are to:

- investigate matters where it is alleged that a child is at risk of significant harm
- refer children and families to services that assist in providing the ongoing safety and wellbeing of children
- make applications to the Children's Court if the child's safety cannot be ensured within the family
- administer protection orders granted by the Children's Court.

Mandatory reporting of child abuse

The following professional groups are required to make a report to Child Protection where they form a reasonable belief that a child has been or is at risk of significant harm, as a result of physical or sexual abuse, and the child's parents have not protected or are unlikely to protect the child from that abuse:

- Registered medical practitioners
- Nurses including midwives
- Victorian police officers
- Registered teachers and school principals
- Out of home care workers (excluding voluntary foster and kinship carers)
- Early childhood workers
- Youth justice workers
- Registered psychologists
- School counsellors
- People in religious ministry.

As a mandated reporter, Council is legally obliged to:

- make a report to Child Protection if a Teacher or Educator believes on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection from physical injury, emotional or sexual abuse
- make the report as soon as practicable after forming that belief
- make a report each time they become aware of any further grounds for their belief.

In addition, any person who believes on reasonable grounds that a child needs protection can make a report to Child Protection. Child Protection will decide when follow up is required and how to classify the report. This may mean providing advice to the reporter, progressing the matter to an investigation, or referring the family to support services in the community, or taking no further action.

More information can be found by clicking here [Child Protection](#)

Information sharing scheme

The Child Information Sharing (CSI) Scheme is legislation that allows authorised organisations and professionals working with children and young people (0-18) to share information without parents' permission in circumstances that promote a child's wellbeing or safety. A person's safety takes preference over someone's privacy. Generally, your information will not be shared without your consent. But if there is a serious threat to an individual's life, health safety or welfare, your information may be shared without your consent to lessen or prevent this serious threat.

Authorised organisations can request and share confidential information if the Child Information Sharing Scheme threshold is met. The disclosing information entity must reasonably believe that sharing the information may assist the receiving information sharing entity to carry out one or more of the following activities;

1. making a decision, an assessment or plan relating to a child or group of children;
2. initiating or conducting an investigation relating to a child or group of children;
3. providing a service relating to a child or group of children
4. managing any risk to a child or group of children.

For more information visit <https://www.vic.gov.au/child-information-sharing-scheme>.

To report any concerns regarding a child, call North Division Intake 1300 664 977 during business hours or call the After Hours Child Protection Emergency Service: 13 12 78



Emergency management



Our kindergartens implement an SMS emergency text system to notify parents and staff of emergencies including total fire ban days, emergency incidents and relocation destinations. Please be aware, Emergency SMS will be sent to Parent 1 on your child's enrolment. Other forms of communication such as social media and email made be used in times of need.

Kindergarten closures

In the event of High ratings, all services operate as usual.

Macedon Kindergarten will be closed on any days that are declared 'Extreme' or 'Catastrophic' and days declared as 'Total Fire Ban'.

Kindergarten	Location	On Bushfire at Risk Register	Pre-emptive Action			
			Total Fire Ban	High	Extreme	Catastrophic
Macedon Kindergarten	in township, one way access/exit	YES	CLOSED	Open unless specific threat	CLOSED	CLOSED
Kyneton Kindergarten	in township	NO	OPEN	Open unless specific threat	Open unless specific threat	CLOSED
Woodend Kindergarten	in township	YES	OPEN	Open unless specific threat	Open unless specific threat	CLOSED
Lancefield Kindergarten	in township	YES	OPEN	Open unless specific threat	Open unless specific threat	CLOSED
Romsey Kindergarten	in township, attached to MCH	NO	OPEN	Open unless specific threat	Open unless specific threat	CLOSED
Riddells Creek Kindergarten	in township, attached to MCH	YES	OPEN	Open unless specific threat	Open unless specific threat	CLOSED
Swinburne Avenue Children's Centre (Gisborne)	in township, backs onto grassland	YES	OPEN	Open unless specific threat	Open unless specific threat	CLOSED
Manna Gum Family and Children's Centre (Gisborne)	in township, attached to MCH and EY office	YES	OPEN	Open unless specific threat	Open unless specific threat	CLOSED

More information

Gifts

In accordance with Councils Staff Code of Conduct, staff are required to declare, in writing to the CEO, any gifts received valued at over \$30, and multiple gifts from the same source over a 12 month period that add up to \$100. Staff are also unable to accept gifts of monetary nature such as scratchies, money and visa gift cards.

There are times throughout the year where Teachers/Educators may be given gifts by the children in their group as a small token of appreciation. If at any stage you intend on giving a gift to your child's Teacher/Educator please keep this in mind.

For more information about our kindergartens, information, and programs, visit our website at mrsc.vic.gov.au/kindergarten or contact the Early Years team.

First Aid Kids

Kindergarten First Aid Kits can be inspected on request. Please speak to your child's Teacher to arrange an inspection.

