



BEECHWORTH KINDERGARTEN

Welcome!

The teaching staff and Committee of Management would like to warmly welcome all parents, guardians and children to the Beechworth Kindergarten for the year 2024.

This information booklet has been designed to provide information about the Kindergarten and how it operates.

Our Kindergarten depends on, and highly values the involvement and support of the families and friends of our children to enable its operation.



CONTENTS

Welcome

About us – The Beechworth Kindergarten

Kindergarten centre staff 3

Centre phone numbers

General information

Hours of operation

Session preferences 4

Immunisation requirements

Term dates

Public holidays 5

Pupil free days

Fees

Our philosophy and values

Policies 6

Health and wellbeing

Communication (newsletters and transition reports

Privacy

Child behaviours

Committee of management 7

2023 committee members 8

Fundraising

You and your child

First few weeks 9

What clothes to wear

What food to send	
.....	
Signing in	10
.....	
.....	
Children’s work	
.....	
....	
Sickness	
.....	
.....	
Parent feedback	
.....	
...	

Beechworth Kindergarten

Beechworth Kindergarten has been operating for over 50 years, in various locations around Beechworth, with a strong history of providing early childhood education to the local children. We often have parents of our children reminiscing about their time at the kinder many years ago and we enjoy sharing their stories.

Things have changed over the years in education, facilities, staffing etc but the ongoing kinder principles remain – to provide high quality education, in a nurturing environment that is available to all families.

Beechworth Kindergarten Centre Staff

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Director/Educational Leader/Teacher: | Tanya Hansford |
| Teacher: | Jo Ivone |
| Teacher: | Monica Lindsey |
| Co-Educator: | Jenelle Dunkley |
| Co-Educator: | Maree Kennett |
| Co-Educator: | Nikki Isaac |

Centre Contacts

During session phone: (03) 5728 1532
During an emergency/ evacuation:
Director – Tanya Hansford: 0427 143 000
Child Care Centre: (03) 5728 2378
Email: beechworth.kin@kindergarten.vic.gov.au

General Information

Licensee: Beechworth Kindergarten Inc.
Primary Nominee: Tanya Hansford
Director: Tanya Hansford
Nominees: Jo Ivone, Jenelle Dunkley and Maree Kennett

Responsible Gov. Dept:
Department of Education and Training (DET)
PO Box 403, Benalla, Victoria 3672
Dept. contact: Jo Bruce
Phone: 02 60557777

Hours of Operation

Group 1: KOALA'S (4 y/o)

Monday and Tuesday 9am to 3pm
Wednesday 1pm to 4pm

Group 2: KANGAROO'S (4 y/o)

Wednesday 1pm to 4pm
Thursday and Friday 9am to 3pm

Group 3: JOEY'S (3 y/o)

Tuesday 9am to 3pm
Wednesday 9am to 12pm
Thursday 9am to 3pm

During 2024 kinder classes will be held each day. 4 year olds will attend for 15 hours; 2 days of 6 hours and 3 hours on a Wednesday afternoon together. 3 year olds will also attend 15 hours, for 6 hours on Tuesday and Thursday with the 4 year old cohort, and Wednesday morning as a smaller 3 year old class. Families can request either the Koala or Kangaroo Group as their chosen day/s, and will be subject to availability. Sessions will be allocated by the Kindergarten Director/Teachers and the Enrolment Officer. Every attempt will be made to accommodate the days requested, however this will be subject to places being available and dynamics of the children attending. Please note that due to Educational requirements priority must be given to 4 year old enrolments. This may alter the availability of 3 year old spaces.

Session Preferences

The initial session preferences are captured on your enrolment form and will be collated for review at the Annual General Meeting. Individuals who attend the AGM will have a higher likelihood of getting their day preferences.

Immunisation requirements

Under the "No Jab, No Play" legislation that came into effect on 1st January 2016, children are required to be fully vaccinated for their age before they can be enrolled in a Kindergarten program. Therefore, our Kindergarten is required to obtain written evidence that your child is

fully immunised for their age, is on a vaccination catch-up program or is unable to be fully immunised for medical reasons. Conscientious objection is not an exemption.

Planned Term Dates for 2024:

TERM 1 DATES: Monday 29th January - Thursday 28th March

Group 1 KOALA COMMENCEMENT DATES

4 YEAR OLD: Monday 29th January 9am

Group 2 KANGAROO COMMENCEMENT DATES

4 YEAR OLD: Wednesday 31st January 1pm

Group 3 JOEY COMMENCEMENT DATES

3 YEAR OLD: Tuesday 30th January 9am

TERM 2 DATES: Monday 15th April - Friday 28th June

Group 1 KOALA COMMENCEMENT DATES

4 YEAR OLD: Monday 15th April 9am

Group 2 KANGAROO COMMENCEMENT DATES

4 YEAR OLD: Wednesday 17th April 1pm

Group 3 JOEY COMMENCEMENT DATES

3 YEAR OLD: Tuesday 16th April 9am

TERM 3 DATES: Monday 15th July - Friday 20th September

Group 1 KOALA COMMENCEMENT DATES

4 YEAR OLD: Monday 15th July 9am

Group 2 KANGAROO COMMENCEMENT DATES

4 YEAR OLD: Wednesday 17th July 1pm

Group 3 JOEY COMMENCEMENT DATES

3 YEAR OLD: Tuesday 16th July 9am

TERM 4 DATES: Monday 7th October - Friday 20th December

Group 1 KOALA COMMENCEMENT DATES

4 YEAR OLD: Monday 7th October 9am

Group 2 KANGAROO COMMENCEMENT DATES

4 YEAR OLD: Wednesday 9th October 1pm

Group 3 JOEY COMMENCEMENT DATES

3 YEAR OLD: Tuesday 8th October 1pm

Public Holidays for 2024

The Beechworth Kindergarten will be closed on all Victorian Public Holidays. *You will be reminded of these days beforehand.*

Labour Day: Monday 11th March

ANZAC Day: Thursday 25th April

King's Birthday: Monday 10th June

Friday before the AFL Grand Final: Subject to AFL Schedule

Melbourne Cup Day: Tuesday 5th November

Pupil Free Days

Teaching staff are allocated up to 4 pupil-free days per year. These are usually taken at the beginning and/or the end of the year for set up and pack up days, as well as transition report writing. They are also used for Professional Development when deemed appropriate. You will be advised with advanced warning of these days.

Fees

In 2024, sessional kindergarten services that participate in the Victorian Government's 'Free Kinder' program receive a per child payment to provide a free, 15-hour kindergarten program.

This payment is made in full for Four-Year-Old programs of 15 hours.

This payment is prorated for Three-Year-Old programs of less than 15 hours.

Beechworth Kindergarten does not currently offer additional program hours or wrap-around care beyond the 'Free Kinder' program hours. In the event that additional program hours or wrap-around care becomes available at the kinder, these services will attract an additional fee payable by families. Participation in any additional program hours or wrap-around care would be entirely optional - families can choose to participate in the free program content only.

Our Philosophy

We recognise the First Nations people as the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we educate. We respect and value their knowledge, culture and history, which we endeavour to learn about and learn from.

We believe in the importance of families as their child's first teacher and we recognise that family relationships are crucial in a child's life. We value and embrace the sharing of information and ideas to enhance the child's learning, and we actively encourage family partnerships and participation.

We believe there is value in the natural environment and materials. We teach children how to care for, respect and maintain natural spaces and materials, whilst learning about, and having respect for, the indigenous stories of the space that they play in.

We are committed to providing a safe, welcoming, and nurturing environment. Children are free to experiment, make choices, take risks and support each other in an environment where they are active participants in their own learning. We provide a child directed, play-based program with a strong emphasis on developing and facilitating respectful relationships and kindness. We believe that this fosters life skills such as resilience, flexibility, communication and confidence, as well as promoting a sense of wonder, wellbeing and belonging.

We value the individuality, knowledge, qualifications, and experience of all staff. We encourage personal and team growth within a positive environment that encourages enthusiasm, dedication and contribution. We believe continual reflection that involves educators, families and children helps our practice, program and environment evolve in a way that incorporates the needs and values of our community. We respect, value and accept each child, and any person who forms a part of our community, as an individual; embracing and celebrating all forms of abilities, genders, religions, cultures and family backgrounds. Everyone is welcome.

Our Values

Families

Respect

Acknowledgement

Program
Play
Environment
Staff

Policies

You can find information on each policy in the 'Beechworth Kindergarten Policy Book'. It is in a folder on the shelf under the 'sign-in' book at the Kindergarten, and can be borrowed for up to a week. Please return in the condition that you borrowed it in.

Health and Wellbeing

We strive to create an environment that assists all members of the service to experience physical, mental, emotional and social wellbeing, and we recognise the importance of a whole-service approach to Health and Wellbeing. We have a Health Promotion Charter and are recognised as a Health Promoting Early Childhood Service. We work in partnership with local health providers to implement the Achievement Program Framework to further develop activities, policy and practise that supports health and wellbeing.

Communication

Newsletters

Staff and Committee members endeavour to keep you informed on all upcoming events; this happens via a newsletter each term from staff, a copy of which can be found on the noticeboard at the front door, or sent via email if your email address is provided on the kindergarten enrolment form.

Email

Important information, events and other business of parent interest may also be sent to families via the email address provided on the enrolment form.

Meeting minutes

Minutes of the Committee of Management's monthly meeting can be made available upon request.

Progress Reports

4 year olds: There will be a Transition Statement at the end of term four with parent/teacher interviews.

3 & 4 year olds: If you have any concerns about your child throughout the year, you can talk to the teacher by making an appointment, or parents are welcome to email any queries or call the Kindergarten.

Privacy

Our kindergarten strives to protect the privacy of our children's personal information. The kindergarten has a privacy policy to ensure sensitive information regarding our children remain respectively confidential. Personal information such as medical conditions, behaviours, developmental diagnoses and social circumstances should not be discussed outside the kindergarten. If you have concerns regarding privacy, please feel free to discuss with the kindergarten teachers. We also have a social media policy which states that Parents/Guardians and other family members or volunteers posting to social media must ensure that only their child is included in photos or posts, unless consent is explicitly given by the parent/guardian of the other children.

Child Behaviour

Beechworth Kindergarten is an inclusive organisation that understands all children learn and behave differently. Children may be at different developmental stages and therefore have a variety of subsequent behaviours and needs. If you have any concerns regarding your child or a child at the kindergarten, please discuss directly with the kinder teacher. It is important to

respect our children by not discussing individual behaviour with those who are not directly involved in their care.

Committee of Management

- Volunteer parents manage many kindergartens in Victoria as part of an incorporated committee.
- An incorporated committee of management consists of parents and interested community members who are elected at the Annual General Meeting to manage the legal, financial and employment responsibilities of the kindergarten.
- The committee members are volunteers who are prepared to dedicate many hours to ensure the centre operates in the best interests of the children and families within the community, and without the committee, the Kindergarten could not run. We really encourage as many families as possible to get involved where possible!

What does the Committee of Management do?

The Beechworth Kindergarten Centre Committee of Management manages all affairs pertaining to the Beechworth Kindergarten Centre. This includes:

- Providing support and encouragement to our teaching team
- Setting and reviewing policies
- All staffing issues including recruitment, staff training, payroll and performance appraisal
- All financial and budgeting matters
- Child enrolments and Government funding arrangements
- Quality Assurance
- Fundraising
- Maintenance and upgrading of grounds and equipment.

At all times we are mindful of our role to ensure we are providing a safe and happy learning environment for our children. We liaise with parents and families, State and Local Government bodies, other community organisations and local business.

The Beechworth Kindergarten Centre Committee of Management consists of five Executive Members and General Members. The Committee meets once per month. At meetings we discuss matters relating to all the above mentioned areas. We make decisions and, providing we have a quorum, make, and change policies as deemed necessary. All parents are welcome to attend.

We plan special general meetings aimed at providing interesting and informative evenings in a semi-formal environment, where the parents of all our children can meet and socialise and learn a little more about the Kindergarten.

We discuss and plan projects to enhance and improve the grounds. When deemed necessary, we schedule working bees and encourage families to participate.

We keep a constant eye on our budget to ensure it is not exceeded, whilst capitalising on all our funds to ensure that our pre-school is the best it can possibly be.

We discuss, debate and plan fundraising activities to help raise money, so that new equipment can be purchased for the centre.

Whilst the Committee of Management can be somewhat time consuming, and at times challenging, it is also very rewarding and provides a great opportunity to learn and be part of a management team, as well as connect with other local families.

New Committee members are always welcome. If you would like to know more or are interested in getting involved, please talk to our Kindergarten Educator/s, Committee President or any Committee member.

The Kindergarten's Annual General Meeting (AGM) is the time a new Committee is elected, for without a Committee of Management the Kindergarten cannot operate. Parents who will have children enrolled at the Kindergarten the next year should consider whether they could contribute as a member of the committee. If parents require more information about this, please do not hesitate to ask.

The 2023 Kinder Committee Executive Team

President: Averil Halleur

Vice President: Catherine Bijker

Treasurer: Katie Skinner

Secretary: Liana Beatson

Enrolments: Sarah Webster

COMMITTEE CONTACT EMAIL: beechworth.committee@kindergarten.vic.gov.au

Fundraising

The involvement of parents/guardians and friends in fundraising is vital in raising funds to purchase new equipment for the kindergarten. We appreciate all your input to help to achieve our goals.

YOU AND YOUR CHILD

Your child's first few weeks:

Subject to current government health and safety regulations / the DET, you are welcome to stay if your child needs you. If you do stay, move away from your child occasionally, talk to other parents or children while staying within your child's sight. When you decide to leave, reassure your child that you will return to pick him/her up. Tell the staff you have decided to leave so they can be with your child. If your child is distressed or becomes distressed during the session, the teacher will telephone you to discuss the next step. In most cases, the child will settle and be playing within five minutes.

What clothes to wear:

- We encourage the kinder uniform which is available for purchase through the kindergarten (details will be provided post enrolment confirmation).
- If you choose not to wear the uniform, appropriate clothing as per the Sunsmart policy is encouraged.
 - Clothing should cover the shoulders; singlets are discouraged for outside play.
 - Wearing dresses should be avoided as they get in the way of crawling and climbing activities.

- o It is recommended to pack spare undies, socks, pants, and a top in your child's backpack.
- o Please avoid sending your child in thongs or crocs as they become a tripping hazard. Sneakers or enclosed sandals are a great choice.
- o We perform a lot of messy activities, so please don't send your child in their best clothes.
- o Gumboots are great for winter, especially in our digging/mud patch. You are welcome to leave a pair of gumboots at the Kindergarten for use throughout the year.
- o As a part of our program, and on days determined by the teachers, we conduct an indoor/outdoor program where children have the choice of where they wish to play. During wet weather and on days we operate the indoor/outdoor program, we allow the children to play outside, if they have an appropriate waterproof jacket on. If any parent/guardian has any issues with this, please speak to the teacher and note that any child that does not want to go out during wet weather can remain indoors with the teacher/educator running the indoor program.
- **Hats** - We encourage a broad brim hat to shade the face, neck and ears in accordance with our Sunsmart policy (baseball caps are not to be worn as they do not protect the neck and ears). **Your child is required to wear a broadbrim hat from the start of Term 1 and the start of Term 4.** This also follows the local school's policy. You may choose to purchase a kinder hat through the kindergarten or alternatively purchase your own hat.
- **Sunscreen** - We supply sunscreen for the children to wear, however if you would prefer your child wears a specific sunscreen due to skin sensitivity, please provide it in your child's kindergarten bag with a name clearly labelled.

What food to provide with your child:

- Fruit, vegetables, cheese, plain dry biscuits or dried fruit would be good choices for snack time. When children are attending kindergarten from 9am until 3pm, children will require a healthy snack, plus lunch, which may be a wholesome sandwich or bread roll and an extra piece of fruit/vegetable etc.
- Healthy food is essential for your child's growth and learning, *so we strongly discourage unhealthy snack foods* such as chips, biscuits, chocolate bars, roll ups and even muesli bars.
- If your child has special dietary needs, please speak to the staff.
- A drink bottle with water will also be required.
- Please make sure your child can easily *open and close* both the lunch box and drink bottle and that their *name is clearly marked on them*.
- Beechworth Kinder is a **NUT FREE** organisation. Please do not send nut or nut products to kinder with your child. Read the label of pre-packaged food to ensure there are no nuts in any of the ingredients.
- **Leave treats for home.** Our Kindergarten implements the Achievement Program Health and Wellbeing Framework and we have been recognised and awarded as meeting the Healthy Eating and Oral Health Benchmarks. We ask that no treats or sweet drinks are to be sent to kinder. Water or milk only for drinking.

Smiles 4 Miles Program

Our Kinder takes part in the Smiles 4 Miles (oral health) Program where the children are provided with a toothbrush and toothpaste to brush their teeth after lunch.

Signing In / Out

It is a legal obligation to physically handover your child to the teacher each day, who will then sign in your child. You must remain with your child at the Kindergarten until the commencement of each session, or when a staff member is present to accept your child. The Kindergarten cannot take children early as we are only licensed for the operating hours provided in this booklet. Similarly, only people you have indicated on your child's enrolment form can pick him/her up, so it is important to ensure these records are accurate and that you are timely at pick up to avoid any late pick-up fees that may occur.

Children's Work

Some of your child's artwork will be on display in the room or in the hallway. Other artwork can be found in the art boxes located on the shelf just outside the kindergarten door. Please check regularly as your child has spent a lot of time creating their masterpieces. Not all work can be kept intact (e.g. block building), but it can always be talked about and reflected upon. We do take numerous photos and photocopies of children's work, that are either sent home, shared on the Seesaw App, or filed in their journal books (which parents receive at the end of the year).

How sick is too sick?

If your child has a temperature, has vomited, or had diarrhoea in the last 24 hours, has conjunctivitis, head lice or any of the infectious diseases listed on the 'exclusion table' (found in the Policy and Procedure Manual), they must be kept at home until they are better or until a doctor certifies that they are no longer infectious. It is important to contact the kindergarten if your child is absent and to detail if they have a contagious illness.

Parent feedback

The teachers/educators at Beechworth Kindergarten are very approachable and encourage you to discuss any concerns you may have with them. If you are not comfortable doing this, please discuss your matter with a committee member.



We always need input from children and parents about the future of Beechworth Kindergarten.

If you have ideas or suggestions please speak to a Teacher or a committee member or even consider joining the Committee yourself – the committee is a very rewarding role and it's for the benefit of your children and future generations – let's help improve our children's learning!