



Kindergarten Information Handbook

More information is available at www.bethanykindergartens.org.au or
contact the BKS Central Support Team via email at kindergartens@bethany.org.au
or by phone on 5273 0200.

Last updated - 21st October, 2021

Find out More

Click below to visit the information you are looking for

ACKNOWLEDGMENT



It is a privilege to be living and working on the lands of Wadawurrung and Gunditjmara people. It is upon their ancestral lands that Bethany services are situated. We respectfully acknowledge the past and present traditional owners and custodians of the land and acknowledge the wisdom and diversity of past and present Elders. We share commitment to nurturing the future generations of First Nations people in the communities in which we work. We must take time to reflect and take up the challenge to open our eyes to understand the story of First Nations people. This land has held a deep spiritual significance, we acknowledge the attachment and spiritual connection the First Nations people have with this country. Through generations, the story and spirit of the people have been written into this land. We acknowledge the people's relationship with Bunjil, the creator, with the land and all creation. We also extend our acknowledgement to all other cultural groups that have contributed to the country we live in today.



At Bethany we celebrate diversity and innovation. We embrace creating an connected organisation which enables all service users, employees, students, contractors, and volunteers to feel safe from discrimination. We support an inclusive environment where people of all genders and ages, people living with a disability, First Nations people and people from LGBTI and CALD communities feel empowered to contribute their experiences and ideas; knowing that these will be valued.

Bethany Kindergarten Services (BKS) - Overview

Purpose Statement

Working together to meet the changing needs and aspirations of people in their communities

Strategic Aims

Children have a good start in life

Families are safe, loving and connected

Opportunity for everyone

Values

- Courage – We take action and stand up for what we believe
- Respect – We value people and build upon their strengths
- Integrity – We are open, fair and just in everything we do
- Innovation – We develop new ways of working to make a difference
- Collaboration – We work together to improve outcomes

Statement Of Commitment To Child Safety

Bethany is committed to providing a child safe environment. We have zero tolerance of any abuse or maltreatment of children. We are committed to ensuring children and young people are able to actively participate in decisions that affect their lives. We understand our legal and moral obligations to treat any child safety concerns seriously. We report any allegations and well-being concerns to authorities.

We are committed to the cultural safety of all children including Aboriginal children, children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability. Bethany is committed to being a child safe and child friendly organisation that recognises, respects and promotes children's rights.

We recognise our responsibilities in keeping children safe from abuse from those associated with this organisation and will ensure that the safety of children is always our first priority.



Welcome

Welcome to Bethany Kindergarten Services (BKS). We wish you and your children a fantastic kindergarten year/s. BKS is the Approved Provider for this kindergarten. We will work in partnership with you to provide a safe, enriching and educational year for your child.

As an Early Years Management Organisation (EYMO), BKS is responsible for the overall management and delivery of the kindergarten program.

The kindergartens within Bethany Kindergarten Services are:

- Bell Park Kindergarten
- Bell Post Hill Kindergarten
- Breakwater Preschool
- Clifton Springs - Beacon Point Preschool
- Corio - William Hovell Preschool
- Drysdale Preschool
- East Geelong - Normanby Street Preschool
- Grovedale Kindergarten
- Hamlyn Heights – William Parker Memorial Kindergarten (not operating in 2022)
- Herne Kindergarten
- Herne Hill - Rix Street Kindergarten
- Highton Preschool
- Highton - Bellevue Preschool
- Lara Kindergarten
- Leopold Kindergarten
- Leopold - Allanvale Preschool
- Newcomb – Kirralee Kindergarten
- Newtown - Fyans Park Kindergarten
- Ocean Grove Preschool
- Ocean Grove – Woodlands Kindergarten
- Portarlington Preschool
- Queenscliff Kindergarten

National Quality Framework

All BKS Kindergartens operate under the National Quality Framework (NQF). The NQF sets a high Australian Wide benchmark for all early childhood services. The NQF includes the following 7 quality areas that are important outcomes for children:

1. Educational program and practice
2. Children's health and safety
3. Physical environment
4. Staffing arrangements
5. Relationships with children
6. Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
7. Leadership and service management

Each Kindergarten is assessed and rated by the Department of Education and Training and given a rating for each of the 7 quality areas. Each service then receives an overall rating of either; working towards, meeting or exceeding the National Quality Standards.

The Assessment and Rating results are displayed at the kindergarten and are available for families to access at www.acecqa.gov.au.

The Kindergarten Program

Kindergarten is an important foundation for your child's education. The kindergarten program is planned by your child's educators and guided by both the National Framework (Belonging, Being and Becoming) and the Victorian Framework (Early Years Learning and Development Framework).

Educators develop the program based on their observations of the children, children's interests, strengths, and abilities within the context of their local community and cultural heritage. The program, which will be displayed at the kindergarten, reflects sound research that children learn best through play and by engaging in experiences that interest them. The program is planned around the five Learning Outcomes identified in the frameworks. The learning outcomes relate to:

1. Children have a strong sense of identity (**Identity**)
2. Children are connected with and contribute to their world (**Community**)
3. Children have a strong sense of wellbeing (**Wellbeing**)
4. Children are confident and involved learners (**Learning**)
5. Children are effective communicators (**Communication**)

Specifically the program provides opportunities for the children to learn to:

- feel confident
- be independent
- communicate with others
- express themselves through speech, movement, music and art
- observe, question and organise their thinking about the world
- be eager to undertake new experiences
- develop creative thoughts
- extend their interests
- be interested in cultures and community

The kindergarten environment is designed to provide opportunities for intentional teaching and self-directed learning. The educators know and understand each child and skilfully implement intentional teaching to enhance and support each child's learning. The children's learning, interactions, development participation and progression is documented and assessed by educators through written observations, work samples and photographs, which are available to families.

Information about Your Child

It is necessary to collect certain information about your child and family on an enrolment form. (The Department of Education & Training (DET) requires BKS to provide data about your child and family including name, address, date of birth and parental/occupational details. The provision of this data is a funding requirement. Families must ensure that the kindergarten has current contact and personal information regarding address, telephone numbers both home & mobile and emergency numbers. If there is an emergency it is vital that you or your nominated emergency person can be contacted. Please advise the educators in writing immediately of any changes so that they can update your personal information on file at the kindergarten. It is a regulatory requirement that a copy of any Court orders, parenting orders and parenting plans are provided to the educators.

Starting the Kindergarten Year

Kindergarten Program

Children accessing the funded four year old kindergarten program are offered 15 hours of kindergarten and children accessing the funded three year old kindergarten program are offered 5 hours from the beginning of Term 1 (children are unable to attend the 3 year old program until they have turned 3). We appreciate that each child has individual needs, and in consultation with families, teachers will decide the most appropriate way for each child to settle into the kindergarten environment. (The hours at the beginning of Term 1 may be varied to accommodate a child's individual needs and circumstances.) Please work in partnership with your child's teacher to meet your child's needs and circumstances.

Adjusting to Kindergarten

Each child has their own needs. Some children may be anxious, while others settle quickly into kindergarten. Some children may immediately find a companion to share the experience with, whereas others may prefer to observe or play alone until they feel comfortable. Establishing relationships and trust in unfamiliar adults may take time for some children, while others adapt immediately. Regardless of your child's response, it is important you always discuss kindergarten in a positive manner.

If your child is experiencing difficulty in adjusting to kindergarten or feeling some anxiety, please consult the educators who will discuss strategies to support your child to make a smooth transition into kindergarten.

What Does My Child Need to Bring to Kindergarten?

This may vary between different kindergartens.

- A named kindergarten bag large enough for your child to take their work home
- A named broad brimmed or legionnaires sun hat which is required for outdoor play (refer to Sun Protection Policy)
- A complete set of spare clothes clearly labelled with your child's name
- Your child's healthy snack, lunch and drink (refer to Food at Kindergarten)
- A warm coat/hat for outdoor play during Term 2 and 3
- Sunscreen if your child has a sensitivity



What Should My Child Wear to Kindergarten?

Play is an important part of the kindergarten program. Ensure that your child is dressed appropriately for the weather and in clothes that are suitable both for indoor and outdoor active play. The clothes should be easily washable. Art smocks are provided for messy activities, however smocks may not completely protect clothing.

In order to support your child's independence when going to the toilet, avoid clothes with difficult fastenings such as lots of buttons.

Provide a spare set of clothes in your child's bag. If no spare clothes have been provided then staff will use spare kindergarten clothes that are available if the need arises. Please ensure that any spare clothes provided are washed and returned to kindergarten as soon as possible.

Enclosed sandals or shoes enable safer play. These types of shoes ensure stability when running, jumping and climbing outdoors. Where possible, provide your child with shoes they can remove and put on without assistance. Thongs, gum boots and "Croc" style shoes are not safe footwear for kindergarten. Children have great difficulty climbing and running in these shoes.

Please clearly label all articles of clothing and shoes that may be removed

Arrival & Departure at Kindergarten

The Education and Care Services National Regulations requires all parents and/or guardians sign their child in and out of the kindergarten session with the full name of the person delivering and/or collecting the child, and the time the child was delivered or collected.

To allow staff time to prepare materials and set up equipment, the kindergarten doors are not opened until each session commences. It is important that you do not leave your child at the door. Please come inside and encourage them to become involved in an activity before leaving. To enable children to settle into the routine and become fully involved in activities, families are requested to talk together away from the kindergarten room or playground.

Families are responsible for supervising their own child before signing them into the program and after they have signed them out of the program. Families are responsible for supervising other siblings, while attending or assisting at kindergarten. Families are responsible for closing all gates and doors behind them, while ensuring they do not hold gates or doors open for other children.

Please let only your child/children in or out of any doors/gates and ensure gates and doors are closed.

Collecting children from Kindergarten

Only those people nominated by parents/guardians and noted on the Enrolment Form as an Authorised Nominee can collect your child. Parents/guardians must provide in writing the name of any person who will be collecting their child from kindergarten who is not listed on their Enrolment Form. This person must be aged at least 16 years of age.

Verbal authorisation can be provided by the parent/guardian in an emergency, to at least two educators, for an additional person to collect the child but this must be followed by written permission from the parent/guardian when they next attend the service.

People unfamiliar to staff will be required to provide photo identification before they can assume care of your child and a phone call will be made to parent/guardian informing them of the situation before the child is released.

If an emergency arises which prevents you from collecting your child on time, please notify the educators at the kindergarten immediately. Please refer to the procedures for the late collection of children in the Delivery and Collection of Children Policy which is available on the BKS website, www.bethanykindergartens.org.au.

Immunisation – No Jab, No Play

As of 28 February 2018, to have an enrolment confirmed for a child in kindergarten, families need to provide an Immunisation History Statement from the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR). It must show that their child:

- is up-to-date with vaccinations for their age OR
- is on a recognised vaccine catch-up schedule OR
- has a medical condition preventing them from being fully vaccinated.

Families can print a copy of their child's Immunisation History Statement from their:

- myGov account or
- Call the AIR on phone 1800 653 809
- Visit a Medicare or Centrelink office

If you are experiencing difficulties accessing vaccinations or required related documents, please contact BKS for assistance as soon as possible. In some cases children can commence at kindergarten while the documents are obtained.

Sun Smart

All BKS kindergartens follow Sun Smart procedures as recommended by the Cancer Council of Australia.

BKS kindergartens require children to wear hats that protect the face, neck and ears whenever they are outside from 1 September to 30 April, i.e. broad brimmed, bucket or legionnaire hats and clothing that covers as much skin as possible (e.g. tops that cover the shoulders, longer style shorts or skirts).

Where possible excursions and other outdoor activities will be scheduled to minimise time in direct sun particularly during peak UV periods between 11am and 3pm (EST). The availability of shade will be considered when planning outdoor activities and excursions.

UV radiation levels begin to rise early in September and stay high until the end of April, so skin should be protected throughout this period, not just during summer. We ask families to apply a 30+ broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen to their child before they arrive at kindergarten. Sunscreen is available at the kindergarten and will be reapplied throughout the session. If you prefer your child to use a particular sunscreen, please advise your child's educators and provide your preferred sunscreen.

Sunhats need to be worn at Kindergarten from 1st September to 30th April

Food at Kindergarten

It is important that young children have a break during a busy kindergarten session. Water and a snack is part of this break time. For longer sessions children may also be required to bring lunch. The children need to bring a healthy sandwich/wrap/pita/rice cakes for lunch and fruit or vegetables for snack.

BKS is committed to:

- promoting nutritious food and eating habits that will contribute to healthy growth and development in children
- providing a safe, supportive and social environment in which children can participate in social meal times
- consulting and working collaboratively with families in regard to their child's nutrition and dietary requirements, including responding appropriately to food allergies and respecting cultural and religious practices and lifestyle choices
- providing children and families with opportunities to learn about food, nutrition and healthy lifestyles, and
- ensuring adequate health and hygiene procedures, including safe practices for handling, preparing, storing and serving food.

Parents/guardians are responsible for:

- adopting the requirements of the Nutrition Policy
- providing details of specific nutritional/dietary requirements, including cultural or religious practices or food allergies, on their child's enrolment form, and discussing these with your child's teacher prior to the child's commencement at kindergarten, and if requirements change over time
- encouraging their child/children to drink an adequate amount of water at kindergarten
- providing healthy, nutritious food for snacks/meals, including fruits and vegetables where applicable
- providing nutritious food and water for celebrations, fundraising activities and kindergarten events, consistent with the kindergarten policy.

Please send all food to kindergarten in an insulated lunch box. Please label your child's snack and lunch boxes with their name and pack a cool pack in the lunch box if food requires refrigeration.

Nude Foods & Water

BKS want to show our support for a cleaner, greener earth and for each kindergarten to be environmentally friendly. Children have access to water throughout the session whether it is from a water container with cups provided by the kindergarten or their own drink bottle.

Water is the only drink to be provided in drink bottles.

Food Allergies

Allergies to foods are common. You are required to inform educators if your child is allergic to particular foods. Food allergies can be life threatening so you may be asked to restrict particular foods at kindergarten to ensure the safety of all children. Please ask educators if you are unsure about which foods can be brought to kindergarten.

Food Ideas

Snack Ideas

Fruit	Vegetables
A piece of fresh fruit	Cob of corn (small)
Fruit pieces: <ul style="list-style-type: none">* ½ kiwi fruit with spoon* orange in small quarters	Veggie sticks: <ul style="list-style-type: none">* celery* carrot* snow peas* capsicum* broccoli bits
Fruit balls: <ul style="list-style-type: none">* watermelon balls* rockmelon balls* grapes (red/green)* cherry tomato	A salad: <ul style="list-style-type: none">* cherry tomatoes* lettuce* snow peas* carrot* capsicum
Fruit salad: Bite size varieties of fruits (e.g. strawberries, rockmelon, watermelon, pineapple etc)	Sliced vegetables with dip

Sandwich Filling Ideas

Vegetable Based Fillings	Protein Based Fillings	Combinations
Avocado, alfalfa sprouts and tomato	Cream cheese with celery	Baked beans (drained) with grated light cheese
Tomatoes	Ham, cheese	Ham, cheese and pineapple
Lettuce, cucumber dip spread	Cheese and vegemite	Vegemite and alfalfa sprouts
Salad – avocado, sliced lettuce, tomato, cucumber, grated carrot, light cheese	Turkey and cranberry sauce	Cheese with carrot and mayonnaise
Hummus with alfalfa sprouts and tomato	Chutney and tasty cheese	Chopped chicken with spread of avocado and lettuce
Grated vegetables with avocado spread	Tuna/salmon with lettuce and mayonnaise	

Other snack and lunch ideas

Bread and Cereal Based	Protein Based	Fruit and Vegetable Based
Weetbix/Vita Brits with margarine and vegemite	Tuna with wholegrain crackers (e.g. vita wheat)	Cold baked beans
Rice cakes with cream cheese	Cubes of cheese	Cold baked potato
	Slice of cheese on wholegrain crackers (e.g. vita wheat)	

Food at Kindergarten

We prefer that children do not bring 'sometimes' foods to kindergarten. 'Sometimes' foods and drinks are food and drink items that are high in fat, sugar and salt, and contain minimal vitamins, minerals or fibre. Examples of sometimes foods are:

- Biscuit and cheese dip packets
- Sweet Biscuits
- Chocolate
- Fruit roll-ups
- Lollies
- Muesli bars
- Juice or soft drink
- Packets of chips (twisties and similar)
- Popcorn with topping (e.g. butter, icing sugar, coloured popcorn, caramel).

Celebrations

Due to the increasing number of children suffering severe allergic reactions, we request that no food products be brought to kindergarten for celebrations. A celebration alternative to food could include stickers. Educators will acknowledge each relevant celebration during group time. Please let the educators know if you prefer your child's celebrations not be acknowledged e.g. birthdays.

When distributing birthday invitations to other children, please do not hand out party invitations at pick up or drop off, please use the notice pockets. We understand that not all children in the group can be invited to all parties and some children may become upset if they don't receive an invitation. Staff will not be responsible for party invitations.

Safety

Front Door

The front door may be locked during session time so please ring the bell if you need to enter during the session.

Road

Instruct your children to exit from the kerb side of your vehicle.

Instruct your child to cross the road, holding hands with a parent or care giver.

Watch

Watch your child if you stop to chat with friends and DO NOT hold the gate/door open.

Laundry

You may be asked to wash smocks, hand towels or dress up clothes. Families are asked to wash and return the items ready for the first session the following week.

Gardening

Some kindergartens rely on families to assist at working bees. You will receive advance notice of any working bee at your kindergarten.

Notices

Notices, newsletters and information about your kindergarten are sent home regularly. Other information is placed on the noticeboard in the foyer at the kindergarten. Information is provided to keep you informed about what is happening at kindergarten.

Appointments with Educators

Teachers are available at mutually convenient out of session times should you wish to make an appointment to discuss your child's development or any other issues related to the kindergarten program. During session times, all educators are required to supervise and interact with children in order to ensure that a high quality program is maintained, particularly at delivery and collection times.

Excursions/Incursions & Special Events

We recognise that excursions/incursions and special events are a worthwhile extension to the educational program and provide children with opportunities to be involved in the broader community. Prior to any excursion or event, where children are taken outside of the kindergarten, a risk assessment and management plan is completed by educators.

The risk assessment and risk management plan assesses:

- The educational value to the children
- Supervision requirements and the number of available parents to come on the excursion
- The safety of children and parents
- Attendance of siblings
- Ensuring the Education and Care Services National Regulations are met
- Transportation requirements, pedestrian traffic safety and controls in crowded areas
- Site assessment, including emergency evacuation plans
- Hazard avoidance or elimination.

Cultural & Religious Diversity

BKS is committed to delivering programs that embrace cultural, language and religious differences. Throughout the year, the educators include activities in the program that reflect this diversity, using themes, materials and language that celebrate the varying backgrounds of the kindergarten families. We welcome any contribution you may wish to make, e.g. explaining a religious festival, singing a song, or bringing in items from home.

Anti Bias Approach

BKS has an organisational wide commitment to embed an anti-bias approach across all our kindergarten locations. The aim of the anti-bias curriculum is to ensure that all children regardless of gender, sexuality, culture or ability are treated equally and are all able to fulfil their highest potential in a caring and supportive environment. Educators are supported to reflect on the educational program, their approach to teaching and as a team share reflections on the way they structure the environment and interact with this in mind.

Toys

Children's toys are to be left at home in order to avoid them becoming broken or misplaced. Educators cannot take responsibility for children's own toys. There may be opportunities for children to bring a special item or something of interest to share during an experience such as "Show and Tell", "Newstime", "Treasure Day" or "Show and Share". The kindergarten will inform families of these particular procedures.

Transitioning to School

A positive transition to school starts through children being comfortable, relaxed and valued. Confident children are excited and motivated to learn and have good relationships with others. A child's ability to read, write or count makes little difference to whether or not they are ready to transition to primary school. Ability to get on with their peers, become more independent and interested in learning are all important for children beginning school. Even children who have had a lot of time in early year's education settings may not experience a successful transition to primary school if they aren't ready to move into that more structured environment. If you have any concerns about your child being ready for school, please discuss them with your child's teacher.

Second Year of Kindergarten Funding (Four Year Old Program)

Second Year of Kindergarten A second year of kindergarten may be considered in exceptional circumstances, where a child is observed to display delays in key areas of learning and development. A child is eligible for a second funded year of kindergarten if:

- The child is observed as having delays in at least two areas of learning and development and;
- A second year of kindergarten will help to strengthen the development of skills in these areas and better facilitate transition to school the following year.

To determine that a child is eligible to access a second funded year of kindergarten, the teacher will work in collaboration with the parents/guardians to develop a Term 3 plan for learning and development. This plan is then reviewed toward the end of Term 3.

If the Term 3 plan goals have not been achieved, the teacher will lead a discussion with the parents/guardians to determine whether a second year of kindergarten or transition to school will achieve better outcomes for the child. A review of the Term 3 plan for learning and development, will inform the decision about whether the child should transition to school or attend a second year of kindergarten.

Please note: Children who have attended their first year of kindergarten in a three year old program must progress to four year old kindergarten in the next year.

Children with Additional Needs

BKS kindergartens provide inclusive programs for all children. Please notify educators of any additional needs that should be considered to enable the program to meet the needs of your child. Individual education and care programs are designed in consultation with parents/guardians and other agencies/support professionals working with the child, in order to support the child in developing their full potential and to maximise their inclusion in the program. We recommend reports and information prepared in relation to your child by specialists are given to your child's teacher. These will assist the teacher with developing the most appropriate education and care program for your child.

To support the inclusion of children with additional needs, educators are able to access a Preschool Field Officer. The Preschool Field Officer is a trained early childhood professional is able to support the participation of children within the program. In some cases, children may be eligible for Kindergarten Inclusion Support.

Interactions with Children

BKS is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children, educators and volunteers. We believe all children have the right to experience a safe and secure environment and positive interaction with others. We recognise that each child is an individual and will develop individually.

Positive Behaviour Guidance

Children will be supported to self-regulate their behaviour. This differs from traditional 'behaviour management' or 'discipline' which generally implies that an adult is 'managing' children's behaviour or using punishment to control children. Behaviour guidance applies to all forms of behaviour, not just behaviours labelled as 'negative'.

Strategies to achieve Positive Guidance

The educators are committed to working with families to achieve positive interactions within the kindergarten environment. Family support meetings can be arranged to discuss any issues and develop strategies to positively guide children's behaviour. Educators work in partnership with families to understand behaviour and how behaviour can be supported by the kindergarten environment and program offered. Where necessary further support services can be accessed with the parent/guardian's permission.

Step 1 – Observe

- Observe challenging behaviour, including in the broader context of their environment, the culture of the kindergarten, and the interactions of the whole group and other educators working with the child.
- Identify, based on observations, whether there is a need to develop an individual guidance plan for the child.

Step 2 – Discuss

Educators will invite parents/guardians to a meeting to discuss:

- The ongoing behaviour displayed by the child, highlighting improvements and celebrating successes.
- Their aspirations, as well as the kindergarten's aspirations, for the child.
- The child's individual characteristics, including interests, temperament, age and cultural background.
- Recommended strategies to support the child's development, and how these strategies will be reviewed and evaluated.

- Resources or changes to the environment/program that may be required for a guidance plan to be implemented e.g. changes to routines and transitions.
- The support already accessed by the family to assist with managing the child's behaviour.
- Other support available, such as a Preschool Field Officer, referral for specialist assessment and additional adult support. (Written consent is required from parents/guardians before any intervention/assessment is undertaken.)
- A shared understanding and consistent approach between home and kindergarten environments.
- Any other matter that will assist with the development of a guidance plan.

Step 3 – Develop

Develop an individual guidance plan, based on the consultation with the child's parents/guardians and other support agencies, that is:

- Appropriate to the needs of the child and accepted/agreed to by parents/guardians and other professionals involved in the education and care of that child.
- Clear and easy to follow for all educators, parents/guardians and/or volunteers/students working with the child.

Step 4 – Monitor and review

- Continually review, reflect, evaluate and revise the strategies that have been implemented.
- Communicate with the parents/guardians regarding the child's progress and involve them in evaluating and revising the strategies.



Health & Wellbeing

For conditions that require ongoing care such as asthma, anaphylaxis, diabetes or epilepsy, etc, a Medical Management Plan must be completed and signed by the child's doctor to ensure that your child obtains the correct care in the event of symptoms occurring during a kindergarten session. In addition, families will work with educators to develop a Risk Minimisation and Communication Plan which is kept at kindergarten. These need to be in place prior to your child attending kindergarten.

Medication

Only medication authorised by a parent or guardian and prescribed by a doctor is permitted to be administered by educators. This medication must bear the **child's name**, the **prescription label** and must be in **the original bottle or container with clearly labelled directions for administration**. You are required to make educators aware that your child needs medication. An educator will provide you with a medication form and you are to complete all information. Refer to the BKS Dealing With Medical Conditions Policy. No medication will be administered unless this procedure has been completed.

Never leave the medication in your child's bag – always give it to an educator

Hygiene

Educators encourage children to develop autonomy with regards to personal hygiene with support. Educators will ensure that:

- Appropriate hand washing is modelled
- Hand washing is supervised on arrival, after toileting, before eating, after messy play, outdoor play and handling animals
- Appropriate 'social hygiene' is modelled in relation to coughing and sneezing (i.e. covering mouth when coughing and use of disposable tissues)
- Each child has their own drink bottle or cup at snack/lunch time
- The kitchen area is kept clean
- Tables are washed before and after food is served
- Cleaners are employed to clean the bathrooms and floors etc.

All BKS kindergartens are equipped with nappy changing facilities. If your child is wearing nappies, please provide at least three additional nappies, as well as a complete change of clothing (see What Should My Child Wear to Kindergarten). Please encourage your child to communicate with educators when they need to be changed.

If you start toilet training, please advise your child's educators, as a consistent approach between home and kindergarten allows children to gain confidence in their abilities and develop independence in their toileting skills.

Illness & Accidents

Accidents

The Department of Education and Training requires parents/guardians to give authorisation to seek emergency medical, hospital and ambulance services. In the event of an accident or serious illness, educators will notify you immediately and urgent medical attention will be sought.

Minor accidents and incidents will be reported to families after the session at collection time. Educators record all accidents and incidents and parents/guardians will be asked to sign an Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record, as per regulatory requirements.

Illness

Kindergarten educators appreciate the difficulties which arise when your child is sick, but it is vital that infection is kept out of kindergarten. If your child unwell, ie., has cold and/or flu symptoms, a sore throat, rashes, recent diarrhoea or vomiting, the child needs to be kept at home even if they insist on going to kindergarten. A day or two at home aids recovery and also prevents illness from spreading to the other children and educators.

Families will be contacted immediately if a child is unwell. If families are unable to be contacted, the emergency contact person nominated on the Enrolment Form will be notified. If they cannot be reached, the child will be cared for at the service until other arrangements can be made.

Families are asked to let staff know anytime their child is sick but must notify the kindergarten immediately if their child contracts COVID-19, Pertussis, Poliomyelitis, Measles, Mumps, Rubella or Meningococcal C. Information regarding children attending kindergarten and returning to kindergarten after contracting an infectious disease is displayed in the kindergarten foyer or available at:

<https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/infectious-diseases/school-exclusion/school-exclusion-table>

Family Involvement

Families are invited and encouraged to be involved in all aspects of the kindergarten including:

- Participation in the program
- Special events such as family celebrations
- Sharing special skills with the children such as gardening, wood work, and music
- Going on an excursion
- Joining the Parent Advisory Group
- Attending kindergarten events
- Assisting with fundraising
- Attending working bees
- Sharing cultural and religious celebrations.

Fundraising

All families can choose to participate in fundraising activities at kindergarten. The funds are used to improve the service in the following ways:

- Purchase additional equipment for the program
- Improve the outdoor area and playground
- Subsidise special events for the children.

Household Articles/Recycled Materials

Don't throw it away – ask if we want it first! If you think that something may be useful please talk to the educators.

Outdoors

- * Pavers
- * Garden decorations
- * Tiles
- * Natural materials
- * Plants for the garden

Art materials

- * Plastic ice cream containers
- * Small cardboard boxes
- * Gift wrapping
- * Wood offcuts
- * Fabric
- * Any type of offcuts that you may be able to get from factories such as plastic, paper, cardboard, buttons etc

For hygiene reasons we cannot accept toilet rolls and for medical reasons such as anaphylaxis we cannot accept items such as milk cartons, nut boxes, egg cartons (please check with educators regarding any cardboard packaging).

Fee Information for Families

Why fees are necessary

The Department of Education and Training (DET) provides per child funding as a contribution toward the cost of providing a kindergarten program. BKS meets the balance of costs through charging fees. Kindergarten fees are compulsory and must be paid by the due date. BKS provides a range of support options to parents/guardians experiencing difficulty with payment of fees (see below).

DET provides a Kindergarten Fee Subsidy (see pg 22) that enables children from eligible families to attend a kindergarten program free of charge, or at a minimal cost. DET also provides funding to assist eligible three-year-old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, and children known to Child Protection, to access kindergarten for 15 hours/week.

How fees are set

As part of the budget development process, the BKS Board sets fees each year for the programs offered by BKS kindergartens, taking into consideration:

the financial viability of BKS Kindergartens

- the level of government funding provided for the program, including the per capita funding and Kindergarten Fee Subsidy
- the availability of other income sources, such as grants
- the fees charged by similar kindergartens in the area
- the capacity of parents/guardians to pay fees
- reasonable expenditure in meeting agreed program quality and standards.

Payment of fees

Fees will be invoiced directly to parents/guardians and must be paid by the due dates indicated on the invoice. Fees are paid in advance of each kindergarten term. First term fees must be received in full, prior to the child starting kindergarten. Families with children enrolling after the commencement of a term, will be invoiced on a pro rata basis for that term. Receipts will be issued when payment is made and regular statements detailing payments received will be provided, on request.

Kindergarten fees are payable directly to BKS, please do not make payments at the kindergarten.

Fee Payment Options

Option 1	Internet Bank Transfer Bank: National Australia Bank Account Name: Bethany Kindergarten Services BSB: 083 537 Account number: 653768527 Please include invoice number and parent/guardian surname.
Option 2	Direct Debit or Centrepay Forms available from Bethany Kindergarten Services, fees@bethany.org.au, or 52730200
Option 3	By Phone Bethany Kindergarten Services on 5273 0200.
Option 4	In person Eftpos or credit card at Bethany Kindergarten Services, 16 Ballarat Road, Hamlyn Heights.
Option 5	Over the counter At any National Australia Bank branch Account Name: Bethany Kindergarten Services BSB: 083 537 Account number: 653768527 Please include invoice number and parent/guardian surname

If you are experiencing difficulty paying fees, or you would like further information, please contact the Fees & Accounts Receivable Officer on 5273 0200 or fees@bethany.org.au.

Further information is available at www.bethanykindergartens.org.au

Refund of Fees

Refund for families eligible for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy

- If a family becomes eligible for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy during a term, a full refund of the applicable term's Fees (and the Kindergarten Enrolment Fee, where applicable) will be provided when evidence of this eligibility is provided to BKS.

Refund of kindergarten Fees prior to the commencement of the kindergarten year

- If BKS receives written notification of a child withdrawal prior to the end of Term 3 in the year before attendance, BKS will provide a refund of Fees paid upon application. This does not include the registration fee.
- If BKS receives written notification of a child's withdrawal prior to the end of Term 4 in the year before attendance, BKS will provide a 50% refund of the Fees paid upon application. This does not include the registration fee.
- If BKS receives written notification of a child's withdrawal after the end of Term 4 in the year before attendance, the parent/guardian will not be eligible for a refund of Fees paid except in extraordinary circumstances.

There will be no refund of Fees in the following circumstances:

- a child's short-term illness;
- public holidays;
- family holiday during operational times;
- closure of the service for one or more days when a qualified educator is absent and a qualified reliever is not available;
- closure of the service for staff training days;
- closure of the service due to extreme and unavoidable circumstances or
- withdrawal of a child during term time unless exceptional circumstances apply.

There will be no refund where a family chooses not to send their child to the program for the maximum number of hours for which they are enrolled.

If a family no longer requires a kindergarten place during the kindergarten year, BKS must be provided with 4 weeks written notification that the position is no longer required. Where written notification is provided within the timeframe, Term fees may be adjusted to a pro rata rate for the weeks attended.

Families whose child is turning three during Term 1, will be required to pay fees once the child turns three. Children can only commence the pre-kindergarten program after they have turned three years old. This is only applicable if the child turns three years old on or before 30 April.

Overdue fees

If Fees are not paid by the due date a reminder will be sent to parents/guardians. Where payment is still not received within a further two weeks, BKS will contact families to discuss payment options; including:

- continuing to work with families to resolve the debt through an extended payment plan;
- employing the services of a debt collector to recover unpaid fees through legal action;
- where a debt collector is appointed it may be the responsibility of families to pay the costs incurred by BKS in appointing the debt collector.

Kindergarten Fee Subsidy

The Kindergarten Fee Subsidy is available to Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander families and families who hold a current:

- Commonwealth Health Care Card
- Commonwealth Pensioner Concession Card
- Department of Veterans' Affairs Gold Card or White Card
- Refugee visa (subclass 200)
- In-country Special Humanitarian visa (subclass 201)
- Global Special Humanitarian visa (subclass 202)
- Temporary Humanitarian Concern visa (subclass 786)
- Protection visa (subclass 866)
- Emergency Rescue visa (subclass 203)
- Woman at risk visa (subclass 204)
- Bridging visas A-E
- ImmiCard
- Triplets or quadruplets attending a funded kindergarten program in the same year.

Families are eligible for the kindergarten fee subsidy for the full kindergarten term in which their concession card is valid. Evidence of eligibility, such as a copy of the current concession card must be provided to BKS on acceptance of a kindergarten place, when a concession card is renewed or if a family becomes eligible for the kindergarten fee subsidy during the year.

It is the responsibility of the family to provide this information to BKS.

Other charges

- **Registration Fee:** BKS charges a non refundable administration fee to register a child for kindergarten. This fee is not charged to families eligible for the kindergarten fee subsidy.
- **Enrolment Acceptance Fee:** BKS charges an enrolment acceptance fee when families accept a kindergarten place. This fee is deducted from Term 1 fees. Families accepting a place and are eligible for the kindergarten fee subsidy are not required to pay the enrolment acceptance fee.
- **Late collection charge:** The BKS Board reserves the right to implement a late collection charge when parents/guardians are frequently late in collecting a child from kindergarten.

Early Start Kindergarten

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, and children known to Child Protection who turn three on or before April 30 in the year they attend, are eligible for Early Start funding which provides access to up to 15 hours of an early childhood program that is planned and delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher. Contact BKS for further information.

Notification of fee changes during the year

Parents/guardians will be notified one term in advance of any fee increase and will be offered the option to request a payment plan.

Fire Drill and Emergency Evacuation Procedures

The Education and Care Services National Regulations require kindergartens to practice emergency evacuations. The evacuation procedures are displayed at the kindergarten and emergency evacuation and lock down procedures are practiced with the children once each term in case of a real emergency.

Smoke Free Environment

A no smoking policy applies to all kindergarten buildings and playgrounds. Smoking is banned within four metres of all entrances to the premises.

Compliments, Feedback & Complaints

Complaints and feedback regarding any aspect of your child's kindergarten experience should be dealt with in the first instance by approaching the teacher to discuss the matter.

In the event that the teacher cannot help you or you do not feel comfortable discussing the concern with your child's teacher, you may contact a Kindergarten Services Manager at the BKS Central Support Team - please see the information on the kindergarten noticeboard for the appropriate person to contact or contact BKS reception on 5273 0200.

Policies

All BKS kindergartens are required under the Education and Care Services Legislation to have certain policies and procedures to ensure that the Kindergarten operates within set rules and regulations.

Policies can be viewed on the BKS website (www.bethanykindergartens.org.au). These policies provide a framework to ensure the best quality service is available to children, educators, parents/carers, parent advisory groups and members of the local community.