

# Aspendale Gardens Kindergarten

## Information for prospective families



2024

Enrolments

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# Welcome to Aspendale Gardens Kinder!

We are pleased that you are thinking about enrolling your child at our service.

Our kinder is unique as we are located within the Aspendale Gardens Community Service, close to the primary school and the local shops. The community service offers a variety of programs for children, including playgroup, messy play sessions, sports, and school holiday activities. This creates a real central hub for our kinder families.

The community service and kinder are run by a volunteer board of management, made up of kinder parents and community members. Our board of management meet monthly and oversee the high-level decision making, financial and strategic planning for the service.

Our team of office and kindergarten staff take care of the day to day running of the service.

We hope that this booklet will answer some of your questions about our kindergarten, as you plan your enrolment for 2024.

If you have any further questions, please don't hesitate to get in touch!

## Contact us:

General email: [enquiries@agcsinc.org.au](mailto:enquiries@agcsinc.org.au)

Enrolment officer: [kim.ives@agcsinc.org.au](mailto:kim.ives@agcsinc.org.au)

Phone: 9587 5955

[www.agcsinc.org.au](http://www.agcsinc.org.au)



# Our Philosophy:

At Aspendale Gardens Kindergarten, we are committed to providing a place of belonging. A place where children and families feel connected and learning and development is nurtured.

We value collaboration - partnerships with families and connections with our community help to create a supportive environment where children can flourish and reach their potential (and have fun!)

We are committed to working in ways that are:

**K**

**Kind:** caring, empathetic, compassionate, understanding, courteous, accepting of all.

**I**

**Involved:** in play, in learning, with the community, benefiting from relationships, sharing knowledge and ideas, discovering with children the answers to their questions.

**N**

**Nurturing:** of relationships, of growth and learning, supporting each child where they are in their development, with a focus on wellbeing

**D**

**Diverse:** inclusive, celebrating all abilities, celebrating family culture, community values, reflective practices, and equity.

**E**

**Environmentally friendly:** connecting with nature, sustainable practices, learning about our world, learning about the Traditional Custodians of the land.

**R**

**Ready for life!** Preparing children for their future, not just for school. Developing resilience, emotional regulation, independence, connection with adults & peers, self-esteem, sense of identity and a love of learning.

We value what each child brings to the group, and incorporate their voices and ideas in all that we do.

At Aspendale Gardens Kinder, we respect and acknowledge the Bunurong people as the Traditional Custodians of the land where we learn and play. We are committed to caring for this land and learning about its history. Together, we are on a journey of learning, teaching and reconciliation.

# 2024 Timetable

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<b>Wattle Room</b>	<b><u>3 year old</u></b> <b>Possums</b> 8:30 – 4:00	<b><u>3 year old</u></b> <b>Dolphins</b> 8:30 – 4:00	<b><u>3 year old</u></b> <b>Possums</b> 8:30 – 4:00	<b><u>3 year old</u></b> <b>Dolphins</b> 8:30 – 4:00	<b><u>Combined group</u></b> 8:30 – 1:30*  This <b>optional</b> session provides an extra 5 hours of kinder per week.
<b>Blue Gum Room</b>	<b><u>4 year old</u></b> <b>Rosellas</b> 8:30 – 4:00	<b><u>4 year old</u></b> <b>Bilbies</b> 8:30 – 4:00	<b><u>4 year old</u></b> <b>Rosellas</b> 8:30 – 4:00	<b><u>4 year old</u></b> <b>Bilbies</b> 8:30 – 4:00	<b><u>Combined group</u></b> 8:30 – 1:30*  This <b>optional</b> session provides an extra 5 hours of kinder per week.

\*Friday group places are limited. Fees apply.

The kinder is closed on the school holidays and all Public holidays.

## 2024 Term Dates

Kinder operates in line with the school terms:

- Term 1 - 30th Jan to 28th March
- Term 2 - 15th April to 28th June
- Term 3 - 15th July to 20th Sept
- Term 4 - 7th Oct to 20th Dec

## Public Holidays

- Labour Day - Monday 11th March
- Good Friday - Friday 29th March
- ANZAC Day - Tuesday 25th April
- Kings Birthday - Monday 10th June
- Friday before Grand Final - TBC
- Melbourne Cup - Tuesday 5th November

## A note about the long sessions...

We understand that long sessions may not suit all families. Our team is committed to working with each family, if you would like to start later, or collect your child early, arrangements can be made with the educators.

Your child will still be enrolled for the full 15 hour program, and you may wish to extend their hours later in the year. The routine of the day will be planned to ensure children who do shorter sessions still get the most out of their kinder experience.

# Starting Kinder:

## Our 3-step Orientation Process

### Step 1: visit with a parent/carer

Children first come to kinder with a parent or carer, to meet the teachers and explore the space. You can share information about your child and ask questions.

You will be allocated a 1-2 hour timeslot in the first few days of term one to visit with your child.

### Step 2: attend with half the group

The group is split in half. Each half group will attend for a session, to learn the routines, and become comfortable in the space.

Teachers spend quality time with each child to get to know them and their needs.

### Step 3: the full group begins

The full group will attend together, and normal session times begin.

If you feel your child needs a shorter session at first, no problem! Just let us know.

### Why do we have a three-step Orientation? Why can't children just start on day one?

The transition to kinder can be challenging for some children, even if they have been to kinder or childcare before. Kinder spaces are large, and can be overwhelming when they are busy with lots of friends, activity and noise.

Our 3-step orientation process allows for:

- Children to see the space with the safety and comfort of a familiar adult, who can model a sense of belonging and fun!
- The children can learn the rules & routine, and become familiar with the room and experiences before they have to share the space with many peers.
- Staff can build trusting relationships with each child, and learn about their interests and needs.

## IMPORTANT:

### Children born between January to April:

Due to regulatory requirements, children cannot start attending kinder until after their third birthday.

If your child will be turning 3 in the early months of the year, we will make a plan with you for when they will begin.

We will hold your child's place until they are 3.

# What to bring:



Children need to bring a large back pack or bag containing:

- A broad brimmed hat.
- A drink bottle filled with water.
- At least one full set of spare clothes labelled with your child's name (including socks!)
- A small bag for soiled clothes where required
- A coat or beanie (in winter)
- A snack and lunch box

## Optional Kinder Clothing



T-SHIRT



WINDCHEATER



POLAR FLEECE JACKET



ADJUSTABLE BUCKET HAT

You can purchase kinder-branded t-shirts, hats, windcheaters and fleece jumpers online here:

[www.eduthreads.com.au/collections/aspendale-gardens-kindergarten](http://www.eduthreads.com.au/collections/aspendale-gardens-kindergarten)

## Belongings from home

Some children may like to bring a comfort toy to help them feel secure in their new environment, which is ok. We suggest that other special toys or belongings be left at home, so they don't get lost or broken.

Occasionally children and families may be invited to bring objects from home for our treasure bag curriculum or items that may be related to current learning within the kindergarten curriculum.

If an item is valuable or has sentimental value, ensure the staff are aware so that the item can remain in their care until the end of the session.

# Snack & Lunch

## Healthy Eating Policy

Children bring a healthy snack and lunch to eat at kinder.

Educating children about healthy eating is an important part of our kindergarten program. We do this through shared meal times, discussions, books, posters, cooking experiences and a visit from Healthy Harold!

We do not have the facilities to warm up food for children. Some children bring a thermos to keep food warm until lunch time. As lunch boxes are not stored in the fridge, an ice pack is recommended for cold items.

## Allergies / Anaphylaxis

We have children at kinder who are allergic to certain foods. In some cases, the allergy can be extremely serious, and life threatening (anaphylaxis).

To minimise the risk, please do not bring nuts or nut products into the centre.

There may be other food restrictions within the centre or in certain groups where appropriate e.g. dairy, eggs (these will be discussed at the interviews). If there are nuts or nut products, or other restricted foods found in a child's bag, they will be stored appropriately until pick up.

If your child develops any Allergies or Anaphylaxis during their time at our centre, please ensure you inform us and complete the relevant documentation.



### Cooking

Children may participate in cooking experiences as part of the educational program.

You will be notified of the recipe and ingredients prior to cooking.

When our veggie garden is thriving, children help to harvest the vegetables and herbs to use in cooking experiences.



# Snack & Lunch Suggestions

## SNACK IDEAS



### FRUIT & VEGETABLES:

- fresh fruit (banana, apple, grapes - cut in half length wise)
- Fruit salad
- Fruit kebabs
- Dried Fruit (sultanas, dried apricots)
- Fresh/grilled/roasted vegetables
- Carrot/celery/snow peas with dip eg. hommus
- Cherry tomatoes (please cut in half)

### SNACKS

- English muffins
- Crackers
- Crispbreads
- Rice cakes
- Crumpets
- Fruit bread

### SAVOURY BAKED ITEMS

- Home made pizza\*
- Home made scones or muffins\*
- Vegetable scones eg pumpkin
- Pasta or noodle bake

\*home made is recommended as packaged baked goods are generally high in sugar and/or salt

## LUNCH IDEAS



### SANDWICHES / WRAPS:

- cheese and vegemite
- cold meat and salad
- tuna and salad
- chicken and avocado

\*Please no peanut butter or nutella

### SALAD:

- Green salad
- Mexican bean, tomato & cheese salad
- Pasta salad

### SOUP:

(PACKED IN A THERMOS)

- Pumpkin soup
- Potato and leek soup
- Chicken and corn soup
- Lentil soup
- Minestrone soup

### OTHER IDEAS:

- Lean roast or grilled meat (eg beef, chicken)
- Lentil patties
- Lean deli meats
- Baked beans
- Tofu
- Fried rice
- Pasta or rice dish (in a thermos)



## PLEASE DO NOT BRING

Foods high in sugar, salt or saturated fat, such as:

- Chips / biscuits
- Cake / slices
- Deep fried foods
- Lollies or chocolates
- Sausage rolls, pasties, most fast food / takeaway food
- Sugary drinks eg. Juice or cordial - Water only please

TO ASSIST WITH MANAGING FOOD ALLERGIES, PLEASE AVOID:

- Nuts or nut products
- Other high risk foods as determined from year to year

Whilst we do not allow children to share food at kinder, we know that children at this age are still learning, and we appreciate your cooperation in reducing the risk of allergic reactions occurring at kinder.

If your child has a limited diet, or a particular dietary need, please talk to the staff so that we can support you and ensure all children have plenty of food to eat at kinder.

# Health Information

## Illness

Children who are sick (runny nose, sore throat, fever or just not feeling well) cannot come to kinder. This is to ensure they can rest and recover, and to reduce the spread of infections to others.

If a child becomes unwell during a session, we will contact a parent/carer to pick them up. If contact cannot be made and the situation is urgent, we may decide to seek medical attention for the child.

In the case of vomiting or diarrhoea, children cannot return to kindergarten until 48 hours after their last vomiting/diarrhoea episode.

## Incident, Injury & Illness reports

Accidents do happen at kinder from time to time. If your child has an incident or injury or becomes unwell at kindergarten, a report will be completed and you will be notified as soon as practicable.

You will be asked to sign the report when you pick up your child.

If your child has had an accident at home and is attending kinder, please complete the injury on intake form upon arrival.

## Exclusion Periods for Infectious Diseases

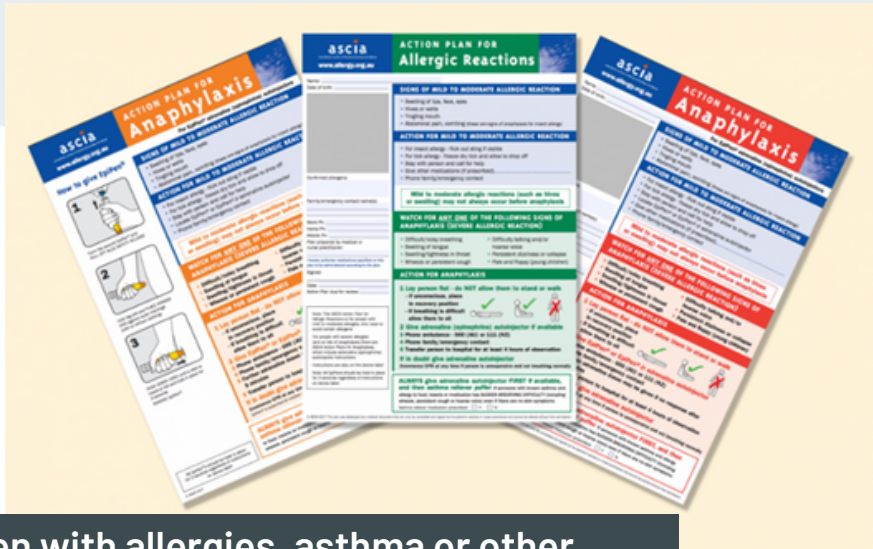
Our kindergarten adheres to the Minimum Exclusion Periods for Infectious Diseases for all children and staff. Children must remain at home for the required timeframe. To minimise the spread of infection, children with a suspected infectious disease need to be collected from the centre as soon as possible.

The exclusion periods can be found here:

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

The image shows a 'INCIDENT / INJURY / TRAUMA AND ILLNESS RECORD' form. The form is divided into several sections: 'Child's Details' (Date of Birth, First Name, Surname), 'Incident / Injury / Trauma & Illness Details' (Date, Time, Location, Description), 'Circumstances leading to or surrounding the incident / injury / illness or illness' (including any products or substances used), 'Action taken by Education & Care Services' (with checkboxes for various actions like first aid, medical attention, etc.), and 'Person Notified or Attempted to Notify of Incident or Illness' (with checkboxes for notification status). There is also a diagram of a child's body for indicating where the child was injured. A blue pen is resting on the form.

# Allergies, Asthma & medical conditions



## Children with allergies, asthma or other medical conditions must provide:

- A coloured print out of the medical management plan that has been recently updated and completed by a doctor. (for Asthma, Anaphylaxis, mild allergies etc)
- Risk Minimisation and Communication Plan (this will be completed together with your child's teacher).
- The child's medication. This will need to stay at the service for the duration of the kindergarten year, with the expiry noted and updated as required.

Risk Minimisation and Communication Plans will be reviewed with the parents and child's teacher on a bi-annual basis, or more regularly, if required.

For their safety, children cannot attend the kinder if their medication is out of date.

## Other Medications

If your child needs to be given medication while at the Centre, (eg antibiotics) you will be required to fill in the details in the Medication Book.

The medication must be in the original container, labelled with the child's name, expiry date and instructions for the dose. This is to ensure staff are fully aware of what to do.

All medications must be handed to a staff member at the beginning of the session who will store it appropriately (medication must not be stored in children's bags to ensure the safety of others).



**Slip** on sun protective clothing



**Slop** on SPF30+ sunscreen. Reapply every two hours



**Slap** on a broad-brimmed hat



**Seek** shade



**Slide** on wrap-around sunglasses

From September to the end of April, we follow sunsmart recommendations at kinder.

Sunscreen is provided by the centre for children to use.

Families can provide their own labelled sunscreen to be kept at the centre if their child is sensitive to the centre sunscreen.

Families are encouraged to apply sunscreen to their child on arrival. Sunscreen will be reapplied throughout the session when required, with teaching staff helping children where required.

## Toileting

We acknowledge that children are ready for toilet training at different ages. There is no requirement for children to be using the toilet when they start at kinder.

When a child is ready, educators will work with families support the child with using the toilet.



# The Educational Program

Our curriculum is designed around each child's needs within the group.

Staff are trained to observe children's behaviour closely and from these observations, goals are set for each child to strengthen their development in the five learning areas.

1. Children have a strong sense of identity
2. Children are connected with and contribute to their world
3. Children have a strong sense of wellbeing
4. Children are confident and involved learners
5. Children are effective communicators.



## Excursions and visitors

To enrich the curriculum, the kindergarten staff organise excursions and visitors to the kinder related to the educational program.

4 year old groups nature walks are included within the kinder curriculum to encourage the children to connect with Country and provide them with challenges they may not normally experience.

The children are encouraged to take calculated risks and to be mindful and caring of the environment.

# Special days

We love special events and celebrations at kinder!

Our team have been reflecting on how we can make celebrations inclusive and enjoyable for all.

Our aim is to provide a rich program with opportunities for children to learn about many different cultures. We love when families share celebrations and special days, which we can all learn about and celebrate together!

We have also been reflecting on our approach to Mother's Day and Father's Day, in relation to the range of families that make up our community.

Rather than encouraging every child to make something for mum or dad (or another special person), we will have opportunities for the children to mark these special occasions, but they won't be compulsory.

Forcing every child to make a gift often results in the educators doing the work, and causes stress for all involved.

We will celebrate the grown-ups in children's lives by holding family events each term, where family members can be part of the kinder program.

## Birthdays

For those who celebrate birthdays, we sing happy birthday with a pretend cake, provide stickers or cards and offer a birthday hat (a fun way to celebrate birthdays that does not involve food.)

Children can bring non-edible treats (eg. bubbles or stickers) to share with their friends in the kindergarten session, if they wish.

- Dress up days
- Book Week
- Birthdays
- Fit & Healthy Day
- Easter
- Halloween
- Diwali
- Lunar New Year
- Harmony Day
- NAIDOC week
- Pyjama Day
- Mother's Day
- Father's Day
- Hanukkah
- Moon Festival
- Christmas

What do you celebrate?



# Storypark

We use Storypark to document the children's learning and share this with families.

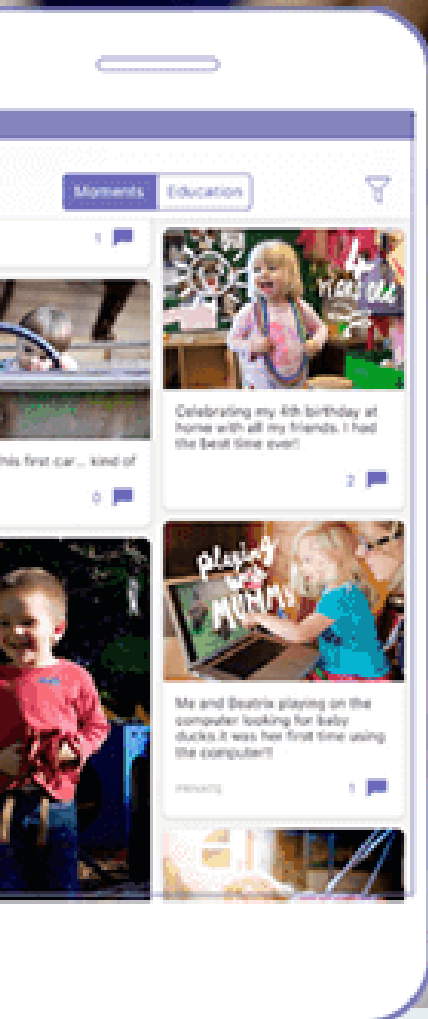
On Storypark you will receive:

- Reminders
- Group information
- Photos and snippets of the children's play
- Learning intentions & reflections

Teachers update Storypark during their planning time each week/fortnight.

Our focus during sessions is on having meaningful interactions with the children, so we do not update Storypark during kindergarten sessions.

We ask families to be understanding if a child's photo does not feature in a Storypark post. They may be in the next one.



Storypark 

## Privacy & Confidentiality

The kindergarten protects the privacy and confidentiality of all children, families and educators. Information is used for its purpose and disposed of when no longer required.

Information is shared between the centre and departments as required under the national law and as required for the child's care and education.

# Funding, Fees & Payments

2022

## Funding for 3 year old kinder

In 2022 kinder funding was introduced for 3 year old programs, but only for 5 hours per week. 4 year old kinder was already funded for 15 hours per week.

The funding did not cover running costs, so parent fees were also necessary.

2023

## 15 hours of 3YO kinder FREE kinder for all children.

In 2023, funding for 3 year old kinder increased to 15 hours per week.

Funding amounts increased to ensure parent fees are no longer required.

**15 hours of Kinder is now FREE for all 3YO and 4YO children.**

2029

## Moving towards 30 hours of 4YO kindergaren

It is proposed that by 2029, kindergarten programs will expand, eventually offering 30 hours per week for 4 year old kinder.



Important to note: Each child can only access funded kindergarten in one service. If your child attends a long day care centre as well, please ensure that they are not claiming kindergarten funding for your child.



As a condition of our agreement with the City of Kingston, we are not allowed to enrol children at our service who are not receiving kindergarten funding. If you have any questions about kindergarten funding, please speak to our Nominated Supervisor, Kim Ives.

The additional 5 hour session on Fridays is not part of funded kindergarten. The Friday session costs \$500 per term.



You will receive an invoice to be paid in full before each term, if you are enrolled in the Friday program.

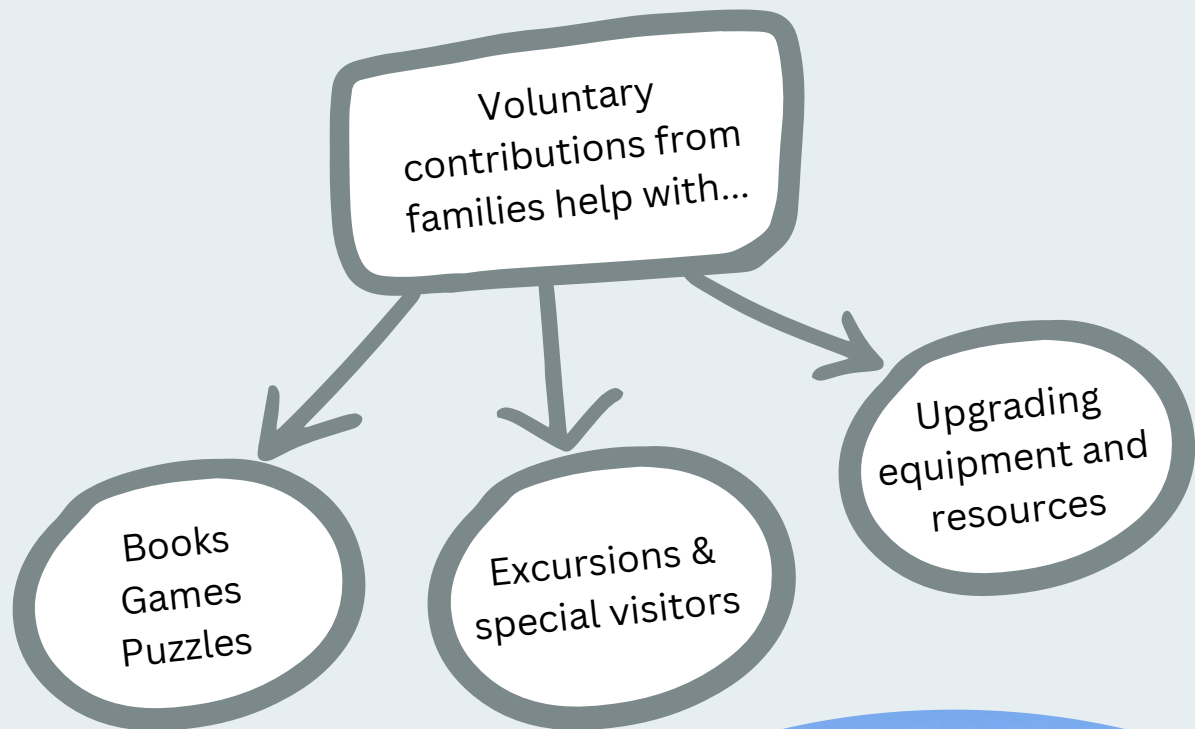
Sorry, we cannot take casual bookings for the Friday kinder session.



# Voluntary Contributions

Whilst there are no term fees payable for kindergarten in 2024, as a not-for-profit service, we welcome and appreciate voluntary contributions from families.

All voluntary payments are used for resources and activities that enrich the kindergarten program.



# Other Information

**Policies** The policies and procedures are reviewed every year by the staff and Board of Management. Families are encouraged to participate in reviewing the policies and put forth ideas and suggestions.

You can find the policies and procedures on our website: [www.agcsinc.org.au](http://www.agcsinc.org.au)

**Behaviour Guidance** Our staff work with families to help children feel secure and comfortable in the learning space; to determine a plan to support children through challenging periods, being consistent with strategies at kindergarten and home environments.

We support each child's behaviour by talking with them, using visual aids, social stories, supporting their choices and setting reasonable limits when required.

We use positive language to help support the development and acknowledgement of feelings and assist children to understand how their behaviour impacts others.

**Child Safety** Aspendale Gardens Kindergarten has zero tolerance for child abuse and has strict policies and reporting protocols for suspected or alleged child abuse.

The kindergarten aims to provide a safe learning environment for all children.

Teaching staff complete daily hazard checklists for both indoor and outdoor learning spaces.

Risk assessments are also undertaken by teaching staff for various program opportunities, visitors and excursions.

**Complaints & Grievances** If you have a complaint, where possible it is best to raise it directly with the person involved, in an attempt to resolve the matter. If the matter cannot be resolved, complaints can be escalated to the Nominated Supervisor or the Board of Management.

**Interactions with children** We are committed to providing a safe and secure environment to support the development of trusting, respectful and positive relationships with children.

Teaching staff develop these relationships by spending meaningful time with each child individually and in groups as well as gaining an insight and knowledge about each child from their families.

We use positive language, learn about children's interests, respect children's choices and role model appropriate behaviour.

**Emergency Management** The kindergarten has an Emergency Management Plan (EMP) for different types of emergencies and required evacuations.

The EMP is stored in each kindergarten room and Community Centre office.

Throughout the year the kindergarten groups will be practicing various emergency scenarios at different times of the day.

**Student teachers** We support the early childhood profession by hosting student-teachers who require practical experience. Student-teachers are always supervised by our kinder staff.

Where applicable, the student teacher will seek permission from parents/guardians to observe a child as part of their studies.

Please make our student teachers feel welcome.



# Family Participation

There are lots of ways to get involved in our kindergarten!

You can get involved by:

- Attending kinder sessions (for an hour or two) to read stories, play games, and assist children as they play and learn
- Joining the group for their nature walks
- Participating in our fundraising events
- Doing a load of washing
- Joining the Board of Management
- Assisting with repairs and maintenance of kinder equipment
- Attending working bees (gardening, cleaning, spreading tanbark...)
- Sharing your culture with the group (eg. a story, song, recipe, celebration)



**Cooking with the children**



**Playing an instrument**



**Sewing or craft**



**Reading books**



**Fundraisers**



**Working Bees**

A photograph of children in a garden. One child in the foreground wears a white bucket hat and a dark jacket, looking down at something in their hands. Another child in the background wears a colorful floral hat and a pink shirt, also looking down. The ground is dirt with some small yellow flowers. In the background, there is a large green field and a line of trees under a clear sky.

**Thank you for visiting us at  
Aspendale Gardens  
Kindergarten!**

**We hope to see you in 2024!**



**Address**

103 - 105 Kearney Drive, Aspendale Gardens VIC



**Telephone**

Office: 9587 5955    4YO kinder: 9580 2153    3YO kinder: 8512 0539



**Email**

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**Website**

[www.agcsinc.org.au](http://www.agcsinc.org.au)