



SER-HB-024

# Kindergarten Handbook



# Acknowledgement of Country

From Larrakia to Wajuk Country, Boonwurrung Country and every Country in between – One Tree Community Services acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land on which we work.

We pay special thanks and respect to the Elders and leaders who have welcomed us to Country at each of our services across Australia. We provide this Acknowledgement in the spirit of reconciliation and as part of our commitment to the unfinished business of reconciliation.

One Tree Community Services values and respects the knowledge and heritage of First Nation's people. We acknowledge Aboriginal peoples as the first teachers and caretakers. We respect the continued and ancient tradition of orally passing down stories, knowledge, history, and language. As wisdom flows to the next generation, we recognise the learning, culture and strengths that Aboriginal children and their families bring to our services.



WE ARE GRATEFUL TO BE ABLE TO WORK ALONGSIDE AND LEARN FROM ABORIGINAL PEOPLE AS EXPERTS.



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# Welcome to kindergarten

We are very excited to welcome you to our kindergarten. We look forward to working in partnership with your family and your child.

## About One Tree

One Tree Community Services Incorporated, known as One Tree, is a not-for-profit organisation. Our story began in 1973, when a small group of community-minded parents came together to create a safe place where children could come to play after school.

Today, we provide over 60 services including; long day care for working families, kindergartens, as well as outside of school hours care, community services, professional support, and training across the nation. One Tree works with people and communities to transform challenges into possibilities.

*“Working with individuals, families and communities for us is about valuing history, culture and the environment and listening to, and becoming part of the stories that define them.” Karri Hillier, One Tree CEO*

We believe that working with communities rather than in communities is the best way to achieve results. The willingness and spirit of local people and organisations to become part of the solution is often the biggest force for positive change.

Our spirit of working together and being determined to lead inspires everything we do. Creating a sense of belonging — for our staff, and the children, families and communities we work with is important to us.

This is what makes us *‘the place to be’*.





# Early Years Management

One Tree is an Early Years Management (EYM) organisation. EYM is an expert in the delivery of high-quality early education and care services. EYM is designed to reduce the management and administrative burden on volunteer committees and support kindergartens. This is so they can continually increase the quality of their services.

## HOW EYM CAN HELP CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND EDUCATORS

There are many benefits of Early Years Management:

**High-quality programs** by experienced professionals who have access to the latest educational practices and compliance.

**Peace of mind for families** wanting to focus on their child's kindergarten experience.

**Alleviating pressures on councils** so they can focus on their core business leaving kindergartens in the care of experts.

At One Tree, it's all about transforming challenges into possibilities with people and communities. As an EYM organisation, we'll do just that within the kindergarten sector.

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## Timetable

Our kindergarten programs are led by a well-equipped teaching team, including a qualified Early Childhood Teacher, Diploma and/or Certificate III Educators. Our kindergarten program operates for up to 15 hours per week or 600 hours per year. A child's transition into kindergarten can be a challenging time. During the orientation period, we encourage you to share your child's individual needs and strengths with our educators. There are a lot of new faces, routines, environments, spaces and equipment for children to learn and navigate. As such, there are opportunities at the orientation session to modify your child's transition into kindergarten and support your child settling in. An overall transition timetable will be found within your welcome to kindergarten letter.

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## Important Information

Please note that all kindergartens will be **closed** during Victorian school holidays, Victorian public holidays, and on two professional development days each year. For 2025, our scheduled professional development days will be on **Wednesday, 17 September, and Thursday, 18 September** (the last week of Term 3). During these closures, please arrange alternative care for your child.



# Kindergarten Starting Age

Every child develops at their own pace, and we want to work with you to decide the best time for your child to start kindergarten. If your child was born between January 1 and April 30, you have the option to start them in school either the year they turn five or the following year, which will affect when they start kindergarten.

Since all children learn and grow differently, some may benefit from starting earlier while others might thrive by starting later. We encourage you to discuss your child's readiness with our kindergarten teachers and other early childhood professionals to help you make the best decision.

## Children born 1 May – 31 December: must enrol at school in the year they turn 6

Year child turns	3	4	5	6
		3-Year-Old Kindergarten	4-Year-Old Kindergarten	First year of school

## Children born 1 January – 30 April: can enrol at school either in the year they turn 5 or 6

Year child turns	3	4	5	6
	3-Year-Old Kindergarten*	4-Year-Old Kindergarten	First year of school	Second Second year of School
OR		3-Year-Old Kindergarten	4-Year-Old Kindergarten	First year of school

*\*Your child will not be able to attend Kindergarten until they turn 3.*

# School Exemption Information

Children who are turning six (compulsory school age) during the second year of funded kindergarten must be exempt from attending school from the Department of Education. Further information can be found on the Department's website.

<https://www.vic.gov.au/education-information-parents>





# One Funded Place

The Victorian Government funds kindergarten and long day care services to provide high-quality programs for children in the two years before school, ensuring all Victorian children get the best start in life.

The government also offers Free Kinder funding for children in a funded kindergarten program, saving families up to \$2,627 per year. This will be passed on to families in our integrated\* funded kindergarten program regularly reducing your fees throughout the year. This will be clearly displayed in your statement.

Your child can attend one funded year in a Three-Year-Old Kindergarten program (between 5 and 15 hours per week) and one year in a Four-Year-Old Kindergarten program (15 hours per week).

*\*A funded kindergarten program operating within a Long Day Care.*



## Mixed Age Grouping

Mixed age groups in kindergarten offers several benefits that support children's development and social skills.

Younger children learn from older peers, while older children reinforce their own understanding by teaching younger children. This peer learning creates a dynamic and engaging learning environment. Additionally, mixed age groups help children build friendships across different ages, fostering social skills and empathy.

Mixed age groups also supports flexible learning, allowing each child to progress at their own pace.

Whether a child is ready for more advanced activities

or needs extra time with foundational skills, mixed age grouping accommodates their individual learning needs.

Older children benefit by taking on leadership roles, boosting their confidence and sense of responsibility. This creates a family-like, inclusive environment where every child feels valued and included.

Mixed age grouping helps all children thrive in a supportive and diverse setting, enhancing their learning and personal growth.

# Early Start Kindergarten:



Early Start Kindergarten (ESK) is an initiative designed to provide free kindergarten programs for eligible children in the year before they start school. This program ensures that children have access to high-quality early childhood education, which is vital for their development and school readiness.

Early Start Kindergarten provides your child access to a 15 hour per week kindergarten program for 2 years.

Accessing high quality early childhood education for 2 years has a substantial and positive impact on a child's cognitive, emotional, and social skills (Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation, 2018).

## Eligibility Criteria:

Children who are eligible for Early Start Kindergarten typically include:

1. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children;
2. Children Known to Child Protection; and
3. Children from Asylum Seeker and Refugee Backgrounds.

ESK provides up to 15 hours of kindergarten each week, giving children a strong foundation for their future education and helping them to thrive in their early years.

# Reconciliation Action Plan

## One Tree's RAP Commitment

One Tree's commitment to its reconciliation journey is at the core of our cultural purpose as an organisation – to transform challenges into possibilities with people and communities.

The challenges of reconciliation are immense, given the painful truth of Australia's history, but so too are the possibilities to transform this by working together.

Our RAP supports us to consult with, work alongside and actively listen to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the communities we are based to embed practices that will advance the cause of genuine reconciliation. OTCS aspires to see the wisdom of Elders past and present to continue to be shared in our services, with our staff, trainees, families, children and clients.





## ONE TREE PHILOSOPHY

## Philosophy Statements for Early Education and Care

- 1** Children are unique and valued citizens with rights and responsibilities.
- 2** Children are capable of initiating their own learning by building on each other's strengths, facilitated by educators as co-learners.
- 3** Care and education are interwoven and founded on relationships, strengthened by families and educators, sharing responsibility and collaboration with the global community.
- 4** We respect and value the diversity of all people. We celebrate the continuous living cultures of First Australians and acknowledge the significant role they play in our communities.
- 5** The environment is the 'third teacher' encouraging exploration and imagination, reflecting the natural world.

# Starting kindergarten

During the first few weeks of the kindergarten year, there will be a strong focus on children's sense of belonging as they learn about their new surroundings. It can be exciting and overwhelming for children during this time. For any support or strategies, please chat with your kindergarten educators.

It's normal for parents to feel anxious as they send their children off to care, and the kindergarten educators are here to help! Communication is key. Please ask us questions, share your concerns, and provide feedback to the educators.

We also encourage you to share your child's culture with us. This could include details about your family makeup, special days or observances that are important to your family, and if your child is Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, information about their Home Country and totem, if known. By sharing these aspects, we can create a more inclusive and supportive environment for your child.

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Below are some suggestions to help you and your child have a smooth transition to kindergarten:

- o have positive talks with your child about their kindergarten;
- o drive past or walk to the kindergarten before the first day so your child is familiar with their new environment;
- o have a look online or take some photos to show your child;
- o after first orientation, talk about the toilets, bag, locker, drinks station and other things;
- o tell your child's educator what interests your child has. This can help the educator and child connect;
- o share any recent significant events such as death, separation, birth, illness, etc;
- o talk with your child's educators about any concerns or worries you and your child have;
- o go to any kindergarten information sessions;
- o encourage your child to eat by themselves. Give them time to peel their fruit, remove packaging, etc;
- o help your child learn to apply their sunscreen and hat. Make sure they can recognise their hat and sunscreen; and
- o support your child to learn to open and close their lunch box.





# What do I do when I arrive at kindergarten?



1

Wait in the foyer/entry until the kindergarten teacher opens the door.

2

Sign your child in on the iPad.



3

Apply sunscreen to your child (if applicable).

4

Assist your child to place their bag into a locker.



5

Greet kindergarten staff and pass on any messages (e.g. Dad is collecting today, child woke up early, etc.).

6

Settle your child into an activity before saying goodbye. If your child is upset, please inform an educator, who will support the separation.



# What do I do when I come to collect my child from kindergarten?



1

Wait in the foyer/entry until the kindergarten teacher opens the door.



2

Sign your child out on the iPad.

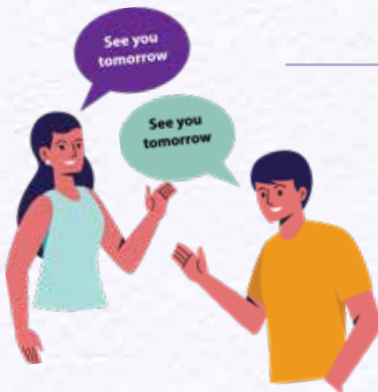
3

Assist your child to collect their belongings, i.e. Backpack, drink bottle, lunchbox, hat, etc



4

Say goodbye to the Kindergarten staff before leaving.



## Late collection fee

One Tree reserves the right to implement a late collection fee, when a parent/guardian is late in collecting their child at the end of the kindergarten session. The first time the parent/guardian is late, an educator will inform you that if late collection continues, you will be charged a late fee. For further information please ask our staff for a copy of our **FE-POL-007 Sessional Kindergarten [Victoria] Enrolment Policy**.





# Enrolment

Our enrolments team is here to help, support and guide you through the enrolment process. The enrolment administrators are responsible for managing bookings, enrolments and processing payments.

Before your child commences at kindergarten, you will need to ensure you have:

- o completed an enrolment record;
- o provided an up to date immunisation statement from MyGov;
- o advised if your child has any special health support needs;
- o provided a medical management plan and providing medication/s and instruments for action plans (if applicable); and
- o provided a court order (if applicable).

**Your child will not be able to start kindergarten until all the required documentation has been completed and returned to our enrolments team.**

After you enrol, we understand some information could change (i.e. new mobile number, moved to a new house). Please contact our enrolments team on

**1800 919 995** (prompt 2) or via email [Kindergarten@onetree.org.au](mailto:Kindergarten@onetree.org.au) to update your information. We must have your updated information in the event of an emergency, and we need to contact you.



# Immunisation

'No Jab No Play' is the name of legislation that requires all children to be fully vaccinated, unless they have a medical exemption, to be enrolled in kindergarten in Victoria.

Parents/guardians are required to provide a copy of each child's immunisation history statement or Immunisation Status Certificate from a doctor, before the child can commence kindergarten. Evidence of a catch-up program may be accepted if the child is late with immunisations. Your child can not start kindergarten without this documentation.

You can receive an immunisation history statement by contacting:

## Medicare

**phone:** 1800 653 809 or

**email:** [acir@medicareaustralia.gov.au](mailto:acir@medicareaustralia.gov.au)



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# Children's health

## Illness

To stop illness and infection from spreading, please keep your child at home if they are unwell. If your child is unwell or has a temperature, please call the kindergarten to advise your child will be absent. If your child becomes unwell or has a temperature whilst they are at kindergarten, the kindergarten will contact you and ask you to come and collect your child promptly.

## Medical Conditions

Does your child have a diagnosed allergy or medical condition? If so, please book an appointment with your local doctor and advise your child is starting kindergarten. They will provide you with an official medical management action plan. This will provide clear instructions on action and treatment for your child's specific medical conditions and includes your child's name and photograph. Along with the medical action plan, the service will need medication as described in the plan, that is clearly labelled with a pharmacist label. This must be given to us **before** your child starts kindergarten.



# Accidents and Injuries

Educators are here to support children in taking safe and calculated risks within their environment, which results in learning and development.

As children practice new skills, accidents and injuries can happen. Should your child have an accident while attending kindergarten, staff will document the incident on our **SER-FOR-022 Incident Injury Trauma Illness and Notifiable Matter Form**. This form must be signed by the parent/guardian when you collect your child. Parents will be called if any injury occurs above the shoulders or when deemed appropriate by the educational team.

There will always be a staff member rostered on who is trained in first aid, CPR, anaphylaxis, and asthma.



## Supporting Behaviours

If your child has additional needs or has medical requirements, including accessing the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), please ensure that these are outlined within the Enrolment Form, attaching any supporting documents. If a child has NDIS please inform the service so we can connect with a therapist to continue goals at the service.

The Kindergarten Inclusion Support (KIS) helps kindergartens to support children with additional needs. KIS applications are made by the kindergarten educators in consultation with parents, early childhood intervention agencies, and preschool field officers. Applications for KIS can be made from September of the year before the child starts kindergarten. Please note applications are accepted continuously. If your child may benefit from the support of a KIS application, a kindergarten educator will be in contact with you to discuss your child's needs and work through the process.

### Preschool Field Officer Service

The Preschool Field Officer (PSFO) Program helps staff to support children with additional needs. The PSFO makes sure children with additional needs are included and can participate.

The PSFO program defines children with additional needs as children in a funded kindergarten program presenting with developmental concerns. Such as:

- o challenging behaviours;
- o speech, language or communication delays;
- o social and emotional difficulties; and
- o a diagnosed disability.

Please note - children who have a diagnosed disability and are already supported by an early intervention service, are not eligible for the PSFO service.



# The kindergarten program

The programs aim to help children develop and learn. They use a research-based approach to support children's routines and offer play-based experiences that support each child's unique and holistic development. The curriculum is developed around the interests, developmental needs of each child, and teacher's knowledge and experience in supporting children's growth.

This curriculum is guided by the approved Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Frameworks (VEYLDF) to achieve five key learning outcomes:

- o Children have a strong sense of identity.
- o Children are connected with and contribute to their world (community).
- o Children have a strong sense of wellbeing.
- o Children are confident and involved in learning (learning).
- o Children are effective communicators (communication).

This curriculum will support your child's lifelong learning outcomes, and prepare them for future learning, inclusive of transitioning from kindergarten to school. As a part of the program your child's Early Childhood Teacher may organise visitors to enhance the program. Some examples would be, visits from the local fire truck, ambulance, or police car, a veterinarian, a local primary school teacher, or Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander elders or presenters.





# One Tree's

## approach to learning

One Tree's programs use a cycle of inquiry process. The cycle of inquiry is based on the Reggio Emilia belief that educators are co-learners, collaborating with the children rather than instructing.

Our kindergarten works within the National Quality Standards (NQS) and with the state recommended curriculum. Further information regarding the cycle of inquiry may be shared with families throughout the year through discussions on children's learning and development.



## StoryPark

StoryPark is an online application that connects families and children with educators. StoryPark is secure and private, with only invited parents/guardians/carers being able to access the application. This allows educators to share your child's learning and development stories and communicate important news to you directly. You can catch up on your child's day all from the comfort of your home or office.

# Community

## partnerships and participation

We encourage families to be involved in the kindergarten program in any way that you can. You can be a parent helper during activities or join the Parent Advisory group (PAG). You will need to provide a current Working with Children Check, or you can apply for one by clicking here:

[apply for a working with children check.](#)

There are many ways in which parents and family members can be involved in and contribute to the kindergarten experience. This may include:

- o Discussing/sharing your occupation/talent;
- o Participating in excursions;
- o Attending events hosted by the kindergarten; and
- o Joining the Parent Advisory Group (PAG).

If you need help, please speak to your child's teacher as we are more than happy to assist you.



# Parent Advisory Group (PAG)

## What is a PAG?

A PAG is a volunteer group that shares ideas and feedback, create events and activities, raise funds, welcome families, partner with educators and have fun.

### Who can join?

Any parent is welcome to join the PAG. You might decide to take on a certain role such as convener. Or you might just be a general member who comes to the meetings. You can join or leave the group at any time.

### How much time does it take?

How much time you put in, is up to you. The group will meet at least once a term and you don't have to come to every meeting. Whatever you can contribute will always be valued.

### How does it work?

The meeting is organised by the convener. At each meeting parents and educators talk about what's happening, ideas, feedback and plan any events or activities.

You might ask to take on a certain role, such as communications or sustainability. There is no one size fits all kindergarten or PAG. Each PAG group is different and will be shaped by you (the parents) depending on what is needed.

### Ready to join?

To express your interest please click on [this link](#) to complete our online PAG expression of interest form, or please speak to your child's Early Childhood Teacher to find out when the next meeting is taking place. Then come along to find out more.





# What to bring

## to kindergarten process

Please clearly name all your child's belongings, including;



**A backpack**



**Healthy lunch and snacks.**

Please pack hot lunches in a thermos. If items need to stay cool place a cold block in the lunchbox.



**A coat and beanie on cool or wet days for outside play.**



**Clothing that is easy for your child to wear, comfortable and safe for climbing and appropriate footwear.**



**A sun hat that shades the face, neck and ears.**



**A spare change of clothes. Your child may get messy, wet or dirty.**

# Food at kindergarten


Parents are to pack a healthy lunch box for your child to eat while at kindergarten. Running, jumping, playing, and learning at kindergarten takes lots of energy. We recommend healthy food to sustain and energise children during the day. Plus, learning about healthy eating can help children make better choices later in life. At One Tree, we aim to teach children about healthy food choices in a fun and engaging environment.

There are many food allergies that commonly occur. The educational team work hard to reduce the risk of allergic reactions which can be life-threatening. Please help us by avoiding packing foods that contain any whole nuts or nut products.





# For a healthy lunchbox pix & mix from each

<p><b>Fruit</b></p> <p><b>FRESH FRUIT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Apple</li> <li>» Banana</li> <li>» Mandarin</li> <li>» Orange quarters</li> <li>» Passionfruit halves (with spoon)</li> <li>» Watermelon, honeydew, rockmelon chunks</li> <li>» Pineapple chunks</li> <li>» Grapes</li> <li>» Plums</li> <li>» Nectarines, peaches, apricots</li> <li>» Strawberries</li> <li>» Cherries</li> <li>» Kiwi fruit halves (with spoon)</li> <li>» Pear</li> </ul> <p><b>MIXED FRUIT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Fruit salad</li> <li>» Fruit kebabs</li> </ul> <p><b>DRIED FRUIT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Dried fruit, popcorn mixes*</li> </ul> <p><b>TINNED FRUIT/SNACK PACKS/CUPS</b> In natural juice (not syrup)</p>	<p><b>Vegetables</b></p> <p><b>CRUNCHY VEGETABLES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Corn cobs</li> <li>» Carrot sticks</li> <li>» Capsicum sticks</li> <li>» Green beans</li> <li>» Cucumber sticks</li> <li>» Celery sticks</li> <li>» Snow peas</li> <li>» Tomatoes (e.g. cherry and Roma tomatoes)</li> <li>» Mushroom pieces</li> </ul> <p>Can serve with either: Hommus, tomato salsa, tzatziki, beetroot dip, natural yoghurt.</p> <p><b>SALADS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Coleslaw and potato salad (reduced fat dressing)</li> <li>» Mexican bean, tomato, lettuce and cheese salad</li> </ul> <p><b>BAKED ITEMS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Grilled or roasted vegetables</li> <li>» Wholemeal vegetable muffins or scones</li> <li>» Vegetable slice (with grated zucchini and carrot)</li> <li>» Popcorn</li> </ul> <p><b>SOUP</b> (In small thermos)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Pumpkin soup</li> <li>» Potato and leek soup</li> </ul>	<p><b>Milk, yoghurt and cheese</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Milk</li> <li>» Calcium-enriched soy and other plant-based milks</li> <li>» Yoghurt (frozen overnight)</li> <li>» Custard</li> </ul> <p><i>Tip:</i> <i>Freeze the night before to keep cool during the day.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Cheese cubes, sticks or slices</li> <li>» Cottage or ricotta cheese</li> <li>» Cream cheese</li> <li>» Tzatziki dip</li> </ul> <p>Can serve with either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Fruit</li> <li>» Wholegrain cereal, low in sugar</li> <li>» Vegetable sticks</li> <li>» Rice and corn cakes</li> <li>» Wholegrain wheat crackers</li> </ul>
<p><b>Meat or meat alternative</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Tinned tuna or salmon in springwater</li> <li>» Lean roast or grilled meats (e.g. beef, chicken, kangaroo)</li> <li>» Falafel balls</li> <li>» Lean meat or chicken patties</li> <li>» Tinned tuna or salmon patties</li> <li>» Lentil patties</li> <li>» Lean deli meats (e.g. ham, silver-side, chicken)</li> <li>» Boiled eggs</li> <li>» Baked beans (canned)</li> <li>» Tofu cubes</li> <li>» Hommus dip</li> <li>» Lean meat or chicken kebab sticks</li> </ul> <p>Can serve with: Wholegrain sandwich, roll, pita or wrap, bread with salad, rice and corn cakes, wholegrain wheat crackers, side salad.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Vegetable frittata</li> <li>» Skinless chicken drumsticks</li> <li>» Savoury muffins or scones (e.g. lean ham, cheese and shallots)</li> <li>» Homemade pizzas with lean roast or deli meats and vegetables</li> </ul> <p>Can serve with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Side salad</li> <li>» Steamed or roasted vegetables</li> </ul>	<p><b>Grain and cereals mains</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Wraps</li> <li>» Sandwiches</li> <li>» Rolls</li> <li>» Toasted sandwiches</li> </ul> <p><i>Tip: Use breads such as wholemeal, multigrain, rye, sourdough, pita, flat, corn, mountain, lavash, white fibre-enriched, soy and linseed, herb, naan, bagels, foccacias, fruit bread and English muffins.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Pasta dishes</li> <li>» Rice, quinoa or cous dishes</li> <li>» Noodle dishes</li> <li>» Sushi</li> </ul> <p><b>SAVORY BAKED ITEMS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Homemade pizzas</li> <li>» Wholemeal savoury muffins or scones (e.g. ham, cheese and corn muffins)</li> <li>» Vegetable based muffins</li> <li>» Pasta or noodle bake</li> </ul> <p><b>SWEET BAKED ITEMS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Fruit loaf</li> <li>» Wholemeal fruit based muffins</li> </ul> <p><b>SNACKS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» High fibre, low sugar cereal (e.g. muesli)</li> <li>» English muffins</li> <li>» Crackers</li> <li>» Crispbreads</li> <li>» Rice cakes</li> <li>» Corn thins</li> <li>» Wholemeal scones</li> <li>» Pikelets</li> </ul>	<p><b>Water</b></p> <p>Take a water bottle (for refilling throughout the day)</p> <p><i>Tip:</i> <i>Freeze overnight to keep foods cool in lunchboxes.</i></p> <p>Sweet and savoury snack foods (e.g. muesli/fruit/nut bars, biscuits, crisps, cakes, muffins, slices) should be limited in lunchboxes. They can lead to excess energy intake if consumed in large amounts.</p> <p>Sugar sweetened drinks and confectionery should not be provided in lunchboxes. They can lead to excess energy intake and tooth decay.</p> <p>For more information about healthy eating and for many tasty recipes, visit the Healthy Eating Advisory Service: <a href="http://heas.health.vic.gov.au/">http://heas.health.vic.gov.au/</a></p> 

# Transitioning to school

Starting school is an important time for children and families.

Children who make a positive start at school are more likely to:

- o Feel comfortable, relaxed, and valued;
- o Feel excited and motivated to learn;
- o Have good relationships with others; and
- o Develop a sense of belonging within the school community.

If your child is transitioning to school after kindergarten, you will receive a Transition Learning and Development Statement written by early childhood teachers. There is a section for families and the child to complete too.

The Transition Learning and Development Statement:

- o Summarises your child's learning and development;
- o Identifies how your child approaches learning and their interests; and
- o Indicates how your child can be supported in the primary school environment.

Some children may benefit from a second year of funded kindergarten before starting school. If it is identified that your child will benefit from attending a second year of funded kindergarten, your child's teacher will discuss this with you. Your child is eligible for a second year of kindergarten if the teacher has assessed that your child has developmental delays in at least two key areas and will achieve better outcomes at kindergarten rather than going to school.

The areas assessed include:

- o Self-care: your child's ability to look after themselves sufficiently;
- o Language: ability to speak and/or understand language;
- o Cognitive (intellectual) development;
- o Social development: how your child interacts with other children; and
- o Emotional development.
- o Additional Support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Families

For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, there is an opportunity to be linked to a Koorie Education Support Officer (KESO). KESOs work closely with families and schools to support a positive transition to school, ensuring that your child's cultural identity is respected and celebrated. They can provide additional support and guidance throughout the early years of schooling.





# Assessment & rating

Early childhood education and care services (ECEC) are assessed and rated against the National Quality Standards (NQS) by the state or territory regulatory authority and given a rating for each of the seven quality areas and an overall rating based on these results. The quality ratings are published on the national registers on the ACECQA website. ECEC services are assessed and rated against the NQS to:

- o promote continuous improvement in the provision of quality education and care; and
- o improve knowledge and access to information about the quality of services to help families make informed decisions about their child's education and care.

The NQS is part of the National Regulations and includes seven quality areas that are important to children's learning and developmental outcomes.

QA 1 - Educational program and practice.

QA 2 - Children's health and safety.

QA 3 - Physical environment.

QA 4 - Staffing arrangements.

QA 5 - Relationships with children.

QA 6 - Collaborative partnerships with families and communities.

QA 7 - Leadership and service management.

Assessment and rating occurs every three to five years. After the assessment and rating has been conducted there are five quality ratings that a service can be awarded:

1. Service promotes exceptional education and care, demonstrates sector leadership, and is committed to continually improving.
2. Service goes beyond the requirements of the in at least four of the seven quality areas.
3. Service meets the National Quality Standard. Service provides quality education and care in all seven quality areas.
4. Service provides a safe education and care program, but there are one or more areas identified for improvement.
5. There is an identified significant risk to the safety, health and wellbeing of children. Immediate action will be taken to address issues.



# Feedback and complaints

Feedback and complaints, are an asset to the Organisation, providing the opportunity to improve the products and services. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) reviews all feedback and complaints. If you would like to provide feedback or to lodge a complaint, please do so by one of the below ways.

**Feedback and complaints:**

Email: [customerservice@onetree.org.au](mailto:customerservice@onetree.org.au)

or phone: (08) 6250 4100

**Enrolment Inquiries:**

Email: [kindergarten@onetree.org.au](mailto:kindergarten@onetree.org.au)

Phone: 1800 919 995 - prompt 2

Office hours are 8:30am – 3:30pm

Website: [www.onetree.org.au/](http://www.onetree.org.au/)

Thank you for choosing us for your child's kindergarten journey. We can't wait to get to know your family. We value you as your child's first teacher and are excited to embark on this new partnership. We know that together we can support your child to thrive and grow.

