Welcome to Kindergarten
Acknowledgement of Country

Wyndham City Early Education and Care Services would like to acknowledge the people of the Kulin Nation as the traditional custodians of the land where we deliver Kindergarten programs and pay respect to their Elders past and present. We further recognise that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have been nurturing and teaching children on this land for many thousands of years, we honour and respect that role.

As part of each Kindergarten Reconciliation Action Plans and the need to meet the principles outlined in the Early Education and Care requirements of the National Law, each kindergarten will acknowledge and embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives into their program and practice including: child led acknowledgements to first nations people, flag raising, yarning circles, the use of fire pits and the inclusion of Aboriginal materials and activities enhancing children’s learning and developmental outcomes.

Valuing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and traditions is an important aspect of our Kindergarten programs.

It is very important that we acknowledge the first Australians as the custodians of this beautiful country and teach our children to be proud of the oldest living culture in the world that belongs to all of us.
Early Education and Care Services

Our Vision
Our Children, Our Focus, Our Future

Our Mission
Work in partnership with families, schools and the wider community to empower children to succeed;

Deliver Services that comply with legislation and quality requirements;

Stay at the forefront of industry standards and best practice as professionals;

Build relationships across the organisation to further plan and deliver Kindergarten Services;

Advocate and plan for Kindergarten Services in Wyndham’s growing community; and

Work with State and Federal Governments to promote the value of Early Childhood Education.
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Welcome to Wyndham City’s Early Education & Care Services

Wyndham City has provided Kindergarten Services in Wyndham for over 40 years. Within the municipality, there are 23 Council-managed Kindergartens, and a growing number of kindergartens that are managed by one of our external early years’ partners. Council provides 4-year-old Kindergarten at all 23 Council-managed Kindergartens and offers 3-year-old Kindergarten at a selection of these Kindergartens. Council provides occasional care at Hoppers Crossing Childrens Centre.

Council’s Kindergarten Services have been split across three regions. The Western, Central and Eastern regions are overseen by an Area Leader. The Area Leader is responsible for the overall management of the Kindergartens, providing program support and supervising the Team Leaders within their region.

Our Team Leaders play a very important role in supporting you and your child’s Kindergarten experience throughout the year. The Team Leaders are responsible for the overall day to day management and operation of the Kindergarten, supporting and guiding the Educator team to ensure that the educational program is of a very high standard and connecting and networking with local schools, Maternal Child Health, Allied Health Services and Early Childhood Networks.

Educators have a very important role to plan and deliver the educational program that will engage your child to learn and develop across a range of developmental and academic areas. The program is guided by the Australian Approved Early Years Learning Frameworks.

Council manages the employment, support and training of all Educators, and monitors the quality of the Kindergarten program to ensure the relevant standards are met at all centres. Council also maintains the Kindergarten buildings to appropriate standards and manages the Central Enrolment process.

Families play an important role in the service and involvement is encouraged. This may include spending time at your Kindergarten, providing ideas and feedback on the program and quality improvement plans or being a part of the Family and Friends Yarning Club (FFYC). The purpose of the FFYC is to provide opportunities for families, Team Leaders and Educators to work together to discuss and support Kindergarten activities.
Transition into Kindergarten

All Wyndham City Kindergartens operate a transition program for the first few weeks of Term one (1). The aim of this program is to allow the children to settle in as a small group and for the Educators to have an opportunity to get to know each child and their family.

Every child’s transition is different and unique. Some children settle quickly, whilst others take a little longer. Your Educators are ready to support a more individualised approach to ensure a smooth transition. Please take the time to discuss your preferences and transition timetable with your Educators at the enrol and play session.

Benefits of a Transition Program

- Allows children to settle in at their own pace.
- Small groups give Educators and children a better opportunity to interact and build a positive relationship with each other. Educators will use the transition time to observe the skills, knowledge and development of each child which will assist in settling and planning.
- Assists Educators in getting to know the children and families as quickly as possible.

The transition program will mean a change to the normal advertised timetable during this period. The transition timetable will be given to you at your enrol and play session. The normal timetable will commence following the transition program.

Key Dates

Term Dates

Each year, the State Government sets four (4) term dates. To find the term dates, please visit Council’s website https://www.wyndham.vic.gov.au/early-education-and-care-services.

Child Free Days

There will be a small number of curriculum (child free) days during the year. These include:

- Professional Development days;
- Early Years Matters Conference; and
- The last day of Term four (4).

These days are important professional development opportunities for our Educators to engage in conversation, network and learn, ensuring that our programs and practice are current and maximises children’s opportunity for learning and development.

To find a list of curriculum days, please visit Council’s website https://www.wyndham.vic.gov.au/early-education-and-care-services.

600 Hours

Wyndham City is committed to ensuring all 4-year-old children receive 600 hours of Kindergarten as per the State Government funding guidelines. Where a session is cancelled, other than a public holiday, Council will arrange for the hours missed to be made up. These will be advertised at the start of Term One (1).
Public Holidays
Your Kindergarten will not be open on the following public holidays:

- Labour Day;
- Good Friday;
- Easter Monday;
- ANZAC Day;
- Queen’s Birthday;
- AFL Grand Final; and
- Melbourne Cup Day.

To find the dates of the above public holidays, please visit Council’s website https://www.wyndham.vic.gov.au/early-education-and-care-services.

A Walk on Country
Wyndham City has a strong commitment to reconciliation as outlined in Council’s Wyndham 2040 Community Plan. It states we will acknowledge the Aboriginal heritage of the land.

A Walk on Country is an event that has evolved over the last 33 years and is now held at two sites across Wyndham - The You Youngs National Park and Point Cook Coastal Park. This event has been designed to provide scope for children and families to learn more about the culture of Australia’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, provide opportunities for connection and exploration of the natural environment, and conduct a community event that is inclusive and fun. As such a parent or guardian is required to attend on the day.

Your Educators will advise you of the date of your Kindergarten’s A Walk on Country in Term Three (3).

Kindergarten Enrolment
Enrolment Information
Before your child commences at Kindergarten, you will be required to complete a Kindergarten Enrolment Record form, which is included in your welcome pack. These forms are required to ensure the centre has appropriate contact, medical and immunisation information.

If you require assistance in completing your Kindergarten Enrolment Record, please contact our Community Support and Enrolment staff or come along to one of our pop-up information sessions. Pop-up information sessions are advertised on Council’s website https://www.wyndham.vic.gov.au/whats-on.

School Readiness Funding
Kindergarten services (Early Education and Care Services) are now required to collect information from all parents and guardians about their education and employment.

Collecting this information will help your kindergarten to receive school readiness funding. The amount of funding each kindergarten gets will be based on the needs of its children, as determined by their parent/guardian occupation and education information.
School readiness funding will help children get even more out of their time at kindergarten. It can be used to purchase a range of programs and supports, such as programs to support children’s language development, resources for educators to help children manage their emotions, or professionals such as speech therapists to work with children, teachers and families.

This is the same information collected by schools when a child is enrolled in prep. All information provided during the enrolment process will only be used to inform kindergarten funding.

For more information, please visit www.education.vic.gov.au/school-readiness

Privacy

Wyndham City Council is bound by the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 and the Health Records Act 2001. Your consent is required for the collection and use of your personal and/or health information and that of your child. The personal and health information requested on the Enrolment Record Form is being collected by Council for the purpose of planning and delivering proper health and developmental care and education services to your child while obtaining and/or attending Wyndham services (which includes MCH, Kindergarten and PFSO Services). The information will be used by Council and it may be shared with Educators, early intervention, health and welfare service providers for the purposes mentioned. Your information will be stored in Council’s Customer Database and used to identify you when communicating with Council and for Council to deliver services and information to you. The information will only be disclosed to other persons or agencies if consented to by both parents; or the authorised parent/guardian; or as permitted by law. For further information on how your personal and health information will be handled, see Council’s Privacy Policy on its website. Authorised parents and guardians may apply for access and/or amendment of the information. Requests for access and/or amendment of the information should be made in writing to Council’s Privacy Officer.

Updating Your Enrolment Information

Parents/guardians should ensure that the Kindergarten has current information regarding address, telephone numbers and emergency numbers. If there is an emergency, it is vital that you or your nominated emergency contact person can be telephoned. Please advise Educators immediately of any changes, so that they can update your personal information details on file at the Kindergarten.

Custody, Guardianship, Court Orders, Parenting Orders or Parenting Plans

The details of any court orders, parenting orders or parenting plans must be provided to the Kindergarten service. The Kindergarten must have full disclosure of these documents where they relate to the powers, duties, responsibilities or authorities of any person in relation to the child or access to the child, to the child’s residence or the child’s contact with a parent or other person.

This could include one of the following:

- A court order preventing a legal parent having access to their child at the Kindergarten;
- A court order that gives another person legal guardianship of the child.

Each child’s legal guardian as recorded on the Kindergarten Enrolment Record has full access to the child and the educational information provided by the service.
If a parent’s name is not on the Kindergarten Enrolment Record and access is requested, this may be agreed to if the parent can prove parenthood. This can only be changed by providing court orders indicating legal change to the access of either parent.

If a court order exists that concerns your child, please ensure that the Educator is informed, and a copy is provided to the Educator at the commencement of the year.

Grandparents/Guardians or Long-Term Care

In the absence of a court order, the child’s legal guardians are still considered to be their parents/guardians. Therefore, grandparents/guardians or carers cannot sign as the parent on a child’s behalf on documents such as excursion forms, medication and medical emergency forms unless they have been legally provided guardianship unless they are listed as an additional contact with permission on the Enrolment Record.

Immunisation Records

Under the ‘No Jab, No Play’ legislation, all families seeking to enrol their child at an early years’ service in Victoria will be required to provide evidence that their child is:

- Fully immunised for their age (An Immunisation History Statement issued by the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR)); or
- Is on a recognised catch-up schedule if the child has fallen behind with their vaccinations; or
- Has a medical reason not to be vaccinated. (The practitioner completes and signs a Medical Exemption Form and supplies it to the AIR. The AIR updates the child’s records and, on request from the parent/guardian, will issue an Immunisation History Statement).

Immunisation History Statements can be requested at any time by contacting Medicare:

- Phone: 1800 653 809
- Email: acir@medicareaustralia.gov.au
- Website: [https://my.gov.au/LoginServices/main/login?execution=e3s1](https://my.gov.au/LoginServices/main/login?execution=e3s1) or the Express Plus Medicare mobile app
- Visit your local Medicare Office

Wyndham City’s Immunisation Team can help families to obtain the required immunisation evidence to commence Kindergarten. They can be contacted on 9742 0736 or via email; immunisationteam@wyndham.vic.gov.au.

Moving Kindergartens

If parents/guardians request a transfer to another kindergarten on Wyndham City’s Central Registration Scheme, they must immediately notify the Educators at their current Kindergarten.

Please note: If you are wishing to transfer to another kindergarten on Wyndham City’s Central Registration Scheme, you will be placed onto the waitlist and must wait for a place to become available.

All outstanding fees must be paid prior to leaving the service.
Cancelling a Kindergarten Place
Families may need to cancel their kindergarten place for a variety of reasons. If parents/guardians are wishing to cancel their current kindergarten place, they must complete a cancellation form and submit it to their educator. The cancellation form is available from your kindergarten or https://www.wyndham.vic.gov.au/early-education-and-care-services

Please Note: In cancelling your child’s place, you will be forfeiting their place and it will be offered to another family in the next round of allocations.

Second Year of Funded Kindergarten
Each year, there are children in Kindergartens across Wyndham who are observed as having developmental, social, emotional or learning difficulties. These may be identified prior to the child attending Kindergarten or by the Educators after observing the child at Kindergarten. The Educators will work closely with the parents/guardians and may recommend further medical or other relevant professional referrals. A referral to the Pre-School Field Officer Service may also be recommended.

If a child is identified as having developmental concerns in two or more areas (examples are speech and social relationships), they may be eligible for a second year of funded Kindergarten.

With parent/guardian approval, the Educators will coordinate the submission for a second year of funded Kindergarten. This submission will include reports from the Educators and professionals who have been involved with the child throughout their attendance at Kindergarten.

A second year at Kindergarten can be of significant benefit to any child who has identified difficulties.

A second-year of funded Kindergarten application is required to be submitted for approval, to the State Government in September of the child’s kindergarten year. It’s important to note, that not all applications are approved. If the State Government declines an application for a second year of funded kindergarten, your child will not be eligible, and they will be required to attend primary school.

As a second year of funded kindergarten is not guaranteed, families with children born between 1 January and 30 April need to make an informed choice about which year they would like their children to commence school and therefore which year their child will attend a kindergarten program. All children learn and develop in different ways.

Early Childhood Educators have the professional expertise and experience as early childhood practitioners to recommend a second year for a child who has identified developmental or learning difficulties.

Please Note: Should your child meet the criteria for a second year, a new application form (different colour for second year children) must be obtained, approved, dated and signed by the Educator for the following year. To obtain a second year, parents/guardians must complete the form, provide proof of birth and pay an application fee. This form must be submitted by the enrolment closing date.

Kindergarten Fees
Kindergarten fees are compulsory, and payment must be made by the due date. If fees are not paid by the due date, your child’s Kindergarten place may be suspended or forfeited.
Yearly Fees

Each year, Council sets its Kindergarten fees which can be found on Council’s website https://www.wyndham.vic.gov.au/early-education-and-care-services. The fees are broken down into term fees.

Once your child is enrolled at a Kindergarten, you will receive an invoice.

Kindergarten fees are due and payable 30 days after the date of the invoice.

Term Fees can be paid in the following ways:

- **In Person** - *(EFTPOS, cash, credit card, cheque, money order)* at;
  - Wyndham City Civic Centre
    - 45 Princes Highway, Werribee
  - Point Cook Community Learning Centre *(EFTPOS and Credit Card only)*
  - Wyndham Vale Community Learning Centre *(EFTPOS and Credit Card only)*
  - Tarneit Community Learning Centre *(EFTPOS and Credit Card only)*

- **By Mail** - *(cheque or money order made payable to Wyndham City)* with a copy of the invoice addressed to:
  - Kindergarten Enrolments – Wyndham City
    - P.O. Box 197, Werribee, VIC 3030

- **Over the Phone** - Via credit card by calling 9742 0777

- **Via BPAY** – Reference number for which can be found on your invoice.

Payment Plans

Kindergarten is a very important part of your child’s education. Families experiencing financial hardship can be supported where required, with a payment plan to pay off Kindergarten fees. Please call the Community Support and Enrolment Team on 9742 8122 should you wish to discuss a payment plan option.

Kindergarten Fee Subsidy *(This applies to 4-Year-Old Kindergarten only)*

Each year the State Government provides Council with an annual Kindergarten Fee Subsidy (subject to availability of funds) towards reducing fees for families who meet the following criteria:

**The child individually holds, or has a parent or guardian who holds one of the following:**

- 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.

**or the child:**

- Is identified on the birth certificate as being a multiple birth child (triplet or more)
or the child;
- Is identified by a parent, carer or legal guardian as being Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander

Please Note: There are no fee subsidies for 3-year-old Kindergarten, as this is a not a funded Kindergarten program.

The subsidy amounts offered by the State Government covers the entire cost of a 15-hour group. Therefore, eligible families will not be required to pay fees. An invoice will not be issued to families who receive the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy. Families must provide a copy of their current Health Care Card, Pension Card, approved Visa or other relevant documentation with their Kindergarten Enrolment Record Form. Council must have a current copy of your card to process the subsidy. Please ensure you provide a copy of your new card as soon as your old one expires to ensure you are not invoiced for the full-term fees.

Any parent or child who becomes eligible for a Health Care Card or Pension Card at any time throughout the year should immediately provide a copy of their new card to Council to gain approval and receive the Government subsidy. Please Note: A subsidy cannot be backdated beyond the date of the beginning of the Kindergarten term in which the eligible card or visa was presented to Council.

Discounts for Multiple Births (This applies to 4-Year-Old Kindergarten only)
Council provides a reduction in Kindergarten Fees for families enrolling more than one child in the same year. These children do not have to be twins but can be two siblings attending in the same year. Families with two children will be charged full fees for the first child and the fees for the second child will be halved. Where there is a third or fourth child, these children will not be charged a fee.

Non-Payment of Fees
If fees are not paid by the due date, the Kindergarten place may be suspended or forfeited. Council will enforce a debt collection process to recover outstanding fees. Please Note: Places will not be allocated to children if there is a debt outstanding for the family to Wyndham City Early Education and Care Services.

Educational and Learning Program
The children’s program is planned and implemented by a trained Early Childhood Teacher, Diploma and Certificate 3 qualified co-educator. Educators plan and deliver an educational program that will engage your child to learn and develop across a range of developmental and academic areas.

Kindergarten services operate under the National Quality Framework, which requires services to develop a curriculum that is reflective of the interest and developmental needs of each child. Part of the framework requires Kindergartens to be rated and assessed against the National Quality Standards. There are five rating levels within the National Quality Rating and Assessment. Services are given a rating for each of the 7 quality areas and an overall rating based on these results.

Information about the framework can be found at: https://www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/about
The ratings are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NQS Rating</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>• Service promotes exceptional education and care, demonstrates sector leadership and is committed to continually improving.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Awarded by ACECQA</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Services rated Exceeding National Quality Standard in all quality areas may choose to apply for this rating.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exceeding National Quality Standard</td>
<td>• Service goes beyond the requirements of the National Quality Standard in at least 4 of the 7 quality areas, with at least two of these being quality areas 1, 5, 6, or 7.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting National Quality Standard</td>
<td>• Service meets the National Quality Standard.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Service provides quality education and care in all 7 quality areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working Towards National Quality Standard</td>
<td>• Services provides a safe education and care program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• There are 1 or more areas identified for improvement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significant improvement Required</td>
<td>• Service does not meet 1 of the 7 quality areas or a section of the legislation and there is a significant risk to the safety, health and wellbeing of children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The regulatory authority will take immediate action.</td>
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The National Quality Standards consists of the following seven quality areas:

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; and
7. Leadership and service management.

As part of the assessment and rating procedure, each Kindergarten has developed a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) to ensure continuous improvement of the care and educational program. The QIP is on display at the front entrance of the Kindergarten and is an opportunity for you to have a greater understanding of your Kindergarten’s plan for improvement.

Educators are also required to implement the practice and principles of the approved Australian Early Years Learning Frameworks that describe the most effective ways for early childhood professionals to work together with children and families. The Early Years Learning Framework focuses on the following outcomes for children:

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

All Kindergarten programs developed by Educators meet the educational requirements and principles of the Education and Care Services National Regulations and National Law.
Outdoor Play

Outdoor play is an important learning environment for your child. It is as important as the indoor learning environment. As such, children will be provided an opportunity to play outdoors all year round. For some parents this can be a challenge.

Playing outside gives your child the chance to explore the natural environment and have adventures. They can play favourite games, test their physical limits, express themselves and build their self-confidence.

A Play Approach to Children’s Learning and Development

It is universally acknowledged that play is the most significant tool through which children learn. Research indicates that play increases brain development and supports greater learning outcomes. Therefore, at Wyndham Kindergartens you will see a play-based approach to children’s learning and development.

Educators design play spaces to promote the following learning outcomes: literacy and numeracy; concentration; problem solving; independence; resilience; emotional awareness; small and large muscle development; coordination; language and listening skills; conflict resolution and negotiation, all within a group context.

Play-based learning will look different from one setting to the next due to the skills, experiences and interests of the children, the dynamics of the group, family involvement, the surrounding environment and educator teaching style and preferences.

When children engage in play, they are often blissfully unaware that they are practicing and building strong foundations for lifelong learning in all facets of their lives.

Shared Teaching

Shared teaching models are employed in several Kindergarten groups to comply with the Federal Government and industrial requirements and to meet community demand for longer sessions.

This means some groups must be shared between two qualified Early Childhood Teachers, who are teamed with one consistent Co-Educator. The format of the shared teaching model may vary, from a situation where one Early Childhood Teacher relieves the other for a scheduled break during a session, to models where the Early Childhood Teachers each lead a particular session, or a part of those sessions, each week.

Educators who are part of shared teaching models are committed to providing a quality program. They form collaborative partnerships, incorporating the following:

- A dedicated meeting at the beginning of the year to jointly plan their approach;
- Shared planning time every week to discuss learning and development opportunities for each child in the group.

The Learning Process

Wyndham City’s, Early Education and Care Services, believe that for a child to learn they need to be motivated by activities and experiences that are developmental and evidence based, which are
meaningful and intellectually stimulating to their learning and developing and are based on what children are interested in. Educator intentional teaching practices are key to maximising your child’s learning and development.

Wyndham’s Kindergartens emphasises the process of an experience (as this is where most learning occurs) rather than the product. This simply means that even though your child may not bring home a painting, drawing or collage every day, they are still learning through experiences such as block play; dramatic play; conversation; physical play; sand play; gardening; construction; interest tables; music and movement.

To support a process approach, some great open-ended questions to ask your child are:

- What surprised you today?
- What did you enjoy the most?
- Can you show me your favourite book/play area/activity?

**Literacy and Numeracy**

Literacy and numeracy are an extremely important part of your child’s educational program. It is important to understand that literacy and numeracy are defined within the Kindergarten environment in a much broader way than just reading, writing and counting.

The program provides children with many rich opportunities to develop their early literacy and numeracy skills. Such as; playing games; turn taking; using calendars; sharing books with peers and Educators; signing names in the sign in book; drawing; painting; physical play; socialising with others; singing songs; role playing in a pretend supermarket and lots of conversations.

Literacy and numeracy development is about reasoning; speaking; listening; creating; thinking; analysing and being able to recognise meaning in other things. These are the building blocks of a strong foundation that will support your child to be a successful reader and mathematician.

**Progress Reports**

Families who would like further information on their child’s progress are encouraged to make an appointment with their child’s Educator. Families can request access to all of their child’s records, including observations taken by Educators. Some Educators may also hold parent/Educator interviews. These will be organised by the individual Educator and you will be notified via the centre newsletter or notice board at the Kindergarten.

Towards the end of the year, a Transition Statement will be prepared for each parent by their child’s Educator as an assessment of their child’s abilities, achievements and interest before starting school. For more information please visit the Transition Statement section of this booklet.

**Meeting with Educators**

Educators are committed to work in partnership with you to ensure that the program is meeting your child’s needs. During session, and in particular at arrival and departure times, Educators are entirely focussed on child interactions, supervision and the delivery of the program.

If you would like further information and would like to discuss your child’s progress, please speak with your Educators to arrange a suitable time outside of session time. Our Educators can talk over the phone, Skype and meet one on one.
It is extremely important to us throughout the year that you have the opportunity to connect with us to discuss your child’s Kindergarten experience, their learning and development and any other concerns and issues.

If you require an interpreter to support your communication, please make the Educator aware of this.

**Behaviour Guidance**

Wyndham City’s, Early Education and Care Services, are committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all participants in Kindergarten programs across the municipality. We believe that all children need a safe and secure environment that includes positive interactions with adults and other children. We also recognise that all children and individuals develop at different stages. A positive approach to Behaviour Guidance is very important to maintain everyone’s safety needs and more importantly for your child to develop empathy and strategies for self-soothing and control. As such we have evidence-based policies and procedures to support your child and Educators to guide and develop safe behaviours and practices.

Methods of Positive Behaviour Guidance include:

- Encouraging positive behaviour in all children and ensuring that all children are respected and valued as individuals;
- Setting limits for behaviour, which is important for the safety and protection of children, others and the environment;
- Helping children to learn the consequences of their behaviour, to develop empathy and understanding of how their actions affect others.

Strategies to achieve Positive Behaviour Guidance include:

- Encouraging families to share information about their child’s areas of interest;
- Encouraging families to inform Educators of anything that may affect their child’s behaviour e.g. sleeping problems, grief, family changes, etc.;
- Providing a developmentally appropriate behavioural guidance structure for all Educators working with the children;
- Ensuring children receive positive feedback and discussion around appropriate and constructive behaviour;
- Consistency between all Educators working with the children in the management of choices and consequences;
- Involving families in issues relating to the guidance of their child’s behaviour.

Educators are committed to working with families to achieve positive behaviour within the Kindergarten environment. Family support meetings can be arranged to discuss the issues and strategies based on the individual child’s behaviour. This will enable all parties to understand what the issues are and how these can be supported by the Kindergarten environment and the program offered. Depending on the child’s needs, further support services can be utilised with the parent’s permission. Referrals to these support agencies will be discussed with the parents/guardians.

The full Behaviour Guidance Procedure is located in The Early Education and Care Services Policy and Procedures manual in each Kindergarten. Families can request a copy of this procedure.
Excursions and Special Events

All Kindergartens have special events at the centre and/or excursions. Families will be informed of these events and parents/guardians are required to sign a permission form prior to the day.

Educators will give careful consideration to;

- The educational value to the children, including the Early Years Learning Framework Outcomes and NQF Guiding Principles;
- The safety of the children and parents/guardians;
- Ensuring that the Education and Care Services National Regulations are met;
- The number of available parents/guardians to attend the excursion.

It is at the discretion of the organising Educator as to whether siblings can attend. This decision will be made for each excursion, based on factors such as the appropriateness of the excursion location and whether the inclusion of siblings will impact on the experience for enrolled children.

Educators may propose rescheduling a session to accommodate a special event, such as the annual A Walk on Country program excursion. In these instances, families will be given notice well in advance.

Celebrations

Celebrations are recognised as an important part of the children’s program, providing valuable insights to the diversity of the Wyndham community. Please discuss your important celebrations and events with your Educators to ensure that they are included.

Birthdays

Birthdays are a special day for children, and they like to celebrate with their friends at Kindergarten. Each Kindergarten will have its own way of celebrating birthdays and this will be discussed during the enrol and play session when your child commences Kindergarten. There are many options available for families who wish to be involved in their child’s birthday celebration at Kindergarten, however, it’s important to discuss options with your child’s Educators beforehand.

Religious / Cultural Celebrations

All families are encouraged and invited to share their religious and cultural celebrations with the Kindergarten. Please discuss with your child’s Educator possible ways of incorporating important celebrations in the program. It is important that at Kindergarten, children and families share in different cultural experiences in order to develop a greater understanding and appreciation of each other.

Inclusion Support Services

Family Support

Educators have information on a range of services and agencies available to assist children and families. If parents/guardians or families need information or advice regarding support services, please discuss this with the Educators, who will assist to find an appropriate support service.
**Wyndham Best Start Alliance**

Wyndham Best Start is a collaboration between agencies committed to building a robust early years’ service system to improve the outcomes for the most vulnerable children and families in the City of Wyndham.

**Wyndham Child and Family Directory (WCFD)**

The Directory connects families with information about services to support their child’s (0-12 years old) learning, health and wellbeing. [www.wcfd.com.au](http://www.wcfd.com.au).

**Children with Extra Needs**

Wyndham City Kindergartens are inclusive services and are committed to providing a positive Kindergarten experience for all children.

Early intervention is key to improving the outcomes for any child with extra needs. Although it can be distressing to understand that your child may need additional support, the earlier we know the sooner we can work with you and your child in order to maximise their learning, development and participation at Kindergarten. Please take the time to speak with your Educators if you feel that you and your child could do with some extra support and resources.

If other specialist services and agencies are already involved with your child, please let your Educator know and provide any relevant reports and information. This will fast track an individualised approach to your child’s participation, growth and development at Kindergarten.

Programs can be designed in consultation with parents/guardians and other agencies working with the child. This level of consultation supports your child to develop to their full potential, and to maximise their inclusion in the service.

To further support the inclusion of children with extra needs, Educators and families have access to the following services;

- Preschool Field Officer (PSFO);
- A variety of support agencies that will work closely with Kindergarten staff to support the child’s inclusion and participation into the program.

Kindergarten is an inclusive environment and as such all children with extra needs will be included. Please be aware that confidentiality will be adhered to at all times and this will restrict the amount of information Educators can share with you about other children.

*Please speak to your Educator about any concerns, referral requirements and contact information for these support services, including the PSFO program.*

**Family Participation**

Parents/guardians and family members are invited and encouraged to be involved in Kindergarten activities. Here are some examples of how you can be involved:

- You are very welcome to drop in and spend time with your child, observing and participating at your own pace;
- Participation in the program for both your enjoyment and for your child;
• Special events e.g. Mother’s Day, Father’s Day, Grandparent’s / Special Person’s Day;
• Sharing special skills with the children e.g. clay modelling, woodwork, gardening, cooking, dancing, bathing baby, performing music or painting;
• Participation in the FFYC;
• Assisting with special Kindergarten events; and
• Sharing of cultural and religious celebrations.

Please Note: If you wish to participate on a regular basis you will need to have a Working with Children’s Check.

Family and Friends Yarning Club (FFYC)

The Family and Friends Yarning Club provides an opportunity for families to be more engaged with their kindergarten and provide input into the delivery of the kindergarten. The FFYC sessions occur at the kindergarten, once a term to:

• Provide opportunities to be involved in Kindergarten activities and events;
• Provide feedback to Council and input into the operations of the Kindergarten program;
• Provide further information to families about the Kindergarten program.

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. This information is provided to keep you informed about what is happening in your Kindergarten.

Please also note that some Kindergartens disperse notices via a pigeonhole or pocket system. Please ensure you check pockets, pigeonholes or your child’s kindergarten bag after each session.

Story Park

Story Park is a fast and private way to share information with families online and in real time. Story Park replaces the production of portfolios, which are used to show a collection of your child’s work and progress while at kindergarten. Types of items that are posted include photographs, videos of children’s interactions, conversations and incursions. Families and Educators can share private conversations if needed. To find out if your Kindergarten uses Story Park, please speak to your Educator.

Arrival and Departure

The Education and Care Services National Regulations and National Law require all parents/guardians to sign their child in and out of the Kindergarten session and for Educators to ensure adequate supervision of children during arrival and departure times.

Please take a moment to ensure that you close all doors and that no other children follow you out the door.

Parents/guardians must sign their child in and out of Kindergarten in the Attendance Book with the time of arrival and departure. Please do not sign a departure time until you have picked up your child. Ensure you use full names when signing rather than initials.
No child will be released to any person other than those elected by parents/guardians on the Kindergarten Enrolment Record.

Parents/guardians must provide in writing the name of the person or persons who will be collecting their child from Kindergarten.

Verbal authorisation can be given in an emergency for a new person to collect a child, this must be followed up by written permission from the parent or guardian within 24 hours. People unfamiliar to Educators will be required to provide photo identification before the child is released into their care.

We acknowledge that conversations between families and Educators are valuable, however if parents/guardians need to speak to Educators, they are asked to wait until all children have been picked up or to schedule an appointment time. Parents/guardians are asked not to talk to Educators during the first 10 minutes of arrival and departure as Educators must focus their attention on the safety of the children at this time.

For safety of the children, strict arrival and departure procedures are in place and parents/guardians must adhere to these procedures.

Late Collection

If in an emergency situation occurs and you are going to be late collecting your child, please notify the Educators immediately.

Educators are not always in a position to remain after the session to care for children who have not been collected. In the event that families are late and have not contacted the Kindergarten, the Educators will begin to contact your listed contacts. If Educators cannot get in contact with you or your listed contacts, we may contact Victoria Police or other relevant authorities regarding the after-hours care of the child.

A late collection fee will be charged, consisting of the cost to cover the required Educators working out of hours. The full late collection policy procedure is located in The Early Education and Care Services Policy and Procedure manual at the Kindergarten.

Please ensure you notify Educators as soon as possible of any changes to your contact and emergency contact details.

Health, Safety and Wellbeing

Nutrition

Kindergarten, in partnership with families, plays an important role in teaching children about healthy eating habits. We are particularly interested in promoting foods that will develop healthy children and limit obesity.

To encourage healthy eating habits, food such as sandwiches, fruits, vegetables and cheese are recommended for snacks and lunch times. Sweet, salty and high fat foods should not be brought to Kindergarten.

Water is always available at Kindergarten for children to drink.

At times of celebrations, cakes and treats may be eaten at Kindergarten. Educators at individual Kindergartens will provide parents/guardians with further information about the fruit and lunchtime routines at their enrol and play session.
For further information on dietary guidelines for children, please visit the Australian Government National Health and Medical Research Council website: https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/health-advice

**Food Allergies / Anaphylaxis**

Allergies to foods are common. Please inform Educators if your child is allergic to any foods or has an EpiPen. If your child has an EpiPen, a Medical Management plan signed by a medical practitioner must be provided to the Kindergarten. It is important for all parents/guardians to be aware of foods that are discouraged from the Kindergarten. If in doubt, you can ask your Educator about this.

All Wyndham City Kindergartens promote ‘Nut Free Zones’. Any food containing nuts are not to be brought to Kindergarten e.g. Nutella, peanut butter. For further information please refer to the Early Education and Care Services Anaphylaxis Policy located at your Kindergarten.

**H2O Zone – Water Only Zone**

All Wyndham City Kindergartens are H2O Zones. This means that children are required to bring a drink bottle containing water only as their drink.

The aim of the H2O Zone is to develop healthy drinking habits and positive attitudes towards drinking water.

**Clothing**

Please consider the range of activities that your child will be participating in during their time at Kindergarten and dress them appropriately.

Clothes that limit participation in the program include:

- Long dresses;
- Good clothes that might get spoiled;
- Zippers, belts, laces, or buckles which are difficult to do up or undo (especially when rushing to the toilet!);
- Big boots;
- Shoes that do not fit.

Children will participate in outdoor play during all sessions, unless the weather is extreme. It is advised that the following clothing will need to be worn;

- Sun hats, sunscreen and suitable footwear. (Slippers, moccasins, thongs, clogs or ‘Crocs’ should not be worn to Kindergarten).
- Warm coats and jumpers for winter and from time to time gumboots for those days when children will be splashing in puddles.

Whilst protective clothing is used at every opportunity, there is no assurance that children will not get their clothes dirty.

We recommend that you clearly write your child’s name all items of clothing.
**Uniforms**

Families will be offered the opportunity to purchase items of uniform. Purchase of uniforms is optional. Details will be provided to you during the Kindergarten year. Options include windcheater, polo shirt and hat in some colour options.

**Sun Smart**


It is compulsory for children to bring a hat to Kindergarten during high UV rate times from mid-August to the end of April. During these times, children are also discouraged from wearing singlet tops or strappy dresses that expose skin to UV rays.

Parents/Guardians are asked to apply 30+ broad spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen to children before they arrive at Kindergarten. Your child’s Educators will seek your permission to apply sunscreen when it is needed. Sunglasses are not compulsory but are encouraged.

**Appropriate Hats**

Legionnaire style hats with flap covering the back of the neck and ears or large brimmed hats are required to be worn by children under the Sun Smart Procedure. Baseball hats are not considered appropriate. Your child’s Educators may ask you to leave a legionnaire or wide brimmed hat (with your child’s name in it) at the Kindergarten for the year.

**Planning for Heat**

On excessively hot days during the year, Educators will review their program to ensure children’s comfort. Parents/guardians may opt to keep children at home on these days if they wish. Educators will provide children with drinks and observe Sun Smart procedures for outdoor play on hot days. For further information please refer to the Sun Smart Policy section of the Early Education and Care Services Policy and Procedure Manual.

**Toys**

Children’s toys are best left at home in order to avoid them being broken or misplaced. Educators cannot take responsibility for children’s toys. However, there may be opportunities for children to bring a special item or something of interest to share with the other children during an experience such as ‘Show and Tell’, ‘News Time’ or ‘Show and Share’. Individual Kindergartens will inform parents/guardians of their procedures.

Please discuss security toys/blankets with your Educators to ensure that your child’s security needs are considered.

**Accidents and Illness at Kindergarten**

The Education and Care Services National Regulations require parents/guardians to give authorisation to seek emergency medical, hospital and ambulance services when deemed necessary.
In the event of an accident or serious illness, urgent medical attention will be sought, and Educators will notify the child’s parent(s) and/or guardian(s).

Minor accidents will be reported to parents/guardians after the session, on collection of the child. Educators record all accidents and parents/guardians will be asked to sign the Accident Register, as per the regulation requirement.

Children feeling unwell (e.g. sore throats, ear aches, heavy colds) cannot participate fully in the session and should be kept at home until they are fully recovered. Please notify Educators if your child becomes unwell or needs to seek medical attention after kindergarten sessions.

Evidence based program and practice provides us an opportunity to fully utilise the Kindergarten program both indoors and out. As such, children will be offered an opportunity to engage in both environments throughout the day (with suitable clothing). If your child is not well enough to be outside, please consider their attendance on that day.

Infectious Diseases

There are Health Department Regulations which exclude children with infectious diseases from attending Kindergarten.


Some infectious diseases not listed on the Exclusion Table will also require the child to be kept at home.

If your child has suffered from an infectious disease, you are required to provide a clearance certificate from your child’s doctor before your child returns to Kindergarten. This ensures the health and safety of all children and adults who use the Kindergarten.

Inform your Educators if your child has an infection or a disease so that they can watch for any further cases at the centre. As per regulatory requirements, Educators will notify families if an infectious disease is present at the Kindergarten.

Evacuation

The Education and Care Services National Regulations require Kindergartens to practice trial evacuations. The Emergency Procedures are displayed at Kindergarten and a trial evacuation will be conducted once a term. If you are at the Kindergarten regularly for duty or other purposes, please familiarise yourself with the centre’s evacuation procedures.

No Smoking

A **NO SMOKING** policy applies to all Kindergartens. It is requested that there be no smoking in the building, the playground or within ten metres of the front gate.
Kindergarten Photos

Wyndham City’s, Early Education and Care Services has a contract in place to provide professional photography services to families. The photographer will take a selection of photos, both inside the kindergarten and outside in the playground and will also take a group photo.

Families will be offered the opportunity to purchase these professional photos of their children.

Purchase of these photos is optional and details relating to times and costs will be provided to families during the Kindergarten year.

The Natural Environment

Wyndham City ensures the Kindergarten programs reflect appreciation, sensitivity, awareness and concern for our natural environment. All centres offer a natural play-based environment.

Recycling and reuse of materials is encouraged amongst Educators, children and families.

Household Articles / Scrap Materials

Don’t throw it away - ask us if we want it first!

We can use any interesting natural or man-made materials or furniture. If you think you have something interesting that may be useful, please talk with an Educator.

Outdoors

- Large tree logs - children could sit on, or cut into log pavers (the bigger, the better);
- Boulders – large and interesting rocks;
- Pavers;
- Garden decorations;
- Tiles that could be used for a mosaic outdoors;
- Natural materials from the garden, beach or countryside e.g. cones, seed pods, shells, skeletons and nests;
- Plants for the garden.

Art Materials

- Fabric;
- Ice cream containers, cream bottles and lids;
- Small cardboard boxes;
- Foil containers, gift wrapping;
- Wood off-cuts and fabric;
- Any type of off-cuts that you may be able to get from factories, such as plastic, paper, cardboard, material, buttons, etc.

For health reasons, we cannot accept the following materials:

- Toilet rolls;
- Laundry product packaging;
- Soap packaging;
- Cigarette packaging;
- Medicine packaging;
- Packaging for nuts or nut products.
**Transition to School**

Educators will provide activities and opportunities to assist your child to make a smooth transition from Kindergarten to School. Some activities might include a Kindergarten visit to a Primary School, visits by School Educators to Kindergarten. We prepare children with the knowledge of what to expect, to help achieve a confident, happy start to School.

**Transition Statements**

Transition Learning and Development Statements will be completed by our Educators for children entering Prep (foundation) in the following year. Transition Statements provide Prep Educators and the children’s families with an assessment of individual children’s abilities, achievements and interests, as well as noting any additional needs to help schools plan individual support programs. For further information on Transition Statements, please visit:


**Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 and National Regulations 2011**

Wyndham City adheres to the Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 and National Regulations 2011. The National Regulations are aimed at the protection and safety of all children in Kindergarten services.

All Council Kindergartens have inspections undertaken by the State Government, in addition to regular inspections by Council Officers to ensure they comply with the National Regulations. Your child’s Educator is responsible for ensuring the centre complies with Regulation requirements. A copy of the Education and Care Services National Regulations and National Law is kept at all Kindergartens. To view a guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, please visit: [https://www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/national-law-regulations](https://www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/national-law-regulations)

Wyndham City also complies with all the relevant legislation, including, but not limited to:

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011;
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010;
- The Department of Education and Training (DET) Funding Criteria and Service Agreement;
- Federal Disability Discrimination Act 1992;
- Health Records Act 2001;
- Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014;
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004;
- Working with Children Act 2005;
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005;
Communication
If you have a concern, complaint or compliment, please firstly make an appointment with your child’s Educator to discuss the issue or feedback.

If the Educator cannot help you with your concern or complaint, or you do not feel comfortable discussing your concern with them, please contact your Team Leader. If the Team Leader is unable to assist you with your concern or complaint, you may contact the Area Leader and then the Coordinator on 9742 8122 to assist you.

At any time, you can also contact, an Authorised Officer from the Department of Education and Training (DET) on 1300 307 415 to discuss your concerns. For further information please visit: https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/contact/Pages/complainec.aspx

Two parent/guardian surveys are sent via email/post to all families during their Kindergarten year, providing an opportunity for feedback and comment. However, Wyndham City appreciates feedback form families on all aspects of our Kindergarten Services at any time throughout the Kindergarten year, so please feel free to contact us as follows:

**Wyndham City Early Education and Care Services**
*Address:* 45 Princes Highway, Werribee VIC 3030
*Post:* P.O. Box 2917, Werribee VIC 3030
*Phone:* 9742 8147
*Email:* kinderenrolments@wyndham.vic.gov.au