

Elonera Preschool Association



Families Handbook



85 Davey Street, Parkdale - Boon Wurrung Country

www.elonerapreschool.com.au

elonera.kin@kindergarten.vic.gov.au

Ph: 03 9580 2193

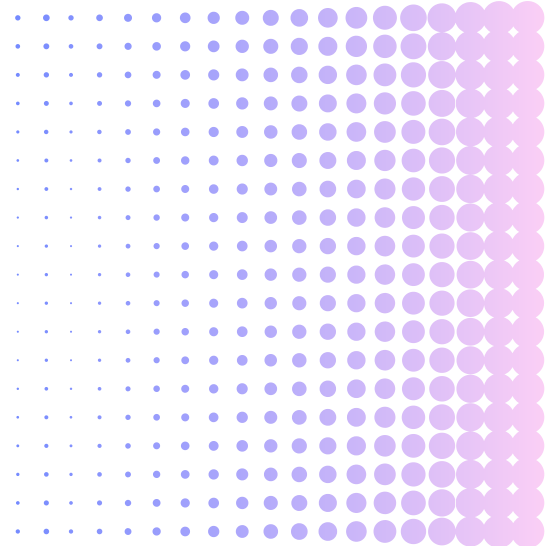
RATED

EXCEEDING

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD



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Welcome to Elonera Preschool

Mission Statement

We strive for excellence in implementing high quality play based programs which enrich children's learning. We value safe collaborative and respectful relationships with our community to provide quality learning outcomes for all children and families.

Philosophy

Children

We advocate, respect and promote children's rights. We believe that each child is a competent and capable learner with the right to be respected as a unique individual.

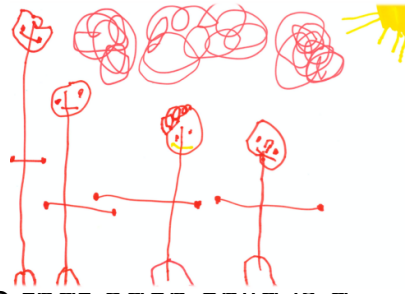
Children as citizens are supported in developing a sense of well-being to be and become confident, secure and thoughtful members of our learning community. Each child supported to have a strong sense of belonging. They are an integral part of our community and the connections between the children, their families and the wider community is recognised, celebrated, strengthened and promoted.

Curriculum

We facilitate each child's learning through play-based approach, informed by contemporary theories and theorists, that is holistic in incorporating their physical, social, emotional, cognitive and spiritual well-being. Our curriculum is informed by our practitioner research projects, contemporary research, as well as collaboration with various professionals and continuing partnership with communities.

We facilitate learning opportunities that reflect on children's ideas, interests, and personal experiences to foster their skills in becoming lifelong learners. Our curriculum will offer opportunities for children to express themselves using their 'hundred languages'

Learning spaces are designed and set-up thoughtfully to scaffold children's learning, presenting opportunities for sustained shared thinking and collaborative learning. Our outdoor learning environment fosters an appreciation and connection with nature as a basis for sustained environmental care and awareness.



Our curriculum promotes children's spontaneity, risk taking, and stimulates exploration, research and construction of theories to understand our world

Families

We develop respectful and collaborative relationships with all families so they feel valued and engaged in shared decision making to support their child's learning.

We strive to promote our families values of kindness, respect, honesty and inclusivity.

We strive to advocate for families from diverse and complex family situations to access community services, resources, programs and to work within the child protection laws and responsibilities.

Community

We strive to create a connected community where every member of the kindergarten feels respected, included and valued.

We endeavour to demonstrate respect for all cultures of the Kindergarten community while acknowledging our First Nation People, we seek to collaborate with leaders and cultural groups in the community to increase our knowledge and understanding.

We strive to demonstrate a commitment to promoting the value and contribution of our Kindergarten within the wider community.

Educators

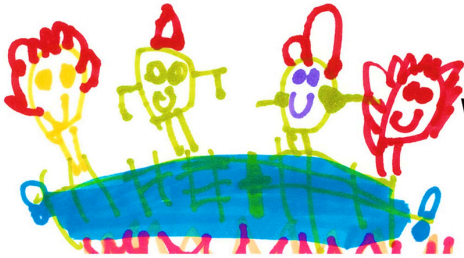
Create and maintain safe and nurturing environments where children feel respected while being provided the time and opportunity to develop their sense of identity.

Engage in critical reflection and ongoing professional learning to review the quality of teaching and learning strategies and are committed to continuous improvement.

Educators are life-long learners alongside children, families and colleagues. Demonstrate intentional teaching practices that are, thoughtful and purposeful in building the children's foundations for successful learning.

Advocate early childhood education and the provision of high-quality education and care. We maintain a culture of ethical practice and in pursuit of social justice and equity.

Educators use the practice principles of the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework, National Quality Standards and are inspired by the educational principles of Reggio Emilia to underpin practice and curriculum.



Committee of Management

Engage with all stakeholders to ensure the guiding principles and values of the Kindergarten, and its daily operations are ethical, responsible while setting clear directions for the effective operation of a quality service.

Elonera prides itself on the positive working relationship between educators and the committee of management. Every effort is made for open and ongoing communication, where a culture of respect creates an environment of trust and collaboration.

Statement of commitment to Child Safety



Elonera Preschool is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and is committed to creating and maintaining a child safe organisation. We are committed to the safety of Aboriginal, culturally and/or linguistically diverse children, neuro diverse, differently abled and children from LGBTQ+ backgrounds. We are also highly committed to the safety of children with disability. We have zero tolerance for child abuse and are committed to actively contributing to a child safe environment where children and young people are safe and feel safe, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives.

Every person involved in Elonera Preschool has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role they play individually and collectively to ensure that the wellbeing and safety of all children and young people is at the forefront of all they do and every decision they make.

Our commitment will be enacted through the implementation and monitoring of the Child Safe Standard, as specified under the Reportable Conduct Scheme and Child Safe Standards.



- *Child Safe Environments and Wellbeing policy*

2025 Time Table

MON	8.30am - 4.00pm 4YO Koalas	
	8.40am - 4.10pm 3YO Wombats	
TUE	8.30am - 4.00pm 4YO Possums	
	8.40am - 1.40pm 3YO Kangaroos	
WED	8.30am - 12.15pm 4YO Koalas	12.15 - 4.00pm 4YO Koalas EC*
	8.40am - 1.40pm 3YO Kangaroos	
THU	8.30am - 4.00pm 4YO Possums	
	8.40am - 4.10pm 3YO Wombats	
FRI	8.30am - 12.15pm 4YO Koalas	Possums BK 12:30- 4:00
	8.40am - 1.40pm 3YO Kangaroos	

**'Extended Care' - this is optional and at an additional cost*

2025 Term Dates

Term 1: January 28th – 4th April

*Kinder classes start 30th January

Term 2: 22nd April – 4th July

Term 3: 21st July – 19th September

Term 4: 6th October to 19th December

*17th December–Last day of kinder



Management

- Elonera is managed by a volunteer committee of current families who meet once a month.
- Please support your committee, being aware that they give their time generously, while juggling family and often work commitments.
- Without these volunteers the kindergarten is unable to operate. Being part of the committee gives you a great opportunity to become involved in the Elonera community.
- Contact president@elonerapreschool.com.au for more information.

- Enrolment policy
- Governance and Management of service policy



Teachers and Educators



3yo Kangaroos and Wombats Team



Eryn
Kangaroos Teacher
Bachelor of Education
EC and Primary



Julia
Wombats Teacher
Bachelor of Education
Early Childhood



Elly
3yo Educator
Cert III in Early Childhood
Education



Senuri
3yo Educator
Working Towards Bachelor in
Early Childhood

4yo Possums and Koalas Team



Hema
Director, Educational
Leader,
Possums Teacher
Bachelor of Education
EC and Primary



Kate P
Possums Educator/
Casual Teacher
Associate Diploma in Early
Childhood Education



Silvana
Possums Educator
Diploma in Early
Childhood Education



Jemma
Koalas Teacher
Bachelor of Education
EC and Primary



Katherine
Koalas Educator/
Activity group leader
Diploma in Early Childhood
Education



Kate L
Koalas Educator/
Nature Pedagogue
Cert III in Early Childhood
Education



- Staffing Policy
- Determining Responsible Person Policy

Contact Information and Communication

Communications between parents and teachers:

We encourage open communication between families and educators. Families can contact teachers and educators in the following ways:

- **Email** – For general inquiries, seeking feedback, concerns, communicable diseases, absences, or compliments. Concerns and confidential matters should be emailed only. This ensures privacy, as platforms like Storypark have features that, if used incorrectly, may share information with the wider community.
- **Storypark** – For non-urgent messages, sharing updates, contributing to daily learning posts or contributing to your child's learning journey.
- **Phone (Kinder Office)** – For urgent matters during session times, such as early/late pickups or checking on your child after a difficult drop-off. The office number is 03 9580 2193.
- **In-Person** – Brief conversations can take place during drop-off and pick-up. If you require a longer discussion, or need to discuss a matter of a sensitive nature, please arrange a time via email to meet with your child's teacher.

While educators strive to respond as soon as possible, please allow up to two working days for a reply before following up. To ensure educators can focus on quality learning experiences, we kindly ask that communication remains clear and purposeful.



Teachers

Director/Educational Leader, Possums Teacher – Hema Srekrishnan
hema@elonerapreschool.com.au

Koalas Teacher: Jemma – jemma@elonerapreschool.com.au

Kangaroos Teacher: Eryn – esullivan@elonerapreschool.com.au

Wombats Teacher: Julia – jcoade@elonerapreschool.com.au



Committee of Management

President : president@elonerapreschool.com.au

Vice President/Grounds and buildings:

groundsandbuildings@elonerapreschool.com.au

Treasurer: treasurer@elonerapreschool.com.au

Secretary: secretary@elonerapreschool.com.au

Human Resources: humanresources@elonerapreschool.com.au

Class Reps:

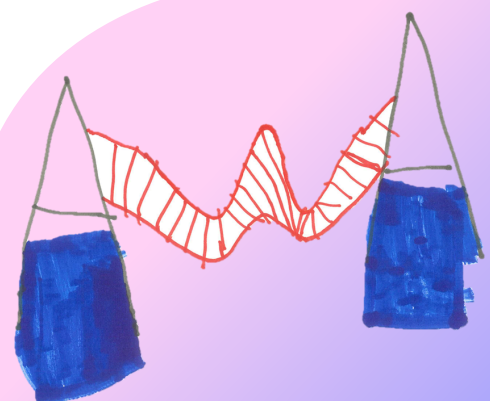
Possums: possumsrep@elonerapreschool.com.au

Koalas: koalasrep@elonerapreschool.com.au

Kangaroos: kangaroosrep@elonerapreschool.com.au

Wombats: wombatsrep@elonerapreschool.com.au

See Website for all other emails.





Arrival and Departure

- Child must be brought in by a parent, guardian or responsible adult
- Sign-in on arrival and sign-out on departure
- Children must be collected from the kinder by a parent, guardian, or responsible adult 16 years or over
- Children to wash hands with soap upon arrival
- Enter classrooms after teachers open doors at session commencement. Please wait until then as this time is used for setting -up the class.
- Arrival on time is important for effective participation
- When collecting children at the end of a session it is important to be on time. Being late can cause children to feel anxious and insecure.
- If you are unavoidably delayed, please phone the kinder as soon as possible
- Please note in the attendance book if a person other than yourself is to collect your child from kinder. This adult must be nominated on your child's enrolment form, and is responsible for ensuring the attendance book is signed when collecting children.
- If you would like an adult who is not nominated on your "pick up list" to collect your child, you'll need to fill in an additional form.
- Please note that there could be other sessions running simultaneously during your pick-up time. Kindly make sure the gate is not left open and leave within 15 minutes of session ending.

Bags



- Children are required to bring a bag to each kinder session.
- They are each assigned a "hook or locker" at the start of the year to hang their bags. It is important to encourage the children to hang their own bags on their hooks or lockers at the start of each session
- In their bag they will need to have a change of clothes, a drink bottle, warm jacket and beanie during winter, and their snack/lunch. All items must be clearly labelled with the child's name.
- We strongly discourage the children from bringing toys from home



- *Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations Policy*
- *Delivery and Collection of children policy*
- *Hygiene Policy*

What should be in my Kinder bag?



To bring on the first day and left at kinder for the year

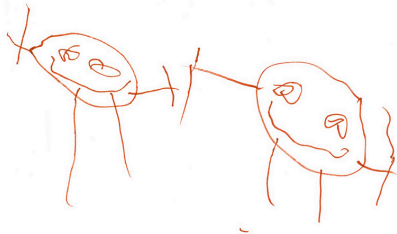
- ☐ Labelled Broad brimmed hat
- ☐ Labelled Roll-on Sunscreen (We prefer roll-ons to promote independence. If your brand doesn't do roll-ons, refillable roll-on bottles are available in market).
- ☐ Pharmacist labelled ongoing medications with the action plan if any



Everyday Kinder Bag (EVERY ITEM TO BE LABELLED)

- ☐ Spare top, bottom, underwear, and socks (multiple sets if child is toilet training or just toilet trained)- one set must for water/sensorial play
- ☐ 4 x Nappies/pull-ups if child is not yet toilet trained
- ☐ Wet bags for wet/soiled clothing
- ☐ For wet weather days:
 - Gumboots
 - Rain coat (water proof)
- ☐ Snack Box
- ☐ Lunch Box (for all groups except Koalas on Fridays and Koalas not attending Extended care on Wednesdays)
- ☐ Drink bottle with only water
- ☐ Comforter (if required)
- ☐ Library Bag on the library day (Koalas and Possums only)

Absence



- If your child will be away due to sickness, please let the teacher know. The best way to contact them is by either starting a conversation on storypark or send an email. See the contacts list for all emails. Alternatively, you are also able to ring the kinder between 8am and 4:15pm.
- Kindly also let the staff know of all planned holidays.
- Teachers and educators also plan experiences based on children's individual needs. Your child would have also established strong friendships at kinder. So knowing of your child's absence is important.

Supervision and Siblings



- Ensure your child is supervised at all times before and after kinder sessions. Once your child is signed out, it becomes the parent/caregiver's legal responsibility to supervise them.
- Siblings must also be supervised at all times, especially outdoors. Do not allow children to access or move resources that have been packed away for the day.
- Do not leave the gate open, and only allow children to enter or exit when under adult supervision.
- At the beginning and end of each session, please come inside the classroom to drop off or collect your child.
- Siblings should stay with you at all times, inside or outside the pre-school. Kinder activities and equipment are intended for pre-school children and may not be suitable for other age groups.
- After kinder sessions, please return any play materials or equipment used to their original location and ensure children do not rearrange any equipment.

- Supervision of children policy
- Relaxation and Sleep Policy
- OH and S policy



Medical Information

Asthma, Anaphylaxis and other medical conditions

- All medical conditions need to be reported in the enrolment for your child's safe participation in the program.
- If your child has been diagnosed with Asthma or Anaphylaxis, you'll need to provide the teacher with their action plan and medication prior to commencement.
- The action plan needs to be developed by a medical practitioner and needs to be a coloured copy with the doctor's stamp/signature, date of plan and date of next review.
- The plan and medication will stay at kinder for the duration of their enrolment.
- It is very important that you keep them current and updated as necessary.
- The teacher will work with you on developing a risk minimisation plan and communication plan.



Allergy Aware Service



- Elonera is an allergy aware service. Hence, we take a more educative approach towards managing allergies and anaphylaxis.
- While we do not blanket ban children from bringing any specific food groups, such as eggs and nuts, we will clearly communicate expectations to provide a safe environment for all children.
- This will be specific for each of the groups, for instance, we may request avoiding nut based butter if and where possible or request bringing yoghurt in pouches, in severe anaphylaxis cases we may request you to avoid certain food items in children's meals.
- Elonera Pre-school is committed to providing, as far as practicable, a safe and healthy environment in which children at risk of anaphylaxis can participate equally in all aspects of the children's program and experience



- Asthma Policy
- Administration of first-aid Policy
- Administration of medication Policy
- Anaphylaxis and Allergic reactions Policy
- Dealing with medical conditions
- Diabetes Policy
- Epilepsy and Seizures



Illnesses



- During the year it is quite probable that your child may contract any of the usual children's illnesses – colds, flu, gastric problems, chicken pox, measles, etc
- If your child has been vomiting or had diarrhoea in the past 48 hours please do not bring him/her to kindergarten
- If your child has a cough, heavy cold or fever please keep them at home to help reduce the risk of spreading infection to others.
- A list of childhood communicable diseases and the DE recommendations of length of time the child is to be excluded from kinder is displayed in the foyer for reference.
- Please remember to let us know if your child will be away due to illness,
- When reports of communicable diseases are reported to the kinder families will be notified through signs in the foyer as well as storypark.

Injury on Intake



- Injury on Intake form: This form will be used either by the parent/guardian on arrival to inform staff of an injury that has occurred at home or by staff on first noticing any injury that has not occurred at kinder
- This is part of our duty to keep our children safe and allows staff to be aware of any matters that may be affecting the child at kinder.

Head Lice

- It is the responsibility of the parent to notify the kinder if head lice have been detected. Due to the ease with which they spread, it is important that children are not sent back to kinder until the head lice have been treated.
- According to the Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2009, children with head lice can be readmitted to school or children's service centres after treatment has commenced.



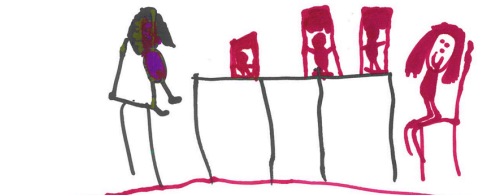
- *Incident, Injury and Trauma Policy*
- *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*
- *Supervision of Children Policy*

Communication

There will be a variety of methods by which staff will communicate your child's progress throughout the year including,

Story Park

- Story park is the main mode of communication
- Here, you will receive communication from teachers, educators and committee of management
- You'll be able to communicate directly with teachers through 'conversation' feature
- Storypark will also house some of your child's individual learning documentation.



Newsletters

- Newsletters are issued termly via Storypark.
- The newsletter is the main source of information from our Committee of Management to advise families of what is happening in your child's kinder program, to remind you of upcoming activities – whether they be social or fundraising and for any other community notices.

Notice boards

- Please check the notice boards in the foyer and beside the exit door and also on top of the outdoor drinking fountain for information about the kinder program, current duty rosters, fundraising, community and Pre-School events.

Compliments and Complaints

- Depending on the nature of the complaint or compliment, you are encouraged to contact either your child's teacher, director or the president.
- If unsatisfied with the response you receive from us, you are able to contact our regulatory authority QARD – Quality Assessment and Regulatory Division



- *Privacy and Confidentiality policy*
- *Compliments and Complaints Policy*
- *Code of Conduct Policy*

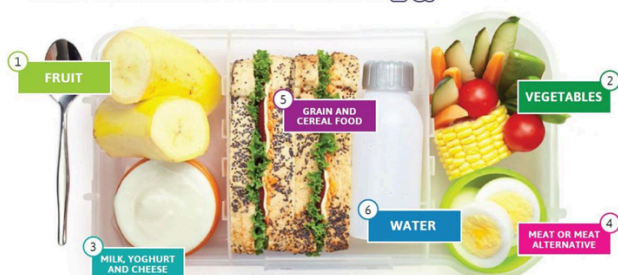
Snack and Lunch

- All groups must bring one packed snack box and one packed lunch, except for Koalas half-day sessions, where only a snack is required.
- It's beneficial for children to pack a separate snack box and lunch box to avoid confusion.
- Children must bring their food in labelled containers they can manage independently.
- A labelled drink bottle containing water is required at each session.
- Recommended snacks include fresh or dried fruit, yoghurt, plain biscuits, cheese, or sandwiches.
- Avoid small packaged foods, and we recommend using reusable containers, including yoghurt pouches, as part of our sustainability initiative.
- Avoid sending potato/corn chips, chocolates, lollies, or cakes, as they do not align with the Dietary Guidelines for Children.
- Follow the guidelines provided by your teacher in accordance with the service's 'Allergy Aware Policy.'
- Ensure your child has an adequate amount of food for the session length. Refer to the Nutrition Policy for more information.



Nude food Tips

FOR A HEALTHY LUNCHBOX **PICK & MIX** SOMETHING FROM EACH GROUP 1-6!



Developed in conjunction with the Achievement Program to support a whole-school approach to healthy eating.



As mentioned previously, Elonera is and strongly supports environmental responsibility. We encourage 'nude foods' where possible. These are some examples on how this can be done, and in fact this could save you some money too.



\$0.66/ 100ml \$1.60/ 100ml

POLICY

- Nutrition, Oral health and active play Policy
- Environmental Sustainability Policy

Clothing

- Please send your child to kinder in clothes that can become dirty.
- Long dresses are not suitable as they are unsafe when climbing.
- Appropriate foot wear such as sneakers that'll allow for active play.
- Please ensure all clothing is clearly labeled, and that a spare change of clothes is in your child's bag in case they require changing.

Sun-safety/ Sunscreen



- In line with our Sunsmart policy, children must arrive with a broad spectrum, SPF50+ water-resistant sunscreen applied from September 1 to April 30. Sunscreen is available in the foyer if not applied beforehand. Each child must bring a labelled roll-on sunscreen, which will be kept at kinder and applied by the child under adult supervision midway through the session.
- Children must wear clothing that covers their shoulders; strappy dresses or singlets are not permitted. Clothing should be easily managed by the child without help.
- Hats must be worn from September 1 to April 30 and whenever the UV index is over 3. Hats must be broad-brimmed, bucket, or legionnaire style to protect the face, neck, and ears. Baseball caps are not permitted. The labelled hat will stay at kinder for the year.
- For more information, refer to the Sunsmart policy on our website.



All-weather Kinder

- We go outside during winter, your child needs a waterproof coat and warm hat during the colder months.
- Being an all-weather kinder, we also play in rain- ensure rain coats and gumboots are packed for wet-days.
- Wet bag (eg: <https://mamasnaturalmagic.com.au/product-category/baby-kids/wet-dry-bags/>)

Uniforms

- An optional preschool uniform is available for purchase, which some children enjoy wearing as a special "kinder top." It also helps protect their clothes from paint, paste, mud, and shaving cream used at kinder.
- Orders placed before 2pm are dispatched the same day to your home, with a small delivery fee. Fast and free exchanges are available if needed.
- To order, visit the website <https://eduthreads.com.au/collections/elonera-pre-schoo>). The uniform link is also available on Elonera's website.



- Sun Protection Policy
- Water Safety Policy

Curriculum Specifics

Curriculum



- Our curriculum is founded on the belief that play is essential for learning, allowing children to explore and express their creativity..
- Our curriculum is governed by our kinder philosophy, Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework, Early Years Learning Framework, Nature Kinship Guide, and inspired the educational principles of Reggio Emilia.

Incursions and Excursions



- Throughout the year the kindergarten groups participate in excursions and incursions as part of the educational program
- Excursions require parents, without younger siblings, to attend and help with supervision. Adult/child ratios must be observed to ensure the children's safety so please consider joining your child's group if possible
- Permission slips will be sent out prior to the excursion and must be returned by the date specified for your child to attend. Incursions and some excursions cost will be covered by the kinder. Families will pay to cover bus and entrance fee charges where required (up to 55\$ per excursion).

Bush Kinder

- Our Bush Kinder program runs during Terms 2 and 3 in the four year old Koala group. This will be held at Braeside Park during the Friday morning session.
- **Koalas group will get a separate handbook with detailed information on everything bush kinder.**



Extended Care

- Extended care is offered to the Koalas group on Wednesdays 12:15 pm–4:00 pm as an extension to the morning funded session.
- This is an optional program in addition to the funded 15 hrs of kinder. Being an unfunded optional program, extended care attracts a fees.

- *Excursions and Service events policy*
- *Bush Kinder Policies-set*
- *Extended Care Policy*



Bare-foot Kinder

- At Elonera, we embrace the concept of "barefoot kinder". We encourage children who wish to explore the environment barefoot to do so.
- We respect children's rights to make decisions about their play, including those who prefer to keep their shoes on.
- Research supports "barefooting" and highlights the health benefits of going barefoot. Podiatrists suggest significant advantages to barefoot play, as it strengthens foot muscles. Walking barefoot helps build vital foot muscles and improves coordination and balance.
- Barefoot play enhances children's sense of touch and awareness, fostering a deeper connection with nature.
- Children at kindergarten will have many opportunities for sensory play and exploration with natural materials like sand, mud, rocks, plants, water, and more.
- They will experience the outdoor environment using all their senses, such as feeling grass, fallen leaves, pebble creek, soft sand, and slippery mud under their feet.

Fire in the program

- Our teaching team believes children are active, creative, competent, and capable learners. We encourage children to explore, assess risks, face challenges, and engage in real-world experiences within the kinder environment.
- Children are trusted and respected, with these philosophies embedded in our educational philosophy and integral part of our frameworks.
- We support informed risk-taking, such as climbing trees safely by ensuring branches are thicker than their arms and climbing only to heights they can confidently jump from.
- We introduced a fire pit in the outdoor harmony garden to incorporate the element of fire into the children's program.
- This fosters community, group gathering, and reflects the cultural significance of fire in many Indigenous cultures worldwide.
- The fire pit will be a place for gathering, storytelling, singing, or quietly admiring the fire's magic.

- *Emergency and Evacuation Policy*
- *Interactions with Children Policy*
- *Fee Policy*



Early Learning Languages Australia (ELLA)

- ELLA is an Australian government initiative that allows children to explore another language through an app-based learning program.
- The apps are custom-developed for language learning on mobile tablets, helping children recognise the sounds and concepts of another language through play-based learning.
- Children are introduced to words, sentences, and songs in the language through age-appropriate, engaging experiences.
- The apps are designed with preschoolers in mind, considering their needs, interests, and capabilities, and offer a variety of interactive, rich learning experiences.
- ELLA encourages collaboration between peers and educators, who act as co-learners.
- We have chosen Japanese to align with the second language options at some of our main intake schools.
- Educators will be learning Japanese alongside the children, creating a shared learning experience.



Our Chickens



- We have two chickens at Elonera, Snowflake and Cinnamon, who the children love to engage with and look after.
- We encourage you to bring in food scraps for our chickens, which can be placed in the container outside of the front gate.
- Please make sure all scraps are bagged before placing into the tub.
- Please only bring fresh scraps for our chickens.

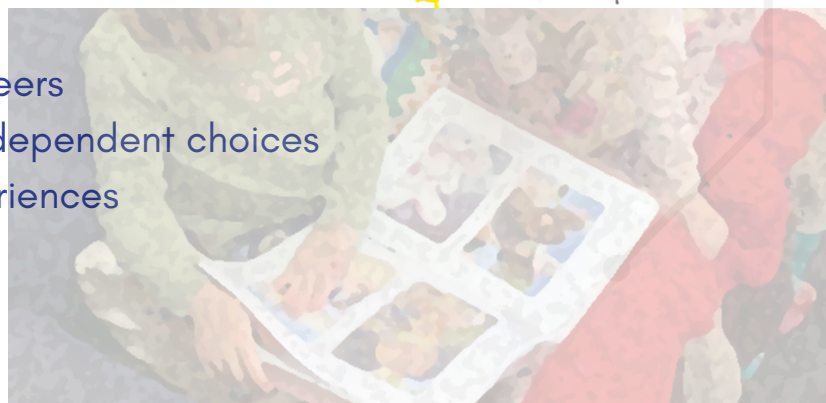
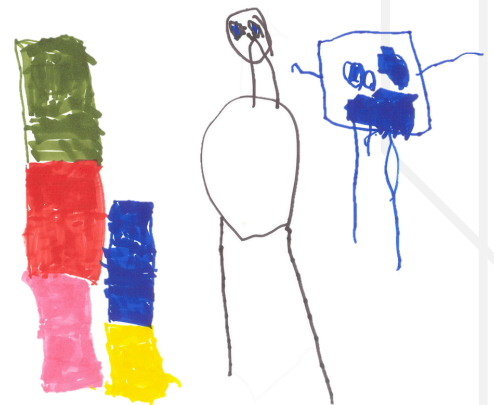


School Life Readiness in a play-based setting

Starting school can be exciting but also challenging. It can be a major life transition for both children and their families. School readiness – We've used this term only because it is widely used. However, a more affective and meaningful phrase would be 'transition to school'. The focus for us will be to work on the skills that will aid children to thrive at school such as building resilience, being more ready for a change and most importantly building social and emotional resilience. Research shows that ready schools, ready families, ready preschools and ready communities will get the children ready.

What does being ready for this transition look like? – having dispositions for learning such as resilience, perseverance, collaboration, creativity, communication – which includes literacy numeracy skills, respect for others, problem solving and decision making. And how are we going to do this? Through play.

- Play is the most important foundation for children's healthy development, with benefits extending into adulthood.
- It is meaningful to the child, voluntary, open-ended, imaginative, and active.
- Play allows children to express their personality and transport themselves into different roles or scenarios.
- It contributes to healthy brain development and is essential for cognitive, physical, social, and emotional well-being.
- Through play, children create, improvise, discover, investigate, hypothesize, imagine, collaborate, negotiate, persist, share, resolve conflict, form attachments, learn empathy, and develop self-regulation
- Opportunity to develop the confidence and skills to
 - Make friends
 - Enter group play situation
 - Assert own ideas and needs
 - Feel good about being able to do so
 - Considerate to needs of peers
 - Self-regulate emotions
 - Cooperate and negotiate with peers
 - Encouraging children to make independent choices
 - Follow through with chosen experiences



Second Year of Kindergarten

- From 2025, a child may be eligible to repeat either Three-Year-Old or Four-Year-Old Kindergarten, but not both, with a maximum of three years of funded kindergarten available.
- A second year of funded Four-Year-Old Kindergarten may be considered if a child shows delays in at least two learning and development outcome areas of the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (Identity, Community, Wellbeing, Learning, Communication).

Considerations for a second year include:

- The kindergarten program being the most appropriate learning option.
- The child achieving better outcomes at kindergarten than if they were to attend school.
- There may be instances where children exhibit delays in two areas, but attending school could still result in better outcomes for them.
- Decision-making process:
 - The teacher identifies potential delays and seeks input from Preschool Field Officers (PSFOs) and allied health professionals.
 - A submission is made to the Department of Education and Training (DET) for final decisions.
 - The process involves collaboration with families.



 *Support Services*

Preschool Field Officer (PFSO)

- Uniting offers a Preschool Field Officer Service which provides consultancy to kindergarten teachers and parents to facilitate the inclusion of all children into state funded kindergarten programs
- Any family with a child attending a state funded kindergarten program or a teacher working in a state funded kindergarten program can access the service through a referral.
- A referral can be made by a parent, a kindergarten teacher or by another professional person working with the child and family

Technology use and eSafety



- We embrace technology as a tool for enhancing learning and communication while prioritising the safety and well-being of our children. We employ technology such as tablets and smart devices in a controlled and educational manner to support learning objectives.
- Devices are used under close supervision and for specifically chosen educational programs or apps.
- Internet access is restricted to pre-approved websites and resources that are educational and age-appropriate.
- Parents are encouraged to participate in discussions about safe technology use at home, complementing our efforts in the kindergarten.
- We provide basic internet safety lessons that are suitable for preschool-aged children, helping them understand the importance of keeping personal information private.
- Safe online etiquette are covered in simple, understandable terms.

Cultural and Inclusive practices

- Multicultural Days: Celebrate various cultures through special days where children can dress in traditional clothing, share traditional food, and parents are invited to share stories or artifacts from their cultures.
- We encourage the use of multiple languages within our classrooms.
- Cultural observances are respected and incorporated into our program planning to ensure all children feel included.



Transitions

- Starting kindergarten is a significant milestone for children and their families. We support this transition with programs designed to make the shift as smooth as possible- with staggered starts and flexible pick-ups.
- Orientation Days: children and their parents are invited to visit their classroom, meet their educators, and familiarise themselves with the kindergarten environment. This day is usually scheduled first week of December.
- Staggered Start: The first few weeks are structured to ease children into the kindergarten routine with shorter days that gradually extend as children become more comfortable.
- We collaborate closely with local schools to create a cohesive transition for children moving on to primary school.

Events and Celebrations

Being a community run kindergarten, we host a variety of celebrations and events throughout the year. Some are curriculum specific for children and some are whole service events. Depending on the type of event, they are either organised by the committee of management, teaching team or individual groups.

Birthday celebrations

Birthdays can be very exciting for 3-6yr olds and is definitely the most important day of the year for them. We love to celebrate their special day with them as well, and each group has its own tradition such as wooden cakes, capes or hats. If you wish to share something small with the children of your child's group, kindly discuss with the teacher, regarding the number of children and the best time. No food including chocolates or lollies to be distributed.



Family Day celebrations

Two times in a year, we hold family day celebrations one around May and another in September where we invite any/all members of family to come into our service to celebrate. Children enjoy showing their class, work and peers. Our inclusive approach enables all families to enjoy these celebrations.



Service Events/ Fundraisers

Some of the whole service events can include movie night, starry story night, open day, end of the year celebrations, etc.

The committee also organises a number of fundraising events at different times of the year such as the bunnings sausage sizzle, trivia night, etc. Funds raised in these events go directly into the kinder resources and equipment. The department funding mainly covers the operational costs of the kinder and funds raised during these events are vital to continue to have high quality resources.

- *Excursions and service events policy*
- *Inclusion and equity policy*



Photography /Videography and Other Documentation

Photos and Videos



- Educators may take photos/videos of children during the program, with prior permission from families. These may be used on the Elonera Pre-School website, in publications, or for promotional purposes. Learning journals may also include photos.
- When no longer needed, photos/videos will be securely stored or destroyed. However, the service cannot control photos taken by parents/guardians.

- Parents/guardians can take photos/videos of only their own child during events but are not permitted to take photos when volunteering for experiences such as excursions.
- Professional photographers may be hired, with prior notice and details provided to parents/guardians.
- Parental permission will be obtained for any photos/videos used in external publications, including newspapers, the website, and newsletters.
- Students on placement may take photos/videos as part of their requirements.
- Access to photos/videos is governed by the service's Privacy and Confidentiality Policy, available on request.

Portfolios

- Most of the documentation of your child's learning and assessment will be on storypark online platform in form of 'stories' and 'Individual Learning Plan'.
- Some tangible documentation such as their art will be a physical portfolio at kinder, which you are able to access at anytime and will come home at the end of the year.

- *eSafety Policy*
- *Information and Communication Technology Policy*



Your role at our Community-Run Kindergarten

Elonera is not just a space for your children, but a space for you to find or extend your village. Being a community kindergarten means it's owned and operated by you parents. There are a number of ways you can be involved in the program and community. You can be involved in your child's learning by actively contributing on storypark platform, volunteering for excursions, reading with children. You are very welcome to share any experience that you'd think will be beneficial to our children. We encourage you to engage in a way that you are comfortable with, whether it be being on the committee, attending our fundraising and social events, sharing a trade skill etc.



This is your Village!

Share your skills/talent or trade

- If you have a skill/passion/interest we would love you to share it with us! Please let us know if you would be able to come to kinder to share this experience with the children
- We also welcome you to come and 'stay and play' when you have the time available. Participating in a kindergarten session allows you to meet your child's friends, observe the experiences the children are exploring as well as providing assistance to the teachers by helping with various activities. Siblings are also welcome to attend. (Parents will be required to provide a volunteer 'working with children's check' in order to engage in 'parent duty.'



Grounds-Duty

- In order to keep the grounds at Elonera well maintained, weekly grounds duty is carried out by our families.
- Each family will be asked to mow, blow, sweep and weed throughout the year.
- All families are required to complete grounds duty twice a year.
- Duty is usually performed on a Sunday morning at 9.30am, but alternate time can always be arranged.
- Access information will be provided to you prior to your weekend duty, and a list will be posted on the outdoor whiteboard for the tasks to be completed at your Grounds Duty.
- Grounds duty should take about an hour to complete and the children are most welcome to come and play while duty is being performed.



We have an opt in or opt out system. Families can elect:

1. To complete Grounds Duty, which means they will be rostered on the weekend duty roster,
2. To OPT OUT of Grounds duty. We won't place you on the roster at all for the year, you have the option to make a voluntary donation of \$150 to pay for a gardener

BSB: 013 352 Account number: 212 550 442 Please quote your SURNAME and GROUNDS DUTY in direct deposit description

Working Bees

- Families are expected to attend one working bee during the year to help maintain the grounds. This is separate from grounds duty.
- Each class has an allocated working bee date, starting at 9:30am and running for approximately 2 hours, regardless of the weather. This year, considering the holiday dates, the first 2 working bees have an option of weekend or weekday.
- Tasks include general clean-up, gardening, and maintenance jobs. All family members are welcome to attend—many hands make light work!

Working Bee Dates:

Term 1: Koalas – Sunday 26th January OR Monday 27th / Tuesday 28th

Term 2: Wombats – Sunday 13th April OR Sunday 27th April

Term 3: Possums – Sunday 20th July

Term 4: Kangaroos – Sunday 5th October



- If your group's date doesn't suit, please contact the Maintenance Coordinator to arrange a swap. Families are also welcome to attend more than one working bee.

Washing

- Each term, one group is responsible for taking home the washing bag. A roster is displayed for families to nominate a turn.
- The washing bag is taken home at the end of the group's last session for the week and returned at the next session.
- The washing typically includes items such as smocks, hand towels, spare hats, dolls' clothes, and blankets.

Car Parking

- Limited car parking available on-site, with some more opposite the kinder at the Water-Galt reserve.
- Please make sure the neighbour's driveway and footpaths are kept clear
- There is one disabled park available, please be mindful that this park is for people with a disabled parking permit only. The space next to the disabled park is to remain clear at all times.
- Please take care at all times when driving and parking near the kinder



Dogs/Pets

- Dogs are not allowed to be brought into the kinder grounds.
- Please leave them outside the fence and tied up away from the gate so families have clear access. This includes days of working bees and grounds duty.
- Not all children are familiar or comfortable with dogs and the kinder is the children's place to enjoy and feel safe in.

Smoking/ Vaping

- Smoking or vaping is not permitted anytime within the kinder or within 4 meters of any pedestrian access point to kinder premises.

- *Road Safety Education and Safe Transport Policy*



Our beautiful preschool was just a dream in a few peoples mind back in 1953. This group of people formed a committee known as East Parkdale Preschool Association and worked tirelessly to ensure that a preschool would stand where it is today. With great patience and determination, they overcame all obstacles in raising enough money to buy land and buid the kinder. We were established in October 1961. We are very proud of our preschool.

A competition was held in the year 1961 to name our lovely preschool. Many entries came through and Aboriginal names were considered. The winning entry as by Mr.Phil McDonough- "Elonera" - meaning "a happy place for children" being very appropriate for the many hours of happiness spent hear by the children.



Elonera Preschool - A

Happy Place for Children!