



Parent Information Handbook

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Bethany Kindergarten Services (BKS) - Overview

VISION

Developing every child's potential

MISSION

To enable the delivery of community focused quality early childhood education through progressive early years management

VALUES

- Maintaining the safety, dignity and rights of each child
- Encouraging children to express themselves and their opinions, and to undertake experiences that develop resilience and promote opportunity for individual development and learning
- Maintaining a duty of care and promoting the health, safety and wellbeing of children through a safe, secure and welcoming environment
- Embracing the diversity of colleagues, children and families with respect to cultural values, age, and the physical and intellectual development and abilities of each child
- Building positive and collaborative relationships with children, colleagues, families and stakeholders to improve learning and development outcomes for children

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY

BKS is committed to child safety. We want children to be safe, happy and empowered. We have zero tolerance of child abuse. We understand our legal and moral obligations to treat concerns seriously and report allegations, safety and wellbeing concerns to authorities. We are committed to the cultural safety of all children including Aboriginal children, children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT



We, Bethany Kindergarten Services, wish to acknowledge the Wathaurong People as the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we stand.

We pay our respects to the Elders both Past and Present.
We thank the Traditional Owners for their custodianship of the land, and celebrate the continuing Culture of the Traditional Custodians and also acknowledge the memory of their Ancestors.

Welcome

Welcome to your child's kindergarten year. This kindergarten is part of Bethany Kindergarten Services (BKS). BKS is the Approved Provider, manages the service and employs the educators. The overall aim of BKS is to develop every child's potential. We will work in partnership with you to provide a safe, enriching and educational year for your child.

Professional management arrangements were introduced by DET through Kindergarten Cluster Management Organisations, now called Early Years Management Organisations (EYMO) so that incorporated associations operated by parent Committees of Management could change their role from being the kindergarten service provider to taking a role that supports the educational program provided at service. The term Parent Advisory Group (PAG) is now used in the DET Early Years Management Policy Framework to refer to the change in roles.

An Early Years Management Organisation (EYMO) such as BKS is responsible for the overall management and delivery of the kindergarten program and other early years services under their organisation. The Parent Advisory Group plays an important role in the Kindergarten. It is an opportunity for parents to get to know each other, to become involved in their community and share in their child's education. Their responsibilities include:

- Representing the parents of the kindergarten
- Fundraising and social events
- Other responsibilities detailed in the BKS Partnership Agreement.

All parents play an important role and we encourage parent involvement. Parents can become involved by assisting through the daily roster, sharing their skills, providing feedback on the program, participating in fundraising or joining the Parent Advisory Group.

The kindergartens within Bethany Kindergarten Services are:

- Allanvale Preschool
- Beacon Point Preschool
- Bell Park Kindergarten
- Bell Post Hill Kindergarten
- Bellevue Preschool
- Breakwater Preschool
- Drysdale Preschool
- Fyans Park Kindergarten
- Grovedale Kindergarten
- Herne Hill K-6 Early Learning Centre

- Highton Preschool
- Kirralee Kindergarten
- Lara Kindergarten
- Leopold Kindergarten
- Normanby Street Preschool
- Ocean Grove Preschool
- Ocean Grove – Woodlands Preschool
- Portarlington Preschool
- Rix Street Kindergarten
- William Hovell Preschool
- William Parker Memorial Kindergarten

National Quality Framework

The National Quality Framework is an important reform which delivers a higher standard of care for children in the critical areas of education, health and safety and provides clear and comprehensive information for families so they can choose the best services for their child. The NQF is designed to give your child the best possible start in life. It is a national system, designed to provide transparency and accountability. The NQF promotes children’s safety, health and wellbeing and sets a National Quality Standard (NQS) so children enjoy the best possible conditions in their early educational and developmental years. The NQS sets a national benchmark for early childhood education and care in Australia. The seven National Quality Standards are divided into areas that contribute to the quality of early childhood education and care. These areas have been identified by research and are:

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

The Department of Education and Training (DET) carry out assessment and ratings of kindergartens against the Standards. These outcomes are displayed at the kindergarten and published at www.mychild.gov.au or www.acecqa.gov.au.

The Kindergarten Program

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

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

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

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

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

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

Information about Your Child

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

Starting the Kindergarten Year

Kindergarten (Four Year Old) Program

Children accessing the funded kindergarten program are offered 15 hours of kindergarten from the beginning of Term 1. We appreciate that each child has individual needs, and in consultation with parents, teachers will decide the most appropriate way for each child to settle into the kindergarten environment. The hours at the beginning of Term 1 may be varied to accommodate a child's individual needs and circumstances.

Pre-Kindergarten (Three Year Old) Program

Children accessing a pre-kindergarten program are offered the full hours from the beginning of Term 1. As with the four year old program, the hours at the beginning of the year may be varied to accommodate individual needs and circumstances. Please work in partnership with your child's teacher to meet your child's needs and circumstances.

Adjusting to Kindergarten

Every child is different. Some may be anxious, while others are quite happy to stay at kindergarten. Some children may immediately find a companion to share the experience with, whereas others may prefer to observe or play alone until they feel comfortable. Establishing relationships and trust in unfamiliar adults may take time for some children, while others adapt immediately. Regardless of your child's response, it is important you always talk to them (or in front of them) about kindergarten in a positive manner.

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

What Does My Child Need to Bring to Kindergarten?

This may vary between different kindergartens

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

What Should My Child Wear to Kindergarten?

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

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

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

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

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

Arrival & Departure at Kindergarten

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

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

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

Arrival and Departure

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

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

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

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

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

Immunisation – No Jab, No Play

As of 28 February 2018, to have an enrolment confirmed for a child in kindergarten, parents and carers need to provide an Immunisation History Statement from the AIR. It must show that their child:

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

Parents and carers can print a copy of their child's Immunisation History Statement from their

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

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

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

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

Sun Smart

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

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

Where possible excursions and other outdoor activities will be scheduled to minimise time in direct sun particularly during peak UV periods between 11am and 3pm (EST). The availability of shade will be considered when planning outdoor activities and excursions. UV radiation levels begin to rise early in September and stay high until the end of April, so skin should be protected throughout this period, not just during summer. We ask parents to apply a 30+ broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen to their child before they arrive at kindergarten. Sunscreen is available at the kindergarten and will be reapplied throughout the session. If you prefer your child to use a particular sunscreen, please advise your child's educators and provide your preferred sunscreen.

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

Food at Kindergarten

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

BKS is committed to:

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

Parents/guardians are responsible for:

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

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

Nude Foods & Water

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

Food Allergies

Allergies to foods are common. You are required to inform educators if your child is allergic to particular foods. Food allergies can be life threatening so you may be asked not to bring particular foods to kindergarten to ensure the safety of all children. Please ask educators if you are unsure about which foods can be brought to kindergarten.

Food Ideas

Snack ideas

| Fruit | Vegetables |
|---|--|
| A piece of fresh fruit | Cob of corn (small) |
| Fruit pieces: * ½ kiwi fruit with spoon * orange in small quarters | Veggie sticks: * celery * carrot * snow peas * capsicum * broccoli bits |
| Fruit balls: * watermelon balls * rockmelon balls * grapes (red/green) * cherry tomato | A salad: * cherry tomatoes * lettuce * snow peas * carrot * capsicum |
| Fruit salad: Bite size varieties of fruits (e.g. strawberries, rockmelon, watermelon, pineapple etc) | Sliced vegetables with dip |

Sandwich Filling Ideas

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

Other snack and lunch ideas

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

Food to be avoided at Kindergarten

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

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

Birthdays

Due to the increasing number of children suffering severe allergic reactions, we request that no food products be brought to kindergarten to celebrate your child's birthday. Celebration alternatives to birthday foods include: balloons, stickers, or bubbles. Educators will acknowledge each child's birthday during group time. Please let the educators know if you prefer your child's birthday not be acknowledged.

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

Safety

Front Door

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

Road

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

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

Watch

Watch your child if you stop to chat with friends.

Laundry

You may be asked to wash smocks, hand towels or dress up clothes. These items will be sent home with a different child each week. Parents are asked to wash and return the items ready for the first session the following week. Parents may have the laundry two or three times during the year.

Gardening

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

Notices

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

Appointments with Educators

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

Excursions & Special Events

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

Each plan for an excursion or event will include a risk assessment and risk management plan to assess:

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

Cultural & Religious Diversity

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

Toys

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

Imitation guns, knives or toys that have the potential to encourage negative attitudes and play are not permitted at kindergarten

Transitioning to School

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

Second Year of Kindergarten Funding (Four Year Old Program)

Second Year of Kindergarten

During the kindergarten year, the teacher and parents work together to plan for a child's transition to school. A second year of funded kindergarten may be considered when a child is observed to display delays in key areas of development. A child is eligible for a second funded year of kindergarten if:

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

To determine that a child is eligible to access a second funded year of kindergarten, the teacher will work in collaboration with the parents to develop a Term 3 plan for learning and development. This plan is then reviewed toward the end of Term 3. If the Term 3 plan goals have not been achieved, the teacher will lead a discussion with the parent(s) to determine whether a second year of kindergarten or transition to school will achieve better outcomes for the child. A review of the Term 3 plan for learning and development, will inform the decision about whether the child should transition to school or attend a second year of kindergarten.

Children with Additional Needs

BKS kindergartens provide an inclusive program for all children. Please notify educators of any additional needs that should be considered to enable the program to meet the needs of your child.

Individual education and care programs are designed in consultation with parents/guardians and other agencies working with the child, in order to support the child in developing their full potential and to maximise their inclusion in the program.

We recommend reports and information prepared in relation to your child by specialists are given to your child's teacher. These will assist the teacher with developing the most appropriate education and care program for your child.

To support the inclusion of children with additional needs, educators are able to access a Preschool Field Officer.

Interactions with Children

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

Positive Behaviour Guidance

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

Strategies to achieve Positive Guidance

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

Step 1 – Observe

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

Step 2 – Discuss

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

- The ongoing behaviour displayed by the child, including highlighting improvements and celebrating successes.
- Their aspirations, as well as the kindergarten's aspirations, for the child.
- The child's individual characteristics, including interests, temperament, age and cultural background.
- Recommended strategies to support the child's development, and how these strategies will be reviewed and evaluated.
- Resources or changes to the environment/program that may be required for a guidance plan to be implemented e.g. changes to routines and transitions.
- The support already accessed by the family to assist with managing the child's behaviour.
- Other support available, such as a Preschool Field Officer, referral for specialist assessment and additional adult support (written consent is required from parents/guardians before any intervention/assessment is undertaken). The Preschool Field Officer is a trained early childhood professional who is able to support the participation of children within the program.
- A shared understanding and consistent approach between home and kindergarten environments.
- Any other matter that will assist with the development of a guidance plan.

Step 3 – Develop

- Develop an individual guidance plan, based on the consultation with the child's parents/guardians and other support agencies, that is:
 - Appropriate to the needs of the child and accepted/agreed to by parents/guardians and other professionals involved in the education and care of that child.
 - Clear and easy to follow for all educators, parents/guardians and/or volunteers/students working with the child.

Step 4 – Monitor and review

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

Health & Wellbeing

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

Medication

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

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

Hygiene

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

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

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

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

Illness & Accidents

Accidents

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

Minor accidents will be reported to parents after the session at collection time. Educators record all accidents and parents will be asked to sign an Accident Form, as per regulatory requirements.

Illness

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

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

Parent Involvement

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

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

Fundraising

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

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

Household Articles/Recycled Materials

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

Outdoors

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

Art materials

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

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

Fee Information for Families

Why fees are necessary

The Department of Education and Training (DET) provides per capita funding as a contribution toward the cost of providing a kindergarten (four year old) program. BKS meets the balance of costs through charging fees. Pre-Kindergarten (three-year-old) is funded exclusively by parent fees.

DET provides a Kindergarten Fee Subsidy (see pg 22) that enables children from eligible families to attend a kindergarten program free of charge, or at a minimal cost. DET also provides funding to assist eligible three-year-old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, and children known to Child Protection, to access kindergarten and pre-kindergarten programs. Kindergarten fees are compulsory and must be paid by the due date. BKS provides a range of support options to parents/guardians experiencing difficulty with payment of fees (see below).

How fees are set

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

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

Payment of fees

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

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

Fee Payment Options

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| Option 1 | Internet Bank Transfer Bank: National Australia Bank Account Name: Bethany Kindergarten Services BSB: 083 004 Account number: 19114 1980 <u>Please include invoice number and parent surname.</u> |
| Option 2 | Direct Debit Forms available from Bethany Kindergarten Services, fees@bethany.org.au , or (03)5273 0212 |
| Option 3 | Centrepay Forms available from Bethany Kindergarten Services, fees@bethany.org.au , or (03)5273 0212 |
| Option 4 | By phone Bethany Kindergarten Services on 5273 0212. |
| Option 5 | In person Eftpos, cash or credit card at Bethany Kindergarten Services, 1/2 Waratah Street, Geelong West, 3218. |
| Option 6 | Cheque Payable to Bethany Kindergarten Services, mailed to 1/2 Waratah Street, Geelong West, 3218. <u>Please include invoice number and parent surname.</u> |
| Option 7 | Over the counter At any National Australia Bank branch Account Name: Bethany Kindergarten Services BSB: 083 004 Account number: 19114 1980 <u>Please include invoice number and parent surname</u> |

If you are experiencing difficulties paying fees, or you would like further information, please contact the Enrolment and Fees Officer on 5273 0212 or fees@bethany.org.au. Further information is available at www.bethanykindergartens.org.au.

Refund of Fees

Refund for families eligible for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy

If a family becomes eligible for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy during a term, BKS will a full refund of the applicable term's fees when evidence of this eligibility is provided.

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

Prior to the completion of Term 3 in the year before attendance in the relevant kindergarten program: if BKS receives written communication of a child's withdrawal, BKS will provide a refund of the Enrolment Acceptance Fee upon application.

Prior to the completion of Term 4 in the year before attendance in the relevant kindergarten program: if BKS receives written communication of a child's withdrawal, BKS will provide a 50% refund of the Enrolment Acceptance Fee upon application.

Children withdrawing from kindergarten after the end of Term 4 in the year before attendance, will not be eligible for a refund of the Enrolment Acceptance Fee, except in extraordinary circumstances.

During the kindergarten year, BKS must be notified in writing that a kindergarten place is no longer required six weeks prior to the end of term, to avoid the family being liable for the following term's fees.

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

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

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

Unpaid fees

If fees are not paid by the due date, the following steps will be taken:-

- An initial reminder and statement will be sent to parents/guardians with a specified payment date.
- Where payment is still not received, BKS will contact families to discuss payment options.

- BKS will continue to offer support to families to resolve the debt.
- BKS reserves the right to employ the services of a debt collector.
- If a debt collector is appointed it may be the responsibility of families to pay the costs incurred by BKS in appointing the debt collector.

Kindergarten Fee Subsidy

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

- * Commonwealth Health Care Card
- * Commonwealth Pensioner Concession Card
- * Department of Veterans' Affairs Gold Card or White Card
- * Refugee visa (subclass 200)
- * In-country Special Humanitarian visa (subclass 201)
- * Global Special Humanitarian visa (subclass 202)
- * Temporary Humanitarian Concern visa (subclass 786)
- * Protection visa (subclass 866)
- * Emergency Rescue visa (subclass 203)
- * Woman at risk visa (subclass 204)
- * Bridging visas A-E
- * ImmiCard

Triplets or quadruplets attending a funded kindergarten program in the same year.

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

Other charges

- **Registration Fee:** BKS charges an administration fee to register a child for kindergarten. This fee is not charged to families eligible for the kindergarten fee subsidy.
- **Enrolment Acceptance Fee:** BKS charges an enrolment acceptance fee when families accept a kindergarten place. This fee is deducted from Term 1 fees. Families accepting a four year old place that are eligible for the kindergarten fee subsidy are not required to pay the enrolment acceptance fee.
- **Late collection charge:** The BKS Board reserves the right to implement a late collection charge when parents/guardians are frequently late in collecting a child from kindergarten. This charge will be set at a level determined by the BKS Board.
- **Levies:** BKS does not charge families any additional levies.

Early Start Kindergarten

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

Child Care Benefit (CCB)

Child Care Benefit (CCB) is an Australian Government payment that can assist eligible families with the costs of childcare at a registered care provider. BKS will issue a childcare benefit

receipt to families who have paid term fees in full at the end of Term 2 and Term 4 in the year your child attends.

Support Services

Families experiencing financial hardship often require access to family support services. Information on these services is available from BKS or your child's teacher.

Notification of fee changes during the year

Fees set for the year will only be reviewed in extraordinary circumstances. Parents/guardians will be notified one term in advance of any fee increase and will be offered the option to request a payment plan.

Fire Drill and Emergency Evacuation Procedures

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

Smoke Free Environment

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

Feedback & Complaints

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

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

Policies

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

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

“Developing every child's potential”