

Aspendale Gardens Kindergarten

Information for prospective families



2025

Enrolments

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Welcome to Aspendale Gardens Kinder!

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

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

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

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

We hope that this booklet will answer some of your questions about our kindergarten, as you plan your enrolment for 2025.

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

Contact us:

General email: enquiries@agcsinc.org.au

Enrolment officer: kim.ives@agcsinc.org.au

Phone: 9587 5955

www.agcsinc.org.au



Our Philosophy:

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

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

We are committed to working in ways that are:

K

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

I

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

N

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

D

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

E

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

R

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

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

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

2025 Timetable

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

**Friday session subject to sufficient enrolment numbers. Places are limited and fees apply.*

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

2025 Term Dates

Kinder operates in line with the school terms:

- Term 1 - 30th Jan to 4th April
- Term 2 - 22nd April to 4th July
- Term 3 - 21st July to 19th Sept
- Term 4 - 6th Oct to 18th Dec

Public Holidays - Kinder closed

- Labour Day - Monday 10th March
- ANZAC Day - Friday 25th April
- Kings Birthday - Monday 9th June
- Friday before Grand Final - TBC
- Melbourne Cup - Tuesday 4th November

A note about the long sessions...

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

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

Starting Kinder:

When to start 3 year old or 4 year old kinder

Your child's birthdate is between:	Start 3 year old kinder	Start 4 year old kinder
January - April 2021	*2024 or 2025	2025 or 2026
May - December 2021	2025	2026
January - April 2022	*2025 or 2026	2026 or 2027
May - December 2022	2026	2027

*** IMPORTANT:**

Children born between January to April:

At AGCS, children cannot start attending their kinder sessions until **after their third birthday.**

This is due to different staffing requirements when caring for children 2 years of age. For some children, this means they will not be able to attend kinder until term 2.

Please consider carefully when you would like your child to start kinder, as children cannot access another year of three year old kinder. If you need help deciding when is the best time to start, feel free to call us or speak to other educators who know your child well (eg. day care educators)

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

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

Starting Kinder:

Our 3-step Orientation Process

Step 1: visit with a parent/carer

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

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

Step 2: attend with half the group

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

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

Step 3: the full group begins

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

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

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

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

Unlike long day care, where children may join the service throughout the year, sessional kindergartens have all children starting together at the beginning of the year.

Our 3-step orientation process allows for:

- Children to visit the space with the safety and comfort of a familiar adult, who can model a sense of belonging and fun!
- Staff get the opportunity to meet parents and carers, ensuring we have strong processes in place for collection of children at the end of the day.
- The children can learn the rules & routine, with more staff support as their is a smaller group at first.
- Staff can build trusting relationships with each child and family, and learn about their interests and needs.

What to bring:



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

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

Optional Kinder Clothing



T-SHIRT



WINDCHEATER



POLAR FLEECE JACKET



ADJUSTABLE BUCKET HAT

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

www.eduthreads.com.au/collections/aspendale-gardens-kindergarten

Belongings from home

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

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

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

Snack & Lunch

Healthy Eating Policy

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

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

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

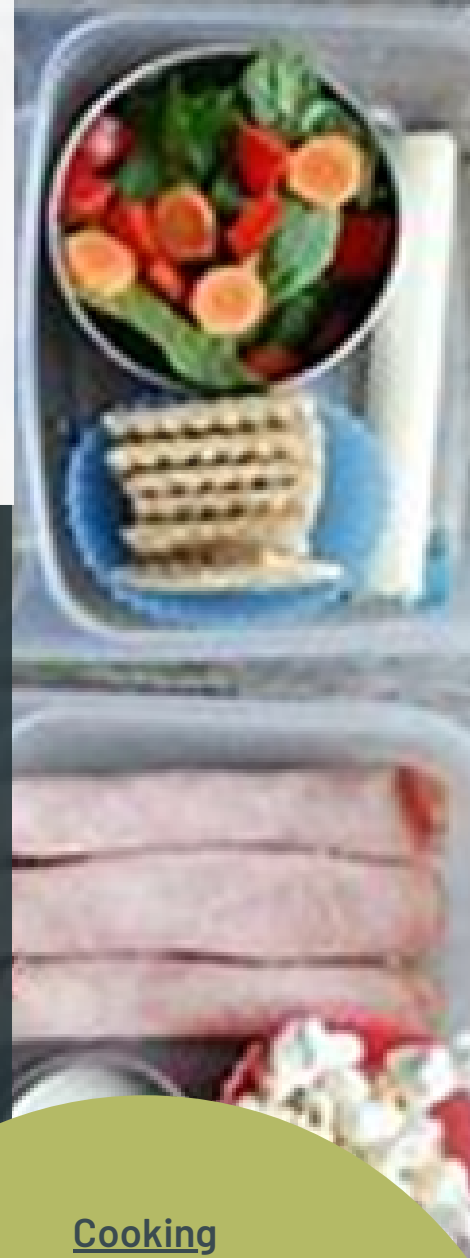
Allergies / Anaphylaxis

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

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

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

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



Cooking

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

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

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

Snack & Lunch Suggestions

SNACK IDEAS



FRUIT & VEGETABLES:

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

SNACKS

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

SAVOURY BAKED ITEMS

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

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

LUNCH IDEAS



SANDWICHES / WRAPS:

- cheese and vegemite
 - cold meat and salad
 - tuna and salad
 - chicken and avocado
- *Please no peanut butter or nutella

SALAD:

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

SOUP:

(PACKED IN A THERMOS)

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

OTHER IDEAS:

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



PLEASE DO NOT BRING

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

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

TO ASSIST WITH MANAGING FOOD ALLERGIES, PLEASE AVOID:

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

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

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

Health Information

Illness

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

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

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

Incident, Injury & Illness reports

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

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

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

Exclusion Periods for Infectious Diseases

Our kindergarten adheres to the Minimum Exclusion Periods for Infectious Diseases for all children and staff. Children must remain at home for the required timeframe.

To minimise the spread of infection, children with a suspected infectious disease need to be collected from the centre as soon as possible.

The exclusion periods can be found here:

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

INCIDENT / INJURY / TRAUMA AND ILLNESS RECORD

Child's Details

Date of Birth: _____
First Name: _____
Surname: _____

Incident / Injury / Trauma & Illness Details

Indicate where the child was injured or ill (use arrows to point to the appropriate area of the diagram):

Right Leg _____
Left Leg _____
Right Arm _____
Left Arm _____
Head _____
Torso _____

Circumstances leading to or surrounding the incident / injury / trauma or illness

Action taken by Education & Care Services

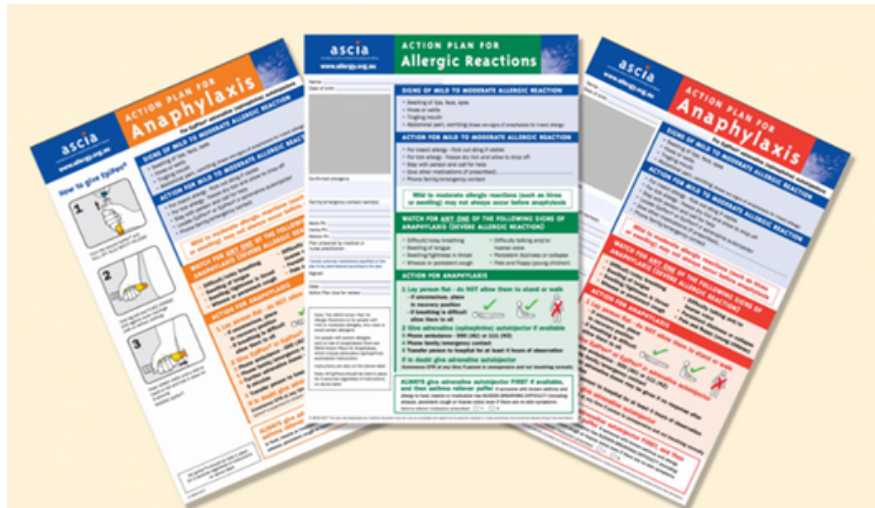
Family Day Care Education

Person notified or attempted to notify of incident or illness

Name	Date Notified	Time Notified	Successfully Notified
Full Name			Yes / No
Phone Number			Yes / No
Address			Yes / No
Signature of Parent/Guardian Notified			Yes / No

Approved to National Quality Assessment of
Ph: 1300 851 288 See Order Code 1210128

Allergies, Asthma & medical conditions



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

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

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

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

Other Medications

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

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

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



Slip on sun protective clothing



Slop on SPF30+ sunscreen. Reapply every two hours



Slap on a broad-brimmed hat



Seek shade



Slide on wrap-around sunglasses

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

Sunscreen is provided by the centre for children to use.

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

Families are encouraged to apply sunscreen to their child on arrival. Children will reapply throughout the session as required, with teachers help.

Toileting

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

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



The Educational Program

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

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

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



Excursions and visitors

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

In 4 year old kinder, nature walks are included within the curriculum to encourage the children to connect with Country and provide them with challenges they may not normally experience, such as climbing trees, building cubbies etc.

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

Special days

We love special events and celebrations at kinder!

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

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

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

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

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

What do you celebrate?

Birthdays

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

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



Storypark

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

On Storypark you will receive:

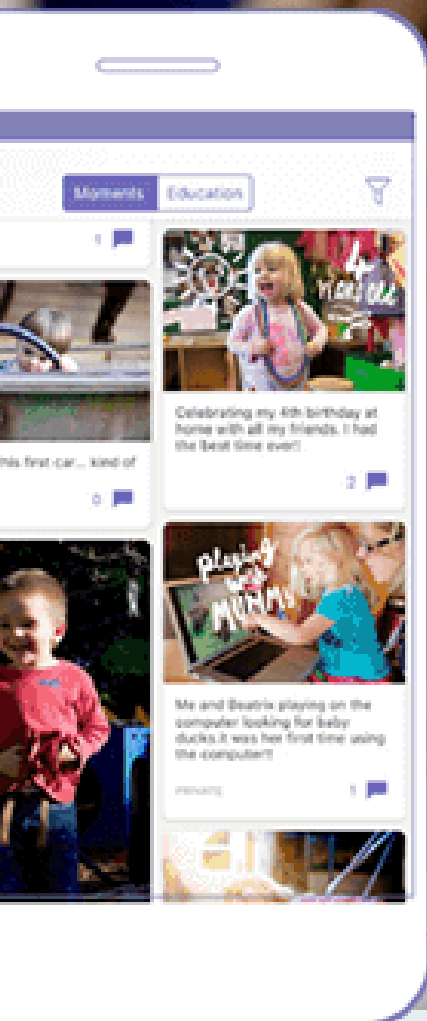
- Reminders
- Group information
- Photos and snippets of the children's play
- Learning intentions & reflections

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

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

We ask families to be understanding if a child's photo does not feature in a Storypark post.

They may be in the next one.



Storypark

Privacy & Confidentiality

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

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

Funding, Fees & Payments

2022

Funding for 3 year old kinder

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

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

2023

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

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

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

15 hours of Kinder became FREE for all 3YO and 4YO children.

2030

Moving towards 30 hours of 4YO kindergaren

It is proposed that by 2030, kindergarten programs will expand, eventually offering 30 hours per week for 4 year old kinder.



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



As a condition of our agreement with the City of Kingston, we are not allowed to enrol children at our service who are not receiving kindergarten funding. If your child is enrolled in funded kinder at another service, or if you have any questions about kindergarten funding, please speak to our Nominated Supervisor, Kim Ives.



The additional 5 hour session on Fridays is not part of funded kindergarten. In 2024, the Friday session costs \$500 per term.

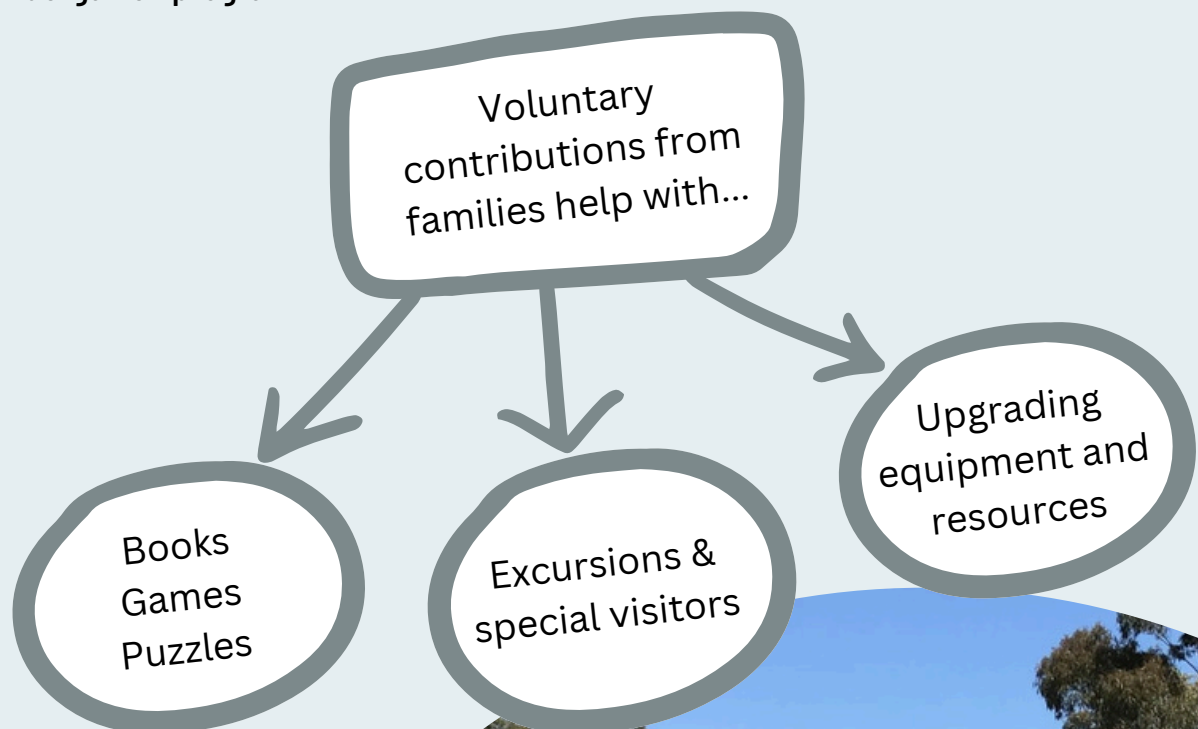
We do not currently take casual bookings for the Friday kinder session.

Voluntary Contributions

Whilst there are no term fees payable for kindergarten in 2025, as a not-for-profit service, we welcome and appreciate voluntary contributions from families.

In 2024, we asked families to pay \$25 per term, if they would like to make a voluntary contribution.

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



Other Information

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

You can find the policies and procedures on our website: www.agcsinc.org.au

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Family Participation

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

You can get involved by:

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



Cooking with the children



Playing an instrument



Sewing or craft



Reading books



Fundraisers



Working Bees

A photograph of two children sitting on the ground in a grassy garden area. The child on the left is wearing a white bucket hat and a dark jacket. The child on the right is wearing a colorful floral hat and a pink shirt. They appear to be engaged in an activity on the ground. The background shows a line of trees under a clear sky.

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

We hope to see you in 2025!



Address

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Telephone

Office: 9587 5955

4YO kinder: 9580 2153

3YO kinder: 8512 0539



Email

enquiries@agcsinc.org.au



Website

www.agcsinc.org.au