

# Whittlesea Preschool Parents Handbook 2026

## Welcome

The committee of management and staff welcome you to Whittlesea Preschool. We take great pride in being a country town preschool right on the doorstep of the city. The community we belong to is a big part of what defines us.

Preschool is the next step in your child's journey and we aim to support them and you in providing quality programs to suit each child in a safe environment where PLAY is our work.

Please use this Parents Handbook together with our Whittlesea Preschool website, Kinderloop and Facebook page and the support resources at the preschool, to assist you throughout your child's journey.

Whittlesea Preschool is managed by a volunteer Committee of Management, and is a Child Safe Organisation. We have our Annual General Meeting in November to elect our new committee – we invite you to become a part of, we need enthusiastic family members to support, guide and be involved in the running of Whittlesea Preschool.

Our preschool programs are based on the development of 3 & 4yo preschool children. Our educators believe children learn through play which allows each child to develop skills at their own rate as they explore and experiment with equipment, activities and ideas as they learn to interact with others, build friendships and work in the community.



*Whittlesea Preschool recognises the support of the Victorian Government*

## Philosophy

Whittlesea Preschool provides an inclusive, safe, caring learning environment with dedicated experienced qualified teachers & educators, for preschool children. Whittlesea Preschool provides a stimulating atmosphere where learning is a natural and welcome part of everyday life and our Educators maintain a place of nurturing, encouragement, understanding and caring. We work within the Victorian Early Years Learning framework which ensures equality of opportunity for all children and their families.

**Our philosophy is evaluated annually to ensure it meets the needs of our community.**

## Whittlesea Preschool Philosophy

### We believe that learning is:

**C**hildren are capable competent learners, our

**H**igh expectations of each child ensure they grow and succeed, our

**I**mage of the child is one, that is full of potential, curiosity to learn and embracing others in the joy of learning,

**L**eadership & continuous learning for our educators empowers them to be the best they can be, it is a major component in the

**D**evelopment of highly effective learning opportunities for all children incorporating the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework

**C**ollaborative partnerships within the preschool and its wider community build the sense of "belonging" to for our children and their families.

**E**ngagement with them allows us to build social capital, creating a strong foundation that reflects the identity and needs of our community.

**N**atural environments ensure children appreciate the world around them and build an understanding of sustainability, being mindful of conserving energy and using natural and recycled materials.

**T**ransitions within the program are viewed as valuable learning opportunities in building confidence and wellbeing within our

**E**veryday routines and group times are important learning opportunities. Life is constant process of 'change' and we need to support children to be prepared for this.

**R**espectful relationships encourage an inclusive and nurturing culture, where children families & staff communicate openly and;

**E**ffectively, with warmth and honesty. Learning happens during social interactions and collaborations with others.

**D**iversity of children families and staff are to be acknowledged and celebrated, ensuring individuals are valued for their strength's, abilities, culture and beliefs and we understand that these qualities are what build a community.

## Educators & Co-Educators

Our educators have a wealth of knowledge and experience in early childhood education and will use this to develop a program for each child and will concentrate on their social, emotional, language, intellectual, physical and creative development.

### Educators

Gina Repic	Centre Director, 3 year old Educator
Lisa Pang	4 year old Educator
Melissa Black	4 year old Educator

### Co-Educators

Debra Rankine	Co-educator
Vivien Lashford	Co-educator
Pam Vandersman	Co-educator
Lauren Robinson	SRF Educator

## Committee of Management

The committee of management is an incorporated association and is governed by the Rules of the Constitution of Whittlesea Preschool Inc.

We meet on a monthly basis (except January) and parents are encouraged to join the committee as an active member. If this commitment is not possible parents are welcome to attend the monthly meetings, dates and times are advertised on the preschool noticeboard.

## Our Program

Our program revolves around the individual needs of children, using our Philosophy & EYLDF (Early Years Learning and Development Framework) to guide outcomes

The Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (0-8years) (VEYLF) is divided into 5 Outcomes – Identity, Community, Wellbeing, Learning and Communication.

It recognises the 5 Principles (EYLF) that are important for children's learning and development. These are:

- Secure, Respectful and Reciprocal Relationships between children and educators
- Partnerships between Educators and Families
- High Expectations and Equity when considering children,
- Respect for Diversity – acknowledging the many ways of living and knowing and
- Ongoing Learning and Reflective Practice by Educators constantly questioning what is happening and why.

The Victorian State Government provides funding for children to access high-quality kindergarten programs in the two years before they start school.

The funding is a contribution towards meeting the cost of the kindergarten program. Government funding is only available for one place per child per year. If your child is currently attending another children's service that offers a preschool program please ensure they are aware the Whittlesea Preschool will be claiming the funding in 2026 for your child.

If you or your child holds a valid concession card (health care card or pension card) please bring the card in at the beginning of each term and the administration staff will sight the card and note the expiry date. Please note this information is treated with utmost confidentiality.

### ***Three Year Old Program***

Children must have turned 3 years of age before they can commence our 3 year old program. They must be 3 on or before the 30<sup>th</sup> April in the year they are enrolled in the 3 year old program.

3yo Kindergarten is fully funded by the Victorian State Government. The 3yo program provides a range of indoor and outdoor activities that are planned using the preschool philosophy & VEYLF outcomes they are designed to use the children's interests and allow growth and development in each child's learning journey.

### ***Four Year Old Program***

To attend the 4-year-old program children must have turned 4 on or before the 30<sup>th</sup> April in the year they are enrolled in the 4yo program.

### ***Second Year Enrolments***

A second year of funded preschool is only made available to children enrolled in 4yo programs, who meet strict eligibility criteria determined by the Department of Education.

A Preschool Field Officer is available, to children in the 3yo and 4yo preschool program, to support families and educators in developing individual program's and strategies for children who may require additional support transitioning into preschool.

Early childhood teachers can help to support families by discussing the ways in which their child's individual learning and development needs can be supported within the preschool program and identify any support agencies which may be beneficial to their child's development.

# Required information

## ***Enrolment Forms***

The Department of Education (DoE) requires an enrolment form to be completed before your child can start preschool. It is important to make sure you fill out all sections completely. The information provided will be used to ensure your child's safety and wellbeing whilst at preschool, statistical information required by DoE and contact information for the administration staff.

*If your address, contact details or any other information changes, it is your responsibility to notify the preschool immediately.*

*Your child cannot attend preschool until the parent or guardian signs an authorisation for staff to seek emergency, hospital, medical or ambulance services, and provide a copy of current immunised status from Medicare.*

If your child has been diagnosed by a medical practitioner with a specific health care need or medical condition including, Anaphylaxis, Asthma and Diabetes an action plan will need to be completed by your DOCTOR and a risk minimisation plan discussed with your teacher BEFORE your child can commence at Whittlesea Preschool.

## ***Interview/Information Day***

The preschool year begins with an interview/information session for both parents and children. This is an opportunity for you and your child to become further acquainted with the staff and the preschool environment, and a time for information sharing with the Preschool staff.

On this day you will need to bring:

- You and your child
- Medical action plan (for children with a medical condition ie: Anaphylaxis, Asthma, Epilepsy, Diabetes or an Allergy) which has been completed by your doctor
- Custody papers if applicable

**Your interview day and time will be sent on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2025.**

## **Settling In**

During the first two weeks of the year, your child will be introduced to our programs within a smaller group. This enables children time to settle and gives educator time to spend with each child to get to know them. Details of the schedule for the first two weeks can be found on the email with the subject heading: 2026 Welcome Email, detailing 2026 groups. We limit these shorter sessions to the first two weeks of Preschool.

A gradual transition time with small groups recognises the importance of a successful start for all preschool children. Children react differently to the new preschool environment and their ability to cope may depend on their personality and past experience of attending other services or spending time away from their parents and home. Some children cope well with the new setting while others find it more difficult. Please feel free to discuss the separation process with your teacher who will advise you about and implement strategies for your child's individual needs.

## ***Arrivals and Departures***

Please bring and collect your child from preschool on time.

When moving into and out of the preschool gates please ensure you only let your child through the gate with you, if other children are trying to move through the gate please ensure they are being accompanied by an adult.

### ***Attendance Book***

As per the DoE regulatory requirements there is an attendance register which records the time of arrival and departure of each child. Please ensure the adult accompanying your child completes these on arrival and departure. It is a requirement for all children to be signed with correct time in and out on arrival and departure.

### ***Beginning of Each Session***

Please wait for staff to open the gate into the outdoor play space.

On entering our yard, sign the attendance book and farewell your child before letting them move into the bag room by themselves.

On the occasions that you need to pick your child early please just let staff know at the beginning of the session.

### ***Change in the collection of your child:***

It is important to notify the preschool staff if you are going to be delayed in collecting your child. Children can become distressed if they are the last at preschool and the staff are unsure as to what has happened.

A signed authorisation note/email and telephone call to the staff is required if someone other than the parent/guardian or authorised persons listed on your enrolment form will be collecting your child from the preschool.

### ***Departure from the Preschool***

At the end of the session we ask parents to wait for staff to release the children to your care.

It is important when collecting your child to wait until they have been dismissed to you. This enables us to make sure that all children go home with the correct person, and to adequately supervise children during dispersal times.

It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to collect their child promptly at the conclusion of the session. We recognise however that there may be isolated occasions when parents/guardians may be delayed. Please be aware our staff have other duties to complete after the conclusion of the session and their own commitments at the end of their rostered day of work.

In the event of children not being picked up on time, teachers follow this procedure:

- Contact parents/guardian on home and work numbers provided on the enrolment form
- If parents cannot be reached, we call emergency contact numbers provided on the enrolment form.
- If no contact can be made with any guardian/emergency contact after a period of 45 minutes, we are required to contact Victoria Police.

# Starting Tips

## ***Getting Started***

There's so much to think about when your child is first enrolled in Preschool- what to pack, how to dress them, how drop-off and pick-up runs will fit into your daily routine and what the expectations are for you as a parent. We realise it can be a bit daunting, so please use this book as a tool or ask any one of our friendly staff. The best way to prepare your child for Preschool is to talk positively about the experience, however don't make it a 'big deal' as this can overwhelm small children. It is the start of an amazing journey, one of endless growth and development for them. If you are positive they are more likely to be happy about the experience, particularly at the beginning.

## ***Preparing for Preschool***

Below is a list of things that you might like to practise at home. Please note: there is no expectation that your child will have mastered all of these, so please don't stress!

- Talking to other people about familiar objects and events
- Answering and asking simple questions
- Following simple instructions
- Using books for enjoyment or for looking at pictures
- Using the toilet independently
- Adapting to unfamiliar settings and new experiences
- Finishing a task and tidying up afterwards
- Playing cooperatively with other children - sharing and taking turns
- Putting on and taking off jumpers, shoes, socks independently

Some of the things you can do to encourage confidence include:

- Organising play dates with other children or going to local park/play centre.
- Talking to your child about what to expect
- Coming up with a goodbye ritual – practice this before your child starts
- Reading to your child every day e.g. starting pre-school books are great
- Encouraging your child to be independent i.e. time by themselves
- Having some practise runs to the Preschool

## **Children at Preschool**

All children are required to bring:

- Kinder bag – big enough to hold
  - Snack & lunch box
  - Small bottle of water
  - Change of clothes

Coming into Kinder:

- Encourage your child to find their photo
- Say goodbye before they enter bag room
- Apply Sunscreen before Kinder

## ***Healthy Lunch & Snacks (Nude Food)***

We have a nutrition policy to guide and promote good nutrition and healthy bodies in children. We have committed to the guidelines of the Healthy Together Achievement program developed by the Victorian Government.

In accordance we ask parents provide a prepared snack / lunch in a clearly name lunchbox. Water is available at all times, children can bring their own clearly named small drink bottle with water (no more than 300ml as these are very heavy and hard to fit in kinder bags – we will refill them as required during the session)

We ask that all food that is brought to preschool is 'NUDE' that is no wrappers. Food should be sent in reusable plastic containers. Some lunch boxes have divisions that are easy to pack.

We will encourage children to choose a healthier alternative from their food and send home any foods that do not fit the Healthy Together guidelines. Please see our healthy lunch box flyer for suggestions

### ***Purple 3yo group –***

#### ***2.5 hours session:***

Children are at preschool for a short time and will only require a small snack. We encourage parents to provide a piece of fruit/vegetable and a piece of dairy.

#### ***5 hours session:***

In the 5 hour sessions we will have a fruit snack for morning tea and lunch after midday. Lunch – See attached flyer for snacks and lunch ideas, tips and information.

#### ***4yo – Sessions:***

Each session we will have a fruit snack for morning tea and lunch after midday. **Lunch** may include a sandwich, wrap or roll, a piece of fruit/vegetable, or a salad.

For the morning tea we ask parents to ensure it consists of a piece of fruit/vegetable and a piece of dairy.

The preschool program supports a worm farm and composting so our food scraps will be used in these.

**We are an 'Allergy Aware Pre-School. Please check all labelling to ensure that children with allergies are not put at any risk.**

**Thank you for your co-operation.**

At the beginning of each year we identify if we have children with allergies/Anaphylaxis. We will provide a list of any products in Term 1 and for the safety of all children at preschool please **DO NOT include** these products in your child's snack or lunch to help children with life threatening allergies remain safe. We will update families of any other foods that may cause an anaphylaxis reaction as we become aware.

How much food to provide can be tricky, if you are unsure please speak with educators. If unsure we will send any uneaten food home so you know. This is a great opportunity to get your child ready for school so provide lunch and snack as they will have it provided when they go to school.

**TIP:** Have your child practice opening and closing their snack/lunch box at home to see if they can do this by themselves. Some lunchboxes are very tricky for small hands to open and we would like to encourage all children to be independent and complete this for themselves where possible.

### ***Practical Clothing***

Please dress your child in comfortable clothes that are washable and easy to manage so they are free to participate fully in all activities. Although protective clothing is provided, it is not possible for your child to stay clean at all times – sand, water, paint, playdough and other 'messy' activities are important sensory experiences at preschool.

Please be aware that long dresses make climbing activities very difficult and lots of buttons, ties, belts and buckles can make it hard for preschool children at toilet time.

Shoes that stay on children's feet and have non slip soles are best for preschool. Shoes with slippery soles, ie: crocs, gumboots, thongs, or open toed sandals and girls fashion shoes are often dangerous when running, climbing, jumping and moving at preschool and should be avoided. Children wearing these type of shoes may not be allowed on climbing equipment if educators feel it could be a risk. GUMBOOTS should only be brought on WET DAYS in a separate bag.

### ***SunSmart***

We are a SunSmart accredited Preschool, children will be required to wear a hat outside and children will be encouraged to play inside or in the shade between the times of highest UV radiation exposure designated on the SunSmart App. Please apply sunscreen to your child before they arrive at preschool to protect your child while playing outside. (Sunscreen is available on the front table if you forget to apply before coming to kinder).

**Please send a hat that can remain at Kinder for the year.**

Children will not be allowed to play outside without a hat or sunscreen. Staff, parents who are helping and visitors are also asked to wear a hat when they are outside with the children to set a good example.

A Sun Smart hat is one that covers the face, back of the neck and ears of the child.

On the enrolment form, parents will be asked to sign an authorisation for staff to apply sunscreen to their child, if or when we need to reapply during a session. If you DO NOT wish to use the sunscreen supplied by the preschool you are REQUIRED to provide a suitable sunscreen to be left at preschool for the use of your child.

### ***Wet Children/Toilet Accidents***

Children can sometimes be so involved in what they are doing that they forget to go to the toilet until it is too late. Sometimes they feel uncomfortable about going to the toilet because of the different toilets or they cannot unfasten zips, buttons, buckles, press studs etc. in time. Accidents of this nature are not unusual for preschool children so if they do happen just be relaxed about it, find out if anything is worrying your child at preschool and ensure children are wearing clothes they can undo quickly. In these situations staff spend time with the child reassuring the child and restoring self-esteem by adopting the approach - "accidents happen to everyone and it's okay".

Children also get wet at preschool by falling in puddles, being over enthusiastic at water play, when washing their hands or spillage of drinks.

**We ask that you have at least one change of clothes in your child's bag each day to ensure they feel comfortable if they require a new set of clothes.**

Children will not be changed against their will and we will support them to change themselves with supervision. If they do not want to change we will call you.

### ***Uniform***

We do have a uniform available here at Whittlesea Pre-School, but it is not compulsory. There are three order dates throughout the year. Any orders outside of these times will incur a \$10 administration fee. Order forms will be included in your orientation email. Full payment is required before order will be placed.

1. Orientation Day – 17<sup>th</sup> December (3yo) 18<sup>th</sup> December (4yo)
2. Third week in February.
3. Third week in April.

### ***Birthdays and Celebrations***

Many of the children like to share their birthdays or celebrations with the rest of the group. We will sing "Happy Birthday" and blow out the candles on our "cake". Please notify the staff before bringing birthday treats, to give out at the end of kinder session, so we can arrange for children with special dietary restrictions to have something special to celebrate with your child.

Whittlesea preschool believes that it is important for children to become familiar with values, customs, beliefs and traditions of other people and the ways they celebrate special occasions. Celebrations and joyful experiences foster in children attitudes of acceptance and value of culture, their own & others. We welcome any assistance and information parents can give us, particularly regarding a festival or event your family celebrates.

If you do not wish to have your child participate in any event or celebration that is occurring in the preschool please speak to your child's teacher.

### ***Toys & Books***

Toys from home are **not** encouraged at preschool. We understand they may provide emotional support for your child however they can often become lost, left behind or broken. They may also cause disruption to the curriculum and cause distress with children who do not have these toys. If your child needs a toy for reassurance when settling into preschool or going through a traumatic time in their lives please talk to your child's teacher.

Books from home are welcome if they relate to an interest we are following at preschool. Children often become upset if we cannot read their book because we have another book planned or there are several children who have brought a book that day or we do not get time to read it so please prepare your child for this or ask your child's teacher what day is best to bring it to preschool.

If your child has an item of educational interest to bring to preschool such as a nest, animals, reptiles, rocks, gem stones, shells, feathers, photos, x – rays, musical instruments, anything from holidays or nature, etc. we like them to bring these things to preschool and share their interest and knowledge with the other children.

## **Role of Families at Whittlesea Preschool**

### ***Family involvement***

Families are welcome to attend sessions and to be involved with children’s activities. This gives staff both an opportunity to informally share information with you about your child and the program and some extra help at activities so they can work closely with individual children when needed.

Helping at preschool gives you an opportunity to:	Other ways in which you can help include:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Spend valuable time with your child (children enjoy their parents’ involvement and often look forward to these occasions)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Supporting committee activities and fundraising activities</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Get to know your child’s friends and your centre staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Attending working bees</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Read stories</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Attending committee meetings</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Prepare and assist with snacks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Helping with excursions and incursions</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Share special skills (cooking, music etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Attending Special occasion days held throughout the year: Mothers Day morning tea, Fathers Night or Grandparent’s day.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ See the program in action</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mending and maintaining equipment</li> </ul>

### ***Siblings***

Other children are welcome to visit the centre with their parents, but please make sure they are supervised at all times for their safety. They are your responsibility while at the centre.

### ***Recycled Materials***

We often use materials that are usually considered to be junk. Throughout the year staff may ask you to save particular items to be used in the program, e.g. boxes, wool scraps, containers, cards, buttons etc.

### ***Engaging with the preschool program***

The curriculum and program book is written up in a continual cycle. It includes changes that occur due to children’s interests and abilities, what children have been doing, what learning has taken place as a result and where we will go next. The program book is available for parents to make comments about anything interesting your child has done or has said about what they have done while at preschool so we can include this in our planning.

Weekly conversation starters will be uploaded to Kinderloop.

## ***Notice Board and Hanging Files***

Notes about what is happening at preschool will be placed in your child's hang file located at the front door so please check them every session. Daily information about upcoming events or illnesses is displayed on the whiteboard and posted on our facebook page. This is a great way to stay in touch.

## **Health and Safety**

### ***Accidents***

All staff members hold a current **First Aid Certificate including asthma and anaphylaxis training**. Parents will be notified of any accidents involving their child as soon as possible and will be required to sight and sign the staff's written account of the accident when picking up their child. In cases where medical attention is required, all efforts will be made to contact you or those persons you have nominated as emergency contacts. In case of an emergency, an ambulance will be rung and any associated costs will be the parent's responsibility.

### ***Allergies***

Please ensure educators are informed of your child's allergy requirements on enrolment. Please contact your teacher before bringing celebration food to share with other children. Some children have allergies to food that may be life threatening. We may nominate particular foods that may be excluded as a strategy to provide a safe environment. If your child has been diagnosed with an allergy you will be required to complete and **Allergic Reaction Action Plan BEFORE** your child can start preschool. Information in the plan should be updated if there are any changes to your child's medication, symptoms or treatment. Any medication is to be given to staff to store safely during the session.

### ***Anaphylaxis***

Anaphylaxis is a severe allergic reaction that can be life threatening. If your child has been diagnosed with anaphylaxis you will be required to complete and **Anaphylaxis Action Plan and a risk minimisation plan BEFORE** your child can start preschool. Information in the plan should be updated if there are any changes to your child's medication, symptoms or treatment. Any medication, including an EpiPen, or Anapen is to be given to staff to store safely during the session.

### ***Asthma***

Parents are required to complete an **Asthma Care Plan, BEFORE** your child can start at preschool. These records ensure that teachers are aware of your child's needs in the event of an asthma attack. Information in the plan should be updated if there are any changes to your child's medication, asthma symptoms or treatment. Any medication, including Asthma medication, is to be given to staff to store safely during the session.

## ***Medication***

If your child requires any type of medication during the session you must provide accurate information regarding its administration to staff and give permission through completion of the Medication Form. Please note that medication can only be administered from its original container bearing the original label and instructions and before the expiry date. All medications are required to be given to Educators before entering the Kinder – medication **CANNOT** be stored in your child's bag!

## ***Attendance and Health***

If a child becomes ill or is injured at preschool, teachers follow this procedure:

- Make the child comfortable
- Contact parents/guardians phone numbers provided
- If parents cannot be reached, emergency contact personnel will be called
- Staff will continue to make the child comfortable and provide ongoing supervision until parent/guardian/emergency contact has been notified and the child is collected from the preschool
- Call an Ambulance if required. A member of staff will endeavour to contact parents/guardians/emergency contact person in the event of calling an Ambulance, however if the staff need to ring the Ambulance in an emergency they will contact parents after the Ambulance has been rung.

## ***Infectious Diseases & Illnesses***

Under health regulations, any contact with infectious diseases (e.g. COVID-19, Gastro, conjunctivitis, head lice, measles, chicken pox) must be reported to the teacher; if children are infectious or unwell, they should stay home until they are better. See the **DHS School Exclusion Table** on display in the preschool, as a guide for your child's attendance.

It is required that children are kept at home when showing the following illness or symptoms:

- Covid-19
- Vomiting- at least 48 hours from last event
- Diarrhoea- at least 48 hours from last event
- Fever and associated symptoms – heavy nasal discharge
- Conjunctivitis
- Cold sores
- Viral infections
- Rashes

If your child is diagnosed with an infectious disease, we request that you notify us as soon as possible so that staff can inform other families of an illness currently circulating at Preschool. If your child is not immunised you will be notified, and your child may need to be excluded as per the DHS School Exclusion Table. A family's confidentiality will be respected at all times.

## Other Important Information

### ***Privacy Policy***

Parents are bound by the same Privacy and Confidentiality Regulations as educators. As part of enrolment parents and guardians sign the Code of Conduct agreement and Privacy Consent form. There are many reasons children behave in the way they do and these reasons and the strategies that have been put in place to deal with them are known only to staff, other professionals and a child's parents.

If you witness behaviour that concerns you please bring it to the attention of staff so they can deal with the situation in an appropriate way.

**Please do not discuss other children or behaviour that you may have witnessed at preschool with other parents or on any media device.  
This is a breach of Confidentiality and Privacy Laws.**

Staff will only discuss matters concerning your child with you or their legal guardian.

### ***Behaviour Guidance Policy***

Whittlesea preschool is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children, staff and volunteers attending our preschool. We believe that positive behaviour in all children is to be encouraged and that all children need to be respected and valued as individuals.

We understand there are many factors that influence behaviour exhibited at preschool and will guide children to understand that there is alternative ways to showing displeasure, or frustration

Setting limits for behaviour is important for safety and protection of children, adults and the environment and that ultimately limit setting will develop self-regulation in children. Managing behaviour positively assists in promoting a predictable and caring environment.

### ***Concerns and complaints policy***

It is lovely to receive compliments and positive feedback. You are also encouraged to contact staff or the committee if you would like to make a positive comment!

If at any time throughout the year you have any concerns about your child or the preschool program, please do not hesitate to approach your child's teacher to make a suitable time to discuss them. If this does not resolve your concern you can contact the President of the Committee of Management, who will then follow the procedure documented in the Complaints Policy.

Concerns or complaints in relation to the Health Safety or Wellbeing of a child made to an Educator or Committee of Management must be forwarded to the DoE within 24 hours of being received.

Parent concerns or complaints can also be made directly to the DoE. The number to contact is available from the front Noticeboard.

### ***Policies***

Whittlesea Pre-School has a number of policies that are required for the management of the preschool. These cover 7 areas of the National Framework covering a variety of topics. They

cover Health and Safety, Staffing, Relationships with children, Service Management and Curriculum.

Copies of all policies are available on the Kinderloop App for your perusal. Policies currently being updated are made available for 4 weeks prior to being adopted. Please take time to read and make suggestions during this time.

### ***Emergency Evacuation Procedure***

The emergency evacuation plan is displayed near the exits in the preschool. The staff will practice emergency evacuation drills with the children once a term so that they are familiar with them. We will let you know when we have practised an emergency procedure so you can talk about it with your child at home.

### ***Fundraising***

Government funding for preschools does not sufficiently cover all the costs required for a preschool to operate and provide ongoing educational activities for our children. In addition to funding, to ensure that our children continue to receive a high standard of education and care, fundraising is required. Throughout the year a number of fund raising events are organised. It would be appreciated if you could support these events.

### ***Professional Development for Staff***

We believe the training of our staff in up to date practices in Early Childhood Education is very important.

Staff are required by their employment conditions to attend professional development over the course of the preschool year. This means that one day in the year a preschool session will be cancelled so staff can attend professional development. Other times staff may miss a session so that they may attend valuable professional development.

### ***No Smoking Policy***

Preschools are non-smoking environments. Please refrain from smoking on the premises or near the front gate.

## **Emergency Management**

### **CATASTROPHIC RATED FIRE DAYS**

For the safety of all children, families and staff, so they can enact their Personal bushfire Plans, The **PRESCHOOL will not operate** on **CATASTROPHIC RATED FIRE DAYS**. We will inform families the day before so you can make arrangements to keep your family safe and will place a sign at the front of the preschool.

### ***Incident within the Preschool***

We will take ALL children, as per our emergency management plan, out of the preschool and assemble at our designated evacuation point with our emergency kit, which includes an emergency contact list and a mobile phone. We will ring emergency services, take the attendance records,

evacuate if necessary and keep children safe and comfortable. Once the situation has been assessed as safe we will contact parents/emergency contacts to inform them about the emergency and where they can collect the children from.

### ***Threat from outside the Preschool***

All children will be kept inside the preschool and staff will supervise them and ring emergency services. Children will leave the preschool only after emergency services have given the all clear to do so. Educators or a member of the committee will contact parents/guardians or emergency contacts to advise them that their child is safe and inform them about how and when they can pick up their child or seek advice about an alternative location from which to pick up their child. If the area has been impacted by the threat and parents are unable to pick up their child, committee and educators will make plans to care for those children at the preschool. No attempt will be made to transport children home through the impacted area. On days of Extreme and Severe Fire Warning staff will keep the radio tuned to ABC 774, regularly check the CFA website and check the atmosphere.

**The Emergency Management Plan is available from the preschool**

## Term Dates & Public Holidays 2026

### Term Dates for 2026

Period	Start	Finish	Length
Term 1	Tuesday, 27 January 2026 (School teachers Start)	Thursday, 2 April 2026	10 weeks
Term 2	Monday, 20 April 2026	Friday, 26 June 2026	11 weeks
Term 3	Monday, 13 July 2026	Friday, 18 September 2026	10 weeks
Term 4	Monday, 5 October 2026	Friday, 18 December 2026	11 weeks

### Victoria Public Holidays 2026

Holiday	Date
<b>New Year's Day</b>	Thursday, 1 January 2026
<b>Australia Day</b>	Monday, 26 January 2026
<b>Labour Day</b>	Monday, 9 March 2026
<b>Good Friday</b>	Friday, 3 April 2026
<b>Easter Saturday</b>	Saturday, 4 April 2026
<b>Easter Sunday</b>	Sunday, 5 April 2026
<b>Easter Monday</b>	Monday, 6 April 2026
<b>ANZAC Day</b>	Saturday, 25 April 2026
<b>King's Birthday</b>	Monday, 8 June 2026
<b>Friday before AFL Grand Final</b>	Friday, 25 <sup>th</sup> September 2026
<b>Melbourne Cup</b>	Tuesday, 3 November 2026
<b>Christmas Day</b>	Friday, 25 December 2026
<b>Boxing Day</b>	Saturday, 26 December 2026
<b>Boxing Day Public Holiday</b>	Monday, 28 <sup>th</sup> December 2026

# Exclusion periods explained

You may be asked to keep your child away from the early childhood education and care service if they are sick, or if certain diseases are present at the service. This is called 'exclusion'. The length of time you are asked to keep your child away from the service is called the 'exclusion period'.

Exclusion reduces the spread of infectious diseases. The less contact there is between people who have an infectious disease and those who don't, the less chance the disease has of spreading.

All services have exclusion policies that everyone should follow, including educators and other staff. You can ask for a copy of your service's policy on exclusion periods. If you have any questions or concerns, talk to the service or your regular doctor.

## Recommended minimum exclusion periods

A recommended minimum exclusion period is the minimum length of time your child will be asked to stay away from the service.

Exclusion and exclusion periods are different for different diseases. They depend on:

 how easily the infection spreads

 how long the child is likely to be infectious

 how severe the disease can be.

The recommended minimum exclusion periods are in the [Staying Healthy guidelines, 6th edition](#).

### Find out more

-  [Staying Healthy exclusion periods](#)
-  [Immunisation](#)

## Why is my child being excluded?

To decide what to do when a child or staff member is sick, services refer to the [Staying Healthy guidelines, 6th edition](#). They may also ask the local public health unit.

Children who are sick can be excluded because of their symptoms, or because of a diagnosis. Children do not need to have a diagnosis from a doctor to be excluded.

Your child will be allowed to return to care once they meet the service's criteria. It is up to the service to decide if your child can return. You cannot use a doctor's note to ask for your child to return to care earlier than what the service has decided.

## My child is not sick, why are they being excluded?

Sometimes a person needs to be excluded because they have been in contact with someone else with a disease. This is because they may be developing the disease and may be infectious, even though they don't yet have symptoms.

Some children are at higher risk of catching a disease, so will be asked to stay away from the service if the disease occurs, even if they are well.

- Children that have not been, or cannot be, vaccinated will be excluded during outbreaks of certain vaccine-preventable diseases such as measles and whooping cough. Australia has a program of vaccinations for all Australian children (see [National Immunisation Program Schedule](#)).
- If your child is immunocompromised, they may be asked to stay away from the care service during outbreaks of certain diseases.



# Exclusion for common or concerning conditions

These are 20 of the more common or concerning conditions seen in care services. For the full list of exclusion based on conditions, see the *Staying Healthy* guidelines.



CONDITION	EXCLUSION OF DIAGNOSED PERSON
<b>Chickenpox (varicella)</b>	Exclude until all blisters have dried - this is usually at least 5 days after the rash first appeared in non-immunised children, and less in vaccinated children See the guidelines for contact exclusions
<b>Conjunctivitis or eye discharge</b>	Exclude until discharge from the eyes has stopped (unless a doctor has diagnosed non-infectious conjunctivitis)
<b>Ear infection</b>	Not excluded unless they also have concerning symptoms (fever, rash, tiredness, pain, poor feeding)
<b>Fever</b>	Exclude until the temperature remains normal, unless the fever has a known non-infectious cause If the child has gone home from the service with a fever but their temperature is normal the next morning, they can return to the service If the child wakes in the morning with a fever, they should stay home until their temperature remains normal If a doctor later diagnoses the cause of the child's fever, follow the exclusion guidance for that disease
<b>Gastroenteritis ('gastro')</b> • <i>Campylobacter</i> infection • Cryptosporidiosis • Giardia infection (giardiasis) • Rotavirus infection • <i>Salmonella</i> infection (salmonellosis) • <i>Shigella</i> infection (shigellosis)	Exclude until there has not been any diarrhoea or vomiting for at least 24 hours Staff members with these symptoms should not handle food until they have not vomited or had diarrhoea for at least 48 hours (they can be assigned to other duties after at least 24 hours, or stay away from the service for at least 48 hours) Check if your state or territory has different requirements for gastroenteritis
• Norovirus infection	Exclude until there has not been any diarrhoea or vomiting for at least 48 hours
<b>Hand, foot and mouth disease</b>	Exclude until all blisters have dried
<b>Head lice</b>	Not excluded, as long as effective treatment begins before the next attendance at the service The child does not need to be sent home immediately if head lice are detected
<b>Hib (<i>Haemophilus influenzae</i> type b)</b>	Exclude until the person has received treatment for at least 4 days
<b>Measles</b>	Exclude for at least 4 days after the rash appeared See the guidelines for contact exclusions
<b>Meningitis (viral)</b>	Exclude until person is well
<b>Meningococcal infection</b>	Exclude until the person has completed antibiotic treatment
<b>Mumps</b>	Exclude for at least 9 days or until swelling goes down (whichever is sooner)
<b>Pneumococcal disease</b>	Exclude until person has received antibiotic treatment for at least 24 hours and feels well
<b>Rash</b>	Not excluded unless combined with other concerning symptoms (fever, tiredness, pain, poor feeding)
<b>Respiratory conditions and infections</b> • Bronchitis and bronchiolitis • Common cold • COVID-19 (also refer to state or territory advice) • Croup • Flu (influenza) • Human metapneumovirus • Pneumonia • RSV (respiratory syncytial virus)	If a person has respiratory symptoms (cough, sneezing, runny or blocked nose, sore throat), exclude them only if: • the respiratory symptoms are severe, or • the respiratory symptoms are getting worse (more frequent or severe), or • they also have concerning symptoms (fever, rash, tiredness, pain, poor feeding) <u>Otherwise do not exclude.</u> A person can often have an ongoing cough after they have recovered from a respiratory infection. If their other symptoms have gone and they are feeling well, they can return to the service
<b>Shingles (zoster infection)</b>	Exclude children until blisters have dried and crusted Adults who can cover the blisters are not excluded (they are excluded if blisters cannot be covered) See the guidelines for contact exclusions
<b>Skin-related infections</b> • Cold sores (herpes simplex)	Not excluded if the person can maintain hygiene practices to minimise the risk of transmission If the person cannot maintain these practices (for example, because they are too young), exclude until the sores are dry Cover sores with a dressing, if possible
• Fungal infections of the skin or scalp (ringworm, tinea, athlete's foot) • Impetigo (school sores) • Scabies and other mites causing skin disease	Exclude until the day after starting treatment For impetigo, cover any sores on exposed skin with a watertight dressing
• Warts	Not excluded
<b>Strep throat</b>	Exclude until the person has received antibiotic treatment for at least 24 hours and feels well
<b>Whooping cough (pertussis)</b>	Exclude until at least 5 days after starting antibiotic treatment, or for at least 21 days from the onset of coughing if the person does not receive antibiotics See the guidelines for contact exclusions
<b>Worms</b>	Not excluded

# Starting childcare or kindergarten?

Immunisation information for parents enrolling a child

**OFFICIAL**

## *Enrolment requirements in Victoria*

By law, to finalise enrolment for your child in long day care, kindergarten, family day care or occasional care, you must provide the service with a current immunisation history statement from the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) that shows your child is up to date with all the immunisations that are due or able to receive for their age.

## *What is an immunisation history statement?*

It is a statement from the AIR that shows what vaccines your child has received and, if applicable, which vaccines are due in the future and when.

All vaccines recorded on the AIR will appear on your child's immunisation history statement. You do not need to do anything to get your child on the AIR. Your vaccination provider will tell the AIR when they give your child a vaccine and which vaccines they have given.

Vaccines on the National Immunisation Program Schedule are provided free.

## *What is this document used for?*

**To finalise enrolment.** To accept an offered place at a service, you must provide a current immunisation history statement. This is usually done within two months before your child is due to start at the service.

**To keep children safe.** If there is a disease outbreak at the service, the document is used

to identify children at risk (for example, children too young or those who cannot be fully immunised against a disease) who may need to stay away from the service until it is safe for them to return.

## *What if I cannot get a statement?*

In some circumstances, a 16 week 'support period' (also known as the 'grace period') can be applied, so your child can start at the service while you arrange to get a statement. Again, the service can advise if this applies to you.

## *How do I get an immunisation history statement?*

The quickest way to get your child's statement is by using your Medicare online account through myGov or the Express Plus Medicare mobile app.

Alternatively, you can call the AIR on 1800 653 809 to request that your child's statement be posted to you. It can take 14 days to arrive by post.

## *What if my child has had immunisations overseas, or they are not eligible for Medicare?*

You can get overseas immunisations added to the AIR. You need to take a translated copy of your child's overseas immunisation history to your Australian immunisation provider. They will check the vaccines your child has had and tell you if any additional ones are required.

They will update the AIR with immunisations given overseas as well as any new ones.

When your child's immunisations are recorded on the AIR, ask your immunisation provider if they can print an immunisation history statement from the AIR for you to give to your childcare or kindergarten service.

Alternatively, you can call the AIR on 1800 653 809 to check if your child's immunisations have been recorded and request a statement to be posted to you. It can take up to 14 days to arrive by post.

A translating and interpreting service is available by calling 131 450, Monday to Friday, from 8.30 am to 4.45 pm.

### *How do I tell if my child is 'up to date'?*

Look at your child's current immunisation history statement. 'Up to date' will appear at the top of the immunisation history statement.

At the bottom, it will show 'Next due immunisation(s)' or 'No vaccines due'. If the next due immunisation date is in the future, your child is up to date for their age.

If your child has completed all their childhood immunisation, it will show 'No vaccines due'.

### *What do I do when my child has immunisations AFTER enrolling?*

After each immunisation, you should provide an updated immunisation history statement to the service to include in their records. Your service will periodically remind you that you need to do this.

### Getting the right documentation

Scenario	Advice
Lost AIR immunisation history statement	Use your Medicare online account through myGov or Express Plus Medicare mobile app to access a copy or call the AIR on 1800 653 809 and request a copy be posted to you. It can take up to 14 days to arrive by post.
Incorrect information recorded on the AIR immunisation history statement	If immunisations are missing from a statement, contact your immunisation provider to check if they have been sent to the AIR. Once the information is recorded on the AIR, you can access an updated copy using your Medicare online account through myGov or Express Plus Medicare mobile app.
Overdue for a vaccination	See a doctor or immunisation nurse. The doctor or nurse will provide the vaccination and advise the AIR. Once the AIR has been updated, you can access a copy using your Medicare online account through myGov or Express Plus Medicare mobile app.
Overdue for multiple vaccinations	See a doctor or immunisation nurse discuss a 'catch-up schedule'. As each vaccination is given, they will update the AIR. Once the AIR receives the information, you can access a copy of your child's immunisation history statement using your Medicare online account through myGov or Express Plus Medicare mobile app.
Medical reasons	If your child cannot be fully immunised for medical reasons, you will need to visit an eligible doctor who may provide an immunisation medical exemption. This information will be recorded on the AIR, noting the vaccines your child cannot receive for medical reasons.  If your child has an immunisation medical exemption recorded on the AIR, information will appear at the bottom of the statement noting the vaccines they cannot receive.
Questions or concerns about immunisation	Seek advice from your doctor or contact your local council immunisation service.

### National Immunisation Program (NIP) schedule

Vaccines listed on the NIP schedule are free to children at birth, 2, 4, 6, 12 and 18 months and 4 years of age. To find out what immunisations your child needs:

- see your doctor or contact your local council immunisation service
- search 'childhood immunisation' on the **Better Health Channel** website <<https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au>>
- **Australian Government Department of Health & Ageing Immunise Australia Program** website <<http://www.immunise.health.gov.au>>
- For translated versions of this document, search 'starting childcare or kindergarten' on the **Health Translations website** <[www.healthtranslations.vic.gov.au](http://www.healthtranslations.vic.gov.au)>
- Translating and interpreting service call 131 450
- Early childhood services and immunisation providers can order free copies of this brochure online from the **Immunisation resources order form page on the Department of Health and Human Services website** <[www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/immunisation/immunisation-resources-order-form](http://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/immunisation/immunisation-resources-order-form)>

To receive this document in another format, email the **Immunisation Unit, Public Health Division, Department of Health** <[immunisation@health.vic.gov.au](mailto:immunisation@health.vic.gov.au)>.

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Available at: <<https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/immunisation/vaccination-children/no-jab-no-play>>

# Immunisation and enrolling in early childhood education and care services

Information for parents and carers

## No Jab, No Play

Under the 'No Jab, No Play' legislation, before enrolling your child into an early childhood education and care service, you must provide evidence that your child is up to date with immunisation for their age.

An Immunisation History Statement from the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) is the only form of documentation accepted for the purpose of enrolling in an early childhood education and care service.

After enrolment, you need to continue to supply up to date Immunisation History Statements to your child's early childhood education and care service.

## About required documentation

### Under 'No Jab, No Play' what documentation is required as evidence of up to date vaccination?

To have an enrolment confirmed for your child in long day care, kindergarten (3 and 4 year old kindergarten), family day care or occasional care (early childhood education and care services), you must provide the service with:

- a current Immunisation History Statement from the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR); AND
- the statement must show that the child is up to date with all vaccinations that are due for their age, or that there is a valid [immunisation medical exemption](https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/im011) <<https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/im011>> to a vaccine.

The Immunisation History Statement from the AIR lists the vaccines your child has received and, if applicable, which vaccines are due in the future and when. Immunisation medical exemption may also be listed, where applicable.

An Immunisation History Statement from the AIR is the only type of immunisation record accepted by early childhood education and care services for the purposes of confirming enrolment. The statement must be provided by the AIR within the two months prior to your child starting at the service.

The Medicare logo and Australian Government crest must be present and identifiable to be considered a valid Immunisation History Statement. For example, if the statement is page two of a letter from Medicare, both pages need to be presented to the service to confirm enrolment.

### How can parents/carers get an Immunisation History Statement from the AIR?

You can obtain a copy of your child's Immunisation History Statement from your [myGov account](https://login.my.gov.au/las/mygov-login?execution=e1s1) <<https://login.my.gov.au/las/mygov-login?execution=e1s1>> or the Express Plus Medicare app. If you have difficulty getting a copy via your myGov account or the app you can:

- call the AIR on 1800 653 809
- visit a Medicare or Centrelink office.
- ask your immunisation provider to print Immunisation History Statements for you

Refer to: [How to get immunisation history statements](https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/how-to-getimmunisation-history-statements?context=22436) <<https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/how-to-getimmunisation-history-statements?context=22436>>.

## **How can parents/carers who are not eligible for Medicare get an Immunisation History Statement from the AIR?**

If you are not eligible to hold a Medicare card, you can ask your immunisation provider to print an Immunisation History Statement or you can call the AIR to request an Immunisation History Statement be posted (allow up to two weeks for delivery by post).

## **Can parents/carers provide other proof of immunisations from an immunisation provider (e.g. a GP)?**

No. Other forms of documentation, for example a letter from a GP or local council, are not acceptable for the purposes of enrolment in an early childhood education and care service.

## **What is considered an 'immunisation medical exemption' under 'No Jab, No Play' and what documentation is required as evidence?**

Some children may be exempt from the requirement to be fully vaccinated on medical grounds. Examples of valid medical reasons that a child could not be fully vaccinated include:

- an anaphylactic reaction to a previous dose of a particular vaccine, or
- an anaphylactic reaction to any vaccine component, or
- has a disease which lowers immunity (such as leukaemia, cancer, HIV/AIDS, SCID), or • is having treatment which lowers immunity (such as chemotherapy).

If you have a child that may require an immunisation medical exemption to one or more vaccines, you should consult your GP. A GP will need to complete and sign an [immunisation medical exemption form](https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/im011) <<https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/im011>> and send it to the AIR.

You will then need to obtain an updated Immunisation History Statement from the AIR that indicates your child is up to date with all the vaccines that they can have and lists the vaccines that they cannot have due to a medical contraindication. This statement needs to be provided to the early childhood education and care service to confirm enrolment.

If you have questions or concerns about immunisation or particular vaccines, you should seek answers from a qualified immunisation source, such as a GP or local council immunisation service. The [Better Health Channel](https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/immunisation-childhood) <<https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/immunisation-childhood>> also provides information online.

## **What do parents/carers whose child's vaccinations are not up to date need to do to obtain an Immunisation History Statement?**

If your child's vaccinations are not up to date, you should consult your GP or local council immunisation service to arrange catch-up vaccination.

The GP or local council immunisation service need to give your child all vaccinations that are due for their age, or that they are able to receive, and inform the AIR. You will then need to request an updated Immunisation History Statement from the AIR.

The updated Immunisation History Statement showing that vaccines are 'up to date' needs to be provided to the early childhood education and care service to confirm enrolment.

## **How can parents/carers obtain acceptable documentation if their child was vaccinated overseas?**

Children who were vaccinated overseas must have their vaccine records assessed by a recognised immunisation provider. The immunisation provider may offer vaccination through a 'catch-up schedule' as required and report vaccines to the AIR.

You can request an Immunisation History Statement from the AIR. This statement must then be provided to the early childhood education and care service to confirm enrolment.

Families who experience difficulty accessing vaccinations or the required documents can seek support and guidance from the early childhood education and care service. You may be eligible to enrol under the Support Period provision (see below for details of the support period provision).

## **When can an early childhood education and care service confirm an enrolment?**

Having an application accepted or being registered on a waiting list for a place at an early childhood education and care service is not a confirmed enrolment.

Confirmation of enrolment can be given by the service, no more than two months prior to the child first attending, only once the parent/carer has provided the service with:

- a current Immunisation History Statement from the AIR; AND
- the statement must show that the child is up to date with all vaccinations that are due for their age, or that they are able to receive; OR
- is eligible to enrol under the 16 week support period while the service works with the family to obtain the necessary immunisations/documentation; OR
- has an immunisation medical exemption that prevents them from being fully immunised for their age.

## **Immunisation after enrolment**

Under Victorian law, parents/carers are required to continue to provide early childhood education and care services with evidence that their enrolled child is up to date with their immunisations.

You will need to provide your child's service with a new Immunisation History Statement whenever your child receives (or was due to receive) immunisation/s after enrolment.

### **Why is this required?**

If there is a disease outbreak at the service, accurate and current evidence of immunisation is needed to identify children at risk (for example, children too young to be fully immunised against a disease) who may need to stay away from the service until it is safe for them to return.

The Victorian Government introduced this requirement to provide an important additional prompt to parents/carers regarding immunisation as part of a continued effort to improve and maintain high childhood immunisation rates and protect the community from vaccine-preventable diseases.

### **What does the early childhood education and care service do?**

The service will regularly request that parents/carers ensure that immunisation evidence is up to date at the service throughout the time your child is enrolled. Services review the immunisation evidence you provide to make sure it

meets the requirements of the legislation and keep it on file with the child's enrolment records. **What do parents/carers do?**

If your child has received a vaccine while they are attending an early childhood education and care service, you should obtain an updated Immunisation History Statement from the AIR and provide it to your child's service.

If you receive a request from the service to ensure that the service has the latest evidence of up to date immunisation, and you know that the service already has the most up to date Immunisation History Statement, you do not need to provide another copy.

## About vaccination

### Why are vaccinations so important?

Vaccination is one of the most effective ways of preventing disease worldwide. Modern vaccines provide high levels of protection against an increasing number of diseases which, in some cases, can be fatal. Worldwide, it is estimated that immunisation programs prevent approximately 2.5 million deaths each year.

The current immunisation rate in Victoria for children under five years of age is around 95 per cent. This coverage rate is necessary to halt the spread of highly infectious diseases such as measles.

Immunisation not only protects those people who have been vaccinated, it also protects those in our community who may be unable to receive vaccines themselves, by reducing the prevalence and spread of disease.

### What immunisations are required for children at early childhood education and care services?

The immunisation schedule for vaccines outlines what vaccines are available under the [National Immunisation Program](https://www.health.gov.au/topics/immunisation/when-to-getvaccinated/national-immunisation-program-schedule) (NIP) <<https://www.health.gov.au/topics/immunisation/when-to-getvaccinated/national-immunisation-program-schedule>> and when they should be received.

All vaccines listed in the NIP Schedule are free. Eligibility for free vaccines under the NIP is linked to [eligibility for Medicare benefits](https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/enrolling-medicare?context=60092) <<https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/enrolling-medicare?context=60092>>.

### Where can parents/carers go for immunisation services?

Local council immunisation services (free service), GPs and community health service can provide immunisation services.

### Are vaccines safe?

The scientific evidence supporting vaccination is overwhelming, and the benefits far outweigh the rare risks.

All vaccines currently available in Australia must pass stringent safety testing before being approved for use by the [Therapeutic Goods Administration](https://www.tga.gov.au/) <<https://www.tga.gov.au/>>, Australia's regulatory authority for therapeutic goods. Safety testing is required by law and is usually done over many years during the vaccine's development.

Once vaccines are in use, their safety is continually monitored by the Therapeutic Goods Administration and other organisations.

All immunisation providers play an important role in reporting adverse events following immunisation which assists in safety surveillance after a vaccine is registered for use in Australia. In Victoria, the agency that receives all reports is SAEFVIC (Surveillance of Adverse Events Following Vaccination in the Community) - more information is available at the [SAEFVIC website](https://www.saefvic.org.au/Info/About) <<https://www.saefvic.org.au/Info/About>> or via 1300 882 924, option one.

# About the 'No Jab, No Play' legislation

## What is the objective of the 'No Jab, No Play' legislation?

The purpose of the No Jab, No Play legislation is to help increase immunisation rates for young children in the community.

The legislation is designed to:

- provide a prompt regarding immunisation for parents/carers enrolling their child in early childhood education and care service
- allow for children of families experiencing vulnerability and disadvantage to be able to access the lifelong benefits of early childhood education and care, while being supported to obtain vaccinations and/or required evidence of vaccination.

'Conscientious objection' to vaccines is not an exemption under the legislation.

Since the introduction of the legislation in 2016, immunisation coverage rates for young children have been steadily increasing in Victoria and are now at around 95 per cent.

## What early childhood education and care services does the 'No Jab, No Play' legislation impact?

The legislation applies to all early childhood education and care services<sup>1</sup> in Victoria providing:

- long day care
- kindergarten (including 3 and 4 year old kindergarten)
- occasional care
- family day care.

The legislation does not apply to:

- enrolment in primary or secondary school (however, please note an Immunisation History Statement from the AIR does need to be provided for enrolling in primary school, however there is currently no requirement for the statement to show the child is up to date with all immunisations)
- children attending an outside school hours care service (after school care, before school care, vacation care)
- enrolments of school children in long day care, family day care or occasional care
- casual occasional care services that offer care of no more than 2 hours per day and no more than 6 hours per week (for example, crèches at gyms, shopping centres and playgroups)
- services primarily providing instruction on particular activities (for example, sport, dance or music)
- services primarily provided or shared by family members of the children (and a family member is readily available and retains responsibility for the child).

## Shouldn't immunisation be a personal choice?

The legislation does not mandate vaccinations, nor does it require the administration of vaccines without consent. You may continue to make a choice not to vaccinate your children.

Governments have a responsibility to make decisions that balance the best possible community health outcomes with individual choices. Preventing problems before they occur is vital to good health.

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<sup>1</sup> approved under the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010* and licensed under the *Children's Services Act 1996*

The purpose of 'No Jab, No Play' is to increase immunisation rates in the community, particularly amongst young children. This is a public health priority, given the serious risk posed by vaccine-preventable diseases and the proven safety and efficacy of vaccines.

### **Is 'homeopathic immunisation' accepted under 'No Jab, No Play'?**

No. 'Homeopathic immunisation' is not a recognised form of immunisation. For more information view the [Homeopathy and Vaccination fact sheet](https://ncirs.org.au/ncirs-fact-sheets-faqs/homeopathy-andvaccination) <https://ncirs.org.au/ncirs-fact-sheets-faqs/homeopathy-andvaccination> produced by the National Centre for Immunisation Research.

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## **Resources for parents and carers**

### **Access these FAQs online**

[No Jab, No Play - frequently asked questions](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/publications/no-jab-no-playfrequently-asked-questions) <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/publications/no-jab-no-playfrequently-asked-questions>

Additional support can be located through [Services and contacts for 'No Jab, No Play'](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/services-and-contacts-for-no-jab-no-play) <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/services-and-contacts-for-no-jab-no-play>

### **More about vaccine safety**

SAEFVIC (Surveillance of Adverse Events Following Vaccination in the Community) can help parents with concerns about vaccine safety – [www.saefvic.org.au](http://www.saefvic.org.au) or phone 1300 882 924. Telehealth is also available with this service.

['The science of immunisation / Questions and Answers'](https://www.science.org.au/learning/generalaudience/science-booklets/science-immunisation)

<https://www.science.org.au/learning/generalaudience/science-booklets/science-immunisation> addresses six questions including *'Are vaccines safe?' and 'How are vaccines shown to be safe?'*

## **More information**

### **More about immunisation**

[Better Health Channel](https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/campaigns/no-jab-no-play/) <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/campaigns/no-jab-no-play/>.

[Childhood immunisation - Better Health Channel](https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/immunisation-childhood)

<https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/immunisation-childhood>

### **View the 'No Jab, No Play' legislation**

View the No Jab, No Play legislation online at [Public Health and Wellbeing Amendment \(No Jab, No Play\) Act 2015](https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/as-made/acts/public-health-and-wellbeing-amendment-no-jab-noplay-act-2015) <https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/as-made/acts/public-health-and-wellbeing-amendment-no-jab-noplay-act-2015>.

## About Commonwealth 'No Jab, No Pay' initiative

Under the Commonwealth Government No Jab No Pay law, in effect from 1 January 2016, parent/carers are no longer eligible for family assistance payments if their children (up to the age of 19) are not fully immunised or if they do not have an approved medical exemption. For information call the Parentline on 13 61 50, or visit [Parentline](https://services.dffh.vic.gov.au/parentline) <<https://services.dffh.vic.gov.au/parentline>>.

## About similar legislation in other Australian states

Similar legislation currently exists in other states, which is displayed on the National Centre for Immunisation Research and Surveillance webpage - [No Jab No Play, No Jab No Play](https://ncirs.org.au/public/no-jab-noplay-no-jab-no-pay) <<https://ncirs.org.au/public/no-jab-noplay-no-jab-no-pay>>.

To receive this publication in an accessible format, phone 1300 882 008, using the National Relay Service 13 36 77 if required, or email [immunisation@health.vic.gov.au](mailto:immunisation@health.vic.gov.au)

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Available at [Resources for 'No Jab, No Play'](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/resources-for-no-jab-noplay) <<https://www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/resources-for-no-jab-noplay>>

# Immunisation after enrolment

Information for parents/carers of children enrolled in early childhood education and care services in Victoria

## OFFICIAL

No Jab, No Play legislation requires parents/carers to provide evidence that their child has received all the vaccines they need and can confirm enrolment in an early childhood education and service. Following enrolment parents/carers are required to keep this evidence up to date with the service.

### What is the early childhood education and care service required to do?

The No Jab No Play legislation obliges early childhood education and care services to prompt parents/carers to provide updated Immunisation History Statements.

Your child's service will request evidence of up-to-date immunisation twice a year. They will review the immunisation evidence provided to make sure children attending the early childhood education and care service remain up to date with immunisation. A health authority may also review this record in the event of a disease outbreak at the service.

The Victorian Government introduced this requirement to provide an important reminder to parents/carers about immunisation as part of a continued effort to maintain high childhood immunisation rates and protect the community from vaccine-preventable diseases.

### What are you required to do?

If your child has received a vaccine while they are attending an early childhood education and care service, you are required to provide your child's service with an updated Immunisation History Statement from the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR).

If you receive a request from the service for the latest Immunisation History Statement, and you have already provided this, you do not need to provide another copy.

### What is an Immunisation History Statement?

An Immunisation History Statement from the AIR shows if your child is 'up to date', what vaccines your child has received, if vaccines are due in the future, and when. If your child cannot have a vaccine for medical reasons, this will be listed on the statement. All vaccines recorded on the AIR will appear in your child's Immunisation History Statement.

### How do I obtain an Immunisation History Statement?

- [myGov](https://my.gov.au/) <https://my.gov.au/>
- [Medicare Express Plus](https://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/express-plus-mobileapps) <https://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/express-plus-mobileapps>
- [Medicare Service Centre](https://findus.servicesaustralia.gov.au/) < https://findus.servicesaustralia.gov.au/>

- Australian Immunisation Register, free call on 1800 653 809
- Ask your GP/immunisation nurse to print the statement (note, not all immunisation providers can do this).

No Jab No Play - Immunisation after enrolment

## How do I tell if my child is 'up to date'?

Your child's most recent AIR Immunisation History Statement will have a section titled 'Immunisation status'. If the status is 'up to date', then your child has had all the vaccines they need for their age. If this is 'not up to date', make an appointment with your child's immunisation provider.

If your child has completed their childhood vaccinations, the statement will be 'up to date' and no vaccines will be listed under the 'Next due immunisation(s)' heading.

## What if I need help?

Discuss your situation with your child's early childhood education and care service. Services can provide you with information about enrolment and refer you to immunisation support services.

If you have questions or concerns about immunisation, speak with your doctor or your local immunisation service.

## Why is this required?

If there is a disease outbreak at the service, accurate and current evidence of immunisation is needed to identify children at risk (for example, children too young to be fully immunised against a disease) who may need to stay away from the service until it is safe for them to return.

## Why immunise?

Immunisation is a proven and safe way to be protected against diseases that cause serious illness and sometimes death. Immunisations are free and protect the vaccinated person and those in the community who cannot be vaccinated by reducing diseases spreading.

## When are immunisations due?

The National Immunisation Schedule program provides free vaccinations to children at birth, 2 months, 4, 6, 12 and 18 months of age and 4 years of age.

To find out what immunisations your child needs, see your doctor or local council immunisation service.

## More information

[Better Health Channel](http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au) <www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au>

[The Victorian Department of Health](https://www.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/immunisation) <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/immunisation>

[The Australian Government Immunisation](https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/immunisation) <https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/immunisation>

[Health Translations](http://www.healthtranslations.vic.gov.au) <www.healthtranslations.vic.gov.au> for translated resources

To receive this publication in an accessible email the Immunisation Program, Community and Public Health Division, Department of Health <immunisation@health.vic.gov.au>.

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Available from [Immunisation after enrolment fact sheet for parents](#)

<<https://www.health.vic.gov.au/publications/immunisation-after-enrolment-fact-sheet-for-parents>>

**No Jab No Play - Immunisation after enrolment**

# HOW TO PACK A NUDE FOOD LUNCH

The Nude Food Warriors have created a step-by-step guide to make packing a Nude Food Lunch easy as 1, 2, 3!



## STEP 1

Choose the main lunch item, it may be something from the list below or a Nude Food creation of your own

- Sandwich/ Roll
- Wrap/Pita
- Frittata/Quiche
- Pasta/Pasta Salad
- Salad
- Sushi/Rice Paper Rolls
- Noodles
- Stir Fry
- Egg Muffins

## STEP 2

Select your fruit

- |            |             |
|------------|-------------|
| Apple      | Berries     |
| Orange     | Fruit Salad |
| Banana     | Pear        |
| Grapes     | Mandarin    |
| Watermelon | Kiwi Fruit  |

## STEP 4

Dont Forget Hydration!

Fill your favourite reusable drink bottle with filtered or tap water! Remember to refill throughout the day to make sure you stay hydrated!

## STEP 3

Pick a nutritious Nude Food snack

- Yoghurt
- Vegetable Sticks and dip
- Cheese and crackers
- Popcorn (natural)
- Rice Crackers
- Vege chips (homemade)
- Pretzels

Stuck on what to pack your Nude Food Lunch in? Turn over for some great storage ideas!



# PICK&MIX 1-6!

## FOR A HEALTHY LUNCHBOX

## SOMETHING FROM EACH GROUP

### 1 FRUIT

- FRESH FRUIT**
- Apple
  - Banana
  - Mandarin
  - Orange quarters
  - Passionfruit halves (with spoon)
  - Watermelon, honeydew, rockmelon chunks
  - Pineapple chunks
  - Grapes
  - Plums
  - Nectarines, peaches, apricots
  - Strawberries
  - Cherries
  - Kiwifruit halves (with spoon)
  - Pear
- MIXED FRUIT**
- Fruit salad
  - Fruit kebabs

- DRIED FRUIT**
- Dried fruit, nut, popcorn mixes\*
- TINNED FRUIT/SNACK PACKS/CUPS**
- In natural juice (not syrup)



### 2 VEGETABLES

- FRESH CRUNCHY VEGIES**
- Corn cobs
  - Carrot sticks
  - Capsicum sticks
  - Green beans
  - Cucumber sticks
  - Celery sticks
  - Snow peas
  - Tomatoes (e.g. cherry and Roma tomatoes)
  - Mushroom pieces

- Can serve with either:**
- Hummus
  - Tomato salsa
  - Tzatziki
  - Beetroot dip
  - Natural yoghurt

- SALADS**
- Coleslaw and potato salad (reduced fat dressing)
  - Mexican bean, tomato, lettuce and cheese salad
  - Pesto pasta salad\*

- BAKED ITEMS**
- Grilled or roasted vegetables
  - Wholemeal vegetable muffins or scones
  - Vegetable slice (with grated zucchini and carrot)
  - Popcorn

- SOUP** (In small thermos)
- Pumpkin soup
  - Potato and leek soup
  - Chicken and corn soup

### 3 MILK, YOGHURT AND CHEESE

- Milk
- Calcium-enriched soy and other plant-based milks
- Yoghurt (frozen overnight)
- Custard

- Tip:**
- Freeze the night before to keep cool during the day

- Cheese cubes, sticks or slices
- Cottage or ricotta cheese
- Cream cheese
- Tatziki dip

- Can serve with either:**
- Fruit
  - Wholegrain cereal, low in sugar
  - Vegetable sticks
  - Rice and corn cakes
  - Wholegrain wheat crackers

### 4 MEAT OR MEAT ALTERNATIVE

- Tinned tuna or salmon in springwater
- Lean roast or grilled meats (e.g. beef, chicken, kangaroo)
- Fajeta balls
- Lean meat or chicken patties
- Tinned tuna or salmon patties
- Lentil patties
- Lean deli meats (e.g. ham, silverdale, chicken)
- Baked beans (canned)
- Tofu cubes
- Hummus dip
- Lean meat or chicken kebabs sticks
- Peanut butter\*

- Can serve with:**
- Wholegrain sandwich, roll, pita or wrap bread with salad
  - Rice and corn cakes
  - Wholegrain wheat crackers
  - Side salad

- Vegetable fritatta
- Skinless chicken drumsticks
- Savoury muffins or scones (e.g. lean ham, cheese and stratos)
- Homemade pizzas with lean roast or deli meats and vegetables

- Can serve with:**
- Side salad
  - Steamed or roasted vegetables

### 5 GRAIN AND CEREAL FOOD

- MAINS**
- Wraps
  - Sandwiches
  - Rolls
  - Toasted sandwiches

- Tip:** Use breads such as wholemeal, multigrain, rye, sourdough, pita, flat, corn, mountain, lavash, white fibre-enriched, soy and seeded, herb, naan, bagels, foccacias, fruit bread and English muffins.

- Pasta dishes
- Rice, quinoa or couscous dishes
- Noodle dishes
- Sushi

- SAVORY BAKED ITEMS**
- Homemade pizzas
  - Wholemeal savoury muffins or scones (e.g. ham, cheese and corn muffins)
  - Vegetable based muffins
  - Pasta or noodle bake

- SWEET BAKED ITEMS**
- Fruit loaf
  - Wholemeal fruit based muffins

- SNACKS**
- High fibre, low sugar cereal (e.g. muesli)
  - English muffins
  - Crackers
  - Crispreads
  - Rice cakes
  - Corn thins
  - Wholemeal scones
  - Pketelets
  - Crumpets
  - Hot cross buns (no icing)

### 6 WATER

- Take a water bottle (for refilling throughout the day)
- Tip:**
- Freeze overnight to keep foods cool in lunchboxes

**Sweet and savoury snack foods** (e.g. muesli/fruit/nut bars, biscuits, crisps, cakes, muffins, slices) should be limited in lunchboxes. They can lead to excess energy intake if consumed in large amounts.

**Sugar sweetened drinks and confectionery** should not be provided in lunchboxes. They can lead to excess energy intake and tooth decay.



\* Check your school's policy regarding the use of nuts and products containing nuts.

For more information about healthy eating and for many tasty recipes, visit the Healthy Eating Advisory Service: [www.heat.healthytgether.vic.gov.au](http://www.heat.healthytgether.vic.gov.au).