



FAMILY HANDBOOK 2021

Glass Street Kindergarten

16 Glass Street, East Kew VIC 3102

Telephone: 9859 6049

E: glasstreetkinder@gmail.com (general)

www.glass-street-kinder.org.au

Welcome to Glass Street Kindergarten 2021

Glass Street Kindergarten is a community-based kindergarten located in the leafy streets of Kew East. We offer a rich and engaging pre-school education program.

Our educators are dedicated to creating a learning environment that fosters a strong sense of community, actively promoting and encouraging parental contribution and involvement while building strong community partnerships.

Please take the time to read this handbook and keep it close by to refer to throughout the year as it may answer any questions that you may have.

Our Philosophy

Glass Street Kindergarten originated in the 1950s in the nearby Scout Hall. The current premises grew from the strength of community spirit. Local people banded together to raise funds that would allow for the construction of a new building for the families of Kew East. In 1956 on our existing site, Glass Street Kindergarten was officially opened. Today, the large European and native trees, provide a beautiful canopy of shade, colour, and beauty for the children at our kindergarten. We take pride in our outdoor space and the endless learning opportunities it provides the children.

Our Vision

A space where all children, families and educators belong.

Our Mission

Glass Street Kindergarten is committed to providing a nurturing, inspiring and inclusive learning environment for all members of our community. We celebrate and value the history and the stories of the past, present and future generations.

We Believe

At Glass Street Kindergarten, we believe all children are capable and competent. We aim to provide an inclusive approach where each child's voice is listened to and respected. We are committed to providing a happy, safe, and welcoming learning community for our children.

We believe play-based learning is essential for children because it contributes to their overall development and wellbeing. Our educators are responsive to children's ideas, provide an open-ended environment and scaffold learning to support children's education.

Family centred practice is core to what we do. We endeavour to form inclusive and trusting partnerships with our families. Inclusion of different cultures and diverse communities is highly regarded and valued. We recognise our long history of local community contribution as integral to the life of our kindergarten. We highly value and respect our community of families of the past, present and future as well as paying our respects to the Traditional Owners of the Land.

Our educators are committed to best practice and strive for continuous improvement. We believe reflecting on all aspects of our teaching, leads to developing joyful and better educational outcomes for our children.

Our Children's Voices

"My favourite thing to do at kinder is look at the sun"

"I like the flowers at kinder. They make me happy"

"I like to go for walks at kinder around the garden. I like to play with my friends"

"I like the monkey bars the best. I can swing upside down like a monkey!"

Kindergarten Management

Glass Street Kindergarten is an incorporated body administered by a Committee of Management. The Committee is elected at the Annual General Meeting and consists of parents of children attending the kindergarten. The Committee meets once a month in the evening. Non-committee members are welcome to attend meetings to discuss any issues they may have regarding the running of the kindergarten.

The Committee of Management comprises of the following members:

- President
- Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Social Coordinator
- Communications Officer
- Grants Officer
- QIP Officer
- Group Representatives

The Committee is responsible for all aspects of the management of the kindergarten including:

- Employment of staff
- Setting of fee levels
- Purchase and maintenance of equipment, building and grounds
- Provision of funds for the operation of the kindergarten
- Payment of outgoing costs, including insurance, utilities and wages
- Policy development
- Quality control
- Adherence to the Code of Conduct

Timetable

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
3 YEAR OLDS 9.30am – 1.30pm		4 YEAR OLDS 8.30am – 4.00pm	3 YEAR OLDS 9.30am – 1.30pm	4 YEAR OLDS 8.30am – 4.00pm
GUMNUTS		BLUEBELL	GUMNUTS	BLUEBELL

Program

Our program is an intentional play-based program which reflects the ideas and interests of the children and teachers alike. We provide a wide range of open-ended learning experiences that are both challenging, developmentally appropriate, and also meet the needs of all children and their individual learning styles. We view the role of the adult as a facilitator in each child's learning journey and strongly believe that by scaffolding children's learning we enable every individual to reach their full potential.

The Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) for Australia and the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF) guides the teaching and learning at Glass Street Kindergarten.

The frameworks draw on conclusive international evidence that early childhood is a vital period in children's learning and development. It has a specific emphasis on play-based learning and recognises the importance of communication and language and social and emotional development.

The frameworks also convey the highest expectations for all children's learning and it communicates these through the following five learning outcomes:

- children have a strong sense of identity
- children are connected with and contribute to their world
- children have a strong sense of wellbeing
- children are confident and involved learners
- children are effective communicators.

Some aspects of each outcome have been outlined for you below.

Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity

This is evident when children:

- sense and respond to a feeling of belonging
- openly express their feelings and ideas in their interactions with others
- initiate and join in play
- are open to new challenges and discoveries
- increasingly cooperate and work collaboratively with others
- celebrate and share their contributions and achievements with others
- show interest in other children and being part of a group
- reflect on their actions and consider consequences for others
- celebrate and share their contributions and achievements with others
- show interest in other children and being part of a group
- reflect on their actions and consider consequences for others

Outcome 2: Children are connected with and contribute to their world

This is evident when children:

- understand different ways of contributing through play and projects
- cooperate with others and negotiate roles and relationships in play episodes and group experiences
- listen to others' ideas and respect different ways of being and doing
- begin to think critically about fair and unfair behaviour
- participate with others to solve problems and contribute to group outcomes

Outcome 3: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing

This is evident when children:

- assert their capabilities and independence while demonstrating increasing awareness of the needs and rights of others
- share humour, happiness and satisfaction
- make choices, accept challenges, take considered risks, manage change and cope with frustrations and the unexpected
- combine gross and fine motor movement and balance to achieve increasingly complex patterns of activity including, dance, creative movement and drama
- show increasing independence and competence in personal hygiene, care and safety for themselves and other

Outcome 4: Children are confident and involved learners

This is evident when children:

- are curious and enthusiastic participants in their learning
- follow and extend their own interests with enthusiasm, energy and concentration
- initiate and contribute to play experiences emerging from their own ideas
- use reflective thinking to consider why things happen and what can be learnt
- try out strategies that were effective to solve problems in one situation in a new context
- transfer knowledge from one setting to another
- experience the benefits and pleasures of shared learning exploration

Outcome 5: Children are effective communicators

This is evident when children:

- respond verbally and non-verbally to what they see, hear, touch, feel and taste
- contribute their ideas and experiences in play, and small and large group discussions
- interact with others to explore ideas and concepts, clarify and challenge thinking, negotiate and share new understandings
- sing chant rhymes, jingles and songs
- share the stories and symbols of their own culture and re-enact well-known stories

Learning Spaces and Environment

At Glass Street Kindergarten, we highly value the importance of the learning spaces and environment. We believe that for optimal learning children need to feel happy, safe and secure in their environment. We role model positive interactions which enable children to form secure relationships with peers and adults. This also helps in building upon children's feeling of self-worth and respect for themselves and others.

We have created an inspiring, aesthetically pleasing, engaging indoor learning environment that supports individual investigation, parallel and cooperative play and collaborative learning. The children's interests are reflected in the experiences provided and used to extend their learning in all areas.

We have a 'bush oasis' and vegetable garden with fruit trees which provide the children natural world a magnitude of learning experiences relating to the natural world around them. It offers opportunities for investigation and hands-on learning in regard to sustainability and life cycles.

Excursions and Special Activities

Excursions, incursions and special events are planned for all children at Glass Street Kindergarten. The educators plan for excursions, incursions and special activities when it is thought to provide benefit to the program. The daily program is planned around these events and provides children to engage in learning around various topics.

Children cannot be taken outside the kindergarten without parental authorisation on an excursion. Parents are requested to complete a separate authorisation form for each excursion.

Excursions require the participation of a number of parents/guardians to ensure appropriate child/adult ratios and supervisions. At the time of an excursion there will be a list for parents to complete should they wish to be involved. Each adult is responsible for the supervision of children. We really appreciate family support during these excursions.

(Please note that in 2020 due to Covid-19 restrictions most excursions and incursions were unable to proceed. For 2021, the kindergarten will resume these activities where possible)

Daily Drop-off and Pick-up Procedures

The following is a list of tasks which parents/guardians must fulfil on a daily basis:

Drop Off

- Parents are required to complete the Daily Attendance Book (sign-in book). Please sign, noting the name and time of arrival of your child. Please ensure that you sign beside the corresponding number for your child which remains the same for the duration of the year.

This book is used in case of an emergency to help account for all children present at the kindergarten

- If you or your child ride a bike or scooter to kindergarten, please park it around the side, behind the gate.

Pick-Up

- At the conclusion of the session, children are dismissed individually by name. We teach this process and ask our families to explain this to their child to reinforce the importance of this. We do this to ensure we see children being picked up by authorised adults.
- Parents are required to complete the Daily Attendance Book. Please sign, noting the name and time of departure of your child.
- The teacher is unable to hand a child over to any person other than the parent unless authorisation is given. Authorisation needs to be confirmed in writing and discussed with your teacher.
- When entering and exiting the front gate, please only allow children in your care to exit and make sure it is firmly closed behind you. If holding the gate open for others to enter the kindergarten please ensure you know them, or of them. If unsure, please call a staff member for assistance. For safety reasons, we do not want strangers on the premises.

(We will keep families informed of any changes required to drop-off and pick-up Procedures as they arise)

Parking

- For the safety of all children, please drive slowly in our narrow street and follow parking signage.
- For the consideration of our neighbours, please do not park across driveways.
- Please adhere to street signs and parking restrictions outside the kindergarten entrance.
- Please do not leave children unattended in your car.

Clothing

It is the aim of the kindergarten to foster a sense of independence in our children as well as assuring their safety within the kindergarten itself. Therefore, when dressing your children for kindergarten please consider the following:

- please ensure that all clothing, including hats, coats, jumpers etc. are named.
- that your child is wearing comfortable and easy to manage clothing that enables them to be independent.
- shoes should allow freedom of movement when climbing. Please **no thongs or Crocs** as they can be dangerous. Gumboots are outdoor wear and can be left at the door.
- we encourage fun, messy play, so please be mindful of this when choosing clothes for kindergarten days.
- between September and April or when the UV rating is three or above, it is compulsory for children to wear hats and sunscreen when outdoors. In addition, we encourage the wearing of clothing with sleeves (e.g. no spaghetti string straps or tank tops).
- please include a **spare set of clothing in your child's bag** so that in the event of an accident, children may be changed into something fresh and familiar.

Glass Street Kindergarten Clothing with New Logo

Clothing items, including hats, with the new Glass Street Kindergarten logo are available to purchase during the year through EduThreads (www.eduthreads.com.au). Please speak to our Administration Officer, Carolyn, for more information.

Snack and Lunch Time

Glass Street Kindergarten promotes a healthy and active lifestyle. We encourage children to embrace a love of fresh, healthy food, and a love of the outdoors. If your child suffers from food allergies or is sensitive to certain foods, please notify the teacher immediately.

Our kindergarten aims to minimise waste and we promote the use of reusable containers over plastic wrappers which end up in landfill. Therefore, we encourage the use of small reusable containers instead of using clingfilm.

Three-Year-Old Program

Please send a piece of fruit and/or vegetable with a healthy snack in a **small, named plastic container** to each session for your child and one other healthy option such as crackers and cheese or yogurt. We recommend that the snack container is placed in a cooler bag in warmer months.

Please also provide a labelled bottle of water for your child to drink throughout the session

Four-Year-Old Program

Please send two healthy snacks in two small, named plastic containers to each session for your child's morning and afternoon tea. In addition, please provide lunch in a **separate, larger, named lunch container**. We ask that you help your child learn how to identify between their **snack containers** (smaller containers) and their **lunch box** (larger container). We recommend that the lunch box is placed in a cooler bag in warmer months.



Please also provide a labelled bottle of water for your child to drink throughout the session





We ask that you do not bring nuts or foods containing nuts to kindergarten to ensure the safety of children with allergies.

We appreciate your understanding and co-operation in keeping our kindergarten safe for everyone.



Snack (morning/afternoon tea) suggestions:

- Fruit, chopped (preferred)
- Vegetables, chopped (preferred)
- Sandwiches
- Pita bread with filling or dip
- Cheese
- Yoghurt
- Dry biscuits and dip/cheese
- Plain popcorn
- Pretzels
- Olives
- Nori rolls
- Dried fruit
- Fruit tubs
- Homemade cake/muffin/slice



Lunch suggestions:

- Sandwich or roll
- Wrap
- Nori rolls
- Savoury muffin
- Pita bread
- Pasta



Birthdays

Birthdays are celebrated for each child at Glass Street Kindergarten, either with or without birthday treats.

We request that invitations to parties not be handed out at kindergarten to avoid any embarrassment.

In line with our healthy eating philosophy, we celebrate birthdays with fruit birthday treats. This is in response to many families being uncomfortable with sugary treats, as well as the decision to demonstrate to children that fruit can be celebratory and exciting too.

Please speak to a member of staff well before your child's birthday so the celebration can be included in our program planning.

Some examples to spark your imagination!



Health and Safety

For the wellbeing of all the children, please do not send a child who is unwell to kindergarten. If your child has contracted an infectious disease, please ring the teacher who will advise you how long the Children's Services Regulations specify that your child should remain away from the kindergarten. If your child is generally feeling unwell, the best place for them is at home recuperating.

If your child will be away for more than one day, please notify the teacher. This also applies to holidays.

Administration of Medication

Parents are required to provide written authorisation in cases where administration of medication is, or may be, necessary. Such information is recorded in the Medication Book, which is kept by the teacher. **Always give medication to the teacher.**

Injuries

In the event of a serious injury where medical attention is required, attempts will be made to contact the parent immediately. In the case of minor accidents and injuries, parents will be advised of the details at collection time.

If whilst at kindergarten a child is seriously injured or there is a medical emergency, the following procedure will take place:

- teacher asks educator to supervise the other children
- teacher is responsible for ensuring that the child is attended to, isolated, made comfortable and reassured
- teacher informs parents or emergency contact
- if parent or emergency contact cannot be reached and the teacher feels it is necessary, the child will be transported to the nearest doctor or hospital by ambulance
- educator then attends to the child while the teacher returns to main group of children.

Immunisations

All children enrolling at Glass Street Kindergarten must be fully immunised, unless they are eligible for the 16-week grace period under 'No Jab No Play' legislation.

Please see www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/factsheets/no-jab-no-play.htm for more information.

Immunisation is the parent's responsibility. Please ensure your child's latest Immunisation History Statement is provided to the kindergarten (even if you are eligible for the 16-week grace period) and an updated copy is provided to the kindergarten every time your child is immunized.

Sunscreen and Hats

Please ensure that your child has sunscreen applied before the start of each session when the UV rating is three or above, and between September and April. Sunscreen is provided at the beginning of each session should you require it. We use the Hamilton UV brand of sunscreen.

Children who attend the four-year-old kindergarten will be supported to reapply sunscreen after relaxation time. In the event that a child is unable to use the kindergarten supplied sunscreen, parents must provide sunscreen, clearly named with the child's name, as an alternative. This needs to be given to the teacher and left at the kindergarten.

As an ongoing commitment to our Sun Protection Policy, it is a requirement of all children attending Glass Street Kindergarten to wear the Glass Street Kindergarten hat. This is required at all times when the UV rating is three or above and between September and April. New hats can be purchased from the EduThreads website.

Hats are to remain at the kindergarten.



Enrolment

Enrolments at Glass Street Kindergarten are managed by the Boroondara Kindergarten Central Enrolment Scheme (BKCES). Parents must apply each year for a place at the kindergarten for the following year. Please note, there is no automatic enrolment for children in the three-year-old group who are moving to the four-year-old kindergarten. Parents must reapply for a place via BKCES.

For further information about BKCES and their enrolment policies and practices refer to the information document available at:

<https://www.boroondara.vic.gov.au/community-support/children-and-families/kindergarten>

or contact BKCES on telephone 9278 4444.

Kindergarten Deferral

Once commencing kindergarten, if parents (in consultation with the teacher) have concerns about their child's readiness, they are able to withdraw their child from the respective group by the end of Term One.

In doing so, you will be placed at the top of the list for the following year. Please note that deferral is not possible after Term One. Should families have concerns about their child's progress or readiness for school, please do not hesitate to speak with your teacher as early as possible to assess the options.

Second Year of Funded Kindergarten

Children in four-year-old funded kindergarten need to display two or more areas of developmental delay, with specialist referral or guidance, in order to be eligible for a second year of funded kindergarten. Being younger does not meet the criteria for a second year of funding. Each child is an individual and cannot be compared to other children.

There is no automatic entitlement to, or guarantee of, a repeat year for four-year-old kindergarten. If you believe that your child may require an extra year of kindergarten, please discuss your options with your child's teacher before the end of Term 1.

The Department of Education does not support children repeating three-year-old kindergarten.

Three-Year-Old Kindergarten Commencement

Parents and guardians should be aware that children cannot commence kindergarten until their child has turned three years of age due to regulated adult to child ratios.

Orientation

We aim to provide each child an enjoyable introduction to their kindergarten group. To help your child settle in comfortably, we have slightly shorter sessions for the first few weeks. These first sessions not only help children settle in gradually, but also allow extra time for staff to get to know and spend time with each child. Each child has different needs and ways of settling into new situations. Some children may be ready to settle into full-time kinder straight away, while others may need a little more time to feel secure and confident in their new learning space.

Please note that the times for the shorter sessions over these first few weeks are outlined in the enrolment letter that you receive prior to commencement.

Leaving parents for the first time to go to preschool can be a very emotional experience for both parent and child. Please speak to your child's teacher if they are struggling with the longer sessions as they increase during the orientation program. The teachers at Glass Street Kindergarten are more than happy to work out an individual plan with you to meet the needs of your child.

Communication and Feedback

Communication and feedback at Glass Street Kindergarten is ongoing throughout the year and takes place in a variety of forms.

Parent Meetings

All parents are invited to attend an individual Parent/Teacher Sharing Meetings during the year. These are valuable meetings where the parents and teachers can share information about your child, their learning and developmental progress. Families have vast knowledge of their children and we value working in collaboration with you.

Glass Street Kindergarten plays a vital role in your child's transition to school. Throughout the year, should you or the teacher have any concerns about the progress of your child, a consultation will be arranged to discuss future outcomes. This conversation can further support you in your understanding of your child as a learner in their learning community and how they are developing skills for lifelong learning. Kindergarten is part of the learning continuum whereby parents will have ongoing and regular communication with their child's teacher.

Newsletter

The Committee of Management circulates a newsletter by email to all kindergarten families. The newsletter reports on the actions undertaken by the committee and information regarding the general community. Parent contributions are welcome.

Foyer Notices and Information

The noticeboards in the foyer display some official documents and relevant policies and regulations. They also display program information and upcoming local community events.

Email

At enrolment you will be asked to provide your preferred email address so that the Committee of Management can set up a group contact list. Given the busy lives we live, we believe this form of communication makes it easier to contact all parents more easily and frequently rather than relying on paper notices in the pigeonholes. This also supports the kindergarten to be more sustainable.

Communicating with Teachers

Please feel free to approach the teachers to ask any questions or provide additional information about your child so that we can best support your children and family.

We value the special relationship between you and your child as your home is your child's first learning environment. Your contribution to the program is gratefully accepted and encouraged. Parents and families are very welcome to contribute to the program with any particular skills or interests at any time. In the past, parents have helped with cooking, playing instruments, excursions, craft experiences, talking to the children about a holiday, even speaking a second language to the children.

If you need to discuss any matter with a teacher in private, please make an appointment.

Parent Survey

A parent survey is administered annually. Parent feedback is vital and greatly appreciated. This information is used to enhance Glass Street Kindergarten into the future. Parents are asked to provide constructive feedback in areas such as, communication, kinder program, the environment and overall satisfaction. A few weeks after all the data has been collated a summary of the responses is distributed to parents (anonymity is ensured).

Grievances

If you have any concerns about your child or the experiences they have at kindergarten, please talk to the teacher. Most problems can be easily resolved if we work together.

The Glass Street Kindergarten Committee of Management is committed to the resolution of any unresolved complaint or grievance that relates to any aspect of the operation of the kindergarten. A complaints policy has been formed indicating the procedure to be followed to ensure that all matters are dealt with efficiently and consistently. The contacts for a complaint of grievance are displayed in the foyer.

All grievances are treated confidentially and with the utmost respect.

Should you have a grievance that has not been resolved to your satisfaction, please put your grievance in writing and contact the kindergarten President

Parent Involvement

Stay and Play

Four-Year-Old Program

Parents are warmly invited to join us in the kindergarten program and have the opportunity to see first-hand the amazing learning that takes place throughout the year. We will let you know when this starts dependent on our program.

In first term, our focus is on settling the children into the program, ensuring they feel safe, secure and a valued member of our whole 'class team' whilst becoming familiar with the routines of the day. Our family involvement is evolving throughout the year. A *Stay and Play* roster is displayed near the kindergarten entrance if you wish to participate in the program (Covid-19 restrictions may apply).

Three-Year-Old Program

Families are welcome in the three-year-old program, as this is often the first-time children are spending time in an environment away from family, it is exciting for children to share it. A *Stay and Play* roster for parental involvement will be put at the front entrance of the service (Covid-19 restrictions may apply).

Other Parental Involvement

Each family will be asked to support us by laundering smocks, tea towels and hand towels.

If you have an occupation or particular interest and are willing to share it with the children, please pass details onto the teacher.

Throughout the year, a series of social events are organised. We believe these events are not only an important way of supporting the kindergarten but are also ways of showing our children that we belong to a community and support one another. We look forward to your involvement in these events!

Working with Children Check

As part of the Government's Child Safe Standards, Glass Street Kindergarten will be requiring that all volunteers who participate at kindergarten in a range of ways including Stay and Play, working bees and excursions must have a current Working with Children Check (WWCC) card registered with Glass Street Kindergarten.

WWCCs last five years and are free for volunteers who work with children.

Parents holding a Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) card can provide a copy of this to the kindergarten instead of a WWCC card, but holders must also register with Working with Children Check Victoria.

Unfortunately, people without a WWCC card cannot participate in these activities. A receipt showing submission of an WWCC card application is not sufficient.

To apply for a WWCC, please go to www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au.

Fees

The operating costs of Glass Street Kindergarten are met in three ways:

- Department of Education and Training (DET) funding for each child enrolled in four-year- old child kindergarten
- term fees
- fundraising.

As the kindergarten is a not-for-profit organisation, all families are encouraged to assist, participate in and/or donate to fundraisers to ensure the maintenance and upgrading of the kindergarten's facilities and grounds.

Following the State Government's announcement of 'free kindergarten' in 2020, term fees for 2021 are detailed below:

Three-Year-Old Gumnuts	\$185 per term
Four-Year-Old Bluebell	\$0 per term

Levies

Due to the State Government's recent announcement regarding 'free kindergarten', there will be no levies charged in 2021. Any levies already paid will be refunded to the family unless the family wishes to make a voluntary donation of this levy to the kindergarten.

Voluntary Withdrawal of Child

Ideally, one full term's notice is required when a child is voluntarily withdrawn from the kindergarten. This may occur when a family is moving and the child has been enrolled into a new kindergarten. BKCES must be advised by the family that the child is being withdrawn from the kindergarten.

Questions?

If you have any questions in relation to this handbook , please contact our Administration Officer, Carolyn Camm at glasstreetkinder16@outlook.com.