



Parent Information
Handbook
2022

Welcome to our kinder!

Welcome to Summerhill Park Kindergarten (SPK). We look forward to a wonderful & rewarding partnership with your family as we help guide your child's development & learning in these important early years.

Our kinder has been a part of the local community since 1958. The knowledge gained over this time, along with our committed & caring staff, ensures we provide children with an enjoyable & educational kindergarten program.

We are run by a parent volunteer Committee of Management – one of the many ways in which you can have direct input to your child's early learning experience. You can also get involved in kinder duty, working bees & a range of fundraising & social events throughout the year so your whole family can become part of our kindergarten community.

SPK is a Child Safe Organisation. We take compliance with the Child Safe Standards very seriously to protect, respect & empower all of our kinder children.

Children from Summerhill Park Kindergarten progress to Ashburton, Hartwell, Glen Iris, St Michael's, St Cecelia's, Solway & Camberwell South primary schools, amongst others.

We work hard to create a welcoming, nurturing environment in which children & their families can feel safe & respected – coming together to share experiences, learn from each other & build a sense of belonging to our kinder & wider local community.

We look forward to getting to know you & your child.

Acknowledgement of Country

Summerhill Park Kindergarten would like to acknowledge the people of the Kulin Nations, the traditional owners of the land on which we play & learn & pay our respects to their elders both past & present.

Please refer to our website at www.summerhillparkkinder.org.au for more information about our Acknowledgement of Country & commitment to Reconciliation.

Summerhill Park Kindergarten

Address: 46 Audrey Crescent, Glen Iris, VIC 3146 Ph:03 9889 1543

Email: summerhill.park.kin@kindergarten.vic.gov.au

Website: www.summerhillparkkinder.org.au

Our philosophy

Summerhill Park Kindergarten provides kindergarten programs for preschool aged children, which reflect the values of the families & local community. The programs & service are provided in a safe & stimulating environment that welcomes & relies upon input from the children & their families. We welcome all children & families & celebrate & respect our diverse community. We share a commitment to equity & all children's right to a quality education.

Summerhill Park Kindergarten is committed to child safety & has zero tolerance for child abuse

Our Staff

Provide a caring & happy environment in which the children can express themselves freely & show their individuality.

Believe each child is unique with individual qualities & needs, & we work in partnership to ensure children can develop to their full potential

Believe play is essential to the lives of young children & should be fun, spontaneous, hands on, stimulating, relaxing, comforting & challenging. We believe learning should be fun & developed through a play-based program

Establish & maintain positive relationships with children & families to create a sense of belonging.

Establish & maintain positive relationships with each other, allowing a collaborative environment, supporting & learning with each other.

Plan, implement & reflect upon the educational program

Ensure regular & effective communication with families regarding their children & the program

Develop programs, which invite children to become involved in a variety of experiences that challenge & stimulate their abilities & thinking. Integrated learning activities encompass the curriculum areas of language, art, dance, music, math, science, drama & social studies.

Provide a learning environment that is welcoming, flexible & safe & will stimulate the curious mind.

Respond to spontaneous learning opportunities, include & encourage interests initiated by children.

Believe that indoor & outdoor environments are considered equally important as settings for learning therefore we strongly promote outdoor play & exploration.

Promote healthy lifestyles practices that enable children to thrive by role modelling & encouraging healthy food choices & active play

Ensure transitions & routines are part of the learning program

We are reflective in our practices where a continuous refined educational quality program is regularly evaluated.

Follow the Kindergarten's Code of Conduct, which guides the priorities & practices of staff & includes standards & expectations

We follow & implement the Centre's philosophy & policies. We also follow appropriate regulations & laws. Summerhill Park Kindergarten acknowledges & references "Belonging, Being, Becoming: The Early Year Learning Framework for Australia" (DEEWR) & "The Victoria Early Years Learning & Development Framework" (DET)

We Believe Children

Have a right to high quality early childhood education

Regardless of ability should feel safe & secure, allowing them to develop a sense of own identity & a healthy positive self-esteem.

Should be able to make choices, explore, experiment & ask questions to develop their thinking & problem-solving skills.

Need to be equipped with the skills of resilience, tolerance, respect, empathy & kindness to enable them to grow into capable adults.

Are capable, competent, co-contributors & we acknowledge them as active participants in their own learning. Children have a voice & the right to be heard. Children contribute to the educational program, with their unique individual qualities.

In Partnerships with Families & Communities

We acknowledge that parents, carers & families, are & always will be the primary influence on their child. It is our responsibility to work collaboratively with families as partners, towards achieving individual goals for their children.

We strive to ensure that every family is welcomed & respect the diverse background of all our children & weave these backgrounds into the fabric of our kindergarten & program, ensuring that our Kindergarten is an inclusive place

of belonging to all.

We promote a sustainable program that strengthens children's knowledge about the natural environment.

Provide a physical environment where children can learn through nature, their senses within a natural play spaces & manufactured resources. We respect our natural & physical environment.

We believe that our philosophy will change as new insights are gained & our practice is evaluated.

Through our Reconciliation Action Plan, our vision is to visibly respect & acknowledge the unique connection that Aboriginal people have to the land on which our kindergarten is situated & to build genuine, respectful relationships with all children & families who attend our service.

We believe children are at the heart of our community & cultivate relationships with the wider community as well as nurturing relationships between the children, parents & teaching staff within the kindergarten.

Our teachers & staff

Our Teachers

Georgie Favaro (DipEd Early Childhood Education 1991) Director & 4-year-old Yellow Group Teacher

Georgie has 20 years' experience as a kindergarten teacher & the last 10 years has been here at SPK. She is the mother of two secondary school aged girls & has played various roles on kindergarten committees as a parent herself. Georgie enjoys the spontaneity of children as this will often lead the direction of the experiences she provides in the kinder sessions. She is a dedicated teacher who enjoys her work & provides a sense of fun.

Megan Bennett (Bachelor Early Childhood Studies 1995) Educational Leader & 4-year-old Blue Group Teacher

Megan is a kindergarten teacher with 16 years' experience. She has two secondary school aged boys who attended Summerhill Park Kindergarten & Megan was a member of the committee at that time. She has been employed with SPK since 2009.

Megan bases her program on encouraging children's creative expression through open ended experiences, developing healthy relationships & expanding upon the children's ideas & interests.

Christine Pritenang (Dip Teaching, Early Childhood 1982) 3-year-old Red Group Teacher

Christine has 30 years' experience as a kindergarten teacher, enjoying 21 of those at Summerhill Park Kindergarten. Christine enjoys the children's creative thinking & loves to provide an open-ended creative program that encourages the children to extend on their individual skills. She enjoys lots of singing with the children to encourage language & concentration skills.

Our Staff

3 Year Old Group

Red Group: Educator: Christine Pritenang
Educator Assistant: Mary Martinez

4 Year Old Groups

Blue Group: Educator: Megan Bennett
Educator Assistant: Denise Taylor
Lunchtime Assistant: Michelle Gilchrist

Yellow Group: Educator: Georgie Favaro
Educator Assistant: Mary Martinez
Lunchtime Assistant: Sarah Bristow

Administration: Alison O'Hara

2022 term dates & session times

Term dates

Term 1: 31st January to 8th April (*teachers start on 28th January*)

Term 2: 26th April to 24th June

Term 3: 11th July to 16th September

Term 4: 3rd October to 20th December (*kinder sessions may end earlier than this date*)

Please note, there are no kinder sessions on the Victorian Public Holidays or on Monday 31st October (day before Melbourne Cup Day).

Timetable

Our timetable has been developed to ensure we provide a high quality, affordable kindergarten program for children that meets the needs of children & families in our local community.

3-Year-Old Group (20 children per group)

Year /Group	Day	Start	Finish
3yo Red Group	Friday	8.30am	1.30pm

4-Year-Old Groups (22 children per group)

Year/Group	Day	Start	Finish
4yo Blue Group	Tuesday	8.30am	4pm
	Thursday	8.30am	4pm
4yo Yellow Group	Monday	8.30am	4pm
	Wednesday	8.30am	4pm

Fees

Kindergarten fees may change from year to year & should be used as a guide only. The following are the fees for families attending in 2022.

2022 Term Fees

Term Fees include program costs, excursions/incursions & a sun smart hat.

Red Group 3yo 2022	5 hour program (1 x 5 hour session)
Term Fees	\$235 per term

Blue Group 4yo 2022	15 hours (2 x 7.5 hour sessions)
Term Fees	\$695 per term

Yellow Group 4yo 2022	15 hour program (2 x 7.5 hour sessions)
Term Fees	\$695 per term

2022 Security Deposit: \$100 credited against Term 2 fees

2022 Maintenance Levy: \$120 per family. Each family is required to pay the Levy at the start of the year with their Term 1 Fees. In term 4 a full refund will be given to those families that are CoM members or have volunteered at 2 major kinder events.

Payment

A Kindergarten Fee Notice is provided each term. As per our Fees Policy, fees for each Term are due by the last day of the term prior, with the exemption of Term 1 fees that are due during the enrolment process the year before.

Concessions may be available for Health Care Card holders & other eligible families. If you think this may apply to you, or if you have any other questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact our Assistant Treasurer via email: assttreasurer@summerhillparkkinder.org.au

Payment can be made using Internet Banking (preferred option), Cheque or cash.

The Committee of Management asks that you please be prompt with your payment. If you are unable to make payment by the due date, please contact our Assistant Treasurer assisttreasurer@summerhillparkkinder.org.au as soon as possible to make alternative payment arrangements.

Our SPK Fees Policy outlines penalties that may apply for late payments or non- payment of fees.

A copy of the Fees Policy is available at the kinder or on our website <https://www.summerhillparkkinder.org.au/policy>

Our learning program & environment

Active learning is at the heart of our developmentally based program. As qualified preschool educationalists, we firmly believe that children learn through play. We plan a program based on the individual needs of each child & stretching & extending their knowledge, understanding & skills through a combination of structured, incidental & open experiences & activities. Our kindergarten environment allows children the opportunity & freedom to:

- Make choices
- Develop new skills & abilities in all areas of development including physical, social & emotional, language, & cognitive
- Become more independent
- Learn a basic routine
- Develop an awareness & acceptance of others
- And of course, to enjoy themselves in both group & individual activities

Our facilities are regularly updated to enhance your child's kindergarten experience.

- A spacious classroom which is continually adapted to include:
 - interesting new play & learning spaces as children develop over the year
 - displays of creative art, a reading corner & large spaces for group play
 - special event focus areas, such as chicken hatching, incursions, Autumn displays
 - a range of toys & tools to encourage participation & creative play, such as dress ups, building blocks, home corner
- A large outdoor environment which encourages interaction & play in active & creative spaces including:
 - natural & sustainable play spaces featuring native & indigenous plantings, rain garden, 'creek bed', water pumps & cubby
 - fixed structures such as slides, bridges, sand/digging pits
 - flexible play structures, such as monkey bars & adaptable swings
 - covered all-weather play space for outdoor play all year round
 - grass area for creative & group play & a group seating area
 - seasonal vegetable gardening
 - large range of toys to use in different ways, e.g. tunnels, tools, cooking gear

Incursions & excursions

Special events & activities are planned throughout the year. In the past these have included animal & reptile visits, chicken hatching program, puppeteers, community members visiting the children's program, music and, for 4-year-olds, a visit to the Botanic Gardens & experiences in our local community.

Special program focus

Reconciliation

Our kindergarten values strong & meaningful relationships with all families & communities within our area. To enhance our understanding & inclusion of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander culture & communities, we used resources from Reconciliation Australia to create a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) for our kinder.

The RAP helps guide our activities, reflection & practice through the year through:

- our Acknowledgment of Country, which we use to introduce & welcome families to our meetings & special events
- providing a range of materials & program activities as part of an established curriculum (eg, excursion to Botanic Gardens) or through incidental discussion
- exploring literacy & storytelling by telling Dreaming stories, and
- using Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander music & arts to achieve learning outcomes in the program.

Why we have an Acknowledgement of Country

An Acknowledgement of Country is a way of showing awareness of, & respect for, the traditional Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander owners of the land on which a meeting/event is being held, & of recognising the continuing connection to Country. We use our Acknowledgement of Country as an opportunity to promote an awareness of the past & ongoing connection to place.

National Quality Framework (NQF): Australia's Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander cultures are valued. QA6.3.4: Building relationships & engaging with the local community.

City of Boroondara Community Strengthening Grant – 2016-17

SPK was awarded the community strengthening grant to create an Indigenous art installation (story poles). The story poles were installed in July 2017 & were painted by the kinder children, with assistance from Aboriginal artist Warkoo & an Aboriginal Elder, Judda from the Art Yarramunua Gallery. This project further strengthens SPK's recognition of the Traditional Owners & Custodians of the Land which our children enjoy.

City of Boroondara Sustainable Kinder of the Year 2015

In 2015 we were successful in being awarded a grant to install a raingarden. This encourages & nurtures understanding of our natural environment, & our impact upon it.

For the children, our rain gardens & natural 'creek bed' play space provide many opportunities for exploring water play & how water shapes our environment.

We encourage reduced packaging in lunches & snacks, feed our worm farm with leftovers (a special task eagerly anticipated by the children!) & enjoy regular seasons of planting in our vegie patch.

Behind the scenes, we use grey water to flush toilets, have a commitment to using recycled products, reuse & recycle what we can, & ensure our gardens are planted with a combination of indigenous, native, bush tucker & water hardy plants.

QA3.3: An active role in caring for the environment, contributing to a sustainable future.

Standards & principles that guide our program & practice

Our kindergarten uses the Victorian Early Years Learning & Development (VEYLD) Framework & the Australian Early Years Learning Framework – Belonging, Being & Becoming – to guide our learning programs. These Frameworks convey the highest expectations for all children’s learning & provide broad direction for early childhood educators in early childhood settings to facilitate children’s learning.

Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity

Outcome 2: Children are connected with, & contribute to, their world

Outcome 3: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing

Outcome 4: Children are confident & involved learners

Outcome 5: Children are effective communicators

For more information, speak with our Director, visit www.summerhillparkkinder.org.au or visit <http://education.gov.au> or www.acequa.gov.au

The Federal Government has also established a National Quality Framework (NQF) including standards – the National Quality Standards (NQS) – that all early childhood education & care services, including kindergartens, are assessed against.

The NQS supports our use of Frameworks by ensuring that the necessary facilities, environments, staffing arrangements, resources & management structures are in place & comprises guiding principles to be embedded in all aspects of daily practice:

1. The rights of the child are paramount
2. Children are successful, competent & capable learners
3. Equity, inclusion & diversity
4. Valuing Australia’s Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander cultures
5. The role of parents & families is respected & supported
6. High expectations for children, educators & service providers

There are seven Quality Areas (QA) in the National Quality Standard, which capture aspects critical to the provision of quality early childhood education & care. These include educational concept & practice, structural quality, interactions between educators & children & targeting services to meet the needs of families & local communities. You may see some of these areas listed in our program materials, setting out which area of the National Quality Standard that activity relates to.

Summerhill Park Kindergarten was assessed most recently, in March 2017 as EXCEEDING the National Quality Standards. We are very proud of these results and continue to work hard to maintain these high standards.



For more information about the NQF & each quality area & what this means for your family visit the Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) website at www.acecqa.gov.au & the Early Learning Association Australia website www.elaa.org.au.

Reference: Early Learning Association Australia, Early Childhood Information Sheet: National Quality Framework – the facts

Enrolment & orientation

Enrolment

Enrolments are handled by Boroondara Kindergarten Central Enrolment Scheme (BKCES). Applications can be made online through BKCES any time after your child turns two, for attendance in 3yo or 4yo kinder. Offers of places in the 3yo programs & the funded 4yo programs will be made by BKCES in Term 2 or 3 of the year preceding attendance. Please contact BKCES on 9278 4444 or visit www.boroondara.vic.gov.au for further information.

Upon successful application to our kindergarten, you will be invited to the Annual General Meeting. You will collect your Parent Information Pack which contains information & forms needed to start your kindergarten year & you can book your orientation sessions.

Orientation sessions

In Term 1, children will start kindergarten in sessions that are reduced in group size & number of hours. Here you will have a short interview with your kindergarten teacher & meet some of the parents & children that will be in your group. This period enables the children to become comfortable in their new environment, aiding the settling process & helping teachers get to know the group.

At these sessions, the teachers will also provide important information to parents in relation to policies, processes & our Code of Conduct at SPK. Families will have an opportunity to ask questions & choose a time for kinder duty.

3 year old kindergarten commencement

In order to comply with national regulations regarding teacher to child ratios, your child will only be able to commence the 3-year-old kindergarten program once they have turned three. Parents are able to accept a spot in the 3-year-old group & are required to pay Term 1 fees, & the security deposit, to hold this spot.

Please speak to the 3-year-old kindergarten teacher about induction & orientation for children turning three in Term 1.

4 year old kindergarten sessions

While the formats of our 4-year-old groups are different, children in both groups get the opportunity to experience structures & routines that develop practical school- readiness skills such as eating lunch & having periods of active & quiet play & learning & rest time.

Immunisation

As part of our enrolment process, we require an Immunisation History Statement (IHS) or an exemption, whichever applies. We require this written proof prior to commencement at the kinder.

No Jab, No Play

Under the 'No Jab, No Play' legislation, all parents/guardians seeking to enrol their child at an early childhood service in Victoria – including Summerhill Park Kindergarten are required to first provide evidence that their child is:

- fully immunised for their age OR
- on a vaccination catch-up program OR
- unable to be fully immunised for medical reasons.

Conscientious objection' is not an exemption under the legislation.

An IHS can easily be obtained by contacting the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) in the following ways:

- Online through MyGov once an account has been created
- Medicare Express Plus App – once a MyGov account has been created
- Over the counter – at a Medicare Service Centre
- Phone AIR on 1800 653 809

Boroondara Council runs a free immunisation program. Times & locations for their sessions are available on their website.

For more information, visit the Victorian Department of Health website on:

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

Useful information about kindergarten

Arrivals & departures (kinder drop off & pick up)

On arrival:

- Wait with your child until the session starts. They are under your supervision until then
- Sign your child in, including details of who will be collecting your child
- Help your child find their locker & store their bag
- Help your child place their lunch/snack box/water bottle on the trolley in the foyer
- Say hello to the teacher or assistant in your group
- Help your child wash their hands first before settling into an activity

When planning to leave, always tell your child you are leaving & when you will return. This honesty helps them to settle more quickly than just disappearing at a convenient time. The teachers help you manage the situation if your child is a little unsettled.

When **collecting** your child:

- Sign your child out
- Step into the “magic circle” to collect your child
- Collect your child’s belongings/bag
- Only people listed in your enrolment records, as being authorised to collect your child will be allowed to collect your child. If you have organised for one of these authorised people to collect your child, please make sure you have listed them in the Attendance book for that collection

Parents/guardians are responsible for completing the attendance book sheet by noting the time the child arrived & left & then signing their name. This must be completed on each arrival & departure as this record is used to determine which children are in care in the event of an emergency.

If your child’s name is highlighted on the attendance book sheet, please see a staff member before leaving.

Remember to check pockets, artwork box & foyer noticeboard each day.

Please make sure the gate is closed again each time you open it & only allow the children in your care out of the kindergarten when leaving the premises. Never allow another child through the gate. Please tell them to wait for their parents.

Siblings

Siblings must stay under your supervision at all times. For insurance reasons & due to the very quick changeover between sessions, we cannot allow/encourage children to play in the kinder grounds after sessions have finished. We encourage you to move the play time to the park next door.

Child safe environment

SPK is a Child Safe Organisation & takes very seriously our commitment to, & compliance with the Child Safe Standards. We are committed to providing a safe & respectful environment for all – a child-safe & child-friendly kinder. We do this by conducting regular checks of equipment, services, staff qualifications & program materials, & creating an open environment where children & parents feel secure, supported & empowered to express their thoughts & feelings. All staff & volunteers must interact in a thoughtful, respectful way with the children & with other staff, volunteers & families at the kinder.

Staff members at the service are also mandatory child protection reporters. They are required by law to report any suspicion of child abuse. **Volunteers & parents on kinder duty are also required to report any suspicion of child abuse** to a staff member or member of the Committee of Management.

It is compulsory at SPK to have a current FREE volunteer Working with Children check to participate in kinder duty or volunteer at kinder events involving children. You will need to show your WWC check to a member of CoM or a staff member before volunteering at SPK – the orientation session is a great time to get this done. A copy of all WWC sighted at SPK will be kept on file.

To apply for a check, please go to www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au & follow the prompts. For further information, speak to the Director.

Clothing

We offer several messy activities at kindergarten such as sand & water play. We find that children will participate more freely in casual play clothes. Please provide a spare set of clothes just in case & remember to label all clothing.

- Thongs & Crocs are not permitted footwear. Climbing & other physical activity can become dangerous with such footwear
- A warm coat & hat for your child is essential during the cooler weather as we use our outdoor environment whenever possible
- In the warmer months, children should wear suitable clothing for sun protection. Please see the Sun Protection section below for more details
- We provide a sun hat as part of your kinder fees

Food

Snack time is an opportunity to talk about the different foods that are good for our bodies as well as give the children a sense of growing independence (e.g. bringing their own container & water bottle).

Children in 3yo kinder will need a morning snack, lunch & water bottle. For longer sessions (4yo kinder) your child will need to bring an afternoon snack as well. Lunch must be provided in a separate container as it will remain in your child's bag until after morning tea.

Please clearly label your child's water bottle & food containers with your child's name.

Good nutrition is essential for your child's good health. Suggestions include:

- Cheese & crackers, small savoury muffins, pikelets, scone
- Fruit & vegetables (eg carrot & celery sticks, small cucumbers, capsicum slices, fruit whole or in small pieces – but do label loose bananas!)
- Yogurt (squeezy yoghurts or containers – please bring a spoon for these)
- Sandwich (no peanut butter, Nutella or other nut spreads)
- Sultanas, dried fruit
- Further suggestions can be found online at www.summerhillparkkinder.org.au

Do not send chocolate-coated biscuits, muesli bars, chocolate bars, lollies or food with nuts

No plastic please

We love our worm farm, but the worms don't like plastic. We encourage parents to provide 'nude food' for their children's snacks & lunches. This means avoiding packaged products where possible & not wrapping sandwiches in plastic wrap. There are plenty of great, cheap containers available that are designed to keep your child's food fresh & in one piece.

Food Allergies & Anaphylaxis

Please be aware that in any given year a number of children at our kindergarten may suffer from serious food allergies. Your kindergarten teacher will inform you of the allergies within your group. We ask that you do not bring these foods to kindergarten. As part of our Anaphylaxis Policy we will ensure:

- that all children wash their hands before eating
- there is no sharing of food during snack & lunch time

Please do not bring nuts or foods containing nuts (eg, peanut butter, Nutella, cakes made with almond meal, museli bars, etc) to kinder.

If your child has any allergies, we will ask you to provide a treat box that contains safe food that can be offered to your child as an alternative at birthday celebrations & parties etc. Please see *Birthdays* below.

For more information, please refer to our *Anaphylaxis Policy* available in the policy manual in the kindergarten foyer or online at www.summerhillparkkinder.org.au

Birthdays

If your child is having a birthday during the term, we will celebrate it with the group by singing Happy Birthday & blowing out the candles on our playdough birthday cake. You are welcome to provide a treat for the group but due to allergies across all groups we have found a packet of jelly snakes works best. If you are unsure of what to provide, please feel free to discuss this with the teaching staff.

Group representatives (reps) & class contact lists

As part of our volunteer Committee of Management, we have a volunteer Group rep for each group. Your Group rep will distribute a class contact list to everyone, so you can organise social gatherings & playdates with your new SPK family. The group rep should also help the fundraising committee organise social events for the kinder.

Incursions & excursions

To help stimulate the children's interest in a particular area, special events are planned throughout the year. We rely on the participation of parent volunteers to help supervise the children during excursions. The cost of incursions & excursions are included in the Term Fees.

Parking

On-street parking is available in Audrey Crescent & Montana Street. Please do not park on nature strips, over neighbour's driveways, or over the solid white lines following the curve near the Audrey Crescent/Montana Street changeover. Be respectful to our neighbour's, & park safe.

Always ensure your children exit the car via the rear door closest to the kerb, footpath or gutter away from the road.

Policies

We have established policies & procedures to ensure the safe, fair & appropriate governance & operation of the service. These policies are reviewed regularly to make sure they are up to date with current legislation & practice. Please make yourself familiar with these policies, in particular: *Code of Conduct, Interactions with Children, Fee Information for Families, Sun Protection, Complaints & Grievances, Service Incursions & Excursions*, & any relevant medical condition policies.

Parents can view these policies online at <https://www.summerhillparkkinder.org.au/policy> or in the kindergarten foyer & are always welcome to contribute to the review process.

Punctuality

Please try to be at the Kindergarten on time so that your child does not enter into a group that is already established for the session (remember what it was like last time you were late for a meeting or a party). Likewise, try to be on time to collect your child as they may become anxious if most of the children have gone home. If you are running late, please let the staff know, so they can confidently reassure your child that you will be there soon. A charge may be imposed when parents/guardians are frequently late to collect their child from the program as per the Fees Policy.

Security gate/security code

Our gate has a security code which is changed annually. You will be notified of this code at your first orientation session. The code is to be kept confidential & for use by kinder families only. Please do not share the code with anyone who does not need it to collect your child. Please ensure that you only take your child in & out of kinder with you, & that the gate is shut behind you.

Please do not let children ride on the gate or use the gate opening button.

Scooters & bikes (and prams)

We are fortunate to be close to good walking tracks & parks. This encourages many families to walk, scoot or ride to kinder – a healthy way to start or finish your day!

If you are scooting or riding (including glide bikes) your child must wear an appropriate helmet (please visit www.childroadsafety.org.au).

Scooter, bikes & prams cannot be left inside the kinder play areas (inside the security gate). They can be left inside the kinder garden near the bench at the owner's own risk. We ask that you store them away from the kinder gate to ensure safe access.

Sun protection

Between the months of September & April, & on days with a UV rating over 3, please make sure you apply a minimum SPF 30+ sunscreen to your child before the session starts.

Please also dress your child in clothing for sun protection. For example:

- clothing that is loose-fitting, made from cool, densely woven fabric & covers as much skin as possible
- tops with elbow-length sleeves & collars
- knee-length or longer-style shorts & skirts.

Singlet tops & shoestring tops/dresses do not provide adequate protection in the sun.

We will seek shade & reapply sunscreen as necessary through the day. A sun smart hat is provided to each child as part of term fees & all children must wear the hat when outside. If you are on kinder duty, please also have a hat for yourself & wear sunscreen. Spare hats & sunscreen are available if required. For more information please refer to our *Sun Protection Policy*.

Travelling to & from kinder

Whether you travel to & from kinder by car, foot, scooter or pram, please be mindful to follow the road rules, use an appropriate child car seat, & wear a helmet when riding. Be particularly aware of driveways if riding. This helps us all to arrive safely at kinder – & models appropriate road safety behaviour for your children.

For more information on teaching road safety to children, including links to fact sheets on child car seats & helmets, please visit www.childroadsafety.org.au.

Your child's health & wellbeing

General information & expectations

Parents play an active role in promoting habits & practices to promote the health of children at the kindergarten & minimising the spread of illnesses at the kindergarten.

Please notify us when your child is diagnosed as having an infectious disease, and/or feeling unwell. Please keep your child at home until they are well.

Your consideration contributes to our ability to maintain a healthy environment for all of the children & adults within the kindergarten.

Washing hands

Prior to the commencement of each session, we ask children to wash their hands in the bathroom. If younger siblings attend a kinder duty session or play during drop-off at the kindergarten, we ask that they also wash their hands or use the hand sanitiser.

Coughing/blowing nose etiquette

You can help teach your child health etiquette:

- Coughing: please show children how to cough into the inside of their elbow, not their hands.
- Blowing noses: using a tissue, press gently on both sides of the nose & blow. When finished blowing, squeeze the sides of the tissue in & towards the end of the nose. Wrap the tissue up & dispose. Wash your hands with soap & water & dry thoroughly.

Asthma, Anaphylaxis & other medical conditions

If your child requires medication for asthma, allergies or other diagnosed medical conditions, we require a:

- copy of your medical management/action plan, signed by your doctor. This should be supplied with your enrolment form
- clearly labelled container/bag with the **prescribed &** in-date medicine which will be kept at the kindergarten

As part of the enrolment process, your teacher will discuss a risk minimisation plan with you & establish any communication plans/records that may need to be kept. A copy of your child's medical management/action plan will be placed in the kinder room (near the kitchen) for staff/volunteer reference.

Medications are kept in the medication bag hanging in the corridor (outside the kitchen) or in the fridge as required.

It is the parents' responsibility to ensure teachers are kept up to date with any changes to their child's condition, management or medication requirements.

For more information please refer to the relevant medical conditions policies available in the Policy manual in the kindergarten foyer or online at www.summerhillparkkinder.org.au

If your child requires medication while at kinder

If your child requires medication (other than as part of managing an ongoing medical condition as above), you must provide a clearly labelled container with the **prescribed &** in-date medication, with your child's name on it.

We cannot give paracetamol or other over the counter medications without a prescription.

In the event of illness, injury or trauma

We have an Illness, Injury & Trauma book, which can be found near the Attendance book at the kindergarten.

If your child has an **accident** while at kinder, after appropriate care & first aid has been given, the incident & action taken will be written into this book. When collecting your child you will be asked to sign against the incident.

If your child **becomes ill** while at kindergarten you will be asked to collect your child as soon as practical in the interests of the health & safety of the other children at the kindergarten.

When to keep children home

Children who are unwell should stay home from kindergarten. Please let us know if your child is sick for more than two days.

If they have an infectious condition, children must stay away from kindergarten for the minimum exclusion periods established by the Public Health & Wellbeing Regulations 2019 (please refer to the table in the foyer or online at <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/infectious-diseases/school-exclusion/school-exclusion-table>)

If your child is diagnosed with an infectious disease (including gastro) you must notify the kindergarten immediately to enable the kindergarten to notify other parents of children who may be at risk of infection.

Head lice

Parents are responsible for regularly checking their child's hair for head lice or lice eggs, regularly inspecting all household members, & treating any infestations as necessary. If lice are found, please notify the kinder immediately. Children can attend kinder again once the lice have been treated.

Please note head lice cannot be 'caught' from sheets, carpet, bedding, pillows or hats. They are transferred from head-to-head from other children when they gather together or share hairbrushes.

First Aid

All staff members at Summerhill Park Kindergarten maintain First Aid & emergency management (allergy, anaphylaxis etc) training. First Aid kits are regularly checked & are found in the kitchen & as part of our emergency/evacuation kit in the office. Parents are welcome to inspect these kits at any time.

Exclusion due to illness

We apply our *Dealing with Infectious Diseases* policy & the National Health & Medical Research Council guidelines for staying healthy in early childhood education & care services (please see office copy or visit <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/reports/clinical%20guidelines/ch55-staying-healthy.pdf>)

A child will not be able to attend SPK for any period of time during which:

- The child is suffering from a disease or condition that is contagious through normal social contact
- A medical practitioner has recommended the child not attend kinder
- When the Director/President requests that the sick child be kept away from the kinder because the child requires care that the kinder staff cannot fulfil
- Where a child requires four-hourly paracetamol or during the first 24 hours of receiving antibiotics
- If a child has been unwell prior to arriving at kinder
- The child has a high temperature
- 24 hours after vomiting, fever or diarrhea
- If a child has been hospitalised in the last 48 hours

Please use your own judgement. Your child may not be contagious but if they are generally feeling unwell it might be better for them to stay at home for rest & extra cuddles. Children who have had a contagious illness or an unspecified rash must produce a doctor's certificate stating the details of the illness that they are no longer contagious & are fit to return to kinder.

For details of minimum period of exclusion, & when a medical certificate is required, please see the *Infectious Diseases Exclusion Table* (as determined by the Public Health & Wellbeing Regulations 2009) in the foyer or visit <http://ideas.health.vic.gov.au/guidelines/school-exclusion-table.asp>

Communication & feedback

We use the following tools to keep in touch with parents about the kindergarten program & their children's progress.

Teacher discussions

Each teacher will happily discuss your child's progress or aspects of the program with you at any time. Spontaneous discussions often occur at arrival & departure times but may be restricted by the activity of the children coming & going.

Parents often use their time on kinder duty to ask specific questions about their child's behaviour. If you require a more formal discussion with your teacher, please feel free to make an appointment.

Attendance book

Important kinder dates/notices & signup sheets are found near the attendance book. If your teacher has an urgent notice, it will often be listed in this spot.

Noticeboards & pockets

The kinder foyer has several noticeboards/whiteboards for learning program information & kinder/community events. Each child is also allocated a pocket for flyers & notices (and birthday invitations!). Please check your pockets & the foyer regularly.

Newsletters

A quarterly SPK newsletter & group newsletters are emailed to families.

Email

Most kindergarten communication, such as newsletters, term invoices, receipts & class communications, are via email. We do this in response to parent requests, & to minimise our paper use at the kinder.

Please notify the kindergarten & your group rep if you change your email address – we don't want you to miss out on all the fun! If you are not receiving emails from kinder or your group rep, please check your junk mail folder. If you need a printed copy of materials, please let the office know.

Website

Our website www.summerhillparkkinder.org.au has information about the kindergarten, our detailed policies, programs & website links on caring for kindergarten-aged children, as well as a calendar of events.

SkoolBag

SkoolBag is another way SPK communicates with kinder families. It allows us to send reminders & timely updates to assist you. Please download the free app from the App Store – compatible with android & apple devices. Create an account and request access to SPK. Once linked to SPK, you will get an alert when there is a new notification from the kinder.

Transition statements to your selected school

Prior to your child entering their selected school, their kindergarten teacher will complete a Transition Learning & Development Statement. It provides an opportunity for children, their families & the professionals working with them to contribute & have their views reflected in it. The information in the Statement helps Prep teachers to get to know the children entering their classes before they start, & to plan for each child's learning & development when they start school.

Feedback, suggestions or complaints

Parents can provide feedback, make suggestions/complaints or get in touch with the kinder in a number of ways:

- Suggestion box in the foyer
- Speaking directly with your kinder teacher, group representative or getting in touch with the Committee President via president@summerhillparkkinder.org.au
- Email your query/concern to kinder@summerhillparkkinder.org.au
- Participate in the annual parent survey, policy reviews or other consultation opportunities provided (e.g. joining a subcommittee, attending a Committee of Management meeting)

We also have an established complaints process & policy, & all feedback is kept confidential as appropriate. We ask that in the first instance, you speak with your teacher or the kindergarten Director or a member of CoM.

Getting involved

There are many opportunities for parents & the wider community to be involved at kinder. Whether you can bake biscuits for a social activity, share a special talent you have with the children such as playing a musical instrument, help with the general running of a kindergarten session, supply services as part of your professional life, or join the Committee of Management, every contribution helps & is greatly appreciated by our kinder community.

The Committee of Management

Without a Committee of Management (CoM) the kindergarten would not satisfy minimum obligations as an “incorporated association” & therefore be unable to operate as a legal entity. The kindergarten’s funding would be under threat as the Government only provides funding to legal entities.

Basically, no CoM = no kinder.

The CoM is a voluntary group of parents elected at the Annual General Meeting held at the end of the kindergarten year. The CoM is responsible for the finances & general running of the kindergarten including maintenance, social events & overseeing the education program. It is a great way to meet other parents & contribute to your child’s kinder. The kindergarten needs parents to volunteer their time, energy, enthusiasm & skills to fill these important roles. No previous experience is required!

Meetings are held once a month throughout the year. The monthly meeting is open to all parents from the kindergarten community & is held on the kindergarten premises. The Committee greatly values your feedback.

Fundraising & social functions

Social functions & fundraisers are organised by the CoM’s Social Subcommittee & group reps to help all families to get to know each other & build the kindergarten community.

There are minor fundraising activities throughout the year, but our major social event is the annual Trivia Night.

Term Fees cover the gap between government funding & the day-to-day operating costs of the kindergarten. Any capital expenditure projects such as updating & maintaining children’s play equipment & landscaping are considered separately with a view to allocating the Capital Improvement income as well as any other possible fundraising income to specific projects.

Maintenance

In 2022, we will be putting your maintenance levy towards a regular gardener & handy man.

If you want to earn back the maintenance levy refund of \$120, you have the option of volunteering at two major kinder fundraisers/events, or at one of the four Working Bees or being a member of CoM. If you are able to help please let us know.

The parent duty roster

In order to run the kinder program for your children, we need parent help in our sessions. We ask you can spare two hours of your time to help in the session you sign up for. At the beginning of each term, a duty roster for each group will be placed near the attendance book. Please choose dates that are convenient for you & come & help at the kindergarten sessions.

Please remember it is compulsory at SPK to have a current Working with Children check to be able to do kinder duty.

Parents of children in the 4yr old groups are required for 1-2 sessions per term, & parents of children in the 3yr old group are required for 2 sessions per term.

Parent duty is a great opportunity to see your child in action at kindergarten & of valuable assistance to our teaching staff, helping with various activities & general supervision.

Newsletters

Our kindergarten newsletters (SPK News) are published quarterly throughout the year. They are the main forms of communication between the CoM & the kindergarten families, to keep you informed of social events, program changes & current issues affecting the kindergarten.

We love to hear from our kindergarten families. If you have a story, picture or painting to share about kinder life or family life please don’t hesitate to talk to your group rep.

Information privacy collection statement

We believe your privacy is important.

Summerhill Park Kindergarten has developed a *Privacy & Confidentiality Policy* that illustrates how we collect, use, disclose, manage & transfer personal information, including health information. This policy is available on request or at any time from our foyer or website <https://www.summerhillparkkinder.org.au/policy>

To ensure ongoing funding & licensing, our service is required to comply with the requirements of privacy legislation in relation to the collection & use of personal information. If we need to collect health information, our procedures are subject to the *Health Records Act 2001*.

Purpose for which information is collected

The reasons for which we generally collect personal information are given in the table below.

Personal information & health information collected in relation to:	Primary purpose for which information will be used:
Children & parents/guardians	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To enable us to provide for the education & care of the child attending the service• To manage & administer the service as required
The Approved Provider if an individual, or members of the Committee of Management/Board if the Approved Provider is an organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• For the management of the service• To comply with relevant legislation requirements
Job applicants, employees, contractors, volunteers & students	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To assess & (if necessary) to engage employees, contractors, volunteers or students• To administer the individual's employment, contracts or placement of students & volunteers

Please note that under relevant privacy legislation, other uses & disclosures of personal information may be permitted, as set out in that legislation.

Disclosure of personal information, including health information

Some personal information, including health information, held about an individual may be disclosed to:

- government departments or agencies, as part of our legal & funding obligations
- local government authorities, for planning purposes
- organisations providing services related to employee entitlements & employment
- insurance providers, in relation to specific claims or for obtaining cover
- law enforcement agencies
- health organisations and/or families in circumstances where the person requires urgent medical assistance & is incapable of giving permission
- anyone to whom the individual authorises us to disclose information

Laws that require us to collect specific information

The Education & Care Services National Law Act 2010 & the Education & Care Services National Regulations 2011, Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 (Vic) & employment-related laws & agreements require us to collect specific information about individuals from time-to-time. Failure to provide the required information could affect a child's enrolment at the service, a person's employment with the service, or the ability to function as an incorporated association.

Access to information

Individuals about whom we hold personal or health information are able to gain access to this information in accordance with applicable legislation. The procedure for doing this is set out in our *Privacy & Confidentiality Policy*, which is available at the kinder or online at www.summerhillparkkinder.org.au.

Information correct at time of printing. May 2021
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