



# Gum Nut Preschool & Childcare

## Kinder Room Information Booklet

*We respectfully acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land where we learn and play, the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation. We pay respect to their Elders past, present and emerging.*



9499 4410

[office@gumnutpreschool.com.au](mailto:office@gumnutpreschool.com.au)

[www.gumnutpreschool.com.au](http://www.gumnutpreschool.com.au)



# WELCOME TO THE KINDER ROOM

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Welcome to our Four-year-old Kinder Room. We believe learning is an adventurous journey filled with curiosity, connection, and creativity and are delighted to present our comprehensive 4-year-old funded kinder program, carefully crafted to nurture your child's growth and development as they embark on their educational journey.

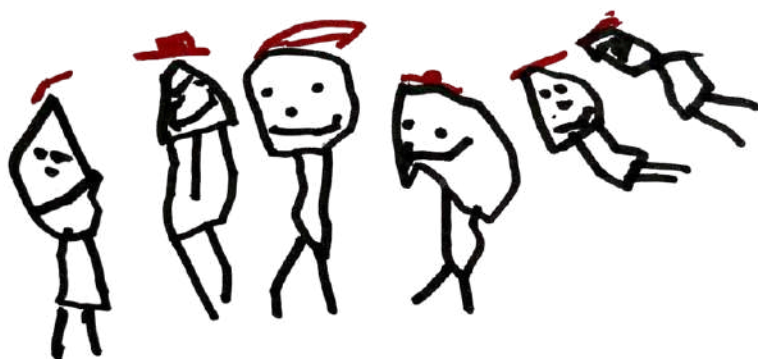
At Gum Nut Preschool and Childcare, our program is divided into two key elements: the Onsite Program and the Bush Kinder Program. These components work together seamlessly, providing a well-rounded learning experience for your child.

Children enrolled in the Kinder Room will enjoy a balanced experience, with dedicated kinder hours in our well-equipped upstairs room and rooftop deck, complemented by the natural beauty of the outdoor setting, including the wetlands. The Onsite Program serves as the foundation of our educational approach, with a focus on inclusivity, diversity, and self-expression.

We believe in fostering an environment where every child feels valued and heard, encouraging them to explore their interests and empowering them to express themselves freely. Our skilled teachers and educators guide the children through various activities, creating a rich tapestry of learning that celebrates the uniqueness of each individual.

Alongside the Onsite Program is our Bush Kinder Program, a distinctive outdoor experience designed to connect children with nature, instilling in them a sense of belonging and respect for the environment. This program encourages children to explore the wonders of the great outdoors, fostering a deep connection with the land and promoting a sense of responsibility towards nature.

Both programs are interwoven to create a progressive and organic learning journey for your child. We recognise the importance of preparing children for the transition to school, and our curriculum is designed with this in mind. Through hands-on activities, play-based learning, and guided exploration, we aim to cultivate the skills and knowledge that will make your child school-ready. At Gum Nut Preschool and Childcare, we believe in nurturing the whole child – mind, body, and spirit. We invite you to join us on this exciting adventure as we empower your child to learn, grow, and thrive in a supportive and enriching environment. Together, let's lay the foundation for a lifetime of curiosity, connection, and success.



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# OUR KINDER PROGRAM

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In the kinder room, our program is thoughtfully designed to align with the principles of the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF), focusing on the key areas of Identity, Community, Learning, Communication, and Well-being. While our program maintains a level of structure, it is firmly rooted in the philosophy of play-based learning, recognising the immense value of exploration, creativity, and child-driven activities.

**EYLF-Informed Curriculum:** Our planning process is deeply reflective of the EYLF, incorporating the five essential elements of identity, community, learning, communication, and well-being. These elements guide our educators in creating a balanced and comprehensive curriculum that addresses the holistic development of each child. **Play-Based Learning** Our curriculum is centred on play-based activities that promote creativity, curiosity, and exploration. Through various play experiences, children develop fine motor skills, language, and cognitive abilities.

## What is Play-Based Learning?

Play-based learning involves activities that are child-directed, allowing them to explore, experiment, and discover at their own pace. It includes both structured and unstructured play, incorporating elements like imaginative play, sensory experiences, and problem-solving.

### ***The Importance of Play-Based Learning:***

- *Cognitive Development: Play stimulates brain development, enhancing memory, language skills, and cognitive abilities.*
- *Social and Emotional Growth: Through play, children learn to share, cooperate, and navigate social relationships, fostering emotional intelligence.*
- *Motor skills: Activities like stacking blocks or crawling contribute to the development of fine and gross motor skills.*
- *Curiosity and Creativity: Play encourages curiosity, imagination, and creativity, laying the foundation for a love of learning.*

At Gum Nut, our program is more than just a curriculum; it's a nurturing space where children can thrive, learn, and develop in an environment that values their individuality and celebrates the diversity of our community. We invite you to join us on this exciting educational journey where play and learning intertwine to create a foundation for a lifelong love of learning and discovery.

*Child-Centric Approach:* Central to our program is the belief that children learn best when their interests are at the forefront. Our curriculum is carefully crafted around the children's individual interests, allowing them to explore and engage with topics that resonate with them. This approach creates a vibrant and dynamic learning environment where every child's uniqueness is celebrated.

*Inclusive Community Building:* We are committed to fostering an inclusive community that embraces diversity. Our program intentionally incorporates elements that highlight and celebrate Aboriginal perspectives, diverse family structures, community diversity, and individuality. By weaving these topics into our daily activities, we aim to instill a sense of respect, understanding, and appreciation for the rich tapestry of human experience.

*Numeracy, Literacy, and Science Integration:* Numeracy, literacy, and science are embedded into our program, with a focus on cultivating a genuine interest and love for these subjects through everyday activities. Whether it's counting during play, exploring languages through stories, or conducting simple science experiments, our aim is to make learning a natural and enjoyable part of the daily routine.

*Enrichment Through Incursions:* To further enrich and extend the children's interests, we regularly incorporate incursions into our program. These experiences, led by external experts or educators with specialised knowledge, provide hands-on opportunities for the children to delve deeper into subjects that capture their curiosity.

*Excursions:* The kindergarten program annually organises two excursions: one with an educational focus tailored to the children's interests, and another at the year end to celebrate the completion of the kindergarten year. These excursions aim to provide a balanced and enriching experience for the children.

*Individual Observation Planning Records:* Every child's unique developmental journey is recorded through Individual Observation Planning Records. These records serve as a valuable tool for our educators to track each child's progress, tailor activities to their specific needs, and ensure a personalised approach to learning.





# BUSH KINDER PROGRAM

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In 2025, Gum Nut Preschool and Childcare will be introducing an enhanced bush kinder program, now available two full days per week (9:30am - 4:30pm).

Our curriculum is centered around the beautiful natural environment of Alphington Park & Wetlands, with plans to gradually expand to include Darebin Parklands and Sparks Reserve. We are committed to creating optimal learning environments for children, emphasising the importance of providing them with ample time and space for exploration. Our approach fosters a consistent and nurturing atmosphere that evolves, promoting curiosity, inspiration, and learning challenges. Recognising that children thrive through outdoor play, we prioritise their happiness and encourage them to take risks. At Gum Nut, we are proud to offer our kindergarten children the unique opportunity to engage in the Bush Kinder Program, set against the stunning backdrop of our local parks and wetlands.

The Bush Kinder program provides children with a multitude of enriching experiences, empowering them to:

## *Make Meaningful Connections with Nature*

- Encourages a deep appreciation for nature and natural materials.
- Fosters a sense of responsibility and stewardship toward the environment.

## *Navigate Dynamic Environments*

- Develops the ability to navigate through changing natural surroundings.
- Promotes ongoing inspiration for learning through consistent yet evolving settings

## *Enhance Decision-Making and Problem-Solving*

- Provides opportunities for independent and collaborative decision-making.
- Cultivates problem-solving skills individually and within a group context.

## *Motor Skills*

- Allows for the free and diverse practice of fine and gross motor skills.
- Promotes overall development and encourages a healthy, active lifestyle.

## *Expand Vocabulary and Expressiveness*

- Facilitates the learning of new words and their appropriate expression.
- Develops enhanced communication skills through diverse experiences.
- Cultivate problem-solving techniques
- Encourages experimentation and inquiry.
- Challenges children to push their limits through engaging real-life experiences.

## *Environmental Awareness and Respect*

- Facilitates the understanding and respect of the environment.
- Nurtures a sense of self-awareness and respect for others.

## *Encourage safe risk-taking*

- Provides a secure environment for children to take calculated risks.
- Build social awareness
- Cultivates social skills by promoting teamwork and collaborative discoveries.
- Encourages assisting others for a shared learning experience.



Things your child will need to participate in the program based on weather condition:

Weather condition	Warm / Hot	Cold / Wet
<b>Reccomended clothing &amp; footwear</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• light, loose fitting long sleeve top (T-shirt is acceptable)</li> <li>• Short or long pants</li> <li>• Sun smart broad-brimmed red kinder hat</li> <li>• Closed toe shoes</li> <li>• Sunscreen has been applied to all exposed skin.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Waterproof raincoat (can be kept at Gum Nut)</li> <li>• Long pants</li> <li>• Long sleeved top</li> <li>• Beanie</li> <li>• Waterproof gloves</li> <li>• Warm gloves</li> <li>• Tall Gumboots (can be kept at Gum Nut)</li> <li>• Thermals are recommended in very cold weather</li> </ul>
<b>Not Acceptable</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open toed shoes</li> <li>• Sandals</li> <li>• Thongs</li> <li>• Crocs</li> <li>• Singlet tops</li> <li>• Sleeveless dresses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non waterproof outer clothing</li> </ul>
<b>Other Required Items</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Labelled water bottle (must be taken home each day and washed)</li> <li>• A carry bag</li> <li>• A change of clothes in their bag <b>everyday</b> (underwear, socks, top &amp; bottoms)</li> <li>• A wet bag</li> </ul>	

### Bush Kinder Sessions Guidelines

2025 program sessions will be held on Monday & Thursday

- Children must be at Gum Nut and ready to leave by 9:30am
- Arrival/Departure Procedures - If your child's group has departed, late arrivals must remain at the centre.
- To collect your child during Bush Kinder, visit the centre first, sign out your child, collect their belongings, obtain an exit pass from the office, and present it to your child's teacher at the parklands.

### Meals

- All meals are provided by Gum Nut during Bush Kinder sessions.

### Term 1 Introduction

- Initial focus on road safety.
- Restricted to the top half of the park and marked-out areas.
- Emphasis on walking to/from the park, establishing boundaries, routines, and becoming familiar with the space.

### Terms 2, 3 & 4 Progression

- Gradual expansion into parklands as children develop safety awareness.
- Exploration of various areas such as the oval, river trail, old swimming pool, wetland surrounds, creek trail, and bridges.
- Flexibility in offsite learning during Term 4 based on children's fatigue levels.
- Weather and Sun Smart Policy
- Gum Nut's policy applies; ensure children are appropriately dressed for weather conditions.
- Be prepared for extended outdoor activities.

### Teacher Accompaniment

- 2-3 teachers will always accompany children during park sessions.

### Well-Resourced Program

- Abundant resources provided, including music, literacy, numeracy, and art activities even outdoors.

### Restricted Personal Items

- No home toys or valuables from children allowed during Bush kinder program.

### Parent Participation

- Parents are always welcome to join the program. Please let the teachers know in advance.



# SCHOOL READINESS

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During Term 4, our kindergarten program shifts its focus to School Readiness, aiming to prepare your child for the transition to primary school. This inclusive approach accommodates children entering their second year of kindergarten, where we adopt the role of "Kinder Captains."

Key components of our School Readiness program include:

## *Partnership with Alphington Primary School:*

- Establishing a close relationship with Alphington Primary School.
- Organising excursions for children to visit the prep classroom, allowing them to familiarise themselves with the primary school environment.

## *Interactive Excursions:*

- Providing opportunities for children to explore the prep classroom.
- Meeting primary school teachers and students, fostering a sense of familiarity and comfort.
- Encouraging children to ask questions and engage in the school setting.

## *Learning Recess and Lunchtime Routines:*

- Introducing children to recess and lunchtime routines.
- Offering insights into lunchbox etiquette, including opening lunchboxes and not consuming all food at once.

## *Practical Experience Week:*

- Designating a week for children to bring their lunchboxes to Gum Nut.
- Teaching practical skills such as using a bell and seeking permission before using the toilet, preparing them for primary school expectations.

## *Dramatic Play Area:*

- Creating a dramatic play area themed around a primary school.
- Allowing children to engage in role-playing experiences, including trying on school uniforms.
- Generating excitement and anticipation for the upcoming transition to primary school.

Our School Readiness program is designed to prepare children for the next chapter of their educational journey, fostering confidence, familiarity, and excitement about the transition to primary school.



# OUR ROUTINE

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Our routine is very flexible, as it is based around each child's individual routines and rituals.

Time	At Gum Nut		Bush Kinder
7:30 am	Family Grouping commences in the Wombat Room (Breakfast served until 8:00 am)	7:30 am	Family Grouping commences in the Wombat Room (Breakfast served until 8:00 am)
8:15 am	Head down to Kinder garden	8:15 am	Head down to Kinder garden
8:45 am	Proceed to Kinder Room	8:45 am	Proceed to Kinder Room
9:00 am	Acknowledgement of Country & Group Time	9:00 am	Get ready to go off-site
9:30 am	Morning Tea, Learning Activities & Experiences	9:15 am	Transition to Bush Kinder location
		9:45 am	Welcome & safety briefing
		10:00 am	Morning Tea and free exploration
		10:45 am	Parklands exploration (intentional teaching and guided activities)
11:30 am	Yarning Circle	12:30 pm	Lunch
12:00 am	Lunch	1:00 pm	Rest and quiet time
2:00 pm	Mindfulness Learning	1:30 pm	Yarning circle
2:30 pm	Activities & Experiences (Break in between for Afternoon Tea at 3:00pm)	1:45 pm	Projects, learning activities and exploration
4:30 pm	Return to Family Grouping	3:00 pm	Afternoon tea and final exploration
6:00 pm	Centre close	4:00 pm	Tidy up & leave for Gum Nut
		4:30 pm	Return to centre for family grouping
		6:00 pm	Centre close

# GENERAL INFORMATION

## **Please remember to sign your child in and out each day (via iPad)**

### CLOTHING

- Ensure your child is dressed appropriately for exploration; spare clothes for messy play or accidents.
- Pack cool attire for summer and a jacket, beanie, and gumboots for Bush Kinder

### FOOTWEAR

- Closed footwear or sandals that cover toes preferred; avoid thongs or crocs for safety during outdoor activities.

### MEALS

- Morning tea, lunch, and afternoon tea are provided by Gum Nut. Lunchboxes are discouraged until School Readiness Week unless for dietary reasons.

### ALLERGIES:

- Bring a treat box if your child has allergies. All medications must be left at Gum Nut with an action plan from a doctor.

### SUNSCREEN:

- Kinder will supply sunscreen unless allergies require you to provide your own. Apply sunscreen before/upon arrival daily.

### HATS

- Bulk order of hats for each child; labelled and kept at kinder. Red Kinder hats are not to go home; always keep them in your child's hat pocket.

### DRINK BOTTLES:

- Labelled bottles to be brought daily and taken home to wash; at least 600ml.

### TOYS

- Comfort toys are welcomed but encouraged to be put away in bags once settled.
- Home toys are not allowed unless modified and related to program.

### LOST PROPERTY:

- Check the lost property tub regularly; unlabelled items will be donated monthly.

## PARENT - TEACHER INTERVIEWS

- Mid-August, details to follow.

## SCHOOL TRANSITION REPORTS

- Parent component to be completed August-September; teachers will complete in September - October.

## GRADUATION

- December (To Be Confirmed).

## PARENT COMMUNICATION

- We communicate weekly updates on your child's activities and upcoming plans through our private Facebook group. Additionally, room and centre events will be shared via both Facebook and email. For daily activities, a dedicated board by the Kinder Room will keep you informed.

## EMAILS:

- Please check this often and keep us informed of email changes. Kinder email address is for planning purposes only, any other information (e.g. change of days, illnesses etc must be emailed to Office)
- Kinder Email: [gumnutkinder@outlook.com](mailto:gumnutkinder@outlook.com) (for program communication only)

## POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:

- Available in the office and some on the parent portal for reference.