



# ANNUAL REPORT

GOULBURN REGION PRESCHOOL ASSOCIATION

2025



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**IN 2025, WE PROVIDED EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS FOR 841 CHILDREN AT 17 DIFFERENT LOCATIONS.**

Welcome to our 2025 Annual Report. In this report, you will read about each one of our services challenges and achievements.

*Goulburn Region Preschool Association acknowledges, and extends our deepest respect and appreciation, to the Aboriginal People, the Traditional Custodians of the land on which our services are located throughout Victoria. We pay respect to their ancient and continuing cultures, their connections to the land, sea and sky and to the Elders, past, present and emerging.*

# CEO REPORT

GRPSA has been educating children in rural and regional Victoria for 38 years and I am proud to report that children and our educators continue to remain at the core of everything we do.

During this time, I have witnessed the dedication of our staff, communities and the families in which we run our services. Although there are constant challenges in the early years sector, GRPSA has had a successful year:

- Our commitment to Victoria's Best Start, Best Life reforms resulted in us adding three new services while continuing to offer 15 hours of Free Kinder for all 3 and 4 year olds. We have rolled out Pre-Prep in Strathbogie Shire and were able to offer at least 20 hours of Pre-Prep to Violet Town, Avenel, Nagambie and Euroa families and children.
- We welcomed Rushworth Kindergarten and Childcare to our EYM as of Dec 2025. We also were announced as the successful provider to three new kindergartens on school sites: McLean St Kindergarten (Yarrowonga College P-12) and Gaambi Djinang (translates to "Happy Footprints in Taungurung language) Kindergarten (Nagambie Primary School) both opening in early 2026. Kialla West Kindergarten (Interim name) is projected to open in 2027.
- 2025 continued to be a year of **Assessment and Rating** (A&R) and we would like to thank the services and Early Childhood Managers for the massive amount of work that goes into the preparation. At the end of 2025, all GRPSA services had a rating of meeting or exceeding.
- Our Nathalia Preschool service was recognised as one of three finalists at the Victorian Early Years Awards. The awards celebrate the remarkable work that early childhood professionals do every day to improve learning outcomes of children across Victoria. The team at Nathalia Preschool have been recognised for their Road Safety and Bike Riding Program.
- Professional Development - GRPSA was invited to take part in an exciting Australian two year research project called **Tuning in to Kids**. This program is designed to help families and educators develop skills in understanding and managing emotions, both in themselves and in their interactions with children. This program, run by the University of Melbourne has been successfully run in Norwegian Kindergartens. GRPSA is one of the first two EYM's to undertake this program. Half of our services participated in 2025 and the other half in 2026.

I want to take this opportunity to thank our senior leadership team of Corina McLeod and Lauren Lazarevski who are the backbone and heart of this organisation. To my administration team who work on backfilling, enrolments, finance, payroll and everything else it takes to run smoothly. To our Board, thank you for your steady leadership during this period of change. Lastly, thank you to our educators who have had to deal with consistent changes. Thank you for your resilience and your on-going commitment to our children.



**Ronni Druitt, CEO**



# BOARD REPORT

Over the past 12 months, the Board has experienced several significant changes, with some long-serving members moving on from their roles. As a result, we have had the pleasure of welcoming two new Board members, Keith Berry and Catherine Davis, who each bring valuable experience, expertise, and fresh perspectives to GRPSA. We welcome Catherine and Keith to the board and look forward to your input in the coming months.

We are currently without an official Board Chair. In the interim, Lewis and I have been sharing the responsibilities of this role with additional support. If you know of anyone who may be well suited to the position of Board Chair at GRPSA, please let Ronni know.

The Board continues to meet regularly and has greatly enjoyed hearing about the achievements of our services and individual employees. Across GRPSA, staff are implementing innovative, evidence-based programs that are making a positive difference for the children and families we support. The Board also recognises and appreciates the commitment and dedication demonstrated by every GRPSA employee, particularly given the challenges facing the early childhood education sector in recent years. Celebrating staff achievements and recognising outstanding performance remains an ongoing priority for the organisation.

Over the past year, GRPSA has achieved several significant milestones, including the successful acquisition of three new services, increasing our network from 17 to 20 services. This has been a substantial undertaking and represents significant growth in both enrolments and staffing. To support this expansion, additional positions and roles have been created across the organisation. While enrolments have remained relatively stable in recent years, a slight decline has been observed due to broader demographic trends and declining birth rates, a challenge that is not unique to our region.

Looking ahead, the Board remains committed to celebrating and sharing GRPSA's achievements both internally and within the wider community. We will continue to support Ronni, our leadership team, and our services to achieve ongoing success, growth, and stability.

## GRPSA BOARD



# Philosophy, Vision, Mission and Values

## GRPSA PHILOSOPHY

The Goulburn Region Pre-school Association (GRPSA) established a traveling service in 1988 to provide preschool children living in isolated settings, or in locations where no service-based service could provide a pre-school place for a child. We continue to operate as a successful Early Years Management with the following vision, mission, values, and goals for our services.

## VISION STATEMENT

GRPSA will ensure the provision of quality early childhood educational programs in rural and regional Victoria with a primary focus on kindergarten programs.

## MISSION STATEMENT

GRPSA will deliver high quality early childhood services where:

- **Staff are** valued, enthusiastic, professional and strive to continuously improve their practice.
- **Children are** actively engaged in programs that support them in their educational journey.
- **Communities and Families are** encouraged and welcome to be actively involved in the early childhood services.

## CORE VALUES

GRPSA is an organisation that promotes the following core values for staff, children, families, and the community:



# GRPSA PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

## Tuning into Kids

GRPSA has been invited to take part in an exciting Australian two-year research project called Tuning into Kids run by the University of Melbourne, with Professor Sophie Havighurst as the Principal Researcher and Program Author. This program is designed to help families and educators develop skills in understanding and managing emotions, both in themselves and in their interactions with children. It has been successfully run in Norwegian Kindergartens. Along with NERPSA, GRPSA are the first 2 EYM's in Australia to undertake this program. Half of our services are participating this year and the other half in 2026

## Drawing to Learn, Learning to Draw

Our other group of educators took part in "Drawing to Learn and Learning to Draw". This program uses drawing activities to boost language, literacy and social skills for children and educators.



**Tuning in to Kids** 



# SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS

GRPSA has undertaken safety audits of all outdoor areas to ensure compliance and safety for our children. We also have undertaken projects at services after consultations with staff.

The following works have been completed during 2025:

- New shade sails for Katamatite and Strathmerton
- New nursery kitchenette for Punt Road Childcare
- New flooring and renovations to kinder kitchen at Nagambie Childcare
- New swing set for Undera
- New signage
- Grants submitted for outdoor renovations for Murchison and Euroa



Tuning in to  
**Kids** 



# FAMILY SURVEY 2025



## GRPSA Service Survey 2025 Results

The Goulburn Region Preschool Association (GRPSA) conducted a survey with service users (parents and caregivers) to gather feedback on its programs and services, informing the organisation's strategic planning.

Out of 683 families invited to participate in the online survey, 340 responded, resulting in an impressive 49% completion rate. Thank you to parents and caregivers for helping us shape our services with your valued feedback.

### STRENGTHS

Parents/caregivers who completed a survey shared what they loved best about the service their child/ren attend:

- Warm, caring, and responsive educators who foster strong relationships with children and families
- Outdoor learning environments (including bush kinder) continue to be a highlight
- High levels of parent confidence in safety, program quality, and educator-child connections
- Individualised approaches e.g. child-led and interest-based programming
- Strong sense of community engagement and welcoming service culture
- Consistent satisfaction with communication and trust in educators' professionalism

*"The program is thoughtfully designed, capturing my child's interest and encouraging active participation. I've noticed clear improvements in their learning and development since starting."*

*"The educators are beyond amazing."*

*"The nature learning program is absolutely fantastic."*

*"Staff go out of their way to update us and answer queries and concerns."*

### OPPORTUNITIES



Expand Bush Kinder and outdoor learning opportunities



Increase the consistency and frequency of personalised communication via XPLOR



Expand before/after care services to better support working parents and offer more opportunities for families to get involved in their child's learning



Strengthen the early years workforce



Increase promotion of GRPSA's website and grow its social media presence



Boost parent/caregiver awareness of service policies and procedures and complaint handling



Seek funding for resources and facility/outdoor upgrades and modernisation



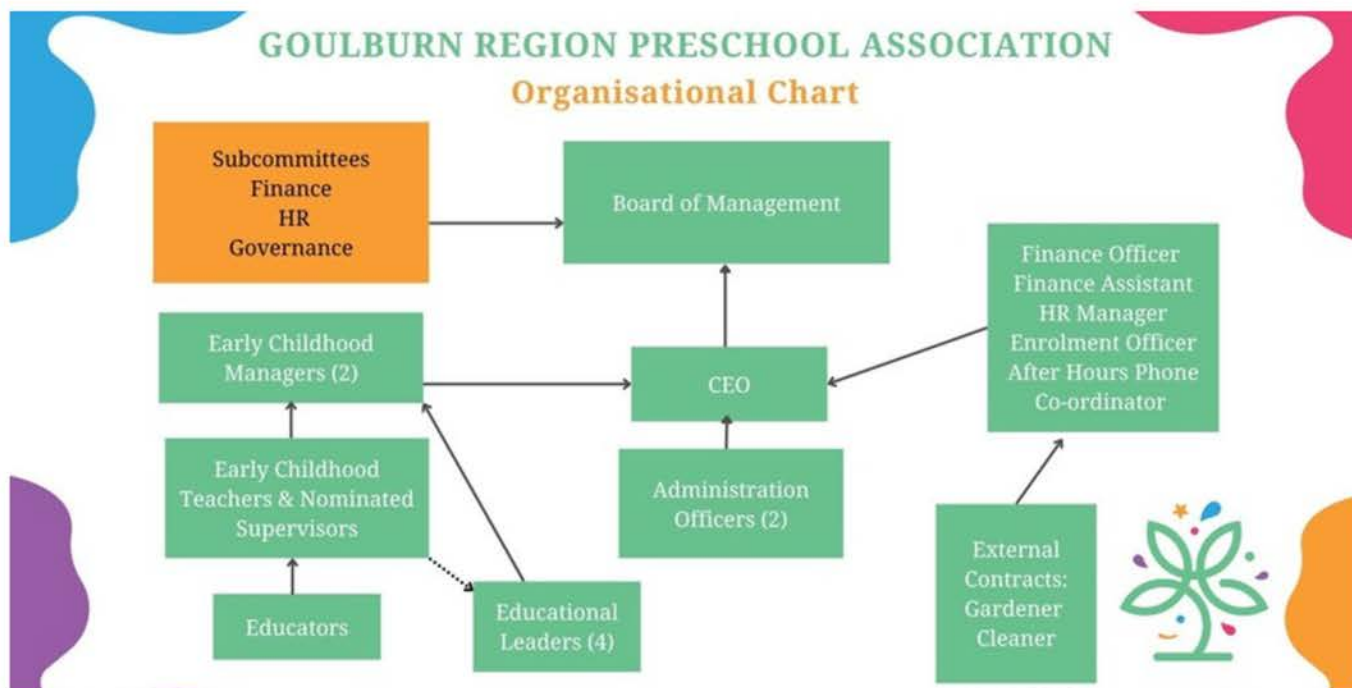
Enhance the quality and consistency of aftercare and long day care and grow creative programming

*"The facility is wonderful and creates an amazing space for learning and discovery, but the educators create the magic."*



# GRPSA GROWTH

Due to continued growth, GRPSA board approved a new organisational structure to support the CEO, EC Managers and Educators.



**Corina McLeod, EC Manager**



**Lauren Lazarevski, EC Manager**



**Mandy Bilney, Educational Leader**



**Sarah Villinger, Educational Leader**



# SERVICE IN THE SPOTLIGHT

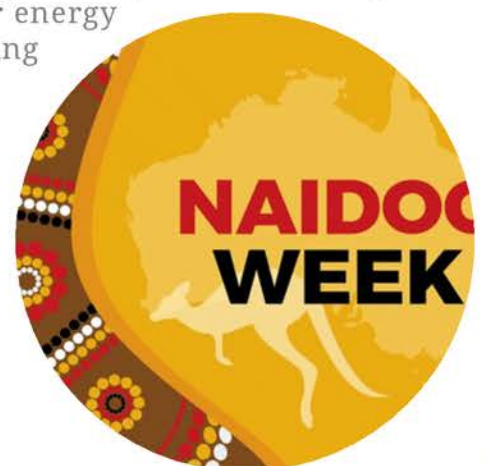
## NAGAMBIE CHILDCARE



*2025 Nagambie children walking to the train station*

Our children share a deep connection to Country and are always proud to sing their ‘Care for Country’ song. They respectfully acknowledge that we live and learn on Taungurung Land and show great care for their surroundings—always quick to notice rubbish and remind us to help protect and care for our Country. Recently, the children have also shown a growing interest in trains, so we thought—what better way to extend on their interests in culture and transport than with a train trip to Seymour to attend the NAIDOC celebrations! This excursion offered a special opportunity to deepen their understanding of Australia’s oldest living culture while engaging with the community in a meaningful way. The day began with lots of excitement as we arrived at the train station in record time! On board the train, the children were buzzing with energy, eagerly pointing out animals along the way—horses, cows, sheep, and even donkeys! Their enthusiasm was contagious, sparking conversations with fellow passengers who were curious about our destination. The children proudly shared that we were heading to the Seymour NAIDOC event. We arrived just in time for the Smoking Ceremony, walking through the cleansing smoke before joining the NAIDOC March down to Kings Park—a powerful and respectful experience. After all that walking and travelling, the children were hungry and ready for a break. We enjoyed a well-earned rest and a delicious sausage in bread. Recharged and refreshed, it was time to explore the many exciting activities. The emergency vehicles were a huge hit—children loved hopping into the driver’s seat, switching on the sirens, and exploring the trucks up close. We then joined Gnarley Neighbours, where the children had a blast taking safe risks—bravely riding skateboards down ramps and pushing their physical limits in a fun and supportive environment. Choosing a temporary tattoo was serious business, with much thought going into selecting the perfect design and choosing the best glitter colours! The tie-dye bag station was another highlight—adding colourful dyes and sprinkling salt to create magical patterns on their very own bags. The fun didn’t stop there! The children explored rhythm and sound using large hand drums, connecting to culture through music and movement. To top it all off, we enjoyed a refreshing ice cream before making our way back to the Seymour train station. The children impressed us once again with their energy and resilience, staying awake for the journey home and walking back to Kinder with big smiles and full hearts. We had such an incredible day and are so thankful to The Taungurung Land and Waters Council and Goranwarrabul House for organising such a meaningful event, celebrating 50 years of NAIDOC. We are already looking forward to returning next year.

-Amy Smith-Jones



# 2025 IN NUMBERS

841 

TOTAL ENROLMENTS

 2759

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
HOURS COMPLETED BY STAFF

544 

3 & 4 YR OLD/  
PRE-PREP  
KINDER  
CHILDREN



25

STUDENT/  
WORK  
PLACEMENTS/  
WORK  
EXPERIENCE

4  LOCAL  
GOVERNMENT  
AREAS

18 

GRPSA SERVICES

151 

CASUAL / PART TIME / FULL TIME  
EMPLOYEES

\$302,266 

GRANT MONEY  
RECEIVED

# AVENEL PRESCHOOL REPORT

It has been another enriching and rewarding year at Avenel Kindergarten, filled with growth, learning, and connection. We are proud to provide a nurturing and engaging environment where children can develop confidence, curiosity, and a lifelong love of learning. The value of kindergarten cannot be overstated—it is a vital foundation for children's social, emotional, and cognitive development, and we feel privileged to be part of this important stage in their lives.



A highlight of our year has been the implementation of our Bush Kinder program after the successful application of a Bush Kinder grant. We used the Euroa Arboretum as our bush kinder site whilst we looked further for a site within the Avenel township. We travelled by bus to the Arboretum adding another element of excitement to the program. Learning and playing in nature provides children with the opportunity to explore and learn in a natural environment, fostering independence, resilience, and a deep connection to the outdoors.

Through hands-on experiences such as climbing, building, observing wildlife, and engaging in imaginative play, children develop problem-solving skills and an appreciation for nature that extends beyond the kinder. After reflection, and with the support of our wonderful Parent Advisory Group,

We decided to continue using the arboretum as a site for our bush kinder program.

The arboretum offered a more natural and untouched space with more opportunities for children to use their imagination and creativity. We are looking forward to continuing our Bush Kinder program in 2026.



We are especially proud of the strong sense of community that exists within our kindergarten. The connection and commitment shown by our families is evident in the wonderful attendance and participation at events throughout the year.



One of the standout events this year was our annual Lantern Night. It was a truly magical evening that brought our community together in a warm and meaningful way. The children took great pride in creating their lanterns, and it was wonderful to see their excitement as they shared this experience with their families.

The glow of the lanterns, combined with singing, and time spent together, created a calm and memorable atmosphere. Events like Lantern Night highlight the importance of connection, tradition, and shared experiences, and it was a joy to see such strong participation from our families.

Whether it be celebrations or special activities, it is always heartening to see parents and families actively involved. These shared experiences strengthen relationships, support children's sense of belonging, and contribute to a



vibrant and inclusive kinder environment.

Other highlights of our year were the continued Start Outdoors games with Kim, the quirky and crazy Mr Ants and his recycling adventure, regular visits to the Avenel Library and walks around our community.

We would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and sincerely thank our dedicated Parent Advisory Group. Your commitment, support, and collaboration are invaluable to the success of our kindergarten.

The organisation of the PAG has resulted in a range of successful fundraising events that have directly supported our kindergarten programs and resources. Whether through attending meetings, assisting with events, or contributing behind the scenes, your efforts help create a strong and vibrant community for our children.



Thank you to our management team and administrative staff at GRPSA. Your work behind the scenes ensures the smooth and effective running of the kindergarten.

running of the kindergarten. From enrolments and compliance to communication and organisation, your support and dedication are essential to supporting our educators and the kindergarten.



This year we welcomed Karen Eldred to our team at Avenel. Karen had many years of experience in the early childhood sector and was finalising her Bachelor degree which she completed in June. Karen very quickly settled into the kinder facilitating the 3 year old program alongside Narelle. Karen resigned at the end of the year and we thank her for the commitment to the kinder, children and families.

To all our educators and relievers, thank you for your passion, professionalism, and unwavering dedication. Your work each day makes a meaningful difference in the lives of the children and families we serve.

Finally, to all our families, thank you for entrusting us with your children's early education. Your support and involvement enrich our kindergarten community and help us continue to grow and thrive.

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**Nicole Byrne**  
**Early Childhood Teacher**



# BARMAH KINDERGARTEN REPORT

*Here is the woka (land).  
Here is the yurratha (sky).  
Here are my anganya, (friends).  
Here am ngain (I).  
We thank the Yenbena (Aboriginal)  
people of the area.  
On which we dagaba (play) today.*

We have enjoyed another busy year. We continue to run our multi age service, our enrolments have fluctuated during the year, with an average of 20 children enrolled.

The highlight of our year was our whole service excursion to Kyabram Fauna Park, with all the children really enjoying the fauna park and all the animals that they could find.

We have continued to build our connection to Nathalia Preschool, with a joint excursion to Uncle Bobs park in Nathalia with a very successful fishing excursion, when we actually caught a couple of carp.



To extend on this interest we went to the Arcadia hatchery, where we tried our hand at fishing again (with no success) but we were able to see the fish in the hatchery up close.

We also joined Nathalia to visit the schools in Nathalia, before spending some time exploring Nathalia preschool.

Nathalia Pre-school returned the visit and came out to Barmah Kindergarten to celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children's day. These reciprocal visits have seen the children develop relationships with children, many of whom they will go to school with in Nathalia.

In 2025 after the positions being vacant for 6 months, we were success in filling our Indigenous Field Worker position, with Chenneil joining our team, Jessie also joined our team as the language teacher, teaching the children Yorta Yorta.

Our relationship with the Barmah food shack continues to grow and we get a regular delivery, this delivery usually consists of bread, and often includes milk and fruit, which the children enjoy eating sometimes fresh, and other times turned into smoothies, or use it in cooking.

During term 2 and 3, we joined with Nathalia preschool to run a monthly Woka Daya (Land play), session at "kinder hill", the children really enjoyed playing in the natural environment, and it was great to see the children's confidence, resilience and persistence develop with each visit. Each day, we would light a fire and cooked something to eat.

At Barmah the children lead the play. This year's group have really loved seeing how far they can push themselves, whether it was seeing how high they could climb a tree,

or how high they could get before jumping onto the crash mat. It was wonderful watching the children as they understand their limits, but also watching and learning from each other.



Barmah has lots of pets, which the children enjoy feeding, handling and learning about. This includes turtles, stick insects, guinea pigs, birds, and hens. The excitement when a child finds an egg, is great to see, and they love using these to cook. A favourite this year has been egg and ham muffins.

Thanks to the parents of Barmah Kindergarten and Occasional Care who entrust their children into our care and to Jas, Leanne, Mia, Chenneil, Jessie, Ronni, Corina, Lauren for their never-ending support, and ensuring Barmah Kindergarten & Occasional Care can continue to operate successfully. Finally thank you to the children, who come to Barmah ready to learn and have fun, and who make everything so enjoyable.

**Robyn Trickey**  
**Early Childhood**  
**Teacher**



# COLBINABBIN PRESCHOOL REPORT



At least year's AGM, the Parent Committee decided that they'd like to focus on a playground revamp at Colbinabbin. Our yard was looking very tired. We had many many skinned knees from the worn out bike track, and the yard has suffered from both lack of rain and flooding in the last few years.

PAG were the successful recipients of a Nutrien Ag Community Grant, and set to work. Our playground is now beautiful! Climbing frames were powder coated, the bike track was refurbished and most exciting of all is our lovely new grass area. The turf was donated by Coolibah Turf, and it has made such a difference to our program. Our previous dustbowl is now the perfect place to play, sing together or just roll around on the soft grass.

The water tank was moved and reconnected and broken sprinklers were replaced. The grant also covered purchase of a new slide. Funds have been allocated for a water play area to be designed by a local landscape designer. This will further link our Kinder space with the Bush Kinder program.

A huge thank you to all committee members, who do so much work quietly behind the scenes. They assist at working bees, maintain the garden, subsidize costs such as Kinder photos and do their utmost to make Colbinabbin Kinder a very special place for the children.

**Cindy Smith**  
**Early Childhood Teacher**



The hardworking committee held their biennial Trivia night, which was a huge success. Over 50 people attended the event and further supported Kinder through a silent auction. Another very popular fundraising initiative were wood raffles during local football matches. This allowed Kinder to go on excursions using Rochester Rotary Community bus.



# EILLEN TAYLOR KINDERGARTEN REPORT

This year has been an exciting and successful year for Eileen Taylor Kindergarten, filled with growth, learning, community connection, and many memorable experiences for our children and families.

One of the major highlights of the year was the successful introduction of our new 3-Year-Old Kindergarten program alongside our existing 4-Year-Old Kindergarten program. This expansion has provided more opportunities for early learning within our community and has allowed children to begin building confidence, friendships, and foundational learning skills earlier. We are proud of how smoothly the new program was implemented and grateful for the support shown by staff, families, and the wider community.

Community engagement continued to be an important focus throughout the year. In Term 2, families came together for a Family Meet and Greet Picnic held at the kindergarten, providing a wonderful opportunity for children, parents, and educators to connect in a relaxed and welcoming environment.

Later in the year, families enjoyed our Family Christmas Picnic at Mivo Park, where children were delighted by the arrival of Santa on a fire truck, creating a memorable celebration for all involved. Throughout the year, both kindergarten groups participated in regular monthly excursions to the Cobram Library and Mivo Park.

These outings supported children's literacy development, social confidence, physical activity, and connection with the local community.



Children from both programs also participated in the Skillzone sports program through a range of incursions and excursions across the year. These experiences promoted teamwork, coordination, confidence, and healthy active lifestyles in a fun and engaging way.

Our 3-Year-Old Kindergarten children proudly attended the Cobram Community Reading Day, helping to foster a love of books and early literacy. They also enjoyed a visit from



Dutch Thunder Wildlife, where children learned about local wildlife, habitats, and caring for the environment through hands-on experiences.

The 4-Year-Old Kindergarten group participated in Bush Kinder during Terms 2 and 3 at Scott's Beach and Quinn Island. These sessions encouraged exploration, resilience, creativity, and environmental awareness through nature-based learning. The children also enjoyed a special visit from the Melbourne Museum, which provided engaging educational experiences linked to their learning program.

To celebrate the end of the year, the 4-year-old group attended an excursion to The Big Strawberry, where children enjoyed strawberry picking and time in the play centre. This excursion was a wonderful way to celebrate friendships and achievements made throughout the year.

Environmental education was another strong focus, with both kindergarten groups participating in a Waterbug incursion that supported children's understanding of waterways, insects, and sustainability. In addition, both groups collaborated on artwork entries for the Cobram Show, proudly showcasing the creativity and talents of our children within the wider community.



In addition to our kindergarten programs, the After Kinder Care program and School Holiday Program continued to be well utilised by families throughout the year. These programs provided valuable support for working families while offering children a safe, engaging, and enjoyable environment to continue building friendships, confidence, and social skills beyond regular kindergarten hours.

This year's achievements would not have been possible without the dedication and hard work of our educators, committee members and families. Their ongoing support and commitment continue to make Eilleen Taylor Kindergarten a welcoming, nurturing, and inspiring place for children to learn and grow.

We look forward to another successful year ahead and thank everyone for their continued support of our kindergarten community.

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**Eilleen Taylor**  
**Kindergarten Teaching**  
**Team**



# EUROA KINDERGARTEN REPORT



2025 was a year of new beginnings and anticipation at Euroa Kindergarten, it was also a year that came with new roles and exciting changes. Kym Henson was appointed the 4yr old Early Childhood Teacher, this was happy news for educators, children and families as Kym was already a very much loved and adored team member and educator within our 3yr old space the previous year. It was also Kelsie Parkinsons first year of being both Service Leader and 3yr old Early Childhood Teacher. Joining Kelsie and Kym were Jody Delahey and Erin Lee-Porcher.



Our 3yr old Kindergarten program supported the children to develop the building blocks of their lifelong love of learning. The children were able to build onto their skills in sharing, turn taking, negotiating, and forming friendships. Through thoughtful and meaningful experiences such as cooking and role based play the children were able to increase their independence whilst also developing their imagination, curiosity, and ever-growing inquiry about the world around them.

Our 4yr old Kindergarten program flourished with inquiry-based projects allowing the children to deepen their knowledge of their world and follow their ever-changing interests. Community engagement was a strong focus from the beginning of the year. The group ventured into the Community throughout the year including visits to Burtons IGA, Euroa Library, Euroa Art Gallery, Inland Rail works, Euroa SES Unit and the Euroa CFA. These experiences not only developed the children interests in these areas but also allowed them to continue to grow in their sense of connection and belonging to their community.

We had another blissful year of our Bush Kinder program. Our days were filled with many adventures through climbing, running, digging, collecting, puddle jumping, bug spotting, hypothesising, and estimating during our days out at Euroa Arboretum. This year our children were able to complete Bush Kinder every week from Term 2 with our 3yr olds venturing out on Thursdays and our 4yr olds on Wednesdays.

A component of our Bush Kinder program we expanded on this year was Cooking experiences and Fire Making. Our children became experts in making damper, pancakes and even choc chip muffins in orange rinds. They became specialist kindling collectors and marshmallow roasters as we aimed to have a campfire each week when the weather permitted.

Our team took up the amazing opportunity to host Marc Armitage, a Playwork consultant for his double gig professional development session on “Forensic Playwork” and “The Play Garden.” This amazing PD allowed the team to deepen our understanding of child-led exploration without fixed outcomes, the use of open-ended loose parts found in nature, risk taking to develop resilience and decision making, the importance of children’s interaction with changing natural elements across seasons, and children having ownership of their play space. Marc’s expertise challenged us to think differently and left us feeling inspired, informed, and ready to create even more meaningful play experiences and outdoor learning spaces. This PD has supported us through the most recent changes with our outdoor play environment following the removal of our playground. We were able to move towards the use of loose parts and begin exploring this way of adding to play and extending children’s learning this way.



At the end of the year, we farewelled Jody Delahey, a long-standing member of the Kinder teaching team. We wished Jody all the best in her next endeavours and thanked her for her many years of dedication to Euroa Kinder.

We would like to send a big thank you to our Parent Committee for their support in 2025. Thanks to their hard work and incredible fundraisers we were able to bring a variety of Incursions into our Kinder space including Friends with Honey, The Flying Bookworm, Labcoat Learning and Museum in Van. The Committee also organised and very thoughtful addition to our Kinder environment; a beautiful plaque placed on our seating outside the 4yr old room dedicated to Jennifer Boote, a loved and missed past member of our Kinder team, warmly named 'Jenny's Seat'. Jenny will always be remembered by our Kinder community with this special token of love.



**Kelsie Parkinson**  
**Early Childhood Teacher**



# KATAMATITE KINDERGARTEN

## REPORT

### A Year of Connection, Learning & Joy

2025 has been a year full of discovery, friendship, and community engagement. Through play-based learning, our children explored, created, and connected — guided by the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLF) outcomes.



### Highlights of the Year:

- Participation in ANZAC Day and Book Week Community Reading Day
- Excursions to the Katamatite Tip (Recycling), Post Office, Police Station, and Boosey Creek Café (Milkshakes and sausage rolls)
- Weekly Bush Kinder Program during Terms 2 & 3
- Dutch Thunder Wildlife Incursion – Building on strengthening our understanding of caring for animals & the environment and for taking care of the land like the Aboriginal people have done since Australia started
- Bike Education Excursion at Wangaratta Bike Ed Centre

- Ditto's Bereave Heart Show & Dental Van visits
- Cooking Rainbow Pasta, volcano making, colour mixing, and finger painting
- Outdoor fun – climbing, swinging, bubbles, slip-and-slide, and sandpit water play
- Featured as “movie stars” for the Moira Shire Recycling Promotion
- Community dinners with local Cricket and Football/Netball Clubs
- End-of-year Family Picnic, Christmas Celebration & Concert

### Learning and Development Outcomes:

#### Outcome 1 – Identity:

Children built confidence, independence, and a strong sense of belonging within our kindergarten community.

#### Outcome 2 – Community:

Excursions, local events, and community partnerships deepened understanding of community roles and environmental care.



#### Outcome 3 – Wellbeing:

Active play, bike safety, outdoor exploration, and wellbeing programs supported physical and emotional growth.

#### Outcome 4 – Learning:

Hands-on experiences like cooking, science experiments, and creative arts fostered curiosity, persistence, and problem-solving.

#### Outcome 5 – Communication:

Storytelling, music, dramatic play, and the Christmas Concert strengthened expression and confidence.

### Acknowledgements:

Heartfelt thanks to our educators, families, and the Committee of Management for your enthusiasm, commitment, and ongoing community spirit.

Together, we have made 2025 a joyful, nurturing, and memorable year of growth.

Looking Ahead to 2026

We will continue to:

- Strengthen our Bush Kinder program
- Embed sustainability and community partnerships
- Provide creative, inclusive, and nature-rich learning experience
- Katamatite Kindergarten remains a place where every child is valued, capable, and connected to their world.

**Jac Monk**  
Early Childhood Teacher



# MERRIGUM PRESCHOOL REPORT

It's my pleasure to present the 2025 Merrigum Kindergarten Annual Teacher's Report.

## Our 2025 highlights

At Merrigum Kindergarten we had 12 children in attendance for Term 1,2 and 3 of 2025. We had 8 children in 4-year-old kindergarten and 4 children in 3-year-old kindergarten. We had another 3 year old start in Term 4, finishing the year with 13 children enrolled. Our group size allows opportunities to work with others and to have space to explore independently. Every child's unique strengths and interests can be fostered in our kinder.



## Staffing

We are pleased to say that our staff team remained amazing and consistent throughout 2025, we have just reached a milestone of working together for 5 years at Merrigum! This is special and worth mentioning as it shows the happy workplace for staff which then achieves better outcomes for the children. This timeframe also means that we are lucky enough to see siblings from the same family come through kindergarten as well, strengthening family

connections for the younger siblings coming through.

## Educational Program

As is good practice in kindergarten settings, each year looks a little different and we adapt our environments and our program to reflect this. We consider the group dynamics, interests, the individual child's needs and current strengths of the program. At the end of 2024 as a staff team we identified a need to improve our sensory resources – including our sandpit as it had become unusable. We held a very successful working bee to clear it out and refill it with the right sand. We purchased a well fitted sand pit cover and have been thrilled with the results. We also purchased some fidgets, weighted blankets, noise cancelling headphones to support the children's emotional regulation.

Mel and Di undertook some training called Drawing to Learn and Learning to Draw very early in Term 1. This program gave new insights and reminders about the importance of having a go, trying new strategies to get reluctant drawers to participate, using space and our whole body. Early drawing can be reclassified as pre-writing and needs lots and lots of practice to enable the children to learn to write in the future.

When I asked individual children what they liked most about their kinder year, one

of them said "The swing!" Another child responded, "Twisted Science!" Another said, "The Sand Pit".

We enjoyed a trip to Merrigum Bowls Club, several trips to Bush Kinder, our garden beds moved to our playground for easier access to gardening and our newly introduced FoodShare program. Di has done a wonderful job getting FoodShare up and running. Kindergarten is especially important for providing uninterrupted play opportunities. We make sure that our transitions and routines are kept to a minimal to build on the children's play skills through ample amounts of time.



## PAG

We had a large and supportive PAG in 2025 and I'd like to thank all the parents for their support. We had a very successful fundraising year. We did a cookie fundraiser through Kyabram Bakery. We ordered Picture Products plate memories as keepsakes. We held a 'School Holiday Fun' Raffle with lots of local donations. We were given a donation from Jen Collyer our class photographer and a donation from KyClub. As a team we held a stall at The Wheels at the Gum and the Merrigum Christmas Carols events. We raised \$1700 towards our excursion to Twisted Science. Our working bee was amazing, we sorted out the sand pit, the garden beds and sorted out two outdoor sheds.

## Building and Maintenance

Greater Shepparton City Council repainted the rooms and provided new blinds in each room.

Thank you to the GRPSA Board, Senior Management and the Administration Team for all of the support we have received and will continue to receive here at Merrigum Kindergarten. We look forward to 2026.



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**Melissa Gowler**  
**Early Childhood Teacher**

# MURCHISON KINDERGARTEN

## REPORT

2025 was a big and exciting year at Murchison Preschool. We began the year with a clear focus: to increase our visibility within the community, strengthen our online presence, and continue delivering a high-quality, inclusive program that supports each and every learner. It has been incredibly rewarding to see these goals come to life across the year, reflected in the strong engagement from families, the broader community, and most importantly, the children.



Throughout the year, we provided a rich and varied program that extended beyond the kindergarten gate. We welcomed a number of visitors to the service, including the Responsible Pet Ownership Program, Ditto's Keep Safe Adventure, AFL Auskick, and dental health professionals. These experiences supported children to build knowledge and confidence in real-world contexts, while also introducing important concepts such as safety, health, and wellbeing in engaging and age-appropriate ways.

Community connection remained a strong focus in 2025. We regularly ventured out on local outings to the park, post office, and surrounding community spaces, supporting children to develop a sense of belonging and connection to place. Our ongoing partnership with Murchison Primary School continued to strengthen, with multiple visits throughout the year. Children had the opportunity to participate in seasonal events and special days, helping to build familiarity and confidence as they prepare for their transition to Foundation in 2026. These experiences have been invaluable in creating a smooth and positive transition to school for our children and families.



Our teaching team remained committed to ongoing professional growth and reflective practice. Throughout 2025, Natalie and I engaged in professional development opportunities including Squiggle Kids training and participation in the Disability Inclusion in Kindergartens Research Project.



These learning experiences have strengthened our teaching practices, particularly in supporting children's early writing development, fine motor skills, and inclusive approaches that ensure all children can fully participate in the program.

Enrolment numbers fluctuated slightly across the year, with approximately 18 children attending the service, made up of both 3-year-old and 4-year-old kindergarten groups. This mixed-age setting provided valuable opportunities for peer learning, leadership, and social development, with older children supporting and modelling for younger peers.



A significant enhancement to our program in 2025 was the successful receipt of Kindergarten Inclusion Support (KIS) funding, which enabled us to employ an additional educator, Lily. This additional staffing has had a substantial impact on the quality of our program, allowing for more intentional teaching, smaller group experiences, and increased support for individual children. The presence of an additional educator has strengthened our ability to respond to children's needs, extend learning opportunities, and foster meaningful engagement across the day.

Across all aspects of the program, we remained focused on creating a welcoming, inclusive, and engaging environment where children feel safe, supported, and empowered to learn. We are proud of the strong relationships we have built with families, and we value their ongoing partnership in supporting children's learning and development. Overall, 2025 has been a year of growth, innovation, and connection for Murchison Preschool. We are proud of what we have achieved together and look forward to continuing to build on these strong foundations in 2026.

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### Murchison Kindergarten Teaching Team



# NAGAMBIE KINDERGARTEN AND EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICE REPORT

**Yarragin-** In 2025 the Yarragin room produced a program that was enriching, caring, child-based and above all fun for every child and educator involved. We saw many milestones met; we had lots of laughter and tears and became a room that flourished with growth and confidence. There were a few trips out and about in the community that saw us participate in an Easter Egg Hunt at St Josephs and go grocery shopping at our local IGA. Over the year we became more connected to our country and thoroughly enjoyed special sensory moments with native leaves, gumnuts and flowers.



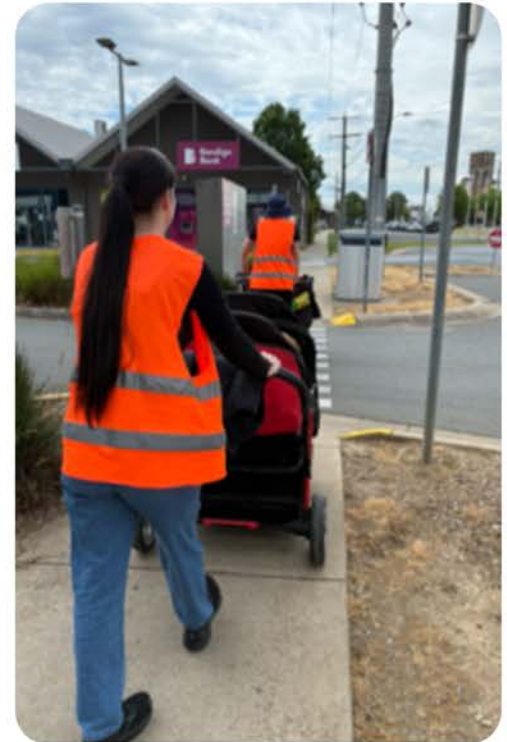
**Garrin-** Our program was enriched through regular and meaningful connections with the local community. The children enjoyed frequent outings to familiar places such as the library, primary schools, IGA, the park and the train station, including a memorable train trip to Seymour that sparked curiosity and conversation. Cooking experiences were an important part of our days,

with children actively involved in preparing food and sharing what we have made together for morning tea and lunch, , fostering independence, collaboration and a sense of pride. We were also fortunate to spend time with Holly, who is training as a wellbeing dog, providing calm, nurturing interactions that support children's emotional wellbeing. Building on our professional development learning from Tuning in to Kids, we continued to intentionally strengthen secure, trusting relationships with each child. Participating in community events such as Christmas carols further deepened our sense of belonging and connection within the wider community.

**Djila-** In 2025 the Djila Program was a meaningful and rewarding journey of connection, growth, and shared learning. Throughout the year, we focused strongly on building respectful, trusting relationships with one another, with children and families, and with the wider Nagambie community. A key strength of the program was the sense of belonging that has developed among the children. Through consistent routines, shared experiences, and a nurturing environment, children have built strong relationships with peers and educators.

These connections have supported children to feel

safe, valued, and confident to express themselves. Equally important has been the relationships formed with families.



Open communication, collaboration, and mutual respect have helped create a supportive network around each child, reinforcing that learning and wellbeing are shared responsibilities. The Djila Program has also been enriched by strong community partnerships. .



Our ongoing connections with the local library, IGA, and Nagambie Primary School have helped children develop a sense of belonging beyond the program. Regular visits and interactions within the community have supported children to feel comfortable and confident in familiar local spaces, while also learning about cooperation, respect, and community responsibility.

These relationships have strengthened the bridge between early learning, school, and community life. A focus throughout the year has been supporting children's emotional regulation and wellbeing. Educators have intentionally embedded mindfulness practices into the program to help children recognise their emotions and develop strategies to manage them. Activities such as drawing and colouring have been used as calming tools, allowing children to slow down, rest their bodies and minds, and express feelings in a safe and creative way. These moments of quiet focus have supported self-regulation, resilience, and emotional

awareness, helping children reset and re-engage with learning and play. Overall, the Djila Program year was grounded in connection. Connection to self, to others, to families, and to community. We are proud of the strong relationships that have been built and the foundations laid for children's ongoing emotional wellbeing, confidence, and sense of belonging to our service and their community.



Our Mingu group embarked on their school journey as they attended transitions days at their local schools. This was a pivotal step for them to get comfortable with their new environments and teachers. The Buluk group expressed their excitement at learning that they would be attending



'big kinder' at a brand-new site which has been named "Gaambi Djinang" meaning happy footprints in Taungurung. At the end of the year, we as a cohort could not believe the growth that the children had shown in their social, emotional and in their learning of the world around them. We are so proud of them all for this amazing achievement!

**Buluk and Mingu-** 2025 was a fantastic year for the Buluk and Mingu groups at Vale Street. Many of the educators were new to the space so we took our time getting to know the children and their families. Together we build strong relationships with these families and valued all feedback given to us so that we were able to reflect on practices and activities that we were doing. We ventured out into the community and as we did this more and more, we were able to build up bonds with community members and services throughout Nagambie.

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**Nagambie Kindergarten  
Teaching Team**



# NATHALIA & DISTRICT PRESCHOOL REPORT

2025 Victorian Early Years Awards acknowledged our Road Safety and Bike Riding program as a finalist in Promoting Children's Health & Wellbeing. This is, indeed celebrating the outstanding work of our educators as they collaborate with families and our local community to facilitate this program with the children. We are very proud that a program we have developed is not only recognised by our families and community but also by our professional peers through the VEYA.



Our 4 year old preschool program supports the children to make safe, kind, fair and independent choices that supports their continual learning and development. This includes our swimming program. This year it was implemented for 4 weeks (not just one). This provided the children with an opportunity to engage in a holistic program where safe choices were essential for their engagement and personal growth. For some children this is their first experience in a pool.

Our preschool received the Bush Kinder Grant that enabled us to purchase resources for our Woka Daya Program. Venturing out to Barmah to collaborate with Barmah Kindergarten, our new resources were put to great use.

It is a privilege that we can bring two centres together, to provide an opportunity for the children to explore and learn on the land of the Yorta Yorta People.

We invited our community and new families to our Lantern Festival. Something new and held at night. What an amazing success! Our parent committee organised face painting, cake stall, lucky jar raffles, create a lantern and activities for the children. Our local Angling Club supplied a bbq tea and Cup-a-Jo provided warm cuppas. We will again be holding our lantern festival again in 2026.

Our Jurassic Park window display for the Nathalia Agricultural Society took out first place. We entered the children's craft work, flower displays, Lego and our own centre display during the show. This enabled us to offer free dinosaur activities on the day of the show along with our very own dinosaur bones!



ANZAC Day provided us with an opportunity to work with the elderly in our community to create an ANZAC window display and to bake ANZAC biscuits that were gifted out on the morning of the dawn service.



We finished our year together with a celebration concert at St Francis Primary School. Every year they make their school and resources available to us to dance, sing and share a meal together before we say goodbye. Again, the Nathalia Angling Club supplied a bbq tea (put on by our parent committee).

Our three and four year old preschool programs continue to grow every year. The children's interests take us on many learning journeys and inspire the educators to continue to learn along with the children.

We would like to acknowledge the commitment of our parent committee. To Emma & Megan who work tirelessly to support the educators along with the planning and implementation of the lantern festival, celebration concert, our engagement in the Nathalia Easter Market and the Nathalia Christmas Carols.



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Thankyou to Kylie for your continued support with the many kilometres you rode during the bike riding program, all the extra hours for the lantern festival and family events (all while studying your Bachelor). To Fen and Cindy for collaborating with me for the three year old program. To Jas for your support with the bike riding and swimming programs. To Lauren for working with us as our new Early Childhood Manager. To Ronni and the GRPSA Board for direction and support for our program. Thankyou!

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**Andrea Sutton**  
**Early Childhood Teacher**



# PUNT ROAD KINDERGARTEN AND CHILDCARE REPORT



Another wonderful year at Punt Road has flown past. Having had the privilege to care for and educate children in our community with 106 bookings each week, some who attended both the Kindergarten program and LDC room. Our hours of operation are 7am-5.30pm, with both before kinder care and after kinder care offered.

We welcomed Mel into her new position as Service Leader in March 2025. Mel has brought with her change and new growth for our service as we move into the future. Mel has been supported in her role this year by Lauren, Jess, Jacinta, Piaf and Mandy all continuing to support the service.

We have welcomed Rachael back from maternity leave and gained Bethany and Stacey from their casual roles to part time positions. Meloney, Kay, Sarah, Michelle, Amy, and Chantel have left to pursue other opportunities. We have been fortunate to welcome Kristy, Tiana, Lee, and Santina into our Punt Road team of amazing educators.

We remain in contact with our fellow educator, Candice. Supporting her through well wishes and the occasional visit as her rehabilitation journey continues.

Our kindergarten teachers for 2025 were Liana (3- and 4-year-old groups) supported by Helen (4-year-old group) every Tuesday.

Our kindergarten teachers and their co-educators provided a year of amazing learning opportunities, delivering a wonderful kindergarten program throughout the year. Both Kinder groups have participated in the Skillzone sports program, library visits, community walks to visit local parks and sharing learning spaces alongside training certificate 3 educators from our neighbouring community house. In addition, the 4-year-old kindergarten group visited the local community garden regularly, bringing back their gardening skills to their very own garden in the kindergarten yard. Bush kinder was another regular on the 4 year-old groups calendar, exploring with hands-on, nature-based play at our local Quinn Island. Our kindergarten groups looked forward to every opportunity to connect with nature and the world around them, growing their curiosity, wonder and confidence through all experiences offered to them.



Our daycare room teams in 2025 were: Gurburr (0-2 years) acting room leader Sarah along with Michele and Amy. Ganga (2-3 years) room leaders Jacinta and Rachael along with Tiana, Amelia, Evivi, Chantel and Meloney. Dungala (3-5 years) room leader Ash along with Kay and Meloney. Each team created warm, engaging and child-centred programs, with a strong commitment to building genuine relationships with children and their families.

Local community engagement has been a strong focus again this year with all rooms enjoying time out of our service visiting local meeting places, parks and the library. Our annual whole service excursion to Barooga Botanical Gardens was a great morning out.

The highlight for most children is the chance to experience a trip on a big bus from Fallons. There was plenty of conversation on board with



familiar places spotted along the roads to our destination.

Everyone was delighted to explore all the botanical gardens had to offer, playing in the fallen leaves, watching the fish in the pond, enjoying the playground and sitting with our peers enjoying some yummy fruit and sausage sizzle provided by our amazing cook, Ellen. Our entire service also enjoyed Cobram Community Reading Day. Dressing up for the book week occasion, we all ventured out in our room groups, walking to various locations around Cobram to listen to books read by local community members. We were also fortunate enough to have our local police officers come to visit at the showgrounds behind our service. All children were able to learn about safety in our community, explore different police vehicles and try on some essential police gear too.



We celebrated and invited our families into Punt Road for Mother's Day breakfast, Father's day breakfast, Winter Solstice dinner, Grandparents Day and our end of year Christmas night.

We would like to say a big thank you to all the support from the GRPSA leadership and administration teams for their tireless efforts to support in all areas throughout our service and, to our Parents and Friends committee, your ongoing support in fundraising, purchasing resources and providing assistance throughout 2025.

2025 saw a lot of growth and change within our community of dedicated educators. As a team we have adapted to the ever-changing world of early years education. Our focus on building stronger relationships with all children and their families remaining a priority alongside creating engaging and challenging learning environments that spark interest, joy and curiosity. Together, we have shared a year filled with learning, growth and connection, and we look forward with excitement to another rewarding year ahead in 2026.

**Punt Road Kindergarten  
and Childcare Centre  
Educators**



# STRATHMERTON PRESCHOOL REPORT

It is with pleasure that the Annual report for Strathmerton Pre school for 2025 is presented.

For the first time in several years, the 3 and 4 year old children came together as one combined group.

We had a total of 17 children (seven 3 year old children and ten 4 year old children)

Educators began the year with “Tuning Into Kids” training. This valuable training assisted our team of educators to respond to and support children’s emotions.

Connecting with our small local community is always so heartwarming. When we visit the local Primary schools, the Bakery, the Op shop, Numurkah Library and participate in the ANZAC parade, the children and educators are welcomed with appreciation.

A very special and memorable community event was Children’s book week when we visited the Strathmerton Mail Box Café. Here Josie Munro (the founding teacher of the Strathmerton Pre school) read the children two books.



Wellbeing and personal safety education for the children was supported by ABCD Dental, Maternal and Child Health Nurse visits, Smiles 4 Miles, Ditto, GV Water – water only programme, Responsible Pet Education, SRF – Psychology and Occupational Therapy information, resources and coaching sessions.

Learning about and appreciating the natural environment was reinforced through the Op shop community garden, Dutch Thunder Wildlife programme and our first Nature Learning excursion which we held at the Strathmerton Primary School.

Language and literacy are supported by the Pre schools lending library. Through SRF we are able to offer book gifting as a part of the borrowing library. SRF – Speech Pathologist information, resources and coaching sessions on language and communication and Key Word Signs.

As well as “playing” in the Pre school environment with friends, the above mentioned experiences help to build each child’s confidence in all areas of development.

Our team consisted of Helen Koopman (teacher), Caroyne McGregor (educator and shared role as SRF additional educator), Kerry Vitullo (educator and shared role as SRF additional educator) and Michelle Carmody (lunch break educator).

After 32 years as an Early Childhood Educator (3 of these years as an employee of GRPSA at the Strathmerton Pre school), Kerry announced her retirement on 30<sup>th</sup> October 2025. Kerry was a valued member of our team and we were sad to see her leave. The Pre school community wished Kerry all the best for her future.

In conclusion, we would like to thank our wonderful children and families for another successful year. Thank you to the awesome GRPSA team for all your valuable support, assistance and advice – you are all superstars.

## Strathmerton Preschool Teaching Staff



# TOOLAMBA PRESCHOOL REPORT

It is with pleasure that I present my annual report for Toolamba Pre-School for 2025.

Toolamba Pre-School offers a play based Pre-School curriculum, guided and supported by the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework. Our program provides an excellent learning through play environment for children's complete development that is not only stimulating, safe and secure but also allows the children to feel a sense of belonging to both the group and the community as a whole. It allows for independent activity choices and individual development both indoors and outdoors. Learning experiences are interesting, inviting and challenging, allowing children to build on existing knowledge and discover new learning, maximising growth in all developmental outcomes through open ended activities that meet the children's needs, interests and abilities. These activities are achievable at each child's individual level and are made up of a variety of individual, small and large group experiences. The focus is not on the end product, but on the process of learning that takes place through this journey of discovery.

Through the use of the Victorian Early Years Learning Framework our program uses the 5 Early

Years Learning and Development Outcomes to develop skills and attitudes that not only prepare the children in readiness for school but also begins to teach the basic skills for life such co-operation, independence, confidence, creativity, resilience, responsibility, resilience, communication and curiosity (to name just a few). A great deal of thought, planning and observations go into the pre-school program that we provide, as it is essential that we meet the needs of both the individual child and the group as a whole. Learning at kindergarten happens constantly, sometimes spontaneous from the children's own interest and sometimes from specifically planned experiences.



## 4YO KINDER

During 2025 Toolamba Pre-School had one funded 4 year old kindergarten group of 24 children. We offered 15 hours of preschool per week over 3 days.



We also had a 3 year old Kinder Group of 20 children for 3 days a week for 15 hours and 3 Occasional Care Sessions that operates on a Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday, servicing over 40 families.

Excursions, Incursions and Special Activities play an important role in our educational program to support and facilitate children's learning. We are extremely fortunate at Toolamba to be able to offer a large variety of visitors to our service through out the year to enhance our program and support learning. During 2025 we have enjoyed The Brave Heart Show, Healthy Drinks Presentation from GV Water, Thingle Toodle Road Safety, Indigenous story time and bush kinder session, Jets Gymnastics session, Mister Ants We all smile in the same language, Responsible Pet Program, GV Health Smiles for Miles Program, the children celebrated Book Week and participated in a Sports, Activities & dress up Day and Tiny Tales visited the kinder with a variety of animals.



A favourite part of terms 2 & 3 is our Bush kinder program. We are so fortunate to have this amazing natural space right at our doorstep. We were able to take part in approximately 16 Bush Kinder sessions. The children loved going over and exploring the environment, building cubbies, having camp fires, toasting marshmallows and S'Mores, popcorn, playing in the puddles, climbing on the logs, drawing with charcoal and just getting back to nature.

Each year we receive School Readiness funding to support the children in their learning. We identify areas of need and choose items from the SRF menu. Through observations of the children we saw the need for a Finger Gym Program as a large number of children needed support with fine motor skills, following instructions and increasing concentration. These sessions took place once a week for 10 weeks in term 2 during the kinder session and were ran by an Occupational Therapist from Thrive Group Shepparton. It is so rewarding to watch the children's growth during this program.



In term 3 both the 3 & 4 YO kinder children enjoyed the Start Outdoors Fundamental movement program. This program supports the children in developing their Gross Motor skills and took place at the tennis courts for 6 weeks. The children participated in a huge variety of activities that not only enhanced their eye-hand co-ordination but also their balls skills, throwing, catching, balancing, jumping, hopping, running, listening and following instructions to name just a few.



During term 4 the children participated in the Toolamba Primary School transition to school program. This is an extremely valuable program that allows for an extremely smooth transition for the children. Each year we are invited to performed 3 songs at the Toolamba "Carols in the Park" community evening. It is so great being part of such a fantastic community event.

### 3YO KINDER

3 YO Kinder is a great opportunity for the children to start to develop independence, resilience, co-operation, listening, communication/language skills, following instructions and being part of a larger social group.

Many of our children transition into 3 YO kinder from Occasional care. This allows for a smooth start to the year with the children already familiar and confident with in this learning environment. The timetable and routines for the day follow on from Occasional Care and then lead onto kinder. Children take part in an indoor program which helps to develop their fine motor skills, concentration, ability to follow instructions, friendships and so much more. We enjoy a story time before morning tea, then move to our outdoor program which encourages the use of gross motor skills etc. Lunch is enjoyed all together before finishing the session with a group time. Through-out the year we utilise the school playground, Frog Bog nature area, walks in the community to Colaura Gardens, take our food scraps to feed the school chickens and more. Thanks to all for a great year.

**Tonya Roche**  
**Early Childhood Teacher**



# TUNGAMAH KINDERGARTEN

## REPORT



It is with great pleasure that I present the annual general report for the Tungamah Preschool.

We started the year of 2025 by saying goodbye to Lynn Foster who retired after fifteen years of dedication to the preschool. The families put on a farewell morning tea where many fond memories were shared. We also said goodbye to Esther Dickie ten days before she gave birth to her first child! Esther drove off on her last day with her car packed with beautiful baby goods donated by our very generous families.

We were very lucky that Brooke Dodd, a current mother of a student attending the preschool, was looking for a career change and excitedly joined the teaching team. Brooke quickly went to work fixing some of our long term issues such as organising a locker for our safety mats and a bike rack for the children to use when they ride their bikes to the preschool. Victoria Anders started working at the kinder in August as an additional assistant employed by SCOPE. It was lovely having an extra set of hands so more books could be read and more in depth conversations could be had.

We are very fortunate to have our wonderful volunteer, Deanne Einsporn, who attends the kindergarten regularly. Deanne runs our FoodShare and donation table and comes and plays with the children during most sessions. We also have Lara Gatty spending time at the kindergarten. Lara attended the preschool when she was 3 and 4 years old and now as a 15 year old, is looking at a career in early childhood.



Donna and Jason at the General Store led a fundraising campaign for a new cubby. A percentage of profits from the sale of their coffees was donated and they had a donation tin on their counter. The Lions Club, Social Club and some of our local families made quite generous donations and we were able to raise just over \$4000.

We ran another very popular bush kinder program. Educators extended their knowledge on camp fire cooking and Brooke's passion and knowledge of our local birds was well received. During one bush kinder session we were delighted to have a wallaby visit our camp! Our excursions to Wangaratta to the bike school, to Yarrowonga to a family's bakery and to Mulwala to Purtle Park were definitely highlights for the year.

Another fantastic year collaborating with our amazing local community and of course the show could not go on without the support of GRPSA's head office. A special thanks to Ronni Druitt GRPSA CEO, Lauren Lazarevski GRPSA Manager and Mandy Bilney Educational Leader. This year, I also want to give a special mention to Amy, Jacinta and Melina for trying each week to provide relief cover so Brooke and I could have a lunch break. Many thanks to you all.

**Narelle Herring**  
Early Childhood  
Teacher



It was an absolute joy to be a part of Tungamah's 150 Year Celebration. We had a tent on the football oval where we had a number of children's activities and we had a photo display celebrating 45 years of the preschool's history. It was lovely to bump into a number of teenagers who enjoyed reminiscing their preschool days and laughing at their kinder photos.



# UNDERA KINDERGARTEN REPORT

2025 was a vibrant and rewarding year for our kindergarten community. We focused on creating engaging, hands-on learning experiences that connected children with their environment, community, and each other.

Throughout the year, our program has been enriched by a wide range of excursions and visitors. Regular visits to community spaces such as the local school playground and recreation reserve, helped foster a strong sense of belonging and familiarity within our town. Children particularly enjoyed our visit to the Kyabram Fauna Park and the Splash Park, which provided both educational and fun outdoor experiences.



Our sustainability and garden program has been a highlight, with children actively participating in cooking activities using fresh produce they helped grow. This hands-on approach supported learning about healthy eating, responsibility, and where food comes from.

We were fortunate to host several engaging programs and performances.

The Smiles for Miles dental health program supported children's understanding of oral hygiene, while the DITTO Keep Safe program introduced important personal safety concepts. The AFL Kinder program provided fun opportunities for active play and teamwork. Visiting experiences such as the reptile show, dinosaur show, road safety visit, and The Flying Book Worm theatrical performance sparked curiosity and excitement across a range of learning areas.

Science exploration was another key focus, with children enthusiastically participating in experiments including volcano eruptions, lava lamps, and colour diffusion activities. These experiences encouraged inquiry, prediction, and problem-solving skills. Through SRF we engaged in 8 weekly Sing & Grow sessions, the children loved using instruments and moving along with the beat of the songs.

Community events were celebrated with great enthusiasm. Book Week saw wonderful creativity with dress-ups and storytelling, while our entry in the Kinder and School section of the Kyabram Show - decorated umbrellas - was a proud moment as children chose a theme, created and decorated an umbrella, earning us a prize and a ribbon.



One of the most memorable experiences of the year was our campfire days, where children enjoyed cooking sausages and marshmallows together. We enjoyed the moments sitting around the fire, yarning, reflecting, engaging—an experience that quickly became a favourite for many.

We also took part in the “One Tree Per Child” initiative, supporting environmental awareness and giving children a lasting connection to nature. Additionally, participation in the Premier’s Reading Challenge encouraged a love of books and literacy development.

Overall, it has been a year filled with learning, laughter, and meaningful experiences. Thank you to Punt Road Kindergarten and Childcare Centre for the loan of their minibus to use on excursions. We extend our sincere thanks to GRPSA and our Manager Corina for her dedicated support of our kinder. This commitment and partnership have made a meaningful difference to our kinder community. We thank our dedicated staff, supportive families, and wider community for their ongoing involvement and commitment to making our kindergarten a nurturing and inspiring place for all children.

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**Emma Bourke**  
Early Childhood Teacher



# VIOLET TOWN KINDERGARTEN AND CHILDCARE REPORT



Another wonderfully busy and fulfilling year has been had at Violet Town and District Children's Service. Across the year, our children experienced rich learning opportunities, meaningful community engagement, and exciting new adventures. Here are some of our key highlights:

## Learning Experiences & Incursions

- Deep Learning About Bees: Our inquiry into bees was a major highlight, supported by a highly informative and entertaining incursion from Helen at Friends with Bees. This experience inspired the children to create a sculpture showcasing different parts of a beehive, including the honey layers—an artwork that proudly won an award at the Euroa Agricultural Show.
- African Drumming Incursion & Easter Celebration: We hosted the Peranbin Primary School for a vibrant African drumming session, along with Easter crafts and an egg hunt.
- Mister Ant Recycling Show: This engaging performance strengthened the children's understanding of sustainability and the importance of caring for our planet.
- Melbourne Museum Visit: Children were thrilled to explore real dinosaur artifacts, including touching fossils, bones, and a dinosaur tooth.

## Safety Programs

- Smiles 4 Miles promoted healthy eating and oral hygiene.
- Ditto's Bravehearts Program helped children learn essential child safety messages, aligned with the 11 Child Safe Standards we embed in our service.



## Community Connections

- We proudly took part in ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day services.
- The children enjoyed Pancake Day at the Neighbourhood House and joined in the fun of decorating the service for Halloween.
- Forest Fire Fighters visited to thank the children for their supportive banner during the Boho/Strathbogie fires.
- Monthly library visits in Terms 1 and 4 included storytime, rhyme time, and a visit from author Susea Spray.
- At Traffic School in Wangaratta, the children built on their road safety knowledge from community walks and sessions with Senior Sergeant Ian Hamill.
- Participation in the Premier's Reading Challenge saw children reading or listening to 40 books over six months.

## Partnership With Peranbin Primary School – Violet Town Campus

- We strengthened our collaborative relationship through shared experiences including: Clean Up Australia Day
- Harmony Day
- National Simultaneous Storytime
- World Book Day
- Our kindergarten children also enjoyed visiting the Mik Meks concert, proudly sponsored by Violet Town Playgroup.

## Active Learning & Nature Engagement

- Auskick sessions allowed children to develop ball-handling, movement, and agility skills while being introduced to AFL.
- Our Nature Learning Program in Terms 2 and 3 encouraged exploration, curiosity, respect for Country, and a deepening love of nature—especially for those passionate about bugs and creepy crawlies.

## Families & Community Involvement

- Families engaged beautifully in children's learning through:
- Mother's Day and Father's Day events
  - A Lantern Walk celebrating the end of Nature Learning
  - Upcoming end-of-year celebrations showcasing the children's learning



# YARRAWONGA PRESCHOOL REPORT

Over the past year, Yarrowonga Preschool has continued to strengthen its commitment to high-quality early childhood education through intentional pedagogical reflection.

A key focus for our team has been engaging in professional dialogue and development around slow pedagogy. Educators have worked collaboratively to critically reflect on the pace of our program, prioritising deeper engagement, sustained thinking and meaningful interactions. This approach has supported children to explore ideas more thoroughly and build greater independence and agency within the environment.

Alongside this, our team continues to delve into focused learning on risky play. Through staff discussions and reflective practice, educators have built a shared understanding of the importance of allowing children to assess and navigate manageable risks.



This has resulted in a more intentional approach to outdoor environments and experiences where children are supported to develop confidence, resilience, problem-solving skills and a strong sense of self-awareness.

A significant highlight of the year has been the continued implementation and growth of our Bush Kinder program. Staff has reported overwhelmingly positive outcomes for children participating in this program. These include:

- Increased confidence and independence
- Strong connection to the natural environment
- Enhanced physical capabilities and coordination
- Rich opportunities for collaboration, creativity and imaginative play
- Development of risk assessment skills in authentic contexts.

Educators have also observed that Bush Kinder provides a unique space for children to engage in uninterrupted, open-ended play, aligning stringing with our commitment to our

philosophy and to slow pedagogy. The natural environment encourages curiosity, inquiry and respect for the world around us, fostering a deep sense of belonging and wellbeing. With all this in mind, Yarrowonga Preschool intends to further deepen this program with our four-year-old kindergarten groups taking part weekly over term 2 and 3 and our three-year-old groups taking part fortnightly across term 3.

The Yarrowonga Preschool team have been on a journey of incorporating more nature and natural items within our outdoor spaces. This includes:

- Fruit trees and bushes
- Redeveloped sand pit and vegetable garden area utilising logs and boulders. This will be extended in 2026 to include our second sand pit area.
- Boulders, rocks and logs intentionally included in the space.

Our team remains committed to ongoing reflection and professional growth, which will be needed with the changes in 2026. We thank our dedicated educators for their passion and commitment and our families for their continued support.

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**Jamie Gash**  
Educational Leader





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GOULBURN REGION  
PRESCHOOL ASSOCIATION

**2025 ANNUAL REPORT**

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