



montessori  
pre-school  
MACEDON RANGES

# PARENT HANDBOOK 2024

*Offering a Strong Foundation for a Lifetime of Learning*

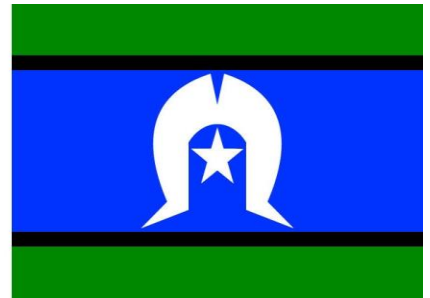


## Acknowledgement of Country

*Macedon Ranges Montessori acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and recognizes the continuing connection to lands, waters and communities.*

*We would like to acknowledge the Wurundjeri people that are the Traditional Custodians of the land and waterways in which we gather, live and work within the Macedon Ranges.*

*We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and to Elders past and present.*





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## MACEDON RANGES MONTESSORI STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

Since establishment in 1985, the Macedon Ranges Montessori Preschool has provided parents with an alternative option of education to mainstream schooling, the Montessori Method.

Our preschool has been in operation at the historic Primary School building site in Riddells Creek, since the relocation of the Riddells Creek Primary School to a new site further down Main Rd. Under the guidance of a steering committee, dedicated and hard-working parents helped renovate and restore the building, which had been well used for many years.

At Macedon Ranges Montessori Preschool, we provide a holistic approach within a supportive environment that nurtures children's self-respect. Our program focuses on developing self-discipline, self-respect and consideration for others and the environment. We use specifically designed Montessori materials, which encourage children to be;

- Independent
- Responsible
- Well organised
- Inquisitive
- Self – motivated
- Adaptable





## OUR MISSION, VALUES & OBJECTIVES

At Macedon Ranges Montessori Preschool, we pride ourselves on creating a partnership with families to celebrate and nurture each child's intrinsic desire to learn, develop and grow.

**We aim to** provide an experience that develops children's self-esteem, confidence, and independence, allowing them to realise their full potential and to be caring members of the family and the community.

**This is achieved through** supportive relationships, joyful learning and meaningful work within a Montessori classroom environment. We provide a quality Montessori education by employing experienced, Montessori qualified teachers and educators and by having a carefully prepared environment (complete with authentic, quality, Montessori materials) to meet the individual developmental needs of each child within the preschool.

**Macedon Ranges Montessori Preschool is committed to** the quality education, care, safety, protection and wellbeing of all children and upholds the values of equity and inclusion in all areas of the preschool.

Montessori education is grounded in a deep respect for the child as an individual. It is our mission for the students enrolled in our program to become independent, self-directed learners. Each child will do this in their own way, depending upon their individual learning style, individual aptitude and learning needs.

Three components of the Montessori philosophy which we emphasise within our preschool are:

- Follow the child.
- Teach me how to do it myself.
- Freedom through discipline

Our core values are based on the broader values of the Montessori philosophy, with emphasis on:

- Respect for each other and the environment
- Gratitude, Grace & Inclusivity
- Kindness to ourselves and others
- Creativity & Curiosity

*“The greatest gifts we can give our children are the roots of responsibility and the wings of independence”*

*Dr. Maria Montessori*



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## MACEDON RANGES MONTESSORI PRESCHOOL 2024 CALENDAR

### TERM 1 (30 January – 28 March)

JANUARY	25	Monday	Staff Commence
	30	Tuesday	<i>Returning Children Commence</i>
MARCH	11	Monday	Labour Day Holiday ( <b>Preschool CLOSED</b> )
	28	Thursday	Last Day of Term 1

### TERM 2 (15 April – 28 June)

APRIL	15	Tuesday	First day of Term 2
	25	Thursday	Anzac Day ( <b>Preschool CLOSED</b> )
JUNE	10	Monday	King's Birthday Public Holiday ( <b>Preschool CLOSED</b> )
	28	Thursday	Last day of Term 2

### TERM 3 (15 July – 19 September)

JULY	15	Monday	Staff & Children return for Term 3
SEPTEMBER	19	Thursday	Last day of Term 3

### TERM 4 (7 October – 20 December)

OCTOBER	7	Monday	Staff Commence/PD Day ( <b>Preschool CLOSED</b> )
	8	Tuesday	Children return for Term 4
	17	Thursday	Annual General Meeting
NOVEMBER	5	Tuesday	Melbourne Cup Public Holiday ( <b>Preschool CLOSED</b> )
DECEMBER	18	Wednesday	Last Session for Children-12.30pm finish
	19	Thursday	Clean Up Day – Staff only
	20	Friday	Clean Up Day – Staff only



## IMPORTANT CONTACT DETAILS

### School Address:

61 Main Road,  
Riddells Creek, 3431. VIC

**Preschool Email:** [macedon.ranges.montessorri.kin@kindergarten.vic.gov.au](mailto:macedon.ranges.montessorri.kin@kindergarten.vic.gov.au)

**Preschool Website:** [www.macedonrangesmontessori.com.au](http://www.macedonrangesmontessori.com.au)

**Office Phone No.:** (03) 5428 6376

**Emergency Mobile:** 0447 733 481

### Kindergarten Business Manager

Miss Celia Spykers

**Email:** [macedon.ranges.montessori.kin@kindergarten.vic.gov.au](mailto:macedon.ranges.montessori.kin@kindergarten.vic.gov.au)

### Committee of Management President/Approved Provider

Mrs. Natalie Giffin

**Email:** [committeemrmp@outlook.com](mailto:committeemrmp@outlook.com)

## PRESCHOOL OFFICE HOURS (DURING SCHOOL TERMS)

8.00am – 4.00pm Monday to Thursday.  
(Closed on Fridays, Public Holidays & School Holidays)

Teaching Hours: 9:00am-3:00pm Monday to Thursday.





## THE MONTESSORI PHILOSOPHY

### Respect for the Child

Much of the Montessori philosophy stems from a deep respect for children. This involves respecting the uniqueness of every child, their freedom to choose, to move, to correct their own mistakes, and to work at their own pace. Montessori educators work and interact with children from a place of genuine respect.

### Absorbent Mind

Maria Montessori's research determined that the first six years of life are the most crucial in a child's development. She termed this stage the period of the '[absorbent mind](#)' to describe the child's sponge-like capacity to absorb information from their environment. During this time, children rapidly develop an understanding of their culture, and their world, and construct the foundations of their intelligence and personality.

### Freedom of Movement and Choice

Maria Montessori observed that children learn best when they are free to move, free to choose their own work, and follow their interests. In a Montessori classroom, children are free to move around the prepared environment, work where they feel they will learn best, and discover learning outcomes through hands-on experience. Montessori learning is largely active, individually paced, often self-correcting, and tailored to the needs and interests of each individual child.

### Individualised Learning

Montessori learning programs are personalised to each child based on their unique stage of development, interests, and needs. Lessons with the Montessori materials are presented one-on-one based on each child's academic progress. Educators track each child's progress and support them as they progress through the curriculum.

### Independence

Montessori is an [education for independence](#). It provides children with the environment, materials, and guidance to learn to do and think for themselves. It views children as born learners who are capable and willing to teach themselves when provided with the right stimulus.

Dr. Maria Montessori observed children and developed an education system for children of 3 to 12 years of age; this is divided into three cycles:

<a href="#">Cycle 1</a>	Children aged 3-6 years
<a href="#">Cycle 2</a>	Children aged 6-9 years
<a href="#">Cycle 3</a>	Children aged 9-12 years

At Macedon Ranges Montessori Preschool, we offer the [Cycle 1](#) program for children three to six years of age. As we are a preschool, our sessions align with the Victorian 3 and 4 year old Kindergarten programs and as such, we do not offer a Primary School program. However, we can facilitate children up to the age of six years of age, within our program.



## THE MONTESSORI SYSTEM OF EDUCATION

Dr. Maria Montessori developed the Montessori System of Education. Learning is based on the use of specially designed materials which:

- Are aesthetically appealing and challenging
- Are self-correcting
- Introduce only one new stimulus at a time
- Are sequenced from concrete to abstract
- Are sequenced from simple to complex
- Are designed to enable the child to learn specific skills and concepts

The Montessori classroom is referred to as the prepared environment. It is a meaningfully structured learning space where everything has a purpose and a place. Furniture is light and child-sized, learning materials are designed to fit in children's hands, and everything is designed to be open and accessible. The prepared environment activates a love of learning through curiosity, stability, and the freedom to choose.



*“To assist a child we must provide him with an environment which will enable him to develop freely.”*

*Dr. Maria Montessori*

The Montessori classroom is not only a place for individual learning, it is a vibrant community of children, where the child learns to interact socially in a variety of ways. The age and gender mix comprising of three-year range approximates a family grouping.

The older children will teach the younger ones and learn much from the experience while the younger children are inspired to more advanced work at an individual rate, unhindered by competition and encouraged by co-operation. The Educational Team act as a guide and facilitator, whose task it is to support the child in the process of self-development. The teacher is foremost an observer, unobtrusively yet carefully monitoring each child's development, recognising and interpreting each child's needs. The teacher provides the link between the child and the prepared environment, introducing the child to each piece of equipment when he/she is ready.



## CYCLE 1 (PRESCHOOL) & THE MONTESSORI AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM

To attend Cycle One (3- and 4-year-old Kindergarten), a student must be at least 3 years of age and able to work independently for a short period of time.

The Cycle One classroom has a minimum of two staff members, but up to 4 (depending on the day and number of children attending). There is always a Montessori qualified, VIT registered, Early Childhood Teacher on the floor with the children during the sessions, teaching, guiding and observing.

Our Cycle One program follows the following frameworks and curriculum:

- Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF)
- Australian Curriculum
- Montessori Australian Curriculum

The Cycle One classroom provides [five fundamental areas](#):

**Practical life:** The Practical Life component of the Montessori method is the link between the child's home environment and that of the classroom. Children learn through doing and this leads to development of fundamental thought processes, understandings, and independence.

Upon entrance to the Cycle one program, the child spends a lot of time on practical life activities, doing things that they see their parents doing at home. Activities such as peeling vegetables, cleaning shoes, pouring water to marked levels etc. fulfil the child's desire to seek order and independence as well as supporting the development of fine motor skills needed to advance to the more complex Montessori equipment and training.

The children are free to engage themselves in activities that interest them. They can work by themselves or with a friend or a group of friends. They can spend as much time as needed in any activity.

The practical life materials involve the children in precise movements which challenge them to concentrate to work at their own pace uninterrupted and to complete a cycle of work which typically results in a feeling of satisfaction and confidence.

This encompasses four key areas:

- ✓ Care of the Self,
- ✓ Care of the Environment,
- ✓ Control of Movement and
- ✓ Grace and Courtesy.





**Sensorial:** The child then moves on to the sensorial equipment, which is designed to perfect coordination and to train the child to discriminate, order and classify.

Sensorial equipment such as the pink tower and colour tablets educate and refine the senses and prepare the child for later work.

The equipment is designed specifically to develop and refine each of the five senses, sight, taste, touch, sound and smell.

**Mathematics:** Through a progressive sequence of concrete equipment based on the decimal system, the children first learn to understand the role of numbers 1-10. They develop the ability to recognise numerals and complete simple operations. Materials teach the composition of numbers 1 to 1000 and basic number facts. The child is given the opportunity to record their work.



**Language:** Language forms the foundation of literacy, which encompasses speaking, listening, reading and writing. Activities and equipment explore and extend the child's oral language, including clarity of speech and expression, listening, interpreting and understanding. Equipment is specifically designed to introduce the building of words and reading of text as well as developing skills necessary for writing.



Macedon Ranges Montessori Preschool has a well-developed Early Literacy Program. Children at our Preschool often complete the 4-year-old program with the ability to read and write simple CVC words (Consonant/Vowel/Consonant), which puts them in an excellent position to start school.

Whilst all children learn at different rates, and there is no expectation for children to know how to read in preschool, we find that providing access to a good Early Literacy Program, sets the children up to be well developed with language by the time they progress to Primary School.

**Culture:** This is the term used to describe all aspects of human activity and interaction with the environment.

It covers learning areas such as Science, History, Geography, Visual and Performing Arts, Language and Health and Physical Education.

These areas of learning provide an opportunity for the child to broaden their general knowledge and to understand the world around them and their place in it. Knowledge of other societies and cultures fosters open-mindedness and helps build tolerance and respect.





**Nilmini Wijesooriya**  
**Early Childhood Teacher & Montessori Directress**

I have been working in early childhood education for over 20 years, and during that time, have developed a deep understanding of the unique needs of young children and the skills required to meet those needs. I believe in providing children with opportunities to explore and discover the world around them.

I moved to Australia from Sri Lanka with my family in 2013 and have loved the new experiences we found in Australia. I love sewing, gardening and spending time in nature.

I am passionate about the Montessori method and admire its focus on giving children foundational skills needed for life.



**Dhanushka Molligoda**  
**Activity Group Leader**

I have worked in the early childhood sector for over 12 years and mainly practiced the Montessori method of learning. I studied my Montessori diploma in Sri Lanka and continued working in the same field after moving to Australia. I'm currently pursuing my Bachelor of Early Childhood Education.

I moved to Melbourne in 2014 and over the last 9 years I have come to love camping and off-roading. I also enjoy reading a book or listening to podcasts. I live with my husband, our daughter and our fur baby. We love spending time outdoors exploring.



**Taia Ly**  
**Kindergarten Teacher/ Nominated Supervisor**

I have had the joy of working with young children for the last 10 years. I was drawn to the Montessori Method because of the environment it provides for children to discover themselves during the most formative years of their development. I believe that by focusing on children in the early years, we have a great shot at creating a wonderful world citizen. As Dr. Montessori herself said, "The child is both a hope and a promise for mankind."

My forte is to engage children with music and movement, and to create bonds with them for meaningful learning and emotional regulation. This is an extension of my own interests in music, dance and acrobatics, human curiosity and emotional intelligence. I feel so privileged to become a part of this wonderful community amongst the beauty of the Macedon Ranges.



**Emma Baker**  
Kindergarten Teacher

I have been a Kindergarten teacher for 11 years. I have been teaching at the Macedon Ranges Montessori Preschool casually since 2019. I love the way the Montessori method encourages children to develop their independence, early literacy & Numeracy skills as well as creating a beautiful nature enriched environment for children to thrive at their own pace.

When I'm not a Kinder, I am a photographer. I enjoy traveling and exploring new things with my family. When I grow up I want to live in Canada, have 4 highland cows & wear silly Christmas jumpers all the time.



**Laura Connell-Fernandez**  
Kindergarten Assistant

I have been working in a Montessori classroom for the last 5 years particularly in Early Education. I enjoy every aspect of this type of learning and even enrolled my own children whole all graduated from a Montessori School. I enjoy being outdoors, gardening, traveling, and learning new things.



**Mandy Merdoch**  
Kindergarten Assistant

I have worked with children for the past 8 years, starting out as Education Support for primary school children. I have since completed my Diploma in Early Education and love working with young children. They make me laugh every day! The Montessori Method is a beautiful way to educate children and live life. I love being at this pre-school. I enjoy travel, music, gardening and books and love sharing stories with the children.



**Celia Spykers**  
Business Manager

I trained and worked in the disability sector for 16 years before working at Swinburne University. I decided to move to the Ranges 10 years ago to raise my child in a community similar to one I grew up in myself. I will be in the office two days a week facilitating enrollments, and other administrative and compliance tasks to ensure the kindergarten runs smoothly.



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*“The goal of early childhood education should be to activate the child’s own natural desire to learn.”*

*Dr. Maria Montessori*

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The preschool employs three (permanent) Educational Team members. One of these team members is an Early Childhood Teacher (Montessori Qualified), then we have 2 Early Childhood Educators, all with more than a decade of Montessori Classroom experience each.

The Early Childhood Teacher is directly responsible for the implementation of the Educational Program and Early Childhood Curriculum (incorporating the Montessori Early Years Curriculum with the Victorian Department of Education’s Early Learning Years Framework).

The Educational Team work together in providing an [Individual Educational Program](#) based on the individual needs and interest of the child within the Montessori philosophy. Each child at Macedon Ranges Montessori Preschool will have their own [Individual Learning Plan \(ILP\)](#), tailored to their specific needs and abilities, in order to truly nurture each child’s individual educational development and learning experience.

#### [Nominated Supervisor/Educational Leader](#)

The Nominated Supervisor/Educational Leader is directly responsible for the management of the Educational Team, including their professional development and training. The Nominated Supervisor provides a monthly report including focus areas for the preschool and enrolment figures. An annual report is also provided at the Annual General Meeting in October.





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## MANAGEMENT OF THE PRESCHOOL & GOVERNMENT FUNDING

The preschool is an Incorporated Association, governed under the rules of the Incorporated Associations Act 2012. Macedon Ranges Montessori Preschool is governed by a Committee of Management (CoM).

The preschool is licensed by the Department of Education & Training (DET) to operate as a registered Kindergarten service.

The Incorporated Association is responsible to the Department for compliance with all relevant regulations and standards. The CoM Executive Members act as the Approved Provider for the service. The responsibility for the day-to-day operation of our service is delegated by the Approved Provider to a Nominated Supervisor (Preschool Director).

The Committee of Management is responsible for the overall governance and financial management of the preschool. The CoM maintain the financial authority of the preschool, governed by the rules of the Incorporated Associations Act, 2012.

The positions within the Committee of Management are elected at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) each year.

The DET provides a portion of the preschool's funding, per capita, for children enrolled in a [Funded Kindergarten](#) program at the preschool.

The preschool also accepts [unfunded places](#) within our program, but the DET does not provide any per capita funding towards these enrolments. Please see our Fee Policy for more details.

### GETTING INVOLVED

The preschool depends on help from families in a number of areas, from [school maintenance assistance](#), [fundraising](#), [grant applications](#), to the important task of [governance](#) and being involved in the [Committee of Management](#). It is important to remember the saying that “many hands make light work”. **Please be available to assist wherever possible as this ensures the smooth running of the preschool and helps to keep our fee structure affordable.**

Without parent involvement, we would not be able to operate as a preschool. Each year, it is fundamental to have families join the Committee of Management.

The main roles that must have filled in order operate, are those of the President, Secretary and Treasurer. You do not need any prior experience of being on a committee to join the CoM.

**Families receive a discount of up to \$400 per year off their school fees if they are an active member on the CoM.**

#### Fundraising

A fundraising sub-committee is established during the year and decides on a program of fundraising activities, which are offered throughout school year. Participation in these initiatives benefits our preschool by raising funds to be used for new equipment and updating facilities. There is generally one fundraising event per term, throughout the year. If you can help out with organising fundraising activities, please contact the CoM or the Preschool Director.



The Committee of Management has the responsibility of the upkeep and maintenance of the preschool grounds, gardens and the equipment on it. As such, we run a number of working bees throughout the year that require family's participation. If you or someone in your family is able to help out with general maintenance tasks around the preschool from time to time, please let the CoM or the Preschool Director know.

The Macedon Ranges Shire Council (MRSC) look after the large areas of grass beyond the Preschool and is responsible for maintaining the school building.





## Contact information for the 2024 Committee

Executive members: Email: [committeemrmp@outlook.com](mailto:committeemrmp@outlook.com)

Natalie Giffin	President	0498 099 410
	Treasurer	
Jharna Hogan	Secretary	

### General Members:

Nicole Paola  
 Moya Grech  
 Vicky Marcuzzi  
 Rayne Ryman (Grounds & Maintenance Officer)

It is expected that committee members attend a minimum of 6 meetings in the year.

### Committee Meetings

Meetings are usually held on the third Thursday of the month during term, via MS Teams (online).

### Parent Participation at Meetings

Any parents wishing to attend the meeting are welcome to do so by indicating an intention to attend to the Secretary prior to the meeting via email [committeemrmp@outlook.com](mailto:committeemrmp@outlook.com)

### Agenda

A formal agenda is followed at each of the Committee Meetings, so if you wish a particular item to be tabled and discussed at the meeting, please ensure you contact the President or Secretary to have the item included. The agenda is finalized and distributed 7 days prior to the meeting each month.

### Schedule of Committee meetings

February	Thursday 16	August	Thursday 17
March	Thursday 16	September	Thursday 14
April	Thursday 20	October (AGM)	Thursday 19
May	Thursday 18	November	Thursday 16
June	Thursday 15	December	No Meeting
July	Thursday 20		

### Committee Procedure Manual

A Committee Procedure Manual has been set up to clarify the jobs of each committee member and the function of sub-committees etc. A copy of this manual is made available for members of the committee and prospective members to read.

## HOW WE COMMUNICATE WITH YOU

Communication is an extremely vital component to the successful operation, management, and general harmony of the Preschool. Our main forms of Communication are:

- **via EMAIL:** [macedon.ranges.montessori.kin@kindergarten.vic.gov.au](mailto:macedon.ranges.montessori.kin@kindergarten.vic.gov.au)
- **MOBILE PHONE** available for parent's and carers to text the Educational Team during teaching session times: **0447 733 481**
- **LANDLINE PHONE: (03) 5428 6376**
- **NEWSLETTER:** The school will send a newsletter to all parents and guardians once per term, available through the OWNA App. This newsletter provides information on preschool events, reminders, calendar updates and information about what has been happening inside the classroom.
- **OWNA App:** Macedon Ranges Montessori also utilizes the OWNA App as a way of being able to share information and updates of the children with their families. The OWNA App is free for families to download and is a great way for you to gain additional insight into your child's learning and provides an opportunity to build engagement with your child over what they have done at school that week. The use of OWNA to document your child's learning journal is only done so after granting permission from parents and guardians.



### Parent-Teacher Discussion Sessions

Parent- Teacher meetings are encouraged throughout the year. The Nominated Supervisor and the Preschool Teacher are available for discussions regarding your child's progress. Please call or email the school to arrange a time to speak with one of our Educational Team.

### Facebook

Macedon Ranges Montessori Preschool has a public Facebook page where we display events, fundraising efforts, promote local events, children in the learning environment, incursions, excursions, artwork, photos, and any other interesting occurrences that may be associated with the Preschool.

- <https://www.facebook.com/MacedonRangesMontessori/>

Your child's photo may appear on this page, but **only after permission is sought from you** to use each photo that is posted. If you agree to have the photo posted on our Facebook page, then your child's photo will be seen by members of the public outside Preschool community.



## UPDATING YOUR INFORMATION

Please ensure that the preschool is kept up to date with your and your child's details. Please note, it is the family's responsibility to ensure contact details are kept up-to-date with us.

Please contact our Preschool Director via email: [macedon.ranges.montessorri.kin@kindergarten.vic.gov.au](mailto:macedon.ranges.montessorri.kin@kindergarten.vic.gov.au) or on (03) 5428 6376 to amend any registration details if you or your child's circumstances have changed.

### Children with additional needs

We are committed to supporting any child that has additional needs. If your child needs assistance, please ensure that your enrolment form clearly identifies this and that you add supporting documentation. For further information, speak to our Preschool Director.

## FEES AND CHARGES

### Macedon Ranges Montessori Preschool Fee Philosophy

We understand that an independent school education is a big investment for most families, and we thank you for considering Macedon Ranges Montessori Preschool for your children. The school's goal is to provide a **quality, affordable and authentic Montessori education**.

Macedon Ranges Montessori Preschool is a not-for-profit organisation. Therefore, the assets and income of the organisation are applied solely for the continued operation and improvement of the preschool, with the aim of directly benefiting the children enrolled at the school.

The preschool's tuition fees are designed to be a simple and all-inclusive cost. These fees include all specialist classes, incursions, excursions, food, text books, stationery, and activities as required. In other words, the fees cover everything required for your child to attend our preschool and receive a quality Montessori education. There are discounts available up front, yearly, payments and for families that have more than one child attending the preschool at any one time.

Please refer to our Fees Policy 2024 (available upon request) for a schedule of current fees and charges.

### Payments

Fee Payments are to be made to the preschool via the OWNA App, EFT, Direct Debit or Cash. Cash can be deposited directly into our account using the account details listed on the invoice. Where possible, fundraising order payments should also be made through EFT.

### Kindergarten Fee Subsidy (KFS)

The DET provides a Kindergarten Fee Subsidy to a parent/guardian or child who holds a current Health Care Card / Pensioner Concession Card / Visa 786 / Visa 785 and families with triplets / quadruplets attending a funded kindergarten program in the same year. The subsidy is paid to the Preschool to directly reduce fees paid by families. To obtain this the supporting documentation (Health Care Card / Pensioner Concession Card / Visa 786 / Visa 785) must be sighted and a copy provided to the Administration Officer or Director at the start of each term, original or certified birth certificates triplets/quadruplets need to be provided to the



## Early Start Education (ESK)

If your child is of Aboriginal heritage or if your child/family have been linked with Child First or child protection you may be eligible for Early Start Kindergarten. ESK provides funding for 15 hours per week for 3 year old children and our Preschool provides the opportunity for this to occur in a multi aged (3-5yr old) setting.

Please contact the Preschool Director to discuss if you are eligible.

## INCURSIONS & EXCURSIONS

We may attend excursions during the year to venues that keep in line with the children's interests or to visit our local community. On any excursion, the Preschool children are supervised by the Educational Team and parents who have volunteered to supervise on the day.

Parents may be needed to assist with children's care and safety and to meet the supervision ratio requirements as outlined in the risk assessment for the Excursion. This is a regulatory requirement for any excursion outside the Preschool fence line.

An annual signed permission will be required for excursions within the local township and notification of excursion dates via the Preview.

It is the policy of the Preschool that all parents assisting with excursions hold a current **Working with Children Card**.

Applications for Working with Children Cards can now be done on line at [www.justive.vic.gov.au/workingwithchildren](http://www.justive.vic.gov.au/workingwithchildren)

Incursions & Excursions will be organised throughout the year and are an inclusive component of the Preschool curriculum. **All costs involved are included in tuition fees.**



## WHAT TO BRING & WHAT TO WEAR



Backpack



Wide Brim Hat



Drink Bottle



Gumboots

For easy identification,  
please clearly name all  
items that your child will  
bring to Preschool



Waterproof Jacket



Change of Clothes

Children should arrive at Preschool with their own clearly labelled backpack. Children are assigned their own dedicated bag/coat hooks for their time at the preschool, so that they develop a sense of belonging. **Please check your child's bag at the end of each day.**

Sun protection is an important part of our program. When the UV rating is 3 or more (on any given day) a hat which protects the neck, face and ears will need to be worn by your child in order for them to be outside. Children should also wear clothing that covers their shoulders (i.e.; no singlet tops), in order to help protect them from the UV.). *(Please also refer to our Sun Smart Policy)*

Please send your children in comfortable shoes that have covered toes. Crocs or thongs (or heel strapped thongs) are not safe footwear for the Preschool. When it is gumboot weather include a pair of slippers or something similar to wear in the classroom as boots are not always comfortable for indoor wear.

### Uniforms

A school uniform is not compulsory at Macedon Ranges Montessori Macedon but School Sunhats, Polo Shirts and Fleece Jackets are now available from:

**BELEZA SCHOOL UNIFORMS**

42c Aitken St. Gisborne, 3437

Phone: (03) 5428 1285.

### Secondhand Uniforms

Secondhand uniforms can be purchased from the preschool (subject to availability). Families can choose to sell their second hand uniforms either through the preschool or through the OWNA App (Swap Shop). Please contact the Preschool Director for more details.



## WHAT TO EAT

We promote a healthy lifestyle to children, including eating nutritious food, maintaining oral health, and participating in physical activity. We recommend that you provide healthy snacks, lunch and water for your child.

### Healthy Eating Policy

An important part of the Preschool program is to educate children and their families about healthy foods/drink and healthy eating habits. We follow the Smiles for Miles program for Healthy Eating at our Preschool.

- Snacks and lunches must keep high sugar and high fat foods to a minimum.
- Staff will incorporate healthy food and drink posters, stories and discussions with the preschool curriculum.
- Water to drink is made accessible and available at all times.



### Morning Snack

The Preschool provides fresh, seasonal fruit to the children for their progressive morning snack.

As part of the Practical Life component of the Montessori Curriculum, children take turns to prepare the fruit each day (peeling, grating, and cutting). Food preparation activities are so much fun for young children. By taking part in food preparation activities the child can develop a high level of concentration, a sense of order, respect for their surroundings as well as increase their independence and improve their fine motor skills

Children have access to the prepared fruit throughout the day, in case they get hungry or need an extra snack.





## Lunch

For children attending full day sessions (including those staying for additional afternoons/extended days), please provide a simple lunch, in a separate lunch box (to the morning snack, if providing choosing to provide a separate snack). This helps children to easily differentiate between their morning snack and their lunch.

Parents are asked to please exclude the following items from snack/lunch boxes:

- Chocolate & Chocolate products including Nutella spread
- Sweets & Lollies
- Raw nuts, peanut butter & nut products
- Juice and flavoured milks (children should only bring water in a bottle to the Preschool)





## DAILY TASKS AT THE PRESCHOOL

### Getting Dressed, Hygiene & Toilet Habits

Attempting to dress themselves, using tissues, handwashing and being able to manage bags and lunchboxes are skills that children can develop at a young age. Getting dressed is about more than just putting on or taking off clothes. It helps your child develop other skills like:

- ✓ fine motor skills as they learn to fasten buttons and zips
- ✓ gross motor skills such as standing on one leg to pull on a pair of pants
- ✓ cognitive skills such as remembering what bits of clothing go on first, build patience and attention to finish the task
- ✓ language such as naming types of clothes, colours and sizes
- ✓ awareness of time and space as they learn to dress for certain occasions and weather conditions

Please dress your child in comfortable clothing that both parents and child will not be concerned about getting dirty or stained. Smocks are provided for various activities. We also ask that you pack a complete change of clothes for emergencies.

It is important that your child is instructed carefully in clean toilet habits, in particular flushing the toilet and washing their hands thoroughly with soap afterwards. Clothing should allow the child to go to the toilet with minimal assistance. For those children still transitioning to successful toileting, Pull Up nappies are allowed.

Please instruct your child on how to blow their nose and the use of tissues, which should be discarded appropriately immediately after use.

We teach children hygiene etiquette and to cough into their elbows to reduce the spread of germs and would appreciate if this could be supported and modelled in the home as well.



### Share and Tell (Share Box)

A regular part of the preschool program involves children bringing things of interest from home to show the other children.

This gives your child the opportunity to express themselves to others, and to inform the group.

Each child will be allocated a specific day to take the Share Box home to prepare for Share and Tell.

The theme of the Share Box will change periodically, in line with the curriculum and learning plan for each Term.



## ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE ROUTINES

### General Guidelines

Government regulations require that adults in charge of a child or children note the time of arrival and departure at the preschool. Therefore, we require that all parents & guardians sign their child in & out when attending sessions at the preschool. This process is done electronically, through the OWNA App and can be done either on a personal phone or by using the iPad within the preschool foyer.

The staff are not responsible for children in the grounds outside of logged times.

### Signing in & out of the preschool

#### **SIGNING CHILDREN IN & OUT OF AT THE PRESCHOOL IS REQUIRED.**

Only those listed as “[Authorised to Collect](#)” on your child’s enrolment form will be able to collect your child. If your child will be collected by someone other than a parent, please ensure that they are listed. From time to time you may find it helpful to update this information. It is imperative that you notify the Educational Team in advance if you have arranged for your child to be picked up by an adult unknown to the team and photo identification must be produced when collecting. Your child will not be allowed to leave with any person not listed as authorised to collect your child even if they are well known to the child.

**Children must be collected by a person 18 years of age or older.**

**Sessions begin at 8.30 am.** On arrival, families are asked to bring their children into the building foyer, help them hang their bag on their assigned bag hook and then sign their child in for the session (using the OWNA App). Children will then enter the bathroom to wash their hands before moving into the classroom to start the day. The 5-hour children will start from 9.00AM and follow the same process listed above.

On departure, children will be waiting inside the classroom with their bags and coats, ready to leave for the day. Parents are required to come into the school building to collect their child and to sign them out for the day, using the OWNA App.

Children should not be left in the foyer or playground without supervision. We ask that all families vacate the school premises by 4.15 PM each day, to allow for staff to tidy and prepare the school grounds for the following day.

**5-hour program 9.00-2.00pm.** Please come into the school building and a member of staff will greet you in the foyer when you arrive. You will then be required to sign out your child using the OWNA App before departing the school grounds.

**Full Day sessions finish at 4.00pm.** Please come into the school building and a member of staff will greet you in the foyer when you arrive. You will then be required to sign out your child using the OWNA App before departing the school grounds.

Being collected on time fosters your child's sense of security. If you are detained unavoidably, please ring our **Emergency Contact Number 0447 733 481**.



Please advise staff if someone other than parents are to collect your child. This can be done through the OWNA App as well.

Where unexpected changes to collection need to be made please email or call the preschool advise staff and so that we can let your child know in advance.

If a child is not attending for any reason, please phone, email or text to advise the Educational Team as we need to keep records of attendance and absences. You can also mark your child as absent/not attending by using the OWNA App.

**A 'Late Fee' may be enforced** for those who do not advise that they will be late to pick up their child.

### Casual Days and Additional Days (vacancies permitting).

There may be times when you wish for your child to attend additional day in the week. This can also be valuable when trialing longer days for younger children or for building extra days at the preschool over time. Casual full days are available upon request if there are vacancies at the preschool on the day.

Please email [macedon.ranges.montessori.kin@kindergarten.vic.gov.au](mailto:macedon.ranges.montessori.kin@kindergarten.vic.gov.au) to book additional time. The Preschool Director will confirm if this time is available.





## WE ARE A SUNSMART PRESCHOOL

Sun protection is used whenever UV levels are 3 or higher. All children are required to wear a SunSmart approved hat that protects their face, neck, and ears. These include:

- ✓ Legionnaire
- ✓ Broad brim
- ✓ Bucket hat

Peak caps and visors are not considered a suitable alternative.

### Sunscreen

SPF 50 broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen is provided at the preschool (Deb Stoko Sun Protect 50+ Brand), however, families can provide an alternative sunscreen to be left at the preschool if their child has a particular sensitivity to the sunscreen provided.

Visit the SunSmart website for more information [sunsmart.com.au](http://sunsmart.com.au)

Management and staff will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the Sun Protection Policy each year and revise the policy as required.





## ABSCENCES, ILLNESSES & ACCIDENTS

Please do not send your child to preschool if

- i) your child is ill or has symptoms of a cold or illness i.e. **a runny nose or temperature, cough, sore throat**
- ii) your child has been diagnosed with either a contagious or infectious disease ([see page 24 of the parent handbook](#)).
- iii) you are in doubt at all as to whether the child is ill

Remember a sick child does not feel like working, and it is also possible to pass an illness onto other children and staff within the preschool.

If a child becomes mildly unwell or suffers a minor accident appropriate first aid is given at the preschool. A record of the accident is kept and what first aid was dispensed. Parents will be asked to sign this record upon collection of their child. Parents/guardians will be notified if it is necessary to have the child taken home.

All emergency information on your child is kept on the Enrolment Form, together with details of any medical conditions or allergies. It is the parents/guardians' responsibility to make sure the details are up to date.

If a child suffers a serious accident/illness at the preschool, a staff member will give help and remain with the child until appropriate assistance arrives. Parents/guardians will be contacted immediately. If this is not possible an emergency contact person listed on the Enrolment Form will be contacted.

The preschool will seek medical, hospital or ambulance service assistance in case an emergency should arise.

All medical costs, including ambulance, will be the parent's responsibility.

### Insurance

The preschool holds a Public Liability Policy. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that their child is covered by appropriate medical and hospital insurance. Responsibility will not be taken for the children outside of preschool hours.

### Notification of Absence

Please notify the preschool of your child's absence due to illness or other circumstances. This aids the Staff in organising the session or notifying other parents of contagious diseases, etc. You can notify the school of your child's non-attendance through the OWNA App or by contacting the preschool directly.



## IMMUNISATIONS

An up-to-date Immunisation History Statement is to be provided to confirm placement and to enroll your child at our preschool.

**An Immunisation History Statement from the Australian Immunisation Register is the only acceptable documentation to confirm immunisation status.**

From 1 November 2018, parents of children attending early childhood services are required to provide the service with evidence that their child continues to be up to date with immunisations while attending. [Under National Law, Macedon Ranges Montessori Preschool strictly adheres to the “no jab, no play” legislation.](#)

If there is a vaccine-preventable disease outbreak at the service, accurate and current evidence of immunisation enables us to work with health authorities to quickly identify children at risk (for example, children too young to be fully immunised against a disease) and take whatever action is required to protect public health.

Parents/carers should provide us with up-to-date evidence of immunisation as soon as is practical after their child receives a vaccination, or in response to a request from us.

Parents/carers only need to provide a new statement to the service when our current IHS is out of date.

The quickest way to get your child’s statement is by using your Medicare online account through myGov or the Express Plus Medicare mobile app.  
Alternatively, you can call the AIR on 1800 653 809 to request your child’s statement be posted to you. It can take 14 days to arrive by post.

## COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

The Department of Human Services has strict rules about when a child may return to preschool after contracting infectious disease. Children who suffer from an infectious disease will not be able to attend for the term of the risk period. This period differs from each disease.

Please refer to the chart on the next page.

Please also refer to our [Dealing with Infectious Diseases Policy](#) for more details (available upon request).

# Minimum period of exclusion from primary schools and children's services centres for infectious diseases cases and contacts

health

*Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2009*

## Schedule 7

**Minimum Period of Exclusion from Primary Schools and Children's Services Centres for Infectious Diseases Cases and Contacts (Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2009).**

In this Schedule, medical certificate means a certificate from a registered medical practitioner.

[1] Conditions	[2] Exclusion of cases	[3] Exclusion of Contacts
Amoebiasis ( <i>Entamoeba histolytica</i> )	Exclude until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 24 hours	Not excluded
Campylobacter	Exclude until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 24 hours	Not excluded
Chickenpox	Exclude until all blisters have dried. This is usually at least 5 days after the rash appears in unimmunised children, but may be less in previously immunised children	Any child with an immune deficiency (for example, leukaemia) or receiving chemotherapy should be excluded for their own protection. Otherwise not excluded
Conjunctivitis	Exclude until discharge from eyes has ceased	Not excluded
Diarrhoea	Exclude until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 24 hours	Not excluded
Diphtheria	Exclude until medical certificate of recovery is received following at least two negative throat swabs, the first not less than 24 hours after finishing a course of antibiotics and the other 48 hours later	Exclude family/household contacts until cleared to return by the Secretary
Hand, Foot and Mouth disease	Exclude until all blisters have dried	Not excluded
Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib)	Exclude until at least 4 days of appropriate antibiotic treatment has been completed	Not excluded
Hepatitis A	Exclude until a medical certificate of recovery is received, but not before 7 days after the onset of jaundice or illness	Not excluded
Hepatitis B	Exclusion is not necessary	Not excluded
Hepatitis C	Exclusion is not necessary	Not excluded
Herpes (cold sores)	Young children unable to comply with good hygiene practices should be excluded while the lesion is weeping. Lesions to be covered by dressing, where possible	Not excluded
Human immuno-deficiency virus infection (HIV/AIDS virus)	Exclusion is not necessary	Not excluded
Impetigo	Exclude until appropriate treatment has commenced. Sores on exposed surfaces must be covered with a watertight dressing	Not excluded
Influenza and influenza like illnesses	Exclude until well	Not excluded unless considered necessary by the Secretary
Leprosy	Exclude until approval to return has been given by the Secretary	Not excluded
<b>Measles*</b>	Exclude for at least 4 days after onset of rash	Immunised contacts not excluded. Unimmunised contacts should be excluded until 14 days after the first day of appearance of rash in the last case. If unimmunised contacts are vaccinated within 72 hours of their first contact with the first case, or received NHIG within 144 hours of exposure, they may return to the facility
Meningitis (bacteria —other than meningococcal meningitis)	Exclude until well	Not excluded
<b>Meningococcal infection*</b>	Exclude until adequate carrier eradication therapy has been completed	Not excluded if receiving carrier eradication therapy
<b>Mumps*</b>	Exclude for 9 days or until swelling goes down (whichever is sooner)	Not excluded
<b>Pertussis*</b> (Whooping cough)	Exclude the child for 21 days after the onset of cough or until they have completed 5 days of a course of antibiotic treatment	Contacts aged less than 7 years in the same room as the case who have not received three effective doses of pertussis vaccine should be excluded for 14 days after the last exposure to the infectious case, or until they have taken 5 days of a course of effective antibiotic treatment
<b>Poliomyelitis*</b>	Exclude for at least 14 days from onset. Re-admit after receiving medical certificate of recovery	Not excluded
Ringworm, scabies, pediculosis (head lice)	Exclude until the day after appropriate treatment has commenced	Not excluded
<b>Rubella*</b> (German measles)	Exclude until fully recovered or for at least four days after the onset of rash	Not excluded
Salmonella, Shigella	Exclude until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 24 hours	Not excluded
Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS)	Exclude until medical certificate of recovery is produced	Not excluded unless considered necessary by the Secretary
Streptococcal infection (including scarlet fever)	Exclude until the child has received antibiotic treatment for at least 24 hours and the child feels well	Not excluded
Tuberculosis	Exclude until receipt of a medical certificate from the treating physician stating that the child is not considered to be infectious	Not excluded
Typhoid fever (including paratyphoid fever)	Exclude until approval to return has been given by the Secretary	Not excluded unless considered necessary by the Secretary
Verotoxin producing <i>Escherichia coli</i> (VTEC)	Exclude if required by the Secretary and only for the period specified by the Secretary	Not excluded
Worms (Intestinal)	Exclude until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 24 hours	Not excluded

## Statutory rule

A person in charge of a primary school or children's services centre must not allow a child to attend the primary school or children's services centre for the period or in the circumstances:

- (a) specified in column 2 of the table in Schedule 7 if the person in charge has been informed that the child is infected with an infectious disease listed in column 1 of the table in Schedule 7; or  
 (b) specified in column 3 of the table in Schedule 7 if the person in charge has been informed that the child has been in contact with a person who is infected with an infectious disease listed in column 1 of the table in Schedule 7.

 The person in charge of a primary school or children's services centre, when directed to do so by the Secretary, must ensure that a child enrolled at the primary school or children's services centre who is not immunised against a vaccine preventable disease (VPD) specified by the Secretary in that direction, does not attend the school or centre until the Secretary directs that such attendance can be resumed. (Note—VPDs marked in **bold** with an asterisk (\*) require the department to be informed immediately. Contact the department on 1300 651 160 for further advice about exclusion and these diseases.)

## Further information

 For further information about exclusions mentioned in this document, please contact the Department of Health's Communicable Disease Prevention and Control Section on 1300 651 160 or visit [ideas.health.vic.gov.au](http://ideas.health.vic.gov.au)



## FUNGI – DEATH CAP MUSHROOMS



It has been discovered that it is possible, within the preschool grounds to have a very rare and extremely toxic form of fungi growing. The mushroom is called Amanita Phalloides (also known as the Death Cap).

This particular form of fungi takes approximately 70-80 years to appear, and only grows within the bounds of Oak and Beech tree roots of the same age.

The mushroom has an olive to yellowish green cap and a bulbous base. The gills are white in colour. They tend to appear after warm wet weather mostly in the months of Nov- April, but also can appear in spring.

There is no real way of eradicating the fungi because it lives on the Oak tree's roots and thus to destroy one, we would need to destroy the other. Therefore, unless we were to remove the large Oak tree and its mature root system, we cannot eradicate the mushrooms.

[We can minimise the risk of these mushrooms by daily searches during the most likely periods of occurrence.](#)

**ANY MUSHROOMS FOUND** must be removed using disposable gloves, and placed in a sealed plastic bag along with the gloves and placed into the garbage bin outside.

This mushroom is extremely dangerous especially to young children. Therefore, we would suggest that parents stress to their child/children the importance of not touching fungi of any kind.

Since early treatment is of the utmost importance, any child suspected of eating even the smallest amount of the mushroom must be treated as a medical emergency.

[We do not wish to alarm parents but feel the need to make all parents aware of their possible existence. For further information, please feel free to ask to view the file on the fungus. Information is available for you to read at the preschool and is also available on the OWNA App.](#)



## BUSHFIRE PLAN

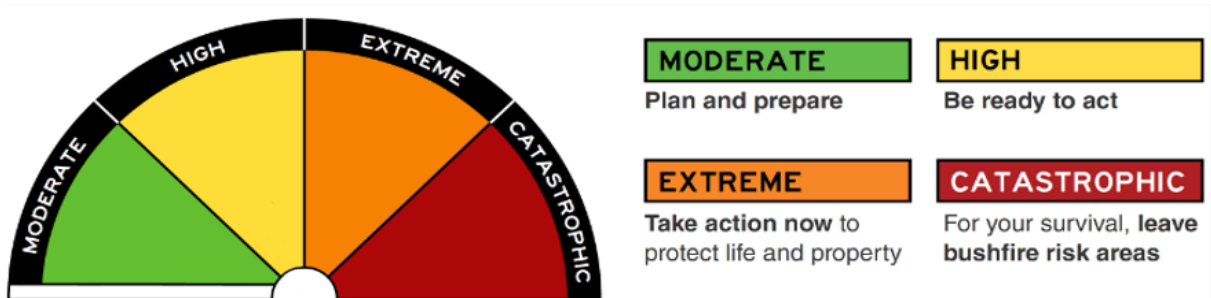
Schools, Preschools and Child Care facilities assessed to be at the highest risk of fire are placed on the Bushfire At Risk Register (BARR). Inclusion on this register is a trigger for the school to pre-emptively close on days forecast to be in the Catastrophic (RED) danger rating, in the Bureau of Meteorology district, as well as other pre-emptive and preparedness actions in line with the fire risk category.

### Macedon Ranges Montessori Preschool is listed on the Bushfire At Risk Register (BARR).

Macedon Ranges Montessori Preschool will be **CLOSED** on ALL DAYS that are declared as **CATASTROPHIC** (previously known as CODE RED days). When a Catastrophic rating is declared, the preschool will not open for the day and parents will be informed through the OWNA App and by text. However, we encourage all families to follow the ratings daily, so that they can make the necessary arrangements for alternative care, as early as possible.

If you have any queries about this arrangement, please do not hesitate to contact the preschool and speak with the Preschool Director.

RATING	ACTION
MODERATE	NORMAL SESSIONS
HIGH	NORMAL SESSIONS
EXTREME	NORMAL SESSIONS
CATASTROPHIC	CLOSED



An SMS text message is included in the Emergency management practice in term 1 to check our communication system.

**It is important to note that in the event of a Bush Fire and the need for children to be relocated from the preschool grounds (as advised by emergency services), this will be done by Staff and/or Committee's private vehicles. Parents will be advised of the relocation point when we have this information.**

Please give serious consideration to your Fire plan in the event that you will need to collect your child urgently in this situation or/if you would prefer not to send your child or reduce their hours of attendance on days of Total Fire Ban or Extreme Conditions.



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## POLICIES

The committee operates the preschool with reference to a number of specific policies. All matters relating to policies should be directed to the committee, preferably in writing.

Our policies reflect our vision and are in place to ensure high quality education and care for the children who attend our preschool. Full copies of the policies can be provided upon request and are available for reference within the preschool foyer.

Parents are encouraged to read and understand the school policies.

Please remember, effective communication is the best policy.

**Macedon Ranges Montessori Preschool abides by the Education and Care Services National Act and the Education and Care Services National Regulations.**

Current copies of these can be sourced at:

<http://acecqa.gov.au/national-regulations>

<http://acecqa.gov.au/National-Law>

Macedon Ranges Montessori Preschool has proudly achieved the rating of **Exceeding the National Standards**, as outlined in the most recent ACECQA Assessment & Rating Audit.

## CONCERNS & COMPLIMENTS

Please inform your child's teacher at the preschool with any concerns or complaints as the first point of contact.

Please contact the Preschool Director or President/Approved Provider if you are unable to discuss your concerns with a Teacher or Educator at the preschool.

Contact details for both the Preschool Director and the Approved Provider can be found at the beginning of this Handbook.



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## WE ARE A CHILD SAFE ORGANISATION

### Our commitment to being a Child Safe Preschool – Zero Tolerance

Macedon Ranges Montessori Preschool recognises that protecting children, preventing and responding to child abuse is an [organisation wide responsibility](#). We commit to regularly review our policies, procedures and documentation to ensure that all principles of a 'Child Safe Organisation' (as outlined in the Victorian Child Safe Standards) are embedded in the everyday thinking and practice at the preschool

In line with this commitment to child safety, all preschool volunteers are required to have a Victorian Working with Children's Check.

Macedon Ranges Montessori Preschool follows the Child Safe Standards and the Reportable Conduct Scheme, which create distinct sets of responsibilities for organisations, but have been designed to complement one another.

For more information visit [ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards/](https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards/) or refer to our Early Years Child Safe Environment and Wellbeing Policy.

Privacy of complaints is maintained and information is only disclosed as required by legislation. Permission is not required from parents and/or guardians of a child to make a report where any abuse is suspected.

### Reporting child abuse

To make a report to Child Protection, a person needs to have formed a reasonable belief that a child has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm as a result of abuse or neglect, and that their parent has not protected or is unlikely to protect the child from harm of that type.

The Victorian Child Protection Service is specifically targeted to those children and young people at risk of harm or where families are unable or unwilling to protect them.

The main functions of Child Protection are to:

- investigate matters where it is alleged that a child is at risk of significant harm
- refer children and families to services that assist in providing the ongoing safety and wellbeing of children
- make applications to the Children's Court if the child's safety cannot be ensured within the family
- administer protection orders granted by the Children's Court.



## Mandatory reporting of child abuse

The following professional groups are required to make a report to Child Protection where they form a reasonable belief that a child has been or is at risk of significant harm, as a result of physical or sexual abuse, and the child's parents have not protected or are unlikely to protect the child from that abuse:

- Registered medical practitioners
- Nurses including midwives • Victorian police officers
- Registered teachers and school principals
- Out of home care workers (excluding voluntary foster and kinship carers)
- Early childhood workers
- Youth justice workers
- Registered psychologists
- School counsellors
- People in religious ministry.

As a mandated reporter, Macedon Ranges Montessori Preschool, all of its staff (permanent and casual) is legally obliged to:

- make a report to Child Protection if a Teacher or Educator believes on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection from physical injury, emotional or sexual abuse
- make the report as soon as practicable after forming that belief
- make a report each time they become aware of any further grounds for their belief.

In addition, any person who believes on reasonable grounds that a child needs protection can make a report to Child Protection. Child Protection will decide when follow up is required and how to classify the report. This may mean providing advice to the reporter, progressing the matter to an investigation, or referring the family to support services in the community, or taking no further action.

More information can be found at: <https://services.dffh.vic.gov.au/child-protection>

## Information sharing scheme

The Child Information Sharing (CSI) Scheme is legislation that allows authorised organisations and professionals working with children and young people (0-18) to share information without parents' permission in circumstances that promote a child's wellbeing or safety. A person's safety takes preference over someone's privacy. Generally, your information will not be shared without your consent. But if there is a serious threat to an individual's life, health safety or welfare, your information may be shared without your consent to lessen or prevent this serious threat.

Authorised organisations can request and share confidential information if the Child Information Sharing Scheme threshold is met. The disclosing information entity must reasonably believe that sharing the information may assist the receiving information sharing entity to carry out one or more of the following activities;

1. making a decision, an assessment or plan relating to a child or group of children.
2. initiating or conducting an investigation relating to a child or group of children.
3. providing a service relating to a child or group of children
4. managing any risk to a child or group of children.

For more information visit <https://www.vic.gov.au/child-information-sharing-scheme>.