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CONTACT AND SERVICE INFORMATION

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https://www.facebook.com/robinascottkinder/

License Id: 3941
Provider Number: PR-0000 1778
Service Approval Number: SE-000 3933
INTRODUCTION

We would like to warmly welcome you and your child to Robina Scott Kindergarten.

This handbook has been designed to help families or carers become familiar with the operations of the kindergarten, so that we may all work towards the common goal of contributing in a constructive way to each child’s wellbeing and optimum development.

Robina Scott Kindergarten conducts a play-based kindergarten program that reflects the service’s philosophy. Our educators provide a quality educational program that aims to give each child a broad and rounded experience – in other words, the curriculum caters for the whole child, including all areas of learning and development. It promotes development of communication skills, a strong positive self-concept and independence, engages their curiosity, and most importantly fosters an enjoyment of learning and discovery. Planning for children occurs at both an individual and group level. Through observations and other informal assessment techniques, our educational team (your child’s teacher and co-educator) are able to plan and implement a program that is responsive to children’s interests, experiences and developmental abilities.

Our educational team ensure that a caring, stable and positive environment is created for the children. As an independent, community operated kindergarten; ‘family’ involvement is an intrinsic aspect of Robina Scott Kindergarten. We value and encourage families/carers to be actively involved in their child’s education and the many activities of the service.

We look forward to a happy and productive year with you, your family and your child.
HISTORY OF ROBINA SCOTT KINDERGARTEN

Robina Scott Kindergarten has a strong community spirit and during over 80 years of operation has enriched the lives of thousands of local Williamstown children.

In 1934 the late Mayoress of Williamstown Mrs. J T Gray, with the support of local members of the community, including Mrs. Robina Scott, met and laid plans to open a free kindergarten in Williamstown. The group managed to obtain the use of a hall at the St Andrew's Church in Cecil Street, Williamstown, and from there it all started. When the Williamstown Free Kindergarten opened in 1934 it was, of course, only small and catered for up to 36 children in one single room.

Construction of the kindergarten’s own building commenced at the current Ferguson Street site in 1952 – following the donation of land by local chemist, Mrs Muster, to the Williamstown Council on the condition it be used for a kindergarten. In December 1953 the new kindergarten was opened and catered for up to 90 children a year.

In 1966 the Williamstown Free Kindergarten Committee renamed the service “Robina Scott Kindergarten” in honour of Mrs Robina Scott who acted as its honorary secretary for 34 years and was a driving force behind the kindergarten’s foundation.

Robina Scott Kindergarten was incorporated in 1986, and in August 1995 a brand new, single unit kindergarten building costing $284,000 opened. In April 1998 a second room was added, along with the Maternal and Child Health Service.

From its humble beginnings in the St Andrew's Church hall, Robina Scott Kindergarten has grown to become one of the largest community kindergartens in Victoria. It operates as a multi-unit service.

COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT

The Robina Scott Kindergarten Committee of Management is the legally constituted body that is elected for a term of 12 months to manage the service on behalf of members of the kindergarten (i.e. families who use the kindergarten and those on the waiting list). The Committee has the responsibility to act as licensee of the kindergarten, employer of management and educators, and is responsible for the day-to-day operation and maintenance of the service. The Committee is charged with making decisions about how the service will operate, financial management, policy development, and administration and ensuring compliance with all relevant regulations.

The Committee consists of a dedicated group of current families who participate in a voluntary capacity to the running of the kindergarten. The Committee comprises the following office bearers: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and six General Committee Members. Meetings are held monthly.

Families are welcome to contact members of the Committee of Management at any time. A list of executive committee members and their contact numbers is on display on the foyer notice board. If you wish to attend a Committee of Management meeting, or view copies of minutes, please contact the Secretary in advance so arrangements can be made.
OUR PHILOSOPHY

Educational Philosophy

At Robina Scott Kindergarten we believe the first few years of early education are fundamental in preparing a child with the skills necessary to become a lifelong learner.

We aim to guide each individual child to discover their own full potential. Most importantly, to nurture each individual’s characteristics of resilience, joy, creativity, respect and confidence to belong and to be able to shape their own world.

Throughout this journey, we aim to develop an environment of positive and trusting relationships, which we believe underpins the foundations for a desire to learn.

Our Principles:

- We believe in the educational and developmental power of a play based, natural environment and emergent curriculum;
- All children are capable, curious and competent learners with the freedom to express their ideas within a safe environment;
- We believe in developing the whole child - nurturing the child’s inner self through an independent mind, a healthy body and their understanding of their place in a sustainable world;
- Individuality is celebrated and it is what each individual brings to the group that enhances and strengthens our learning community;
- We provide a culturally diverse and inclusive environment that recognises and respects a multi-cultural perspective and the traditional owners of the land;
- We believe in allowing children time and space to discover, explore and investigate at their individual pace and level;
- We encourage self-esteem, understanding and respect for others and for the world around us; and
- We value and encourage collaborative partnerships with families, children and educators in order to provide a welcoming, nurturing, challenging and inspiring environment that promotes a desire to learn and grow. We support these interactions to enrich children’s learning experiences.

Educators:

- Believe in a holistic approach to learning whereby children are active participants in their own learning, whose voices are heard and respected.
- We believe in creating stimulating and responsive environments, that offer flexible, play based experiences which are both planned (intentional), and spontaneous, including many open-ended, inquiry based projects. These are underpinned by reflective practices, designed to engage children’s learning, interests and development.
- We believe in a collaborative engagement between children, families, educators and the Committee of Management; encouraging communication, participation and cooperation at all levels.
- We are committed to extending our own knowledge and that of our team through internal and external Professional Development.
- We believe that the children’s emergent learning and developmental outcomes should foster children to achieve. This is strongly influenced by the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) and the National Quality Framework (NQF).
- We are committed to being active in meeting the quality standards and practices of the NQF. We aim to take our service from “exceeding” to “excellent”.

We acknowledge and commit to enhancing the rich history of Robina Scott Kindergarten as we continue to be active participants in the local community.
MANAGEMENT AND EDUCATORS

All teachers at Robina Scott Kindergarten hold a Bachelor of Early Childhood Education, this is a four year university degree approved by the Department of Education and Training for funded kindergarten programs.

At Robina Scott Kindergarten we firmly believe that continuous professional development is synonymous with quality early childhood education. As such, all educators are encouraged to further their professional development and each year undertake training to keep abreast of new developments in early childhood education and to develop new ideas. All educators at the service have a current Working with Children Check, First Aid Certificate and undertake specialised CPR, Asthma and Anaphylaxis training on an annual basis.

As of 2016, all Victorian early childhood education and care services with children from 3 years and over will have their educator to child ratio increased from 1:15 to 1:11. This means any group with more than 22 children will need to engage a kindergarten teacher, a diploma and a certificate III trained educator who floats during the session.

Improved educator to child ratios allows us to provide more individual care and attention and contributes to better health and learning outcomes for children. Educators are able to develop more effective and meaningful relationships with children, resulting in more engaged and relaxed individuals.

Our Service Manager, Marnie van Luinen is responsible for overseeing the day-to-day activities of the kindergarten, managing administrative staff and educators and ensuring the service operates in accordance with all Licensing and Regulatory requirements.

Our Educational Leader Melanie Sullivan – has a key role as Educational Leader to create a common vision for children’s learning and curriculum collaboratively. Through a clearly articulated vision for learning, our educators are connected and motivated to work toward shared goals for children and their learning. By using the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) as a starting point for discussions, the big ideas of Belonging, Being and Becoming can then be used to guide thinking about providing for the best educational outcomes for children.

Our Office Administrator, Katrina Chavarria, assists with administration of the kindergarten and will handle any queries you may have in relation to fees, enrolments and fundraising events.

As a team we collaborate to make your experience welcoming, unique and positively memorable.
### KINDERGARTEN TIMETABLE

#### ROOM 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 Year Old</td>
<td>8:15 – 1:15 (5 hours)</td>
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<td>Red Group</td>
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<td>Blue Group</td>
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<td>8:15 – 1:15 (5 hours)</td>
<td>8:30 – 2:30 (6 hours)</td>
<td>8:15 – 1:15 (5 hours)</td>
<td>8:30 – 2:30 (6 hours)</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 Year Old</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue Group</td>
<td>1:45 – 4:45 (3 hours)</td>
<td>3 Year Old</td>
<td>3 Year Old</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pink Group</td>
<td>Purple Group</td>
<td>Green Group</td>
<td>Blue Group</td>
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<td>1:45 – 4:45 (3 hours)</td>
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#### ROOM 2

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<td>Yellow Group</td>
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<td>Green Group</td>
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<tr>
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<td>8:30 – 2:30 (6 hours)</td>
<td>8:15 – 1:15 (5 hours)</td>
<td>8:30 – 2:30 (6 hours)</td>
<td>8:15 – 1:15 (5 hours)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 Year Old</td>
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<td>Purple Group</td>
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<td>Green Group</td>
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<td>Purple Group</td>
<td>1:45 – 4:45 (3 hours)</td>
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<td>1:45 – 4:45 (3 hours)</td>
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### KINDERGARTEN TERM DATES

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Dates</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Term 1</td>
<td>30th January to 31st March</td>
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<tr>
<td>Term 2</td>
<td>18th April to 30th June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 3</td>
<td>17th July to 22nd September</td>
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<tr>
<td>Term 4</td>
<td>9th October to 22nd December</td>
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</table>

Please note sessions may need to be cancelled/changed from time-to-time to accommodate the inclusion of special events, professional development and educator’s illness. Whenever possible, you will be notified well in advance of any cancellations via newsletter, email and/or on the term calendar.

**Professional Development (child free) Days** will be advised during term one so that families are given enough notice to make child care arrangements. There are normally two assigned each year.

### PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

In addition to the standard term holidays, the service will be closed on all gazetted public holidays.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Holiday</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Labour Day</td>
<td>Monday 13th March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Friday</td>
<td>Friday 14th April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easter Monday</td>
<td>Monday 17th April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANZAC Day</td>
<td>Tuesday 25th April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queen’s Birthday</td>
<td>Monday 12th June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Final Day</td>
<td>TBC 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>Melbourne Cup Day</td>
<td>Tuesday 7th November</td>
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</table>
In 2017, our 4-year-old kindergarten fees will be $460 per term for the 15-hour program. Our 3-year-old kindergarten program will also be $460 per term for 6 hours. In addition there is a $60.00 annual maintenance levy that is fully refundable if families participate in at least a 3-hour block for working bee during the year.

Robina Scott Kindergarten cannot operate without the payment of fees by families/carers. The Department of Education and Training provides our service with per capita funding as a contribution toward the costs of delivering our four-year-old kindergarten program.

Kindergarten fees are necessary because there is a shortfall between the level of government funding and the cost of operating a viable kindergarten. Three-year-old kindergarten programs are non-funded and Robina Scott Kindergarten incurs all costs. To meet the operational costs of the kindergarten, it is therefore essential that all fees are paid promptly and we do ask for your cooperation in this matter.

If you have any difficulty with payment of fees, please discuss the matter with the service’s Office Administrator, Katrina Chavarria or contact the Committee Treasurer whose name and phone number is on display on the foyer notice board. Any matters discussed are strictly confidential.

For non-payment of fees the Committee of Management has the discretion to withdraw service. Please refer to the 3 year old and/or 4 Year Old Kindergarten Fees Policy for further information on procedures for non-payment of fees.

Families enrolled in 4 year old kindergarten

For holders (either family/guardian or child) of a Health Care Card, Pensioner Concession Card or Visa 786/785 there is a State Government Kindergarten fee subsidy available through the service that effectively makes attendance at Robina Scott Kindergarten free for eligible families.

METHODS OF PAYMENT

The service offers two fee payment methods (NO CASH PAYMENTS ACCEPTED):

1. Direct deposit via Internet Banking, from your bank account. Details for direct deposit will be provided on your kindergarten fees invoice. Deposits can also be made directly through your bank branches. BSB: 033100 Account: 234067

2. Cheques (personal or bank) and money orders made payable to ‘Robina Scott Kindergarten Inc.’ Please ensure that any cheques/money orders sent to the kindergarten with your child are placed in a sealed envelope with the child’s name, colour group, the payment amount and the reason for payment written clearly on the outside. Cheques/money orders should be placed in the payment box located near the office door in each kindergarten room – please do not leave in your child’s bag.

Are fees still applicable when my child does not attend kindergarten?

Yes fees are still applicable. Robina Scott Kindergarten is still open, operational and provides a full service regardless of the absence of children be it planned (e.g. holidays) or unplanned (e.g. Illness). All we ask is that you let us know verbally for a short absence (i.e. illness) and in writing for a long absence (i.e. holidays)
STAGGERED INTAKE, ORIENTATION AND INTERVIEWS

At the beginning of Term 1, the children are split into two groups (half) and introduced into the kindergarten.

The **goal** of the staggered intake is to:

- Enable the children to become more familiar with their new environment;
- For children to adjust to a new routine;
- For children to find out where things are through familiar routines;
- To get to know the other children and educators;
- For educators to develop a better understanding of you and your child’s needs.

The **purpose** of the staggered start is to:

- Provide the opportunity for our teachers to begin to get to know the children and their needs;
- Allow teachers an opportunity to easily explain and practice routines and safety procedures;
- Offer several small group lessons and activities dealing with social skills, such as
  - working and playing together,
  - asking for assistance
  - self-control (self-regulation) and
  - following directions

Many years of experience have shown that a good start to kindergarten gives children confidence and develops a happy, relaxed tone within the group. Research also shows that children who learn these skills are more likely to get along with others and do better during the kindergarten year. In the calm and less overwhelming staggered start environment, children have the opportunity to make a smooth transition, become familiar with their surroundings, expectations and new friends.

**Continuity of learning and transitions**

As a team we work on assisting children to feel confident, secure and connected to familiar educators and other children. Transition involves changes to physical environment, learning environments, social expectations, interactions, and children’s self-concepts.

Families are children’s first and most influential teachers. Your knowledge of your child is very important; therefore communicating with you to create a positive relationship makes everyone feel confident and comfortable in sharing information in the future.

The relationship between our educators and your child is imperative, as it is needed for the development of self-confidence and a sense of security so they can explore and learn in their environment.

In order to achieve successful transition our educators ensure that children are actively involved in the transition process, through a collaborative partnership, with children, families and educators.

This is achieved by:
Giving children two opportunities with half groups to gently transition (gradual orientation) to kindergarten.

Organising interviews to provide one on one time for you to talk about your child. This is extremely important for children with additional needs, medical issues, English as a second language and families who have specific concerns. This allows us to begin building an important face-to-face partnership with families.

Sharing information about kindergarten to help your child during orientation days.

Allowing time at orientation for children to adapt to routines/expectations rules within a smaller group environment.

Educators familiarising themselves with your child’s family.

Ensuring smaller group sizes for the first few days, allowing children to feel more comfortable meeting other children and educators.

THE PROGRAM

The Education and Care Services National Law Act and the Education and Care Services National Regulations specify the requirements children’s services must meet in their day-to-day operation.

These contain important standards including that an educational or recreational program is available for children.

Our educational program is:

- based on the child’s developmental needs, interests and experiences;
- designed to take into account each child’s individual differences;
- enhance each child’s development.

Our program refers not only to planned learning experiences provided for children but to all experiences, both planned and unplanned (intentional and spontaneous), that children have throughout the day.

An outline of the educational program is displayed in each room for each group.

Children’s programs is guided by the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework and the National Early Years Learning Framework.

We provide furniture, materials and developmentally appropriate equipment that is suitable for the educational or recreational program provided for that child. The design, arrangement and variety of resources and equipment assist in creating an environment where children are engaged and interested, are able to explore and discover and to make choices.

In setting up the learning environment, we ensure that it promotes learning, meets individual needs and enhances children’s emotional and social wellbeing.

The program is the child’s total experience while at kindergarten. It includes play and learning experiences, relationships and interactions with adults and other children, and daily living experiences. Educators plan rich learning environments and provide a range of interesting and worthwhile experiences that are based on their knowledge of the children and their interests.

All areas of development and learning are catered for and supported. Educators continually focus on getting to know your child and encourage them to participate as equal partners in their own learning journey. Particular value is placed on child initiated learning and play.

Children learn through watching others, interacting with each other, exploring their environment and ideas, sharing and communicating. Educators model appropriate behaviours and set up intentional learning environments that promote creativity, curiosity, investigation, problem solving, cooperation as well as independent thinking and enquiry.
The program caters for active and quiet activities as well as outdoor play experiences. We also work towards helping your child feel a sense of security and stability.

The early years learning programs are based on both the National Early Years Learning Framework (Belonging, Being and Becoming: an Early Years Learning Framework for Australia) and the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework. Copies of these documents are available to read online at [www.education.vic.gov.au](http://www.education.vic.gov.au).

**CHILD’S KINDERGARTEN EXPERIENCE**

At Robina Scott Kindergarten we are committed to providing a program that reflects the service’s philosophy, is age appropriate and based on the individual needs and interests of each child. During indoor and outdoor playtime children are offered a wide range of learning experiences. The children choose their own activities and move freely between them. They make many decisions and solve problems. The experiences provided are generally open-ended to encourage creativity and imagination, as well as promote independence.

Theme days and special days/night that involve families or special friends are included as part of the program each year.

**ENGAGING CHILDREN’S VOICES**

By ‘children’s voices’ we mean children’s expression of their meaning through talk and other ways, such as visual arts, dance, movement, song, music, poetry, photography, drawing, drama and writing – the “hundred languages of children”, to quote Loris Malaguzzi (Edwards, Gandini & Forman, 2012). We seek to ensure that children’s voices are channelled through multiple modes so that children might express their meanings as fully and richly as possible.

Through whatever means children use, it is children’s voices that matter when consulting with them about issues affecting them. Consulting with children is more than a one-off event – it involves sustained engagement over time. What occurs before and after the consultations is as important as the consultations themselves. This consultation will be seen in group project work as well as interest based learning experiences.

How is this achieved in the program?

The mindset taken when consulting with children is critical to success. The following mindsets are particularly important:

- Being prepared to look at what children can do, and seeing and making visible the competent child.
- Understanding the child’s perspectives by seeing their experiences and realities through their eyes.
- Having meaningful conversations with and among children through give-and-take dialogue.
- Exploring with children what they mean and discovering and demonstrating depth in the child’s meaning.
- Stepping back from doing to and for children and instead co-constructing experiences with children and providing scope for children to do for themselves, thereby letting the child’s agency do its work.
- Sustaining engagement with the child over time.
- Making the child’s voice audible and their insights visible through authentic documentation.

**CULTURAL COMPETENCE**
Both the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (EYLF) and the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF) highlight the importance of creating a culturally inclusive environment as a foundation for supporting children’s identity and sense of belonging, and in developing trusting and secure relationships with both children and families.

What is culture? Culture can be defined as ‘what we create beyond our biology’. Not given to us, but made by us (Williams, in MacNaughton, 2003, p.14). Using this definition, culture incorporates the scope of human diversity and ways of being, such as gender, ethnicity, class, religion, ability, age, and sexuality (DEEWR, 2010, p. 22).

To effectively develop respectful and supportive relationships with all children and families, our educators value the influence that culture has on experiences, understandings, expectations and practices. Culturally competent educators are also able to identify this in relation to their own cultural context and examine and address any bias or stereotyping.

Cultural competence is not the ability to be ‘competent in a culture’, rather the ability to competently work with children and families from all cultural backgrounds. One of the first steps towards cultural competence is for us to reflect on our own worldview and how that has been influenced by the cultural values implicit in your life.

Educators identify the cultural influences in their own experiences and perspectives are able to recognise that others also experience life in a cultural context. This understanding assists us to embed cultural perspectives throughout all programs, practices, policies and relationships to create a culturally rich and safe environment for all children and families.

Educators are supported on their journey to cultural competency by:

- onsite support visits to enhance educators cultural competency
- individual child and family support in the child’s home language
- multilingual material to support the cultural and linguistic rights of children
- telephone support and advice
- professional learning, coaching and training.

GUIDELINES FOR A SECOND YEAR OF FOUR YEAR OLD KINDERGARTEN

The Department of Education and Training (DET) provides funding to support children to access a four year old kindergarten program in the year before they start school. In most cases it is appropriate for a child to transition to school after their kindergarten year. Schools are responsible for ensuring all students have access to a quality education that meets their diverse needs and are obligated under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 to make adjustments to accommodate students with a disability.

In exceptional circumstances where a child is observed to display delays in key outcome areas of learning and development, the possibility of a second year of funded four year old kindergarten may be considered.

However, a second year should only be considered where the kindergarten program is deemed to be the most appropriate learning program and environment for that individual child, and that the child will achieve better outcomes at kindergarten than if they go to school.

Careful consideration should be given to this decision as in many cases, school can be the most appropriate environment for a child with identified delays or disabilities for a number of reasons including:

1. increased contact time in an educational environment
2. strong peer/friendship group support
3. access to additional support, equipment or specialist staff.

It is important to consider the anticipated barriers to the child achieving good outcomes in school and what the experience of an additional year in kindergarten will provide to address these barriers.
From the time of enrolment in a kindergarten program, regular communication between the parent and the early childhood teacher in relation to a child’s learning and development is very important. If a parent and/or early childhood teacher observes that a child’s learning and development is not progressing at a rate similar to their peers, strategies can be planned and implemented to support the child’s learning and development in those specific areas.

When considering whether a second year of funded four year old kindergarten will benefit a child, the early childhood teacher and parent must ensure that the child meets the eligibility criteria for a second year.

A child receiving Early Childhood Intervention Services support may be eligible for a second year of funded kindergarten; however this should not be assumed to be the case. A full second year assessment process should be carried out for each individual child for whom a second year is being considered, as depending on the child’s circumstance it may be appropriate for the child to transition to school rather than a second year of kindergarten.

Eligibility

**Determining eligibility for a second year of funded kindergarten**

The early childhood teacher is responsible for determining a child’s eligibility to receive a second year of funded kindergarten. The assessment for determining eligibility should factor in the teacher’s ongoing observations over the time the teacher has spent with the child, along with any more formal assessments that may have been undertaken.

**Eligibility criteria**

The early childhood teacher can declare that a child is eligible to receive a second year of funded four year old kindergarten if:

- the child is observed as having delays in at least two outcome areas of learning and development detailed in the *Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework*; and
- there is evidence to suggest the child will achieve better outcomes if he/she attends a second year of four year old kindergarten to strengthen the learning and development of skills in these areas and better facilitate transition to school the following year.

**Assessing against outcomes**

To declare that a child is eligible to receive a second year of funded four year old kindergarten, the early childhood teacher must have observed a delay in at least two of the following five outcomes areas as identified in the *Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework*:

- identity (emotional development)
- community (social development)
- wellbeing (self care)
- learning (cognitive development)
- communication (receptive/expressive language)

The National Quality Framework sets a new national benchmark for the quality of education and care services. It also gives services and families a better understanding of what constitutes a quality service. This will enable families to make informed decisions about the services providing education and care to their child. To make certain the National Quality Framework is delivered consistently and reliably, the Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority or ACECQA (pronounced Ah-see-qua) works with regulatory authorities and state and territory governments as they implement the new regulations.

The National Quality Standard (NQS) was informed by research about best practice and the way in which high quality education and care contributes to positive outcomes for children. It comprises quality areas, standards and elements.

**The seven quality areas in the NQS are:**

1. Educational program and practice
2. Children’s health and safety
3. Physical environment
4. Staffing arrangements
5. Relationships with children
6. Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
7. Leadership and service management

The National Quality Standard is linked to the National Learning Framework, which recognise that children learn from birth and outline practices to support and promote children’s learning.


**The Rating System**

The National Quality Standard is accompanied by a national quality rating and assessment process that reflects a national approach to the assessment and reporting of the quality of education and care services across the variety of service settings.

The availability of this information promotes transparency and accountability and will help families make informed choices regarding the quality of education and care at a service. Each service will receive a rating for each quality area and an overall rating. These ratings must be displayed by the service and will be published on the ACECQA.

There are five rating levels within the rating and assessment process:

1. Significant Improvement Required
2. Working towards National Quality Standard
3. Meets National Quality Standard
4. Exceeds National Quality Standard
5. Excellent

👑 We are proud to announce that Robina Scott Kindergarten has been rated as “EXCEEDING”!
EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS

The Education and Care Services National Regulations list all the minimum requirements that early learning programs in Victoria must adhere to in order to become registered and maintain registration. Families are welcome to look at the regulations booklet, a copy of which is available online through the DET website http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/parents/Pages/default.aspx

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL LAW

The National Quality Framework (NQF) operates under an applied law system, comprising the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations. The National Quality Framework applies to most long day care, family day care, outside school hour's care and preschools/kindergartens in Australia.

RATIOS – Child to Adult

As part of the National Quality Standards, Victorian kindergarten services are required to maintain a 1 educator to 11 children ratio. In rooms where there is more than 22 children enrolled, three educators will make up the educational team: a Bachelor kindergarten trained teacher, a Diploma and a Certificate III trained early childhood educator. These changes are effective as of January 2016.

PRIORITY OF ACCESS CRITERIA

Alongside the Victorian Government, Robina Scott Kindergarten is focused on:

• Establishing Victoria as the Education State, starting with early years
• Lifting participation rates of vulnerable children in universal services, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, recently arrived migrants, and children in out-of-home care

Priority of Access

If more eligible children are seeking a place at a kindergarten services than there are places available, children are required to be prioritised based on the following:

• Children at risk of abuse or neglect, including Out-of-Home Care
• Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children
• Asylum seeker and refugee children
• Children eligible for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy
• Children from families with complex needs
• Children with additional needs, defined as children who:
  • Require additional assistance in order to fully participate in the kindergarten program
  • Require a combination of services which are individually planned
  • Have an identified disability or developmental delay.
CHILD PROTECTION: New Child Safe Standards

Victoria is introducing compulsory minimum standards that will apply to organisations that provide services for children to help protect children from all forms of abuse. The child safe standards form part of the Victorian Government’s response to the Betrayal of Trust Inquiry. Legislation to introduce the child safe standards is being considered by the Victorian Parliament. When the legislation passes Parliament, the child safe standards will start applying to organisations from 1 January 2016 in phases:

- Phase 1: Organisations that provide services for children that are government funded and/or regulated will be required to work towards compliance from 1 January 2016
- Phase 2: Other organisations that provide services for children will be required to comply from 1 January 2017.

The child safe standards will be compulsory for all organisations in scope, but not prescriptive. This will allow the diverse range of organisations in scope some flexibility in how they implement the child safe standards to meet requirements. More information please go to http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/home/safer%20communities/protecting%20children%20and%20families/betrayal%20of%20trust%20implementation

In complying with the child safe standards Robina Scott Kindergarten has and will continue to improve the following principles as part of each standard:

- promoting the cultural safety of Aboriginal children
- promoting the cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- promoting the safety of children with a disability.

To create and maintain a child safe organisation Robina Scott Kindergarten has and will continue to apply the following standards:

- Standard 1: Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety, including through effective leadership arrangements
- Standard 2: A child safe policy as part of our commitment to child safety
- Standard 3: A code of conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children
- Standard 4: Screening, supervision, training and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel
- Standard 5: Processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse
- Standard 6: Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse
- Standard 7: Strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children.

Compliance monitoring

Organisations in the first phase are already regulated or funded by government and compliance with the child safe standards will be initially monitored through these existing arrangements. It is intended that any future oversight and compliance functions for the child safe standards that may apply to all organisations in scope would not duplicate or replace existing regulatory or reporting mechanisms. The introduction of the child safe standards will not alter any existing requirements to hold a Working with Children Check.

A Copy of the child safe policy can be located in foyer.
CHILDREN WITH ADDITIONAL NEEDS

Robina Scott Kindergarten offers a program that is fully inclusive – that is, where every child is valued and fully participates as a member of the group. Children with additional needs are provided with a rich learning environment where they have the opportunity to explore and enjoy a range of experiences with other children and adults.

We are fortunate to have links with a range of support services to assist children, their families and our educators with any additional needs your child may have.

If educators become concerned about a child’s development and progress, this will be discussed with the family. Upon a diagnosis by a medical professional, an application for funding is sought by Robina Scott Kindergarten (RSK) to support the child, family and educators. If we are successful in our application, we are then allocated an additional aid to work with your child to increase the adult to child ratio in the program.

Supporting children with additional needs

Differences exist among all children and all children benefit from having their individual needs met. Children with additional needs (such as children affected by a disability or medical condition) may face additional challenges when attending educational services or in the community.

When a child has additional needs, it may restrict them from being able to do some of the things that other children can do. For instance, chronic or permanent illness may affect children’s physical health. Sometimes, the additional need may not be so obvious and could be interpreted differently by an observer; such is the case with children on the Autism Spectrum.

Children with additional needs have their own unique strengths and abilities that need to be supported to build resilience and promote their learning, mental health and wellbeing.

Our role

Supporting children with additional needs enables them to participate and feel included at Robina Scott Kindergarten and in their community, and helps develop their strengths. Providing all children with the support they require helps to meet their needs and enables them to grow and achieve to their full potential.

For children with additional needs, developing individualised strategies to support their needs can be beneficial, based on the child’s individual requirements (e.g. routines and structure can often be helpful for children on the Autism Spectrum).

However, children do all vary and can respond differently to strategies. It is important that we always consider the child’s individual needs. By working together with you, their families, our service can make sure that children with additional needs are well supported, which is important for their mental health and wellbeing. At times children with additional needs will be supported through an additional aid in the room.

What does an additional aid do?

The additional educator is employed as an extra member of the team, to share the daily team responsibilities to ensure that all children can access and participate in all aspects of the program and curriculum.

This shared responsibility means that while the additional educator may have some involvement with a child with ongoing high support needs, they work with all children in the group. The same is true for all our educators.
The role of the additional educator will therefore look very similar to that of other educators at Robina Scott Kindergarten (RSK). It is inappropriate for the additional educator, or any educator, to only work with a child with ongoing high support needs in a one-to-one capacity, and to the exclusion of other children or educators in the care environment. Working in this way can single out the child and limit their opportunities to fully engage with other children, adults and the learning environment.

What is important is that ALL educators support and remain with ALL children in the group, to ensure they can participate fully in all aspects of the day.

Important points:
- The additional aid is employed to increase the staff to child ratio (above licensing requirements) when a child or children with ongoing high support needs are in the group.
- They act as an additional employee (often funded by an external agency) in the group reducing the workload of the permanent educators.
- This allows the permanent educators to focus on inclusive practices to ensure all children are being included. Educators support all children at RSK, and all educators in the service may be involved in providing support to the child with additional needs.
- At RSK we refer to our additional aid as Integration Support Workers.
- The Integration Support Worker does not work one on one with children with additional needs.
- They are part of the team.

**ENROLMENT OF CHILDREN - ELIGIBLE AGE**

**Children with birth dates between 1st January and 30th April**

Families of children with birth dates between 1st January and 30th April have a choice about whether their child will commence school in the year they turn five or the following year, and therefore whether to commence kindergarten in the year they turn four or the year they turn five.

**Late Entry**

Enrolment of children who turn six during the kindergarten year must be exempt from starting school. This is known as a late entry.

A second year should only be considered where the kindergarten is the most appropriate learning program and environment for that individual child, and the child will achieve better outcomes at kindergarten than if they go to school. These discussions would need to be discussed with your child’s educators.

**Early Entry**

Early entry to kindergarten may be appropriate for gifted or talented children who meet criteria for early entry to school.

Early school entry in government schools must be approved by the appropriate Department Regional Director and is only granted in exceptional circumstances when there are strong grounds for believing it is in the best interest of the child and that long-term educational disadvantages would occur.
THE ROLE OF OUR EARLY YEAR’S EDUCATORS

What is an educator?

An educator is an individual who provides education and care for children as part of an education and care service. Our “Educational Team” is made up of our kindergarten teachers and co-educators (previously known as assistants).

What is their primary role?

- Our educator’s priority is to interact with the children at all times. Children can be included in routines such as wiping the table, sweeping the floor, packing up rooms and yards etc. Positive interaction can take place during all daily routines.
- The children’s comfort and safety is a priority; however we trust that educators will maintain a balance between the program, necessary routines and interacting with children during play.
- All educators are responsible for the implementation of the planned program or curriculum. However, it is flexibility and spontaneity in allowing for children's involvement, which can create teachable moments.
- Supervision is essential. While interacting with the children at their level, educators must also be aware of their safety and limits at all times. Regular “head counts” are used to ensure that all children are accounted for. It is important that educators know where children are – this will ensure the sharing of information on children’s whereabouts with families as they arrive and depart during the day.
- Educator to Child ratios are maintained at all times – 1 Educator to every 11 children over 3 years

Communication is a vital part of our teamwork. Please pass on any important information about your child to the relevant educators responsible for your child. Any information you provide about children's health, medical conditions, routines etc. should be passed on to permanent room educators immediately so as to maintain effective communication.

CHILDREN’S PORTFOLIOS

Your child’s digital portfolio is a collection of organised, purposeful information and items, by and about your child. The portfolio provides an insight and an overview of your child’s learning and development over time. It is a record that captures the merger of process and product. We see this document as interwoven and complementary, involving discovery, reflection, evaluation and communication.

Digital portfolios can include observations, photographic records, learning stories, conversations, reflections, artefacts, descriptions, questions and analysis on development.

For our individual educators, portfolios can be selective and structured collections of information about their practice, gathered for specific purposes in relation to a teacher’s professional philosophy and evidence of planning.

For children and families, portfolios can offer the chance to become part of a collaborative process, where all contributions are welcomed and add to the understanding of children learning in family and community contexts.

Portfolios encourage a comprehensive and in-depth reflection of your child’s learning journey over time, legitimising future goals and expectations. Portfolios portray possibilities and future pathways
that provide opportunities to scaffold, transform, monitor, review and evaluate learning and
development in partnership with others.

By providing rich sources of documentation, including examples of your child’s learning stories,
drawings, writings and self-reflections through photographs, anecdotal notes and other
observations, we build a kaleidoscope of their learning and development. These records of a child’s
knowledge, understandings, skills and abilities can activate new insights and fresh perspectives for
teachers when they are planning the program.

All groups will be using SEESAW as the digital portfolio for 2017. SEESAW is a secure, private online
space to document and share information with families.

**BEHAVIOUR GUIDANCE**

Robina Scott Kindergarten is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children in attendance. We
recognise that children’s behaviour is a reflection of their level of development and is influenced by a
range of factors including peers, family and culture. Management and educators provide a program
that supports the use of *positive techniques* of guidance, redirection and reinforcement, as opposed
to comparison, competition or criticism. Management and educators utilise a set of basic
developmentally appropriate behavioural guidelines that:

- Emphasise positive actions and reactions
- Give children reasons for the limits
- Are implemented in a consistent manner
- Are reinforced regularly
- Enable educators and families to work together
- Are reviewed regularly for age, stage and cultural appropriateness

These guidelines aim to help children learn how to interact effectively and, in doing so, learn to balance
their own rights, needs and feelings with those of others.

In any matters relating to children exhibiting behaviour that is unacceptable, it is important that they be
managed in a considerate manner. It is vital to respect the rights and privacy of all concerned, and to
seek further advice from your teacher or Service, where and when appropriate. Please refer to the
service’s *Behaviour Guidance Policy* for more information regarding procedures for the management
of ongoing unacceptable behaviour. This policy does not outline excluding children from the
kindergarten as this is only ever considered as a last resort and as part of a consultative process
directed by the Committee of Management.

**SETTLING YOUR CHILD INTO KINDERGARTEN**

Nowadays with more children attending playgroups, three-year-old kindergarten or childcare prior to
commencing kindergarten, educators are generally finding fewer children have any anxiety about
settling in. We believe that kindergarten should be a positive experience right from the start and we
aim to help all children feel comfortable and secure in their new environment, thus enabling them to
separate from their ‘adults’ confidently.

If your child is comfortable for you to leave at the beginning of the first session, then by all means do
so. However, every child is different and emotions unpredictable – some will simply need time to adjust.
Your child may need some extra patience and understanding as they become accustomed to all the
new faces and new surroundings. In this case, you are very welcome to spend time during the session
reassuring them.
Occasionally your child will appear to be upset and families often feel guilty about leaving. Usually the best course of action is to say goodbye and to follow through by leaving and not looking back. Rest assured we will contact you if your child is distressed and cannot be consoled by educators.

Regardless of the way in which your child reacts, never slip away without saying goodbye. Always tell your child that you are going and when you will be back. Reassure your child that you will return, and let them know what you will be doing whilst you are gone. Don’t be concerned if your child does not want to talk much about kindergarten – it often takes a while for them to absorb all that has happened.

**WHAT TO BRING TO KINDERGARTEN**

- Named kindergarten bag – which will be supplied in the same colour as the child’s group
- Named kindergarten sun hat – which will be supplied in the same colour as the child’s group
- During the cooler months a coat and warm hat that covers the ears is recommended
- Named change of clothes that is appropriate to the weather conditions
- Spare underwear and footwear – especially if your child is still mastering toilet training
- Light jacket/jumper in case of sudden weather change in warmer months
- Suitable healthy snack/lunch in a named container (see below for ‘Restricted Food’)
- Water bottle – clearly named – FILLED WITH WATER ONLY.

**APPROPRIATE CLOTHING FOR KINDERGARTEN**

Families are asked to dress their child in clothes that are appropriate to the prevailing weather conditions and that can cope with the demands of an active day. This enables children to participate fully in all activities.

**Play is messy sometimes**

Children will be encouraged to explore the environment using their senses and “messy” activities are common. Whilst smocks are provided, we cannot guarantee clean clothes. It is recommended children are dressed in play clothes that are easily washed and that they are able to manage for themselves. This encourages their independence, particularly with toileting.

**Appropriate Footwear**

Suitable footwear is essential in a kindergarten setting – this includes footwear that can handle puddles in winter and protects feet from the sun in summer. For safety during outside play, we suggest shoes or sandals that provide good support and have a flexible sole with plenty of grip. Most importantly – no sandals with open toes, heals, slip on shoes such, as thongs/crocs are NOT permitted.

**Sunsmart**

As a SunSmart kindergarten children must wear their kindergarten supplied sun hat and sun protective clothing during peak UV months. See below for more details. During the colder months children will need to bring a warm hat and jacket.

**Spare Clothes**

Please ensure your child has a **spare** set of clothes in their bag, including underwear and a jumper/jacket for sudden changes in the weather conditions. Families are also asked to clearly label all articles of clothing sent to kindergarten.
HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Robina Scott Kindergarten is registered to participate and promote ‘The Achievement Program’. This is part of Healthy Together Victoria, which aims to improve people's health where they live, learn, work and play.

Healthy Together Victoria focuses on addressing the underlying causes of poor health in children's settings to strengthen Victoria’s prevention system. It incorporates policies and strategies to support good health across Victoria, as well as locally led ‘Healthy Together Communities’.

The Achievement Program encourages organisations to create healthier environments and adopt a holistic approach to health promotion. This includes developing a healthy physical and social environment, creating healthy policies, and providing children, young people and workers with health and wellbeing opportunities. It encourages children, students, workers and families to be actively involved in creating healthy environments, and has a focus on building and strengthening community partnerships.

The Achievement Program is a jointly funded initiative of the State Government of Victoria and the Australian Government. The Achievement Program for early childhood education and care services and schools is a joint initiative of the Victorian Department of Health and the Department of Education and Training.

HEALTHY EATING

Robina Scott adopted initiatives from the Kids – ‘Go for your life’ wellbeing program. The Kids – ‘Go for your life’ program incorporates the below six healthy eating and active play behaviours, with corresponding healthy messages. These have been developed as key habits to combat the rise in childhood overweight/obesity and improve the lifelong health of Victorian children.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Behaviour</th>
<th>Healthy Message</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increase water consumption</td>
<td>Tap into water everyday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase fruit and vegetable consumption</td>
<td>Plant fruit and veg in your lunchbox</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce the consumption of energy dense foods and drinks</td>
<td>Limit sometimes foods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase physical activity</td>
<td>Move, play and go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decrease time spent in sedentary activity</td>
<td>Turn off, switch to play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase the number of children walking and riding to school and other places</td>
<td>Stride and ride</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

More information will be provided about the program’s six key healthy lifestyle messages and these will be reinforced throughout the year.
We are committed to helping children establish healthy eating habits for life. We feel we have a responsibility to promote the healthy growth and development of children. Families/carers are asked to support our efforts by providing their child with a nutritious snack or lunch to consume. Emphasis is placed on freshly prepared foods, particularly fruit and vegetables.

Your child’s snack/lunch should be sent in a clearly named lunch box or cooler bag with an ice pack if it contains food that’s normally refrigerated. Variety and realistic portions, suitable for your child’s age and appetite, are recommended. Each child must bring a labelled water bottle filled with water only to kindergarten each day. It will be available at all times for children to help themselves. During hot weather children are provided with constant reminders.

Please inform educators if your child has any specific dietary needs or restrictions for cultural, medical or other reasons.

Recommendations for healthy food options include:

- Fresh or stewed fruit in natural juice (dried fruit is sticky and high in sugar, so only offer occasionally)
- Vegetable pieces (e.g. carrot and celery sticks, cucumber, green or red capsicum)
- Bread, crackers, rice/corn cakes
- Yoghurt and cheese – dairy free products can be offered (please offer ice block to keep chilled)

Pre-Packaged Items - We kindly ask that NO pre-packaged items be brought to kinder:

- Milk drinks (e.g. Up and Go, Big M)
- Chocolate or lollies
- Chips and similar products
- Roll ups
- Cakes and pastries
- Fruit bars
- Snack bars
- Muesli bars
- Sweet/Savoury biscuits

Restricted Foods

As there are a growing number of children at the service with life-threatening allergies, families/carers are asked NOT to send the following food products to kindergarten at any time, this may be amended when children with allergies are known.

- Peanuts or peanut products (e.g. peanut butter sandwiches, biscuits, peanut oil)
- Tree nuts (almonds, cashews, hazelnuts, brazil, macadamia, walnuts – including Nutella)
- Muesli bars that contain nuts
- Whole egg (egg listed as an ingredient in the product is permitted)
- Homemade biscuits or cakes containing nuts

Note: further restrictions may be needed, or may be varied, once allergens are known for children enrolled in current year
SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES

Robina Scott Kindergarten engages all its users (children and adults) in a holistic approach to explore how to improve on the management of our resources, energy, waste, water, and our landscape. This is complimented with education on biodiversity, indigenous cultures, science, the weather, health and well-being, climate change and community involvement.

Our Goals

- Learn and teach for sustainability as an integral component of the program
- Use natural resources, including energy, water, waste and biodiversity, in more sustainable ways
- Work towards sustainability in partnership with our local community

Use of Water

We encourage children to use water wisely (e.g. watering plants with their left over drinking water and using rainwater from the tank for outdoor water play).

The Service abides by the Victorian Government’s ‘Permanent Water Saving Rules’ as well as any additional water restrictions issued by Melbourne’s metropolitan water authorities.

The protection of children at all times is of paramount importance. Children are closely supervised during water play, when accessing water from the rainwater tank and in the bathroom.

Use of Energy

- Lights and equipment are turned off not in use
- Energy saving devices and appliances are installed
- Doors and windows are closed when heating or cooling are in use
- Dishwasher is filled for use and set at the energy saving setting
- Thermostats are set at most energy efficient levels.

Recycling

The kindergarten greatly appreciates donations of art and craft materials for use in box construction and other children’s activities. Items needed include: cardboard boxes, clean milk cartons, drawing paper, bottle tops, buttons, fabric pieces etc. However, each year the service has a number of children with life threatening allergies so it is important that NO egg cartons are donated. Further restrictions may need to be added once allergens are known for children enrolled in the upcoming year. For hygiene reasons toilet paper rolls and feminine hygiene packaging cannot be used.

We also ask the children to recycle snack box packaging that can be washed and used again at kindergarten.

Colour coded recycling bins are available throughout the service.

Our Garden

Volunteer families maintain our outdoor garden. A weekly roster is displayed for those who want to contribute to aiding in the maintenance of our environment. The children and educators look after the plants, vegies and herbs daily as part of our sustainable practices.

Our service has a compost bin and worm farm that has both a practical and educational benefit to the program. Children’s snack scraps are placed in the compost, which is then used in our garden.
Nude Food – Snacks and Lunches

We encourage our families to use alternatives to land waste (cling wrap, wax paper, aluminium foil sheets and freezer and snack/sandwich bags.)

- Swap cling wrap for compostable paper towels or paper bags – these can go in our compost
- Swap freezer and snack/sandwich bags for reusable snack/lunch containers or stainless containers

Reduce the waste and help us be a Green Kinder.

DELIVERY AND COLLECTION OF CHILDREN

For safety and security reasons all families/carers **MUST** sign their child in and out of kindergarten each day and enter the **actual** time (not session time) of arrival and departure in the attendance book. Families also need to record the name of the person who delivered and, most importantly, who will be picking up their child. Accurate and full completion of the attendance book is a regulatory requirement. During an emergency evacuation the attendance record is used to check which children are present at the kindergarten.

To ensure adequate supervision at all times, it is important that your child is delivered into the room and handed over to a member of the teaching team. Similarly, upon collection the family/guardian (or authorised person) will need to approach the mat to pick up their child – and all children will remain seated on the mat until the educators call their name. This prevents children leaving with the wrong person or on their own. Upon arrival, families are asked to wait in the foyer until an educator opens the door to invite you in. You will appreciate that we cannot take responsibility for supervising children before the commencement of the program or after they have been signed out of the attendance book.

**PLEASE ADHERE STRICTLY TO PICK UP TIMES.**

There is nothing more distressing or unsettling to a child than to doubt if you are really coming back. If your child has not been collected by end of session, every effort will be made to contact you, and if this fails the emergency contact persons listed on the enrolment record will be contacted.

A **late collection fee** will be applied in nonemergency situations when families/carers are 15 minutes late in collecting their child.

The fee will be based on $25.00 for every 15 minutes, or part thereof, for two or more late collections to cover the salaries of educators detained due to late collection of children.

Please make every effort to have your child arrive on time for sessions because it’s quite disruptive to other children and the flow of the program. Children also feel more relaxed and secure when they arrive on time.

A collection authorisation form must be completed if a person other than those already nominated on your enrolment form will be collecting your child. (Families automatically have the right to collect their child, unless altered by a court order.) An **authorised person must be aged 16 years or over**. For full details of the service’s collection and delivery procedures, please refer to the *Delivery and Collection of Children Policy*. 


SUNSMART AND SUN PROTECTION

With their sensitive skin, young children are at particular risk of sunburn and skin damage that increases the risk of developing skin cancer later in life. As an accredited SunSmart kindergarten, we are committed to protecting the children, and adults attending the services from the harmful effects caused by too much exposure to the sun’s ultraviolet (UV) radiation. In partnership with families, we believe we have a role to play in establishing healthy sun protection behaviours for life.

The service’s Sun Protection Policy applies from the beginning Term 3 until the end of Term 1 the following year, when UV levels are highest. Our general strategies require:

- Children to wear their kindergarten supplied sun hats (in the same colour as the child’s group) when outdoors. If being laundered or misplaced, an alternative broad brimmed legionnaire/bucket sun hat should be worn that protects the neck, ears, temples, face and nose.

- An adult to apply SPF 50+, broad spectrum, 4 hour, water resistant sunscreen on their child’s exposed skin 30 minutes before arrival at the service.

- Families/carers to dress their child in appropriate sun protective clothing. We discourage sleeveless tops and tops that expose the midriff.

- Ensure your child wears footwear that protects the tops of their feet from sun exposure.

- All adults at the kindergarten to role model SunSmart behaviours.

- For adults to encourage children to use available areas of shade for outdoor play activities, particularly between 10:00am and 2:00pm (11:00am and 3:00pm daylight saving time) when UV levels reach their peak.

You will be required to sign a declaration form committing to apply sunscreen to your child prior to each kindergarten session. Permission is also being sought to reapply sunscreen for longer sessions and in the event sunscreen is forgotten or is washed off during a session.

HYGIENE AND PREVENTION OF CROSS CONTAMINATION

Robina Scott Kindergarten strives at all times to provide a clean and hygienic environment. Management and educators implement up-to-date infection control procedures to minimise the spread and risk of infectious diseases and illnesses in children and others attending the service.

Children are taught the importance of good hygiene practices and learn to wash their hands regularly as part of the daily routine. Children will be encouraged to wash hands:
- Before arrival at the service (families to help with this)
- In the cases where known allergies exist in group, the washing of hands before session begins
- Before and after eating or handling food
- After going to the toilet
- After coming in from outside play
- After wiping their nose

Washing hands well is the most effective way to prevent the transmission of disease and illness.

For further information on the full range of cleaning procedures and hygiene practices, please speak to our Service Coordinator or view appropriate policies in Policy Folder found in foyer.

**CHILDREN’S ILLNESS**

Please keep your child at home if he/she is sick during night and it’s evident that your child is feeling unwell that morning. **Children who are infectious must remain at home.** This is for the wellbeing of all children and adults at the service.

If your child becomes unwell (e.g. has a temperature above 38 degrees, vomits or is distressed) whilst attending the service you will be contacted immediately and asked to collect your child as soon as possible – if unable to be reached contact persons listed on the enrolment record will be contacted. In the meantime, every effort will be made to keep your child comfortable, away from other children and under close observation.

You **MUST** inform the service if your child has been diagnosed with an infectious disease such as influenza, measles or chickenpox – as the kindergarten is required under legislation to place a sign on the door regarding the infectious disease.

If in doubt, please ask the Service Coordinator or your child’s teacher. A detailed list of the Department of Human Services’ minimum periods of exclusion for infectious and communicable diseases is displayed on the foyer notice board.

Below is an extract showing some of the more common childhood conditions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition/Symptoms</th>
<th>Exclusion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diarrhoea</td>
<td>Exclude until diarrhoea has ceased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conjunctivitis</td>
<td>Exclude until discharge from eyes has ceased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cold sores (herpes)</td>
<td>Exclude if weeping and uncovered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influenza, and influenza like illnesses*</td>
<td>Exclude until well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hand, Foot &amp; Mouth disease</td>
<td>Exclude until all blisters have dried</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head lice</td>
<td>Exclude until day after treatment commenced</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*More than common cold

Please consider the health and wellbeing of your child and the other children at the service when deciding whether or not your child is well enough to attend. When unwell children attend kinder it puts the health of teachers and other children at risk.
CHILDREN’S MEDICATION

Please notify your teacher of any medications your child requires. Medication should never be left in the child’s bag. Please hand these to the teacher or co-educator personally. We will only administer medication if the following procedures are followed:

- Medication is current, is in its original container, bears the original label/instructions and is prescribed for that child.
- All details must be recorded by the family/guardian in the medication book each day medication is required. (If your child requires long-term administration of medication or requires emergency medication please discuss procedures with your teacher.)
- Non-prescription medications and over-the-counter medication is clearly labelled with the child’s name. The instructions and use-by-dates should be visible.

Families are also reminded to make certain that their child’s enrolment details are kept up-to-date and include details of persons who have lawful authority to request or permit the administration of medication. For further information refer to the service’s Administration of Medication Policy.

ACCIDENTS AND MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

All accidents that occur at Robina Scott Kindergarten are recorded by our educators in the Accident/Illness book, and if required you will be contacted at the time. Otherwise families are verbally informed when they come to collect their child and asked to co-sign the accident record.

In the case of a serious accident, we will endeavour to contact you immediately. If emergency treatment is required, an ambulance will be called without delay. Note: when enrolling children, you are required to sign the authority for management and/or educators to seek emergency medical, dental or ambulance assistance if necessary. Families are responsible for all costs associated with an ambulance service called to attend their child.

All educators at the service have up-to-date certification for First Aid Level 2, CPR, Asthma and Anaphylaxis and are equipped to handle emergency situations.

ANAPHYLAXIS AND ALLERGY MANAGEMENT

Each year there are a number of children presenting at kindergarten with allergies, some of which are life threatening. The kindergarten is committed to providing, as far as practicable, a safe and healthy environment in which children at risk of life threatening allergic reactions can participate equally in all aspects of the program. It is vitally important that the family of a child at risk of anaphylaxis inform the service, either on enrolment or on diagnosis, of their child’s allergies.

Within the context of Robina Scott Kindergarten Anaphylaxis Policy, some of the key risk minimisation procedures that are currently in place to protect at risk children from accidental exposure to allergens are:

- All families are requested NOT to send the following food products to kindergarten:
- Peanuts or peanut products, tree nuts, whole egg, biscuits or cakes containing nuts and chocolate. Note: further restrictions may be needed once allergens are known for children enrolled.
- Above food restrictions also apply to donations of arts and crafts materials
- No sharing of food amongst children
- Hand washing for all children upon arrival at kindergarten, before and after eating
Educators check all children’s snack boxes each day and remove items that may pose a risk.

Provision of educational information on anaphylaxis and its management to all families.

Anaphylaxis Action Plans for each child at risk are prominently displayed in their classroom.

A Risk Management Plan is maintained at this service – completed by teacher.

Management and educators undertake annual Anaphylaxis training and regularly practice EpiPen administration.

No child with a prescribed EpiPen or AnaPen is permitted to attend kindergarten without it.

ASTHMA MANAGEMENT

The Educators are committed to providing, as far as practicable, an environment in which all children with asthma can participate in order to realise their full potential. It is important that families of a child with a history of asthma inform the service, either on enrolment or on diagnosis, of their child’s asthma.

It is generally accepted that children under the age of six do not have the skills and ability to recognise and manage their own asthma effectively. With this in mind, educators recognise the need to consult with families on a regular basis regarding the supervised management of their child’s asthma.

As outlined in the service’s Asthma Policy some of the key guidelines for all children with asthma are:

- All children with diagnosed asthma must have a written Asthma Management Plan
- In the event of an asthma attack, management and/or educators will follow the Emergency Asthma Management Plan provided by Asthma Victoria
- Families are required to provide the service with a current asthma medication/equipment for the child at all times
- Where possible, minimise known asthma triggers within the service
- Management and educators at the service receive specific training in Emergency Asthma Management
- A Risk Management Plan is maintained at this service – completed by teacher
- Provision of educational information on asthma and its management to all families.

No child with a prescribed Ventolin is permitted to attend kindergarten without it.

IMMUNISATION – ‘NO JAB, NO PLAY’

Existing legislation already requires that immunisation information is provided on enrolment.

With the ‘No Jab, No Play’ law in effect prior to commencing any kindergarten sessions the parents/carers MUST provide the service with an immunisation status certificate that shows their child:

- is up to date with vaccinations for their age OR
- has a medical condition preventing them from being fully vaccinated.

An immunisation status certificate is a statement showing the vaccines a child has received. The most common type of immunisation status certificate is an Immunisation History Statement from the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register (ACIR).

Immunisation History Statements can be requested at any time by contacting Medicare:

- phone 1800 653 809
- email acir@medicareaustralia.gov.au
• visit the Medicare website
• visit your local Medicare office

Medicare automatically posts parents/carers an ACIR Immunisation History Statement after their child has completed their 18 month and 3½-4 year old vaccinations.

It is likely that, in most cases, providing the ACIR Immunisation History Statement will be the easiest process for services and parents.

**When parents object to their child being vaccinated – medical exemption**

Under the proposed laws, some children may be exempt from the requirement to be fully vaccinated on medical grounds.

Examples of valid medical reasons that a child could not be fully vaccinated include:

- an anaphylactic reaction to a previous dose of a particular vaccine, or
- an anaphylactic reaction to any vaccine component
- has a disease which lowers immunity (such as leukaemia, cancer, HIV/AIDS, SCID), or
- is having treatment which lowers immunity (such as chemotherapy).

Parents/carers who think their child may require a medical exemption to one or more vaccines should consult their GP or contact the Immunisation Service at their local council.

If a child had a medical reason they cannot be vaccinated, a GP or immunisation nurse from the local council immunisation service would need to complete and sign a Medicare Immunisation Exemption Medical Contraindication Form, and send it to the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register (ACIR).

The parent would then need to obtain an updated Immunisation History Statement from the ACIR that indicated the child was up-to-date with all the vaccines that they can have, and listed the vaccines that they cannot have. This statement would need to be provided by the parent to the early childhood service to finalise enrolment.

Alternatively, parents and carers would be able to obtain documentation from immunisation providers that would meet the requirements for enrolment.

**How would parents/carers obtain acceptable documentation if their child was vaccinated overseas?**

Families whose children were vaccinated overseas would consult their doctor or immunisation nurse. Overseas vaccination schedules may differ from the Australian schedule and need to be checked by a doctor/nurse who will transfer the information to the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register (ACIR).

If/once the child is up-to-date with the Australian schedule; the ACIR would issue the parent with an Immunisation History Statement that shows they are up-to-date.

For families that do not have a Medicare card, vaccines recorded and provided in Australia can still be recorded on ACIR. The parent/carer would be able to contact ACIR and request a copy of the Immunisation History Statement. The parent would have to provide the statement to the early childhood service to finalise enrolment.

If the child were not up-to-date with the Australian schedule a catch-up schedule would need to be developed.

The immunisation provider would provide documentation about the catch up schedule that the parent/carer could then provide to the early childhood service to finalise enrolment.


IMMUNISATION SCHEDULE
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Disease immunised against</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Birth</td>
<td>Hepatitis B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 months</td>
<td>Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis, Polio, Hib, HepatitisB, Pneumococcal, Rotavirus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 months</td>
<td>Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis, Polio, Hib, HepatitisB, Pneumococcal, Rotavirus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 months</td>
<td>Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis, Polio, Hib, HepatitisB, Pneumococcal, Rotavirus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 months</td>
<td>Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Hib, Meningococcal C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 months</td>
<td>Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Varicella</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis, Polio, Measles (part of the MMR vaccine), Mumps (part of the MMR vaccine), Rubella (part of the MMR vaccine)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The MMR vaccine is only required at 4 years if the MMRV vaccine was not given at 18 months.
Excursions and visitors to the service are an important part of the kindergarten program. They provide opportunities for the children to explore the wider community as well as enrich and extend the educational program provided at the service.

In the lead up to excursions, families/carers will receive notification of the planned activities and the adult/child ratio required to conduct the outing in a safe manner. Adult assistance is appreciated on these days. Siblings will not be able to attend excursions where the family/guardian is responsible for other kindergarten children.

Permission slips will be issued prior to all excursions, and must be signed and returned in order for your child to be able to attend. Please be aware that there is no provision for a child to attend kindergarten if they are not participating in the excursion. You can also refer to our Excursion Policy in the Policy Folder.

‘SHOW AND SHARE’

Throughout the year children will have an opportunity to bring in a special item for ‘Show and Share’. Emphasis should be placed on bringing items that the child has made themselves, tickets or mementos from events, photos from holidays, and items from nature such as an unusual shell. Commercial toys are not permitted.

‘Show and Share’ is included in the program because it provides opportunities for children to extend their language and gain positive experience public speaking and asking questions in a group situation.

SECURITY/COMFORT ITEMS AND HOME TOYS

If your child has a security blanket or teddy etc., and feels the needs to bring it to kindergarten then we are happy for them to do so. However, please be aware that things are sometimes lost, misplaced or left at kindergarten – so it’s best not to bring something your child cannot get through the night without.

Please distinguish between objects of comfort and an object that may create potential conflict. We request that children not bring toys from home as they may cause disputes between children over sharing, or broken hearts if damaged or lost.

To curtail aggressive and negative behaviour we are a ‘war toy free’ kindergarten. Therefore please do not allow your child to bring toy weapons such as toy guns, swords, knives or any other item that promotes aggressive behaviour. Play suggesting violence is discussed and re-directed.

CELEBRATING BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays are a special day for children, and they usually like to celebrate it with their kindergarten friends. Each colour group has its own birthday ritual, which will include singing and honouring the child. There are many options available for families who wish to be involved in their child’s birthday celebration at kindergarten – including the provision of party bags containing non-food items such as pencils, bubbles, stickers etc. It’s important to discuss options with your child’s teacher beforehand, and please be aware that the service does permit a small birthday cake or cup cakes or lolly pop/Freddo frog to be sent for sharing with the class. LARGE LOLLY BAGS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

Birthday parties at home are often a social event for kindergarten children. It’s obviously a great thrill for children to receive a party invitation, but for the child who doesn’t they can feel left out and possibly upset. For this reason we ask that invitations to birthday parties are placed in the children’s pockets located in the foyer so that they may be opened at home.
Robina Scott Kindergarten takes no responsibility for the safety of the items placed in party bags. We ask that you take into consideration dental health, breakable parts, toxicity, finger entrapments and potential choking hazards.

**PARTNERSHIPS WITH OUR FAMILIES AND CARERS**

Warm, mutually respectful relationships between educators and families are essential to providing a good quality early learning program. The information we share with each other benefits the children, the families and the educators. This sharing is the basis for developing a true partnership between yourself and the educators, which they think, will benefit your child’s experience at Robina Scott Kindergarten.

While we realise that families often have work and other commitments and may have limited time, you are welcome to be involved in the service. Some suggestions of ways you can participate in the operation of the service include:

- Joining our Committee of Management
- Contributing to our newsletter
- Assisting the children with group projects
- Sharing your special talent or interest with the children (for example cooking, bathing a baby, gardening, sharing your customs or playing an instrument)
- Singing or reading a story in your home language
- Participating in the children’s educational activities
- Participating in community events offered by the service
- Collecting recycled materials from home for the children to use

✓ **See the list on the outside of recycling container for guidance and suggestions**

You may have other ideas about ways you would like to participate. If you do, please share them with us. Whether or not you participate in activities at the service, we want to have a relationship with you. The most important contribution you can make is to share your thoughts, ideas and concerns about your child, their development and learning, what matters to you in your child rearing and what you hope for in your child’s experience in the early learning program.

Working together, we can give children a great experience. We welcome your feedback, ideas, and look forward to working with you.

**Family Input Sheet**

Children are part of a bigger world than the one they experience at kindergarten. For this reason we appreciate the input that families provide to thread through our program. We know that over the holidays, during weekends, before and after sessions, your child has lots of unique life experiences. These involvements are valuable learning tools and we’d like to find ways of incorporating some of them into our program and learning outcomes.

Please take the time to fill out a "Family Input Sheet" that will be provided from time to time, and share with us some of the activities you do with your child whilst not with us at Robina Scott. Please add photos and other meaningful and relevant items to share with the group during mat time. It doesn’t have to be a big event. As you know, children are fascinated by everything be it big or small, and learn about life from everyday experiences as well as special events.
Communicating with Families

Information boards are located in the foyer of the service. From time to time, the Committee of Management plans social functions. Notices of these and other upcoming events will be posted.

Updates, newsletters, receipts and any information for you to read or keep will be sent to you via SEESAW APP or email – so please check regularly. Please make sure you have provided this information to our Office Administrator. If you would like to still receive hard copies of our information and invoices please let us know. A pocket will be designated for your family in the foyer - again this must be checked regularly.

Newsletter are distributed to families on a regular basis. It has information about the service, policies, programs, upcoming events, news, recipes and various articles about children’s learning, health and development. Families are welcome and encouraged to help with the newsletter by providing articles, information, recipes and stories – anything that you think other families will find interesting. Educators are committed to discussing your child’s development and learning.

While all educators in the service will use a variety of ways to communicate with you, the most important communication is the face-to-face communication at drop-off and pick-up times. Although those are busy times, and it won’t always be possible to have extended conversations, our educators will make every effort to talk with you about your child. Families are also welcome to speak to the educators who care for their child in an interview at any time throughout the year.

NOTICES AND NEWSLETTERS

Apart from the regular informal discussions you will have with your child’s teacher and co-educator, the primary means of communication with families/carers is via notices and newsletters. These notices are placed in your child’s pocket located in the entrance foyer, so please remember to check each time you visit the service. If you would like to leave messages for other families, please feel free to use these pockets. The pockets are not to be used for dissemination of advertising or promotional materials.

Newsletters are distributed throughout the term to help keep you up-to-date with kindergarten events, changes to policy as well as provide information on the children’s program. Other general notices and information will be posted on the notice board in your child’s room as well as in the foyer.

FAMILY & TEACHER MID-YEAR INTERVIEW

Your child’s teacher is always available for short discussions after each session, once all children have been collected. However, you may like to arrange a more private and relaxed time to discuss any aspect of your child’s progress at kindergarten. All our teachers have scheduled preparation time each week, and would be happy to arrange a meeting with you during this time.

Family Teacher Mid-Year Interviews are an opportunity for your teacher to provide you with an update on your child, as well as understanding the group goals and curriculum objectives. It is always valuable for you to be part of this conversation. We hope that you will also use this time to share information about your child which will help teachers individualise the program and create meaningful learning experiences.

Sharing information is a great way to set up a partnership. Interaction between teachers and families can help with your child’s development and wellbeing, with benefits for everyone involved.
Benefits of family involvement are:

**For your child**
- Children perform better when their families are involved in their education.
- Children settle better into programs when their families are involved.
- Children feel valued and important when their families take an interest in their lives.

**For educators**
- Educators experience a higher level of job satisfaction in an environment that encourages listening, respect and appreciation.
- Educators feel a stronger connection to children when they work with families in partnership.
- Educators become further skilled in developing important social skills when they communicate with families.

**For families and carers**
- Involvement gives families the opportunity to discuss their child’s interests with educators, and to have some input into the program.
- Families who are familiar with a program feel more comfortable about raising concerns and negotiating solutions with educators.
- Positive partnerships with educators can relieve family stress.

Interviews are mainly designed to speak to families of the four year old children. The three-year-old kindergarten teacher will assess which families will benefit from a meeting, and will advise them accordingly.

**Transition to School**
Starting primary school is a major milestone for you and your child, marking the start of a new phase of life for you both.
The transition to school is an experience that starts well before, and extends far beyond, your child’s first day.
Your child may start school after going to kindergarten or they may not attend school for another year. All children will have developed a range of skills and abilities that will form the basis of their positive school experiences.

**Transition Learning and Development Statement**
You and your child’s teacher will complete a Transition Learning and Development Statement that will then be given to your child’s new school.
The Statement consists of two parts: one for you, the family, to complete (Part 1 – Sections A, B & C) and one for the early childhood educator (Part 2). Part 1, Section C is for families of children with additional learning needs, a disability or developmental delay to record information on the additional services involved or any other important information the school should know.
FUNDRAISING

The role of the Fundraising for Robina Scott Kindergarten is looked after by Group Fundraising Teams. They help to raise funds for capital expenditure and equipment – that is used to improve the kindergarten program and environment generally. The kindergarten relies upon income raised through fundraising activities, as fees and government funding do not adequately cover the quality experiences and resources that we like to be able to offer the children and families attending the service.

The Fundraising Team consists of an enthusiastic and hard working group of current families who participate in a voluntary capacity to generate income through a range of fundraising activities involving the local community, businesses and families attending the kindergarten.

It is hoped that all families will assist with at least one fundraising activity during the year.

KINDER DUTY

Participating in kinder duty is an excellent way to observe your child and experience a day at the service. Families come away with a practical understanding of the learning environment, knowledge about their child's peers and a sense of satisfaction in contributing to the smooth running of the program. Families and children find the experience equally as enjoyable – there’s nothing better for children than to have a loved one at kindergarten!

At the beginning of each term, our educators will display a roster for families to book suitable dates to perform kinder duty. We aim to have one extra adult helper on duty in each session. Siblings/toddlers are most welcome to accompany you on these days, but their supervision is your responsibility. We look forward to your help and thank you for the vital support given during our kindergarten sessions. Kinder duty commences in Term 2 every year.

Please note a Volunteer Working with children’s check is required to participate in kinder duty. To apply see link below.

http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au

WORKING BEES

Working bees are essential for the general maintenance of the kindergarten, and once again their success is dependent on the enthusiastic participation of families. Hobson’s Bay City Council has passed much of the responsibility for kindergarten maintenance to the Committee of Management.

We are committed to ensuring that children play in quality natural outdoor environments. Such environments should promote a sense of wonder with the natural world and offer children the opportunity for open-ended exploration, discovery and learning. Our outdoor classroom and learning spaces allow us to promote sustainability through natural play that inspires inquisition and curiosity.

Working bees are held approximately 1-2 times a year and duties undertaken typically include: painting equipment, sanding and varnishing equipment, repairs, window cleaning, general cleaning and gardening. In the lead up to working bees, full details will be provided in emails, newsletters and posted on notice boards.

All families/carers are encouraged to participate at one working bee per year (which equates to approximately three hours work). All children use the equipment and benefit equally from a well maintained and presented kindergarten.
PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

As a kindergarten we are required to maintain records that contain personal, health and sensitive information about children and their families or carers. At Robina Scott Kindergarten we believe your confidentiality is important and have put in place a Privacy and Confidentiality Policy that illustrates how we will collect, use, disclose, manage and protect information about children and families attending the service. The service’s Privacy and Confidentiality Policy is located in the foyer of the kindergarten for further information.

Before commencement at the service all families/carers will be given permission slips to gain their consent for:

- Inclusion of your contact details on your child’s colour group contact list, which is shared with other families in your child’s class.
- Photography of your child participating in a variety of kindergarten activities for inclusion in the internet, individual children’s records, display within the kindergarten and as mementos for families/carers.
- Printing of your child’s name on the professional kindergarten colour group photograph.
- If your child has a medical condition, an allergy or asthma, we will need display this information in your child’s kindergarten room to enable us to provide for your child’s care and safety needs.

Note: The service is bound by the Victorian privacy laws, the Information Privacy Act and the Health Records Act, as well as other laws that impose specific obligations in regard to handling of information.

INTERPRETER SERVICES

Should you require the services of an Interpreter including Auslan, we can contact the Telephone Interpreter Service or the Victorian Interpreting and Translating Service (VITS) on your behalf. As bookings are required for this service, please contact our office in advance.

Hobson’s Bay City Council has also set up the Language Line – 9932 1212 which has recorded information regarding services in the community and interpreter access.

SECURITY

At the commencement of Term one, all families/carers will be issued with a 4-digit code, which they will be required to enter on the touchpad located outside each kindergarten room in order to gain access. In the interests of safety, we ask that you keep the number confidential.

If security should ever be compromised, the code will be changed and you will be advised ASAP. If management or educators are unsure of the person’s identity they will not be able to enter rooms and identification will need to be shown.

EVACUATION PROCEDURES

Emergency evacuation procedures for children and management and educators in the case of a fire etc. are displayed throughout the kindergarten. Educators are trained to deal with such emergencies and at regular intervals evacuation drills are practised with the children. Smoke detectors and fire extinguishers are routinely checked and serviced.

RELIEF STAFF DURING AN EDUCATORS ABSENCES

Whilst it is difficult for us to pre-empt when absences will occur, every effort is made to promote consistency in both the care and education of our children. In order to avoid cancelling sessions, relief
staff are employed to cover the absence/illness educators. All relief staff will have their qualifications/records verified before commencement of employment.

Robina Scott Kindergarten predominantly engages the services of Randstad, well trusted relief staffing agency, to replace our Kindergarten Teachers. More often than not, they will engage the services of a teacher who has worked previously with us and meets OUR expectations.

We have a strong partnership with these agencies and they understand the specific needs of our service. We also contact co-educators (assistants) from our regular casual relief pool for the above reasons. Relief educators need to have appropriate early years qualifications, a current Working with Children, First Aid, CPR, Asthma and Anaphylaxis training.

It is unfortunate when both educators from the group are absent, as this makes it a little more challenging for all of us. It is during these times that we count on your support, by passing on information about your child to the relief educators. This does not include ongoing medical alerts (Asthma, Anaphylaxis) or special needs, as relievers are fully versed at induction. Management is also part of their support system during the day, as are other educators (of group next door) and our valuable family helpers on duty. This community spirit makes the day productive for the children and smoother for the team. You can also refer to our Relief Staff Policy in the Policy Folder in the foyer.

SERVICE CLOSURE

During the year, sessions may be cancelled for child free days as per staff award, educator professional development days, or for orientation sessions and induction information sessions. Also, in the event that an educator is absent and suitably qualified relief staff cannot be found, a session may be cancelled. We aim to give families as much notice as possible when these cancellations occur.

STUDENTS AND WORKPLACE EXPERIENCE

Robina Scott Kindergarten supports students from a variety of training institutes, universities and schools. Families will be advised beforehand of any student participation in their child’s kindergarten program. Students at the service work under the direction of the educators and are never left alone to supervise children either in rooms, toilets or yards. Students are not part of the ratio. Please always speak to our educators to pass on information and ask about your child’s day.

Mentoring Students - Why it’s important

Some may think that the aspiring educators are the only ones that benefit from peer mentoring and coaching programs in education. However, the educators who are coaching these future new recruits can learn a lot as well. As a mentor, they gain an invaluable experience. By collaborating with colleagues and learning how to successfully and effectively advise students, a mentor will in turn gain more than imagined.

New recruits need a support system that allows them to transition from theory to practice. Being a mentor is an important role because mentoring students can help them improve and strengthen their skills and practices and thus, keep them in the profession. It’s important for a mentor to remain current with new teaching methods, stay energised in, and experience periodic professional renewal. All educators are lifelong learners and working in partnership with students and colleges enhances practices, improves student learning and builds communities. Source: http://EzineArticles.com/4232111
FEEDBACK, COMPLAINTS OR GRIEVANCES

As part of our quest for continuous improvement, we welcome your feedback and input on any aspect of the kindergarten, fundraising activities, newsletter information etc. Please let us know verbally or via email or by using the suggestion box located in the foyer.

The importance placed on the relationship between ourselves and families is reflected in our service’s philosophy. In order to enhance and preserve this relationship any grievances, concerns or differences of opinion will be taken very seriously. Every attempt will be made to resolve issues as they arise in a cooperative and fair manner.

Any concern or complaint should initially be raised directly with the person/s involved, unless you are uncomfortable doing so. Please feel free to approach the Service Manager to discuss any concerns or issues relating to the service, the management, our educators, the programs or the children. At any time you are also welcome to raise any concerns with the service’s management, via an executive member of the Committee of Management – their names and phone numbers are on display on the foyer notice board. For further information regarding the complaints procedures, please refer to the Complaints and Grievance Policy located in the foyer Policy Folder.

Should you have a complaint, this can be forwarded in writing to the Service Manager (servicemanager@robinascott.com.au).

NOTICE TO TERMINATE CARE

You will need to provide written notice if you decide to end your child’s enrolment with us. This notice allows us to remove your child from the system. Early notice allows your child’s place to be filled by another family is waiting for a place. This can be done via email to admin@robinascott.com.au

Depending on the period of time that your child has been at Robina Scott, our teachers will put together a pack that will include any relevant developmental information and your child’s portfolio.

If you wish to provide us with consent to speak to your alternate early year’s provider in regards to your child’s development, please do so in writing.

LOST PROPERTY

Every effort will be made to ensure that your child’s belongings are returned to their bag/locker. Unfortunately, items are occasionally misplaced or lost.

To minimise this families can help by:

- Naming all your child’s items and clothing
- Not bringing in valuable toys or items into kindergarten
- Checking you haven’t mistakenly picked up someone else’s belongings
- Notifying us promptly of missing items or if you have taken another child’s item in error
- Checking the lost property box located in the foyer
**CAR PARKING**

Parking can be extremely difficult in Lyons Street – particularly at peak drop off and collection times. There is ample parking available across the road at the Town Hall or behind COLES supermarket.

**Please exercise care when parking or reversing, as small children are not easily seen.**

If on Kinder Duty, a service-parking pass is available from the office for car parks in Lyons Street. Office staff or an educator will allocate you a pass. Please return this pass at the end of your stay.

Our neighbour, Williamstown Convenience Store (opposite Kindergarten) in Lyons Street has requested that kindergarten families **DO NOT** use their car parking spaces.

The driveway adjacent to the kinder entrance in Lyons Street is the emergency exit for the Doctors Surgery and **IT MUST BE KEPT CLEAR AT ALL TIMES.**

Maternal and Child Health parking bays (2) at the front of the kindergarten **MUST BE KEPT CLEAR AT ALL TIMES.** Fines will be incurred.

Please note that Robina Scott Kindergarten cannot take responsibility for fines incurred where parking instructions have been breached, nor are we able to write letters to request for parking fines to be revoked/reviewed. We ask that you observe the time limits and instructions as parking officers frequently patrol this area.

**NEVER LEAVE CHILDREN UNSUPERVISED IN CARS.**

![Never Leave Children Alone In A Car](image_url)

**BIKE RACKS**

Families can use the bike racks in front of and inside of service to secure bikes, scooters and prams.

We have found in the past that children often have similar modes of transport (i.e. colour and brand) and have accidently taken the wrong one home. Please make sure your transport is labelled and easy to identify to avoid such mistakes.

Remind your child to wear **ALWAYS** a helmet when using trikes, bikes, skateboard and/or scooters.

Robina Scott Kindergarten does not take responsibility for any theft or damage of items left during or after hours of operation.
SMOKE-FREE ZONE

From 13 April 2015, under the Tobacco Act 1987 smoking is prohibited within the grounds of, and within four meters of an entrance to, all Victorian childcare centers, kindergartens, preschools and schools.

Smoking is banned:

- **Within the grounds** of all childcare centers, kindergartens, preschools and primary and secondary schools in Victoria

- **Within four meters** of an entrance to all childcare centers, kindergartens, preschools and primary and secondary schools in Victoria.

The following diagrams show examples of where the smoking ban applies:

The maximum penalty for someone breaking this law is five penalty units, with an infringement penalty of one penalty unit.

Please butt out responsibly.

We hope you have a wonderful year at Robina Scott Kindergarten

Early Childhood Education cannot occur in isolation. The child is part of a whole - part of a family, a friendship group, a member of the wider community and a participant and co-creator in our environment.

Embrace "The Whole"

www.theECcoach.com.au