



kindergarten



2018 Information

Miners Rest Kindergarten

Address: Dundas St, Miners Rest

Phone : 53346 104

Email : miners.rest.kin@kindergarten.vic.gov.au

Kindergarten Staff

Elly McCarthy (Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood) Kindergarten Teacher

Bec Bray (Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood) Kindergarten Teacher

Emma Jeffrey (Diploma of Children's Services) Educator

Abby Spencer (Diploma of Children's Services) Educator

Dionne Deverall (Diploma of Children's Services) Educator (will commence maternity leave early 2018)

Additional staff will be appointed before 2018

(Please call us by our given names)

TERM DATES 2018

Term 1 *Tuesday 30th January – Thursday 29th March (parent info sessions 30th & 31st Jan)*

Term 2 **Monday 16th April – Friday 29th June**

Term 3 *Monday 16th July – Friday 21st September*

Term 4 **Monday 8th October – Wednesday 19th December (End of year clean-up Thursday 20th & Friday 21st December)**

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS 2018 (There are no Kinder sessions on public holidays)

Labour Day – Monday 12th March

ANZAC Day – Wednesday 25th April

Queen's Birthday – Monday 11th June

Ballarat Show Day – Friday 10th November

Approved Provider –

Miners Rest Primary School - Dale Power

Dundas St Miners Rest Vic

Phone (03)5334 6328

power.dale.r@edumail.vic.gov.au

www.minersrestps.vic.edu.au

Our Kindergarten is a proud addition to the Community and presents improved Educational opportunities for our growing town. It is a City of Ballarat owned facility, with Miners Rest Primary School the registered Service Provider.

City of Ballarat Central Enrolment Scheme

The City of Ballarat's Centralised Kindergarten Enrolment Scheme is an initiative to ensure the whole community has access to a fair, equitable and timely system for processing kindergarten enrolments. This service is operated by the City of Ballarat throughout the Ballarat region and includes a wide range of participating kindergartens.

Enrolment procedures are available through the City of Ballarat on 5320 5720 or visit www.ballarat.vic.gov.au.

Please return completed Application for Enrolment forms to
Post: The City of Ballarat
PO BOX 655
Ballarat, 3353
Email: kindergarten@ballarat.vic.gov.au

*Applications for Enrolment close on the 30th June in the year preceding enrolment.

Early Start Kindergarten initiative provide free teacher qualified kindergarten programs for:

- ✓ 3 year old children known to Child Protection (including those referred directly from Child Protection to Child FIRST)
- ✓ 3 year old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children

Enrolments of children with additional needs

All children have the right to an education and at Miners Rest Kindergarten, we advocate that each and every child has access to a Kindergarten program that ensures individual needs are met. We offer an inclusive program that fosters individuality and diversity in order to promote learning, development and well-being. Where appropriate, Kindergarten Inclusion Support Packages for children with severe disabilities may be applied for, offering supplementary assistance to support the inclusion of children with severe disabilities to access our kindergarten programs. All of our staff have vast knowledge and experience working with all children, including those with additional needs.

Miners Rest Primary School Council

Miners Rest Kindergarten is managed by the Miners Rest Primary School Council (MRPS). This means that the MRPS is the Approved Provider of the Kindergarten and the employer of the staff. MRPS also manages the operational budget for the kindergarten, including collection of fees and the payment of accounts. The kindergarten fees (payable at MRPS), together with funding from the Department of Education and Training (DET) make up the income for the kindergarten for the year. MRPS offers professional assistance for staff as well as all other responsibilities associated with being the Approved provider of the Service.

Dale Power, Miners Rest Primary School Principal is only too happy to answer any questions relating to the above and can be reached at (03)5334 6328 or Dundas Street, Miners Rest 3352.

For information about our Kinder and Primary School, please visit our website
www.minersrestps.vic.edu.au

2018 Fee Information for families

Why fees are necessary

The Department of Education and Training (DET) provides per capita funding as a contribution toward the costs of providing a four-year-old kindergarten program. Services meet the balance of costs through charging fees and fundraising activities.

DET provides a Kindergarten Fee Subsidy (see below) that enables children from eligible families to attend a four-year-old kindergarten program free of charge, or at a minimal cost. DET also provides funding to assist eligible three-year-old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, and children known to Child Protection, to access kindergarten programs. Miners Rest Kindergarten provides a range of support options to parents/guardians experiencing difficulty with payment of fees (see below).

How fees are set

As part of the budget development process, the Kindergarten Executive Committee sets fees each year for the programs of the service, taking into consideration the financial viability of the service, the level of government funding provided for the program, including the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy, the availability of other income sources, such as grants, the fees charged by similar services in the area, the capacity of parents/guardians to pay fees, reasonable expenditure in meeting agreed program quality and standards, requirements of the *Kindergarten Fee Subsidy – Fees Policy* (details in *The Kindergarten Guide*:

(Department of Education and Early Childhood Development) available under *early childhood / service providers* on the DET website: www.education.vic.gov.au

Fees set for the year are only reviewed in extraordinary circumstances, for example, if attendance rates fall below the budget 'break even' point.

For further information, please refer to our Fees Policy located at the Kindergarten.

4 Year Old Fees: \$400.00 per term standard fee

Free for Health Care Subsidy holders

3 Year Old Fees: \$400 per term (one session), \$760 (two sessions)

Child Care Rebate

Families wishing to claim their Registered Child Care Benefit must request a receipt by emailing miners.rest.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au. Please note, due to the time and resources required receipts will not be issued to all families, only those who specifically request it. Receipts will only be issued to those families who have paid their fees and will be issued by December 2017.

Welcome to Miners Rest Kindergarten

Welcome to a very special time as you and your child move through their Kindergarten year. We want this year to be very happy and rewarding for your family and look forward to getting to know you and your child.

During the year at Kindergarten, your child will discover and develop a wide variety of skills and experiences. During the first five years children develop and learn much faster than at any other age. Our Kindergarten endeavours to provide a stimulating and nurturing environment that encourages and fosters children's individual development. Kindergarten supports children to become more aware of the world in which they are a part of. It helps promote language development and numeracy awareness as well as learning dispositions, physical and emotional wellbeing and identity. Time at Kindergarten strengthens a child's confidence and personal skills, and provides the opportunity for all children to develop a strong sense of self.

Your child will be encouraged to develop personal independence, self-awareness and a feeling of self-worth, and will be given opportunities to develop warm, caring, respectful relationships and friendships with other children and adults. A child's work is their play; therefore the Kindergarten program is child centred. We use current ideas and experiences initiated by children in their play and scaffold this learning into further play development.

Many children have had some group experiences before attending Kindergarten, for example childcare, pre-kindergarten, kindergym and/or playgroup. For some children though, Kindergarten is often the first opportunity for them to venture into the world outside their home and family.

Children's play (learning) can be haphazard or ordered; busy or planned out, quiet or booming with emotion, individual or in groups or exhibit several elements all at once! Therefore, the emphasis of what your child is learning at Kindergarten is not focused on reaching a specific level of development at a predetermined age, but to achieving *their own potential at their own stage*. Our programs cater for these intangibles to provide for a child's full individual development in consultation with the National Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) and the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF). Please be assured our Kindergarten values the privacy of all families and confidentiality will be maintained at all times.

Wrap Around Care & Out of Hours School Care (OHSC)

Our Wrap Around Care and Out of School Hours Care (OSHC) Program aims to provide a safe, secure and stimulating environment for children at the highest possible standard, catering for pre-school children (3yrs+) to Grade 6, outside Kindergarten and school times.

Operation Times

Program operating times for the Out of School Hours Care Program are:

Before Kinder/School Care - 7.00 am – beginning of session

After Kinder/School Care – end of session to 6.00 pm

Holiday Care / Curriculum Days 9.00am – 6.00 pm

Breakfast is provided before 8.30am during Before Kinder/School & Holiday Care.

For further information please don't hesitate to visit our WAC/OSHC service and discuss any questions or ideas you may have with our educators.

Group Times for 2018
4 Year Old Kindergarten

We offer a variety of groups to help meet the needs of our families. 4 year old Kinder children will attend 15 hours of Kindergarten.

Pre-Kindergarten

We offer two pre-kindergarten sessions this year to meet the needs of our community. These sessions both run for 3 hours and children can attend one session or both for a discounted rate.

Room	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Yellow Room	Yellow Bandicoots 8.45 - 1.45 (5hrs)	Red Brolgas 8.30-4 (7.5hrs)	Yellow Bandicoots 8.45 - 1.45 (5hrs)	Red Brolgas 8.30-4 (7.5hrs)	Yellow Bandicoots 8.45 - 1.45 (5hrs)
Blue Room	Blue Ducks 9.15-3.15 (6hrs)	Playgroup 9.30-11.30 Purple Possums 12.30-3.30 (3 hrs)	Blue Ducks 9.15-3.15 (6hrs) 6hr	Green Frogs 8.30-11.30 (3 hrs) Blue Ducks 12.30-3.30 (3hrs)	

The Start of the 2018 Kindergarten Year

To help support the children to settle into their new Kinder year, allow educators to get to know the children and to develop vital relationships from day one, the children will **attend half sessions for the first 2 weeks of Kindergarten**. Please read the attached letter for your child’s attendance times.

The End of the 2018 Kindergarten Year

Kinder uses the last session for each group of the School/Kinder year as clean-up days so the last Kindergarten session this year will be Wednesday 19th December. Clean Up days will be Monday 20th and Tuesday 21st December.

Settling into Kindergarten

Kindergarten is a great place to be but the first few days and weeks can also be an overwhelming experience, as your child meets a new range of children to play with, teachers to learn from and a variety of new experiences to explore. Settling into Kinder is a new routine for many children to become familiar with. At times it may feel overwhelming for parents and children to leave one another however by ensuring children that you will return and that they will be safe in this new space, often assists with the settling in process. Please feel free to stay with your child if it seems appropriate otherwise say goodbye, assure them you will return and promptly make your way back to the car. As difficult as it can be sometimes, we assure you that drawn out goodbyes can often be more distressing for both you and your child. Should you need some support with separation at the beginning of session, our educators are more than happy to assist and we will always contact you if your child does not settle. Please rest assured however that most children do settle very quickly.

Staff Preparation Time

You will notice from the previous timetable that during the week there are times when children are not in attendance at the Centre. Time before and after Kindergarten sessions are set aside for educators to prepare programs and experiences for the children, as well as attending various meetings. These times also offer an opportunity for you to make an appointment to come and speak to a Teacher regarding your child’s progress.

Code Red Fire Alert Days

At the direction of the Department of Education and Training (DET), School and Children's Services in high fire risk areas will be closed on days declared as **Code Red Fire Danger Rating Day**. This may affect our Kindergarten. Where possible up to 3 days' notice will be given but in some instances less notice may be provided. You will be notified by the Kindergarten if we are closing, but you can also check the DET website for details www.education.vic.gov.au



Staff Illness

It is occasionally necessary for Kindergarten sessions to be cancelled due to Educator illness when there is no qualified relief Educators available. This is always a last resort and families are notified as early as possible if this is to happen.

National Quality Framework for Early Childhood – Assessment and Rating Process

The National Quality Framework was introduced in 2012 with the fundamental aim of providing better educational and developmental outcomes for children accessing early childhood services. The National Quality Standard (NQS) is a key aspect of the NQF and sets a national benchmark for early childhood education which is linked to the EYLF.

The NQS outlines 7 Quality Areas:

- 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**

'Guide to the National Quality Standard' (2012) Produced by Australian Children's Education and Quality Care Authority (ACECQA)

As part of this framework, Kindergartens are assessed and the quality of the service is rated against the 7 Quality Areas.

Within the first 12 months of operation, Miners Rest Kindergarten underwent their National Quality Assessment and Rating, receiving **EXCEEDING** National Quality Standards in *Education Programming and Practice*, *Relationships with Children* **AND** *Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Community*, therefore has an overall rating of **MEETING** National Quality Standards.

Miners Rest Kindergarten promotes continuous quality improvement and we are proud of our service, the program we shape with the children and the relationships we are continually forming with families and the Miners Rest community!

Policies/Quality Improvement Plan

In accordance with Education and Care Regulations, a copy of all Kindergarten policies and our Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) are available at the Kindergarten, simply ask one of our educators. Please take the time to contribute to these documents.

Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework

The revised edition of the VEYLDF was launched in May 2016 to ensure your child receives a quality education program in their year prior to Primary School. This is a vital time for them to learn and develop. The document reflects cutting edge research and practice, policy directions and aspirational outcomes for you children.

VEYLDF evokes a vision for all children to experience play-based learning that is engaging and builds their success for lifelong learning, health and wellbeing, responding to their needs, interests, ideas, strengths and abilities. It has a strong focus on responding to the needs of families whilst building respectful and responsive relationships. Aboriginal culture is also acknowledged and supported.

The VEYLDF also provides valuable guidance for supporting children and families in their transitions through the first eight years of a child's life as it links the five Outcomes for Learning and Development to the first three levels of the Victorian Curriculum F-10. The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (EYLF) and My Time, Our Place: Framework for School Age Care in Australia (MTOP) share the same five Learning and Development Outcomes.

The VEYLDF outlines 5 Outcomes:

Identity – Children have a strong sense of their identity

Community – Children are connected with their world

Wellbeing – Children have a strong sense of their emotional and physical wellbeing

Learning – Children are confident and involved learners

Communication – Children are effective communicators

‘Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework’ (2016) Produced by Department of Education and Training (DET) and Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA)

National Early Years Learning Framework

The EYLF outlines 3 Elements:

Belonging – Children feel they belong as they form close and trusting relationships with their family, community, culture and place.

Being – Children need time to just be, time to play, enjoy life and take on challenges here and now.

Becoming – Children are shaped by many factors and begin to learn and grow actively moulding them today and in the future.

‘Belonging, Being & Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia’ (2009) Produced by Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) for the Council of Australian Governments (COAG).

Transition to School—A Positive Start to School

Starting school is a major life transition for children and their families. It is a period of change that can be both challenging and exciting, in which children and families adjust to new roles, identities and expectations, new interactions and new relationships.

Many children will start school after having attended kindergarten or child care, whilst others may not have attended any formal prior-to-school service. Regardless of this, all children will have developed a range of skills and abilities that form the basis of positive school experiences.

The Transition Learning and Development Statement supports the consistent transfer of information, irrespective of the school a child is going to. It provides an opportunity for children, their families and the professionals working with them to contribute and have their views reflected in it.

The information in the Statement:

- ✓ Summarises the strengths of a child’s learning and development as they enter school
- ✓ Identifies the child’s approaches to learning
- ✓ Notes their interests
- ✓ Indicates how they can be supported.

The Transition Learning and Development Statement is developed by the child, their family and Kindergarten Teacher on behalf of the child. It is at the families discretion whether this information can be forwarded to school for their information.

Individual Goals and Learning Objectives

Our program is ever changing and evolving based on each child and groups needs and interests, however always aims to encourage and develop in children:

- ☺ A **sense of belonging** to their family and their Kinder group
- ☺ Lively **enquiring minds**, a **love of learning** and a **willingness** to apply **effort** to worthwhile tasks.
- ☺ The ability to **think** rationally and reflectively.
- ☺ The use of **imagination**.
- ☺ Powers of **creative** self-expression.
- ☺ Powers of **judgment** to take on **considered risks**.
- ☺ **Experimenting, inquiry** and **investigating** processes and skills
- ☺ Physical and mental **wellbeing**.
- ☺ **Self-confidence**, a sense of worth and **respect** and **consideration** for others.
- ☺ **Decision making** and **problem solving** skills.
- ☺ An understanding of **themselves** and **their world**.
- ☺ Competence in intellectual, social and physical **wellbeing**.
- ☺ Growth towards **independence**
- ☺ Developing the child’s awareness of good **health, hygiene and nutrition**.

Parent/Teacher Chats

Conversations with families are so important and we really value the information we gain from you about your child as well as sharing details with you about your child's progress. Teachers set aside some time in May to have formal conversations with parents of children enrolled in our 4-year-old kindergarten program. These conferences are to discuss your child's strengths and progress, as well as to set new goals to support their learning and development as the year continues. This time is also a great opportunity to discuss plans for your child for the following year. Some children will transition on to school, whilst others may benefit having a second year enrolled in a 4-year-old kindergarten program. In having these conversations with families, we can ensure that we continue to plan and support your child's needs. Kinder will close for one day in May to accommodate these interviews.

Despite these formal interviews, we encourage parents and guardians to contact teachers at any time throughout the year to discuss their child's learning. This can be done through an informal chat before or after session, a phone call, email or by arranging an interview in teachers non-contact time.

Learning Journeys and Portfolios

Each child contributes to their own learning journal, which is accessible in the kindergarten room. Artefacts such as photos, drawings, or notes are added to it. We also use an app called 'Seesaw' to share what your child is learning at Kinder. We add a daily reflection to this app as well as ongoing information about the learning and discoveries that your child has made. This app also allows us to communicate with you instantly about upcoming events. As children become more confident they are also able to use this app to communicate with you throughout the day and share their learning by way of writing, taking photos, taking videos and drawing pictures. You will find your log-in details attached and can access your child's journal anytime via iOS app, Android app or on the web using other smartphones and computers for the whole year.

Changes to Sessions due to Kinder/School Events

Throughout the year events will be planned that move with the interests and ideas of the children and extend the program. At times Parents may receive notice that there is a change to the usual session times. On these such days, Kinder sessions may finish at an earlier time to give children time to rest before hopefully coming back to join in special out of hours events!

Parent/Educator Communication

Communication between home and kinder is so important and therefore we appreciate having regular contact with you about your child. Please let us know of any current interests your child is demonstrating at home, any exciting news you have about your family, changes to family circumstances or anything else that you think would be important for us to know. This can be done informally during drop off or pick up time, commenting on Seesaw, a phone call or via email. If you would like a more formal discussion about your child, please don't hesitate to make an appointment outside session times with the teacher.

Behaviour Guidance

Any large group of people face challenges getting along, and kinder is no exception. Young children face challenges specific to their development and sometimes struggle to understand what is deemed 'socially acceptable behaviour'.

We aim to work with your child by providing them with guidelines and boundaries to enable them to learn what acceptable behaviour is. Guidance will be consistent so that they can make decisions based on knowledge of the consequences. Educators will consult with parents about aspects of behaviour guidance and emotional care if they are concerned about a child's behaviour. For further details, an "Interactions with Children Policy" available.

Updating Information

Please ensure that you advise us of any changes to your family or child's circumstances so that we have current and up to date information on file for your child. This might include things such as change of address, phone numbers, family circumstances, medical history, etc.

Excursions, regular outings and visitors

During the year we may have excursions related to our needs and interests. These excursions/outings provide children with a "hands-on" approach to learning and give them the opportunity to engage with the wider community. They are a valuable part of the kindergarten program. **It is a requirement by the Department of Education to have written permission from the parents for each excursion.** Some

excursions will be included on our regular outings permission slip that is enclosed in this pack however others will require a separate permission slip to be completed and sent to families for signing at the appropriate time. We may at times also have special visitors come to kindergarten to speak to the children and the required risk assessments and working with children checks will be conducted.

Kindergarten times, signing in and out attendance book

To help your child to settle into the day a little easier, please ensure that you arrive at kindergarten on time. We also ask that you be punctual at collection time as well to save your child becoming anxious. We understand that sometimes situations are out of our control and therefore if you are held up, please contact us so that we can reassure your child that you are on your way. Upon arrival at kindergarten, children must be brought into the room by their parent or guardian, who will need to sign the attendance book, write the time of arrival as well as who is expected to collect the child at the conclusion of session. At the end of session, children will need to be collected from inside the Kindergarten when dismissed by the teacher, the time of departure written into the attendance book and signed once again. It is extremely important that the attendance book is completed correctly as it is checked off by teachers for fire drills and in any emergency as an official record of attendance.

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development requires children to be dropped off and collected by parents/ guardians or other adults that have been nominated on your child's enrolment form.

Collection of children

For the safety and wellbeing of your child, educators will only allow people nominated on the enrolment form and/or emergency contact form to collect your child. Should you require another adult to collect your child throughout the year, educators will require you to complete a written authority to add them to the list. Please notify educators if a different person from usual going to collect your child and ensure that they bring a current form of photographic ID for us to approve. This person will also need to sign the attendance book upon collection of your child. **Under NO circumstances will educators allow an unauthorised person to collect any child. This person will be required to sign the book saying that they have picked up your child.**

Gate/Door

Children are naturally curious. They like to know how things work, so it is not surprising that some children want to know how a 'child safe' gate/door opens. For your child's safety, we ask that you please refrain from letting your child open the gate or door at Kinder. **Drop off and pick up times can be very busy so we also please ask that you ensure you only let your child in/ out of the kindergarten.**

Notices

Each Kindergarten group has a file located next to the sign-in book in which you will find Kinder letters, Book Club, Miners Rest Primary School notes, newsletters, etc. Please try to collect any correspondence from your child's file each session to ensure you are not missing out on important information. Files are listed alphabetically by your child's FIRST NAME.

To save paper we'd love to email you information and notes. MRPS and Kindergarten newsletters are published on the school website as well as emailed to families. We have a free School App for Smartphones. It has numerous capabilities. Please take advantage of it and utilise as required. If you wish to have a hard copy, please notify Kinder staff.

Photographs/Videos and Social Media

Some parents have requested that their child not be photographed and therefore we kindly request that you check with a staff member before taking any photographs or videos that contain other children. Families have a right to their personal privacy so we ask families to be mindful in maintaining confidentiality when dealing with social media. Please ensure that photos, status updates, links or comments that might include or make reference to someone else's child or to Miners Rest Kindergarten in any way are not placed on social media websites such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter etc.

Clothing

At Kindergarten your children are involved in a variety of creative play that can sometimes involve messy experiences! We do our best to keep their clothes as clean as possible by using smocks but accidents can happen. Please dress them in clothes that are –

-  Allowed to get dirty
-  Comfortable and safe (e.g. a warm coat and gumboots in Winter, footwear that is practical for climbing and exploring, wide-brimmed sun hat between September 1st and April 30th)

- ✎ Can be easily washed.
- ✎ Easily managed independently by children, especially when going to the toilet
- ✎ Clothing must have sleeves and preferably be made from a closely woven fabric.

It is recommended to send at least one spare change of clothes with your child to kindergarten. This will reduce the chance of them becoming distressed should an accident occur.

Please also label your child's clothing if possible. This will assist us in making sure that it is returned to the correct owner!

SunSmart

Miners Rest Kindergarten is a Sun Smart Kindergarten with our **SunSmart policy in action from the 1st of September until the end of 30th of April**. Children, teachers and visitors are all required to wear a **wide brimmed hat** and sunscreen to play outdoors, regardless of the weather. Please ensure your child's hat has been clearly labelled. Spare hats are available at the kindergarten should a child or adult forget to bring one.

We have sunscreen located in each of our rooms for children to apply with adult supervision. If you would prefer your child to use their own sunscreen, please provide a clearly labelled bottle of sunscreen to be kept at kinder for easy access.

Birthdays and Celebrations

We encourage families to share their important cultural events. If there are events you would like to see celebrated at kinder please let the educators know. (Birthdays, Mother's/Father's Day, Easter, Passover, Christmas, name days etc.).

Children enjoy celebrating their birthday at kindergarten and we acknowledge this special day for your child by singing "Happy Birthday" using a wooden cake with real candles to blow out. Please feel free to bring a store brought packet of sealed biscuits or birthday cake to share with the rest of the children after lunch. It is best practice for birthday cakes/biscuits to be in a store brought sealed package and that blowing out candles and sharing around for all to eat is not permitted. This will help reduce the risk of spreading infectious diseases. **Please be aware that some children have severe allergies to various food types. Nuts or nut byproducts must not be brought into kinder.** *If, for whatever reason you don't want your child to have cake (allergy, religious, special diet) please feel free to send along an alternative from home that we can keep in the freezer.*

Birthdays invitations – should you have birthday invitations to hand out for your child, please place them in children's files located next to the sign in book. This way they reach parents, rather than getting lost by children and also reduces the chance of children becoming upset if they are not invited.

Healthy Eating – Snacks/Lunch

At our Kindergarten, we model and encourage children and families to make healthy nutritional choices as part of our Healthy Eating policy. Children will have both morning snack and lunch in a whole group situation. We believe that this:-

- ✔ Provides children with a balanced routine
- ✔ Gives children the opportunity to socialise with a variety of different children
- ✔ Improves time management
- ✔ Encourages children's responsibility
- ✔ Begins the transition to school process
- ✔ Reduces the chance of contaminating the kindergarten with allergens for children with allergies

Each session, all children will bring their own snacks and lunch. We encourage children to bring a piece of fruit, which they can manage independently (e.g. an orange cut and in cling wrap). For lunch we offer suggestions such as sandwiches, rolls or wraps. Children will also need to have their own clearly water bottle. We will also have a water fountain and small glasses available in each room for easy access. As we have limited refrigerator space we ask that in warmer months you place an ice pack in your child's lunch box or use an insulated lunchbox to keep your child's food cool.

As we aim to encourage healthy eating at kindergarten, we ask Parents to pack snacks such as fruit, vegetables, rice crackers, muesli bars, yoghurt, plain popcorn, etc. for their children. Snacks such as chips, lollies, cakes, chocolate covered muesli bars, chocolate custards and sweet biscuits are sometimes foods and therefore discouraged at kinder. These types of snacks are high in sugar and/ or salt, providing minimal food value for growing bodies.

Cooking at Kindergarten

From time to time, educators share the joys of cooking with the children. This gives educators the chance to promote a healthy lifestyle to children, sharing and eating nutritious food together as well as discussing the importance of oral health and participating in physical activity according to national and state guidelines and recommendations. During these times, food safety guidelines and hygiene practices are maintained as well. High priority is given to ensure cross contamination of foods for children with severe or life-threatening allergies does not occur. Educators also ensure that the dietary and cultural needs of children and families are taken into consideration when planning such experiences and for events and activities.

Important Information regarding Snack/Lunch Foods and Children with Life Threatening Allergies

At Miners Rest Kindergarten we sometimes have children with **LIFE THREATENING allergies** to certain foods and products. This means that if they ingest, or in some instances, come into contact with foods that cause them to have a severe allergic reaction.

We will inform at the beginning of next year about any children with allergies or as risk of anaphylaxis to certain foods in your group. Their photo will be displayed in the centre as well as a list of the allergies that they have. Our Healthy Eating policy and Anaphylaxis policy aim to minimize the risk of allergic reactions and help reassure the families of those affected by life threatening allergies. **Should food with a life-threatening allergen be sent with a child to kindergarten, educators will send it home with the child to avoid cross-contamination within the setting.**

Our Sustainability Commitment

Environmental sustainability is about meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. By becoming sustainable, we can reduce our environmental footprint and help preserve the worlds precious natural resources. At Miners Rest Kindergarten we are committed to not only being environmental sustainable as a service but also educating others on how they too can become environmentally sustainable. You are welcome to join us on our journey.

Parents and Friends – How can I Help at Kinder?

We value the support of parents and friends who share their time and efforts at Kinder for the benefit of all our children. There are many ways for families to join in and contribute such as; washing laundry (smocks, tea towels, dress ups etc.), helping out during session by interacting with your child as well as others, attending excursions, sharing a special hobby/skill such as cooking/playing footy drills with your child's group, assisting on working bees or participating on Parent Committees/PFA/School Council.

Children love when their parent or someone special joins into their Kinder session to play with them. What a great way to spend quality time your child, engage in their learning through play and meet their Kinder friends. Feel free to spend half an hour or 1 hour, a morning or an afternoon. Just remember to sign the red folder in the foyer.

Volunteers at Kindergarten

Parents are sometimes asked to contribute to the outdoor environment by attending working bees or doing minor maintenance to the garden, which can take place out of normal working hours. As a safety precaution we ask that parents/volunteers never undertake any work without another adult present, and they sign to acknowledge having read and understood the volunteer induction form beforehand.

Parent Committee

The Parent Committee's role is to - coordinate fundraising in conjunction with the school Parents & Friends Association, source and apply for relevant Grants to support improvements to the Kindergarten, arrange minor upkeep requirements and generally work together to ensure the Kindergarten looks great and is welcoming to all. They are also required to liaise with Educators and the Miners Rest Primary School in making decisions about how money raised will be spent. The Parent Committee often looks to delegate tasks to members of the Parent body so please consider providing your support when approached.

A new Committee is elected each March at our Annual General Meeting (AGM). As a parent, you are invited to join. Normal meetings are held at Kindergarten once or twice per term. The Parent Committee is comprised of five office bearers: The President, the Secretary, the Treasurer, Fundraiser/s and Maintenance, as well as up to three General Committee members. Two committee members need to represent the Kindergarten at Parent and Friends meetings held each month.

Any Parent is welcome to attend monthly meetings, but only elected Committee members are able to vote. Please take the time to consider being a part of the Committee whether you feel you can commit to a small or larger role! All committee positions need to be filled on the night of the AGM in order for the Parent Committee to operate.

Fundraising Committee

Fundraisers play a vital role in our Kindergarten. We require a minimum of two volunteers to join the Miners Rest Primary School PFA to assist in raising money for our Kindergarten. The joint approach offsets the need to work in opposition with the school and compete for funds from our communities' families. Each year as current Parents leave the Kindergarten, we need new volunteers to form this Committee and continue its important function. Please consider getting involved!

Fundraising

In the current economic climate the need to raise extra money through fundraising activities is an unfortunate fact of life. While we receive monies through Government grants and fees, this is still not enough to meet the total costs of operating a Kindergarten. On average we need to raise approximately \$5 000 each year through fundraising in order to balance our budget.

Fundraising Levy

During the year the Kindergarten runs a number of different fundraising events such as raffles, toy catalogues, family portraits etc. We value your commitment to fundraising but do not expect families to feel they must take part in every activity. If you feel you are unable to support all fundraisers, please choose those that appeal the most.

It is anticipated that each family's contribution would fundraise approximately \$200 throughout the year. If you wish, you may pay a \$200 levy (\$50 per term). By paying this you are not expected to fundraise throughout the year.

Accidents/Incidents

The first aid cabinet is kept well stocked and up to date. Accidents do happen from time to time and when a child is injured, first aid will be applied if required. Minor accidents (grazes, bumps, small cuts and scratches etc...), will be treated at the Kindergarten, and you will be notified at the end of session and be required to sign an Accident Form. All Staff are trained in first aid. At times, for more serious accidents (a bump to the head), a staff member may choose to make a phone call to let you know.

Elly McCarthy is the First Aid Officer and will be notified of all accidents/illness/incident and injury. In the case of serious incidents, Dale Power will also be notified as well as the Department of Education and Training, according to regulation. For accidents requiring urgent medical attention, parents and/or emergency contacts will be contacted to take the child to hospital for treatment. In cases of extreme emergency, the ambulance will be called first and then parents or emergency contacts will be notified as soon as possible. Ambulance costs will be payable by families. **In all cases the welfare of the child is the first priority.**

Health and Safety/Emergency Management

We take every precaution to protect children at the Kindergarten from any hazard likely to cause serious injury. We have developed an evacuation procedure and drills will be practiced with Staff and children each term. *A copy of our Emergency Management Plan is on display at the Kindergarten in the front foyer as well as a copy in the office. Please let us know if you would like to read this plan.*

All visitors are required to sign the Visitors Book located on the table in the front foyer. If you are staying at Kinder for longer than 10 minutes, please sign this book. This provides us with a record of adults who are at Kinder, so that you can be accounted for in the case of a real emergency. If you happen to be at Kindergarten during a fire drill, please follow instructions given by educators.

Sickness

At times throughout the year your child may become unwell and if this is the case, we ask that you please keep them home from Kinder. They are unable to enjoy the program, which can be upsetting for them, and also risk spreading the infection to other children and educators.

Should your child become unwell during the day, we will attempt to contact you first to come and collect your child to avoid them becoming distressed. If we are unable to contact you then we will contact the people listed as Emergency Contacts on your child's enrolment form.

We have attached a list of infectious diseases to the back of this handbook for your information. Should your child become ill with one of these diseases, please notify us immediately so that we can alert other

parents (obviously without using any names) to the outbreak. Please take note of the days of exclusion from school/kinder for each of these diseases.

Medication

At times, your child may require medication to be administered throughout the session by Educators. Should this happen, we will need to record this in the Kindergarten Medication Book.

To enable us to administer prescription medication, it is essential that the original label is on the original bottle outlining the following information:

- ✓ Child's name
- ✓ Doctor's instructions to administer medication
- ✓ Expiry date

It is important that medication is handed to an educator and not left in a child's bag. When administering medication, our policy states that two educators will check and administer authorised medication to the child and then the parent or guardian collecting the child at the end of session will need to sign and date the Medication Book.

In instances where a child has been diagnosed with a medical condition, we will require a Medical Management Plan prior to your child commencing kindergarten, which has been completed and authorised by a licensed health care professional. This plan provides educators with details about the condition and authorises staff to administer medication if applicable. Please ensure that you provide us with an adequate supply of appropriate medication and equipment (e.g. Epi pen/reliever/spacer) for your child at all times and notify us of any changes to the plan throughout the year. In addition to the Medical Management Plan, we will also prepare a Risk minimisation plan in consultation with you. This document is intended to identify the issues or potential situations that could lead to a medical incident or emergency and strategies to reduce these risks.

For further information in relation to this, please speak to one of our educators to obtain a copy of our policies.

Immunisations – No Jab, No Play

Under the 'No Jab, No Play' legislation, Early Childhood Services will require documentation, prior to enrolment, to prove that the child has been:

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

'Conscientious objection' is not an exemption under the 'No Jab No Play' legislation. Children who do not fill the above criteria will not be able to attend Kindergarten.

No Smoking

A general reminder that smoking is NOT PERMITTED inside the Kindergarten buildings/sheds, in the outside play area or in front of or near to entrance gates.

Suggestions, Questions, Complaints and Grievances

Please feel free to ask the educators any questions or queries you may have about the Kinder. Please feel free to arrange a time to meet.

In line with our Complaints Policy, any concerns regarding your child and/or the program should be discussed with the Kindergarten teacher. Any other concerns or any issues you feel are still unresolved after meeting with the teacher should be referred to the Dale Power 5334 6328 or email to power.dale.r@edumail.vic.gov.au. This policy is available at the kindergarten along with all of our current policies.

All staff at Miners Rest Kindergarten look forward to working with you and your child throughout the year.

We look forward to a happy and successful 2018!

Elly, Bec, Abby and Emma