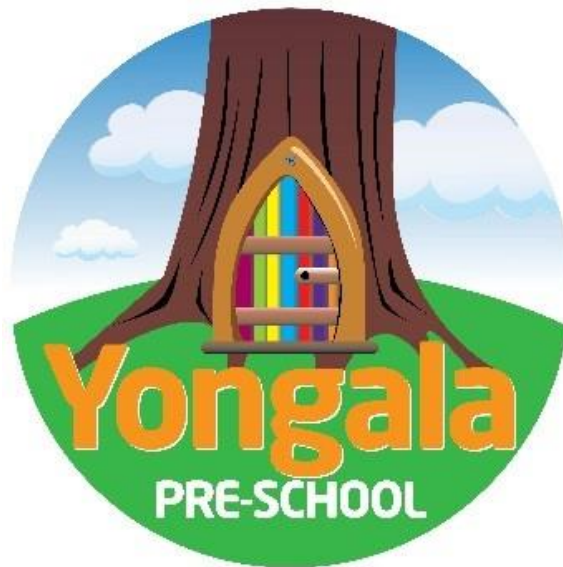


Yongala Pre-School



2023 Information Booklet

Important information for your family about
our Pre-School

Contents

1. Who we are & what we do?	4	6.3 Late pick-up	
1.1 Our educators		6.4 Student absence procedures	
1.2 Our program			
1.3 Child safety standard		7. Dealing with medical condition?	18
1.4 Policies		7.1 Hygiene policy	
2. How our program is developed?	6	7.2 Anaphylaxis & how we handle	
2.1 Philosophy		7.3 Your responsibilities	
2.2 Theoretical supports		7.4 Updating immunisation status	
2.3 Framework		7.5 When a child becoming ill	
3. When to start & important dates	10	7.6 Medication	
3.1 2022 Orientation process for 3/4 group		8. Communicating with families?	20
3.2 2022 Orientation process for 4/5 group		8.1 Regular emails & newsletters	
3.3 Group interviews		8.2 Parent-educator interviews	
3.4 Staff professional development days		8.3 The program book	
4. How to transit your child for kindergarten?	12	8.4 Pigeonholes & notice board	
4.1 What you can do at home		8.5 Children's link book	
4.2 On the very first day		8.6 Your class representative	
5. What to bring & what not to bring?	14	8.7 Preschool field officer (PSFO)	
5.1 What to put in your child's kinder bag?		9. Fees & how we spend it	22
5.2 How to dress you child for kinder		9.1 2022 fee policy	
5.3 Rest time for 4/5 group		9.2 Parent participation levy	
5.4 Excursion package		9.3 Preschool expense	
5.5 Lost property		10. How to get involved?	22
5.6 Craft materials from your home		10.1 Family gifts	
5.7 Birthday parties		10.2 Parent duty roster	
5.8 What NOT to bring		10.3 Excursions	
6. Attendance	17	10.4 Working bee days	
6.1 Getting to the kinder		10.5 Fundraising events	
6.2 Attendance routine (Sign-in/ Sign-out)		10.6 Contributing your interests and skills	
		10.7 Joining Yongala committee	
		10.8 Need to know more?	

Welcome to Yongala and congratulations as you prepare for your child to enter a different phase of his/her life!

This booklet offers some background information regarding the Pre-School and its operations. It outlines many of the pre-school's policies and procedures which are also useful references for families. We hope the contents will explain the necessary day to day proceedings so you and your child can quickly and confidently settle into Yongala.



We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the Kulin Nation as the original custodians of this land, and pay our respects to their Elders both past and present.



ZERO
TOLERANCE
OF CHILD ABUSE

We wish to acknowledge the Wurundjeri People as the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we stand. We thank the Traditional Owners for their custodianship of the land and celebrate the continuing living Culture of the Aboriginal people. We pay respect to their Ancestors and Elders both past and present and emerging.

1. Who we are & what we do?

YONGALA PRE-SCHOOL Inc.

Registered in Victoria No: A0011200F;

ABN 85 238 487 108

25 Nott Street Balwyn 3103

9817 4939

www.yongala.kindergarten.vic.gov.au

Yongala Preschool in the present building began to provide kindergarten for children in 1962. It has always been a parent-managed, not-for-profit service. The Preschool is managed by the Committee of Management and the Director. The Director is responsible for the daily running of community Preschool, with the valuable input of all our stakeholders including the children, families, other educators and committee.

1.1 Our Educators

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS

Pauline Daly – Director and 4/5 Group

pauline.yongala.kin@kindergarten.vic.gov.au

Georgia Mazis –4/5 Group

georgia.yongala@kindergarten.vic.gov.au

Becky Su– 3/4 Group

becky.yongala@kindergarten.vic.gov.au

CO-EDUCATORS

Christina Yoo – 4/5 Group

To be announced– 3/4 Group

Trusy Kent – Lunch time relief

1.2 Our Program

Our 'play-based' program aims to bring into being successful learners, confident and creative individuals and active and informed members of the community. The importance of early learning is now recognised as giving children the best start in life to create a better future for them and our nation.

"To open a child's mind to learning and discovery is a gift for life"

Our program is play based and has a strong focus on including the interests of the children. Teachers constantly plan, implement and evaluate programs to meet the needs, and interests of the children.

The teachers believe in developing the 'whole child', assessing all areas of a child's development... emotional, social, spiritual, cognitive, physical and creative. These areas are all highlighted within the Early Years Learning Framework, which has been designed as the framework for teaching children in the early years. The Learning Outcomes are identified as:

IDENTITY – a child's sense of self, belonging, resilience, confidence and relationships: care and empathy for others.

COMMUNITY – a child's sense of belonging to a wider community and their role in that community, responding to and respecting diversity, an awareness of fairness, respect and care of the environment.

WELLBEING – a child's strength socially, emotionally and spiritually. Their increasing responsibility for health and physical wellbeing.

LEARNING – a child's curiosity, cooperation, creativity, enthusiasm, persistence, imagination, problem-solving, inquiry, experimentation and investigation. This incorporates connecting with experiences, people, places, technologies and learning across contexts and mathematical learning.

COMMUNICATION – a child’s verbal and non-verbal interactions, engagement with texts, expression of ideas, understanding of symbols and patterns.

We plan our environments, experiences and activities, with these outcomes in mind, and we encourage parents to contribute their experiences and skills to our program too!

1.3 Child Safety Standard

We hold the care, safety and wellbeing of children as a central and fundamental responsibility of our Preschool.

At Yongala Preschool, we have a legal responsibility to provide a safe and secure environment for children and to protect them from all forms of abuse and neglect. We are steadfast in our resolve to honour this responsibility. Yongala has formalised a policy to respond to the laws in regard to child safety. This is available in the policy folder and details are available on the board.

For matters that cause you concern, please contact one of our Preschool Child Safety Officers, Pauline Daly Director or the current President of the Preschool whose contact details are on display in the locker room.

What we will do to ensure ChildSafe Standards at Yongala Preschool

In its planning, decision-making and operations Yongala Preschool will:

1. Take a preventative, proactive and participatory approach to child safety;
2. Value and empower children to participate in decisions which affect their lives;
3. Foster a culture of openness that supports all persons to safely disclose risks of harm to children
4. Respect diversity in cultures and child rearing practices while keeping child safety paramount;
5. Provide written guidance on appropriate conduct and behaviour towards children;

6. Engage only the most suitable people to work with children and have high quality staff and volunteer supervision and professional development;

7. Ensure children know who to talk with if they are worried or are feeling unsafe, and that they are comfortable and encouraged to raise such issues;

8. Report suspected abuse, neglect or mistreatment promptly to the appropriate authorities;

9. Share information appropriately and lawfully with other organisations where the safety and wellbeing of children is at risk; and

10. Value the input of and communicate regularly with families and carers.

11. We request all the parents/guardians of Yongala families to obtain Working With Children Check (WWCC).

1.4 Policies

Yongala Pre-School has many policies to guide the day-to-day management of the service. The folder containing all of the policies is located on the shelf in the locker room and all families are welcome to read it at any time. Most policies are also available on our website.

By accepting a position at Yongala Pre-School you are agreeing to comply with all policies authorised by the Committee of Management at Yongala Pre-School.

2. How our program is developed?

2.1 Philosophy

Our statement of philosophy describes Yongala's values, beliefs and understandings about children, families, the role of educators and the ways children learn. It is a living document that often requires your comment and contribution.

MISSION

The Educators and Committee of Management of Yongala Pre-school are committed to upholding and celebrating the rights of all children in a safe and secure environment. This is done through a program that provides opportunities for children to be actively engaged in meaningful experiences, a balance between child-initiated and educator-supported learning experiences. The environment is designed to facilitate and support each child's natural desire to learn. The children are viewed as confident and capable learners who are to be actively involved in their own learning. Children are encouraged to build meaningful relationships with their peers, staff and the broader community.

Yongala Preschool is committed to the principles of inclusive education celebrating the individuality and uniqueness of young children and their families. We create a welcoming and vibrant community respecting and valuing the diversity of our families. Our preschool values strong partnerships with care-givers of children and in order to achieve the best possible outcome for each child. Because when children learn, we all grow.

PRINCIPLES

The principles of Yongala Pre-School are the cornerstone of the education practices for educators, families and management. The principles and practices are drawn from the Victorian Early Years Learning and

Development Framework and National Early Years Learning Framework for Australia "Belonging, Being and Becoming".



CHILD

We recognise that all children as rights holders and full members of society, capable of participating in their social worlds through their relationship with others. These rights, expressed in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), are:

- the right to life and development
- the right to be heard
- the right to non-discrimination
- the right for the best interests of the child to be upheld.

The educators and committee of management of

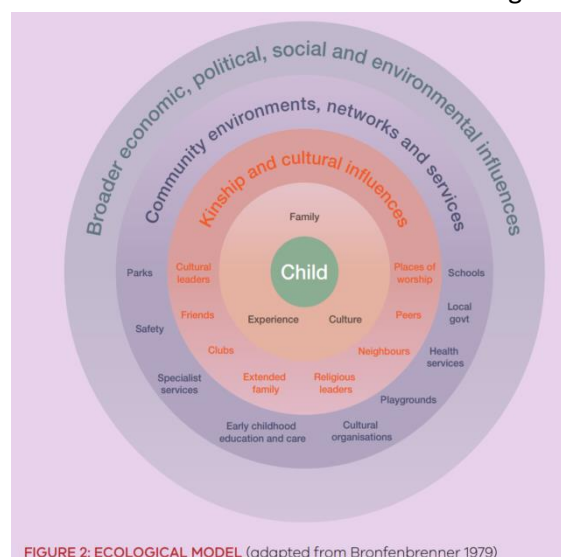


FIGURE 2: ECOLOGICAL MODEL (adapted from Bronfenbrenner 1979)

Yongala Preschool adhere by the above-said rights, and as such, hold the belief that all children are competent

and capable learners of all abilities. Educators value the importance of experiential learning and provide opportunities for children to construct their own understandings, contribute to the learning of others, and participate in decisions that affect them. Play-based experiences based on children's interests encourage and foster a natural sense of curiosity, exploration and investigation while developing a lifelong love of learning. We believe that play is a vital for children's learning and their physical, social and emotional development.

Children's individual learning needs and development outcomes are discussed and communicated between team members and care-givers in order to achieve equity, inclusion, immediate and future learning outcomes.

Our communication with children is based upon mutual respect, the foundations of which build on each child's emerging sense of identity, wellbeing including their voice.

We believe that it is important to create a space where each child feels valued and secure, a place where his or her family's cultures and values are respected, honoured and considered as a source of richness for all the learning community.

FAMILIES

We acknowledge that children first learn within the context of their family culture. We understand that learning is enhanced when educators and families form strong collaborative partnerships. We are committed to building strong relationships with each family in order to achieve the best possible outcome for each child. We believe that an effective collaboration will support not only children's learning but will help children in building a strong sense of belonging, identity, and well-being. We think that families should participate in the learning experiences of their children at preschool and should take an active role in developing the program bringing to the pre-school their ideas and areas of expertise and sharing them with our learning community. We encourage families to do stay and play so they can be a part of the program and support the teachers in running a rich program for the children. Group time including meal and mat time is considered very important by families in our centre

who see it important that all children come together as a family and learn as a group. For many families, preschool is viewed as their extended family due to the isolation from their relatives.

MANAGEMENT, TEAM MEMBERS AND EDUCATORS

The team are dedicated to quality outcomes for children. They are professional, committed to lifelong learning, skilled, knowledgeable, reflective and collaborative. Continuous improvement, best practice and quality outcomes underpin practice. Current research, theories and understandings are considered and applied in the context of the uniqueness of Yongala, through a process of ongoing critical reflection.

Our teachers have an advanced understanding of the pre-reading, pre-writing and pre-mathematics skills that children are required to learn in early childhood in order to create better outcomes when they reach school and engage in formal learning experiences. Each of the play-based experiences on offer in the children's learning environment support a range of skills and development. All educators take observations of the children and assess their development from a positive perspective, focusing on what they can do, rather than focusing on their deficits.

ENVIRONMENT

The environment is set up in a way that provides continuity and predictability for children. A wide variety of experiences are available to children, some encouraging large and small group learning and others allowing for individual learning opportunities. Educators recognise the benefits of open-ended play and the use of natural products in their universal ability to support each child's development. We embrace, love and respect our natural surroundings and we aim to make sustainability part of our daily practice and educational programs.

COMMUNITY

We are committed to ensuring we offer extensive learning opportunities by incorporating the wider community in the experiences we offer the children. We also use the knowledge and expertise of

external agencies in supporting and extending children of various backgrounds and abilities. Collaborative partnerships with local schools, library and aged care facility are living and are constantly evolving. The acknowledgement, respect and value of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures are evolving in our centre constantly. Educators are culturally competent and respect multiple cultural ways of knowing, seeing and living. It is within our setting that we celebrate diversity and can understand and honour differences.

PROGRAM

Our program emerges from the interests of the children through group discussion and parent contribution by sharing information about their child's interests. Educators incorporate this when developing both individual and group plans including intentional teaching moments for learning and play. We balance intentional teaching with child directed learning opportunities whilst we encourage children to seek new challenges and, in a play, based learning environment.



FIGURE 4: INTEGRATED TEACHING AND LEARNING APPROACHES

2.2 Theoretical supports

Our practice supports elements of the following theories:

HOWARD GARDNER'S MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES THEORY

Appreciates children have strengths in different areas and that recognising these intelligences helps children experience success and feel valued. In noting the different ways or 'intelligences' that influence the way we can learn we can make the learning more visible in learning stories and plan accordingly for the future.

REGGIO EMILIA

The practice of Reggio Emilia in relation to the importance of the children's voice means that our program is designed to foster every opportunity to create learning based on each child's interests. Children must have some control over the direction of their learning as well as having endless ways and opportunities to express themselves in order to develop to their highest potential.

Image of the Child - We see the child as strong, competent, curious, resourceful; that each child has enormous potential. The child in my view is a constructor of knowledge, actively seeking to make meaning of their world.

- Listening - "Why do we forget so easily that in order to talk, we first had to listen?" (Eulalia Bosch) We listen to each child, observe them closely, ask open ended questions and explore their ideas. This also encourages receptive and expressive language skills in the child.
- The Hundred Languages – All children make discoveries and learn in many different ways. We refer to these as the hundred languages – e.g. drawing, painting, sculpting, creating collages, acting, dancing, moving, singing and creating music ...and there are a hundred, hundred more.
- Projects - teachers provide experiences that provoke each child's learning. The child is seen as a protagonist; an active constructor of his/her own knowledge. Children are capable of long term sustained learning when the topic is of interest to them.

VYGOTSKY'S SOCIO-CONSTRUCTIVIST THEORY

whereby children learn from more knowledgeable others is demonstrated throughout our program and in our interactions with children. We see children as competent and capable and prefer to pose questions designed to encourage children to think, inquire and discover possible theories. Therefore the child is able to learn skills, or aspects of a skill that go beyond the child's actual developmental or maturity level through these interactions with others.

BRONFENBRENNER'S ECOLOGICAL THEORY

sees children's relationships with family and community as influencing their development. We believe that our child-centred approach to teaching (combined with the development of social relationships and strong family involvement), supports children's learning and development.

ERIKSON'S PSYCHO-DYNAMIC THEORY

emphasises each child's unique history, skills and style of learning, and the importance of assisting children in developing their individual identity and self-esteem. We draw out each child's strengths, interests and abilities, and place these centrally in curriculum negotiations.

- Promote cultural awareness in all children, including greater understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of knowing and being
- Support children to develop a sense of place, identity and a connection to the land
- Encourage children as active participants for sustainability,
- Influence the quality of life now, and for future generations.

2.3 Framework

So how are the principles and learning frameworks used?

At Yongala we use two frameworks as the basis of our program, the Victorian Early Years Learning and development framework (VEYLDF), from which the principles are taken, and the National Early Years Learning Framework for Australia: Belonging, Being and Becoming. As well as providing the basis for planning, promoting and assessing learning, they allow all educators across Australia to focus on the same learning and wellbeing outcomes for the children in their care. They also allow us a shared language and encourage us to involve families and a community in children's learning. Individual learning stories, individual objectives, group program plans and

reflections will all use these frameworks to describe how your child's developmental outcomes are being planned for and achieved. Therefore it is important all families are familiar with these documents.

If you would like any more information, hard copies of the frameworks are available for families to borrow from the office or you can download your own copy of the frameworks from <http://www.cccvic.org.au/content.cfm?content=105>

3. When to start & important dates

3.1 Orientation process for 3/4 group

EDUCATOR: Becky Su

CO-EDUCATOR: to be announced

Shortened sessions: please carefully note the time of attendance of your child

Date	Orientation Time	What to Bring
WEEK 1	Mon 30 Jan Preparation Day setting up kinder room <u>NO CHILDREN</u>	
	Wed 1 Feb Group interviews	
	Medical management	
WEEK 2	Mon 6 Feb <u>All Children</u> 9am -2pm	Lunch Fruit box
	Wed 8 Feb <u>All Children</u> 9am – 2pm	Drink Bottle
WEEK 3	Mon 13 Feb <u>All Children</u> 8:30 – 3 pm	
	Wed 15 Feb <u>All Children</u> 8:30 – 3 pm	
WEEK 4	Mon 20 Feb <u>All Children</u> 8:30 – 4 pm	Lunch Fruit box
	Wed 22 Feb <u>All Children</u> 8:30 – 4 pm	Drink Bottle

Commencing Week 4, normal session times apply

MONDAYS 8.30 am -4 pm

WEDNESDAYS 8.30 am -4 pm

The ¾ group has a soft entry and exit times

Morning 8:30 – 9.15 am

Afternoon 3– 4 pm

Please work with your teacher if your child is not coping with the longer sessions.

3.2 Orientation process for 4/5 group

EDUCATOR: Pauline Daly & Georgia Mazis

CO-EDUCATORS: Christina Yoo

Trusy Kent (Lunch reliever)

Date	Orientation Time	What to Bring
WEEK 1	27 Jan Preparation Day setting up kinder room <u>NO CHILDREN</u>	
	Tue 31 Jan Group interviews	N/A
	Thu 2 Feb <u>All Children</u> 9am -1 pm	Lunch Drink Bottle
	Fri 3 Feb <u>All Children</u> 9am -1 pm	
WEEK 2	Tue 7 Feb <u>All Children</u> 9am – 2 pm	
	Thu 9 Feb <u>All Children</u> 9am – 2 pm	Lunch Fruit box Drink Bottle
	Fri 10 Feb <u>All Children</u> 9am -2pm	
WEEK 3	Tue 14 Feb <u>All Children</u> 9am -3 pm	
	Thu 16 Feb <u>All Children</u> 9am -3 pm	Lunch Fruit box Drink Bottle
	Fri 17 Feb <u>All Children</u> 9am -3 pm	

Commencing Week 3, normal session times apply

Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 9am -3:00 pm

4/5 group do not have soft entry or exit times. We appreciate all children in class by 9:10 am so the morning literacy session can commence. Late arrival break concentration and learning flow of the other children and are unfair to all.

3.3 Group interviews

Group Interviews are held in the first weeks-check dates in your Orientation Information. Over the two weeks following during the shorter orientation sessions, we will be holding personal interviews with each family to understand more about your child. These times will be available for you to select at the start of the year.

3.4 Staff professional development days

It is possible that once or twice a year the Pre-School will be closed to enable its educators to undertake professional development training. These days will be planned at the beginning of each year, and families will be given at least four weeks' notice.

All Educators meet for 1 hour on the first day of each term to plan for and discuss the term ahead. The $\frac{3}{4}$ year old will therefore begin the first day of each term at 9:30 am.

4. How to transit your child for kindergarten?

4.1 What you can do at home

Both the National and Victorian Frameworks have an emphasis on the transitions in a child's life; from home to kindergarten, to school and beyond. It points out that partnerships formed between families and early childhood setting all contribute to ensure a smooth transition for every child. Different environments have their own ways of approaching transitions. If all relevant parties in each area work together, to share knowledge and expectations, then the transition for everyone concerned will be smooth. With smooth transitions, we will ensure secure, confident, supported children ready to build on these experiences to explore and to grow. In order for this partnership with your family and this centre to work most effectively, we would like to give you some practical suggestions to prepare your child for Preschool and to convey to you our expectations.

PREPARATION

Much of the preparation process is actually linked with our expectations. There is an assumption when your child starts kindergarten that they will have a certain amount of life skills, such as toileting as independently as possible, dressing themselves, actually walking into kinder, managing their kinder bag and snack items, helping to put things away, following simple instructions, beginning to express emotions, and actually being left for short periods of time.

You can begin now, by thinking about and implementing strategies to allow you and your child to be 'kinder ready'. These include, having a concrete idea of the centre and staff, leaving your child for short periods and encouraging independence in everyday living skills.

INDEPENDENCE

You can encourage independence in dressing at home now, especially managing a jumper or jacket, and before and after toileting. Also allow your child to have their healthy snacks from the container they will bring to kinder. Practise putting snack items, jumpers etc. in and out of their kinder bag. Many parents do these simple tasks for their child, thinking they are not ready, or that it will be done more efficiently by an adult. Encouraging young children in toileting independently, helping to pack up their toys, and ensuring they can follow through on simple instructions makes for a smoother transition to the 'big world' of kinder.

TOILETING

Toileting is always a common area of concern with parents of young children entering kinder for the first time. Other than occasional accidents, we would like your child to be as independent as they are able unless there is a developmental reason why your child is not toilet trained. When we have a group of 22 children, it becomes very difficult to have one of our staff in the bathroom, leaving only one to supervise the rest of the group.

MODELING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

A huge part of preparing for and coping with the beginning of Preschool is anxiety, in the child and also in a parent. We would encourage you to think about this now, and implement the following strategies to help you both deal with anxiety.

Modelling positive behaviour, prior to and during the kinder year, enables your child to understand that you have confidence in us. We know this may be difficult, but never allow your child to see your anxiety. When you enter the kinder in the first weeks, it's a good idea to settle your child at an activity, then say goodbye, and go! Never hesitate once you say goodbye, and always tell your child you are leaving. Most children settle soon after a parent has left. Please be assured, if your child does not settle, we will ring you.

Please understand that we have been in the profession for many years and have dealt with numerous anxious children and parents. Please trust us to help you and your child have the most positive and happy experience at kinder. Sometimes it can take a long time for a child to settle, so please follow our lead. We will offer strategies to help you overcome your child's fear, and if we work confidently together, we will see the anxiety through.

Even when you implement the above strategies, separation anxiety can be one of the most concerning problems, both for the child and parent when you first step out beyond the comfort of home. You may think you have passed the critical first encounters with separation anxiety when your child finally allows you to leave. Unfortunately, anxiety can occur at any time, and can be caused by a number of issues, including a change in family circumstances, overtiredness, a new house, a new baby or a prolonged period of absence due to illness or a holiday. Keeping us informed of any changes throughout the year is important as we plan for effective participation in the program. A constant flow of information between home and kinder establishes an important bond, enabling us to work together to support your child's sense of belonging and wellbeing.

So, as you prepare to embark on perhaps a new journey for you and your child, remember that smooth transitions, preparation and the development of relationships between all significant participants in the entire process can ensure a positive outcome for us all. So, take a deep breath, look at that young child of yours and then do the same this time next year. You will see a huge difference. We look forward to getting to know you and your child, and anticipate a year filled with joy, laughter and learning.

COMMUNICATION

Communication is fundamental in ensuring that the optimum environment and learning experiences are provided for the children and collaborative partnership takes place with families. Please see "how do we communicate with families" Chapter.

4.2 On the very first day

It is most important that your child has a happy and relaxed start to the Pre-School year. The orientation process will help to ensure this, as the children are able to become familiar with the new educators and children in the kinder as well as new routines in a small group setting. It gives us the opportunity to observe your children carefully and establish a happy rapport as we get to know each other. The children need to feel safe and secure, and learn to trust us to care for them, and your co-operation with the shortened hours and smaller groups will assist us to achieve this end. We will ease into our full time hours when we feel that all the children have settled comfortably. At the start of the year there are many factors to consider with this timing, such as weather, and how the children are settling into their new environment. Please be patient for your child's sake.

On the first day of kinder allow plenty of time to get ready. Try not to rush or skip any part of your child's normal routine. All children react differently to a new experience. Some may have trouble accepting their new environment and educators at first, others may be a little uneasy and apprehensive, and many will settle quite easily. Whatever your child's reaction, let them know you understand their feelings, as will we, and continue to offer your support and encouragement. It is vital that you pick your child up on time so they do not feel forgotten, especially at this early stage of the year.

5. What to bring & what not to bring?

Children are required to bring a kinder bag to kinder each session- your choice (**no wheels**) but select a bag that is easily managed by your child, and can be easily accessed by them and educators. It must also be able to fit into their outside locker, so be sure it is not too tight a fit, so that access becomes difficult.



5.1 What to put in your child's kinder bag?

In your child's kinder bag, it must include a water bottle, a separate lunch box and a fruit box (for healthy snack), a set of spare clothes, and according to our sunsmart policy and weather, you may need to include a raincoat and a hat for sun protection.

It is important to note that all your child's belongings should be clearly labelled.

RAINCOATS & SPARE CLOTHES

A small bag of change of clothes to remain in your child's bag. In the event of an 'accident' or just a messy play experience, children prefer their own clothing, although we do have spare clothing.



Raincoats/waterproof jackets are required all year round as we go out every day.

LUNCHES, SNACKS & WATER BOTTLES

We are trying to achieve a wrapper free community so please send nude boxes and reusable wrappings.

Foods eaten by children at early childhood services contribute significantly to their daily nutrient intake and also influence the development of their lifelong eating habits, growth patterns and energy levels.

When children eat well, they learn better, are more alert and are more likely to grow and develop to their full potential. Thank you for not sending "discretionary food"



such as lollies, sweet biscuits, cakes, chips, chocolate etc – we encourage and promote healthy eating. 'Discretionary' foods and drinks are items that are high in fat, sugar and salt, and that contain minimal vitamins, minerals or fibre. These can also be referred to as 'sometimes' foods and drinks. Examples of discretionary food and drinks include: chocolate, confectionery, jelly, sweet biscuits, cakes and slices, fruit juice and fruit drinks, cordial, sports drinks, energy drinks, flavoured milk and flavoured mineral water

Snacks and lunches should be sent in two container, clearly marked with your child's name. Water bottles must also be clearly named. Some children are able to recognise their own name very early in the year, so this reinforces this for them, and also makes it easier for staff to assist children in finding their fruit container. Please make sure their name is clearly visible.

Last snack must consist of fresh fruit or vegetables only.

The Department of Education and Training (DET) advise that fresh fruit is preferable for snacks due to its health benefits. The fresh fruit should be left in a "whole" state if possible to encourage the child's independence in eating fresh fruit. As a suggestion, oranges and watermelon can be sliced, but apple and banana may be cut in half.

Lunches must also be made with healthy choices in mind at all times- ie. a sandwich, noodles, fruit, yoghurt.

Cheese or dried fruit can be included in the snack/lunch box if your child desires. When selecting a snack/lunch box and water bottle, consider how difficult it will be for your child to open. In hot weather try freezing the drink. We also have a program where we encourage the children to reduce, reuse, and recycle, to eliminate waste, and to protect our environment.

SUN PROTECTION POLICY AND HATS

Australia has the highest incidence of skin cancer in the world. Skin damage, including skin cancer, is the result of cumulative exposure to the sun. Most of the damage occurs during childhood and adolescence. We encourage all members of the Yongala community to wear protective clothing, to use SPF 30+ and broad spectrum sun cream and to seek shade if possible. Hats are worn between September and end of April. Every child should have their own hat, clearly marked with their name, which is to be worn at all times during outside play. Although we have sunscreen available at Yongala, it is the responsibility of the parents to make sure their child has sunscreen applied before coming to Preschool each day. Please try to get into this habit, as sunburn can occur even on cloudy days. Please send a named roll on in your child's bag so they can re-apply sunscreen at lunchtime during warm weather

SunSmart Policy summary

- Each child and staff member will be required to have an appropriately named head covering at pre-school during their attendance. This is to be worn on days of risk to ultraviolet exposure (ie during 1st and 4th terms)
- By wearing hats the staff will provide a role model for the children and they will encourage parents and others to also provide appropriate role models
- The parent will be required to administer sunscreen to their child as appropriate
- Children are required to arrive at the pre-school wearing appropriate hats on days of risk to ultraviolet exposure
- The pre-school will ensure a supply of SFP30+ broad spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen for use by parents
- If any child has a particular sensitivity to the sunscreen provided by the pre-school, the parent must provide an alternative, labeled and at their own cost, to be left at the pre-school and used by parents on their child.
- The Pre-School program will reflect the SunSmart policy and outdoor activities will, where possible, be planned to take place before 10am or after 2pm Eastern Standard Time or before 11am and after 3pm during daylight savings time.

5.2 How to dress your child for kinder

Please dress your child in easily laundered clothing because, despite all care, children manage to get dirty. Physical activity is vital to the health of all children and is encouraged as much as possible at pre-school. Thus it is really important that they be dressed in clothes that allow them to climb and crawl without danger of becoming entangled, as can occur with dresses. Footwear must be easy to take on and off and suitable for children participating in running and climbing activities. Thongs and crocs are not safe footwear.

5.3 Rest time

Rest time lasts for approximately forty-five minutes and is regarded as a quiet time when children can take 'time out' and to be on their own, as well as develop an understanding and ability to self-regulate. Children sometimes read books, listen to tapes/CD of music, stories or fall asleep. Sleeping is not compulsory.

SLEEPING

Each child will require something to put down on the floor during our resting period. Ideas



- Cot set, flannelette blanket and pillow
- Small sleeping bag or
- Single bed sheet cut in half with small blanket

5.4 Excursion package

From our centre philosophy you can see we are committed to ensuring we offer extensive learning opportunities by incorporating the wider community in the experiences we offer the children. Excursions are not included in the fees and as they and incursions are a regular addition to the program. To keep excursion costs and administration costs to a minimum for all

families, parents will be given the option to purchase an excursion package at the beginning of the year or pay for each excursion and administration at the time of the excursion.

5.5 Lost property

Every endeavour is made to return items of lost property. **Please clearly label all clothing, particularly shoes.** Any lost items are placed in the lost property basket, located in the children's bathroom.

5.6 Craft materials from your home

We thank our families and appreciate the contributions that are brought from home for the children to use in the program. This may range from containers, boxes, baskets, paper, ribbon, fabric etc. Please put the items in the coloured bins just outside the door. Sorting will be done according to known allergies and allergens (eg. in relation to our nut-aware procedures), inappropriate graphics and inappropriate labels. Please do not send in any medication boxes.

5.7 Birthday parties

Birthdays are an exciting time at Pre-school. Families are most welcome to celebrate their child's birthday at preschool. Whilst some discretionary choices may be provided for special birthday celebrations, the following items should never be provided:

- sugary drinks (e.g. cordial, soft drinks, fruit juice drinks, energy drinks, sport drinks)
- confectionery (e.g. lollies, candy, sweets, chocolate, jelly)
- deep fried foods (e.g. deep fried potato products, chicken nuggets, fish fingers).

In line with our healthy eating policy families may consider sharing other treats for birthdays such a new book for the preschool library, seedlings, small toys balloons, pencils..... You may like to put your name down on the Pre-School duty roster for that day and bring your camera. If having a party outside of preschool, we suggest you use email from the friendship list unless the whole class is invited and no one will be left out.

5.8 What NOT to bring

NUT FREE ZONE

In the interests of child safety this Pre-School is allergy friendly. Please see a summary of our Anaphylaxis Policy in this booklet for more information. We also ask that you refrain from sending any foods containing nuts, including peanut butter, Nutella and some muesli bars (please be vigilant with the ingredients in muesli bars)



TREAT FOOD

Thank you for not sending "treat food" such as lollies, sweet biscuits, cakes, chips, chocolate etc – we encourage and promote healthy eating.

WRAPPERS

We thank you for supporting the education of our children on environmental awareness issues such as reuse, recycle, replenish. Please assist by eliminating or limiting packet food and wrappings. The children place most fruit scraps in their class compost bin, which in turn is put on in the outdoor compost bin or worm farm to then be used on the vegetable garden at a later date. We believe that in order to be sustainable in the future we must encourage our children to have positive environmental habits.

TOYS FROM HOME

Children love to share the thrill of their toys with their friends. However, this can often turn into a negative experience when toys are lost or broken. It can also lead to competition amongst children in having to have the same toy as someone else. We would like to avoid this and ask that toys and special jewellery remain at home. There may be times when children are invited to bring special things to the preschool and this will serve as an appropriate time for sharing.

6. Attendance

6.1 Getting to the kinder

Please observe the “No Parking” signs at the front of the pre-school. They are there for the children’s safety and motorist’s visibility. Take care to keep the driveways and nature strips of the houses nearby clear. Please ensure that **the gate is closed securely behind you at ALL times.**

6.2 Attendance routine (Sign-in/ Sign-out)

If someone other than yourself will be collecting your child, please mention this to the staff so they can write this in the attendance book. It is a requirement that notification is needed if someone other than the legal guardians of a child drops them off or collects them. This involves ensuring that information on people authorised to pick up your child from the pre-school is up to date on your enrolment form. A sample signature of people authorised to collect your child will be required to be on file for the sake of comparison.

The gate will be locked until the official start times to allow staff their maximum preparation time. Please do not allow your child to ring the bell.

It is equally important that parents collect their children on time. Staff are allocated a specific amount of time to pack up after sessions and it is unfair to them when parents arrive late. If for some reason you are going to be late, please phone the Pre-School to advise the staff so they know of your circumstances and can make appropriate arrangements for your child. This also reduces stress on your child, as they will understand that there is a reason you have not arrived at the end of the session.

The Pre-School grounds closed before and after session. Thank you for your co-operation to see children including siblings are not playing on equipment when arriving and exiting. The park over the road is an ideal place to continue to socialise with classmates if you so desire.

6.3 Late pick-up

A late collection fee will be applied when the parent/guardian is late in collecting their child. The fee will be based on \$50 per 10 minutes or part thereof, from the conclusion of the session. If the child is left for over 30 minutes DET will be contacted and the parent/guardian will continue to accrue a fee of \$50

per 10 minutes, or part thereof, until such time as the child has been collected.

In the situation where the parents/guardians or authorised person is **10 minutes late** in collecting their child and has not notified the centre that they will be late, **the qualified staff members are responsible for:**

- Contacting the parents/guardians and, if they are not available contacting the other persons authorised to collect the child/ren on the child/ren’s enrolment form and requesting that they collect the child/ren
- Contacting the nominated licensee representative to inform them of the situation
- Contacting another staff member if a staff member needs to leave so that they can relieve them. Centres need to ensure that two staff members (one of whom must be qualified) remain in attendance as per the requirement.
- Continuing to attempt to contact the parents/guardians or authorised persons
- Notifying the regional DET office of the current situation and informing them of the procedures being undertaken.
- Contacting the local police if the parents/guardians or authorised persons are still not contactable after 30mins.

6.4 Student absence procedures

Sick children are to be kept at home to stop the spread of infection. We will be enforcing exclusion periods to protect everyone and the risk of having to close the Centre because of the likes of a gastroenteritis outbreak. Children find it very difficult to cope with the demanding pre-school session and can readily infect others. Keep your child at home if they are infectious or miserable - even if it is just a cold. As a courtesy, please phone the kinder to advise of your child’s absence.

If your child is absent from preschool, please contact us on the morning of their absence by 9 am using one of the following options:

Email: Pauline Daly- 4/5 Group

pauline.yongala.kin@kindergarten.vic.gov.au

Becky Su – 3/4 Group

Becky.yongala@kindergarten.vic.gov.au

Or Phone: 9817 4939

7. Dealing with medical condition

7.1 Hygiene policy

Yongala has a hygiene policy, which can be found in the policy folder on the shelf in the locker room. All parents are encouraged to read the full policy. Parents participating in the duty roster are asked to comply with the hygiene practices when attending the Centre or assisting with a Centre activity and encourage their child/ren to develop and follow effective hygiene practices at all times. While on duty, parents should encourage children in good personal hygiene practices, such as washing their hands after blowing their nose, touching only the food they are going to eat and using their own drink bottles or cups.

7.2 Anaphylaxis & how we handle it

Our pre-school has adopted a Dealing with Medical Conditions Policy and an Anaphylaxis Policy. It is important that you as a member of our Pre-School community are aware of their contents and understand their implications.

Below is a short summary of the policies, highlighting important points. It is your responsibility to refer to the Yongala Policy folder to view the full policies. It is located on the bookshelf in the locker room.

What is Anaphylaxis?

Anaphylaxis is a severe, life-threatening allergic reaction. Up to two per cent of the general population and up to five per cent of children are at risk. The most common causes in young children are eggs, peanuts, tree nuts, cow's milk, bee or other insect stings, and some medications. A reaction can develop within minutes of exposure to the allergen, but with planning and training, can be treated effectively by using an adrenaline auto-injector called an EpiPen®.

What does this mean for Yongala?

We should all be aware that it is not possible to achieve a completely **allergen-free environment** in an area that

is open to the general community. However, the kindergarten has adopted a range of procedures to reduce the risk of a child having an anaphylactic reaction. These include strategies to minimise the presence of the allergen in our pre-school.

These strategies include (see Dealing with Medical Conditions Policy and the Anaphylaxis Policy for the full range of procedures):

- Making all parents aware when there is a child attending the Pre-School with a specific allergy
- Requesting certain foods not to be brought into the Pre-School should a child attending the Pre-School have a specific allergy to it/them.
- Enforcing no food sharing - children will only eat food prepared for him/her
- Ensuring tables and bench tops are washed down after eating
- Prohibiting all nuts, including peanut butter and Nutella, as a general precaution
- Ensuring our staff are properly trained to deal with an anaphylaxis reaction
- Ensuring the use of non-food rewards for all children
- Ensuring children are contained to one area during snack/meal times
- Implementing a 'risk minimisation' plan (see the policy folder for the Yongala risk minimisation plan)

7.3 Your responsibilities

What are your responsibilities as a member of the Yongala Pre-school community?

Should a child in a specific group be allergic to a substance known to cause anaphylaxis, you, as a parent of a child attending that group will be informed. We ask people not to bring food into the Pre-School which educators have informed you will endanger a child's life or risk an anaphylactic reaction. Your support as a parent is, of course, vital. Yongala is a designated 'Nut Intolerant Zone'. This means that nothing can be brought into the Pre-School containing nuts regardless of whether there are any children allergic to nuts within the kindergarten or not. This includes **PEANUT BUTTER AND NUTELLA**.

What are your responsibilities as a parent of a child with an allergy or medical condition that requires a Medical Management Plan?

Importantly, you should read the entire Anaphylaxis Policy of Yongala Pre-School which is located on the bookshelf in the locker room. In line with the Education and Services National Law, the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 and the Yongala Pre-School Dealing with Medical Conditions Policy, a child cannot be enrolled until the following procedures have been undertaken for all children with **allergies, anaphylaxis or other medical management plans including asthma**:

- Notify the service that your child has an allergy or a medical management plan.
- Make an appointment for a planning meeting prior to the child being enrolled.
- Provide a completed Medical Management Plan and medication at this meeting to ensure all requirements have been met. A risk minimization plan will be completed and your child can then be enrolled.

Medical Management Plans need to be on the correct colour poster, to display a current photo, to have a doctor's signature and to be very clear in direction (no alterations and hand written corrections).

- Supply all necessary medications in line with their Medical Management Plan and these medications must remain at the centre, except in the case of school holidays or extended leave where they may be signed back to the parents at the request of the parent/Management.
- Replace medication when it is close to its use by date.

7.4 Updating immunisation status

As of the 1st November 2018 all parents must provide an updated immunization History statement every 6 months. One is provided before an offer is made and the other is provided six months later around May.

7.5 When a child becomes ill

Should your child become ill during session times, you will be contacted immediately. If you are unable to be contacted, procedures in line with the Enrolment Form signed by parents at the start of the year will be followed.

Health Regulations state children must stay away from pre-school for the following illnesses:

Head lice	Until after full treatment
Gastroenteritis	Until 48 hours after symptoms have ceased
Diarrhea	Until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 24 hours
Chicken Pox	Until fully recovered, or at least one week after eruptions appear
Measles	Until at least five days from appearance of rash or until receipt of certificate of recovery from infection
Rubella	Until fully recovered, or at least five days from onset or rash
Mumps	Until fully recovered

A more extensive list is displayed on a Health Department poster at the kinder. If you have any concerns about illnesses, please talk to your child's educator.

7.6 Medication

If your child requires medication, all details must be completed in the medication book. You should hand the medication in the original container to the educator or assistant.

You must also sign the confirmation section, at the end of the kinder session, to acknowledge the medication was given.

You must notify the Centre if your child has an infectious disease, so other parents can be notified. Sick children **must not be sent** to Pre-School.

8. Communicating with families

Yongala Preschool uses a range of ways to inform the parents about their children learning. If you have any concerns regarding your child's progress, please feel free to discuss them with his/her educator. Although it is often tempting to discuss problems with other parents, it is important that the educator is aware of your concerns to enable solutions to be found. If for some reason you are unable to resolve your concerns after speaking to the educator we ask that you direct your concerns to a Committee member such as the president, vice-president or group representative.

8.1 Regular emails & newsletters

Email is a great way for the Staff and Committee of Management to communicate with you. It is therefore important that you are able to access the email address provided in your contact information at least once a week. Please advise us of any email address changes.

Should you wish to contact the kinder please note there are two email addresses:

Pre-School Committee (Enrolment Officer):
yongalaenrolments@outlook.com

Pre-School Director:
pauline.yongala.kin@kindergarten.vic.gov.au

Newsletters are distributed to all parents via email. It is a great way to keep informed of the day-to-day activities of the Pre-School and includes reports from the teaching staff and Committee members.

On our website, a variety of information such as forthcoming events and newsletters are available on the [website](http://www.yongala.kindergarten.vic.gov.au).
<http://www.yongala.kindergarten.vic.gov.au>

8.2 Parent-educator interviews

It will be offered to families at the mid year point and will entail 10 minute discussion, where once again, we can share information about your child's progress in relation to the VEYLF and NEYLF outcomes, and any other relevant information that needs to be shared.

8.3 The program book

Our Program Planning plans will be located on the notice board near the office. The reflection books are near the sign-in book for your perusal every session. This allows us to share our ideas and thoughts with you. A reflection and next week's reminders will be emailed weekly. Your comments, feedback, and input are always welcome valued and acted upon.

8.4 notice board

There are notice boards located outside in the locker room. These are for information from the teaching staff, Committee of Management, Department of Education and the others community information and parenting information.

8.5 Children's individual learning folders

The Children's folders are available to take home and share with the family by arrangement and end of term and, finally, you get to keep it at the end of their 2 year learning journey. Throughout each term information will be added: samples of your child's work, photographs, group learning stories, conversations and observations we have made relating to your child. You are also invited to add your own pages to the links book throughout the year, and make comment in the parent response area. All the children's links books will be stored in the room to encourage each child and family to access at their convenience. Please note and respect individual privacy – Links books are only to be accessed by own family members, unless otherwise invited by the child or parents of that portfolio. We will use this document as a formal and informal means to share your child's progress and development throughout the year.

8.6 Your class representative

Each parent with a child attending Yongala will have a Class/Group Representative. This person is a direct link between you and the Committee and staff and can pass on valuable information. Their main role is to encourage social interaction amongst parents, which has proven to be a valuable network, particularly if parents are new to the area. We encourage your participation in any events or social activities and can confidently predict it's a great way to make new friends. Please make yourself known to this person.

8.7 Preschool field officer (PSFO)

The Preschool field office service is a free service to families and educators of children attending funded 4 year old kinder. Staff and families of children in 3 year old kindergarten (or equivalent in a childcare centre) may access the service in Term 4 in planning transition to the funded kindergarten year.

The role is funded by Department of Education & Training and the City of Boroondara.

Some of the reasons your child could present with an additional need at kindergarten:

- A concern about your child's participation in the program?
Difficulty with separation; adjusting to a new language or culture; joining in large groups; confidence in less familiar settings, physical access issues etc
- A concern about your child's development?
Physical co-ordination; behaviour; toileting/dressing/eating/sleeping; concentration for learning; difficulty with talking, listening or following directions; play & social skills; readiness for the transition to school

WHAT IS PRESCHOOL FIELD OFFICER? WHAT DO THEY DO?

- A Preschool Field Officer (PSFO) is an experienced early childhood educator with

time to observe your child's interests, interactions & skills in the kindergarten setting, without your child or others aware they are being assisted in this way.

- Strategies can then be shared with the staff and with you to assist your child's participation in the kinder group and support the child's skill development.
- Information about relevant local useful services can also be provided.
- A written report of the visit is provided to the parent(s) and educators.

HOW DO I ACCESS THIS SERVICE?

- By giving permission for the teacher to contact us and then providing written permission for the visit on the PSFO referral form.
- Or by phoning one of the PSFOs at Council (see below) and completing the referral/permission form.
- Sometimes an educator may suggest a referral to the PSFO to assist the staff in meeting your child's needs. We can share resources and recommend relevant professional learning opportunities.
- Where a parent chooses not to give permission for individual observation, the staff may request a group observation to provide additional strategies for managing the needs of the group.

If you have any questions please contact us at Council in Children & Family Services (part of the Family Youth & Recreation Department) on 9278 4642 or 9278 4370.

9. Fees & how we spend it

9.1 2023 fee policy

Fee notices will be issued in advance and payable prior to the conclusion of the preceding term and are to be paid by the date specified on them. For security reasons, payment should be by direct deposit or Internet transfer. Cash will not be accepted.

A reminder notice will be issued if the fees are not paid by the due date, giving a further deadline for payment and a late fee charge will apply. If fees are still not paid, then the child involved may need to be excluded from the Centre until the fees are paid.

If parents are unable to pay fees, they should approach a member of the teaching staff as soon as possible to arrange an alternative.

Three/Four Year Old Pre-School fees

Hours: 15hours per week - free

Four/Five Year Old Pre-School fees

Hours: 18 hours per week (DET funded 15 hours per week for free)

	Fees for 15 hrs	Extra 3 hrs
Term 1	0	\$300
Term 2	0	\$300
Term 3	0	\$300
Term 4	0	\$300

9.2 Parent participation

Each family is asked to select a way to contribute to our community preschool. The choices are:

1. Active committee member
2. Fundraising team
3. Maintenance team
4. A voluntary donation of \$400 per year.

9.3 Preschool expense

The Pre-School expenses include:

- salaries
- building and grounds maintenance/improvements
- teaching materials and equipment
- rates
- insurance
- gas, electricity and telephone
- photocopying, mail, marketing, and advertising
- cleaning materials and contract cleaning
- consumables
- printing of photos

10. How to get involved?

Parents are a vital resource in the pre-school and your help is always appreciated. Some ways you could help include:

10.1 Family gifts

From time to time, you may be asked to contribute a gold coin donation by your group rep to buy a small gift for families, for example when new babies are born. These are just small ways we can let families know their Yongala kinder community cares. Please contribute when you can.

10.2 Parent duty roster

It's a special time for you and your child when you come along to Pre-School and spend a session helping and showing interest in your child's activities. This activity is not carried out if any risk of covid is present.

10.3 Excursions

You will receive written notification and asked to sign before any excursion. An excursion package is now offered to parents at the beginning of each year to cut

the cost of excursion administration Parental help is needed if you can come, as strict ratios of adults to children are required under the Education and Care Services National Law Act 2011.

10.4 Working bee days for the maintenance group

The Pre-School conducts working bees each year to maintain the Pre-School grounds. Our children deserve a beautiful and environment in which to play. We therefore request families to assist when possible. Tasks typically include weeding, general gardening and pruning, clearing of cobwebs and repairs.

10.5 Fundraising events

The Pre-School relies on fundraising to support equipment purchases that are essential to assist in maintaining the quality of program we are able to offer at Yongala Pre-School. Fundraising is usually kept to two to three activities per year.

The committee will ensure fundraising income is kept separate from the Pre-School's operating budget. Families will be informed about expenditure of fundraising income.

10.6 Contributing your interests and skills

- bring in your skills/talents/hobbies, eg. Playing an instrument, storytelling, cooking, gardening, sewing etc.
- help on excursions.
- provide waste materials for creative activities. These include empty boxes, paper, cardboard, gift wrap, used greeting cards, polystyrene, corks, softwood, wool, materials, cellophane, cotton reels, clean empty milk cartons or anything you think we can use.
- participate in fundraising and social events, and putting your hand up for 'one-off tasks.
- advising staff or Committee if you have special talents (ie plumber, carpenter, handyman) and if you are willing to provide these on occasion to the kinder.
- Donating goods/services for Pre-School events

10.7 Joining Yongala committee

Yongala Pre-School is a not-for-profit Community run Pre-School. The responsibility of running the Pre-School's organisational and administrative functions

lies with the volunteer parent Committee of Management. The role of the Committee of Management includes tasks such as:

- financial management including budgets, bill payment, staff salaries
- ensuring the Pre-School meets all regulatory requirements
- policy setting
- hiring of staff
- maintenance of buildings, grounds and equipment
- organisation of fundraising and social functions
- promotion of the Pre-School
- promotion of social interaction and a sense of community spirit

Interested members are elected onto the Committee at the Annual General Meeting in November each year. No special skills are required - just an interest in the education of your child and a willing attitude. Photos and contact details are in the locker room.

10.8 Need to know more?

We welcome questions from parents and are happy to be of assistance anytime. Please direct your general enquiries to our staff at the Pre-School, or ask to speak with a committee member who can help.

Should you wish to contact the kinder please note the email addresses:

Pre-School Committee (Enrolment Officer):

yongalaenrolments@outlook.com

Pre-School Director:

pauline.yongala.kin@kindergarten.vic.gov.au

Our website at

W:<https://www.yongala.kindergarten.vic.gov.au/>

also has a variety of information on it.

We hope you enjoy this special time with us at Yongala Pre-School.