



FAMILY HANDBOOK

2020

Turner Street Kindergarten

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Moreland Early Years Management Inc.

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Welcome from Moreland Early Years Management

Moreland Early Years Management Incorporated (MEYM) is a not-for-profit Early Years Management company, servicing the Moreland Shire. MEYM operates through a Board of Management, with a General Manager and an MEYM Office responsible for operational management of the six early years services we currently manage.

MEYM was created in response to a desire in the community for a locally based, responsive and collaborative early years manager. Moreland is a diverse and ever-growing community and through our partnerships within the community, MEYM is growing with you and your family. MEYM's values of respect, collaboration, integrity and diversity are reflected in our interactions within the community and shared by our staff.

We also recognise that the early years is a period of rapid growth and development and always seek contemporary and innovative modes of practice and programs with which to engage children and teach.

A new kindergarten year means change and new beginnings, bringing opportunities to both meet and reconnect with others. Change can also mean anxiety for parents and children, especially if this is your child's first time away from family. We are delighted that you have chosen an MEYM service in which to enrol your child!

We hope that through the AGM, information/orientation sessions and the opportunity to talk to teachers, staff and other parents, you will reaffirm your decision to enrol your child with us, and enjoy the welcoming and supportive environment at your chosen kindergarten. Several MEYM Board Members have already seen their children thrive at MEYM services, so we also share your nerves and excitement!

MEYM looks forward to another busy yet rewarding kindergarten year, with the opportunity to build upon our successes and provide real and positive impacts on the running and future of our kindergarten services. If you ever have any questions or suggestions, please email the Board at meym.board@meym.org.au or the MEYM Office at admin@meym.org.au

All the best for a wonderful 2020!

Sheridan Zajacek

Chair of the Board
Board of Management
Moreland Early Years Management Inc.

Dr Karina Davis

(Interim) General Manager
Moreland Early Years Management Inc.

Welcome to Turner Street Kindergarten

We would like to extend a very warm welcome to you and your child and hope that your association with Turner Street Kindergarten and the other families that are part of our kindergarten community will be a happy and enjoyable one.

Our Kindergarten is part of a network of local Children's Services within the City of Moreland and is managed by Moreland Early Years Management (MEYM). There are still lots of opportunities for parents and families to be involved via our Parent Advisory Group, which primarily fundraises for us, through parental assistance during class hours, and as part of a working bee, held at various times throughout the year.

The teaching staff for both the four-year-old and the three-four year-old-groups have tertiary qualifications in teaching, specialising in Early Childhood Education, and their co-educators hold a Diploma or Certificate III in Children's Services. The Victorian Early Years Learning Framework is used as a resource and guideline when planning and reflecting on the kindergarten program. It outlines a clear focus on children's learning and wellbeing, providing a base for planning, promoting and assessing learning.

We hope that your child has a memorable and positive kindergarten experience: exploring, experimenting, learning, building relationships, discovering, imagining, creating, expressing his or her feelings and ideas and becoming a confident, competent individual.

Please take the time to read this handbook, as it will answer many questions that you may have.

Moreland Early Years Management Values

Respect
Collaboration
Integrity
Diversity

Moreland Early Years Management Vision Statement

MEYM is a collaborative and innovative organisation that recognises that the early years is a period of rapid growth and development. We value partnerships with children, families, and our diverse communities in supporting children to reach their full potential.

Moreland Early Years Management Identity

Our logo highlights what is core to Moreland Early Years Management, namely our community (the environment), our partnership (collaboration) and family (our relationships).

We've taken this simplified representation and highlighted it in strong, vibrant colours — an invitation to our audience, the families and broader community of Moreland to feel comfortable and at home.

Turner Street Kindergarten Values

Preparation for life

Learning through play

Positive relationships

Stimulating learning environment

Inclusive practice

Family collaboration

Turner Street Kindergarten Philosophy

As educators at Turner Street Kindergarten, we endeavour to build a foundation for children's learning. We believe early childhood is a critical time in which the experiences children encounter greatly influence their future lives and learning.

Our teaching philosophy is based on the Victorian Early Years Framework and reflects the National Early Years Framework – Belonging, Being, Becoming. Our programs support children to develop skills to:

- have a strong sense of identity
- be connected with, and contribute to their world
- have a strong sense of wellbeing
- be confident and involved learners
- be effective communicators

We provide a positive, safe, stimulating and challenging learning environment where children feel a sense of trust and are happy – a place where children feel a sense of belonging.

We believe children are unique individuals who have differing personalities, temperaments, learning styles and interests, and therefore learn at different rates in different ways and at different times.

We listen to children. This is a place where children's voices are heard and responded to in a positive manner. We value the importance of positive relationships and work to develop respectful, trusting and close relationships with children and families.

We recognise that families are the child's first educators, and children learn best when educators and families work in partnership with each other to support children to reach their full potential.

We strive to provide an environment where children and families from all cultural backgrounds feel welcomed and accepted. We make use of our communities' resources and incorporate the child's community into the program.

We believe children learn best through meaningful play - to be curious, discover, explore, question, experiment, problem solve and imagine. Our play-based, child centred programs are inclusive of all children's capabilities, needs and interests, and reflect the holistic development of each child. We

support children to develop physically, cognitively, socially, emotionally, linguistically, and aesthetically.

We value environmental sustainability and believe it is important to engage children in sustainable practices and a respect for our environment.

We believe as educators we are continually learning alongside families and children, reflecting on our practices and principles to enhance our professional development.

Program Details

Turner Street Kindergarten currently offers both Government-funded 4-year-old programs and (currently unfunded) 3-year-old programs. These are:

Program	Sessions	Hours	Total	Class Size
4-Year-old	3 Sessions	5 Hours	15 Hours per week	Capped at 22
4-Year-old	2 Sessions	7.5 Hours	15 Hours per week	Capped at 28
3-Year-old	2 Sessions	2.5 Hours	5 Hours per week	Capped at 22

Staff

At Turner Street, experienced kindergarten Teachers and Co-educators conduct each group. The teacher to child ratios is stipulated in the National Regulations and the current ratio for children aged 3 to 5 is 1:11.

Children's Service Co-ordinator:

Joan Goldun

Early Childhood Teachers:

Bonnie Thomson – 4-year-old Blue group

Joan Goldun – 4-year-old Green group (Antoinette Altobelli on maternity leave)

Janet Bucknell – 3-year-old Yellow group

Early Childhood Co-educators:

Leisa Whelan – 4-year-old Blue group

Anna Psarras – 4-year-old Blue group

Aradhana Singh – 4-year-old Green group

Pina Bertoncini – 3-year-old Yellow group

Timetable

Day of Week	3-year-old Yellow	4-year-old Blue	4-year-old Green
Monday		8:30am – 4:00pm	
Tuesday	2:00 – 4:30pm		8:30am – 1:30pm
Wednesday		8:30am – 4:00pm	
Thursday			8:30am – 1:30pm
Friday	8:30am – 11:00am		11:30am – 4:30pm

Term dates

Term 1	Tuesday 28th January – Friday 27th March
Term 2	Tuesday 14th April – Friday 26th June
Term 3	Monday 13th July – Friday 18th September
Term 4	Monday 5th October – Friday 18th December

Public holidays

Labour Day:	Monday 9th March
Good Friday:	Friday 10th April
Easter Monday:	Monday 13th April
ANZAC Day:	Saturday 25th April
Queen's Birthday:	Monday 8th June
AFL Grand Final Friday:	TBA (Friday before AFL Grand Final)
Melbourne Cup Day:	Tuesday 3rd November

MEYM Professional Development days

Turner Street Kindergarten will be closed on the following days due to the scheduling of MEYM Professional Development days for all staff:

Term 2:	Tuesday 14 th April
Term 4:	Monday 2 nd November

In 2020, MEYM will have 2 Professional Development days where it brings all MEYM staff together to learn, share and extend their knowledge of children's learning and growth and quality practice and innovation in curriculum and pedagogy. All MEYM services, including Turner Street Kindergarten, will be closed on these days.

Fees

Fees are collected by MEYM and are payable one term in advance. Please pay fees promptly when due. In special cases, parents may pay fees in instalments after consultation and approval with MEYM.

A non-refundable deposit of \$50.00 is required at the time of enrolment to secure a place for both the 3-year-old and 4-year-old programs. This will then be deducted from the Term 4 fees; pending all term fees have been paid. For the 4-year-old enrolments, this deposit is not payable if you are eligible for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy.

4-year-old Kindergarten (Government Funded)

\$430.00 per term (15 hours)

3-year-old Kindergarten (Currently Unfunded)

\$420.00 per term (5 hours)

Fee Subsidy

MEYM kindergartens receive a subsidy from the Department of Education & Training (DET) to provide kindergarten programs for four-year-old children. The subsidy, plus the kindergarten fees families are required to pay, contributes to the cost of delivering the kindergarten service.

This fee subsidy is offered to promote participation in preschool and to make Kindergarten fees affordable for families who hold one of the following: Health Care Card, Pensioner Concession Card, Department of Veterans' Affairs Gold/White Card, Asylum Seeker bridging Visas A-F, Temporary Protection/Humanitarian Visas 447,451,785, or Refugee and Special Humanitarian Entrant Visa Holders 200-217 and Resolution of Status (ROS) Visa, Class CD, Subclass 851. The fee subsidy will enable families who hold one of these concession cards to access preschool at no cost (or minimal cost). If the Health Care Card/Pensioner Concession card expires during 2020 and new card details are not provided when requested, full fees will apply.

Children of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent are eligible for free kindergarten. Families are requested to contact MEYM to discuss fee arrangements, if you have not already done so.

Please note that fundraising is not covered by this fee subsidy.

Non-payment of Fees

A reminder will be sent to families if kindergarten fee payments have not been paid by the due date. A follow up telephone call from MEYM will be made if payment of kindergarten fees still has not been made. Following this, the kindergarten placement maybe cancelled until fees are paid. Kindergarten accounts in arrears will be sent to MEYM's Bad Debt Collection Agency.

Please refer any enquiries regarding fees to Pagona Dury, MEYM Administrative and Finance Officer, p.drury@meym.org.au or (03) 9081 6986.

Kindergarten Program

The current program plan will be on display and available to parents at all times. Parents will have access to information about what their child will be learning and the intentional teaching plan. The program will be evaluated and reflected via Storypark posts from each group's teacher. Teachers will base the educational program on individual observations, interest and abilities of each child. These observations will be recorded and shared with parents via Storypark. Parents are encouraged to comment and play a role in their child's learning and experiences at Turner Street Kindergarten.

Our programs offer children opportunities to learn through hands-on and relevant experiences. In particular, we encourage children to explore their environment, which is rich in learning experiences and fosters creativity, imagination and collaboration. We recognise and value children for who they are now and provide opportunities for children to tell and share stories, reflect through play and express their ideas.

We take a holistic view of children's learning and development and embrace the view of children's lives being characterised by belonging, being and becoming, the three inter-related elements contained in the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF). Our programs draw on the VEYLDF and therefore reflect experiences that support children to work towards the five learning outcomes: Identity, Community, Wellbeing, Learning and Communication. Below we have outlined some of the aspects of each outcome.

Identity - to assist children to develop a strong sense of identity

This is evident when children:

- have a strong sense of belonging
- openly express their feelings and ideas in their interactions with others
- initiate and join in play
- are open to new challenges and make new discoveries
- increasingly cooperate and work collaboratively with others
- celebrate and share their contributions and achievements with others
- show interest in other children and being part of a group
- reflect on their actions and consider consequences for others

Community – to support children with connecting and contributing to their world

This is evident when children:

- understand different ways of contributing through play and projects
- cooperate with others and negotiate roles and relationships in play episodes and group experiences
- listen to others' ideas and respect different ways of being and doing
- begin to think critically about fair and unfair behaviour
- participate with others to solve problems and contribute to group outcomes

Wellbeing – to support children with developing a strong sense of wellbeing

This is evident when children:

- assert their capabilities and independence while demonstrating increasing awareness of the needs and rights of others
- share humour, happiness and satisfaction
- make choices, accept challenges, take considered risks, manage change and cope with frustrations and the unexpected
- combine gross and fine motor movement and balance to achieve increasingly complex patterns of activity including, dance, creative movement and drama
- show increasing independence and competence in personal hygiene, care and safety for themselves and others

Learning – to encourage and assist children with becoming confident and involved learners.

This is evident when children:

- are curious and enthusiastic participants in their learning
- follow and extend their own interests with enthusiasm, energy and concentration
- initiate and contribute to play experiences emerging from their own ideas
- use reflective thinking to consider why things happen and what can be learnt
- try out strategies that were effective to solve problems in one situation in a new context
- transfer knowledge from one setting to another
- experience the benefits and pleasures of shared learning exploration

Communication – to encourage and assist children in becoming effective communicators

This is evident when children:

- respond verbally and non-verbally to what they see, hear, touch, feel and taste
- contribute their ideas and experiences in play, small and large group discussion
- interact with others to explore ideas and concepts, clarify and challenge thinking, negotiate and share new understandings
- sing and chant rhymes, jingles and songs
- share the stories and symbols of their own culture and re-enact well-known stories

Our programs provide opportunities for teachers and educators to celebrate the richness and diversity of cultures and heritages that children and their families bring to our community. This includes making connections between aspects of Indigenous Australian culture and children's personal cultural heritages.

Storypark

As part of our 3-year-old and 4-year-old programs, your child's learning journey will be documented in Storypark. Storypark is an easy-to-use private online service that helps families and educators work together to record, share and extend children's learning. Children's learning skills, development and interests will be documented in your child's individual online Storypark portfolio.

Learning Environment

At Turner Street Kindergarten our children engage in indoor and outdoor play experiences. The indoor area provides a variety of learning areas for the children to work independently or in groups, create and build, investigate, engage in imaginative play, use a range of materials, learn through play and enjoy the wide range of learning opportunities offered. The experiences are intended to develop the children's independence and problem solving skills. The children are at times free to choose where they play, and are encouraged to participate in all activities. At other times they will be asked to work closely with staff in focused small group activities.

Our outdoor area provides an abundance of shade and different play and activity areas, which includes a range of climbing structures, a cubby house, and a sand play area. Each year we develop an edible garden area where the children have opportunities to engage in activities with staff. The children have the opportunity to plant, water, care for and pick plants. They forage for snails and worms and make compost. The produce and herbs from our garden provide lots of impetus for learning, sharing and joyful experiences such as cooking and tasting.

Excursions and Incursions

For the 3-year-old group special activities are planned for and based around kindergarten and family activities, as well as one incursion, usually in Term Four. Each year the incursion is chosen by the 3-year-old educators, giving consideration to the interests of the individual children and group as a whole. In 2019 we had a Bush Babies incursion.

For the 4-year-old group incursions and excursions are planned for on a yearly basis and may change from year to year. They are based around the current children's interests and abilities. The incursions and excursions in 2019 included The Great Recycling Adventure, Coburg Library for Children's Book Week, Butterfly Life Cycle Incursion, Dinosaur Bones from Melbourne Museum, Dental visit, Responsible Pet Ownership, and an incursion from the Police and Fire Brigade. We also had excursions to the Zoo and the Bundoora Farm.

No child can be taken outside of the kindergarten without parental authorisation. Parents are requested to promptly complete a separate authorisation form for each excursion.

3-year-old group

Children must be 3 years old on or before the 30th April to attend our 3-year-old program. If a child is not yet 3 upon commencement of the kindergarten program, but turns 3 within the first term, parents can secure their child's place by payment of full fees for the term. Children can then commence the program within the first term on or after their 3rd birthday, not before. This requirement is reflective of the staff: child ratios as stipulated in the National Regulations. The ratio for children under 3 years of age is 1:4 as compared to the ratio of 1:11 for children aged 3 to 5. Please note that it is not sufficient for a parent to attend with a child until they turn 3, as this does not meet the ratio requirements or satisfy current Departmental or MEYM policy standards.

Unfortunately the 3-year-old program is currently not government subsidised like the 4-year-old program, and so fees are comparatively higher. There are also no discounts for Pensioner or Health Care Card holders.

Children who attend our 3-year-old program and want to enrol in our 4-year-old program the following year are not automatically guaranteed a place. Parents are required to fill out an enrolment form for the 4-year-old program and apply through the Central Enrolment Scheme run by Moreland City Council. Places are determined by meeting relevant criteria; for more information, see <https://www.moreland.vic.gov.au/community-health/children-and-families/kindergartens/four-year-old-kindergarten/>

Additional Needs

All children with additional needs will have access to our service and the program will be designed to accommodate the needs of the child. Specialist services will be accessed to help the child achieve their full potential. Parent participation is encouraged and vital in achieving the specific program objectives developed for the child.

Communication

Open communication with educators is paramount. All staff are happy to discuss your child's progress at any time, although appointments need to be arranged for more detailed discussions. We are also open to any suggestions or comments you may have, as well as the sharing of information to improve and enrich your child's learning environment.

Please feel welcome to share significant events or occasions that are happening in your child's life. It is important for teachers to have an understanding of issues particular to your child or any changes in your child's life (such as moving house, the birth of a new sibling or an illness). This helps us plan an appropriate and supportive program for your child.

Email and Storypark are our main forms of communication. Given the busy lives we live we believe electronic communication allows us to contact all parents easily and frequently. It is also a more environmentally sustainable practice. The kindergarten notice board also provides various information including 'General information', 'What's happening now', and 'Fundraising'.

Concerns/Complaints

Parents are strongly encouraged to discuss any concerns they may have in regards to their child with the child's teacher first. An appropriate time will be arranged to ensure the concerns are addressed immediately.

If your concern has not been addressed to your satisfaction the matter may be directed to Dr Karina Davis, (Interim) General Manager at Moreland Early Years Management, via email k.davis@meym.org.au .

Parent Involvement

We encourage parents and carers to become involved in our Turner Street community. We all have skills and ideas to contribute to the social life of our kindergarten. Participation can be through:

Kinder duty

Parents can assist during their child's session times as volunteer helpers. Spending time at the kindergarten provides a wonderful opportunity for you to engage in your child's learning with other children and educators. Research highlights that there are increased gains for children's learning and outcomes when families are engaged in their child's kindergarten program.

There is a parent helper roster for each group each term. We understand that each family can contribute at their own level depending on other commitments. However, your input, support and involvement can really make a difference.

Parents of the 3-year-old-group are invited to stay and help whenever they are available to assist. A roster is placed beside the sign in book to allow parents or family members to advise us of when they can assist.

Parents of children in the 4-year-old-group are requested to select one or two days per term that suit them to assist at the kindergarten. These times will be selected at your interview day at the beginning of Term 1 and at the end of each term in preparation for the next term. If you cannot attend at the selected time, please arrange to swap with another parent/guardian. You are welcome to take part in the kindergarten program at any time.

Kinder duty involves assisting children and teachers during activities, helping to clean up after activities and snack times. Parents and families are also very welcome to contribute to the program with any particular skills or interest at any time. In the past, parents have helped with cooking, playing instruments, excursions, craft activities, talking to the children about a holiday and even speaking a second language for the children. We ask that parent helpers sign the Visitor's book for the session they attend.

The kindergarten environments are structured to challenge four to five-year-old and three to four-year-old children, therefore families will need to be aware of the supervision issues surrounding the presence of a younger child. Younger children must always be supervised, indoors and out, by the parent/carer responsible for the care of the younger child at kindergarten. The kindergarten educators will be educating and caring for kindergarten children attending the program and are unable to be responsible for other children present at the service.

Laundry Roster

The kindergarten supplies smocks for the children's use. Each family will have at least one turn at laundering smocks and tea towels. In the 4-year old groups we also supply rest towels. We ask families to assist with washing our rest towels at the end of each term. A washing roster will be available at kindergarten at the beginning of Term 1. Please check your name and arrange to swap with another family if it doesn't suit you.

We would like each parent to supply their child with their own individual hand towel for hand drying purposes. The towels must have your child's name clearly labelled on it and an elastic hook sewn onto the corner of the towel. These individual towels must be taken home after each session to be washed and returned to the kindergarten for your child's next session.

Parent Advisory Group (PAG)

Overview

Each Kindergarten has a Parent Advisory Group (PAG), its members being parents/guardians of currently enrolled children or those with a recent association with a Service of MEYM. Nominations and election of members usually occurs each year at the kindergarten's Annual General Meeting. This voluntary group meets monthly and is primarily responsible for organising fundraising opportunities, organising social events for the families of the Services, and can be represented on the MEYM Kindergarten Representative Group (KRG).

Each PAG nominates at least one member to be part of MEYM's KRG, which, together with a member of the MEYM Board of Management, meets every few months. This group provides a conduit between families and the MEYM Board and is an opportunity for you to learn more about the kindergarten educational program and be involved in wider management decisions for your service.

The PAG can also provide assistance in the educational program and actively engage with MEYM to enhance their children's experiences and connections with Moreland community. Being part of the Turner Street' PAG also affords you the chance to be involved in the wider community and to meet new people within your local area.

Incorporated status

Despite being managed by MEYM, Turner Street Kindergarten has maintained its own status as an Incorporated Association. As an Incorporated Association there are a number of responsibilities that will reside with the PAG, as with any Incorporated Association, which include, but are not limited to:

- A minimum of 5 members, electing group members in office bearing roles of President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer, ordinary members
- Managing the fundraising monies of the Service
- Maintaining a bank account with a financial institution (2 members to sign) where all fundraising monies are deposited

- Maintaining financial records that correctly record and explain all fundraising transactions undertaken
- Preparation of the annual financial statements and where required review/audit of the financial statements
- Lodgement of annual financial statements with Victorian Consumer Affairs
- Organisation and holding of Annual General Meetings.

Maintenance

Families can also engage in small maintenance jobs such as working bees, which helps the centre run smoothly and keeps the costs down.

Working Bees may be arranged by the PAG, in consultation with MEYM, to maintain gardens, renew and spread tan bark, repair equipment, etc. The kindergarten staff and MEYM appreciate the assistance and support of families to maintain the environment and instigate new outdoor projects.

First Days of Kindergarten

Starting kindergarten is a big step in a young child's life. The first few weeks are busy and tiring as children become familiar with routine and basic rules, the staff and the large group of children of which they are now a part. This experience, combined with the separation from family may be overwhelming. Children can be assisted in their adjustment by receiving calm assurance, patience and understanding from both parents and staff, and being given plenty of time to adjust and adapt.

It is important to support your child and help them to gradually settle into their new surroundings. Your child may initially insist that you stay with them. Here are a few strategies that may encourage a smooth and happy transition for you and your child:

- Come into the kindergarten and help them settle into an activity
- If your child would like you to stay a while, please feel free to do so
- It is most important that you say goodbye to your child as this promotes a sense of trust and security for your child
- Once you have said goodbye to your child and the kindergarten staff, it is important that you leave promptly. If your child is insecure they may become more upset if you hesitate
- If you are concerned about your child, please feel free to telephone the centre when you arrive home or at any time during the session

Generally, children will settle in well as soon as their parent/caregiver is out of sight. Some children take a little longer to settle in than others - we are all different. When ongoing settling and separation difficulties occur, please make an appointment to discuss this with your child's teacher.

What to bring to Kinder

What your child needs to bring to kinder:

- A bag that is large enough to keep belongings in and children can easily handle and pack independently
- Individual hand towel for hand drying (required to be taken home for washing after each session)
- Healthy (preferably nut-free/rubbish-free) lunch in a container that children can open and close independently (four year old children only)
- Healthy (preferably nut-free/rubbish-free) light lunch or snack in a container that children can open and close independently e.g. fruit or vegetables (three and four-year-old children)
- Drink bottle that children can open and close independently, containing water only (no fruit juice or cordial)
- Warm jacket, rain jacket, beanie and gloves; we play outside rain or shine. On cold or rainy days please pack your child a rain jacket or warm jacket. Most children look forward to the outdoor sessions and it is often an area they speak about and remember enthusiastically and where some children do their most engaged learning. Sending appropriate clothing means children can participate in all the learning areas planned for the day.

Please ensure all belongings are clearly marked with your child's name. Any items that are unnamed will be placed in the lost property box located in the entrance foyer.

Arrival and Collection of Children

On arrival:

1. Please ensure your child's bag and coat is placed in their designated/labelled space.
2. Sign your child into the kindergarten in the Attendance Book located in the parent waiting room. Please ensure the following details are entered into the Attendance Book – the exact time of arrival, sign your name and print the person's name that will be collecting your child after the session.

On collection:

1. When collecting your child, sign your child out in the Attendance Book, and note the time of pick up.
2. Please check the parent pockets on a regular basis for any artwork and messages to be collected.
3. MEYM Policy is that no child can leave the kindergarten with another adult without the written consent of a parent or guardian. On the child's enrolment record form, there is a section for Yearly Authorisation, which allows for nominated authorised people to collect your child. Daily Authorisation Forms are for parents to authorise a change to collection

arrangements on a given date e.g. if a child is going to play at another child's home and will be collected by that parent.

4. Families are requested to collect their child/ren punctually at the end of the session. Late pickup can result in a late collection charge as stipulated in the MEYM Fees Policy, as educators will be unable to engage in other duties required of them when there are children present who must be supervised.

Late Collection of Children

National Law states that two educators must remain on duty whilst a child is at the Centre. If you know that you will be late collecting your child, please contact us ASAP on (03) 9350 1902. If a parent is regularly late in picking up a child, warnings may be given and if unheeded, a late collection fee may be charged.

If the child is not collected at all, the police or protective services will be contacted.

Gate Safety and Security System

The second gate that opens to the kindergarten is operated by a secure pin pad system. For the security and safety of our children it is imperative that you do not share the pin code with your child.

Parents and caregivers must ensure that both gates at the front of the building are closed when entering or departing the kindergarten. Both gates should always be checked and closed by adults to ensure that no child leaves the kindergarten without their parent or caregiver. Please do not let any child apart from your own through the gate with you when leaving.

Parking

Please park only in the designated areas around the kindergarten. Turner Street can be a dangerous road and families need to be aware that on days of light drizzle, cars may lose control as they drive through the roundabout. Please take very special care at all times. Don't be tempted to double park or park in the 'No Standing' areas. The 'No Standing' areas were designated to make our kindergarten safer. We encourage all parents to be pro-active road safety role models for your children by adopting and promoting road safety rules. One disabled parking space has been provided by the City of Moreland. Please leave this space free for those families who are eligible to use it.

Playground Safety

Parents and caregivers are responsible for the supervision of children whilst waiting in the play area before and after each kindergarten session. The children's safety is of prime concern to staff and the committee of management. It is therefore requested that children do not play on the outdoor equipment. **Children and siblings are not allowed to play on equipment before or after the session.**

Please remember that staff take care, time and effort in setting up the playground for the planned outdoor program, which all children will engage in and benefit from during session time.

Clothing

Children should wear safe, comfortable and sensible shoes and clothing. No thongs, slip-ons or “best” clothes. Children need to be able to move freely and safely, go to the toilet independently and participate in activities that can be messy, such as painting or water play.

We have branded Turner Street Kindergarten t-shirts, long sleeved tops, windcheaters and hats available for purchase in a variety of colours and sizes. Whilst these are not compulsory, they are popular with the children and can provide a great alternative for kindergarten, ensuring that other clothes are kept clean and potentially paint or stain-free!

All clothing that a child may take off during a session – jumpers, jackets and bags – must be clearly marked with his / her name. Please ensure clothing is weather appropriate, such as a warm jacket for outside play during cooler weather.

Every child will be provided with a Turner Street Kinder hat, free of charge, which will be kept at kinder in a zip lock bag. The hats will be washed at the end of each term.

A spare change of clothes, including underwear, should always be inside your child's bag (together with a reusable bag to place dirty clothes in), as accidents do happen and sometimes they get messy and need to change.

Food and Nutrition

We are committed to educating children and parents/guardian about healthy food and healthy eating habits. Our Kindergarten promotes healthy eating, regular meals/snacks and encourages children to drink plenty of water.

Parents are required to provide all food for their child to consume at kindergarten. Please pack snacks and lunches in lunch boxes or containers that are easy for your child to open and close. An ice brick (or similar) in their lunch box will help to keep your child's food cool and safe. Refillable drinking bottles for water are also needed. At our kindergarten we promote sustainability through our processes and conversations with children. We ask families to assist us with implementing these principles with children by minimising packaging and wrappings on food they bring to kindergarten. Using reusable washable containers for all foods, including yoghurt, encourages “Nude food”. We are working towards reducing our landfill waste at Turner Street Kindergarten.

The handling and distribution of food will be in accordance with the National Regulations.

We are a **nut-free and allergy-aware** kindergarten. This means no nuts and all foods containing nuts or traces of nuts, due to the high risk these foods can pose for children susceptible to allergic reactions. We also ask that all “fun food”, such as processed and packaged foods like chocolate or chips, is kept at home for the time appropriate for your family.

4-Year-Old Lunch

Four year olds must bring a packed lunch each session. Children will sit together to eat their lunch. We recommend a healthy lunch, such as a sandwich, with their water bottle.

Dietary Requirements

Children's individual dietary needs are respected and accommodated. Any special needs or known food allergies, including treatment - and provision of any medicines, such as an Epipen - should be noted on the enrolment form and communicated to the staff. This includes keeping us updated on new allergies as well. The staff will document this in the child's file. A photo with the child's name, allergy and reactions will be displayed prominently in the playroom.

If children have food allergies, a list of foods unsuitable to bring for lunch and/or snacks will be established annually, and will be displayed at the kindergarten and communicated to all parents.

Medication and Allergies

If it is necessary for your child to take medication while at kindergarten, please inform the teacher and/or educators. **Medications will only be administered for prescription medicines provided in their original container with the child's name on the prescription label and within the use by date.**

Prior to commencement, parents of children with **asthma** must fill out an **Asthma Management Plan**, signed by a doctor, which is then kept at the centre. It is the parent's responsibility to keep the information on the Plan updated and current and to provide in-date medication for the child at the kindergarten.

Parents of children with **Anaphylaxis** diagnosed by a Doctor must provide an **Anaphylaxis Plan** and **auto-immune device** for a child to commence kindergarten. The auto-immune device provided must be current stock (i.e. within the use by date) and must be replaced prior to the use by date. Families are responsible for ensuring that a current (within use by date) auto-immune device is always available for the child whilst he/she is in the kindergarten service. Without a current (within use by date) auto-immune device and/or Anaphylaxis Plan a child cannot attend the kindergarten.

Parents of children with **allergies, diabetes** and any other medical condition diagnosed by a Doctor, must also complete **Management Plans** with all medications recorded and labelled. Please discuss with the educators. If children have food allergies, a list of foods unsuitable to bring for lunch and/or snacks will be established annually, and will be displayed and communicated to parents.

Medication is stored securely by educators and must be given to the child's educator for this purpose. **Under no circumstances should medication be left in a child's bag.**

Head Lice

Head Lice (Pediculosis) is not a notifiable condition and head lice do not transmit any infectious diseases. Head lice are transmitted by having head to head contact with someone who has head lice (Department of Health 2015).

If Teachers and educators at the service suspect your child has head lice, they will contact you. Children do not have to be sent home immediately from an education and care service if head lice are detected.

Prevention and treatment of head lice

- The service will inform all families if any case of head lice has occurred and encourage parents to check their child's hair.
- The child may return to the service after effective treatment of head lice has commenced.
- Families to inform the service immediately if their child has head lice or has recently been treated for head lice.
- Families to regularly check their child for head lice.

Medical Exclusion from Kindergarten and Infectious Diseases

It is the obligation of this centre to ensure that all children and staff are in a safe and healthy environment while at the kindergarten. To fulfil this obligation, the centre must abide by the National Regulations and the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

The containment of infectious diseases also means that children who have an infectious disease may be excluded from the centre. A copy of the list of excludable diseases is posted at the kindergarten and parents will be provided a copy.

The kinder does not have the facilities to care for sick children, therefore if a child shows symptoms listed below, they must be kept at home:

- a) Vomiting
- b) Diarrhoea
- c) Conjunctivitis
- d) Respiratory Infection – more than just the common cold
- e) Hand, Foot & Mouth diseases – when weeping blisters are present.

If the child shows signs of any of the above illnesses while at kinder, the parents will be contacted and arrangements made for the child to either be collected as soon as possible or isolated from the other children until the child can be collected. An ill child will be kept comfortable and under supervision at all times.

Parents will be notified of an outbreak of an infectious disease within the centre by a notice being displayed on the notice board.

Accidents & Incident Reporting

We endeavour to provide a safe environment for all children to enjoy. However, in the case of an accident occurring, full details of the incident will be recorded in our incident book and the parent/guardians will be informed of the event. Emergency medical, hospital or ambulance service will be sought where deemed necessary.

The parent/guardian/caregiver is required to sign a written record of each such incident and MEYM and the Department of Education and Training will be advised as per National Law.

Serious Injury or Medical Emergency

If a serious injury or medical emergency occurs at the kindergarten, staff will administer first aid and call an ambulance. Parents/guardians will be contacted at the same time.

As per Regulation 33, parents/guardians must give authorisation for an ambulance and/or a medical/hospital service to be sought by the centre in the case of an emergency.

Parents/guardians will sign a Confidential Information form upon enrolment at the centre, which gives this authorisation. The kindergarten cannot accept a child without this form being signed by the legal guardian.

All costs associated with an ambulance service will be the parent or guardians responsibility.

No Jab, No Play Legislation

The 'No Jab, No Play' legislation commenced in 2016. Children who are not immunised require an approved medical exemption to be able to attend the Kindergarten. Children who do not provide proof of immunisation at the time of enrolment will not be able to participate in the kindergarten program until we have a copy of your child's immunisation records on file. More information can be found on <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/campaigns/no-jab-no-play>

Family-Child Services in Moreland

Your child's teacher has access to comprehensive resources to assist families in referring children to other services that can provide specialist advice and support. Waiting lists for public services can be long, and teachers are mindful of this when seeking advice from other specialist services. Educators can also provide private specialist information.

Moreland City Council employs Preschool Field Officers (PSFO) that are available to visit the kindergarten, observe a child, and offer additional advice. Your child's kindergarten educators may suggest such a visit, you may arrange a visit directly, or you can ask the educator to arrange for a PSFO to attend the service to observe your child. A PSFO is available to liaise with families and educators, suggesting strategies, possible courses of action, and follow up review visits.

If your child's educator requests that you consider a PSFO visit, you will need to indicate your permission by signing a consent form. A visit will not take place without parental permission. A PSFO will arrange a mutually convenient time to discuss observations with you following an observational visit.

Sun Smart Policy

We have a duty of care to protect children from skin damage caused by the harmful UV rays of the sun. Our Sun Smart policy has been developed to ensure that all children attending Turner Street kindergarten are protected from this. It is implemented throughout the year, but with emphasis from the beginning of September to the end of April. Parents are asked to apply sunscreen onto their children before the kindergarten session.

As part of our general Sun Smart strategies:

1. The Centre will require children to wear hats that protect the face, neck and ears when they are outside.
2. These hats will be provided by the Centre.
3. Children will be encouraged to use available areas of shade for outdoor play activity.
4. We will ensure there are sufficient number of shelters and trees providing shade in the Centre grounds.
5. Outdoor activities will be scheduled before 11am and after 3pm daylight savings time whenever possible.
6. Staff will act as role models by:
 - Wearing appropriate hats and clothing outdoors
 - Encouraging parents or caregivers to use 30+ sunscreen for skin protection prior to the session
 - Seeking shade wherever possible
7. SPF 30+, broad-spectrum water resistant sunscreen will be provided for staff to use as necessary.
8. Teaching about skin and ways to protect skin from the sun will be incorporated into the curriculum and programmed activities.
9. The Sun Smart Policy will be reinforced in a positive way through parent newsletters, noticeboards and meetings.
10. Staff and parents will be provided with educational material on sun protection.

When enrolling their child, parents will be:

1. Informed of the Sun Smart Policy.
2. Issued with a Centre hat (kept on the premises) that protects face, neck and ears.
3. Asked to apply SPF 30+, broad-spectrum, water resistant sunscreen before the commencement of the session.
4. Encouraged to practice Sun Smart behaviours themselves.

Emergency Evacuation

Turner Street Kindergarten has a detailed emergency evacuation plan that details safe exit points and emergency assembly points. The plan is displayed in various areas around the kindergarten room. Each group will conduct an emergency drill every term.

Toilet Training

It is encouraged that children be toilet trained before attending the kindergarten, as this is associated with preschool readiness, however should your child soil themselves, staff will attend to your child's hygiene needs as soon as practicable. In the event that your child is not fully toilet-trained, Pull-ups and a change of clothing must be supplied.

Toys

Children are not permitted to bring toys from home to kindergarten. They may be lost or broken, other children may want to play with the toy, or the child may not be interested in playing with anything else, therefore missing out on the program being implemented by the staff. The exceptions are if a child is finding it difficult to separate or settle in and needs a 'security blanket' or if the child has a special item to show us e.g. a bird's nest or something similar. Please note some classes may do 'show and tell' and so children can bring things for this, but you will be notified if this is happening.

Birthdays

To avoid any circumstance where a child may suffer an allergic reaction to certain foods such as dairy products and nuts, our policy is no cakes from home to eat. No lollies, chocolates or party bags either, to honour our healthy eating practices. We are delighted to help children celebrate their birthday or other special celebrations at kinder. Please let us know when you would like your child to celebrate their birthday.

We like to keep celebrations for individuals as simple as possible, so that while the event only plays a very small part in our daily program, they are made to feel important and a valued member of the group.

Staff Professional Development

At Turner Street Kindergarten all staff participate in professional development. It is a requirement in our award that we attend a certain amount of in-services according to our weekly hours. This can be in the form of teacher meetings, workshops, conferences and reading of relevant early childhood literature.

We are then able to share and implement new ideas and information with the children, the PAG and families within the kindergarten community. We are always learning.

All Educators have current First Aid (Level 2) certificates, Asthma Management and Anaphylaxis Certificates.

MEYM has already nominated 2 full "shut-down" days for 2020, where all staff across MEYM services will be engaged in joint professional development sessions. **There will be no kindergarten sessions at Turner Street Kindergarten on these days.** These days will be confirmed early in 2020, but are currently Easter Tuesday on **Tuesday 14th April 2020**, and the Monday before the Melbourne Cup Holiday, i.e. **Monday 2nd November 2020**. These dates were chosen in an attempt to cause minimal disruption and inconvenience to kindergarten families.

Visitors

The kindergarten keeps and maintains a Visitor's Book, which is located inside the playroom. Visitors who wish to gain access to the service will be required to complete details in the Visitor's Book. Please note: this does not include authorised persons or parents who regularly collect children.