

# Jacaranda Preschool Inc

## Bush Kinder Program 2022

# Parent Handbook.



## **When I'm playing outside I'm learning**

Absorption   **Arranging**   Adapting   Action  
**Animals**   Autonomy   Balance   **Belonging**  
Calculating   Caring   Change   **Cause and Effect**  
Chemical Reaction   **Community**   Classification  
Creative thinking   **Construction**   Co-operation  
Density   **Communication**   Creatures   Culture  
Connections   **Confidence**   Depth   Conservation  
**Distance**   Evaporation   Exploring   **Force**  
**Experimenting**   Environment   **Friction**   Feelings  
Friendship   **Gravity**   Height   Identification  
**Inertia**   Insects   Investigation   **Initiative**  
**Independence**   Invention   Light   Listening  
**Language**   Manipulating   Movement   **Matching**  
**Measurement**   Mass   **Myself**   Negotiation   Nature  
**Nurturing**   Number   Observing   **Ordering**  
Patterning   Physics   **Planning**   **Problem Solving**  
Propulsion   **Plants**   Questioning   Reaction  
**Risk**   Responsibility   **Self Control**   Size   **Shape**  
**Speed**   Spatial   Representation   Suspension  
Scent   **Seasons**   Scientific Method   Touch  
**Temperature**   Team Work   Texture   **Vibration**  
Volume   Weight   **Weather** and so much more!

**Playing outside makes me  
happier, healthier, smarter**

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## PARTICIPATION

To participate in this program parents/carers must complete and return to kinder prior to the first session a **Routine Excursion Form**.

Parents/carers should also provide any changes to their excursion and enrolment forms **including updating the list of authorised people to collect your child**  
Children participating in our Bush Kinder Program at Westgarthtown will be dropped off and collected from the Bush Kinder site by their parents/ guardians/ authorized persons.

## COMMUNICATION

We ask parents to **always have their mobile phone with them and turned on** throughout the duration of their bush kinder session to be easily contactable when necessary and aware of any updates throughout the session.

**Please enter relevant numbers to your phone:**

### Contacts for Bush Kinder in session – Nebel Street

Nominated Supervisors:	<a href="#">Emma Reimers and Kate Digney</a>	9464 4723
Staff for Orange group	Kate Digney (Orange Group) Leanne Naum (Orange Group)	<a href="#">0422 336 881</a>

### Contacts for Jacaranda Pre-School

Jacaranda Preschool – Nebel Street Kindergarten:	<a href="mailto:jacaranda.nebel.kin@kindergarten.vic.gov.au">jacaranda.nebel.kin@kindergarten.vic.gov.au</a> 9464 4723
President:	Vanessa Nitsos Chan <a href="mailto:jacaranda.lalor.president@kindergarten.vic.gov.au">jacaranda.lalor.president@kindergarten.vic.gov.au</a>

### Important information:

Website address:	<a href="http://www.jacarandakinder.com.au">www.jacarandakinder.com.au</a>
Kinder Mobile	<a href="#">0422 336 881</a> Orange Group (Nebel St)



## **PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

At Jacaranda Pre-School we believe an essential part of early childhood learning is being outside in nature.

We know children need more time outside in nature and this knowledge is supported by research.

Children are natural learners. Bush Kinder will provide your child with the time and ideal environment to learn in 3 hours of uninterrupted play in the bush, using what nature has provided as learning materials.

Bush Kinder will be a special part of your child's kinder experience.

They will have the opportunity to play in the rain, roll down grassy mounds, balance along fallen logs, get involved in dramatic play, find insects, draw with sticks in the ground, make mud pies. Each child's developmental progression, advancing skill levels and particular interests will be noted by their teachers. The teachers will use this knowledge to support the children's learning just as they do at kinder.

Teachers will support children as they take the risks and face challenges essential to learning.

Stories will be told, knowledge will be shared, songs will be sung.

Through play, your child will connect with and respect this space. They will connect with their land in a way that cannot be done under a roof or within walls.

## **SESSION OVERVIEW**

Prior to the commencement of each session, teachers will scan the bush space for safety and new areas of potential interest.

The children will then be free to engage in play within the boundaries of the Bush Kinder site.

Antibacterial cleaning material will be available for hand cleaning and personal care hygiene needs.

## **STAFF**

At a minimum, two staff will be in attendance at all times. Staff ratios have been set at 1:11.



## **ATTENDANCE**

**\*In response to Covid 19, if your child is unwell they should not attend kinder.**

### **When shouldn't my child attend?**

We ask that parents/carers are diligent and exercise their own judgement in assessing whether it is appropriate for their children to attend Bush Kinder.

Children should not attend Bush Kinder if they are ill, excessively tired or if parents are concerned about their well being due to forecast weather conditions.

### **Others in attendance at Westgarthtown Bush Kinder Program**

**In response to Covid 19, please ensure you keep distance from others at drop off and pick up times. Please attempt to limit the number of people who attend with you for drop off and pick up.**

To ensure our kindergarten children are given freedom to play and engage with nature we ask that adults are respectful of their space at all times.

During Pick/up and drop off times if you have siblings present please ensure that they stay with you at all times.

### **Late collection fee policy**

Parents/carers are asked to collect their child on time, where this be from the Bush Kinder site or Kindergarten. Staff members are not paid to care for children after the end of each session.

Late collection fees apply if parents/carers arrive late for collection of a child, as per Jacaranda Pre-School late collection fee policy, a copy of this was placed in your child's enrolment pack.





## SESSIONS

### Session times

**Bush Kinder sessions will be running on Tuesdays from Term Two for Orange Group (Nebel Street) 8:15 – 11:15am at Westgarthtown**

### **Bush Kinder Session cancellation – Westgarthtown Bush Kinder Program**

Bush Kinder sessions may be cancelled ahead of time due to extreme weather or other circumstances. In this instance, a NORMAL KINDER SESSION will be held at kindergarten and parents will be notified via SMS text message.

However, if during a Bush Kinder session, there is a need for us to evacuate or there is an emergency, parents will be notified to collect their child and take them home. There will be no session at kinder.

## WEATHER

The weather forecast for the Bush Kinder will be posted near the sign in book by the conclusion of the session the group attends immediately before bush kinder. Parents will be notified if a Westgarthtown Bush Kinder session is cancelled in advance.

This information will be obtained from the Bureau of Meteorology website: <http://www.bom.gov.au/vic/forecasts/melbourne.shtml>  
<http://www.bom.gov.au/forecasts/graphical/sectors/VIC.php>



## CLOTHING

Parents are required to determine appropriate clothing based on the weather forecast appropriate to their session time.

Children will not be allowed to attend a Bush Kinder session if they arrive with inappropriate clothing and without suitable clothing to change into.

It is important that Bush Kinder participants wear appropriate and protective clothing and footwear which:

- allows children to move freely and undertake activities such as climbing, balancing, running
- keeps children warm and dry in cold/wet weather
- protects children from the damaging effects of the sun, UV rays in warm weather and high UV conditions.
- prevents sunburn, bites, scratches and stings. (Even in warm weather, long sleeve tops and long pants are recommended - this clothing should be loose fitting and light).
- Where possible is made from natural fabrics which allow the body to breathe and is comfortable against the skin
- In the case of footwear, it needs to keep feet and toes covered and have a flexible sole to allow children to climb and balance on uneven surfaces. We recommend children wear gumboots when the weather is wet and the ground muddy

The following table provides examples of recommended clothing, clothing which is not recommended and unacceptable clothing:

	Warm Weather	Cold Weather / Rain
<b>Recommended clothing and footwear</b>	Light loose fitting long sleeve tops and long pants, broad brimmed hat, closed toe shoes	Long pants, long sleeved top, beanie, waterproof gloves, thermals in very cold weather. Gumboots or waterproof hiking boots.
<b>Not recommended</b>	short sleeved tops, shorts, skirts or dresses.	Skirts, dresses (incompatible with Rain sets)
<b>Unacceptable clothing and footwear</b>	Open toe shoes, sandals, thongs, crocs, singlet tops	



**\*Rain sets:** Light rainproof suit worn over clothing, which includes a jacket with a hood, and pants, which zip up over clothing. The centre will provide a rain set for each child to use

**Change of clothes:** All children participating in Bush Kinder are required to bring a change of clothes and footwear as these may become wet and muddy. It is recommended that the spare clothing include:

- Spare top and bottoms of appropriate thickness/weight for the weather on the day
- Spare underpants
- 2 pairs of socks
- 1 pair of gumboots
- The Bush Kinder 'on-site kit' will contain some spare clothing, Rain sets.

On high UV days, please ensure that you apply sunscreen prior to the session commencing. Sunscreen will be available for re-application during sessions.

### **Clothing provided by Kindergarten**

Rain sets will be provided by Jacaranda Pre-School. Families are asked to leave the Rain sets with staff at the end of each session.

## **WHAT ELSE TO BRING**

### **Water**

Parents/carers are required to provide a water bottle of fresh water at all sessions. There will be access to drinking water to supplement this when required on site. All participants onsite at bush kinder are required to have a water bottle.

### **Food**

Parents/carers are required to provide a snack in a sealed container for each session for their child to eat. We ask you to consider the environment by not including any packaging. We also ask that you continue to follow the centre's Healthy Eating Policy.

### **Footprints**

Please always take away with you what you brought in. Parents and children are asked not to bring toys along to Bush Kinder to better enable children to engage in the natural surrounds.

### **Medications**

Staff will bring children's medication and action plans which have been provided by children's parents.

### **Training and Awareness sessions**

Sessions will be run as part of orientation for staff and children for dog safety training. Staff must have a Level 2 First Aid Certificate.

### **Risk Benefit Assessment**

A Risk assessment has been prepared and is available for parents to view.

## **Further Policy and Regulations**

Bush Kinder is conducted as part of the Jacaranda Pre-School program and therefore is governed by the regulations and procedures of the Kindergarten. Due to location and environmental factors, variations to policy have been identified and different procedures created which are specific to Bush Kinder to ensure the safety and well being of all children, staff and volunteers involved in the program.

We ask parents to view the policies regarding Bush Kinder which are available in the centre's foyer, to gain a full understanding of the responsibilities of the Jacaranda Pre-School Committee, staff, volunteers and parents alike.

## **Bush Kinder Policy**

**Delivery and Collection**

**Dogs**

**Emergency Evacuation**

**Extreme Weather**

**Identification and Visibility**

**Play Benefit and Risk**

**Protective Clothing**

**Snake Awareness and first  
aid**



## **Bush Kinder Site- Westgarthtown**

### **LOCATION**

The Bush Kinder site is in The Westgarthtown Lutheran Reserve, between Rosedale Drive (Which is the continuation of German Lane) and Mount View Road, Thomastown. The Reserve is 1.4 kms from Jacaranda Pre-School.

The area has Historical sites which date back to 1851 when the Ziebell farm house was built. Ziebell Farm house and outbuildings are all included on Victoria's Heritage register.



**Ziebell's original farmhouse, barn and other buildings have been lovingly restored by the City of Whittlesea. They represent the heart of Ziebell's original 102 acre farm, named The Pines, the largest at Westgarthtown. Built between 1851 and 1856, with 61 cm thick stone walls, the house is a typical German farmhouse design.**



**The drystone walls on the Lutheran reserve have been restored in recent years, with the involvement of the City of Whittlesea, Parks Victoria, the Friends of Westgarthtown and Reservoir Corrections.**



**The Thomastown Lutheran Church occupies a commanding position at the centre of the original Westgarthtown settlement'640 acres. The Thomastown Lutheran church is the oldest operating church in Australia.**

This site has been chosen as it gives a comfortable area for children to explore and get to know through the seasons. It provides clear lines of sites with natural boundaries easily identified by staff, children and volunteers. It also offers opportunity to expand into different environments when the group wishes to explore just the bit further and always providing a known place to call Home.





## Parking Area

Parking is available on Rosedale Drive (German Lane) and within the Reserve near the Lutheran church. Please take care in the car park.



## PICK UP AND DROP-OFF

The drop off point is the Lutheran Church as designated in the orientation session and on the above map. Bush Kinder signage will be displayed around the perimeter of the site.

### Drop-off

Parents and carers need to ensure they:

- Bring their child's bag/backpack with change of clothes and a sunhat
- Bring their child's a water bottle filled with clean drinking water and a fruit/ vegetable snack
- Sign the child in using the attendance book and record the time of arrival

### Pick-up

Parents and carers need to ensure they:

- Sign the child out using the attendance book and record the time.
- Please ensure the staff are aware you have collected your child.
- Be mindful of not distracting/speaking with staff until all of the children have departed.
- Be responsible for the supervision of the child once signed out, while still at the Bush Kinder site.
- Collect the child's belongings (bag, water, hats) (Please leave the Rainsets with staff so they can be washed for the next session)

***Please refer to main Delivery and Collection of Children Policy for full procedures relating to collection by authorised person, late collection and late collection fees.***

## Toilets

To maintain required staff ratios as set by regulations at all times, the public toilets at Westgarthtown Lutheran Reserve in the Ziebell Farmhouse will only be utilised by children when the whole group walks to the Farmhouse.

While at the Bush Kinder site, a camping toilet will be provided for children and staff to use when necessary. It is housed in an appropriate tent. Staff will attend to any children requiring assistance. Parents are requested to encourage children to use the toilets prior to their session.

## EMERGENCY EVACUATION

There are times that have been identified that require the Bush Kinder participants to evacuate to a safer location to ensure the safety and well being of the group. In this event, Bush Kinder staff will notify parents via a Broadcast SMS. Parents are asked to familiarise themselves with the designated safe areas and assembly points as detailed in the emergency evacuation maps.

The reasons for relocating include, but are not limited to: Fire or Bushfire, missing child, aggressive dogs off leads, other animal intruders, uninvited person/stranger (threatening, causing a nuisance or unease for staff and participants), natural events, such as extreme weather, floods, severe winds or thunderstorm, medical emergency or accident.

### Westgarthtown Bush Kinder Program.

#### A. TORRENTIAL RAIN, HAIL, ELECTRICAL STORM, EXTREME WINDS.

In the case of TORRENTIAL RAIN, HAIL, ELECTRICAL STORM, EXTREME WINDS OR INTRUDER, we will evacuate the children to Assembly Point A – The Lutheran church

Figure 1 - Assembly Point A Lutheran Church



Assembly point A: Ziebell Farmhouse Veranda

Group to wait here

until torrential rain and/or hail has passed and it is safe to resume normal activities.

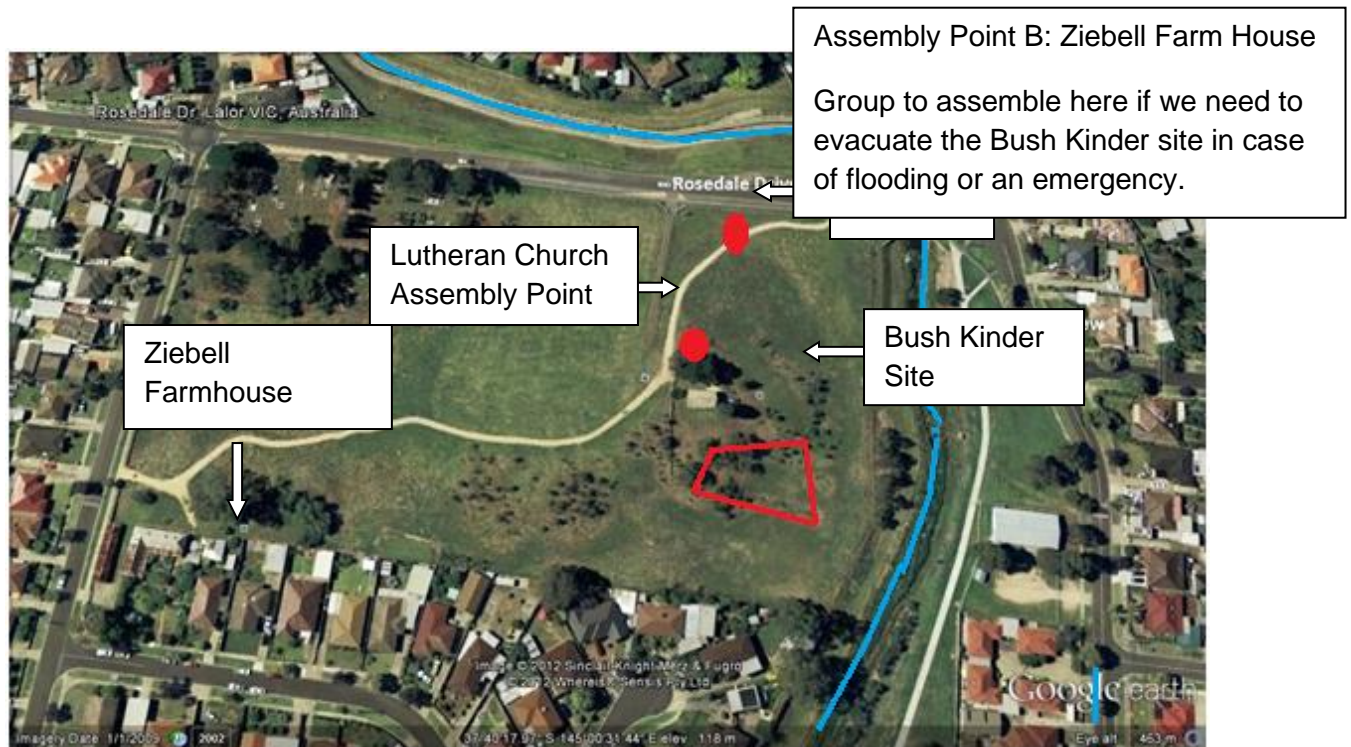
If parents are required to collect their child from Assembly Point A they are to enter via Gardenia

Assembly point A: Lutheran Church

Group to wait here until torrential rain and/or hail has passed and it is safe to resume normal activities.



In the event that deems it unsafe to evacuate to the Lutheran Church, we will evacuate to the Ziebell Farmhouse – Assembly Point B



**Figure 1 - Assembly Point B Ziebell Farm House**

If the need arises to evacuate the site fully, we will walk to Thomastown Recreation Reserve – Assembly Point C.

