

Little St. Margaret's Kindergarten

Information Book

29 Mayfield Ave, Malvern 3144

Ph. 9822 7106

Director@littlestmargarets.com.au

www.littlestmargarets.com.au

Acknowledgement of Country

Little St. Margaret's Kindergarten respectfully acknowledges that we are together on the Traditional Lands of the Wurundjeri and Bunurong peoples of the East Kulin Nations.

We acknowledge the Ancestors who have taken care of Country – land, waterways and sky.

We acknowledge the Elders – past, present and emerging.

We extend our respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and people of all cultures.

We acknowledge their living connection to Country, relationship with the land all things living.

May Bunjil and Waa watch over us and keep us safe on Country.

Contents

Welcome to Little St. Margaret’s Kindergarten	3
Little St. Margaret’s Commitment To Child Safety.....	3
Our People	5
Teachers and Educators	5
Early Childhood Educators' Day	5
Council.....	5
Curriculum	6
National Quality Framework	6
National Quality Standard	6
Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF)	7
Kindergarten Programs	7
Diversity	8
Incursions/Excursions and Special Person’s Day.....	8
Park program.....	8
Music.....	9
The Resilience Project	9
3- & 4-Year-Old Funded Kindergarten.....	9
Preschool Field Officer.....	10
Transition to Kindergarten.....	10
Transition to School.....	11
Preparing for Kindergarten	11
What to bring for 3year old kindergarten (Green and Blue groups):	11
What to bring for 4year old kindergarten (Red and Yellow groups):	11
What to bring for extended care:	11
Operating hours	12
Kindergarten sessions	12
Extended care.....	12
Attendance.....	12
Arrival and departure process	12
Absences	13
Fees	13
Kindergarten fees	13
Kindergarten subsidies (3year old programs only).....	13
Kindergarten subsidies (4year old programs only).....	13
Invoicing	14
Late collection charge	14
Unpaid fees.....	14
Enrolments.....	14
Uniforms	15

Working with Children Checks	15
Family Participation.....	15
Art and craft material.....	15
Fundraising	15
Laundry.....	16
Parent Library	16
Children’s health and wellbeing	16
Covid-19	16
Nuts.....	16
Medication	16
Illness and infectious diseases.....	17
Immunisation:.....	17
Medical conditions.....	18
Medical emergencies.....	18
Accidents and injuries	18
Sun protection	18
Child Safe Standards	18
Child protection	19
Rest and relaxation time	19
Toileting.....	19
Importance of safety	20
Building and playground safety	20
Emergency procedures	20
Visitor’s book.....	20
Policies and Procedures	20
Grievances	20
Birthdays.....	21
Parking.....	21
Photographs.....	21
Student educators	21

Welcome to Little St. Margaret's Kindergarten

We are delighted to welcome you and your family to Little St. Margaret's Kindergarten. At Little St. Margaret's we provide a safe and nurturing environment for children to explore, learn and grow in the years before commencing school. We understand that for some children, kindergarten is often a child's first contact in a social setting without parental support, we therefore strive to make your child's kindergarten year/years as positive and enriching as we possibly can. We look forward to sharing this educational journey with you and your child.

Please read and familiarise yourself with the information contained in this handbook before commencement of the kindergarten year. Do not hesitate to speak with the Manager, your child's Teacher or one of the parent Directors if you have any questions.

Little St. Margaret's Commitment to Child Safety

Little St. Margaret's Kindergarten is committed to child safety. We believe that all children have the right to feel safe, happy and empowered. We support and respect children and their engagement in the world around them. You have the right to be protected from being hurt and mistreated, in body or mind. (Article 19, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child)

Little St. Margaret's is committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and providing a safe environment for children with varying abilities.

Little St. Margaret's has zero tolerance of child abuse and treats all safety concerns seriously and consistently with our policies and procedures. Child safety is the responsibility of everyone within the Little St. Margaret's Kindergarten community.

Our Philosophy

In relation to children we:

- believe that early childhood education is an integral part of children's learning and development.
- believe they have a right to a safe and stimulating learning environment.
- support the development of meaningful relationships between peers, educators, families, and the wider community.
- maintain high expectations for each child and encourage the development of independent, resilient individuals.
- foster a sense of identity and belonging.
- encourage interactions in relation to others that show care, empathy, and respect.
- value the child's voice and incorporate their ideas and experiences in the curriculum.

In relation to our educational programs we:

- value a play-based curriculum that provides children with opportunities to explore, discover, question, reflect, imagine and take chances.
- value the benefits of a secure and nurturing environment that provides each individual child with the opportunity to grow emotionally, physically, intellectually, and socially.
- use intentional teaching strategies that are deliberate, purposeful and thoughtful.
- provide programs which reflect children's interests and abilities, placing emphasis on choice and independence.

In relation to families we:

- value their role as children's first and most influential teachers.
- encourage meaningful family participation as we believe it is essential in achieving the best possible outcomes for each child.
- believe that effective and respectful communication is the foundation of strong relationships.
- acknowledge that all members of the Little St. Margaret's community have a right to experience a sense of belonging.
- respect each family and value the contribution each family makes to the service.

In relation to educators we:

- employ early childhood professionals who are highly trained and passionate.
- value individual skills and experience, and recognise that these contribute to a diverse team, essential for delivering high quality programs.
- support them to be lifelong learners and encourage them to undertake professional development to enhance the educational program and outcomes for the Little St. Margaret's community.
- believe that reflective practice is essential to provide a high-quality curriculum.

In relation to the community we:

- acknowledge children as global citizens.
- welcome the contributions of external professionals which enhance the outcomes for children and families.
- promote active involvement that builds connections between Little St. Margaret's and the broader community.
- recognise that children have the right to belong and participate in many different communities.
- acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which Little St. Margaret's operates and pay our respects to Elders past and present.

In relation to diversity we:

- believe that inclusion is grounded in ideas of social justice and human rights.
- are committed to breaking down barriers to inclusion.
- believe all children have a right to belong to the Little St. Margaret's community. We celebrate individual differences and work towards achieving the best possible outcomes for each child.
- value the cultural history of all children and families and promote awareness and acceptance of different cultural practices within the context of Little St. Margaret's and the broader community.

In relation to the environment we:

- endeavour to create a welcoming and nurturing atmosphere for the Little St. Margaret's community.
- believe in providing inviting spaces for play that encourage children to investigate, imagine and explore ideas, both independently and with their peers.
- encourage awareness of the interdependence between people and the environment and the need for sustainable practices to develop environmentally responsible habits in children.

Our People

Teachers and Educators

Little St. Margaret's employs professional teachers and educators who are passionate about the education and care of young children and have formal qualifications in early childhood education. In addition to these qualifications all teachers and educators hold current First Aid certificates and undergo regular CPR, Asthma and Anaphylaxis training. Throughout the year, teachers and educators are also encouraged to attend external professional development sessions and in-house training to further their knowledge and keep abreast of new innovations in early childhood.

Early Childhood Educators' Day

Early Childhood Educators' Day recognises and celebrates the work of Australia's educators in early learning services. It's a chance acknowledge and to say thank you for their wonderful contribution to the wellbeing and healthy development of the young children in their care. Little St. Margaret's celebrated this day with personal gifts to each educator, providing a special morning tea and distributing certificates of acknowledgement. On behalf of all our staff, I would like to thank all families and our LSM council for your generous gifts. We all felt very special and appreciated

Council

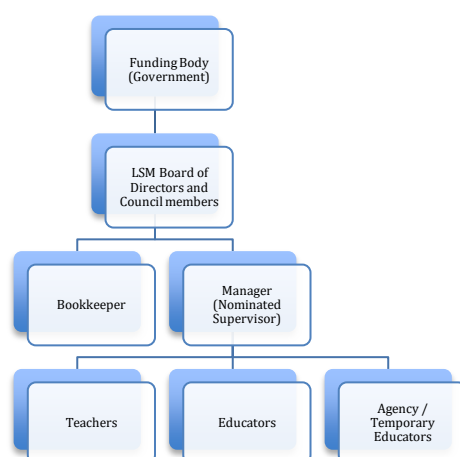
Little St. Margaret's is a not-for-profit community-based kindergarten. Parent volunteers are appointed as Directors or council members to assist in managing the kindergarten in the following positions:

- Chairperson
- Deputy Chair
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- Marketing/Communications
- Social and Events
- Maintenance Coordinator
- Legal/HR
- Grants

These positions are essential for the successful operation of Little St. Margaret's and are filled at the Annual General Meeting each year. If you are interested, please see the Manager, your child's teacher, or the current Chairperson of the council.

Council meetings will be held monthly on a Wednesday of each term and will commence at 7:30pm. All members of council are expected to attend the meetings to report on any progress within their role.

Little St. Margaret's structure of operation:



Curriculum

National Quality Framework

The Early Years Learning Framework's (EYLF) vision is for all children to experience play-based learning that is engaging and builds success for life. Educators use the framework in partnership with families, children's first and most influential educators to develop learning programs responsive to children's ideas, interests, strengths and abilities, and recognise that children learn through their play.

The Early Years Learning Framework describes childhood as a time of belonging, being and becoming.

- Belonging is the basis for living a fulfilling life. Children feel they belong because of the relationships they have with their family, community, culture and place.
- Being is about living here and now. Childhood is a special time in life and children need time to just 'be'—time to play, try new things and have fun.
- Becoming is about the learning and development that young children experience. Children start to form their sense of identity from an early age, which shapes the type of adult they will become.

This initiative aims to improve educator-to-child ratios in services, increased skills and qualifications, national regulations and a quality ratings system which will help you to make informed choices about the education and care you choose for your child.

The National Quality Framework (NQF) for early childhood education and care services came into effect on 1 January 2012. The NQF aim is to raise quality and drive continuous improvement and consistency in education and care services. The NQF is part of a national reform agenda that was signed off by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in December 2009.

The reforms include:

- Education and Care Services National Law Act (2010)
- Education and Care Services National Regulations.
- National Quality Standards (NQF)
- National body – Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA)

National Quality Standard

The National Quality Standard (NQS) sets a high Australia wide benchmark for the quality of education and care services and includes the following 7 quality areas that are important outcomes for children:

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

Early childhood services are regulated, assessed and rated by the Department of Education and Training to ensure children are protected from harm and have the best chances for learning and development.

Little St. Margaret's aims to exceed the National Quality Standard and has a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) in place. The QIP is a self-assessment tool used to review our kindergarten's performance

in delivering quality education and care, and to plan future improvements across all areas. The QIP also assists with regulatory authorities with assessing the quality of our service. At the time of assessment, each service is given a rating for each of the 7 quality areas. Each service then receives an overall rating of either, working towards, meeting or exceeding the National Quality Standards.

In 2022 Little St. Margaret's Kindergarten was rated Exceeding the National Quality Standards.

For further information on NQS/NQF please refer to www.acecqa.gov.au

Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF)

The Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF) relating to the first eight years of life was revised in 2016. The vision and purpose of the VEYLDF is to guide early childhood professionals in a collective effort with families toward the achievement of the nationally agreed Early Years Learning Outcomes (Early Years Learning Framework for Australia, 2009) where children:

- Are connected with and contribute to their world
- Have a strong sense of wellbeing
- Are confident and involved learners
- Are effective communicators

The VEYLDF recognizes that families provide the caring relationships, the models, the opportunities and the experiences that shape their children's learning and development.

Kindergarten Programs

Kindergarten is an important foundation for your child's education. The kindergarten program is planned by your child's educators and guided by both the National Framework (Belonging, Being and Becoming) and the Victorian Framework (Early Years Learning and Development Framework). Educators develop the program based on their observations of the children, children's interests, strengths, and abilities within the context of their local community and cultural heritage. The program, which will be displayed at the kindergarten, reflects sound research that children learn best through play and by engaging in experiences that interest them. The program is planned around the five Learning Outcomes identified in the frameworks. The learning outcomes relate to:

1. Children have a strong sense of identity (Identity)
2. Children are connected with and contribute to their world (Community)
3. Children have a strong sense of wellbeing (Wellbeing)
4. Children are confident and involved learners (Learning)
5. Children are effective communicators (Communication)

Specifically, the program provides opportunities for the children to learn to:

- feel confident
- be independent
- communicate with others
- express themselves through speech, movement, music and art
- observe, question and organise their thinking about the world
- be eager to undertake new experiences
- develop creative thoughts
- extend their interests
- be interested in cultures and community

The kindergarten environment is designed to provide opportunities for intentional teaching and self-directed learning. The educators know and understand each child and skilfully implement intentional teaching to enhance and support each child's learning. The children's learning, interactions,

development participation and progression is documented and assessed by educators through written observations, work samples and photographs.

Ongoing professional development for all educators at Little St. Margaret's ensures that the curriculum we provide is based on sound research, educational practices and principles and is consistent with optimal learning methodologies.

Diversity

At Little St. Margaret's we recognise that our community is culturally diverse, and we aim to ensure all families experience a sense of belonging. To achieve this, we provide opportunities for all children to develop an understanding of different cultures and help foster in each child an awareness and acceptance of these cultures by integrating multiculturalism into our programs. This is achieved through providing and offering a range of books, music, cooking, activities, singing, clothing, play resources and multicultural incursions.

Incursions/Excursions and Special Person's Day

Incursions/excursions and special events are a valuable way of extending the educational program and provide children with the opportunity to be involved in the broader community. We plan a variety of educational and interesting incursions for both 3- and 4-year-old groups throughout the year.

Excursions are conducted as part of the 4year old programs.

Prior to any excursion or event, a risk assessment and management plan are completed by educators, where children are taken outside of the kindergarten. The risk assessment and risk management plan assess:

- The educational value to the children
- Supervision requirements and the number of available parents to come on the excursion
- The safety of children and parents
- Attendance of siblings
- Ensuring the Education and Care Services National Regulations are met
- Transportation requirements, pedestrian traffic safety and controls in crowded areas
- Site assessment, including emergency evacuation plans
- Hazard avoidance or elimination

The cost of incursions and excursions is covered within the term fees.

Park program

The children in the 4year old program attend a weekly excursion to Sir Robert Menzies Reserve, the park at the end of Mayfield Ave. Parent helpers are rostered on to attend each week. At the park, children are encouraged to explore the large natural environment and spend time participating in a wide variety of experiences (e.g., observing nature, ball games, group games, reading books, chalk drawing etc.)

Music

All classes at Little St. Margaret's Kindergarten participate in a 30-minute music session each week. An outsourced music company conducts these sessions.

The Resilience Project

Little St. Margaret's Kindergarten is proud to partner with The Resilience Project. The Resilience Project is an organisation that delivers emotionally engaging programs to early learning centres, schools, sports clubs, and businesses, providing practical, evidence-based mental health strategies to build resilience and happiness. Little St. Margaret's delivers a 21-Week Early Years Program to children, developed by The Resilience Project, focusing on the key pillars of Gratitude, Empathy, Mindfulness and Emotional Literacy. The Resilience Project Early Years Program supports Little St. Margaret's Kindergarten to implement a whole-of-centre approach to wellbeing, and supports children, parents, educators, and the wider community to together build resilience and positive mental health.

3- & 4-Year-Old Funded Kindergarten

The Victorian State Government provides funding so children can access a kindergarten program in the two years before they start school. The funding is a contribution towards meeting the cost of the kindergarten program.

Your child will be attending our funded kindergarten program and will be counted as an eligible child when we submit our data to the Department of Education and Training (DET).

Your child can only be counted at one location and can attend only one funded three-year-old or four-year-old program at any one time. If your child is currently attending another children's service that offers a funded kindergarten program, you will need to advise the other service so they can stop claiming the funding.

Second year of funded 4-year-old kindergarten

During the 4-year-old kindergarten year, the early childhood teacher and the child's parent(s)/guardian(s) will work together to plan for the child's transition to school. The early childhood teacher can declare that a child is eligible to receive a second year of funded kindergarten if:

- your child's teacher has found they have developmental delays in at least two key areas of learning and development, and
- your child will have better outcomes at kindergarten rather than going to school.

A second year of funded kindergarten is not intended for children who are simply immature or too young to attend school. Equally, children with additional needs may only be eligible for a second year of funded kindergarten if it is assessed that they will benefit from another kindergarten year.

Please note: Children attending a funded 3-year-old kindergarten program are not eligible to access a second year of 3-year-old kindergarten.

Preschool Field Officer

Preschool field officer is available to all funded three and four-year-old kindergarten children to provide a range of support including:

- discussions about your child's learning and development
- kindergarten program and strategies and resources
- educator mentoring
- identifying where to get additional support

PSFOs use a locally responsive approach that includes consultative support, resourcing and practical advice to assist kindergarten teachers.

Their role also assists kindergartens to link families into supports and services available for children with developmental concerns and broader child and family supports.

There is no cost to the kindergarten program or families for the PSFO service.

Transition to Kindergarten

Transition to kindergarten is an exciting time for children, parents, and educators. At Little St. Margaret's Kindergarten, the process begins with families accepting their offer of a place in the year prior to their child attending.

There are several experiences that occur to facilitate a smooth transition to either our 3year old or 4year old kindergarten:

- **October:** Parent Information Session
- **November:** 4Year Old Kindergarten teachers visit 3year old programs at Little St. Margaret's. If required, teachers may contact a child's current early childhood education and care setting if the child is not currently attending Little St. Margaret's Kindergarten.
- **January**Holiday/ Welcome letters sent via mail over the Christmas summer holidays.
- **Jan/February** Orientation session- small groups of children visit the kindergarten while individual parent/teacher interviews are conducted. This provides children and their families with an opportunity to either reconnect with familiar faces or meet new children and their families.
- **First two weeks of Term 1** – Transition procedure commences. Children initially attend for reduced hours and increase their hours to full sessions. Evidence based research and experience, has demonstrated that children settle more easily into kindergarten program when their transition is gradual. This allows them the opportunity to build connections with the staff as well as the opportunity to adjust to their new environment and peers. No extended care provided during this time.
- **Parents 'welcome' social events** – usually organised by the Parent Class Rep in each group.

Further details for each of these experiences will be given to families during the transition process. If your child is beginning at Little St. Margaret's Kindergarten during the year an individual orientation process will be developed to meet the needs of your family and child.

Transition to School

To support a positive start to school for all children, a transition statement is developed by our teachers (4YO groups only) and families in term 4. The online statement is a tool for families and teachers/educators to share information about a child's learning and development with the school your child will be attending before commencement. The information educators provide in the transition statement is based on your child's learning and development throughout the year. Parents/guardians also have a very important section to complete, along with any comments, and give their authorisation to share this information with the school.

Little St. Margaret's is proud to have strong connections with the local schools in our community. Our teachers regularly engage with schoolteachers to ensure our children have a smooth and positive start on their next educational journey.

Preparing for Kindergarten

Each child is required to bring a medium sized bag or backpack each day they attend kindergarten. Please pack a change of clothes in your child's bag. Although we have a limited supply of spare clothes at Little St Margaret's, most children will feel more comfortable wearing something of their own. Art smocks for messy activities are provided by the kindergarten.

Please be mindful that our children go outside each day and need to be dressed appropriately. Coats for the cooler months are necessary and a beanie may be worn. Thongs / crocs and gumboots are discouraged as wearing them can prove dangerous in the playground. It is important for children to be able to manage their own clothing. Please label all clothing items with your child's name.

What to bring for 3year old kindergarten (Green and Blue groups):

- a refillable drink bottle
- a snack box for morning tea
- roll on sun cream with a valid expiry date
- a sun smart reversible hat, which will need to be purchased from Little St. Margaret's
- a small to medium backpack
- a named pillowcase for the sheet and blanket your child will use at kindergarten to be stored in. Little St. Margaret's provide sheets and blankets.
- a lunch box (for 9am – 3pm days only)

What to bring for 4year old kindergarten (Red and Yellow groups):

- a refillable drink bottle
- a snack box (for morning tea)
- a lunch box (for 9am-3pm days only)
- roll on sun cream with a valid expiry date
- a sun smart hat, which will need to be purchased from Little St. Margaret's
- a medium backpack

What to bring for extended care:

- a lunch box (children attending Monday and Wednesday 12pm – 3pm)
- a snack box (children attending Tuesday, Thursday and 3yr old children attending on a Wednesday)

Operating hours

Kindergarten sessions

4Year Old Kindergarten Red and Yellow	Mon, Wed and Fri Tues and Thurs	9:00am – 12:00pm 9:00am - 3.00pm
3Year Old Kindergarten Blue	Tues and Thurs	9:00am – 3:00pm
3Year Old Kindergarten Green	Mon and Fri Wed	9:00am – 12:00pm 9:00am – 3:00pm

OPTIONAL: Early drop off is available from 8.30am; please see the Manager or your child’s teacher for further information.

The answering machine is on and monitored throughout the day. It is also on after hours and during the holidays. Please leave a message and your call will be returned when possible.

Extended care

Extended care is available on a Monday and Wednesday afternoon from 12:00pm – 3:00pm or 12:00pm - 6:00pm for children attending the service. It is also available on a Tuesday and Thursday afternoon from 3:00pm – 6:00pm. There is no extended care on a Friday afternoon. Extended Care is available as a permanent or casual booking at an additional charge. Please contact extendedcare@littlestmargarets.com.au for bookings or further information.

Attendance

Arrival and departure process

As part of the Education and Care Services National Regulations, all children must be ‘signed in’ and ‘signed out’ of the attendance books on each day they attend Little St. Margaret’s Kindergarten. Please assist us in maintaining our attendance record by recording your child’s time of arrival and departure, the person collecting your child and the expected departure time in the attendance book provided.

A child can only be collected by their parent/guardians or an authorised person when nominated in writing by the child’s parent/guardian. The person scheduled to collect the child must be written in the attendance book and is required to present an identification card upon arrival. Parents must give educators notification ASAP if there are any changes to any previous arrangements. Please see the Delivery and Collection of Children policy or an educator for more information.

Before and after the kindergarten sessions we ask that both kindergarten children and siblings refrain from playing in either of the outdoor play spaces. This ensures the safety of all children and allows the experiences to remain set up for the kindergarten children as intended for the purposes of the programs.

Please ensure that only adults press the buttons of the gate code at the front gate. If children are aware of the code and parents allow them to press the buttons when arriving and departing, then children can open the gate themselves. This undermines the safety and security of the children during their attendance at our service. Parents will be notified when the gate code is changed during the year.

Absences

Please call before 10am if your child is not attending their kindergarten session. Alternatively, you can email your child's teacher or leave a message on the answering machine after hours. Please notify your child's teacher of scheduled absences/holidays or regular appointments. This helps with our individual programs and planning.

Fees

Kindergarten fees

Fees are reviewed and set yearly by the Directors of Little St. Margaret Ltd. Please refer to the fee schedule or website for current fees.

Kindergarten subsidies (3year old programs only)

Subsidies are available to eligible families to attend the 3year old program. The kindergarten fee subsidy allows children to access up to 5 hours of kindergarten delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher. Children are eligible for one year of 3year old kindergarten only.

Your child is eligible in any of the following circumstances:

- If your child identifies as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
- If your child is identified on their birth certificate as being a multiple birth child (triplets or more)

Or if your child holds or has a parent or guardian who holds one of the following:

- A Commonwealth Health Care Card
- A Commonwealth Pensioner Concession Card
- A Department of Veterans Affairs Gold Card or White Card
- Refugee visa (subclass 200)
- In-country Special Humanitarian visa (subclass 201)
- Temporary Humanitarian Concern visa (subclass 786)
- Production visa (subclass 866)
- Emergency Rescue visa (subclass 203)
- Woman at Risk visa (subclass 204)
- Bridging visas, A-E

If your family or child has a humanitarian or refugee visa listed by the Department of Immigration and Border Protection, which is not included in the above list, your child may still be eligible for the kindergarten fee subsidy. Please speak to the Manager for more information.

Kindergarten subsidies (4year old programs only)

Subsidies are available to eligible families to attend the 4year old program. The kindergarten fee subsidy allows children to access up to 15 hours of kindergarten delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher in the year before school for free or at a low cost.

Your child is eligible in any of the following circumstances:

- If your child identifies as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
- If your child is identified on their birth certificate as being a multiple birth child (triplets or more)

Or if your child holds or has a parent or guardian who holds one of the following:

- A Commonwealth Health Care Card

- A Commonwealth Pensioner Concession Card
- A Department of Veterans Affairs Gold Card or White Card
- Refugee visa (subclass 200)
- In-country Special Humanitarian visa (subclass 201)
- Temporary Humanitarian Concern visa (subclass 786)
- Production visa (subclass 866)
- Emergency Rescue visa (subclass 203)
- Woman at Risk visa (subclass 204)
- Bridging visas, A-E

If your family or child has a humanitarian or refugee visa listed by the Department of Immigration and Border Protection, which is not included in the above list, your child may still be eligible for the kindergarten fee subsidy. Please speak to the Manager for more information.

Invoicing

Invoicing occurs quarterly and will be sent out to families via email and parent pockets. To secure your child's spot it is essential that fees be paid on time. If at any time you are experiencing difficulties in payment, please contact Little St. Margaret's Kindergarten to discuss options.

A **5% discount** is available to families who would like to pay the full year fees in advance. Please refer to the fee schedule for further details and due date.

Late collection charge

Little St. Margaret's reserves the right to implement a late collection charge when parents/guardians are late in collecting a child from the service. This charge will be set at a level determined by the Board of Little St. Margaret's. Any child remaining at Little St. Margaret's at the end of the session will join the extended care program if a position is available, and the family will be charged accordingly.

Unpaid fees

If fees are not paid by the due date, the following steps will be taken.

- An initial reminder letter will be sent to parents/guardians with a specified payment date and will include information on a range of support options available for the family.
- Where payment is still not received, families will be invited to attend a meeting to discuss the range of support options available and establish a payment plan.
- Failure to attend the meeting and continued non-payment may result in a second and final letter notifying parents/guardians that the child's place at the service may be withdrawn unless payment is made, or a payment plan is entered into within a specified period. This letter will also include information on a range of support options available for the family.
- Directors will continue to offer support and will reserve the right to employ the services of a debt collector.
- If a decision is made to withdraw the child's place at the service, the parents/guardians will be provided with 14 days' notice in writing.

Enrolments

Application for enrolment forms for Little St. Margaret's Kindergarten are available on our website. Forms must be completed in full and submitted with a copy of the child's birth certificate and current immunisation certificate. The non-refundable enrolment fee must also be paid. Families are encouraged to enrol younger siblings as soon as practical.

Uniforms

Uniforms at Little St Margaret's are available, however not compulsory. Families are given the opportunity to purchase uniform items at the beginning of the year. Depending on the demand, orders can also be placed throughout the year. Little St. Margaret's strongly recommends the purchase of a reversal sun hat.

Working with Children Checks

A Working with Children Check involves a national criminal history check and a review of findings of workplace misconduct. It is a requirement for all individuals who work or volunteer in child-related environments.

All volunteers that will have direct contact and assigned supervision of children, will require to have a Working with Children Check. All parents and stepparents are exempt from the checks. Any other family members (grandparents, aunts, uncles, brothers, sisters, nannies, or babysitters) wanting to participate in our programs and excursions will need to have a Working with Children Check before attending our sessions. The checks are free of charge and are valid for 5 years. The following link will provide you with more information and application details:

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

At Little St. Margaret's we value the participation and involvement of all our families and outside community, therefore we strongly encourage members of your family to consider applying for the check so that we can continue to support your child's educational journey at Little St. Margaret's. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Manager or your child's teacher for clarification.

Family Participation

Parent involvement is welcomed at Little St. Margaret's Kindergarten. All parents/visitors must be double vaccinated for COVID-19. Parents can be involved in several ways:

- Spending time participating in the program – sharing special talents/skill (playing musical instrument, gardening, cooking, reading stories to the children).
- Park duty in 4yr old kindergarten
- Working Bees/Maintenance
- Participating on Little St. Margaret's council
- Involvement in policy reviews
- Participating in parent surveys
- Organising and participating in fundraising activities
- Attending social events (coffee mornings, parent dinners, whole centre drinks and end of year Picnic in the Park).
- Attending parent information evenings, AGM

Art and craft material

We use a variety of recyclable materials in the programs. If you can help with any of the following, please let us know- recycled white paper, small boxes, corks, material scraps, wool, soft wood (small pieces), cotton reels, ribbon, bottle tops.

Fundraising

Opportunities to help raise additional funds for the purchasing of new equipment for our kindergarten will occur occasionally throughout the year. Details of any fundraising events will be communicated to parents when they are organised.

Laundry

Parents are asked to help with laundry by placing their name on a weekly roster to take home the laundry to wash over the weekend. Parents are usually asked to participate once per term per family.

- 3yr old Blue – washing children’s bed sheets or blankets, taken home Thursday and returned Tuesday.
- 3yr old Green – washing children’s art smocks and towels, taken home Friday and returned on Monday.
- 4yr old Red/Yellow – washing children’s art smocks and towels, taken home Friday and returned on Monday.

Parent Library

There is a parent library near the kitchen in the front classroom. There are books and pamphlets that you may find interesting on a variety of topics. If you would like information on a particular issue, please speak to one of the educators and they can refer you to something appropriate. If you wish to borrow a resource, please record your details in the borrowing folder.

Children’s health and wellbeing

Covid-19

Little St. Margaret’s is guided by the Department of Education. As new information is received, LSM will communicate this information to all families. We appreciate your support with abiding by the recommendations.

A COVID-19 Risk Minimisation Plan has been prepared for LSM.

Mealtimes

Healthy Eating is encouraged at Little St. Margaret’s Kindergarten, and we strongly recommend that you limit the amount of processed and packaged food provided for your child for our daily mealtimes. We encourage you to leave “sometimes food” such as chips and chocolates for home and as we would prefer, they are not brought to kindergarten.

3Year Old Kindergarten (Blue and Green groups):

- Children are asked to bring small snack box for morning tea.
- Children who stay for lunchtime are asked to bring their own food in a named lunchbox.
- We strongly encourage you to send fruit/vegetables as part of the morning tea snack

4Year Old Kindergarten (Red/Yellow group):

- Children are asked to bring all the food they will need for the day (morning tea and lunch) in their own individual named lunchboxes. We suggest one for morning tea and a larger container for lunch.
- We strongly encourage you to send fruit/vegetables as part of the morning tea snack.
- All children require a refillable drink bottle each day for water.

Nuts

Little St. Margaret’s is a ‘nut aware’ kindergarten. This means that we are aware that some children can have severe allergic reactions triggered by nuts and wish to minimise the risk for all children encountering nuts while attending the service. Therefore, we ask that parents please avoid putting any nuts or nut products into your child’s morning tea or lunchbox.

Medication

On occasion, children may need medication administered whilst attending Little St. Margaret’s. For this to occur parents/guardians will need to complete the medication form at the kindergarten to

authorise educators. All medication must be in original containers and clearly labelled. If it is prescription medication it must be prescribed to the child receiving the medication.

Illness and infectious diseases

In the event of illness, injury or emergency, the parent/guardian will be notified immediately. Parents are asked to provide names, addresses and phone numbers of at least two people to contact if a parent or guardian is not contactable. The emergency contacts provided will need to be within 30 minutes of the kindergarten.

Parents/guardians are also asked to sign a consent form authorising the kindergarten to seek emergency, medical, and hospital or ambulance service in the event of illness, injury or emergency. Full written details are recorded in relation to any illness, medication or emergency treatment administered to a child while attending Little St. Margaret's.

If a child does not have an infectious disease but exhibits any of the following signs they are to be excluded and parents will be contacted immediately:

- sleeps at unusual time
- raised temperature about 37.5 degrees
- crying constantly because of discomfort due to illness
- vomiting and/or diarrhoea
- reaction to medications
- in need of constant one to one care

If your child is unwell prior to coming to kindergarten, or exhibits any of the above signs, please notify Little St. Margaret's of their absence before 10am.

The following exclusion periods must be adhered to:

- 24hour exclusion after vomiting means 24 hours clear of vomiting after reintroduction and tolerance of a full diet i.e., full-strength milk, fruit, vegetables, meat, bread etc.
- 24hour exclusion after a temperature means the temperature has stayed at a normal level (around 36-37 degrees) for 24 hours without Panadol or any other administered agent.
- 24hour exclusion after Panadol means that children are excluded for 24 hours after receiving Panadol for any reason.
- 24hour exclusion after medication means that children are excluded for 24 hours after commencing a course of antibiotics or anti-fungal. This gives time for the medication to begin to take effect.
- 24hour exclusion after childhood/travel immunisation as children may need close monitoring for any adverse reactions.
- 24hour exclusion after diarrhoea means that children are excluded until there has not been a loose bowel movement for 24 hours.

Please notify us immediately if your child contracts an infectious disease or illness. Any occurrence of an infectious disease in the kindergarten will be made known to all families (without identifying the infectious person). Please refer to exclusion table below, parents will be required to withdraw a child with an infectious disease from the kindergarten for the period of confinement specified.

Immunisation:

Effective from January 2016, the "**NO JAB, NO PLAY**" legislation applies. All children enrolled in an early childhood service in Victoria must provide evidence that their child is:

- fully immunised for their age OR
- on a vaccination catch-up program OR
- unable to be fully immunised for medical reasons
- Acceptable immunisation documentation is required in the form of an immunisation history statement from the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR)

It is important that you notify educators with details of any changes in your child's immunisation status throughout the year.

Medical conditions

Parents of children with diagnosed medical conditions (i.e., asthma, allergic reactions, anaphylaxis) are required to inform educators of these medical conditions on enrolment. Completed management plans that are signed by the child's doctor and associated medication must be provided before the child attends kindergarten. Your child's teacher can provide you with copies of the medical management plans. Parents are required to let educators know as soon as possible of any changes to their child's medical condition throughout the year.

Medical emergencies

The wellbeing of your child is our priority. If your child is involved in a medical emergency an educator will administer first aid as required, call emergency services and contact you.

Accidents and injuries

Little St. Margaret's Kindergarten aims to provide a safe environment for all children, parents, and educators. If your child is involved in a minor incident e.g., tripping over, the educator will offer comfort and appropriate first aid. Educators will complete an accident report and discuss the incident with you at pick up time. If the accident is more serious e.g., bumping their head, the educators will comfort your child, provide appropriate first aid and contact you by phone to inform you of the accident. In some circumstances you may be required to collect your child and seek medical advice.

Sun protection

Little St. Margaret's is a registered sun smart service and adheres to a Sun Smart Policy which states, 'sun protection is required from September to the end of April or whenever UV levels are above 3'. Our policy requires children when playing outside to:

- Have sunscreen applied at least 20 minutes before going outside
- Wear loose fitting clothing that covers as much skin as possible. Clothing made from cool, densely woven fabric is recommended.
- Wear tops with elbow length sleeves, and if possible, collars and knee length or longer style shorts and skirts. If a child is not wearing sun-safe clothing (e.g., a singlet top or shoestring dress) they will be required to choose a t-shirt/shirt to wear over the top before going outdoors.
- Wear hats that protect their face, neck, and ears, e.g., legionnaire, broad-brimmed or bucket hats. Baseball or peak caps and visors are not considered a suitable alternative.

All children are required to bring a named roll-on sunscreen with a clear expiry date that remains at the kindergarten.

Child Safe Standards

The Victorian Government introduced compulsory minimum standards for organisations that provide services for children to help protect children from abuse. The Child Safe Standards form part of the Victorian Government's response to the Parliamentary Inquiry into the Handling of Child Abuse by Religious and Other Non-Government Organisations. After five years of their implementation, it has been evident how the Standards have improved safety for all children. In 2022, changes were introduced to make our Standards even stronger. The new Standards set out minimum requirements and outline the actions organisations must take to keep children and young people safe.

Further information can be found in Little St. Margaret's policies:

- Child Safe Environment and Wellbeing Policy

- Code of Conduct Policy

The Child Safe Standards consist of the following 11 areas:

- Organisations establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued
- Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.
- Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.
- Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.
- Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.
- People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.
- Process for complaints and concerns are child focused.
- Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.
- Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.
- Implementation of Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved.
- Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.

All Victorian services for children are required to operate within a 'child-safe environment.' Little St. Margaret's has met all the required standards for child safety and will continue to screen staff and train them to identify and report any suspected abuse.

Child protection

The Little St. Margaret's Kindergarten organisation along with our employees and volunteers has a duty of care and an ethical responsibility to protect children from any risk of harm. Teachers who are employed as an Early Childhood Teacher (ECT) are required to register with Victorian Institute of Teaching and are mandated to report to Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Child Protection.

A referral to Child FIRST or a report to Child Protection will be made whenever there are reasonable grounds to believe that a child has or is likely to suffer significant harm or the child's safety and/or wellbeing is at risk. Actions and decisions taken under this policy will consider the importance of maintaining respectful and collaborative relationships with children and their family.

Please refer to Little St. Margaret's child protection policy available at the kindergarten.

Rest and relaxation time

All children who attend a full day at Little St. Margaret's Kindergarten will have a rest or quiet time in the afternoon. During these times children who wish to sleep will be supported to do so, with others enjoying listening to relaxing music, story tapes, reading books or doing other quiet activities. The length of rest times will vary according to the needs of the children.

Toileting

Little St. Margaret's encourages children to be toilet trained (or involved in the process of toilet training) when they commence kindergarten. Each classroom has a children's bathroom attached so educators can support and supervise children's toileting routines throughout the session.

Parents are encouraged to pack an additional change of clothes for their child each day in their backpack in case a change is required. Please speak to your child's teacher if you have any questions regarding toileting.

Importance of safety

Building and playground safety

The educators at Little St. Margaret's conduct daily and monthly safety inspections of the indoor and outdoor environments. Any hazards are removed or made inaccessible to children and reported to management for further action. The Australian Standards for Playgrounds are used to guide all outdoor equipment purchases

Emergency procedures

Fire extinguishers and first aid kits are located throughout Little St. Margaret's and are regularly maintained. Emergency evacuation procedures are clearly displayed. The educators practice emergency evacuations procedures with the children once a term.

Visitor's book

All visitors must sign in and out in the visitor's book, this is a regulatory requirement and is important for the security of the children, parents, and staff. Any visitors working directly with the children will be required to be double vaccinated for COVID-19.

Policies and Procedures

Little St. Margaret's Kindergarten has policies that are aligned with the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 and the Education and Care National Law Act 2010. Policies and procedures support the foundation of quality practice. They assist in promoting the best outcomes for children, families and the service we provide. Parents can refer to the policies on our website. It is important for families to read and understand these policies when starting kindergarten and for referral throughout the year.

Families are also involved in the review process of our policies. When a review is due, the policies will be emailed to our LSM community with a request for feedback. All policies under review are then endorsed by LSM Council at the monthly council meetings.

Grievances

We value and support open communication at Little St. Margaret's Kindergarten and would encourage parents with any concerns to raise them with their child's teacher and/or the Manager in the first instance. Formal Complaints may be registered in writing with the Directors of the Little St. Margaret's via director@littlestmargarets.com.au. If the complainant feels that their concern has not been satisfactorily resolved, they may choose to refer their complaint to the Department of Education and Training.

Department of Education contact:

Children's Services Authorised Officer –
Dandenong Office ph. 1300 338 738
165 -167 Thomas Street or PO Box 5, Dandenong 3175

Birthdays

If you would like to celebrate your child's birthday at Little St. Margaret's, we invite you to join us for this special occasion. Our birthday celebrations include providing your child with a pretend birthday cake with candles, an optional party hat and singing happy birthday as a group. Children can bring party favours (e.g., bubbles or balloons) to share with their peers at the end of the session.

Parking

As Little St. Margaret's Kindergarten is in a residential street, parents are asked to be mindful when parking. Please remember to consider our neighbours and park at least 1 metre from their driveways. Be aware that the area immediately outside the kindergarten is a 5 minute drop off zone and the City of Stonnington parking inspectors regularly patrol the surrounding area.

Photographs

Educators take photos of the children daily to document, record, assess and report on their learning and development as part of the curriculum. These photos are used in displays around the room, reflections emailed to the parents in the group, in the child's individual portfolio etc. A professional photographer will visit during the year to take group and individual photos. These kinder photos will be available for parents to purchase if they wish.

Parents give written consent via the child's enrolment form for their child to be photographed for these purposes. If you are concerned about photographs being taken of your child for privacy reasons, please discuss this with your child's teacher.

Student educators

Throughout the year, we welcome students from various universities, TAFE and school organisations. They may be doing work experience, volunteer roles or formal placements as part of their training to become qualified educators. Placements can be one day or over several weeks, depending on the requirements. Qualified staff at Little St. Margaret's always closely supervises student educators.

Student educators gain valuable experience in the early childhood field and Little St. Margaret's staff appreciate keeping up to date with current educational discussions and practise from a tertiary perspective. Parents will be informed when a student educator is working within their child's program.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information.
If you have any questions or would like more clarification, please do not hesitate to
contact the Manager.

We look forward to working closely with you
and your child as they experience an
Adventure in Education at Little St. Margaret's Kindergarten.

Notes:

