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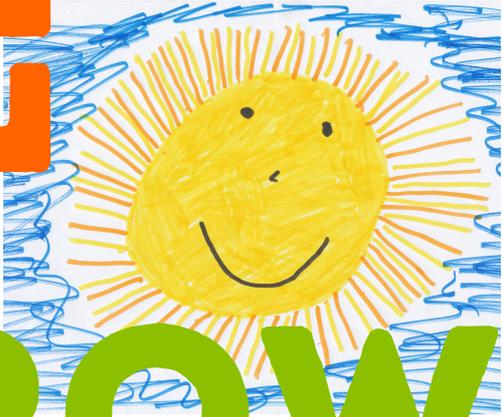


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HIGHMOUNT PRESCHOOL

36 Lechte Road, Mount Waverley VIC 3149
(03) 9802 2812 | highmount.kin@kindergarten.vic.gov.au
www.highmountpreschool.org.au
ABN 61 371 106 108 | Reg No. A0005140G

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Acknowledgement of Country

Highmount Preschool acknowledges the traditional custodians of this land, the Woi-wurrung Wurundjeri people, and pay our respects to the Elders past, present and future.

WELCOME

Highmount Preschool extends a warm welcome to all children and their parents and guardians.

This year will be a big step for your child. Some children will have been to playgroup or crèche, but for many this will be their first experience away from home. We recognise that each child is unique and that children will approach this new environment in varying ways.

Each child will be made to feel welcome and secure, so that they will be at ease to explore and become familiar with the outdoor area, the room equipment, the staff and the other children. The program allows for a great deal of parent/guardian involvement, so you will be able to be part of your child's preschool education. As parents/guardians you will play a very important role in the functioning of Highmount, and we hope you will feel satisfaction in being part of our kindergarten community.

This handbook will give you the main information about the way Highmount operates and how you can help make Highmount an enjoyable, rewarding and safe environment. Further details regarding our policies and procedures are available for viewing on our website <http://www.highmountpreschool.org.au> Hard copies can be made available upon request.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any concerns, questions or suggestions throughout the year. We look forward to an exciting and beneficial year for your child.

This handbook is designed to provide parents or guardians with relevant information on the policies, procedures and expectations of the Highmount Preschool Association Incorporated. The Committee of Management encourages all parents and guardians to become familiar with these policies and procedures.

Any queries about the contents of this booklet should be directed to the committee or the teachers.

PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT

At Highmount Preschool we plan, evaluate and implement a child-centred program based on the principles outlined in the Victorian Early Years Framework (VEYLDF) and the National Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) – Belonging, Being and Becoming.

Our Vision, Our Purpose

We believe extending and enriching children’s learning will maximise their potential and develop a foundation for future success and learning.

Therefore, concerning **children**, we believe:

- Our priority is to ensure the safety, health and wellbeing of children according to the Child Safe Standards.
- Each and every child has the right to quality education and care, regardless of their background, ethnicity, culture, language, beliefs, gender, age socioeconomic status, level of ability, additional needs, family structure or lifestyle in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- Nurturing helps children to feel respected, self-confident, trusted, responsible, independent and acknowledged for their individuality.
- Children should be provided with the opportunity to adopt environmentally friendly practices.
- Children’s individual development needs, interests and experiences should be recognised, embraced and supported.
- Children should be treated equitably and with respect.
- Promoting inclusive practices ensures the successful participation of all children.

Therefore, concerning **families**, we believe:

- Families bring with them the knowledge of the whole child and that home and family is the primary source of learning for children.
- Trust, respect and collaboration forms the basis for strong partnerships between families and educators to ensure that their child’s needs are being met.
- Families should be encouraged to engage in meaningful participation within the program.
- In engagement and partnerships between families through community, social events, excursions, working bees and fundraising activities.
- In open and constructive communication with families which includes discussions, child portfolios, daily reflections and newsletters.

Therefore, concerning **educators**, we are committed to:

- Employing qualified educators who are dedicated to advancing the best interests of children and families.
- Encouraging on-going professional development in the field of early childhood education.
- Working together as a team to help create a supportive, happy and productive work environment.
- Employing professionals who adhere to the Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics (Feb 2016)

STAFF

Rebecca Tyson – Early Childhood Teacher (ECT) and Educational Leader

Rebecca joins the Highmount Preschool community in 2020. It will be her 7th year teaching kindergarten and her 15th year working in the education sector.

“I am deeply passionate about quality education for all children and aim to provide children with meaningful and engaging learning experiences and foster a life-long love of learning. I am very much looking forward to being part of the Highmount community and providing a high-quality kindergarten program for the children and families to enjoy. I know that in 2020 together we will learn, gain understanding, be challenged and inspired, experience adventure and wonder, and most importantly we will form connections and have fun!”

In her spare time Rebecca enjoys spending time with her partner Craig, her daughter Phoebe and their extended family and friends. Her hobbies include painting, drawing, restoring mid-century furniture and exploring the Yarra Valley.

Jenny Galanos–Assistant Educator

Jenny has a Diploma of Teaching and worked as a primary school teacher for several years. She has worked with children in a variety of areas throughout her life including family day care, home day care and at the Craig Family Centre with children aged 2-5. Her first position as an assistant was at St Paul’s Kindergarten in Canterbury and she now enjoys being part of the Highmount Preschool team. Jenny works as an assistant teacher at Highmount with both the three and four-year-old groups.

Hilda Cousins - Assistant Educator

Hilda joined Highmount Preschool as a volunteer in 2016 and loved working with children so much she decided to leave her 30-year corporate career to study and attain a Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care.

Upon graduating in 2019 Hilda worked as Assistant Educator before becoming the three-year old group leader in 2020. Hilda also works as an Assistant Educator alongside our 4-Year-Old Teacher.

“I’m so excited to be a part of the Highmount community and look forward to working with the children and their families”

Abida Khan - Assistant Educator

Abida has a Bachelor Degree in Education (overseas) and a Diploma in Early Childhood Education from JTI Melbourne. Abida has worked at Chandler Kindergarten and Mount Waverley Preschool. Abida joined the Highmount Preschool team in 2016 and works as lunch time relief. Abida has a varied experience in both Preschools and Primary Schools. She has a keen interest with young children in teaching through play.

Our educators (*including Relief Educators*) meet the training and qualification requirements as set out in the Education and Care Services National Law Act and Regulations.

All educators possess and regularly update their First Aid, CPR, Asthma, Anaphylaxis and Auto injection device training.

NATIONAL QUALITY FRAMEWORK

The National Quality Framework (NQF) aims to raise quality and drive continuous improvement and consistency in education and care services through:

- a national legislative framework - Education and Care Services National Regulations, Education and Care Services National Law Act
- a National Quality Standard
- a national quality rating and assessment process
- a national body called the Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA).

Quality education and care shapes every child’s future and lays the foundation for their development and learning. The early years are critical for establishing self-esteem, resilience, healthy growth and capacity to learn. Research shows quality education and care early in life leads to better health, education and employment outcomes later in life.

For further information:

<https://www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/about>

National Quality Standard

The National Quality Standard (NQS) is a key aspect of the NQF and sets a national benchmark for early childhood education and care, and outside school hours care services in Australia.

To ensure children enjoy the best possible conditions in their early educational and developmental years, the NQS promotes continuous improvement in quality.

For further information:

<https://www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/national-quality-standard>

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN (QIP)

What is the Highmount Preschool Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)?

The National Regulations require approved services to have a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP). The aim of the QIP is to help the staff and educators self-assess their performance in delivering quality education and care and to plan future improvements. The QIP also helps the regulatory authorities with their assessment of the service.

Have a read if you like...

Please take the opportunity to have a read of our QIP and our current goals at Highmount Preschool. A copy of the Highmount Preschool QIP is located in the “welcome area”.

We are always looking to improve our service. We welcome feedback from parents and the preschool community as we endeavour to be a program that is flexible and responds to the needs of the children and families at the service. Feedback can be provided anonymously and will be treated with confidentiality and respect.

THE EARLY LEARNING YEARS FRAMEWORK

Learning Outcomes for Children Birth to 5 Years

The National Quality Standard is linked to [national learning frameworks](#) that recognise children learn from birth.

The **Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (Belonging, Being and Becoming)** suggests five outcomes. At Highmount Preschool we will be moving towards achieving these outcomes during the year. You will see references to these outcomes in the journal/visual diary on most days as we share what has been happening, some learning stories and our thoughts about a curriculum that energises as the year progresses.

Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of IDENTITY

- Children feel safe, secure and supported
- Children develop their emerging autonomy, inter-dependence, resilience and a sense of agency
- Children develop knowledgeable and confident identities
- Children learn to interact in relation to others with care, empathy and respect

Outcome 2: Children are connected with and contribute to their world – COMMUNITY

- Children develop a sense of belonging to groups and communities and an understanding of the reciprocal rights and responsibilities necessary for active community participation
- Children respond to diversity with respect
- Children become aware of fairness
- Children become socially responsible and show respect for the environment

Outcome 3: Children have a strong sense of WELLBEING

- Children become strong in their social and emotional wellbeing
- Children take increasing responsibility for their own health and physical wellbeing

Outcome 4: Children are confident and involved LEARNERS

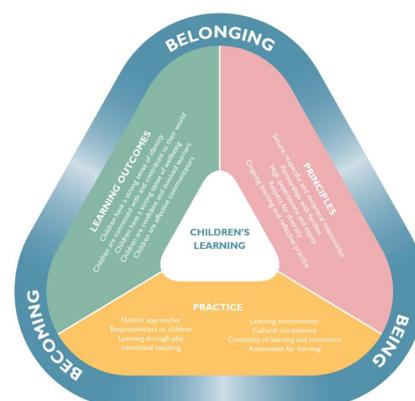
- Children develop dispositions for learning such as curiosity, cooperation, confidence, creativity, community, enthusiasm, persistence, imagination and reflexivity
- Children develop a range of skills; such as problem solving, inquiry, experimentation, hypothesising, researching and investigating
- Children transfer and adapt what they have learned from one contact to another
- Children resource their own learning through connecting with people, places, technologies and natural and processed materials

Outcome 5: Children are effective COMMUNICATORS

- Children interact verbally and non-verbally with others for a range of purposes
- Children engage with a range of texts and gain meaning from these texts
- Children express ideas and make meaning using a range of media
- Children begin to understand how symbols and pattern systems work
- Children use information and communication technologies to access information, investigate ideas and represent their thinking.

For further information:

<https://www.education.gov.au/early-years-learning-framework-0>



GENERAL INFORMATION

Term Dates - 2020

Period	Start	Finish	Length
Term 1	Tuesday 28th January <i>(school teachers start)</i> Wednesday 29th January <i>(students start)</i>	Friday 27th March	9 weeks
<i>School Holidays – Saturday 28th March 2020 – Monday 13th April 2020</i>			
Term 2	Tuesday 14th April	Friday 26th June	11 weeks
<i>School Holidays – Saturday 27th June 2020 - Sunday 12th July 2020</i>			
Term 3	Monday 13th July	Friday 18th September	10 weeks
<i>School Holidays – Saturday 19th September 2020 – Sunday 4th October 2020</i>			
Term 4	Monday 5th October	Friday 18th December	11 weeks
<i>2020 / 2021 Summer School Holidays</i> <i>Saturday 19th December 2020 – Wednesday 27th January 2021 (school teachers start)</i>			

Public Holidays– Victoria 2020

Day	Date	Holiday	Day	Date	Holiday
Wednesday	1 st January	New Year's Day	Monday	13 th April	Easter Monday
Sunday	26 th January	Australia Day	Saturday	25 th April	Anzac Day
Monday	27 th January	Australia Day Public Holiday	Monday	8 th June	Queen's Birthday
Monday	9 th March	Labour Day	Friday	25 th September	Friday before the AFL Grand Final – Subject to AFL Schedule
Friday	10 th April	Good Friday	Tuesday	3 rd November	Melbourne Cup
Saturday	11 th April	Easter Saturday	Friday	25 th December	Christmas Day
Sunday	12 th April	Easter Sunday	Saturday	26 th December	Boxing Day
			Monday	28 th December	Boxing Day Holiday

Session Times

<u>Monday</u>	<u>Tuesday</u>	<u>Wednesday</u>	<u>Thursday</u>	<u>Friday</u>
8:30 - 2:30pm	8:30 - 11:30pm	8:30 - 2:30pm	8:30 - 11:30pm	8:30 - 2:30pm
4-Year Old	3-Year Old	4-Year Old	3-Year Old	4-Year Old
	EDUCATORS: Hilda Cousins & Jenny Galanos		EDUCATORS: Hilda Cousins & Jenny Galanos	
RED, GREEN & PURPLE GROUPS	12:15pm - 3:15pm	RED, BLUE & PURPLE GROUPS	12:15pm - 3:15pm	GREEN & BLUE GROUPS
	4-Year Old BLUE & PURPLE GROUPS		4-Year Old RED & GREEN GROUPS	
EDUCATORS: Rebecca Tyson & Hilda Cousins	EDUCATORS: Rebecca Tyson and Jenny Galanos	EDUCATORS: Rebecca Tyson & Hilda Cousins	EDUCATORS: Rebecca Tyson and Jenny Galanos	EDUCATORS: Rebecca Tyson and Jenny Galanos

3-Year-Old Program – Groups

Two days a week
- 6 hours

2 x 3-hour session

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
YELLOW GROUP				
	8:30am – 11:30am		8:30am – 11:30am	

4-Year-Old Program - Groups

Three days a week
- 15 hours

2 x 6-hour session
1 x 3-hour session

RED GROUP	GREEN GROUP	BLUE GROUP	PURPLE GROUP
Monday 8:30am – 2:30pm – 6 hrs	Monday 8:30am – 2:30pm – 6 hrs	Tuesday 12:15pm – 3:15pm – 3hrs	Monday 8:30am – 2:30pm – 6 hrs
Wednesday 8:30am – 2:30pm – 6hrs	Thursday 12:15pm – 3:15pm – 3hrs	Wednesday 8:30am – 02:30pm – 6hrs	Tuesday 12:15pm – 3:15pm – 3hrs
Thursday 12:15pm – 3:15pm – 3hrs	Friday 8:30am – 2:30pm – 6 hrs	Friday 8:30am – 02:30pm – 6 hrs	Wednesday 8:30am – 2:30pm – 6hrs

DELIVERY AND COLLECTION OF CHILDREN

At Highmount Preschool we are committed to:

- ensuring the safe delivery and collection of children being educated and cared for at the service
- meeting its duty of care obligations under the law

Attendance Book

Parents/Guardians are required to sign the daily Attendance Book on arrival and departure. This informs staff as to who is collecting the child. Highmount will keep the child inside the classroom until they are satisfied that the person collecting the child is authorised to do so.

Please note that the Department of Education (DET) does not accept initials, it should be a **full signature**.

Additionally, please ensure that you write the **exact time** you drop off and pick up your child – **not** the session time. This enables us to be aware of where your child is at a given time and ensures we comply with Occupational Health and Safety guidelines and insurance purposes. Highmount’s responsibility for a child does not start until the session begins, and it reverts to the parent/guardian as soon as the session ends.

Delivery of Children

Parents/Guardians are requested to wait with their child in the “welcome area” until staff are ready to receive the children. Unless by prior arrangement, children must not enter the Preschool building before the start of the session.

- an Attendance Book will be made available to parents/guardians when educators are ready to take full responsibility for children
- the person delivering the child to the service (and collecting the child from the service) will need to complete the following details in the Attendance Book each day and sign their name
 - the full name of the parent/guardian
 - the date and time the child arrives and departs
 - the signature of the person who delivers and collects the child
- once children have been signed into the Attendance Book, the educators become responsible for the care and education of the children.

Upon Departure

Children must be collected punctually. Young children often become distressed if they are picked up late.

- at the end of the session families are asked to wait in the “welcome area” until an educator opens the door.
- children are to remain seated on the floor until the educator says their name indicating the appropriate parent/authorise nominee has arrived to collect them.
- the person collecting the child needs to sign their name and note the time in the Attendance Book indicating that they have collected the child
- once the Attendance Book has been signed and the time of collection noted, the children's supervision is the responsibility of the parents/guardians or carers whilst they are still on the premises.

Late Collection of Children

Parents/guardians of children attending the service are expected to adhere to scheduled session times. However, there may be occasions when there are unavoidable delays when parents/guardians or authorised persons are collecting children. If parents/guardians are unable to adhere to scheduled session times it is expected that;

- parents/guardians must contact and advise the educators if they are going to be unavoidably late so that they can reassure the child and/or alleviate any fears the child may have by not being collected on time.
- parents/guardians will make arrangements for their child to be collected in the event of their delay; and
- **every effort** is made to organise alternative arrangements for timely collection of the child-

Regular Late Collection of Children and Late Collection Fee

The Committee of Management reserves the right to impose a late collection fee should parent/guardians continually ignore their child's scheduled session times or are habitually late despite reminders.

The procedure for the recovery of a late fee will be set out in the Highmount Preschool's Fee Policy.

Authorised Nominees

Your consent is required for persons other than parents/guardians to collect the child from the service on your behalf. These people are known as "Authorised Nominees." An Authorised Nominee is a person who has been given permission by a parent/guardian to collect the child from the preschool. These details are recorded on your Enrolment Form.

In the event that that your child is not collected from the service and the parents/guardians cannot be contacted, an authorised person will be contacted to collect your child. This list can be added to or changed at any time during the year.

In the event that the "Authorised Nominee is dropping off and/or collecting your child then please ensure they make themselves known to staff and that they are shown the location of the Attendance Book, how to sign-in/out and that the PIN to access the security gate is provided.

Playground Safety

Parents and children are welcome to socialise and play in the playground before and after the Kindergarten session. However please note that the Approved Provider Highmount Preschool Association Incorporated and educators accept no responsibility and/or liability for any incidents that occur outside the formal Kindergarten hours.

Parents are solely responsible for their children in the playground **before** and **after** kindergarten session times. We also ask that parents and children do not move any equipment and leave the playground as you find it. Our staff work hard to maintain a tidy, safe, clean and pleasant environment for the children.

Safety Gate and PIN

The front gate is operated by a PIN (Personal Identification Number). The PIN is changed annually, and you will be informed of the PIN at the beginning of the school year. When entering the school gate please enter the PIN and lift the gate safety latch. Upon exiting the preschool premises, you will need to press the green EXIT button located on the left-hand side of the gate and lift the gate safety latch. At all times please be aware that no other children are following, and that the gate closes firmly behind you.

Under no circumstance are children to use the security system.

Parking

Please take note of the **timed parking restrictions** on Lechte Road opposite the preschool entrance. Please be mindful of the nearby residents and do not obstruct driveways.

The Committee of Management would also like to take this opportunity to remind parents of the **dangers of leaving children unattended in cars** even for a short period of time and that it is recommended that children exit a vehicle on the kerb side of the road.

COMMUNICATION

Parent Pockets

Each child has a pocket located in the “welcome area” of the Preschool. All notices, payment receipts etc. are placed in the pocket. We advise you to check the pocket daily.

Parent Noticeboard

Noticeboards are located in the Preschool. Notices include information on the Preschool program and upcoming activities. For example: incursions, parenting seminars, immunisation schedules, community events etc. It is important that you read these on a daily basis, as sometimes it is not always possible to send a notice home.

Newsletter

Highmount Preschool produces a letter 4 times a year.

The newsletter is emailed to parents/guardians of the preschool and a link placed on the FlexiBuzz app. Please ensure that your email address is provided during the enrolment process. A hard copy will be placed in the “welcome area” next to the Attendance Book for those without access to email.

The newsletter editor welcomes any contributions.

Program / Visual Diary

The weekly program will be displayed in a visual diary, which is placed next to Attendance Book. Each week children’s developmental needs will be assessed against the Early Learning Years and Development Framework and the five outcomes. We also take regular photos, and these are displayed in the diary.

Surveys

The Committee conducts a survey during the year to receive feedback from parents.

Social Events

The 3 and 4-Year-Old Parent Representatives organise various events during the year such as morning teas, Mother’s Day and Father’s Day celebrations and other activities.

Interviews

At Highmount Preschool we value the opportunity to informally chat to parents regularly throughout the year as a means of sharing information about your child’s progress both at home and at kindergarten. Towards the middle of the year the educators will organise formal interview appointments with parents to discuss their child’s progress. If at any time during the year you are concerned about your child’s progress and/or development, you can request a meeting by contacting the educators by phone or email.

Highmount Preschool uses the “FlexiBuzz” app to send instant messages, newsletters, notices, etc. We strongly recommend that you download the app to your personal device.

Events Calendar

With Flexibuzz you won’t need to keep track of upcoming events and reminders. FlexiBuzz let’s everybody know what’s on and when with reminder messages automatically dispatched before each event; keeping everyone accurately informed on all planned activities. Activities can be added to your personal calendar.

Language Translation

The FlexiBuzz language translation tool helps people whose first language is not English. With the click of a button, messages can be understood in over 90 different languages.

Search for “**FlexiBuzz**” in your app store:



Log-in

Open “FlexiBuzz” and register/log-in

Find

Inside the menu, click on “Find & Tick”

Search for “Highmount”

Select us from the results

Tick

Tick the grey tick boxes that apply to you

When the tick turns green, you’re connected

Inbox

Click on the Inbox icon

This is where you’ll receive our instant messages, newsletters and notices

For technical support email: support@flexibuzz.com



Facebook

The purpose of the Facebook page is to:

- share events like incursions, excursions, and reminders about these events
- preschool and children’s projects will be shared ensuring that children’s names are not identifiable.
- links to parenting articles, and educational information will be posted on the page.
- **children will not be identified either by image or name.**

The aim of our Facebook page is to promote communication. It will be up to the discretion of the administrator to remove:

- abusive and offensive language
- any personal information
- cultural inappropriateness
- commercial content
- intimidation or offensive behaviour

PRACTICALITIES

Orientation

Our three-year old program provides for an induction and orientation session at the beginning of the year. Parents and Guardians are invited to stay for the entire session with their child. The kindergarten routine will be discussed to assist children with settling in and encouraging them to feel safe and secure in their new surroundings. An induction session is also offered to new families beginning in the four-year-old program.

The orientation session is an ideal opportunity to share information about your child with the educators and discuss your expectations of kindergarten for your child.

Parents will be notified of the orientation session date and time at the Annual General Meeting.

Staggered Starts

Staggered starts are made over the first few weeks of the new year for the 3-year-old and 4-year-old groups to give each child more one-on-one contact with the staff (and vice versa). It also offers children the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the kindergarten environment and routines, and to deal with any anxiety or separation issues.

“In 4-Year Old, your child is entitled to access a minimum of 15 hours of kindergarten per week (or 600 hours per year). However, when attending a kindergarten program for the first time, children may benefit from a ‘staggered start’ to the 15-hour timetable. This means that children can begin kindergarten in a smaller group for shorter periods of time initially. Children come to kindergarten with different needs and experiences. If the staggered intake timetable provided does not suit your child or your family needs, please discuss your preferences with the educators.”

We are committed to working with families to ensure that starting kindergarten is a positive experience that meets the needs of all children and families.” DET

We will provide information detailing the staggered start timetable at the Annual General Meeting.

Settling in and Separation

All children react differently when introduced to kindergarten and it can be trying for both parents and children. The environment will be new and your child may feel uncomfortable and need time to adjust. Be patient and understanding while your child begins this new experience. It is important that you give your child reassurance during these first days.

The way parents feel can influence their child’s adjustment to preschool. If you feel reluctant and over-anxious about leaving your child, they may also feel insecure and wary, making their adjustment difficult. Your child may be very reluctant to leave you! You may like to stay for a short while until your child settles at an activity. However, when you are leaving, give your child a cheerful kiss goodbye and then leave promptly after reassuring them that you will be back to pick them up. Don’t hover around once you have said you are going, or your child may feel anxious. If you are still concerned after leaving your child, please don’t hesitate to call us during the session to see how they are going on **9802 2812**

** It is important that you are punctual when picking up your child; otherwise they may feel forgotten and worried, making their adjustment to kindergarten more difficult.

What to Bring

- **Bag** – We suggest a backpack.
- **Hat** – We are a Sunsmart kindergarten so during 1st September to 30th April we ask that you provide a sun hat. If a child does not bring a suitable sun hat then the Preschool will implement a 'no hat, no outside play' practice. We suggest that you apply sunscreen for your child at home before the kindergarten session.
- **Clothing** – Children should be dressed in suitable play clothes considering weather conditions. Weather permitting, part of each session includes outdoor play; therefore, please remember to send your child to preschool with a warm jacket and hat in the colder months. Clothing needs to be easily managed by the child, so they can go to the toilet on their own, take off their jumper when hot, and put on their jacket when going outdoors. This encourages and develops the child's independence.
- **Change of Clothes** – At least one complete set of clothes (including underwear and socks) in case of accidents or messy playtime is highly recommended.
- **Shoes** – Thongs and slip on shoes are not suitable footwear as they do not provide enough foot protection during outdoor play particularly during activities such as climbing, running etc.
- **Drink Bottle and Lunch Box**



Highmount Preschool will provide protective clothing for activities involving paint, clay or water. All bags, removable clothing, drink bottles, and snack containers should be clearly labelled with the child's name. A lost property box is located in the welcome area.

Snack Time

We ask that all parents send snacks for their children in a small, labelled container that children can open themselves. We encourage healthy eating habits and prefer food to be sent in containers with no packaging. The following suggestions are suitable snacks;

- fresh fruit
- vegetables
- small sandwich
- cheese and crackers
- water bottle

NB. We are a **NO NUT** kindergarten as we have children at risk of Anaphylaxis.

Highmount Preschool supports the “**Progressive Mealtime**” model... where children can snack anytime within a certain time frame instead of eating at a set time where it may not suit the children.” (NQF, 2012).

The progressive approach to mealtimes, rather than expecting children to all eat together, recognises children as active participants in making decisions about their own wellbeing and learning. Incorporating progressive mealtimes allows children to choose to eat when they are hungry, rather than according to a timetable and without interrupting the needs and play of others. This also encourages quieter, more social and meaningful interactions at mealtimes and allows for a smoother flow throughout the day. Anecdotal evidence has shown that progressive mealtimes are less stressful for children and educators. *Heather Barnes 2019*

Educators have a process in place whereby they monitor whether a child has eaten their snack and lunch.

Artwork

We encourage children to be creative and enjoy exploring different forms of artistic mediums. At Highmount Preschool we focus on the process, not the end product. Children are able to choose from a variety of activities and materials and enjoy the creative process without always having to take home a completed end product. Creating is also about block play, construction, play dough, clay etc. They may even create their own dramatic play in the home corner.

We will encourage cutting and pencil-holding skills and help them develop the ability to write their own name.

An “art box” placed in the “welcome area” at the end of each session where finished masterpieces can be collected.

Birthdays

The Federal Government’s “Staying Healthy in Childcare” guidelines permit families to bring cakes or cupcakes that do not contain any nuts to celebrate special occasions. However, they recommend that the birthday child blow out their candles on a separate cupcake to prevent the spread of germs among young children.

Highmount Preschool supports this strategy and would also ask parents/guardians to provide small portions eg, cupcakes, biscuits, slices etc. Please be mindful of children who may have allergies and contact staff for further details.

If your child has allergies, please supply a selection of safe treats that will be kept at the centre so that your child can still enjoy the celebrations. If you wish to give party bags or treats to the children, please ensure that the contents are safe and age appropriate for the children, these items will be handed out as the children leave their session.

Parents often put their name on the “Stay and Play” roster closest to their child’s birthday.

Money

To prevent money being misplaced at kindergarten, please place all money for special events etc. in an envelope with details of child’s name and group, amount and what it is for written on the outside. Please include correct money as this makes collection of money easier and less time consuming for our volunteers! The envelopes can then be placed in the blue box located in the washroom.

Term fees are to be paid by Internet banking, cheque or direct bank deposit. We do not keep cash or change on the premises.

Photographs

Highmount Preschool organises a professional photographer (**Little World Photography** www.littleworldphotography.com.au) to take both individual and group photos of the children. These photos will be made available for families to purchase if you wish.

The photography sessions will occur on the Week Commencing **Monday 27th April 2020**.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

“Parent participation in early childhood education is widely recognised in research as crucial to positive lifelong outcomes for children. Currently, many Victorian parents are engaged in strong and active partnerships with kindergartens and other community-based early children’s services.” Department of Education and Training

Highmount Preschool is committed to promoting parent involvement in the preschool program and fostering a spirit of cooperation between the parents/guardians of the children attending the Preschool and the Staff and Committee of Management.

“Stay and Play” Roster

Every Term a Roster for Parental involvement is placed in the “welcome area.”

We require volunteers to assist with the daily kindergarten program and we encourage parents to write their names on our “Stay and Play” roster at least once and possibly twice per term.

Whilst assisting in the sessions we ask that you:

- ✓ sign yourself and any children in and out of the Visitor’s Book, this is a legal requirement
- ✓ spend time enjoying activities with the children
- ✓ write the children’s names on all their artwork
- ✓ read a book or help with a puzzle
- ✓ helping to pack up activities
- ✓ general tidy up of the room, cleaning paintbrushes, wipe down table and chairs, vacuum the carpet etc.
- ✓ you may be asked to assist with a specific activity/experience that has been arranged for the session

If parents are unable to volunteer their time due to work commitments, then talk to us about other ways you can participate like collecting craft materials. *eg.* paper, corks, bottle top lids, empty boxes etc. If you can play the piano, do some cooking, gardening and craft activities then please let us know. Your assistance and participation is greatly welcomed and appreciated by both children and educators.

You are welcome to use the kitchen facilities for making tea or coffee but for safety reasons hot drinks must be consumed in the kitchen area only.

We appreciate and thank you for volunteering your time at kindergarten; your child will love having you there. You will see how your child interacts within the group and gain valuable insight into your child’s development.

Laundry Duty

The “Stay and Play” roster includes a laundry roster. This involves taking home a bag of smocks, tea towels and hand towels. Occasionally dress-up clothes may be included. We ask that you return the washing cleaned and folded at your child’s next session.

Parent Participation & Siblings

Parents/Guardians and younger siblings attending the kindergarten must sign the Visitor Logbook, which is kept near the Attendance Book in the “welcome area”.

Younger siblings can benefit and enjoy the experience of coming with you when you help during session times. However, please remember that younger siblings are your responsibility to supervise at ALL times, e.g. if you are inside then they must be with you and not outside with the staff.

Personal Items

We ask that toys are NOT brought to kindergarten as they may be lost, broken or fought over. Any toys that are brought will stay in the “special box” until the session concludes.

Excursions and Service Events

Highmount Preschool recognises that excursions and incursions (service events) provide opportunities through the educational program for children to explore and experience the wider environment and broader society. Examples of excursions include watching a performance by the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and visiting the Kew Traffic School.

Incursions enrich the learning program and involve the children directly in new experiences. Incursions can include; Henny Penny Hatching, Kelly Sports, Responsible Pet Education Program, Road Safety Education, Science for Preschoolers, The Bones Show and Recycling and Waste.

No additional fees will be payable for your child to participate in these activities however minimal costs may be incurred for parental involvement.

Please refer to the Highmount Preschool Policy Manual or the website for detailed policy guidelines.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Highmount Preschool Policy and Procedure Manual

The policies of this kindergarten are written to reflect the requirements of the Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010, the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 and the Victorian Kindergarten Guide 2016.

A full copy of all Highmount Preschool’s policies and procedures are available for viewing on our website <http://www.highmountpreschool.org.au> Hard copies can be made available upon request.

Privacy and Confidentiality

Early childhood services are obligated by law, service agreements and Service Approval requirements to comply with the privacy and health records legislation when collecting personal and health information about individuals.

All information collected from persons is considered private and will not be disclosed without the prior knowledge or consent from the child’s parents or guardians, unless there are Child Protection concerns or a medical emergency.

As a parent / guardian, you will have the opportunity to be involved with many activities and children throughout the year at preschool and it is important to remember that you must respect the privacy and confidentiality of other children and their families in any discussions that may take place while assisting at the preschool.

Emergency Management

Highmount Preschool is committed to planning for and responding to fire and emergency evacuations. Emergency management procedures will commence if the Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person-in-Charge decides the circumstances warrant, or if directed by emergency personnel.

Highmount Preschool will provide an induction checklist to ensure all new staff and relief staff are aware of the location of fire extinguishers and the evacuation procedures.

Further details are available in the Highmount Preschool Policy Manual located in the foyer or on our website at <http://highmountpreschool.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Emergency-and-Evacuation-Policy-v3.pdf>

Concerns or Complaints

All families are encouraged to direct any concerns, complaints or feedback to their child's educator or the Nominated Supervisor at the Preschool.

You can also contact Lou Skepper President of the **Highmount Preschool Committee of Management** on 0403 327 762 or highmount.president@gmail.com

Alternatively, you can contact the Department of Education and Training on 1300 651 940 or emr.qar@edumail.vic.gov.au

ENROLMENT POLICY

When to enrol

Highmount Preschool participates in the Monash City Council Central Enrolment Scheme. To register your child (both 3 and 4-year old programs) you will need to create an account via the online portal and follow the prompts to submit your application.

The online system replaces the paper form of registration process. Families are able to enrol, pay the administration fee and view their application details from home at any time. You can login to **update your details and change your kindergarten preference** at any time.

It is your responsibility to ensure that your details are correct and up-to-date at all times to allow us to process your child's application before the cut-off date of 30 June, in the year prior to commencing kindergarten. This will ensure that your child will be included in the allocation process.

Further information on the Central Enrolment Scheme can be found at the City of Monash website <http://www.monash.vic.gov.au/Services/Children-Family/Kindergartens>

Queries can be emailed to the Preschool Support Officer on kinderenrolments@monash.vic.gov.au

Phone queries should be directed to 9518 3530.

Successful applicants will be issued with a Letter of Offer in the year prior to the child's attendance at the Preschool. Upon receipt of the non-refundable deposit payment (to secure a position) and Placement Confirmation Form, you will be invited to attend the AGM. At the AGM you will be asked to submit your completed Enrolment Form, Immunisation Certificate, Fee Agreement and Child Background Information Sheet.

For more information on Highmount Preschool enrolments, please email highmount.kin@kindergarten.vic.gov.au

Changes to Personal Details

Please inform Highmount Preschool immediately in writing of any changes to home address, email, work contacts, child-minding details, emergency contact details and/or names of persons you authorise to collect your child. It is the parent's responsibility to keep the Preschool informed of all information relevant to ensure the safety, health and wellbeing of each child.

FEE POLICY

The Committee of Management will decide the rate of fees payable, the period of time (e.g. term) for which the fee is fixed and the method of payment. The Committee of Management will consider:

- the running cost of the Preschool
- affordability to parents

Families are advised that kindergarten is not a free service and relies on fee collection to cover a percentage of running costs. Fees must be paid as directed by the Committee of Management and notice to this effect will be given to parents prior to collection of fees.

Non-Payment of Fees

Fee collection is mandatory, and the Committee of Management has the discretion to withdraw service for non-payment of fees.

Parents should contact the Fee Officer if you are having difficulty with payment of fees as the Preschool has a process for negotiating alternative arrangements.

Kindergarten Fee Subsidy

The Kindergarten Fee Subsidy is provided by DET and enables eligible children to attend 15 hours of kindergarten free of charge. Eligibility conditions change from time-to-time and must be checked in the most recent edition of the Kindergarten Funding Guide.

Families may be eligible for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy in the year before school if they fall into the following category:

- The child is identified by the parent carer or legal guardian as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
- Commonwealth Health Care Card
- Commonwealth Pensioner Concession Card
- Department of Veterans' Affairs Gold Card or White Card
- Refugee Visa – subclass 200
- In-country Special Humanitarian Visa – subclass 201
- Global Special Humanitarian Visa – subclass 202
- Temporary Humanitarian Concern Visa – subclass 786
- Protection Visa – subclass 866
- Emergency Rescue Visa – subclass 203
- Woman at Risk Visa – subclass 204
- Bridging Visas, A-E
- The child is identified on their birth certificate as being a multiple birth child (triplets or more)

The fee subsidy will enable families who hold one of these concession cards to access kindergarten at low or no cost. If the Health Care Card/Pensioner Concession Card expires during 2019 and new card details are not provided when requested, full term fees will apply. Families who are eligible are required to show the relevant card/information to the Enrolment Officer at the kindergarten.

For more information and frequently asked questions visit www.education.vic.gov.au/kindergarten/feesubsidy

Refundable Maintenance Levy

The participation of parents/guardians is encouraged and can help to keep costs more affordable. These projects, which parents are asked to assist with, are intended to improve the facilities available to the children and promote a positive community within the Preschool environment. Payment will be refunded to parents/guardians on participation in 2 specified activities which include working bee(s) and/or fundraising BBQ. Eligible concession card holders will not be required to pay this levy. Please note 'kinder duty' during session times cannot be claimed as refundable time against this levy. The levy is not intended to be a barrier to participation and families experiencing financial difficulties should discuss this with the service.

Four-year-old families who are eligible for the Government's Kindergarten Fee Subsidy are not required to pay the Maintenance Levy.

The levy will be invoiced along with Term 1 fees. Refunds will be paid at the conclusion of Term 4.

Schedule of Fees 3-Year Old

Service	Fee	Amount Payable	Date
Non-refundable deposit to secure 3YO placement for 2020	\$80	\$80	Date set by Enrolment Officer
Term 1 Fees	\$520		Friday 24th January 2020
<i>plus</i> - Refundable Maintenance Levy	\$125		
<i>Subtotal</i> - Term 1 Fees Balance	\$645	\$520	
<i>Less - Refundable Deposit</i>	\$80		
Total Term 1 Fees Payable	\$565		
Term 2 Fees	\$520	\$520	Friday 20th March 2020
Term 3 Fees	\$520	\$520	Friday 19th June 2020
Term 4 Fees	\$520	\$520	Friday 11th September 2020

Please Note: Children must be three years old at the time of attendance. Enrolment may be accepted for children who will be three (3) years old by the 30th of April in the attending year. However, they cannot attend until they are three (3). To ensure a place, parents are required to pay the first Term's Fees in full, with the child commencing from their third birthday.

Schedule of Fees 4-Year Old

Service	Fee	Amount Payable	Date
Non-refundable deposit to secure 4YO placement for 2020	\$100	\$100	Date set by Enrolment Officer
Term 1 Fees	\$495		Friday 24th January 2020
<i>plus</i> - Refundable Maintenance Levy	\$125		
<i>Subtotal</i> - Term 1 Fees Balance	\$620	\$495	
<i>Less - Refundable Deposit</i>	\$100		
Total Term 1 Fees Payable	\$520		
Term 2 Fees	\$495	\$495	Friday 20th March 2020
Term 3 Fees	\$495	\$495	Friday 19th June 2020
Term 4 Fees	\$495	\$495	Friday 11th September 2020

Please note: Current Health Care Card holders/Pensioner health benefit card holders are eligible for a discount each term on satisfying the requirements as set out in the Fee Policy.

Method of Payment

Payment may be made by:

- **Internet banking into the Highmount Preschool Association bank account.**

Please ensure you write the child's name as a reference. Without this we cannot trace payment.

- **Crediting cash or cheques directly into the Highmount Preschool Association bank account;**

Cheques are to be made payable to "Highmount Preschool Association"

Please ensure that you return the bank deposit stub in the Blue Box. Without this reference we are unable to trace the payment.

Bank Details

Westpac

BSB: 033 065

ACCOUNT NUMBER: 471 357

ACCOUNT NAME: HIGHMOUNT PRESCHOOL ASSOCIATION

HEALTH

Highmount Preschool is committed to:

- the safety and wellbeing of all children.
- providing a safe and healthy environment for children while at the service.
- responding to the needs of the child if the child is injured, becomes ill, or is traumatised whilst attending the service.
- complying with all legislative requirements.

Health and Infectious Disease

Infectious diseases are common in children. Children are at a greater risk of exposure to infections in a children's service than at home due to the amount of time spent with a large number of other children. The Department of Health has developed a document, *Minimum Period of Exclusion from Primary Schools and Children's Services Centres for Infectious Diseases Cases and Contacts*, to assist in protecting the public by preventing, or containing, outbreaks of infectious conditions common in schools and other children's services and is regulated by the *Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2009*.

When a child is ill or becomes ill at the Preschool

If your child appears unwell or you have reason to think they may be infectious, please consider the other children and keep them at home. If your child requires Panadol (or similar), they should not attend kindergarten.

To reduce the risk of spreading infection, families will be informed that a child may not stay for the session or will be sent home if they are displaying the symptoms of:

- Gastroenteritis
- Respiratory infection (more than just the common cold). eg. Infected runny nose or persistent cough
- Hand, foot and mouth disease (when weeping blisters that have not yet scabbed over are present).
- Any of the infectious diseases listed in the "Minimum Period of Exclusion from Primary Schools and Children's Services Centres for Infectious Diseases Cases and Contacts".

When a child becomes ill after arrival at Preschool, the parent/guardian, or if they are unable to be contacted, the emergency contact person will be notified immediately, and arrangements will be made for the sick child to be taken from the Preschool as soon as possible. If necessary, details will be recorded in the Incident; injury, trauma and illness record.

Accidents at Kindergarten

If a child has an accident or is injured at Preschool, arrangements will be made to notify the child's parent/guardian immediately. First aid treatment will be carried out and details of the accident / injury will be recorded in the Incident, injury, trauma and illness record. Parents are asked to read this information and sign and date the record. In the case of a serious accident or injury, educators will submit a report to the Department of Education and Training (DET) within 24 hours of the event occurring. A serious accident or injury would be defined as that which requires medical, hospital or ambulance attendance.

Parents/Guardians will be responsible for all costs associated with an ambulance service called to attend their child at the service.

Immunisations

The law – “No Jab, No Play”

Under Victorian law, it is illegal for any child to be enrolled at Highmount Preschool unless they have been immunised as set out in the Australian Immunisation Schedule. There are only two exceptions to this rule:

- The child has not been fully vaccinated but has commenced a program of “catch-up” vaccinations and will soon be fully vaccinated.
- The child is medically unable to receive some or all vaccinations (e.g. Due to an anaphylactic reaction to a vaccine).

Please note that under the law conscientious objections is no longer an exception.

The child cannot attend the service until acceptable documentation is provided.

Australian Childhood Immunisation Register (ACIR) Immunisation History Statement

The ACIR is a national register administered by Medicare that records details of vaccinations given to children in Australia.

If your child is fully immunised:	You must provide an Immunisation History Statement (AIR) from the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register. You can obtain one online via www.humanservices.gov.au or email acir@medicareaustralia.gov.au Alternately, visit your local Medicare office or contact 1800 653 809.
If your child has a medical exemption:	If your child has a medical reason that they cannot be vaccinated, you must ask your doctor to sign an ACIR Medical Contraindication Form and supply it to the Australian Child Immunisation Register. The Register will then update your child's Immunisation History to show which vaccine(s) your child is unable to receive. You must then obtain a copy of this statement and provide it to the Preschool. You can obtain one online via www.humanservices.gov.au Alternately, visit your local Medicare office or contact 1800 653 809
If your child is on a “catch-up” program:	You must provide evidence from an immunisation provider (such as your GP or local council) that your child has commenced and is on track with a vaccination catch-up schedule.
Please <u>do not</u> submit any other documentation such as pages from your child's Maternal Child Health Record book. Under the law we cannot accept these as evidence.	

Local councils run immunisation sessions where vaccines are provided free to children. Refer to link below for Monash Council.

www.monash.vic.gov.au/Services/Health-Safety/Public-Health-Safety/Vaccinations-Immunisations

Alternatively, GPs or immunisation nurses can provide the vaccines.

To view the immunisation schedule (what vaccines are due at what age) go to www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au and search “immunisation” or speak to your doctor.

Medical Conditions Policy (Asthma, Anaphylaxis and Allergy)

Children may come to kindergarten with a range of medical conditions including; asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, anaphylaxis and other allergies.

All staff maintain current First Aid, CPR, Anaphylaxis and Asthma Certificates. Educators will ensure that a copy of the child's medical management plan is visible and known to all educators in the kindergarten, including relief educators.

- parents/guardians of a child with asthma/anaphylaxis / allergy will;
- inform educators at the kindergarten, either on enrolment or on diagnosis, of their child's medical condition. This information will be documented with the child's enrolment record.
- develop a risk minimisation plan with educators. (The Risk Minimisation Plan is intended to identify the issues or potential situations that could lead to a medical incident or emergency, and strategies to reduce these risks.)
- provide educators with a medical management plan signed by the Registered Medical Practitioner giving written consent to administer medication in line with this action plan.
- provide educators with any relevant medication.
- assist educators by offering information and answering any questions regarding their child's medical condition.
- notify the educators of any changes to their child's medical condition and provide a new medical management plan in accordance with these changes.
- communicate all relevant information and concerns to educators, for example, any matter relating to the health of their child.
- comply with Highmount's policy that no child who has been prescribed medication is permitted to attend kindergarten or its programs without the relevant medication.

For detailed policy please refer to the following files;

Medical Conditions Policy

<http://highmountpreschool.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Dealing-with-Medical-Conditions-Policy-v4.pdf>

Asthma Policy

<http://highmountpreschool.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Asthma-Policy-v3.pdf>

Anaphylaxis Policy

<http://highmountpreschool.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Anaphylaxis-Policy-v3.pdf>

Educators/carers and parents/guardians need to be made aware that it is not possible to achieve a completely allergen-free environment in any kindergarten that is open to the general community.

A child cannot attend kindergarten without a medical management action plan and any relevant medication.

COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT (CoM)

Highmount Preschool is a legally constituted body under the Incorporations Act 1981. We are a community-based, not-for-profit kindergarten, with all funds raised through fees, fundraising initiatives and levies going back into the operational costs of running the kindergarten.

Highmount Preschool is managed and maintained by a voluntary Committee of Management (CoM) who are elected at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) to represent and act on behalf of the kindergarten community. The CoM is responsible for the management of the kindergarten, and ensuring it is meeting Department of Education regulatory requirements.

Without a Committee of Management, Highmount Preschool would not satisfy minimum obligations as an “Incorporated Association” and therefore be unable to operate as a legal entity. Victorian Government funding is conditional on the Highmount Preschool having a full Committee of Management.

All roles / functions of the Committee are crucial to Highmount’s continued success. As a member of the Committee, you will enjoy the opportunity for community and social involvement as you join with other parents / guardians to promote and oversee Highmount’s operations.

The Preschool needs parents to volunteer their time, enthusiasm, skills and energy to fill the Committee roles. No previous experience is necessary! The Committee conducts meetings once a month throughout the year.

If you would like to know more about becoming a committee member and what is involved, please don’t hesitate to contact the current President Lou Skepper at highmount.president@gmail.com

Fundraising

Highmount Preschool will have a number of fundraising activities for the year. It is hoped that all families will do what they can to help support the activities chosen.

All monies raised from fundraising goes towards purchasing new equipment or replacing old equipment from which your child will benefit.

OUR PROGRAM

Our Preschool program is designed to support children in expanding their world from the comfort of their family network, to successfully being a member of a broader community. We understand that children learn through play, therefore we provide a fun and supportive program which encourages:

- Kindness
- Self-awareness and confidence
- Broader community social skills
- Listening and observation skills
- Literacy and numeracy skills
- Investigation and inquiry skills

We place strong emphasis on inclusive, play-based strategies. Children at Highmount Preschool enjoy both indoor and outdoor play elements, with purpose-built spaces and structure to promote socialisation, imaginative play and physical activity.

Your child’s learning and curiosity will be encouraged through experiences and activities, such as exploring the natural world, being explores to new ideas and solving problems.

We believe that children excel when they play, learn and grow together.

3 - Year Old Program

First term is usually kept simple as educators are getting to know the children and may be kept busy with excited, wandering or crying children. During the course of the year we try to lay the important foundation for the coming terms with the children’s social development.



For example;

- Sharing
- Listening directions
- Caring for equipment
- Self-control
- Self-help skills
- Waiting for their turn
- Respecting others
- Participating in group experiences
- Resolving conflicts
- Resilience

Your 3- to 4-year-old child will continue to grow and develop in many ways in the coming year. Although children reach developmental milestones at different times, your child will likely achieve the following developmental milestones before he or she turns 5.

<p>Wellbeing – Physical & Emotional Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is refining gait and balance • Squats and rises without using hands • Can carry large objects while walking • Throws ball (not necessarily with direction or aim) • Active • Jumps in place • Pours and fills, turn knobs, unscrews lids • Uses basic tripod grip • Responds to praise, needs adult reassurance • Becomes frustrated easily, may push, bite or hit • Can become jealous • Develops fears • Doesn’t like change • Wants independence but is still independent • Is egocentric 	<p>Identity - Social Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relates better to adults than to other children • Beginning to role play • Needs help to share and take turns • Can’t remember rules • Uses parallel and co-operative play • Can feed self with spoon and fork • Dresses in simple clothing • Independent in toileting (mostly)
<p>Communication - Language Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joins in simple songs, rhymes and stories • Has 200 or more recognisable words • Asks many questions • Can follow simple two-part directions • Considers talking more important than listening • Can make needs known to unfamiliar adult 	<p>Learning – Cognitive Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses symbols in play eg. box is a spaceship • Knows 2-3 primary colours • Can anticipate familiar events • Will sort objects with distinctive characteristics • Concentrates for 10 minutes or more at a task • Likes to explore the environment • May have an imaginary friend • Is easily distracted • Gather information through the senses.
<p>Further information can be found at: https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2018-02/DevelopmentalMilestonesEYLFandNQS.pdf</p>	

4 - Year Old Program

The Highmount Preschool program takes into consideration the observations, needs and interests of each child. By focusing on the Early Learning Years Framework, the program promotes and integrates an effective developmental approach to learning.

Teddy Bear Project



Within the first few weeks of Term One we will introduce our kindergarten Teddy Bear. We will name him/her and then the children take turns in taking the teddy bear home for 2-3 days so that the teddy bear can participate in the child's daily activities. The teddy bear comes with a project book and the children, with the help from their family, can document/draw about their experiences with the teddy. We can then share these stories with all the children at the kindergarten.

Library

In Term Two we will be making our own library bags. The children can then borrow (1) library book on either Monday or Tuesday. We encourage the children to choose and be responsible for looking after their library books.

Letterland

This program will commence in Term Two. Each week we will discuss a letter of the Letterland program eg. "A" Annie Apple. We will then discuss whose name starts with that letter and think about other words with this letter. This is a fun and interactive program that encourages the children to start recognising and sounding out letters of the alphabet.



Learning Journal / Portfolios

Each child will have their own portfolio with photo, observations and learning statements. At the end of the year your child's portfolio will be given to you as a treasured keepsake.

Shared Stories

We would like to invite all families to share their stories from home by recording them in your child's learning portfolio.

"When educators establish respectful and caring relationships with children and their families, they are able to work together to construct curriculum and learning experiences relevant to children"

(Early Years Learning Framework, 2009 pg 11)

Stories can be about a range of things. For example;

- Holidays
- Weekend Trips (including visits to friends and family)
- Visit to favourite places (eg. Farm, Beach etc.)
- Birthdays
- Favourite Foods
- Involvement in the preparation of food
- First Experience (eg. First time riding a bicycle without training wheels)
- Favourite Toy or Game
- A photo of a special place
- Anything that is of significance to your family, and most importantly your child

We would also like to hear about any interesting conversations you share with your child which express their ideas about their time at kindergarten.

Handwritten or typed stories of any length, with or without photos, in any language or format are a great record of your child's life now and for the future. They can be added to portfolios by families, handed to educators or emailed to us to be printed and added to your child's portfolio.

Sharing stories enables us to better know your family and your children and are a springboard for discussion and reflection with your child and others. Shared stories are also a great way to foster the relationship between home and kindergarten and encourage a sense of belonging. They also help to develop language and literacy skills.

Stories can be emailed to: highmount.kin@kindergarten.vic.gov.au

Transition to School

In Term 4 a Transition Learning and Development Statement will be given to you and your child's primary school by your child's educator.

The transition statement will be developed by your child's early childhood teacher and will summarise your child's learning and development before they start school, as well as his or her strengths and interests. You will be asked to tell the school more about your child and give your perspective by completing Section 3: The Family section of the Statement.

The Transition to School Statement will then be forwarded to your child's primary school.

RESOURCES

<p>Belonging, Being and Becoming - The Early Learning Years Framework for Australia</p>	<p>https://docs.education.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/belonging_being_and_becoming_the_early_years_learning_framework_for_australia.pdf</p>
<p>Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework For all Children from Birth to Eight Years</p>	<p>http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/childhood/providers/edcare/veylframework.pdf</p>
<p>Starting Blocks</p>	<p>Starting Blocks provides parents with information about early childhood education and care.</p> <p>Starting Blocks is a starting point to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> learn about children's developmental milestones understand what to expect from an early childhood education and care service find services and learn about their quality ratings get tips on starting child care or preschool, and what can be done at home to encourage your child's learning and development.
<p>Parentline</p>	<p>Parentline is a Victorian telephone counselling, information and referral service for parents and carers with children from birth to 18 years.</p> <p>Parentline supports and nurtures positive, caring relationships between parents, children, teenagers and the significant other people who are important to the well-being of families.</p> <p>If you need to talk to someone, call Parentline on Phone 1300 30 1300 between 8am and 10pm, 7 days a week or visit www.parentline.com.au</p>
<p>Maternal and Child Health Service</p>	<p>The Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Line is a 24-hour, 7 day a week statewide telephone service available to Victorian families with children from birth to school age.</p> <p>The service functions as an adjunct of the universal Maternal and Child Health Service and is fully funded by the Victorian Government. The service is staffed by qualified maternal and child health nurses who provide information, support and guidance regarding child health, nutrition, breast feeding, maternal and family health and parenting.</p> <p>Phone: 13 22 29 or visit http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/parents/support/pages/mchline.aspx</p>
<p>Better Health Channel</p>	<p>The Better Health Channel was established in May 1999 by the Victorian (Australia) State Government. The Better Health Channel provides health and medical information to help individuals and their communities improve their health and wellbeing.</p> <p>Information on the Better Health Channel is provided to help people stay healthy or understand and manage their health and medical conditions. It does not replace care provided by medical practitioners and other qualified health professionals.</p> <p>www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au</p>
<p>Raising Children Network</p>	<p>The Raising Children Network website is based on the philosophy that all children and families are individual and different. We provide scientifically validated information, translated into everyday language, to help parents and carers make decisions that work for them in their individual family circumstances. Please visit www.raisingchildren.net.au</p>

Starting Out Safely	Starting Out Safely - This website includes information and resources for families, educators and anyone working with or transporting young children to help them stay safe and become independent road users. http://childroadsafety.org.au
Monash Public Library	Preschoolers love to sing and listen to stories and can enjoy free storytime sessions at the Library. Sessions run for 45 minutes. No bookings needed. https://www.monlib.vic.gov.au/Kids/Storytime
My Child	My Child - The www.mychild.gov.au website is Australia's online child care portal. On this website you will find information on different types of child care and how to get assistance with the cost of child care. You can also search a database to find child care centres in your local area. In many cases, you will also be able to find the services' vacancy and fee information. This site also has information and links to other useful websites about children's health and wellbeing, parenting and family support services.
The following resources have been designed to support families through the transition-to-school process.	
Welcome to Primary School	A Parent's Guide to Victorian Government Schools - Starting primary school is a major milestone for your child. Here you'll find information on how to make the move to primary school as smooth as possible. The first years are an exciting and engaging time for your child. Building positive relationships and experiences in the early years is important to long-term development, learning and wellbeing. The more you can help your child to become familiar with the layout of the school and what they need to do before day one, the less overwhelmed they are likely to feel. To start Prep, the first year of primary school, your child needs to turn five by 30 April of that year. Your child must be at school in the year they turn six, which is the compulsory school-starting age. www.education.vic.gov.au/welcometoprimarieschool
Choosing a Primary School	Choosing a school for your child and/or enrolling your child into school please visit www.education.vic.gov.au/findaservice or phone the DET Information and Referral Service on 1800 809 834
Transition – A Positive Start to School	Transition: A Positive Start to School – <i>Information sheet for families</i> and <i>Guidelines to help families complete the Transition Learning and Development Statement – Part 1: the family</i> are available at www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/parents/transition/Pages/default.aspx
Transition to School – Multilingual Resources	Transition to School – Multilingual Resources - These documents and helpful videos are available in community languages at www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/parents/transition/Pages/caldresources.aspx