

# MARCH NEWS

TALBINGO 3-YEAR-OLD KINDERGARTEN INC.  
WWW.TALBINGO3YOKINDERGARTEN.COM.AU  
ASSOC NO: A0027800W ABN: 11 834 193 711



## HARMONY WEEK

As families would now be aware from KindyHub, we will be celebrating Harmony Week at kindergarten! This year's theme is Everybody Belongs. We will be marking the occasion with fun activities and a special African Drumming incursion.

Children are also invited to dress up or bring an item that reflects their cultural traditions. There will be a box in the foyer for families to share some information about their child's clothing or item. This will then be used to help the child explain their attire or item to their classmates and educators. Alternatively, children can choose to wear orange, the official colour of Harmony Day.

Groups will be celebrating on the following days:

- Echidna group - Friday 19 March
- Koala group - Wednesday 24 March
- Possum group - Wednesday 24 March
- Wombat group - Thursday 25 March

Make sure to arrive on time so your child does not miss out on all the fun!

## SCHOLASTIC BOOK ORDER

Thank you to those families who put in a Scholastic order for Term 1! Our order is being processed and the books will be on their way to us soon.

Keep an eye on your emails to find out when the next order is open!

## EASTER

The end of Term 1 is almost upon us, and with it comes Easter. To celebrate, children will be participating in some special craft activities and an Easter egg hunt on their last day of term! Parents/guardians are invited to attend the last 30 minutes of their child's last session of term to join in the fun.

Parents/guardians of children with special dietary requirements will be contacted individually to arrange an appropriate solution for their child's needs.

## CODE OF CONDUCT

Talbingo 3-Year-Old Kindergarten Inc. is proud to provide a warm and welcoming environment for our children, their families and our wonderful educators.

You may not be aware, but as a Committee managed community kindergarten, all administrative functions that enable the kinder to operate are carried out by volunteers. In this light, our service can only succeed if we have positive and collaborative relationships between families, educators, and the Committee who are the legally responsible Service Provider.

Any breaches of the Code of Conduct that was agreed to by all parents and guardians at the time of enrolment will be dealt with seriously. You can help us ensure that we maintain a constructive and safe environment for everyone at our kinder by ensuring that feedback is provided respectfully and by communicating courteously.

## TERM PLANNERS

KOALA- Tuesday 8:30-11 and Wednesday 12-2:30  
WOMBAT- Thursday 9:30-2:30

POSSUM- Tuesday 12-2:30 and Wednesday 8:30-11  
ECHIDNA- Friday 9:30-2:30

**TALBINGO 3-YEAR-OLD KINDERGARTEN INC.**  
**WWW.TALBINGO3YOKINDERGARTEN.COM.AU**  
**ASSOC NO: A0027800W ABN: 11 834 193 711**

### **THREE-YEAR-OLD KINDERGARTEN IN 2022 AND BEYOND**

You may have heard about some changes coming to the three-year-old kindergarten landscape next year. Have a read through these FAQs for some information on how these will impact Talbingo 3-Year-Old Kindergarten Inc.

**What's changing in relation to 3-Year-Old Kindergarten in 2022 that changes the landscape?** The Victorian Government has announced a program to fund three-year-old kindergarten over the coming years. In 2021, funded three-year-old kinder was rolled out in regional areas of Victoria. The Government has announced the intention to roll out funded three-year-old kindergarten across all of Victoria in 2022 which includes the City of Casey. You can read more about the government program here: <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/Pages/three-year-old-kinder.aspx>

The City of Casey has also advertised that they will be providing funded 3-Year-Old Kindergarten programs from 2022 and enrolments are due to open in July. You can follow the City of Casey's facebook page for further updates.

**What does this mean for my child who is currently enrolled in 2021?**

All discussions and investigations are in relation to 2022 and beyond, with no direct impact on the current kindergarten year or the COVID response Free Kinder in 2021 funding.

**Who will operate 3-Year-Old Kindergartens in 2022 and beyond?**

At present, all 3-year-old kindergartens in the City of Casey are operated privately, usually through early years management companies or through Committee structures, like Talbingo 3-Year-Old Kindergarten Inc. The City of Casey Council has announced its intention to operate 3-year-old kindergarten programs in 2022, much in the same way that they operate the large majority of 4-year-old kindergarten programs in the local area. There may be a range of different providers of 3 year old kindergarten programs in the City of Casey in 2022 and these may include council, private (including long daycare) or committee managed structures. There is likely to be a range of different options in terms of 3-year-old kindergarten providers available to families.

**Who makes this decision regarding the future of our kindergarten?**

The Committee is currently investigating the impact of changes and how this may affect the viability of our program going forwards. Should the committee feel that it is in the best interests of our association to make significant changes to the operating model then this will be proposed to all association members at a Special General Meeting. The Committee is yet to decide how to proceed and is still in the discussion stage.

**Does this mean Council will manage Talbingo 3-Year-Old Kindergarten in 2022?**

The Committee of Talbingo 3-Year-Old Kindergarten Inc. is currently considering all options available to the kindergarten. Some of the options being investigated include transitioning to a Council or EYM managed model, becoming a registered service under national regulations to receive government funding for the program, or remaining an independent service that charges full fees to families for the kindergarten service. The Committee is contemplating all available options and hopes to further communicate with members as soon as practically possible.

It is important to note that Council has indicated they will be guided by the needs and decisions of the association in relation to the kindergarten space we hire. In addition, any fundamental change to the purpose or structure of our Association is subject to the outcome of a Special General Meeting of all members in accordance with our Own Rules. The Committee is presently investigating all options and no decisions as to how to proceed have been made.

**What does it mean for waitlists and priority of enrolment/offer of placements?**

Should the kindergarten move to Council managed or remain independent and utilise the council's central enrolments system, the places at our kinder will be allocated through this system and we will not have a say over who attends, meaning our traditional waitlist process will be redundant.

Irrespective of whether the kindergarten remains independent full fee paying or moves to an independent funded service, Council or Early Years Manager, it is likely required that we follow priority of access guidelines which include priority of placement being given to families who meet defined High Priority criteria first and then children who fit the local criteria. For more information on priority of access please see [Kindergarten Offering Process](#)

### THREE-YEAR-OLD KINDERGARTEN IN 2022 AND BEYOND

#### **Why has the Committee decided to offer refunds to waitlisted families?**

The Committee has decided that as the strategic future of the kindergarten is uncertain at this point in time, it is appropriate to offer refunds of the application fees paid by families currently on the waitlist for 2022 and beyond. Presently, we cannot provide any certainties or guarantees in relation to our program or priority of access/offering systems. In addition, by continuing with a waitlist and application process without explaining our current circumstance, families may believe that they have secured a place at our service in some form next year and may therefore not investigate alternative options eg. Council managed kindergartens or long daycares, possibly leaving them without options for their child in the future. We aim to be as open and transparent with families as possible.

#### **What does it mean for my child's enrolment if I have placed them on the waitlist for Talbingo 3-Year-Old Kindergarten Inc. by paying the application fee?**

All affected families will receive instructions to be refunded the application fee they have paid if they choose to accept. These families will be kept on an information list and will be informed when there are any updates or decisions made in relation to Talbingo 3-Year-Old Kindergarten for 2022 or beyond. Any families interested in 3-year-old kindergarten next year should also keep an eye on communications from the City of Casey in relation to its plans for the 3 year old kinder rollout or any other organisations that provide a 3-year-old program. You can follow the City of Casey Facebook page where updates are posted. Residents of any other local government area should refer to their local council's communication channels for updates.

#### **What is the Information List and what personal details will be retained?**

An information list will be created including all the information for families who have received refunds. The list will be used to email interested families as more information comes to light. If you do not wish to be placed on this list, and prefer to withdraw from kindergarten correspondence then please let us know via email. If any of your details have changed since you completed your initial application, please inform us. Please note this does not apply to families who decline the refund.

#### **What happens if the traditional waitlist and offering process is able to continue in its current form?**

If the traditional waitlist/priority of placement system is able to continue then families who have received refunds will be contacted via email to confirm if they would like to re enter this waitlist by making payment within 7 days.

For families who decline this current offer of refund, they will continue with their place on the waitlist.

#### **What does it mean for my association membership?**

According to our constitution, waitlisted families have full membership and voting rights, should they have paid the relevant fees. Therefore if your family receives the application fee refund and is removed from the waitlist, you will not be a current member of the association and will have no rights under the Own Rules.

#### **Can I elect to remain on the Waitlist?**

Absolutely. This is a personal decision that all families need to make and we apologise that this was not articulated in our initial correspondence. Should you wish to remain on the waitlist you may do so, however it is important to note that at this stage refunds will only be provided should you request one within this time period.

#### **I am confused about the kindergarten structure and management. What does it all mean?**

Talbingo 3-Year-Old Kindergarten Inc. is the name of our Incorporated Association. As an Incorporated Association we are also bound by the terms set out in our constitution 'Own Rules for Talbingo 3-Year-Old Kindergarten Inc'. The association is registered under the Victorian Children's Services Law and Regulations to provide 'occasional care' to the community. The association is managed by a volunteer committee of parents/guardians and the only paid staff we employ ongoing are our much valued educators and cleaners.

By completing an application form and making the application fee payment, according to our constitution you automatically become a member of our association. All currently enrolled children have parents/guardians who are members of our association.

#### **I have an opinion about the future direction of the kindergarten. How can I share my views?**

The Committee is genuinely interested in the viewpoint of all members as we navigate these investigations into the Association's future. Should you have any specific views relating to the future of our service, we ask that you submit them as soon as practically possible so that your ideas can be explored as part of the Committee's discussions relating to options for 2022 and beyond. Should a Special General Meeting be called, all feedback will be circulated to members as part of the Notice of Special General Meeting.

Please email any views you may have to [talbingo.committee@gmail.com](mailto:talbingo.committee@gmail.com)