

Bush Kinder

What is Bush Kinder?

- ◆ Bush Kinder is where kinder education for children is held outdoors, allowing children to engage in a variety of activities in a natural setting not typically available in a traditional kinder setting.
- ◆ Whatever the weather, children are encouraged to play, explore and learn in a bush or natural environment.
- ◆ Physical activity is encouraged, and the children and adults benefit from using only what nature has provided.
- ◆ Learning in nature invigorates the senses, stimulates the imagination and nourishes wellbeing.
- ◆ By exploring nature, building cubby houses, climbing trees, splashing in puddles and playing games, the children are learning with their whole bodies.
- ◆ It supports children with creating a connection with the land, and extends their knowledge, appreciation and care for the natural environment.

Benefits

- ◆ There are huge benefits of children spending time outdoors – brain development, increased bone and muscular development, better social and cognitive development, emotional wellbeing and less illness.
- ◆ Alongside that, children develop strong physical, social and language skills, and above all self-esteem, patience, self-regulation and self-confidence. Plus, they develop a great respect and love for the environment in which they live.
- ◆ It provides children with the opportunity to experience moments of peace, quiet and some downtime from their regular busy schedules.



Clothing

- ◆ Children wear clothing appropriate for the weather and to enable them to move freely.
- ◆ Long sleeves, jumpers, long pants, beanies, hat, sturdy shoes and a warm coat are suggested.
- ◆ We recommend runners. Gumboots can be slippery and uncomfortable to walk in for long periods, but can be a good “spare” pair of shoes.

Waterproof red suit

- ◆ Kinder will loan a waterproof red suit for children to wear whilst in attendance at Bush Kinder.
- ◆ This suit **must** be worn by children for the duration of the Bush Kinder session, for supervision and safety reasons.
- ◆ These suits are only protective, and provide little warmth. It is important to wear appropriate clothing beneath the red suit.

What to bring

- ◆ Bag: Each child needs a LARGE backpack that can easily fit lunch/snack, spare clothes and shoes.
- ◆ Clothes: Each child should bring a full change of clothes, including underwear, socks and shoes. It is not recommended that gumboots be worn all the time due to the restriction in movement they impose; however, they may be appropriate at times and may be a suitable 'spare' pair of shoes.
- ◆ Waterproof Red Bush Kinder Suits: Children are to arrive to Bush Kinder wearing these suits.
- ◆ Food: Each child is to bring appropriate food. Generally, the food required will be the same as that which is suggested for sessions on non-Bush Kinder days. Please keep packaging to a minimum. We suggest using paper bags to hold your child's food
- ◆ Water: Each child should bring a suitably sized named drink bottle filled with fresh drinking water.

Parent helpers

- ◆ We welcome parent helpers to join us during our Bush Kinder sessions and prefer to have at least one parent helper join us for the session.
- ◆ All parents who wish to join us will be required to provide a current Working With Children Check (WWCC) and proof of vaccination.
- ◆ Additional parent helpers support us to explore our Bush Kinder sites in greater detail, and allow for greater engagement and interaction in their surroundings.



Cancellation

- ◆ If Bush Kinder is cancelled, the kinder session will be held back at kinder.
- ◆ Bush Kinder will only be cancelled when extreme weather is predicted, such as thunderstorms, strong winds or heavy rain.
- ◆ Rain alone will not be a factor for cancelling Bush Kinder (and the children love the opportunity for jumping in puddles!)

Policies, risk assessments & safety

- ◆ We have a comprehensive *Bush Kinder Policy* which is provided to all families and available on our website.
- ◆ A risk assessment is completed prior to children accessing the Bush Kinder site/s.
- ◆ All educators are qualified first aiders, and are able to respond to different types of emergencies. Children with asthma, anaphylaxis or other medical conditions that require medications that have been supplied to the kinder will have access to at Bush Kinder.

Considerations

- ◆ Children carry their own backpacks when moving through the park.
- ◆ We have limited access to fresh water, so each child must have an adequately sized drink bottle for them to use.
- ◆ Children have access to toilet facilities during Bush Kinder. At some sites, this may be a pop up tent with a porta potty for a 'bush wee'.
- ◆ We take minimal resources with us to Bush Kinder. This time is focused on children exploring and engaging with nature as much as possible, learning how to use their imagination and not relying on physical objects to engage in play!