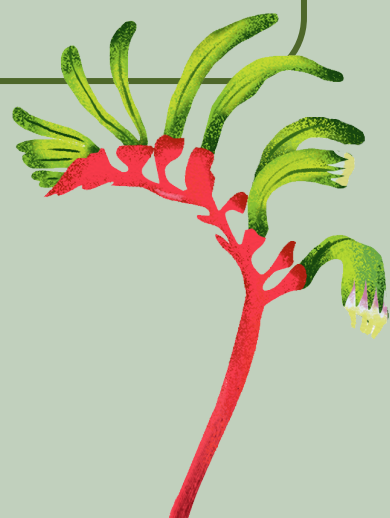




BITTERN PRESCHOOL

*Bush Kinder Information
booklet*



What is Bush Kinder?

At Bittern Preschool we are passionate about the importance of outside and nature play in a child's learning and development. Children are natural learners, and bush kinder will aid your child in this learning. Bush kinder provides your child the opportunity to play and learn in a natural space using the materials and experiences provided by nature.

Your child will have the opportunity to climb trees, balance on broken branches, discover the birds and plants that interest them, play in the rain and the mud and explore their understanding of the natural world around them.

Bush kinder will be held at a space connected to Bittern Primary School. Not only will your child have the natural space to explore and learn, they will at times have the opportunity to utilise the school's library and the developmental playroom alongside the foundation students. Both of these provide extended learning opportunities for your child.

Studies have shown that children who are exposed to play outside in natural environments have:

Increased confidence, motivation and concentration.

Increased social, physical and language skills.

Deeper conceptual understandings and respect for the natural environment.

Increased social and imaginative play.

More varied and supported risk-taking behaviours and positive dispositions towards risk and challenge.

Where is Bush Kinder?

Bush kinder will be held at a bushland connected to Bittern Primary School, Portsmouth Road, Bittern. We will walk from the kindergarten to the Bush kinder location. Please see copy of Attachment 1 at the end of this booklet



When is Bush Kinder?

Your child's kindergarten sessions will still run for the same times.

Busk Kinder will run fortnightly on a Friday 9:45am - 11:45pm. Children will arrive at kinder at the normal times 9:15am - 2:15pm

Sessions may be cancelled ahead of time, at short notice or during a session in the following circumstances:

- Extreme weather
- Staff absence
- Sudden extreme weather
- Emergency evacuation

In these circumstances you will be notified via an announcement on Story Park. In the event the Bush kinder session is cancelled, a normal kinder session will continue at Bittern Preschool.



What will Bush Kinder days look like?

The morning of your child's Bush Kinder session you will drop your child off at kinder as normal. As always its of the utmost importance that you sign your child into the iPad in the foyer of the kinder.

Once all of the children have been signed in the will gather for small talk with their teachers to discuss and refresh the safety expectations of Bush kinder.

Your child's teacher will remind all the children to go to the toilet and to apply sunscreen to themselves.

Everyone will leave at approximately 9:45am to arrive at the Bush kinder site just after 10:15am.

The group will stay at Bush kinder for 2 hours. During this time they will have the opportunity to explore the natural environment as well as have a snack. At 11:15pm the group will be ready to walk back to Bittern Kindergarten and continue their kindergarten session until pick up time.

Who goes to Bush Kinder?



Staff in attendance of Bush Kinder will be Karen Lipsett, and Caroline Tearle. Both Karen and Caroline have experience in running a Bush Kinder program and are looking forward to running the program again in 2024.

In order to ensure safety is the highest priority, we ask for family helpers each Bush Kinder session.

Parent helpers will walk with us from Bittern Preschool to Bittern Primary School. Please bring along a hat, snack and bottle of water.

At Bittern Preschool we are understanding that many families have younger children. Younger siblings are invited to attend the Bush Kinder session, however they remain the responsibility of the family volunteer.

Whenever you attend a Bush Kinder session we require you to sign in the visitor book and the sign out at the end. This applies to any siblings or younger children who may be attending with you.

What if my child is unwell?

We ask that parents use their own judgement in assessing if their child should or should not attend Bush Kinder.

Your child should not be attending Bush Kinder if they are unwell, excessively tired or if a parent/guardian is concerned about their child's wellbeing due to the weather and conditions.

If your child will not be attending a Bush Kinder session we ask that you either call or text the Kindergarten phone on 0407 622 325, prior to the session.

The teachers will be carrying this phone with them, so we advise you program that number into your phone if the situation arises that the teachers need to get in contact with, or you need to get into contact with the teachers during the session.

What if my child has a medical condition?

Staff will discuss any medical conditions with you prior to the Bush Kinder program commencing.

Staff will ensure that they take each child's action plan and medication with them to each bush kinder session.

All staff have up to date first aid training, and carry a full first aid kit with them during Bush Kinder.

If relief staff are required for a Bush Kinder session, a full briefing of medical conditions and allergies will occur before any session.

What do I pack for my child?

Children are required to carry their own bag to and from the Bush Kinder site, please keep this in mind when packing their bag. As always snack, lunch and a water bottle must be packed for the kinder session.

We will eat morning snack at the Bush Kinder site. Please make sure that their lunch box and drink bottle fit inside the backpack and is easy enough for your child to access this themselves.

Please also ensure the following are packed as spares:

- Top and bottoms, ensuring they are weather appropriate
 - Underwear and singlet in winter.
 - Socks
- Lightweight water proof jacket
 - A spare pair of shoes.

How do I give permission?

To participate in Bush Kinder parents/guardians must complete a "Routine Excursion Form." This form will be distributed by the teachers and must be returned to the kindergarten prior to the commencement of the Bush Kinder Program.



What if there is an emergency?

In the case of an emergency evacuation, staff will follow Bittern Primary School's evacuation plan.

The reasons for relocating include, but are not limited to:

- Fire/bushfire
- Missing child
- Aggressive dog off lead
- Other animal intruders
- Uninvited person threatening and/or causing nuisance or unease for staff and participants
 - Natural events such as extreme weather, floods, severe winds or thunderstorms
 - Medical emergency or accident

It is important to note that POLICE and FIRE BRIGADE personnel outrank all event management in any emergency procedure and Bush Kinder participants would follow the directions of such emergency services.

In the event of an emergency evacuation all parents/guardians will be notified via an announcement on StoryPark.

It is highly unlikely that any of the identified risks or events will eventuate, however it is our responsibility to ensure that the appropriate policies and procedures are in place in the unlikely event that it may occur.



Does this program cost

The Bush Kinder program does not cost any additional fees to the families.