

Media Release

The Hon Lizzie Blandthorn MP
Deputy Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council
Minister for Children
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NEW BUSH KINDER EXPANSION TO GET MORE KIDS OUTDOORS

Victorian children in Glen Waverley will have the chance to explore the outdoors and play in nature, thanks to an expansion of bush kinder programs by the Allan Labor Government.

Minister for Children Lizzie Blandthorn and Member for Glen Waverley John Mullahy today visited Brentwood Preschool to learn about its planned Bush Kinder program and Bilingual Kindergarten program.

Brentwood Preschool received a \$6,000 grant to help buy necessary equipment for its bush kinder program. The program enables children to get outside, play with natural materials, and learn through activities such as climbing trees and watching wildlife.

Brentwood Preschool is one of the 150 bush kinders which received a grant in 2024. These programs are being established in 52 local government areas, including 25 regional locations. Of the 150 kinders receiving one-off grants, 100 are in metropolitan Melbourne.

Bush Kinder programs are educational as well as exciting for children, giving them a supervised place to play in a natural environment while helping them to develop, learn and grow.

Nature and outdoor play have a significant positive impact on a child's learning and development, as well as their physical and mental health and wellbeing.

Research shows regular learning through outdoor play helps young children develop across a whole range of areas, including physical and cognitive development.

Applications for the 2025 round of an additional 150 bush kinder grants will open in the second half of 2024.

The Labor Government is investing \$3.6 million over four years to expand bush kinder programs in up to 600 kindergarten services across Victoria.

A list of kindergartens receiving a bush kinder grant can be found at vic.gov.au/bush-kinder-grants-program.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Children Lizzie Blandthorn

"We're supporting up to 150 kindergartens like Brentwood Preschool each year to start bush kinder programs, giving more children opportunities to get outdoors and learn in a natural environment."

"Bush kinder programs are not just fun and educational, they also help to keep kids active and connect them with nature – boosting their health, wellbeing and development."

Quotes attributable to Member for Glen Waverley John Mullahy

"Kids in Glen Waverley will learn and play outdoors more thanks to the new bush kinder program, supported by the Allan Labor Government."