

Media Release

The Hon Lizzie Blandthorn MP
Deputy Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council
Minister for Children
Minister for Disability



Tuesday, 9 July 2024

MEENIYAN EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE CENTRE A STEP CLOSER

Families in the South Gippsland town of Meeniyan will have more access to local childcare and kindergarten, thanks to the Allan Labor Government's delivery of a new early learning and childcare centre in the area.

Minister for Children Lizzie Blandthorn today announced the purchase of land in Geale Street, Meeniyan, for the future Meeniyan Early Learning and Childcare Centre (interim name).

The Meeniyan ELCC will deliver early childhood services for communities in the Foster region and will be located across the road from Meeniyan Primary School – meaning local children will be able to attend long day care, kinder and primary school in one convenient location.

The Meeniyan ELCC is one of 50 government-owned and operated centres opening between 2025 and 2032 to improve access to early education and help meet demand for kindergarten and childcare in our communities.

The ELCC will offer childcare and Three- and Four-Year-Old Kindergarten programs, and transition to Pre-Prep. The centre may also include space for co-located services such as maternal and child health services and playgroups.

The first four ELCCs will open in 2025 at Sunshine Primary School, Eaglehawk North Primary School, Moomba Park Primary School and Murtoa College, with 14 others opening in 2026 at government schools across the state.

Locating kinder and childcare at schools supports children to get the most out of their early learning, supports their transition to school and gives families a consistent place for the services they need, close to home.

Work to select suitable sites for the remaining ELCCs is continuing. Where possible, the ELCCs will be located at or alongside schools or TAFEs, hospitals and other major employers to make childcare accessible and more convenient for busy parents and carers.

The Labor Government is investing billions to build and expand hundreds of kindergartens across the state and deliver 50 early learning and childcare centres in communities where they are needed most.

Through our nation-leading \$14 billion *Best Start, Best Life* reforms, the Government is transforming early childhood education to help children thrive, save families money, and support parents and carers to return to work or study if they choose.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Children Lizzie Blandthorn

"This land purchase is the first step in delivering a brand-new Early Learning and Childcare Centre in Meeniyan, and I'm excited about the opportunities it will bring for local children and families."

"We're building 50 early learning and childcare centres in the communities that need them most – bringing early childhood education and care to where it is needed and making life easier for parents, carers and families."

Quotes attributable to the Member for Eastern Victoria Tom McIntosh

"This new centre will be a great addition to our community in Meeniyan. Giving more local children early education opportunities ensures our kids have the best start in life."

Media contact: Grace Cramer | 0447 913 851 | grace.cramer@minstaff.vic.gov.au