

Media Release

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



Friday, 13 December 2024

PARTNERSHIP DELIVERING MORE KINDER PLACES IN WHITTLESEA

The Allan Labor Government is supporting bigger and better kindergartens for families north of Melbourne, doubling capacity at three services by 2028 thanks to a partnership with the City of Whittlesea.

Minister for Children Lizzie Blandthorn today announced three projects that will create up to 194 additional kindergarten places.

Stables Kindergarten will be demolished from June 2025 and rebuilt as a two-room service, increasing capacity from 54 to 118 places. The rebuilt kindergarten, supported by a grant of \$4 million, will open in Term 1, 2027, with children attending Mill Park Drive Children's Centre while works are under way.

Dalton Road Kindergarten in Thomastown will be rebuilt from mid-2026, creating up to 64 new kindergarten places, with a \$4.5 million Labor Government grant. The service will close in late 2025 and reopen in early 2028, providing up to 118 kindergarten places across two brand-new rooms.

Derby Meadows Preschool in Epping will undergo redevelopment, with the existing single-room service set to be replaced by a two-room kindergarten from mid-2026. The project, supported by a \$4.5 million Labor Government grant, will deliver up to 118 kinder places by early 2028, up from 52.

The three projects are part of the Labor Government's \$24.25 million Building Blocks Partnership with Whittlesea City Council, which is delivering up to 490 new kindergarten places.

Two partnership projects are already under way – Murnong Community Centre, opening in 2026, and West Wollert Community Centre, opening in 2027. These centres will collectively deliver up to 296 kindergarten places while providing essential access to child, family and community services in growing suburbs.

Since 2021, the Labor Government has entered into 17 Building Blocks Partnerships, supporting the delivery of 106 new and expanded kindergartens and creating up to 14,712 new kindergarten places.

The Labor Government is investing billions to build and expand hundreds of kindergartens across the state, supporting the delivery of 15 hours of Three-Year-Old Kindergarten each week by 2029 and up to 30 hours of Pre-Prep each week by 2036.

Through our nation-leading *Best Start, Best Life* reforms, we are 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

"Our partnership with City of Whittlesea will deliver as many as 490 new kinder places – giving more families in the area access to great local kinders close to home."

"Investment in kinder is an investment in our children's future – our Building Blocks partnerships are delivering more than 14,000 new kindergarten places in local government areas across Victoria, and saving families up to \$2,500 per year, so more children can get the best start in life."

Quote attributable to Member for Mill Park Lily D'Ambrosio

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“These two upgrades are creating 130 new kindergarten places in the Mill Park electorate and more play-based learning opportunities for children and families.”

Quote attributable to Member for Thomastown Bronwyn Halfpenny

“We’re offering Free Kinder and building, modernising and expanding hundreds of kindergartens right across the state, including established and new suburbs, increasing capacity and delivering high-quality early learning facilities so more children can get the best start in life.”