



# Apollo Bay Preschool Inc.

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## Apollo Bay Preschool Notification Early Years Management & Kinder on School Sites Program

### What Is Happening?

Apollo Bay Preschool has provided kindergarten programs for generations. The preschool has a proud history of working in partnership with the community through a voluntary parent Committee of Management (CoM) with an active fundraising arm and strong personal connections throughout the district.

The year to date has presented two major developments at the kinder which will guide the service in a positive direction for the remainder of 2021 and beyond;

- In response to ongoing early years reforms, the roll-out of three-year-old funded kindergarten, the increasing demand on a voluntary committee and the challenge with forming a committee each year, the current COM voted unanimously in February 2021 to investigate transitioning to an Early Years Management (EYM) model, and voted for a sub-committee to form and commence this process.
- The Apollo Bay Preschool has been fortunate in being one of the first kinders in the state to participate in the Kinder on School Sites (KOSS) initiative. This is the creation of a new facility that will form a part of the Early Years Hub located on the Apollo Bay P-12 College site, and will incorporate;
  - two 33-child capacity kindergarten rooms
  - a dedicated Maternal and Child Health consulting suite and storage area (which will be operated by the Colac Otway Shire (COS))
  - waiting areas in the public foyer of the building
  - staff offices, storage, and associated facilities and amenities
  - a shared flexible meeting room/consulting suite
  - a secure playground area for the licenced rooms, with a lockable gate leading onto the school oval. Use of oval may be used by negotiation with the school.

The new Early Years Hub will be complete in late 2021, and will be handed over to the Colac Otway Shire as primary lessee. Council has a responsibility to appoint a suitably-qualified not-for-profit kindergarten operator to enter into a licence for the site, with a requirement that the kindergarten is operational for the commencement of the 2022 educational year.

The CoM and Council share a common interest in intending to forge a new partnership with a kindergarten operator that aligns with the values and philosophies of the Apollo Bay community, and is able to meet Council's requirements of a building licensee and educational partner.

As such, the COM and Council have developed a partnership in undertaking a joint Expression of Interest (EOI) process to appoint an EYM that will take a leadership role in the operation of the Early Years Hub.

**Quote from Apollo Bay Preschool President - Elenore Lannigan**

"The partnership and collaborative nature of the process that the Apollo Bay Preschool sub-committee and Council have embarked on over the past few months, is a testament of our joint commitment to the preschool educators and children that participate in our program now and for future generations.

2021 has seen big opportunities presented to our preschool this year. With leveraging the outstanding service that is provided now, having an Early Years Manager appointed, as well as moving to a new site, this allows us to provide an even greater service to our community going forward whilst retaining our local values and priorities.

Thanks is to be extended to the Council and additional stakeholders they have provided through this process to ensure the Apollo Bay Preschool can conduct this process with the highest standard possible."

**Quote from General Manager, Development and Community Services, Colac Otway Shire - Ian Seuren**

"Council and a sub-committee of the Apollo Bay Preschool have worked positively together to develop a process that will ensure we secure the right operator for the Apollo Bay Early Years Hub.

We have focussed on incorporating the values and aspirations of the Apollo Bay Preschool (which in turn reflect the local community's values and aspirations) into this process.

We thank the Apollo Bay Preschool Committee of Management for its partnership approach.

We're confident that we will secure an operator that will continue to build on the strong legacy established by present and past parent committees of the kindergarten, and that local children will thrive in the new Apollo Bay Early Years Hub."

**What are the benefits?**

The Preschool Committee of Management is excited for the opportunities and growth that we can gain from having an EYM. It will;

- Provide appropriate support and professional development for educators
- Provide consistent management of the service for educators and families
- Allow for the parent committee to focus on building relationships
- Allow the parent committee to focus on holding social events
- Allow greater focus for the parent committee on fundraising opportunities
- Provide the ability to leverage the space for other community needs

**When is it happening?**

A thorough due diligence process will underpin the EOI undertaking with a priority on appointing a service that aligns with our community values and needs. At this stage, a recommendation of a suitable vendor will be presented to the Committee of Management for approval on or before 30 June 2021.

**For further information please contact:**

Elenore Lannigan, Apollo Bay Preschool - President - [elenore.lannigan@gmail.com](mailto:elenore.lannigan@gmail.com)

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **What does this mean for enrolments in 2022?**

Enrolments for 2022 will be for the new site. Whilst we are working on some preliminary planning of this at present, enrolment timeframes and details will be finalised with the appointed Early Years Manager in consultation with the Committee of Management.

### **How will this affect fees going forward?**

The EOI process requires the EYMs to demonstrate how enrolment fees are determined, however what fees are set (if any), will be finalised with the appointed Early Years Manager in consultation with the Committee of Management and communicated during the enrolment process.

### **Will staff be retained as a part of this process?**

The Apollo Bay Preschool Committee of Management values the knowledge, effort and dedication of our educators and support staff. As a part of the EOI process, it is noted that we support retaining all staff during the transition to an Early Years Manager.

### **Who are you looking at as a part of the process?**

At this stage of the EOI process, the details of vendors will remain confidential, however once an Early Years Manager has been appointed, this will be communicated accordingly. It's important to note that we are looking at suitably funded Early Years Management services that best suit our community.

### **Will parents still be able to volunteer?**

Volunteering is part of the fabric of kindergartens. We envisage this will continue under the new Early Years Manager and we've built volunteering into our evaluation criteria, although the actual model of volunteering might look slightly different.

### **What happens to existing funds the kinder have?**

It is explicit through the EOI process that funds the kinder currently has, are to remain allocated to the kinder to invest appropriately and in consultation with future committee structures. Meeting regulatory requirements around these funds, as well as future management will be finalised in conjunction with the appointed Early Years Manager.

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### **Who makes the final decision on who is appointed as the EYM?**

The EOI process involves 3 Apollo Bay Preschool Committee of Management members and 3 Colac Otway Shire representatives. There are a number of review stages for us all to review responses, engaging with prospective EYMs etc, with the intention to provide a recommendation to the Apollo Bay Preschool Committee of Management to review, approve and subsequently appoint the Early Years Manager.

**What changes will we see this year at the Kinder?**

At this stage we are unable to provide details on possible changes until we commence the EOI process and engage with the appointed Early Years Manager. Any changes will be communicated at the appropriate times.

**How is the Colac Otway Shire involved in the process?**

The Apollo Bay Preschool Committee of Management are working in partnership with the Colac Otway Shire on this EOI to ensure we appoint a suitable Early Years Manager to manage the current operations, as well as a future licensee in the Early Years Hub. They have provided significant resources by way of early years, legal, compliance and procurement expertise through this process as well as participation as sub-committee members.

**Who else has been involved in the process?**

In developing the EOI documentation, the sub-committee has engaged the Kinder educators and Committee of Management, the Department of Education, ELAA, VSBA (Victorian School Building Authority), Colac Otway Shire, external legal firms and will continue to have close connection to these stakeholders during the EOI process.

**Are the Apollo Bay P-12 College aware of this initiative?**

Yes they are, and it is important to note that whilst the kinder is on the school site, it is a separate entity and is not being absorbed into the school curriculum.

**How can I keep up to date on progress of these initiatives?**

Regular communications will be sent to educators and families as more information becomes available. All information, including additional Frequently Asked Questions as they arise, will be placed on the Apollo Bay Preschool website. This will be completed in the coming week and we will provide the link to the page in due course.

**Will there still be a parent Committee when the EYM is appointed?**

Under the Early Years Management model, a Parent Advisory Group (PAG) will be formed. The roles & responsibilities of the PAG will be defined in consultation with the EYM and current Committee of Management during the transition of the service.