

# Kindergarten Infrastructure and Services Plan

Benalla Rural City

# CONTENTS

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>1. Introduction</b>  | <b>3</b>  |
| 1.1. Reform context   | 3         |
| 1.2. Purpose of Kindergarten Infrastructure and Services Plans (KISPs)      | 3         |
| 1.3. Structure of the KISP  | 4         |
| 1.4. Disclaimer   | 4         |
| <b>2. Map of Early Childhood Education services in Benalla Rural City</b>   | <b>5</b>  |
| <b>3. Local context</b>   | <b>6</b>  |
| 3.1 Purpose   | 6         |
| 3.2 Key considerations  | 6         |
| <b>4. Unmet demand estimates between 2025 - 2036 for Benalla Rural City</b> | <b>12</b> |
| 4.1 Purpose   | 12        |
| 4.2 Methodology   | 12        |
| 4.3 Summary of current kindergarten provision                               | 14        |
| 4.4 Agreed estimates of demand for kindergarten places                      | 14        |
| <b>5. Authorisation</b>   | <b>16</b> |

© State of Victoria (Department of Education) 2024



Kindergarten Infrastructure and Services Plan Benalla Rural City is provided under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International licence. You are free to re-use the work under that licence, on the condition that you credit the State of Victoria (Department of Education), indicate if changes were made and comply with the other licence terms, see: [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

The licence does not apply to:

- any images, photographs, trademarks or branding, including the Victorian Government logo and the DE logo; and
- content supplied by third parties.

Copyright queries may be directed to [copyright@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:copyright@education.vic.gov.au)



Department  
of Education

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Reform context

The Victorian Government's \$14 billion Best Start, Best Life (BSBL) reforms are the most significant change to Victoria's early childhood sector in a generation.

The BSBL reforms include:

- **Free Kinder:** Free Kinder is now available for Victorian 3- and 4-year-old children at participating services in standalone (sessional) kindergartens and long day care centres – a saving of up to \$2,500 per child, every year.
- **Pre-Prep:** Four-Year-Old Kindergarten will gradually transition to 'Pre-Prep' – increasing to a universal 30-hour-a-week program of play-based learning for 4-year-old children in Victoria by 2036.
- **Three-Year-Old Kindergarten:** the continued roll-out of Three-Year-Old Kindergarten, with programs increasing to 15 hours a week across the state by 2029.
- **Early learning and childcare centres:** the establishment of 50 Victorian government-owned and operated early learning and childcare centres. These centres will be built in areas with the greatest need and will make it easier for families to access early childhood education and childcare. The first of the centres will open in 2025.

These initiatives demonstrate a clear commitment to improving early learning outcomes for Victorian children, workforce participation and access for families, and present the most significant change to Victoria's early childhood sector in a generation.

Pre-Prep will roll-out in Benalla Rural City in 2026. Statewide, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from a refugee or asylum seeker background, and children who have had contact with Child Protection services, will be able to access up to 25 hours of Pre-Prep in 2026, increasing to up to 30 hours from 2028. Children who have (or have a parent or guardian who has) a Commonwealth concession card and children who are a multiple birth child (triplets or more) across the state will be able to access up to 25 hours of Pre-Prep in 2028, increasing to up to 30 hours from 2030.

## 1.2. Purpose of Kindergarten Infrastructure and Services Plans (KISPs)

New and expanded infrastructure is key to delivering the BSBL reforms and will require a large expansion of kindergarten facilities across the State. KISPs, which are jointly developed with Local Governments, indicate where and when new infrastructure will be required to support both reform implementation and population growth in each of Victoria's 79 local government areas (LGAs). KISPs help all kindergarten providers meet demand and collectively provide a clear picture of infrastructure need across the State.

KISPs support planning for services and future capital works and include detailed information about:

- Current capacity and demand for funded kindergarten

- Capacity to be delivered for planned infrastructure projects and future demand for kindergarten
- Forecast ‘unmet demand’ for kindergarten – that is, the kindergarten places needed that cannot be met by current or planned capacity
- Information specific to each local government area and its early childhood education and care landscape.

KISPs were initially developed to support the roll-out of Three-Year-Old Kindergarten and have now been updated to incorporate Pre-Prep.

KISPs are intended to support planning. They are not funding documents and do not commit any party to addressing the unmet demand identified.

**However, it is expected that future investment requests through Building Blocks and funding decisions about Local Government, not-for-profit projects (including non-government schools) would align with the relevant KISP (including Section 3: Local Context).**

### 1.3. Structure of the KISP

Each KISP consists of the following sections:

- **Section 1:** A short introduction to the Best Start, Best Life reform and the KISP.
- **Section 2:** A map of existing and planned Early Childhood Education and Care services.
- **Section 3:** Local context and knowledge of key information in Benalla Rural City relevant to early childhood education.
- **Section 4:** Unmet demand estimates in Benalla Rural City over the life of the reform.

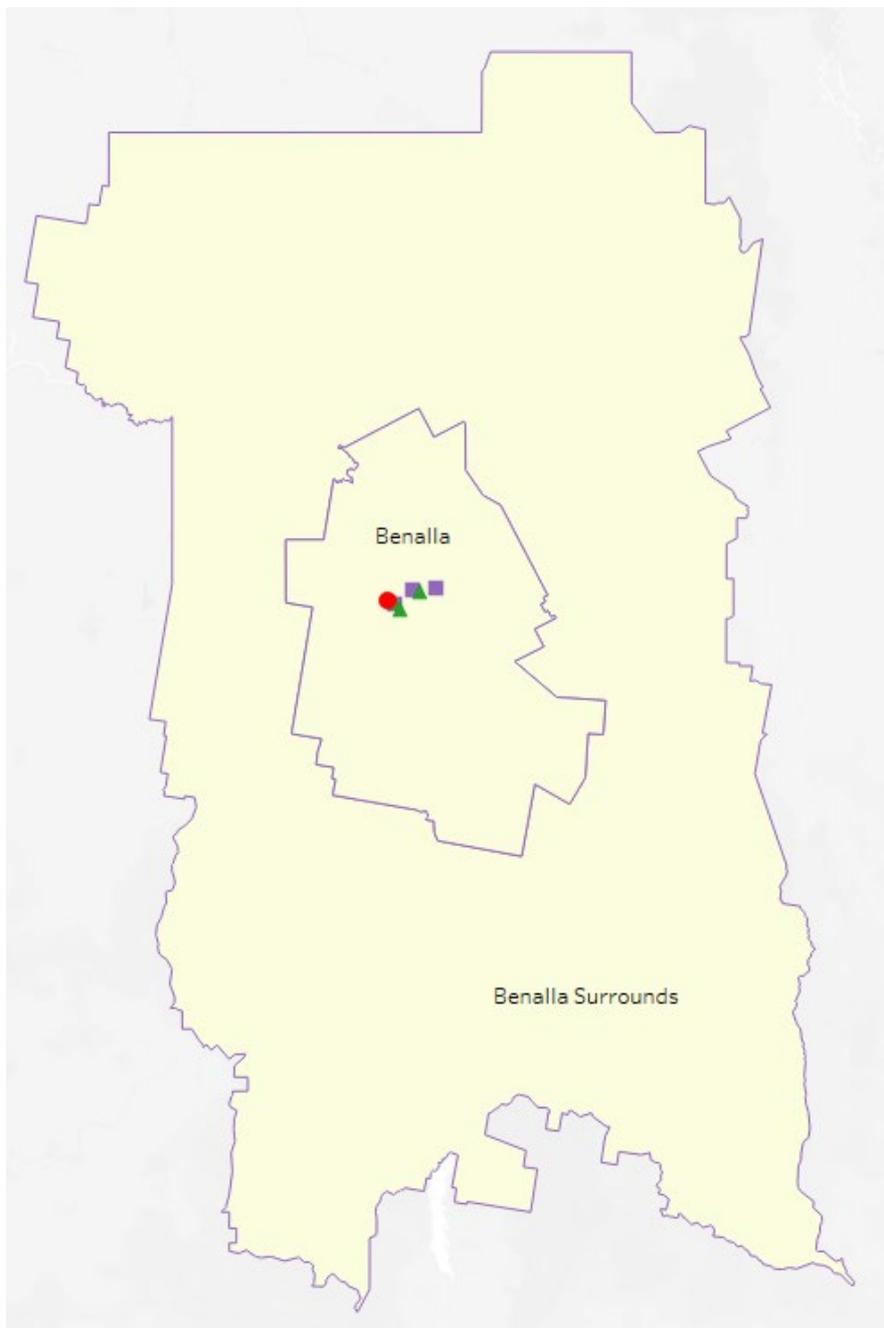
### 1.4. Disclaimer

All data presented in this document is published for information purposes only. Operational and business decisions should not be based solely on this document. Neither the Department nor Benalla Rural City Council warrants, guarantees, makes any representation or assumes any duty of care in relation to the data, including as to its suitability, completeness, accuracy or adequacy.

## 2. Map of Early Childhood Education services in Benalla Rural City

The map below shows the distribution of currently operating and new State-supported services that are planned to open in the future in Benalla Rural City. Planned services by the private sector are not included.

This map has been prepared using departmental data, from both the National Quality Agenda IT System (NQAITS) and the Victorian School Building Authority (VSBA).



## 3. Local context

---

### 3.1 Purpose

Local, place-based knowledge and context play an important role in supporting the implementation of the BSBL reforms across Victoria. This section of the KISP documents this knowledge and context and should be considered alongside the kindergarten demand estimates in Section 4.

Information provided as local context may support applications through the Building Blocks Capacity Building and Planning Grants streams.

### 3.2 Key considerations

#### Key local geographic considerations or information relevant to Three-Year-Old Kindergarten and Pre-Prep

##### *All ECEC Services are Located in Benalla*

As of 2024, all Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) services are situated in Benalla. There are no childcare or kindergarten facilities in the surrounding rural towns and primary schools are also limited. Consequently, families in these rural communities' travel to Benalla to access kindergarten and childcare services.

In 2024 approx. 70 kinder aged children lived in the Benalla Surrounds SA2. On any given year, over 30 children will travel into the Benalla town for their kindergarten, representing approx. 20% of the demand in this SA2. **This is not considered in the unmet demand projections in section 4**, which projects that children who live in Benalla Surrounds will attend a kindergarten service in their SA2 of residence. Due to the dispersed nature of Benalla Surrounds SA2, with over a dozen towns, this is not feasible.

Therefore, solutions to address unmet demand that appears in Benalla Surrounds could be located the Benalla SA2. Additionally, over ten children in Benalla Surrounds travelled to **Wangaratta** Rural City, which borders the east of Benalla Rural City.

##### *Landlocked Centres*

There are three stand-alone kindergarten facilities in the Benalla Rural City (Munroe Ave Preschool, Bernard Briggs Kindergarten and Ride Avenue Preschool), two are owned by Council and one is community owned. All three stand-alone services are landlocked with no possibility of extending to increase their size. Importantly, these three centres are the only not for profit services in the Benalla Rural City. Additionally, the childcare service Benalla Kids Cottage (not funded for kindergarten) is also landlocked and the building where the service is provided is leased not owned.

##### *Age/condition of existing Infrastructure*

Five of the six buildings were estimated to be built in the 1950's-1970's, one building was estimated to be built between 1980-1990.

- Bernard Briggs Kindergarten- constructed in 1950's
- Munro Avenue Preschool- constructed in 1950's
- Ride Avenue Preschool- constructed in 1950's
- Gumnuts Resort-constructed in 1970's
- Pro Kidz- constructed in 1978
- Benalla Kids Cottage- estimated construction 1980-1990, this is a leased building that was listed for sale in 2023.

### *Existing Infrastructure Strengths*

Consultation with services highlighted a number of infrastructure strengths:

- Large outdoor spaces
- Large rooms
- Natural outdoor spaces
- Great natural light
- Office spaces
- Great shade
- Inside/outside programs can be offered

### *Existing Infrastructure Challenges*

Consultation with services highlighted a number of infrastructure challenges:

- Small office spaces
- Small kitchens
- No sleeping spaces to accommodate longer days
- Limited spaces to meet with parents
- Oddly shaped rooms
- No space for early years support services to co-locate
- Limited parking
- No covered outdoor space for parents during pick-up times

### *Ability to Co-locate with other Key Early Years Services*

None of the existing kindergarten providers have infrastructure suitable for co-locating other early years services, such as Maternal and Child Health or Allied Health services. In 2024, no funded kindergarten services offer co-located early years services.

### **Aboriginal Self Determination in Early Childhood Education and Care**

The Marrung: Aboriginal Education Plan 2016-2026 recognises that improving outcomes requires universal services to strengthen their connections with Koorie families, as early childhood inequalities are the foundation of lifelong disparities in health, educational achievement, and wellbeing.

The 2021 ABS Census reveals that 2% of Benalla Rural City's population identifies as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, which is twice the proportion seen across Victoria.

In the Benalla Rural City, a formalised data sharing partnership/ agreement for Benalla Rural City Council, Kindergarten providers, Tomorrow Today and the Department of Education (DE) has been developed ensuring that all Early Start Kindergarten (ESK) eligible children are actively supported to be enrolled in two years of kindergarten.

A key aim of this partnership is ensuring that all children from an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander background are enrolled in Early Start Kindergarten (ESK), ensuring they have priority of access to kindergarten.

### *Key Principles of the Approach:*

- **Simplicity:** a registration and enrolment process that is aligned and easy for families and services to follow.
- **Proactiveness:** families experiencing barriers are proactively engaged by offering early support.
- **Respect:** Families feel respected, supported and heard.
- **Choice:** Families are offered choice, so they can choose the kindergarten program that is the best fit for their child.
- **Collaboration:** Partners work together with families and each other to deliver the best outcomes for children in the Benalla Rural City.
- **Consistency:** The approach aligns with Department of Education (DE) policies and guidelines.

## Key demographic trends that influence demand for kindergarten

Data shown below for the Benalla Rural City shows a positive trend of improvements over time; however, compared to Victoria the picture of disadvantage remains less favourable across almost all indicators.

| Indicator<br><i>*TREND shown in green indicates improving over time, red is worsening and yellow is no change.</i> | Benalla LGA 2016 | Benalla LGA 2021 | Victoria 2021 | Data Source   |
|--|------------------|------------------|---------------|---|
| Single parent families with children aged less than 15 years (2021)<br><b>IMPROVING</b>                            | <b>30.5%</b>     | <b>28.1%</b>     | <b>18.2%</b>  | Compiled by PHIDU based on the ABS Census of Population and Housing, August 2021.   |
| Jobless families with children aged less than 15 years (2021) <b>IMPROVING</b>                                     | <b>18.6%</b>     | <b>12.2%</b>     | <b>9.9%</b>   | Compiled by PHIDU based on the ABS Census of Population and Housing, August 2021.   |
| Children in families where the mother has low educational attainment (2021) <b>IMPROVING</b>                       | <b>19.8%</b>     | <b>15.8%</b>     | <b>10.8%</b>  | Compiled by PHIDU based on the ABS Census of Population and Housing, August 2021 (unpublished) data.  |
| Low income, welfare-dependant families -with children (2021)<br><b>IMPROVING</b>                                   | <b>11.6%</b>     | <b>5.8%</b>      | <b>4.3%</b>   | Compiled by PHIDU based on data from the Department of Social Services, June 2022; Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Census of Population and Housing, August 2021 (families), and ABS Estimated Resident Population 30 June 2021 |
| Social housing -rented dwellings (2021)<br><b>IMPROVING</b>  | <b>4.7%</b>      | <b>4.0%</b>      | <b>2.5%</b>   | Compiled by PHIDU based on the ABS Census of Population and Housing, August 2021 (unpublished) data.  |
| Low income households (bottom 40% of income distribution) (2021)<br><b>WORSENING</b>                               | <b>50.3%</b>     | <b>53.8%</b>     | <b>39.5%</b>  | Compiled by PHIDU based on the ABS Census of Population and Housing, August 2016 (unpublished data).  |
| Dwellings with no motor vehicle (2021)<br><b>IMPROVING</b>   | <b>6%</b>        | <b>5.2%</b>      | <b>7.5%</b>   | Compiled by PHIDU based on the ABS Census of Population and Housing, August 2021.   |
| People receiving an unemployment benefit long-term (2021)<br><b>WORSENING</b>                                      | <b>6.4%</b>      | <b>7.9%</b>      | <b>5.5%</b>   | Compiled by PHIDU based on data from the Department of Social Services, June 2022; and the Australian Bureau of   |

|   |  |             |             |   |
|---|--|-------------|-------------|---|
|   |  |             |             | Statistics Estimated Resident Population, 30 June 2021  |
| Health care card holders (2021) <b>IMPROVING</b>                      | <b>10.5%</b>   | <b>8.6%</b> | <b>7.7%</b> | Compiled by PHIDU based on data from the DSS Payment Demographic Data, June 2022, and Australian Bureau of Statistics Estimated Resident Population, 30 June 2021 |
| SEIFA Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage (IRSED)-2006-2021 | 2021: <b>968</b><br>2016: <b>951</b><br>2011: <b>957</b><br>2006: <b>967</b><br><i>*In 2021, the Benalla LGA was ranked as the 20<sup>th</sup> most disadvantaged LGA in Victoria.</i> |             |             | ABS Socio-economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA), 2006, 2011, 2016, 2021 data.  |

### Projects or trends that may influence supply of early childhood education and care

#### *Kindergarten on School Site (KOSS)*

A kindergarten on school site (KOSS) was announced by the Minister in October 2024. The KOSS is forecasted to be open in 2027 on the Benalla P-12 College-Clarke St Campus. The service will offer 99 licensed places. The supply this project will provide has been factored into the unmet demand estimates at section 4.4.

#### *Proposed New Early Years' Service*

A permit has been issued for a new early years centre on Four Mile Road in Benalla.

Planning information suggests that the centre will offer 80 child care places.

A permit has been issued, and it is unknown when the centre will become operational.

#### *Residential development*

Subdivision data captures that there are 1,122 residential lots in the planning stages:

- 300 lots are at pre-application
- 203 are at planning permit stage; and
- 619 are currently under development as at 2024

Growth is generally within the Benalla township and its fringes. There are no proposals for dense developments within the town centre (i.e. apartments or multi-unit developments within the CBD).

#### *New "Housing for All Victorians" Policy*

The recently announced Victorian Government "Housing for All Victorians" policy sets housing targets to 2051 for every local government area. Benalla has a target of 1,700 new dwellings by 2051. The demand these additional dwellings will create has not yet been factored into the unmet demand estimates at section 4.4.

Council is working with the Regional Planning Hub to prepare a framework plan to accommodate this growth.

### *Economic Development*

Enterprise Park is being developed for industrial use. Early sales have seen around 40 blocks presold, with strong interest in future sales.

Construction for the initial stages of this industrial estate is set to begin in early 2025. New industry is expected to create additional jobs in Benalla Rural City.

### *Other opportunities to highlight:*

- the Concrete Batching Factory has an extended contract with 300 workers on site
- there could be development in the tourism space e.g., benefits from cancelled Commonwealth Games; and
- current planning around native forestry changes could attract further opportunities.

### *Real Estate Rentals and Sales*

The demand for real estate (both sales and rentals) remains high in Benalla with limited residential properties on the market for sale at this time. Homes under \$500,000 are selling very quickly.

### *Liveability*

Recent infrastructure additions have resulted in increased liveability for families living in the Benalla Rural City:

- Satellite site for Wangaratta Specialist School (being built on Benalla P-12 site)
- 15 million in funding for Benalla's Indoor Recreation Centre redevelopment
- New Splash Park
- New Cinema/Visitors Centre

### *Working from home:*

Organisations are increasingly considering allowing employees to 'work from anywhere', which extends beyond working from home, to include working in other locations, cities and even countries. Neilson, K. (2021) "5 Ways to Revolutionise Your Employee Value Proposition", HRM Online, <https://www.hrmonline.com.au/covid-19/employee-value-proposition-2/>, 14 September.

Benalla's proximity to Melbourne remains a draw card. The Great Australian Population Shift captured the three underpinning reasons why the pandemic could influence people's preferred lifestyle and living location into the future:

- We are now far more willing to work from home
- We favour larger properties, with room to form a home base, grow veggies and spend time with the kids; and
- We may be happy to live further from key CBD locations, because we are not commuting every day (Ripehouse Advisory 2020).

The whitepaper names Benalla (in the 'golden circle' of 2-3 hours from Melbourne), as an LGA that could see significant growth of 5.08 per cent making it the eighth largest population increase in Australia. What is not clear is the extent of this projected growth in terms of growing numbers of preschool aged children.

### **Other information about the expansion of early childhood services**

#### *Workforce*

Kindergartens in Benalla Rural City are experiencing ongoing challenges attracting and retaining teachers and educators. These workforce issues affect all services, making it difficult to attract additional staff. Moreover, the reluctance of current staff to work longer hours has been identified as a key obstacle to implementing changes in service delivery models.

### *Childcare*

Childcare is a critical part of the ECEC system. The available research confirms the importance of high quality early childhood education and care (ECEC) during the first 1000 days of a child's life and its role in reducing developmental vulnerability.

The benefits of attendance at high-quality childcare include less impulsivity, more advanced expressive vocabulary, and greater reported social competence (Belsky et al. 2007). Children from disadvantaged backgrounds show the greatest gains from attending high-quality childcare (Elliott 2006; Moore 2006).

In 2024 in Benalla, there are three centres offering kindergarten only, two centres offering integrated LDC/kindergarten programs and one childcare centre solely offering. Two of the childcare centres are full with waiting lists for childcare and one centre has some capacity.

Australian research suggests children from low socio-economic status backgrounds receive lower quality education and care (Torii et al., 2017) and that there are fewer high quality services in the areas where children need it most (Cloney, Cleveland, Hattie, & Tayler, 2016).

The Mitchell Institute Report *Deserts and Oases-How accessible is childcare in Australia?* (Hurley, Matthews & Cloney, 2022) confirms that where you live matters. Families in regional areas are the most at risk of suffering from poor access to childcare. It also shows that there are concerning correlations between access to childcare and socio-economic status.

The Mitchell Institute research shows the 'Benalla surrounds' SA2 area as having the lowest access to childcare with 0 places available per child and the 'Benalla' SA2 area as having 0.5278 places per child available.

Kindergarten can be offered alongside childcare in long day care services, and it is vital that childcare supply remains sufficient for the community as the Best Start, Best Life reforms roll-out across Benalla Rural City. Not only is childcare critical for childhood development, but it is also fundamental in supporting gender equity, workforce participation, the economy and the overall liveability of the municipality. Additional infrastructure offering integrated kindergarten programs could jointly address childcare and kindergarten needs in the community.

*Belsky, J., Vandell, D. L., Burchinal, M., Clarke-Stewart, K. A., McCartney, K., Owen, M. T., & NICHD Early Child Care Research Network. (2007). Are there long-term effects of early child care? Child Development, 78(2), 681–701*

*Cloney, D., Cleveland, G., Hattie, J., & Tayler, C. (2016) Variations in the availability and quality of early childhood education and care by socioeconomic status of neighborhoods, Early Education and Development, 27(3), 384–401.*

*Elliott, A. (2006). Early childhood education: Pathways to quality and equity for all children (Australian Education Review No. 50, pp. 1–75). Melbourne: Australian Council for Educational Research*

*Hurley, P., Matthews, H., & Pennicuik, S. (2022). Deserts and oases: How accessible is childcare? Mitchell Institute, Victoria University.*

*Moore, T. G. (2006). Early childhood and long term development: The importance of the early years (Topical Paper, Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth, June 2006).*

*Torii, K., Fox, S., & Cloney, D. (2017) Quality is key in early childhood education in Australia, Mitchell Institute Policy Paper No. 01/2017. Mitchell Institute, Melbourne.*

# 4. Unmet demand estimates between 2025 - 2036 for Benalla Rural City

---

## 4.1 Purpose

As the BSBL reforms are rolled out and Victoria's population grows, demand for kindergarten and Pre-Prep places will increase significantly. While additional capacity will be needed to meet this demand, this will vary across the State and over time, due to differences in the capacity of existing services, growth trends and sector composition.

To identify where, when and how many additional kindergarten places are expected to be required over the roll-out in Benalla Rural City, Council and the department have developed:

1. a summary of the current provision of kindergarten within Benalla Rural City (**Section 4.3**).
2. an estimate of kindergarten places that cannot be met through existing services for the 2025 - 2036 period, taking into account the additional demand that can be accommodated by optimising utilisation of existing services and infrastructure (**Section 4.4**).

Local governments and providers can use these published estimates to inform reform implementation activities such as service planning, kindergarten program expansion, infrastructure investments and Building Blocks funding applications in alignment with future demand over the roll-out.

## 4.2 Methodology

The estimated kindergarten places used in the following sections have been agreed between Benalla Rural City Council and the department, and were informed by:

- demand projections developed by the department which draw on a range of inputs, including population forecasts and current enrolments
- the estimated capacity of existing and planned services in the LGA (Section 2)
- where applicable, modelling undertaken by Benalla Rural City and service level information; and
- local knowledge and context provided by the local government (Section 3) that explains particular issues and trends in their area.

### Kindergarten places explainer

The KISP measures a service's capacity to deliver funded kindergarten in terms of the number of **15-hour places** (referred to as "kindergarten places") available for Three-Year-Old kindergarten and Pre-Prep (noting that, by 2036, two kindergarten places will be required for one Pre-Prep enrolment). The number of kindergarten places is different from a service's licensed or approved places, which count the number of children permitted to attend the service at any one time under the license. Many services can enrol more children in their funded kindergarten program(s) than they have licensed places for because they can run more than one kindergarten program per week. Kindergarten places are therefore a more accurate measure of service kindergarten capacity than licensed places.

Kindergarten places have been presented as 15-hour places so that new Three-Year-Old Kindergarten places and the additional 15-hour places required for Pre-Prep can be easily compared to existing 15-hour Four-Year-Old Kindergarten places. This is because, when Three-Year-Old Kindergarten is fully rolled out in 2029, three-year-old children will have access to 15-hours of kindergarten. When Pre-Prep is fully rolled out in 2036, four-year-old children will have access to up to 30-hours of kindergarten, an increase of the current offering of 15-hours per week.

It is important to note that enrolments are not equivalent to 15-hour places. One 15-hour place can support a total of 15 hours of delivery per week split between one or more children, including but not limited to the following examples:

| One 15-hour place (15 hours of delivery) |            |                                       |
|--|------------|---------------------------------------|
| <b>Example 1</b>                         | 1 child    | 1 x 3YO attending 15 hours per week   |
| <b>Example 2</b>                         | 1 child    | 1 x 4YO attending 15 hours per week   |
| <b>Example 3</b>                         | 2 children | 2 x 3YOs attending 7.5 hours per week |
| <b>Example 4</b>                         | 3 children | 3 x 3YOs attending 5 hours per week   |

Two 15-hour places can support a total of 30 hours of delivery per week split between one or more children, including but not limited to the following examples:

| Two 15-hour places (30 hours of delivery) |            |   |
|---|------------|---|
| <b>Example 1</b>                          | 1 child    | 1 x 4YO attending 30 hours per week   |
| <b>Example 2</b>                          | 2 children | 2 x 3YOs attending 15 hours per week  |
| <b>Example 3</b>                          | 2 children | 1 x 3YO, and<br>1 x 4YO both attending 15 hours per week                          |
| <b>Example 4</b>                          | 3 children | 2 x 3YOs attending 7.5 hours per week, and<br>1 x 4YO attending 15 hours per week |

### Geographic boundaries used in the KISP

These estimates have been developed at an LGA and community level to show the overall forecast and variation within an area. The KISP defines community at the Statistical Area Level 2 (SA2), which is a medium-sized area which represents a community that interacts socially and economically, with an approximate population range of 3,000 to 25,000 people, and an average population of about 10,000 people. The KISP uses 2021 SA2 boundaries. More information is available at the [Australian Bureau of Statistics website](#).

### Supply contributed by pipeline projects

Benalla Rural City and the department have added any new places that will be made available through planned expansions of existing services or new services into estimates of existing supply, where this information is available. This may include projects being delivered by not-for-profit providers (including non-government schools) with support from the Victorian Government, planned Kindergartens on School Sites, and government-owned and operated early learning and childcare centres.

The KISP does not estimate how and when the broader sector will expand to meet the additional demand for kindergarten places that are estimated over the roll-out period.

### 4.3 Summary of current kindergarten provision

The figures below provide a summary of current kindergarten provision within the LGA and provide relevant context for the estimates of demand for funded kindergarten places included in Section 4.4. The data included in this section are largely drawn from:

- the department’s Kindergarten Information Management System (KIMS), as at 2023.
- the National Quality Agenda IT System (NQAITS), as at October 2024.

| Number of services by service type (NQAITS)   |   |
|---|---|
| Stand-alone kindergartens   | 3 |
| Long day care centres (including services not currently delivering funded kindergarten) | 3 |

| Percentage of services by management type, LGA level (NQAITS) |            |
|---|------------|
| Type  | Percentage |
| Local Government  | 0%         |
| Private not for profit  | 50%        |
| Private for profit  | 50%        |
| Other   | 0%         |

| Current kindergarten offering in Benalla Rural City                 |      |
|---|------|
| Three-Year-Old Kindergarten participation rate (KIMS):              | 74%  |
| Four-Year-Old Kindergarten participation rate (KIMS):               | 101% |
| Number of services that offer a funded kindergarten program (KIMS): | 6    |

### 4.4 Agreed estimates of demand for kindergarten places

The below estimates (**Table 1** onwards) have been developed by Benalla Rural City Council and the department to illustrate the estimated:

1. Demand – the total number of kindergarten places expected to be required over the roll-out period to support the current provision of Four-Year-Old Kindergarten, the BSBL reforms, and population growth
2. Supply – the total number of kindergarten places that can be accommodated by existing services and infrastructure, and planned, State-supported services which are yet to open.
3. Unmet demand – kindergarten places that cannot be accommodated by optimising existing services and infrastructure (i.e. the shortfall between demand and supply).

#### Interpreting the estimates

Infrastructure need in the LGA and its local communities is indicated by the bottom rows of the tables in this section (**Table 1** onwards): *Unmet demand*. If the number of kindergarten places in this row is above zero, it means that the area is estimated to need additional infrastructure capacity. Any type of provider – local government, not-for-profit (including non-government schools) or for-profit – can build this additional infrastructure.

Sub-SA2 factors may need to be considered to give a holistic picture of unmet demand. For example, in rural communities, one SA2 may contain several small towns, some with excess supply and some with unmet demand. At the SA2-level, demand may appear to be met because all supply and demand is considered in aggregate; however, it is not feasible for families to drive long distances to access kindergarten capacity in another town. Sub-SA2 factors are covered in **Section 3: Local context**.

**Table 1: Estimated kindergarten places required between 2025 - 2036 in Benalla Rural City**

| <b>Benalla Rural City estimates</b> | <b>2026</b> | <b>2027</b> | <b>2028</b> | <b>2029</b> | <b>2030</b> | <b>2031</b> | <b>2032</b> | <b>2033</b> | <b>2034</b> | <b>2035</b> | <b>2036</b> |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Demand for kindergarten places      | 286         | 302         | 332         | 371         | 381         | 433         | 442         | 450         | 459         | 464         | 473         |
| <b>Unmet demand</b>                 | <b>32</b>   | <b>36</b>   | <b>43</b>   | <b>52</b>   | <b>55</b>   | <b>68</b>   | <b>73</b>   | <b>76</b>   | <b>79</b>   | <b>83</b>   | <b>87</b>   |

### Community estimates

**Table 2-A: Estimated kindergarten places required between 2025 - 2036 in Benalla SA2**

| <b>Benalla estimates</b> | <b>2026</b> | <b>2027</b> | <b>2028</b> | <b>2029</b> | <b>2030</b> | <b>2031</b> | <b>2032</b> | <b>2033</b> | <b>2034</b> | <b>2035</b> | <b>2036</b> |
|--------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Demand for kindergarten  | 253         | 267         | 289         | 319         | 325         | 365         | 369         | 374         | 379         | 382         | 386         |
| Kindergarten supply      | 264         | 442         | 451         | 451         | 460         | 460         | 460         | 460         | 460         | 460         | 460         |
| <b>Unmet demand</b>      | <b>0</b>    |

**Table 2-B: Estimated kindergarten places required between 2025 - 2036 in Benalla Surrounds SA2**

| <b>Benalla Surrounds estimates</b> | <b>2026</b> | <b>2027</b> | <b>2028</b> | <b>2029</b> | <b>2030</b> | <b>2031</b> | <b>2032</b> | <b>2033</b> | <b>2034</b> | <b>2035</b> | <b>2036</b> |
|------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Demand for kindergarten            | 32          | 36          | 43          | 52          | 55          | 68          | 73          | 76          | 79          | 83          | 87          |
| Kindergarten supply                | 0           | 0           | 0           | 0           | 0           | 0           | 0           | 0           | 0           | 0           | 0           |
| <b>Unmet demand</b>                | <b>32</b>   | <b>36</b>   | <b>43</b>   | <b>52</b>   | <b>55</b>   | <b>68</b>   | <b>73</b>   | <b>76</b>   | <b>79</b>   | <b>83</b>   | <b>87</b>   |

## 5. Authorisation

The Ovens Murray Area Executive Director, Mr Bernie Boulton, of the Department of Education and the Chief Executive Officer, Mr Peter Keane, of Benalla Rural City endorse this Kindergarten Infrastructure and Services Plan (KISP) for Benalla Rural City Council by signing on

... 11 / 12 / 25 ...

This KISP is not intended to create legal relations or constitute a legally binding contractual agreement between the parties. The parties may review this KISP in 2028 to publish a new version that will replace the previous version.

Signed for and on behalf and with the authority of Benalla Rural City Council.



.....  
Signature

Name: Peter Keane

Title: Chief Executive Officer

Signed for and on behalf and with the authority of the Department of Education



.....  
Signature

Name: Bernie Boulton

Title: Area Executive Director – Ovens Murray