

Kindergarten Infrastructure and Services Plan

Golden Plains Shire

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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 Golden Plains Shire in 2028. 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



State
Government

Department
of Education

- 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 Golden Plains Shire relevant to early childhood education.
- **Section 4:** Unmet demand estimates in Golden Plains Shire over the life of the reform.

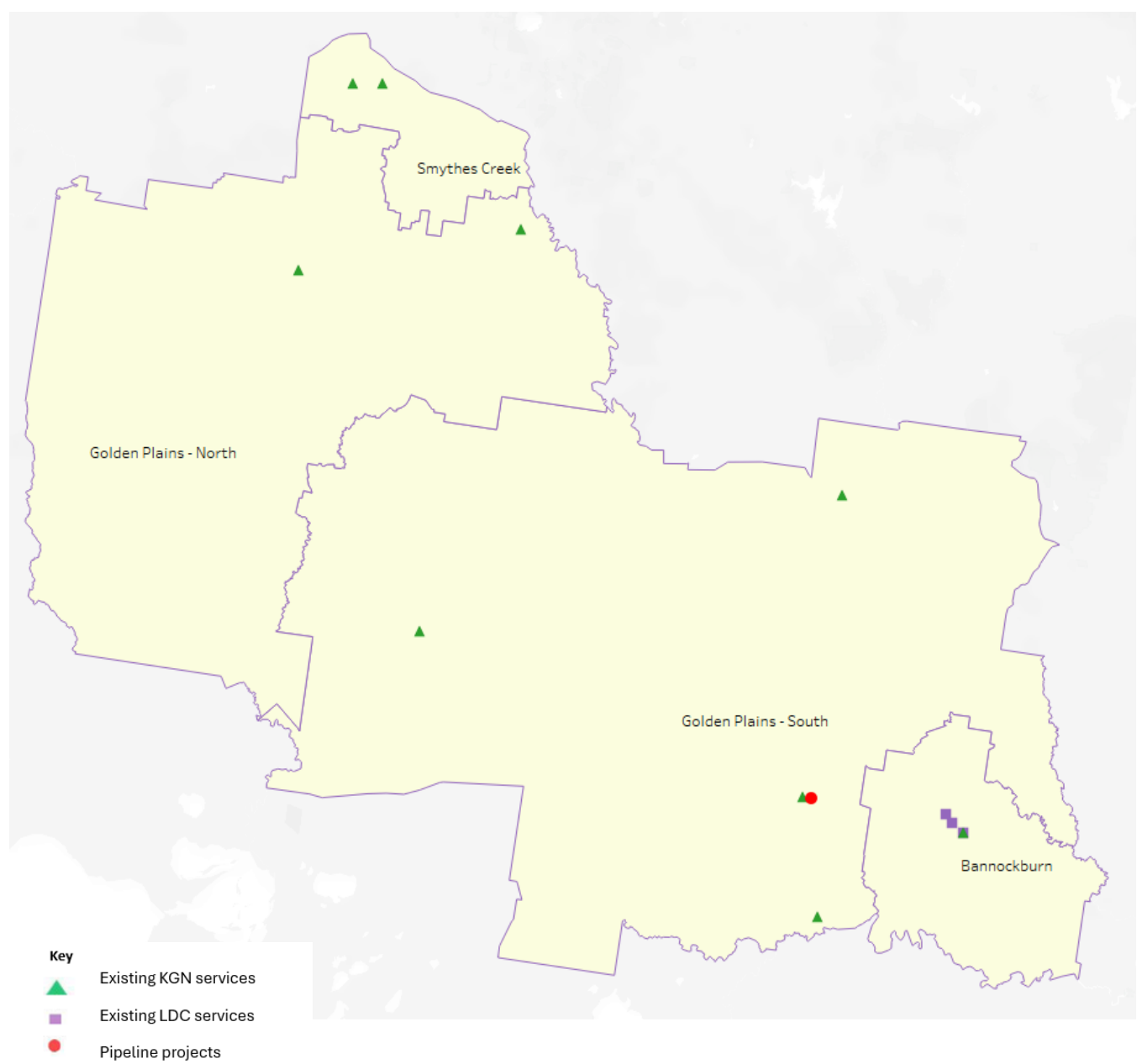
1.4. Disclaimer

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 Golden Plains Shire 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 Golden Plains Shire

The map below shows the distribution of currently operating and new State-supported services that are planned to open in the future in Golden Plains Shire. 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

Regional Overview

Golden Plains Shire located between the major regional cities of Ballarat and Geelong, covers more than 50 rural and peri-urban communities. The Shire is experiencing one of the fastest population growth rates in regional Victoria, driven by affordability, lifestyle appeal, proximity to regional employment, and access to M1 Princes Freeway linking the Surf Coast and western Metropolitan Suburbs.

Bannockburn, Teesdale, Inverleigh, and Lethbridge in the south-east, and Smythesdale, Scarsdale, and Haddon in the north-west, are experiencing the most significant residential expansion. Golden Plains Shire Growing Places Strategy identifies growth already planned for Bannockburn within the Bannockburn Framework Plan, focuses new growth in Meredith* (subject to sewerage), Lethbridge and Teesdale, and future growth opportunities in Cambrian Hill and Stonehaven. The Bannockburn South-East Precinct alone is expected to almost double the township’s population.

Golden Plains Shires total population is expected to increase by at least 60.7% from 26,520 in 2025 to 42,607 by 2041.

Segmentation of Early Childhood Education Services

Golden Plains Shire Council (GPSC) plays a dual role in both direct service delivery and infrastructure planning. The municipality offers a diverse early childhood education and care (ECEC) network that includes council-operated services, not-for-profit providers, and private long day care.

A. Council Managed Sessional Kindergarten Services

Golden Plains Shire Council manages and delivers early years services through its Early Years Management (EYM) model, which includes all aspects of three and four-year-old (including Pre-Prep from 2026) free sessional kindergarten facilities.

Facility Name	Location	Licensed Places	Notes
Teesdale Children’s Centre	Teesdale	33	Refurbished 2015–2016 Single room capacity 33. Operates 5 x 7.5 days of rotational/integrated program to meet Pre-Prep provision. Whilst it is expected that this will not be

			able to accommodate projected unmet demand, the opening of Victorian Early Learning Centre in Teesdale early 2026 will support community demand.
Inverleigh Early Learning	Inverleigh	33	Extended from 22 to 33 place 2016. Single room. Operates 4 x 7.5 days of rotational/integrated program. It is expected that this will not be able to accommodate projected unmet demand.
Meredith Kindergarten	Meredith	33	Operates an integrated program and will accommodate community demand until further growth is realised after 2032.
Rokewood Kindergarten	Rokewood	25	Operates an integrated program and will accommodate community demand until further growth is realised after 2032.
Bannockburn Kindergarten	Bannockburn	50 (operational capacity 44)	Two room sessional Kindergarten 50 places (22 + 22). It is expected that this service will not be able to accommodate projected unmet demand associated with provision of Pre-Prep from 2028.

B. Community Operated (EYM) Sessional Kindergarten Services

Community operated EYM three and four-year-old (incl. Pre-Prep from 2026) free sessional kindergarten are currently all operated by the Eureka Community Kindergarten Association (ECKA), a large Early Years Management Provider. ECKA leases and manages facilities in partnership with Council and/or State Government Kindergarten on School Site (KOSS) facilities.

Facility Name	Location	Licensed Places	Notes
Woody Yaloak Kindergarten	Scarsdale	27	Operates an integrated program and it is expected that this will accommodate projected demand until further growth is expected after 2032.
Napoleons Kindergarten (KOSS)	Napoleons	66 (2 rooms)	Operates an integrated program and is expected that this will accommodate projected demand.
Haddon Preschool Centre	Haddon	66 (2 rooms)	A modular building which opened in 2024; is expected that this will accommodate projected unmet demand for 4-year-old Pre-Prep until 2033.
Northern Community Centre Preschool	Haddon	22	It is expected that this will accommodate projected unmet demand for 15 hrs 3-Year-old until 2033. This service runs a 3-year-old program only, with 4-year-olds attending Haddon Preschool Centre.

C. Childcare Providers

Private and not-for-profit centre based long day care providers deliver integrated care for 0–5-year-olds including three and four-year-old Kindergarten (incl. Pre-Prep from 2026).

Facility Name	Location	Licensed Places	Notes
Kardinia Early Learning	Bannockburn	168	NFP Childcare incl. 3 & 4-year-Old Kindergarten
Bright Minds Early Learning	Bannockburn	167	Childcare incl. 3 & 4-year-Old Kindergarten
Nurture Learn & Play	Bannockburn	126	Childcare incl. 3 & 4-year-Old Kindergarten
Early Learning Victoria	Teesdale	102	State Government operated Childcare incl. 3 & 4-year-Old Kindergarten. To open 2026.

Aboriginal Self Determination in Early Childhood Education and Care

In Golden Plains Shire, a growing number of Aboriginal families have identified their heritage, reflecting a potential increased stronger sense of community belonging. Golden Plains Shire Council demonstrates its commitment to embedding Aboriginal culture in early childhood programs, ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families feel respected and celebrated as demonstrated in the Municipal Early Years and Children's Plan 2025-2029.

The Aboriginal population represents 1.5% of the total population (higher than the Victorian average of 1.0%, but below the national average of 3.2%). The population of identified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders increased by 83.4% during the period from last census to 2021.

The age distribution reveals critical insight for early years planning. 42.3% of the Aboriginal population in Golden Plains are aged 0–14 years, with significant peaks in the 0–4 (14.9%) and 5–14 (27.4%) age brackets, reinforcing the need for targeted early childhood education services and supports, including health, developmental screening, and culturally responsive learning environments. Source: ABS Census Data, Golden Plains Shire Council 2021

Golden Plains Shire Council recognises the importance of expanding culturally safe early childhood infrastructure, enhancing educator cultural competency, and strengthening partnerships with Aboriginal Communities including both residents and Traditional Owners to co-design inclusive services and programs.

Key demographic trends that influence demand for kindergarten

Golden Plains Shire is experiencing significant demographic change, especially in the 0–4-year-old cohort, which is a key driver of kindergarten demand.

Between 2025 and 2041, according to [Population and age structure map | Golden Plains Shire | Population forecast](#), the number of children aged 0–4 is projected to increase from 1,791 in 2025 to around 3,138 by 2041 this is an anticipated change of 75.2%.

At a community level, forward population projections show that:

- Bannockburn is expected to almost triple in size due to the Bannockburn South Precinct, (one of the most significant greenfield developments in the region).
 - Bannockburn South has a current population of 37 which is expected to increase to 7,830 by 2041.
 - Bannockburn North and South combined expect an **additional 4,451** residents by 2032.
- Teesdale, Inverleigh, Lethbridge are also forecast to experience steady growth from medium-density subdivisions and under-utilised rural lots.
- Smythesdale and Haddon both face growth limitations. The Yellow Glen development Plan in Smythesdale has been approved allowing for around 170 additional houses whilst additional growth is expected through under-utilised suburban lots.

Kindergarten-aged population is demonstrated to increase most significantly in SA2 areas:

Southern communities/areas:

Bannockburn (North and South) SA2 a combined 3–4-year-old population increase of 309 children, from 234 in 2025 to 543 by 2032.

Golden Plains South SA2 a combined 3–4-year-old population increase of 157 children, from 165 in 2025 to 322 by 2032. More specifically - Lethbridge and District a combined 3–4-year-old population increase of 22 from 78 in 2025 to 103 by 2032

Northern communities/areas: Haddon - Smythesdale District SA2 a combined 3–4-year-old population increase of 70 children, from 88 2025 to 158 by 2032.

Whilst projections vary dependant on data sources, Council data, which includes predicted growth anticipates, the 3- and 4-year-old population is projected to increase from approximately 740 (2025) to 1,116 by 2036 – an increase of 376 children.

Socio Economic and Early Years Vulnerability Data

Data from the Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) provides evidence to support health, education and community policy and planning. It helps identify what is working well and what can be improved to support children and their families.

Within Golden Plains Shire, two areas – both located in the Golden Plains North SA2 – have developmental vulnerability rates higher than Victorian State averages in more than two domains. These are:

- Napoleons/Enfield
- Ross Creek/Smythesdale

The SEIFA Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage (IRSD, 2021) highlights significant variation in socio-economic conditions across the Shire. Communities such as Inverleigh, Teesdale, and Bannockburn and District rank in the top 20–25% of least disadvantaged areas in Victoria, reflecting relatively low levels of socio-economic vulnerability.

In contrast, areas such as Linton and District fall into the lowest third statewide, indicating higher levels of disadvantage that may impact access to early years services and supports. Whilst mid-range areas like Haddon–Smythesdale, Lethbridge, and Enfield–Napoleons show more moderate disadvantage, suggesting a mix of strengths and emerging needs.

Barriers to Access and Community-Specific Challenges

While planning is underway to increase access to public housing, existing access is constrained by limited public transport and inconsistent support services. These factors shape both the residential demographic profile and the socio-economic landscape of the Shire.

Residents face a range of challenges depending on personal circumstances, including:

- Rental and mortgage stress
- Difficulty commuting - limited access to public or community transport incl. taxi
- Reliance on travel outside the municipality for food, secondary education, hospitals and employment
- Geographic isolation, with long distances to essential services like shopping and medical care
- Agricultural reliance, with many engaged in grain and livestock farming and dependent on local networks
- Pockets of distrust in government services, affecting uptake of available support

Implications for Early Years Planning

This variation across the Shire underscores the importance of place-based planning and tailored service responses. Ensuring equitable access to kindergarten infrastructure and early years supports requires overlaying vulnerability data with population growth trends, especially in communities where disadvantage is more pronounced. The importance of overlaying this data with population growth is critical.

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

Kindergarten infrastructure and workforce capacity across Golden Plains Shire is being shaped by a combination of population growth, policy reform, ageing facilities, and sector workforce shortages.

To meet increasing demand, a coordinated approach will be required to expand both kindergarten infrastructure and the early childhood workforce. Based on modelling in the Sub Regional Early Childhood Workforce Plan (2024), a significant uplift in the number of Early Childhood Teachers and Qualified Educators is required by 2032 to deliver both Three-Year-Old Kindergarten and the full Pre-Prep reform.

In 2024, new modular facilities were opened in Bannockburn, Haddon and Napoleons increasing capacity across the shire by 198 places. These additional facilities provided welcome relief to support the rollout of 15 hours of funded Three-Year-Old Kindergarten. However, these new places are not sufficient to address the ongoing population growth and demand expected under the Best Start, Best Life reforms.

Of the new modulars opened in 2024, the Napoleons Kindergarten on School Site (KOSS) facility has also relieved demand previously met by Ballarat's Buninyong service, which had been the closest option for many families in the area.

Childcare

A new Victorian Government Early Learning and Childcare Centre (ELCC) in Teesdale is due to open in January 2026. The impact of this service is reflected in the unmet demand estimates in section 4.4.

The new centre is expected to significantly relieve pressure in the southern corridor, particularly for Teesdale families. Some impact is also anticipated in neighbouring communities such as Shelford and Lethbridge, which currently lack kindergarten or childcare facilities. However, the impact on

Inverleigh is expected to be minimal, as the Teesdale site does not align with common travel paths for the community.

While new private childcare centres have been proposed by developers in Bannockburn and Smythesdale, no projects have yet progressed.

Kindergarten

Bannockburn is expecting new residential development between 2025-2041.

Development plans include the following facilities offering funded Kindergarten provision within the South-East Precinct. The capacity of these new services is not yet reflected in the unmet demand estimates at section 4.4.

Location	Facility Kindergarten	Services	Kindergarten capacity
Bannockburn South-east	Community Centre (adjacent to Primary School site)	Sessional Kindergarten 3 rooms + Maternal and Child Health consultations rooms + Allied Health accessible Consult rooms + community space.	99
Bannockburn South-east	Government Primary School incl KOSS	3 sessional kindergarten rooms	99
Bannockburn South-east	Government Primary School incl KOSS	3 sessional kindergarten rooms	99

The Bannockburn South-east Community Centre is considered the priority project within this suite of developments and is expected to commence by 2030. However, it will not meet the earlier demand emerging in Bannockburn due to Pre-Prep reform. The current 50-place sessional kindergarten facility in Bannockburn is not large enough to address the sessional need of the local community.

Golden Plains Shire Council considers that a Central Registration policy for sessional kindergarten which prioritises enrolments for Golden Plains residents over out-of-municipality children to be undesirable. Therefore, children residing in neighbouring municipalities could produce unexpected demand in Golden Plains Shire, particularly if the children are from eligible Priority of Access cohorts or in municipalities which have a later Pre-prep roll-out than Golden Plains Shire.

Golden Plains Shire Immediate Priority Communities

Inverleigh. The heritage-listed single room Council owned Early Learning Centre in Inverleigh is already under pressure to meet the needs of the community. The 33-place facility currently has 66 children enrolled. The introduction of 15 hours of 3--year-old kindergarten, increased Pre-Prep hours plus a limited hours care program providing 19 places, one day per week is beyond the capacity for this site.

Council will continue to advocate for land and funding through the Building Blocks Partnership Agreement, working with the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action and the Victorian School Building Authority to secure a new Early Learning Centre within the next 24 months. Although some families will travel to Teesdale to access the new Early Learning Victoria

ELCC (from 2026), this is not a travel path for community, and many will continue the longer commute to Bannockburn and outside the municipality.

Woody Yaloak Kindergarten (Scarsdale) This is an ageing facility in need of redevelopment. Expansion opportunities are limited by both land size and the requirements for a septic system upgrade.

A new, accessible, purpose-built kindergarten in this area would better serve families from Linton, Snake Valley, Newtown and Cape Clear, and would also relieve pressures on Haddon Kindergarten.

Bannockburn Sessional Kindergarten The current facility is at capacity. Planning is underway to identify land for a new sessional kindergarten – a priority project within the next 24 months.

A proposal is being reviewed to extend the existing facility from 44 to 55 places. However, a new facility is preferred to accommodate ongoing growth. Immediate supply challenges are expected particularly for free sessional kindergarten places while the community continues to grow.

Bannockburn South East As part of broader development planning, this precinct is likely to include three new Kindergarten facilities, the first of which is expected to be realised by 2030 (dependant on approvals and delivery of lots, which is developer and market led).

Lethbridge This growing community has a local primary school but no standalone funded Kindergarten. Families currently access services via:

- Centre based Long Day Care in Bannockburn
- Sessional (free) Kindergarten in Bannockburn, Teesdale or Meredith.

These communities are facing their own capacity issues. The Lethbridge community has advocated for local access to kindergarten for many years. The current and projected population now supports the establishment of a two-room facility with flexible, rotational group models.

Facility Fit for Purpose

Current Infrastructure condition assessments show varying levels of capacity and suitability across existing sites. This is an important factor when considering upgrades, new developments, or the decommissioning of older facilities.

Golden Plains Shire Council has undertaken internal reviews of its council-owned and/or managed early years assets, focussing on:

Building conditions and compliance, Capacity relative to demand, Accessibility and Inclusivity, Adaptability to deliver Pre-Prep and extended hours, Integration potential with other services (i.e. MCH, allied health, family support).

This review highlights the single room Woody Yaloak Kindergarten facility in Scarsdale to be prioritised for either significant refurbishment or relocation.

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

1. **Workforce** supply remains one of the most significant challenges to maximising utilisation of infrastructure as part of the Best Start Best Life reform across the Shire. Golden Plains Shire Council and local Early Years Managers are actively responding through:
 - Participation in State Government funded 5 Year Early Childhood Workforce Plans

- Place-based approaches to attract and retain local staff
 - Initiatives to create flexible employment models
 - Promotion of local traineeship and graduate pathways
2. **Co-located** community hubs such as the Meredith Community Learning HUB and Bannockburn Family Services Centre have demonstrated success in:
 - Maximizing shared infrastructure
 - Integrating wraparound services such as MCH and family support
 - Enhancing community accessibility
 3. Townships closer to Ballarat and Geelong (e.g. Bannockburn, Haddon) benefit from **stronger workforce accessibility** and service integration. In contrast, rural and more isolated communities such as Rokewood, Linton, Meredith and Napoleons face:
 - Smaller populations
 - Limited infrastructure
 - Greater difficulty attracting and retaining staff.
 4. To address **geographic disparity**, flexible and locally responsible service delivery models have been employed including:
 - Mixed-aged groups
 - Rotational programming
 - Multi-purpose facility uses
 5. **Scaling sessional kindergarten** programs to the required 30 hours per week under Pre-Prep will require:
 - Workforce uplift
 - Infrastructure investment
 - Consideration of funding model flexibility
 6. **Providers must** also manage:
 - Staff-to-child-ratios, operating hours
 - Staff wellbeing and retention, Enterprise agreements
 - Viability of small-scale services
 7. **Access to kindergarten** is further challenged by:
 - Limited public transport
 - Financial hardship preventing private vehicle ownership
 - Isolation in outlying communities

Other information about the expansion of early childhood services

Golden Plains Shire Council is undertaking a strategic, place-based approach to early years infrastructure planning that:

- Responds to significant and uneven population growth
- Addresses geographic, social, and economic vulnerabilities
- Aligns with state-wide policy reform including Pre-Prep implementation
- Recognises the limitations in workforce supply and existing infrastructure.

Future planning will require:

- Ongoing advocacy for funding and land, especially in Inverleigh, Bannockburn and Lethbridge
- Greater integration between local and state infrastructure investments (e.g. Building Blocks and KOSS projects)
- Flexible, community-informed service delivery models
- Strong focus on equity and access for all children and families across the Shire

With a firm foundation in data, partnerships and community insight, Golden Plains Shire Council will continue to work in partnership with State Government to plan for and deliver sustainable and inclusive early childhood education infrastructure to support future enrolment growth and ensure successful implementation of Best Start, Best Life reform, including Pre-Prep.

4. Unmet demand estimates between 2025 - 2036 for Golden Plains Shire

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 Golden Plains Shire, Golden Plains Shire Council and the department have developed:

1. a summary of the current provision of kindergarten within Golden Plains Shire (**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 Golden Plains Shire 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 Golden Plains Shire 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)		
Example 1	1 child	1 x 3YO attending 15 hours per week
Example 2	1 child	1 x 4YO attending 15 hours per week
Example 3	2 children	2 x 3YOs attending 7.5 hours per week
Example 4	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)		
Example 1	1 child	1 x 4YO attending 30 hours per week
Example 2	2 children	2 x 3YOs attending 15 hours per week
Example 3	2 children	1 x 3YO, and 1 x 4YO both attending 15 hours per week
Example 4	3 children	2 x 3YOs attending 7.5 hours per week, and 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

Golden Plains Shire Council 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 4.5. The data included in this section are largely drawn from:

- the department's Kindergarten Information Management System (KIMS), as at 2024.
- the National Quality Agenda IT System (NQAITS), as at August 2025.

Number of services by service type (NQAITS)	
Stand-alone kindergartens	9
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	42%
Private not for profit	42%
Private for profit	16%
Other	0%

Current kindergarten offering in Golden Plains Shire	
Three-Year-Old Kindergarten participation rate (KIMS):	94%
Four-Year-Old Kindergarten participation rate (KIMS):	92%
Number of services that offer a funded kindergarten program (KIMS):	12

4.4 Agreed estimates of demand for kindergarten places

The below estimates (**Table 1** onwards) have been developed by Golden Plains Shire 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 to 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 Golden Plains Shire

Golden Plains Shire estimates	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036
Demand for kindergarten places	546	591	623	772	884	937	1,120	1,155	1,194	1,238	1,278	1,308
Unmet demand	0	0	0	33	87	121	261	293	329	352	390	420

Community estimates

Table 2-A: Estimated kindergarten places required between 2025 - 2036 in Bannockburn

Bannockburn estimates	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036
Demand for kindergarten	234	256	274	338	391	423	515	543	572	608	641	666
Kindergarten supply	297	297	297	305	305	305	305	305	305	320	320	320
Unmet demand	0	0	0	33	87	119	210	238	267	287	320	346

Table 2-B: Estimated kindergarten places required between 2025 - 2036 in Golden Plains - North

Golden Plains - North estimates	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036
Demand for kindergarten	60	66	69	91	105	110	132	133	135	137	138	138
Kindergarten supply	158	158	158	158	158	158	158	158	158	158	158	158
Unmet demand	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 2-C: Estimated kindergarten places required between 2025 - 2036 in Golden Plains - South

Golden Plains - South estimates	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036
Demand for kindergarten	165	178	185	230	259	270	318	322	327	331	334	337
Kindergarten supply	218	266	266	268	268	268	268	268	268	271	271	271
Unmet demand	0	0	0	0	0	2	51	55	60	60	63	66

Table 2-D: Estimated kindergarten places required between 2025 - 2036 in Smythes Creek

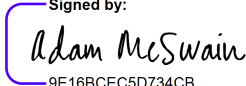
Smythes Creek estimates	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036
Demand for kindergarten	88	92	95	114	128	134	155	158	160	163	166	167
Kindergarten supply	158	158	158	158	158	158	158	158	158	158	158	158
Unmet demand	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	5	7	8

5. Authorisation

The Central Highlands Area Executive Director, Ms Jen Winter, of the Department of Education and the Chief Executive Officer of Golden Plains Shire endorse this Kindergarten Infrastructure and Services Plan (KISP) for Golden Plains Shire Council by signing on 14 /10 /2025

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 Golden Plains Shire Council.

Signed by:

9E16BCEC5D734CB...
.....
Signature

Adam McSwain
Name:

Chief Executive Officer
Title:

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

.....*Jen Winter*
Signature

Jen Winter
Name:

Executive Director, Central Highlands Area
Title: