



Education
and Training

Kindergarten Infrastructure and Services Plan

Shire of Campaspe

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. REFORM CONTEXT

In an Australian first, the Victorian Government has committed to implement Three-Year-Old Kindergarten for all children over a 10-year roll-out with a total investment of almost \$5 billion, including \$1.68 billion to support the infrastructure expansion required for the reform. This reform will add another year of universal funded kindergarten so that, by 2029, all children in Victoria will have access to two years of play-based learning through a funded kindergarten program.

1.2. PURPOSE OF KISPS

Three-Year-Old Kindergarten will require a large expansion of kindergarten across the State. The Government has invited all 79 Victorian Local Governments to discuss and agree upon a Kindergarten Infrastructure and Services Plan (KISP) for their Local Government Area (LGA).

Each KISP has been jointly developed with Local Government and published to estimate the growth in demand for kindergarten within the LGA. The KISPs will help all kindergarten providers meet demand and provide a clear picture of infrastructure need across the State.

While a KISP is not a funding document and does not define required infrastructure projects or commit any party to funding specific projects, it is expected that future investment requests through Building Blocks and funding decisions about Local Government and not-for-profit projects would align with the relevant KISP.

1.3. HOW TO USE THE KISP

Each KISP contains estimates of future kindergarten supply of, and demand for, Three and Four-Year-Old Kindergarten places against existing enrolment capacity. Not-for-profit and for-profit providers can use these estimates to inform their plans to expand kindergarten programs, establish new services or invest in new or extended facilities.

For example, KISPs provide demand estimates in terms of where, when and how much demand for kindergarten places will grow in an LGA. KISPs also estimate where and how many kindergarten places providers can accommodate in existing facilities before an area needs new infrastructure to meet demand. The estimates can be used to inform decisions about where and when expansions of kindergarten program capacity and the construction of new or extended facilities are needed to meet demand growth.

Where there is an agreed KISP for the LGA, the Local Government and not-for-profit kindergarten providers seeking co-investments through the Building Blocks Capacity Building stream must refer to, and align their proposed project with, the infrastructure need identified in the KISP.

1.4. STRUCTURE OF THE KISP

Each KISP consists of the following sections:

- **Section 1:** A short introduction to the Three-Year-Old Kindergarten reform and the KISP.

- **Section 2:** A map of existing and planned Early Childhood Education and Care service locations.
- **Section 3:** Local knowledge and context relevant to the expansion of kindergarten services.
- **Section 4:** Funded kindergarten demand estimates.

1.5. DISCLAIMER

All data presented in this document are estimates only and are based on the best information available to the Department and Local Government at the time. They are published on an as-is basis and are for informational purposes only. They are subject to adjustment in response to market forces and as new data and other relevant information becomes available. The data may under- or over-estimate both total demand in a given location or year and the capacity for new demand to be met by providers. As a result, operational and business decisions should not be made solely based on this document. Any use of this data is solely at the risk of the user. The Department and Local Government accept no responsibility for any loss or damage, either direct or incidental, that may result from the use of the data.

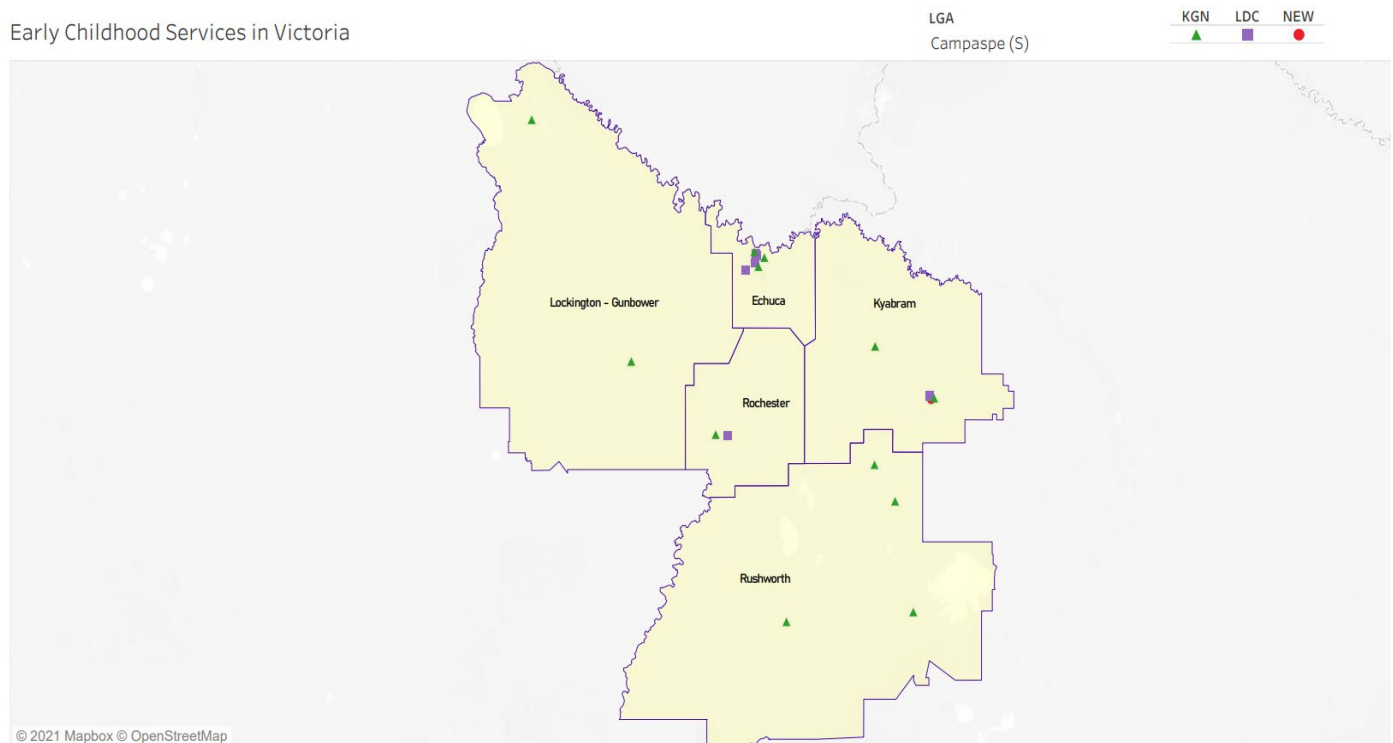
2. MAP OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION SERVICES IN SHIRE OF CAMPASPE

The map below shows the distribution of currently operating and new services that are planned to open in the future in the LGA and across its communities.

This map has been prepared using Departmental data, from both the National Quality Agenda IT System (NQAITS) and the Victorian School Building Authority (VSBA). Where applicable, this map has been refined by the Campaspe Shire Council and the Department to capture other services that are planned to open in the future.

Local Government Area	Service Name	Project Type	Suburb	Total Licensed Capacity Proposed by project
Campaspe Shire	Kyabram Community and Learning Centre Inc	Early Learning Facilities Upgrade	Kyabram	60

Early Childhood Services in Victoria



3. LOCAL CONTEXT

3.1 PURPOSE

Local, place-based knowledge and context play an important role in supporting the implementation of Three-Year-Old Kindergarten across Victoria. This section of the KISP documents this knowledge and context and has informed the funded kindergarten enrolment estimates in Section 4.

3.2 KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Key demographic trends that influence demand for kindergarten

The Shire of Campaspe is located in North Central Victoria, about 180 kilometres north of Melbourne. The Shire encompasses a total land area of over 4,500 square kilometres. The majority of the 37,000 population resides in the townships of Echuca, Kyabram, Rochester, Tongala, Stanhope, Girgarre, Rushworth, Colbinabbin, Lockington and Gunbower.

The Shire of Campaspe is a predominantly rural area, with most of the land used for agriculture, particularly dairy farming, cereal and grain growing and sheep. In addition to this on-farm production, manufacturing and construction are other primary contributors to the local economy. The diverse landscape of the Shire has also enabled tourism to develop and prosper, which further broadens the economic base for the region.

Campaspe continues to enjoy a positive population growth.

The age and gender distribution is as follows:

Age (Years)	Campaspe 2016	Regional Vic 2016	Campaspe 2011
0-4	5.6% or 2,075	5.8%	6.3 %
5-9	6.1%	6.3%	6.5%
10-14	6.2%	6.1%	7.4%
Total population	37,058		36,357

(data from 2011 and 2016 ABS Census)

Analysis of the data shows that compared to Regional Victoria, Campaspe Shire Council has a similar proportion of people under 15 years.

Between the 2011 and 2016 census periods, on average, the Campaspe population increased by 0.38% per year, with a total increase of 701.

Birth notices for Campaspe

	2020-21 YTD*	Est.20	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17
Born in Campaspe	340	405	414	373	403	355

Born interstate	3	18	4	0	0	0
Born Overseas	0	0	4	0	0	0
Transfer into area	87	93	120	114	135	118
Transfer out	-60	-90	-58	-16	-10	-8
Total	367	426	484	471	528	465

**2020-2021 YTD as at 20/4/2021 as per CDIS – Client Development Information System*

Birth rates over the last 5 years including estimated data for 2020-21 period shows some fluctuation, but generally remains stable.

Growth of the area through housing

Residential building approvals have varied greatly over the past 10 years, with an average of 135 approvals per year. Noting an increase over the last three financial years to 162 per year.

A Precinct Structure Plan is proposed as part of a rezoning to create 5,000 new homes for Echuca West. Based on data available it is difficult to predict breakdown growth related to this approval. It is anticipated that a large portion of these new builds will be families with children.

Employment locations

The latest Small Areas Labour Markets data from the National Skills Commission shows unemployment has risen from 3.4% pre pandemic in December 2019 to 5.8 % December 2020.

According to the 2016 ABS census data 76.8% of Campaspe residents work within the municipality. 7.3% travel to Greater Shepparton and 6.0% to Murray River Council. This data does not break down travel within the municipality for work.

Kindergarten enrolment data offers some insight into trends in travel for accessing kindergartens

As at 15 September 2020, 71% of the 2021 kindergarten year enrolments for Echuca Central, Echuca East and Echuca South kindergartens live in Echuca, down from 82% for 2020.

Moama enrolments have increased by 6% for the same period with an increase of 5% from other Victorian locations.

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

Campaspe Shire features some areas of moderate population growth, and in contrast, pockets of no growth or declining population. Overlaying the expected growth in Echuca's West as development opens up (5,000 additional dwellings over the next 30 years), is the yet to be quantified impact of COVID-19 work / life adjustment and the spill from metropolitan areas to rural living.

Anecdotal data suggests that movement to the regions as a result of COVID-19 is occurring across the state and is certainly being noted in Campaspe, having an impact on availability of rental properties, as well as increasing demand for (and value of) home sales.

Campaspe Shire Council operates in a rate constrained environment.

For some 10-12 years the organisation has been on a journey of asset and service review to achieve financial sustainability, while ensuring the community has access to the services it needs.

As a result, the organisation has ceased to deliver several services when it has identified alternate (and oftentimes more specialised) providers are available. Relevant to the development of this document, Campaspe Shire Council resolved in 2013 to withdraw from direct delivery of funded kindergarten services.

Following a rigorous expression of interest process to appoint an alternate provider that would meet the needs of the community as well as operate according to the guiding principles and values of the Council, Shine Bright EYM (formerly known as Loddon Mallee Preschool Association), was named the successful EOI applicant in 2014, and in 2017 took over management of Council's four kindergarten services (Rochester, Tongala, Lockington and Gunbower).

In late 2014 Council ceased delivery of kindergarten within its centre-based long day care centres. Some of the factors that impacted this decision included workforce constraints and changed industrial conditions, along with the inability to effectively cost recover (without impacting families' capacity to pay). Sector wide workforce constraints continue, with increased but unmet demand for qualified staff.

In line with Council's decision in 2013 to withdraw from direct delivery of kindergarten services, Council has no intention to reinstate within long day care kindergarten at either of its centre-based care services (Echuca and Rochester).

This should be noted when reviewing demand and capacity estimates and projections within this document, as the data is predicated on availability of kindergarten places at both of Council's centre-based care services, which is not representative of Council's adopted service delivery model.

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

Campaspe LGA was nominated for the tranche two rollout of funded three year old kindergarten in Victoria, therefore commencing delivery in 2021. Unmet demand is evident already for this service in some locations, with only half of the 15 hours per week being able to be offered to families. Infrastructure as well as workforce constraints underpin this unmet demand.

Other information about the expansion of early childhood services

Due to a lack of viable alternatives Council's exit from Kindergarten provision did not include Infrastructure. However, it is Council's intention to continue to explore all options available until a viable alternative is identified. A major challenge is the age and increasing maintenance requirements of current kindergarten infrastructure that is reaching the end of its useful life.

The expansion of three-year-old kindergarten programs may offer opportunities to address this matter as new facilities are required due to increased demand.

4. FUNDED KINDERGARTEN ENROLMENT ESTIMATES BETWEEN 2021-29 FOR SHIRE OF CAMPASPE

4.1 PURPOSE

As Three-Year-Old Kindergarten is rolled-out and Victoria's population grows, demand for both Three and Four-Year-Old Kindergarten 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 over the roll-out in Shire of Campaspe, Campaspe Shire Council and the Department have developed:

1. A summary of the current provision of kindergarten within the LGA (**Section 4.3**).
2. An approach to optimising the utilisation of existing services and infrastructure through 'change management' strategies that Campaspe Shire Council and the Department will support to help meet additional demand in the LGA (**Section 4.4**).
3. An estimate of the Three and Four-Year-Old kindergarten places that cannot be met through existing services for the 2021-29 period, taking into account the additional demand that can be accommodated by optimising utilisation of existing services and infrastructure through point 2, above (**Section 4.5**).

Local Government 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 10-year roll-out.

4.2 METHODOLOGY

The estimated Three and Four-Year-Old Kindergarten places used in the following sections have been agreed between Campaspe Shire Council and the Department, and were informed by:

- Estimates developed by the Department which draw on a range of inputs, including population forecasts, current enrolments and results from the Kindergarten Capacity Assessment Program (KCAP), conducted in 2019.
- The estimated capacity of new services that are planned to open in the LGA (Section 2)
- Local knowledge and context provided by the Local Government (Section 3) that explains particular issues and trends in their area.
- The approach to optimising utilisation of existing services in the LGA (Section 4.4), and
- Other sources, such as modelling undertaken by Local Governments and local data.

The KISP measures a service's capacity to deliver funded kindergarten in terms of the number of children it could enrol in Three and Four-Year-Old Kindergarten. The number of funded 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.

Three-Year-Old Kindergarten places have been presented as 15-hour places so they can be easily compared to Four-Year-Old Kindergarten places. Moreover, when Three-Year-Old Kindergarten is fully rolled-out in 2029, every three-year-old child will have access to 15-hours of kindergarten.

From 2023 all providers will have flexibility to determine how many hours of funded Three-Year-Old Kindergarten they deliver per week, with a minimum of five hours and a maximum of 15-hours funded pro-rata. It is expected that hours offered will vary. Given this variation, **it is important to be aware that during the transition to all three-year-old children receiving 15-hours of funded kindergarten per week in 2029, the 15-hour places presented in this report may represent multiple three-year-old places that individually receive less than 15-hours of kindergarten per week.**

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, which is medium-sized areas which represent a community that interacts socially and economically, with a population range of 3,000 to 25,000 people, and an average population of about 10,000 people.

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:

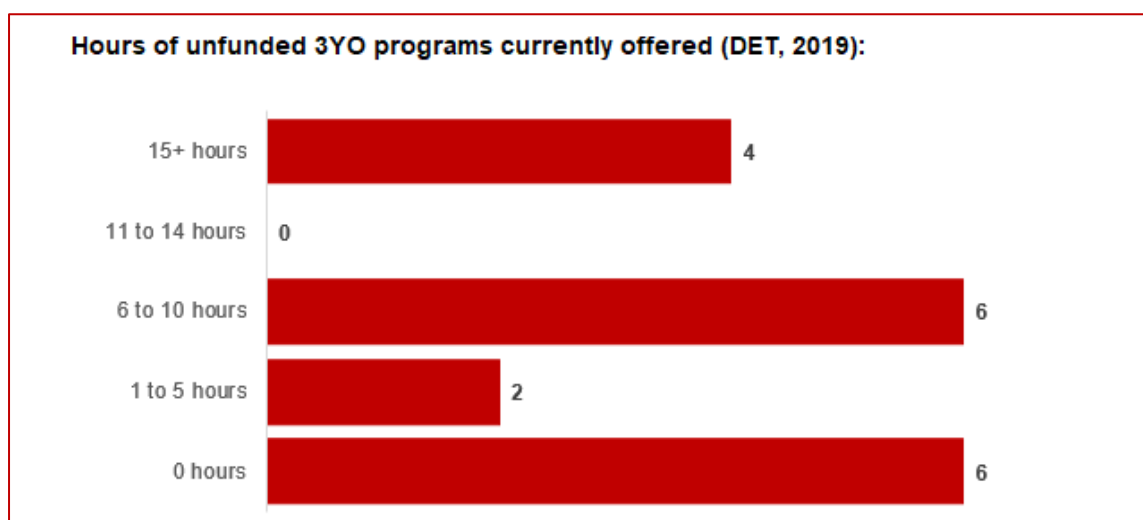
- The Kindergarten Capacity Assessment Program (KCAP), collected between June and October 2019.
- The Department's Kindergarten Information Management System (KIMS), as at 2019.
- The Department's Quality and Regulatory Division (QARD) monitoring data, as at 2019.
- The National Quality Agenda IT System (NQAITS), as at April 2020.
- The Victorian Child and Adolescent Monitoring System (VCAMS), as at 2018.

Please note that, because these sources were collected at different points, this may result in slightly different totals appearing in the below data.

Number of services by service type (NQAITS, 2020)	
Stand-alone kindergartens	12
Long day care centres	8

Percentage of services by management type, LGA level (NQAITS, 2020)	
Type	Percentage
Local Government	11%
Private not for profit	79%
Private for profit	11%
Other	0%

Current kindergarten offering	
Four-Year-Old Kindergarten participation rate (VCAMS, 2018):	95%
Number of services that offer a funded kindergarten program (DET, 2019):	18
Number of services that offer an unfunded Three-Year-Old Kindergarten program (DET, 2019):	12



4.4 APPROACH TO OPTIMISING THE USE OF EXISTING SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Change management strategies to optimise existing services and infrastructure

Children can often be accommodated through existing spare places and by services ‘unlocking’ unused capacity. As the experience of providers in the 2020 Three-Year-Old Kindergarten roll-out LGAs shows, while the optimisation of existing services can be challenging, it is highly time- and

cost-effective compared to building new capacity through infrastructure projects. It also helps target infrastructure investment to the places that need it most and avoids over-supplying the local market.

Campaspe Shire Council and the Department will support providers and services to maximise their kindergarten places through the following change management activities and practices:

- Increasing the capacity of any Local Government operated services by:
 - Running additional programs.
 - Using different timetables, including running 7.5-hour days.
 - Changing the delivery model, such as introducing rotational models or mixed-age groups.
 - Having degree-qualified kindergarten teachers leading integrated kindergarten programs in long day care settings.
- Encouraging and supporting other providers and services in the LGA to undertake change management.

Campaspe Shire Council and the Department have estimated how many Three and Four-Year-Old Kindergarten places can be accommodated through existing services in the LGA (**Table 1**). Both parties are committed to helping providers and services offer these kindergarten places before progressing to funded infrastructure solutions to meet demand. This commitment is reflected in the LGA and community level estimates below (**Table 2** onwards), which assume that demand will be met first through existing services and second through additional infrastructure. Note that in some cases the number of kindergarten places that can be offered through existing services may exceed demand for kindergarten places.

Table 1: Total estimated funded kindergarten places that can be offered by optimising existing services and infrastructure across the LGA, between 2021-29 (presented in 15-hour equivalent places)

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
Estimated existing supply of kindergarten places*	825	825	825	825	825	825	825	825	825

*This may be higher than current three and four-year-old enrolments as it includes any spare places that are currently available or could be generated by making some minor adjustments to programming approaches. The likely expansion of services and kindergarten places in response to population growth (i.e. growth in demand not generated by the Three-Year-Old Kindergarten Reform that would likely occur) is not accounted for in these estimates.

4.5 AGREED ESTIMATES OF DEMAND FOR FUNDED KINDERGARTEN PLACES THAT CANNOT BE MET THROUGH EXISTING SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

The below estimates (**Table 2** onwards) have been developed by Campaspe Shire Council and the Department to illustrate the estimated:

1. Total number of Three and Four-Year-Old Kindergarten places expected over the roll-out period.
2. Three and Four-Year-Old Kindergarten places that cannot be accommodated by optimising existing services and infrastructure over the roll-out period.

These estimates have been developed to reflect that the increase in demand for Three-Year-Old Kindergarten places will be gradual.

In estimating how many Three and Four-Year-Old Kindergarten places cannot be accommodated by existing services and infrastructure, Campaspe Shire Council and the Department have taken into account 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 Local Government owned services being developed and planned Kindergartens on School Sites.

These estimates do not, however, 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.

Infrastructure need in the LGA and its local communities is indicated by the bottom rows of the tables in this section (**Table 2** onwards): 'Total kindergarten places that cannot be accommodated by existing services'. For example, if the number of kindergarten places for the LGA or a community is above zero in this row, it means that the area is estimated to need additional infrastructure (noting that further optimisation which avoids the need for additional infrastructure may be possible). Any type of provider – Local Government, not-for-profit or for-profit – can build this additional infrastructure. If this row shows all zeros, it means that there is no estimated need for additional infrastructure in the area.

Local Government and not-for-profit kindergarten providers must refer to the estimates in this section when applying through the Building Blocks Capacity Building Grants stream for Government funding. Under this stream, projects must be in a community where there is infrastructure need as shown in the community's table of estimated demand for kindergarten places (i.e. there are numbers in the bottom row above zero). Projects in LGAs or communities where demand can be met through existing services (i.e. the bottom row shows all zeros) are not eligible for funding under this stream.

LGA estimates

Table 2: Total estimated three and four-year-old kindergarten places between 2021-29 (presented in 15-hour equivalent places)

LGA level estimates	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
Total estimated demand for kindergarten places (three and four-year-old children)	791	820	834	839	840	882	885	887	889
Total kindergarten places that cannot be accommodated by existing services	47	70	83	89	90	130	133	136	138

Community estimates

Table 3-7: Total estimated three and four-year-old kindergarten places between 2021-29 (presented in 15-hour equivalent places)

Echuca estimates	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
Total estimated demand for kindergarten places (three and four-year-old children)	377	390	398	401	402	423	425	427	429
Total kindergarten places that cannot be accommodated by existing services	35	49	56	60	61	82	84	86	87

Kyabram estimates	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
Total estimated demand for kindergarten places (three and four-year-old children)	224	230	233	233	232	242	242	242	242
Total kindergarten places that cannot be accommodated by existing services	12	18	21	21	20	30	30	30	29

Lockington - Gunbower estimates	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
Total estimated demand for kindergarten places (three and four-year-old children)	58	61	63	63	64	69	69	70	70
Total kindergarten places that cannot be accommodated by existing services	0	0	1	2	3	7	8	8	9

Rochester estimates	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
Total estimated demand for kindergarten places (three and four-year-old children)	71	74	76	77	78	83	83	83	84
Total kindergarten places that cannot be accommodated by existing services	0	3	5	6	7	11	12	12	12

Rushworth estimates	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
Total estimated demand for kindergarten places (three and four-year-old children)	62	63	64	64	63	66	65	65	65
Total kindergarten places that cannot be accommodated by existing services	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

5. AUTHORISATION

The Area Executive Director (Loddon Campaspe) of the Department of Education and Training and the Chief Executive of Campaspe Shire Council endorse this Kindergarten Services and Infrastructure Plan (KISP) for Shire of Campaspe by signing on 08/06/2021.

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 2024 to publish a new version that will replace the previous version.

An out-of-cycle review may be triggered if both parties agree that there has been a change in relevant data, information or the local early childhood sector that significantly affects the reliability of a KISP's estimates for planning purposes.

Signed for and on behalf and with the authority of Campaspe Shire Council


Signature


Witness Signature

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Title: Chief Executive Officer

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Signed by Area Executive Director (Loddon Campaspe) Department of Education and Training



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