

Media Release

The Hon Ingrid Stitt MLC
Minister for Workplace Safety
Minister for Early Childhood



Thursday, 22 April 2021

NEW KINDERGARTEN OFFICIALLY OPENS IN DOCKLANDS

Families living in Docklands have access to a kindergarten and school at the same location, thanks to the Andrews Labor Government.

Minister for Early Childhood Ingrid Stitt today visited Docklands to officially open the new kindergarten co-located at Docklands Primary School.

Gowrie Docklands Kindergarten includes two children's rooms and outdoor learning terraces on the first floor of the school. Gowrie Victoria is the approved provider and will offer sessional and integrated kindergarten programs for both three- and four-year-old children.

In an Australian-first, the Labor Government is investing nearly \$5 billion to deliver a full 15 hours of Three-Year-Old Kinder to every Victorian child over the next decade, with the roll-out beginning in 2020.

As part of this rollout, the Labor Government is upgrading infrastructure through a \$1.68 billion co-investment with the early childhood sector to build and expand kindergarten facilities across the state.

This early learning centre is part of \$283 million in capital funding in the *Victorian Budget 2019/20* to start delivery of an annual pipeline of kindergartens on school sites.

Gowrie Docklands Kindergarten is the first of nine kindergartens on school sites already announced by the Labor Government for delivery through the program, with the others in this first group to start operation in Term 1, 2022.

This investment ensures the delivery of a number of new kindergartens on existing school sites each year to support the roll-out of Three-Year-Old Kindergarten, and the co-location of services to make it more convenient for families.

The Labor Government is also ensuring that every new Victorian primary school set to open from 2021 will have a kindergarten on-site or next door, reducing the burden on parents and helping to build the Education State.

This includes Docklands Primary School and the other nine new primary schools which opened in 2021, as well as all six new primary schools opening in 2022.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Early Childhood Ingrid Stitt

"Building the Education State starts with the early years – that's why we are delivering a record investment into early childhood services."

"We know that education begins far earlier than a child's first step into primary school. This new kindergarten gives Docklands children the early years centre and education they need and deserve."

Quote attributable to Member for Northern Metropolitan Sheena Watt

"We're making it easier for parents to ditch the dreaded double drop-off and we're ensuring that every child can access top notch education close to home."