

Media Release

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Minister for Workplace Safety
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KINDER UPGRADE BLITZ TO IMPROVE FACILITIES AND BOOST JOBS

The Victorian Government is making sure young children have access to the best kinder facilities with hundreds of projects to upgrade and improve learning environments while supporting local jobs across Victoria.

Minister for Early Childhood Ingrid Stitt today announced the first round of grants in the \$30 million *Building Blocks – Refurbishment and Minor Works* program.

Grants totalling \$12 million will go towards 105 projects at centres offering a funded kindergarten to upgrade amenities and improve conditions of local kinders across the state.

Forty-seven projects will receive grants of up to \$500,000 for major works and refurbishments, while 58 centres will receive grants of up to \$50,000 for minor works and refurbishments.

Projects include improvements to internal learning areas, playgrounds, staffroom upgrades, kitchen refurbishments, toilet upgrades, painting, replacing carpets, installing accessible ramps, landscaping and fixing or installing new fencing.

Funding in this round will also help boost local economies by supporting more than 180 jobs in construction and associated industries.

Building Blocks Grants is a streamlined overarching funding scheme that supports early childhood providers with new and existing infrastructure and facilities for eligible three and four-year-old kindergarten services.

For more information about Building Blocks Grants, visit: schoolbuildings.vic.gov.au/Pages/Building-Blocks.

In an Australian-first, the Government is investing almost \$5 billion this decade to provide three-year-old children with access to an additional year of funded kindergarten programs.

From 2022, three-year-old children across the state will have access to at least five hours of kindergarten. Services will then scale up their hours to reach the full 15-hour program by 2029.

As part of the Three-Year-Old Kindergarten roll-out, the *Victorian Budget 2021/22* has invested \$1.68 billion to build and expand kindergarten facilities across the state over this decade.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Early Childhood Ingrid Stitt

“Building the Education State starts with the early years and we are improving the learning environments in existing kindergartens – ensuring they are modern, safe and fit-for-purpose to give our children the best start.”

“This funding not only improves the condition of early childhood buildings, it also supports jobs and local communities across the state.”