

Media Release

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Minister for Workplace Safety
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DELIVERING BETTER KINDERS FOR MORE VICTORIAN CHILDREN

The Andrews Labor Government is helping Victoria's youngest learners get the best start in life by improving local kindergartens across the state with facility upgrades and state-of-the-art technology.

Minister for Early Childhood Ingrid Stitt and Member for Hawthorn John Kennedy today visited Hawthorn Early Years Kinder – one of two kinders to receive the maximum funding of \$300,000 in the Building Blocks Improvement grants program, helping to deliver a flexible, functional and safe outdoor learning environment for the service.

Hawthorn Early Years Kinder is one of 49 kindergartens sharing in more than \$3.5 million in the latest round of the Building Blocks Improvement stream – with grants given to upgrade or improve the amenity of early learning facilities as well as funding new IT devices.

Building Blocks grants are available to local councils and not-for-profit organisations delivering funded kindergarten programs. In the Improvement stream, they can apply for grants of up to \$300,000 to renovate and refurbish their centre or up to \$50,000 for a minor improvement project, as well as up to \$1,500 to upgrade IT devices.

So far in 2021, 618 kindergartens across the state have already received a Building Blocks Improvement grant, sharing in more than \$4.3 million in funding.

The Building Blocks Grants program 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.

In an Australian-first, the Labor 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.

For more information and the Building Blocks program, visit schoolbuildings.vic.gov.au.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Early Childhood Ingrid Stitt

"We're delivering unprecedented investment in early childhood services so our children right across the state can get the most out of their great local kindergartens – giving them the best start in life."

"We want to make sure all children can fully participate at their kinder, so it is crucial that we upgrade facilities and equip them with modern technology to create modern, inclusive and interactive learning environments."

Quote attributable to Member for Hawthorn John Kennedy

"We're proud to be boosting early childhood services here in Hawthorn – helping local families access more kinder places with better facilities for their children and setting them up for the rest of their lives."