

Media Release

The Hon Lizzie Blandthorn MP

Deputy Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council

Minister for Children

Minister for Disability



Thursday, 6 November 2025

MORE KINDER PLACES FOR REGIONAL VICTORIAN FAMILIES

More families in regional Victoria will soon have access to new kindergarten facilities, with the Allan Labor Government partnering with Sandhurst Catholic Early Childhood Education and Care to deliver new kinders at low-fee Catholic schools.

Minister for Children Lizzie Blandthorn today announced up to \$14.62 million for a new Building Blocks Partnership which will deliver four new kinders in Greater Shepparton, Baranduda in Wodonga City, and North Bendigo and Huntly in Greater Bendigo.

The modular kinders will be co-located with Catholic primary schools, providing more than 472 kindergarten places for local families.

Each centre will support three and four-year-old kindergarten programs, with facilities designed to meet the needs of growing communities.

The new centres will be located at:

- St Thomas Aquinas Primary School in Huntly – with one kinder room opening in 2027 and a second in 2028
- St Peter's Catholic Primary School in Long Gully – two kinder rooms opening in 2027
- St Francis Of Assisi Primary School in Baranduda – two kinder rooms opening in 2029
- St Anne's College in Kialla – two kinder rooms opening in 2029

The partnership brings the total number of Building Blocks Partnerships to 20 – including 17 with local councils and three with non-government school organisations – delivering 117 new and expanded kindergartens for Victorians.

More than 145,000 children and their families are saving up to \$2,600 per child each year through Free Kinder, which is available at 97 per cent of funded kindergartens across the state.

The Labor Government is investing billions to build and expand hundreds of kindergartens across the state, supporting the delivery of 15 hours of three-year-old kindergarten by 2029 and up to 30 hours of Pre-Prep by 2036.

Our nation-leading \$14 billion Best Start, Best Life reforms are transforming early childhood education to help children thrive, save families money, and support parents and carers to return to work or study if they choose.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Children Lizzie Blandthorn

"Cost of living is tough right now so we're making kinder free, local and easy for families."

"This is about delivering better education for children and reducing stress for parents, creating more time for what matters – work, study or time with family."

Quote attributable to Member for Bendigo West Maree Edwards

"Regional families deserve the same opportunities as families anywhere else – that's why we're building new kinders where communities are growing fastest."

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Quote attributable to Sandhurst Catholic Early Childhood Education and Care Ltd Chief Early Childhood Officer Carla Jeffrey

“We are honoured to have our commitment to improved educational outcomes and high-quality early childhood education for children in rural and regional Victoria recognised and strengthened through this valued partnership.”