



**MEDIA RELEASE: THURSDAY, 10 OCTOBER, 2019**

**New and improved home for Avenel Preschool**

Strathbogie Shire Council joined the Hon. Jaclyn Symes MLC, Member for Northern Victoria and Minister for Regional Development, Agriculture and Resources to open the new and improved Avenel Preschool.

The \$566,000 upgrade and extension included extensions to the buildings, reconfiguration of the entrance, a new reception area, a consultation room and a meeting room.

It also included the provision of a second playroom, all abilities toilet and a new kitchen.

A dedicated Maternal and Child Health room was also part of the upgrade, allowing for a Maternal and Child Health nurse to be stationed at the new facility on a part-time basis.

Extensions will facilitate a greater capacity for kindergarten students, from 28 to approximately 60 places and will see the integration of an early childhood learning centre, fun groups, supported play groups, as well as after school and, in future, long day care provision.

Funded by the Department of Education and Training, the Hon. Jaclyn Symes MLC stated how impressive the building design and functionality was for the Avenel children, educators and community to enjoy and use.

Those in attendance were delighted to hear Minister Symes further announce \$10,000 of funding from the Victorian Government for Avenel Preschool to purchase educational resources for use in the new facility.

The new facility comes at a fantastic time for families living in Avenel, with upcoming roll-out of three-year-old kindergarten in the Strathbogie Shire next year.

The Strathbogie Shire area was one of six local government areas selected for the rollout in 2020, which will include the provision of 15 hours of subsidised kindergarten programs for all three-year-old children.

Strathbogie Shire Mayor Cr Amanda McClaren said Avenel has become a popular place for young families to settle, with significant growth in attendance at both the Avenel Preschool and the local primary school over the last few years.

“The Avenel Preschool has been transformed into a one-stop-shop for early childhood which is fantastic for all of our young families in Avenel and surrounds,” Cr McClaren said.

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