



Korumburra's new integrated children's centre more than just a building

The new \$5.2 million Karmai Community Children's Centre in Korumburra is scheduled to open its doors in 2017.

Wonthaggi builder, TS Constructions, was awarded the contract and construction on the 'one stop shop' for families and young children will commence next month. Formerly the Korumburra Integrated Children's Centre, Karmai Community Children's Centre is the result of the amalgamation of Korumburra Kindergarten and Birralelee Childcare Centre in August 2014.

The new centre will include a kindergarten, 120 places for childcare, out-of-hours care and maternal and childhood services. It will provide economic and social benefits to the Korumburra community which will be felt for years to come, according to Council's Director for Corporate and Community Services, Jan Martin.

"Karmai Community Children's Centre will be a key hub for the community, bringing together a range of services where professionals work together to deliver education, care, health and support services to children and their families," she explained. "Integrated children's centres offer quality early childhood education and care programs to meet local community needs which in turn will strengthen workforce opportunities and community participation."

The centre (to be located at 19a Mair Crescent, Korumburra) is a community-initiated project, driven by a dedicated group of representatives. The group recognised the need for a children's centre in Korumburra to meet the critical need for children's services and worked tirelessly, with Council, to achieve a positive outcome.

"The Karmai Community Children's Centre community are absolutely thrilled with the imminent commencement of the build" said Bronwyn Beach, Karmai Board of Management. "It's a project that has taken 8 years to come to fruition with the passion, support and efforts of so many mums and dads, centre staff, committee/community members and of course the South Gippsland Shire Council."

"There is no doubt that the excellent experience and feedback from our staff and the committed community members will be seen in the final product" explained Ms. Beach. "The Children's Centre will provide an environment with integrated learning areas, open facilities, purpose built design with all educators and children as well as other community services housed in a single location. We will be watching the site with excitement and anticipation."

The Children's Centre will co-locate current services that are unable to meet increasing demand and have no capacity to expand.

Funding for the state-of-the-art facility has been contributed by all levels of government and the local community, which Mayor, Cr Jeanette Harding, said made this a truly collaborative project.

"At Karmai we will develop and deliver services that will work together more closely, we will plan together, we will develop strategies and funding together and we will work in a way that appears seamless to children, young people, families and communities," she added.

"The centre's motto *More than a just a building... a place of opportunity* means our families and their children will have the best start in life, they will be supported to achieve in a safe, secure and participatory learning environment."

For a virtual glimpse into what Karmai Community Children's Centre will look like, go to Council's Facebook page to see a simulated fly-through of the new building.

PR1715 23/09/2015

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