

Mahia nga mahi o nga tamariki Hei apopo ka tu Hei rangatira.

*Fulfill the needs of our children and tomorrow they stand strong.
(International children's Day)*



Parent Information Booklet

Welcome

By the time you open this information book you will already have taken your first steps towards becoming part of The Ole Schoolhouse community. The purpose of this book is to help you understand better what you can expect for your child's education

Organisation

The Ole Schoolhouse is an independent Early Childhood Education Centre owned by Eric and Julie Hollis, both experienced educators passionate about the rights of the child and children's wellbeing. Both Eric and Julie are actively involved in the day-to-day running of the Centre and they welcome hearing from parents.

Programme

During early childhood, children are constantly physically active. We work with this rather than against it, seeing the child as an "adventurer and explorer" and providing experiences for him or her to learn and develop naturally at his or her own pace. We create an environment that supports our families, our community and builds the foundation of who our children will become as adults, our future community and the future of our environment. We value the contribution of parents and whanāu, and see their input as an integral part of our curriculum.

Children are encouraged to develop at their own pace and developmental level through a varied programme which includes mat time, music, art, dramatic play, early maths, pre-reading skills, sensory play and physical development on a daily basis. Social development also plays a key role in your child's learning as sharing and social interaction with peers and adults is a part of The Ole Schoolhouse learning experience.

There are opportunities for parents to contribute to the Centre and the child's learning programme. The Programme Planning Board gives details of activities that the children have been involved in during the day and programme planning meetings are always open for parents to attend and have input.

Not all children are dropped-off or picked-up by their parents so our staff respond positively when parents telephone to discuss their children or to seek a professional perspective on parenting issues such as behaviour management.

The child's Profile Book and secure online portfolio (EDUCA) are key tools of communication and children are encouraged to take this home to share with whanāu. There is space for parents / whanau to contribute comments and photos, etc. to the portfolio so that it can become a shared celebration of the child's learning.

A weekly newsletter is distributed at the centre to all the families outlining some of the activities that have taken place in the centre in the past weeks, staff news such as training and professional development, centre planning and other important issues that may need to be addressed in order to keep everyone informed.

We Provide:

- Staff who are Early Childhood trained and who hold current certificates in First Aid;
- Teacher/child ratio's that are in accordance with the centres "Certificate of Licence" set by the Ministry of Education;
- A warm homelike environment;
- Care routines carried out with sensitivity to individual needs, attention to health and safety are designed to promote independence and self esteem;
- A child centred curriculum which offers opportunities for learning through exploration and play;
- Fun activities which facilitate children's development - physical, intellectual, language. emotional and social;
- Opportunities for children to learn and play with and alongside others.

We provide positive behaviour guidance through encouraging:

- An understanding of centre rules and the reasons for these;
- An understanding of fairness;
- An understanding of the consequences of stepping beyond the limits of acceptable behaviour;
- An increasing ability to take responsibility for their own actions;
- The ability to listen attentively and respond appropriately to speakers.

Things you need to know

Enrolment Form

All parents are required to complete an enrolment form with personal addresses and business contact numbers, doctor's name and phone number, any allergies or treatments required, child vaccinations and those authorised to collect the child. It is important to notify staff if there is any change in people authorised to pick up children. As part of this process regulations require us to take copies of your child's birth certificate and immunisation record.

Sickness

We ask you to keep your child home if s/he is unwell. This is for the comfort of the child, and to prevent the spread of disease, epidemics, vomiting, diarrhoea, measles, mumps, etc. If we detect sickness we will contact you so that other arrangements can be made for your child's wellbeing and collection.

Holidays and sickness

Please notify the Centre in advance if your child will be absent due to holidays. In the event of absence for any reason fees are payable in full for the first week and at half rates thereafter providing notice has been given to the Centre.

Bags

Please provide your child with a clearly named bag containing a change of clothes, a warm hat for the winter months, and a sun hat for the summer. These hats are to be named and if possible left at the centre in the hat rack provided.

Sleeping children

All children are given the opportunity to have a mid-day rest after their lunch. Those who do not sleep are encouraged to rest and have a “quiet time” to allow children who need to sleep the opportunity to do so.

Children will be provided with their own stretcher bed and bedding. Toddlers will be with the over two-year-olds, unless other requirements are necessary. For further information please refer to our Sleeping Children policy.

Medicines

If your child needs medicine or special treatment, please notify staff on arrival and **SIGN THE MEDICAL REGISTER** which authorises us to administer medicine as directed by the parent. We will not give medicine unless authorised. All medication must be taken out of the child's bag and handed to staff on arrival. **NO MEDICATION TO BE LEFT IN CHILD'S BAG** as this could be a danger to other children. Please make sure to collect medicine on departure at the end of the day.

Accidents

If there is an accident or an emergency we will try to contact the parent, but must be free to ask for help as we think appropriate including taking a child to a doctor/getting medical advice or administering First Aid.

Clothing

Please dress your child appropriately (i.e. not in their best clothes). We encourage children to explore and to develop skills by active play and to learn self-toileting, feeding, dressing and putting on shoes. **PLEASE NAME EVERYTHING!**

Toys

Please don't bring toys to the centre unless they have some special significance such as a 'cuddly' toy for sleeping. In this case make sure it is named and pointed out to us.

Meals

We use organic ingredients where possible and actively seek to avoid artificial food additives. A nutritious hot cooked lunch, morning and afternoon tea are provided. Special dietary foods are usually provided by parents. Please do not give your child sweets to bring to Centre as it is not fair to the other children. Please let us know if your child has any special requirements.

Issues and Concerns

Staff are keen to discuss issues and concerns as they arise on a day-to-day basis. If you wish to take a concern to the centre directors this can be done either through staff or through a phone call or confidential letter. If necessary, arrangements can be made for a meeting with directors and/or staff.

Hours

Our normal hours are 7.30am to 5.30pm. There is a late pick up fee of \$10 per 10 minutes when children are not picked up by 5.30pm unless a prior arrangement has been made. Never leave a child unless staff have acknowledged their arrival. If someone else is to collect a child please make sure that we have a contact number for emergencies.

Accounts

Accounts are to be paid weekly in advance of attendance. Money that we receive from WINZ will be credited to accounts when received and parents remain liable for the full amount until we receive the subsidy. Fees are still payable when the child is sick or not attending for any reason as we are keeping the position available for them. Our fees are calculated to include excursions and all extras and hence there are no hidden or optional costs to pay beyond the weekly fee. For this reason we do not credit public holidays and fees are payable for these days. We are happy to consider make-up days for public holidays when our numbers permit.

Childcare subsidy

A leaflet from WINZ explains how the subsidy is paid, who qualifies and how to apply. Application forms are available through WINZ. The subsidy is available to families who attend a licensed centre for a specified number of hours per week, and who meet the special circumstances. The centre is required to confirm attendance. The parent is responsible to advise WINZ of any change in circumstances likely to affect the entitlement to a subsidy, and to inform the centre as well.

Please, always obtain a receipt from WINZ when leaving an application form with them.

A last word

Thank you for taking the time to read this parent guide that is provided to all new parents/caregivers as part of the enrolment process. It is designed to be part of your orientation to our community and we hope that it will help you and your child/ren find your way in the exciting journey you have embarked upon.

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