

Waikanae Kindergarten



Davina Houghton
Admin/Support Staff



Allison Neocleous
Student Teacher

Our teaching team at Waikanae Kindergarten are:
(back row) Pettina Meads, Lara Akbaba – (front row)
Helen Hansen, Karen Backler.

Kia Ora, welcome to Waikanae Kindergarten. We've put some information together to provide a snapshot of our programme, the day and opportunities for whānau involvement so that you know what to expect and how you can be involved in your child's learning. We hope you enjoy your time with us and we look forward to getting to know your child and family.

1. What is unique about our programme?

The curriculum has an emphasis on providing learning opportunities for children to develop their knowledge of sustainability which supports our newly developing Enviroschools programme. We have a wide range of activities available everyday to support children's decision making and becoming independent learners. The extensive playground and beautiful natural surroundings provides children with opportunities to take responsibility for the environment. We foster and encourage children challenging themselves physically and intellectually in a positive working environment. We value children making friendships and developing collaborative relationships. We respect children's varying ways of expressing themselves in different ways and nurture their creativity.

2. What is a 'profile'? (prepared for each child while at kindergarten)

Your child's profile is a collection of learning stories and photographs to show the significant learning that they are experiencing. We value your thoughts on your child's learning and invite you to contribute to their profile. The information from you, your child and from us is used to plan how we can support children's learning. Your input is invaluable. This can be done in any form e.g handwriting, letters from extended whanau, holiday stories or something that is of a significant achievement.

3. What food do parents need to provide?

Children need to bring a lunch box with sufficient food for their morning tea and lunch. Water is available throughout the session. As part of our programme we regularly cook and bake with children. If your child has any allergies or intolerances please let us know. Please can all bags, lunchboxes, lids and bottles be named. Our kindergarten has a healthy food policy and we have an egg and nut free zone. Details of this are in the attached Food and Drink Procedure.

4. What is our routine around food?

Children sit down as a group for morning tea and lunch. We remind them to wash their hands before eating. If children wish to they can revisit their lunchboxes during the afternoon.

5. How do we start the session/day at the kindergarten?

Upon arrival it is important to sign your child in and then when leaving to sign them out again. This is for funding purposes. As families arrive everyone is welcomed and children are invited into their choice of activities. This is a time to make connections with their friends and explore the kindergarten environment. We value parents settling their children and linking with friends. We would appreciate your help each day by assisting your child to put their name on the whiteboard in the kitchen. This is good for learning name recognition.

6. How are parents involved in our kindergarten?

Along with engaging with us about your child's learning, we invite you to become involved in our kindergarten community. You are welcome to stay during the sessions and spend time with the children. There is always tea and coffee available so feel free to help yourself. We realize you may not want to stay a whole session so please feel free to come for an hour or two. We also have other social occasions such as luncheons each term. Along with this we welcome your ideas and feedback.

7. What other tasks can parents do to help at kindergarten?

Occasionally during the year we invite parents and whanau to help with our end of term clean ups, maintaining the grounds, supporting fundraising events and accompanying the children on trips away from the kindergarten. Check the whiteboard as we often request parents to help in certain areas. Perhaps you could also help do a bag of kindergarten washing (towels and cloths) on the occasional basis.

8. Does kindergarten have a committee/whānau group?

Our committee supports the kindergarten by fundraising, applying for grants, undertaking small maintenance tasks and supporting the teaching team. Parents and whanau find that being on the committee is a great way to meet people and to become more involved in our community. New members can join at any time. If you are interested please let us know.

9. Does kindergarten provide a sunhat and sunscreen and what are our routines around sun safety?

We ask you to apply sunscreen before your child comes in the morning and for your child to bring a sunhat. We do have some spare hats and on our longer sessions we will reapply sunscreen after lunchtime. Children wear sunhats outside during the summer, term 4 and term 1, and we actively remind children to keep their hats on.

10. What are our toilet routines?

If your child needs to go to the toilet or is using nappies please let the teachers know. We will work together to support your child to become independent with their toileting. If your child is using nappies please keep a supply in their bag. Please ensure that children can manage their clothing for toileting. When we change children a record is kept so if you want information about this please let us know. If your child needs changing we ask you to launder any kindergarten washing that has been used.

11. What community partnerships does our kindergarten have?

We support the Before School Check health programme. Their -coordinators come into kindergarten to carry out their check in the year prior to each child starting school. Waikanae and Kapanui schools are zoned so if you want more information on this or their transition to school procedures, please ask a teacher. Also Michelle from the local library visits regularly to read stories to the children.

12. Where to place notes and Whānau Contribution and where to collect your notices from?

Parents are asked to contribute 50 cents per hour. You will receive a statement from the Association for this. You can pay by cash or cheque at kindergarten or even easier pay direct using internet banking or from i-payroll. All money deposited at kindergarten and all notices being returned go in the locked box on the table as you enter. Thank you for this and we can talk about this more should you wish to. Also on the table are two boxes. One for Pukeko group and one for Tui and Fantail group. Please check regularly to clear your mail and notices.

Please bring the following named items to kindergarten each day:

- A back pack with a change of clothes and additional items like a jacket that are relevant to the season.
- Food in a named lunch box and drink bottle

Please make sure your child is dressed in **appropriate play clothing**. Some of our activities encourage or involve messy play.

Helping your child settle in to Kindergarten

There are several things you can do to help your child prepare for kindergarten.

1. By staying for a period of time on your child's first day ensures the teachers can show you around the kindergarten, your child can see that their family – teachers are developing a relationship.
2. You may want to have a regular routine in the morning e.g reading a book, having a swing etc before leaving.
3. Let a teacher know you are leaving so we can slip in beside your child. It is important to say good-bye to develop trust and ensure your child knows you are coming back.
4. Try to talk about routines of the day and use the teacher's names.
5. Always be reassured it is okay to phone anytime or pop back early to celebrate your child's success at staying without you.
6. It is quite normal for your child to become upset two to three weeks after starting kindergarten. Let a teacher know and we can put a plan in place for resettling. Keep bringing your child however as they will soon settle again.

Prior to or on your child's first day, talk to the teachers and work out a settling plan. Each child is different so they will need differing levels of support or time to settle independently into a new environment.

(Note - you will find more useful information on our Association website – www.wn-kindergarten.org.nz)

Attending Kindergarten

It is really important that your child attends kindergarten for the hours agreed within your enrolment agreement as according to the Ministry of Education there is only a 15 minute window of arriving late or collecting early otherwise funding can be affected. Not only do teachers plan their programmes around the children attending each session but ECE funding is provided on the basis of a child's regular and timely attendance at kindergarten. Parents, whānau or caregivers need to sign your child in and out each day. Kindergartens must provide this information as part of the ECE funding process. It also provides key safety information in the event of an emergency (as to who is in attendance at kindergarten). Please talk to your teaching team if you have unavoidable reasons for your child not regularly attending kindergarten.

Managing sickness

Please have a plan in place in case your child becomes ill and needs to be collected from kindergarten. If not yourselves, please nominate an alternative person who can collect your child as soon as possible after being notified. There are times we may ask for children to stay away from kindergarten for a period of time after their symptoms have cleared (for example gastro illnesses which is 48 hours). We ask that you phone the kindergarten to advise us your child is ill as we need to record all illnesses. If going on a holiday during term time, please can you also let us know.

Fundraising

Our kindergartens thrive with the support of parents, whānau and committees. Initiatives or events organised by committees provide funds which go toward making each kindergarten a rich and engaging learning environment. Whether your involvement is at a committee level, actively assisting committee initiatives or attending events, your participation is central to making fundraising efforts a success for your kindergarten.

Policies and Procedures

To operate in New Zealand, every Early Childhood Education service must meet strict Ministry of Education regulations. Each of our kindergartens has a Policy and Procedure booklet which relates to the attendance and welfare of your child. You are welcome to view these at any time.

Excursions

From time to time the children will be taken on short walks near and around the kindergarten. Parents are asked for permission for short walks during enrolment. As part of the learning programme, older children may be taken on longer excursions; your permission will be sought on each occasion. Parents and caregivers are welcome to join us. There could possibly be a charge for this depending on where we are going. We also invite entertainers into the kindergarten to perform

Please read the kindergarten's excursion policy for more information.

Celebrations

Although we do acknowledge birthdays, we only have a formal farewell for children turning 5 or leaving the kindergarten. Please ask if you would like to know more about this.

Enjoy your time at Kindergarten

We hope you will find your time at kindergarten a fun and enriching time. Feel welcome to spend time with your child, as an individual, with younger siblings or extended family members. A key aspect of our learning programme is the ongoing collaboration and connection with whānau so it's important to us to foster strong relationships with you.