

Moira Gallagher Kindergarten



Our team at Moira Gallagher Kindergarten are: *Head teacher – Di Crosby, Teachers: Epi Higgs, Katrina Highgate, Leeanne Houia and Christine Kwok*

Information for parents about Moira Gallagher Kindergarten

Welcome to Moira Gallagher Kindergarten. We've put some information together to provide a snapshot of our daily programme, and opportunities for whānau involvement so that you know what to expect and how you can be involved in your child's learning.

1. What is unique about our programme?

We believe that children are able to make decisions about their learning and our role is to support them and extend their thinking. This means that you will see teachers talking to children about what they are making, doing and thinking. You will see teachers encouraging children to extend their learning. You will not see teachers making things for children, drawing pictures for them or giving them templates to create something. You will see an environment that encourages children to explore reading, writing and numbers.

We love to talk to whanau about how and what children learn at kindergarten so please come and ask us questions.

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

During your child's time at kindergarten teachers are recording their learning. These stories are filed in your child's profile, a clear-file you will find in the kindergarten playroom. You are welcome to look at your child's profile at any time. You can take it home to show family and you are welcome to add your stories to the profile. Sometimes there are very strong links between what your child does at kindergarten and what they do at home. We are keen to hear about what your child is interested in at home too. Your family stories help to create a picture of your child's learning in these early years. Children take their profiles with them when they leave kindergarten.

3. What food do parents need to provide?

Your child will need to bring food each day. We recommend a lunch box with sandwiches, biscuits and fruit and vegetables. We ask you to save 'junk' food such as chippies and crunchie bars for treats at home. You do not need to send a drink as water is available at all times.

4. What is our routine around food?

We do not have set times for morning tea and lunch, but allow children to decide when they are hungry. Children will learn to wash their hands, get their lunch box and sit to eat when they are hungry. Teachers do make sure that new children manage their food so they do not eat it all early in the day. Teachers will also check that children do remember to eat during the day. We believe that allowing children to make decisions about their personal need for food and to manage the eating process is very empowering for children and develops skills that will help them when they transition to primary school.

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

At the start of each day you will sign your child into the kindergarten and the child will take their name from the table and put it on the wall. This is another opportunity for children to learn to recognize their name.

If your child has something special to bring to show the teachers or children they are welcome to do so, although the teachers will ask that it stays either in the child's bag or in the teacher's office for safe keeping.

6. How are our parents involved in our kindergarten?

Parents are welcome to spend time at kindergarten during the session. You may wish to spend time with your child or lend a hand to the teachers. We are very happy for you to just sit and watch the session and have a cup of tea!

Parents generally assist the teachers with the end of term clean up and we welcome any help with the grounds. Sometimes parents offer to take books home to mend or to do other small jobs. If you would like to help us in any way please again just talk to the teachers.

7. Sun protection?

All children will wear a hat when playing outside. We have a basket of caps for children to use or you may provide your own. We have sunscreen for children too.

8. What are our toilet routines?

Children who are toilet trained will toilet themselves. Teachers will work with parents to support toilet training. If children are still in nappies parents must send spares in the child's bag. Please make sure that your child always has a spare change of clothes in their bag.

9. What community partnerships does our kindergarten have?

We have a 'transition to school' programme with Windley School where children make visits to the new-entrant class as they are nearing 5 years old.

We have a close relationship with Windley School and we visit the school library each week.

'B4 School' checks are carried out by Plunket before each children turns 5. Parents attend these checks in the kindergarten.

We have a vision and hearing tester come to the kindergarten.

We also have access to speech therapy and other services for children.

Please bring the following named items to kindergarten each day:

- A back pack
- A jacket or additional jersey, according to the weather.
- Food in a lunch box .
- A change of clothes in case your child gets wet or dirty.

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. Usually there will be a period of several weeks from when you get notified of a place at kindergarten and when your child starts.

During this time, we suggest you:

1. Visit kindergarten and spend time familiarising your child with the environment, teachers and children (ring ahead to make sure there are no special events planned for that day).
2. Point out the kindergarten when you drive past and talk to your child about what activities they might do and which friends are there.
3. Talk about the teachers by name.

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. 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).

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, children may be taken on longer excursions - your permission will be sought on each occasion. Parents and caregivers are welcome to join us.

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

Enjoy your time at Kindergarten

We hope you will find your time at kindergarten a 'family affair' and 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.