

Information for Parents about Taitoko Kindergarten Tamariki Area



The team at Taitoko Kindergarten

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Kia ora, Talofa, Mālo-e-lelei, Welcome to Taitoko Kindergarten. We've put some information together to provide a snapshot of our programme, day 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?

Our programme offers unique learning opportunities for your child in our whānau based environment where children attend from ages 0-5 years

We also provide opportunities for whānau to be involved in our programme and encourage you to learn alongside your child by staying sometimes and working together with the teachers. We have a weekly coffee morning (every Tuesday from 10-30am till 11-30am. We have a variety of guest speakers come to Coffee Morning, and you are invited to add your ideas to the list of possible topics for discussion. We hold a weekly Kapa Haka with our tamariki each week, and our kaiako is Luciana Maru-Hill.

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

Your child's portfolio is a collection of documentation about the significant learning that they are experiencing in our environment. We value your thoughts on this learning and invite you to contribute to their portfolio by commenting on the Whanau sheet (in the back of the profile) and talking with teachers so your voice can be added to Learning Stories written by the teachers. The information from you, your child and from us is used to plan how we can support children's learning.

3. What food do parents need to provide?

The children have a snack of toast and fruit which is available from 9-15am till 10-00am. We ask you to contribute to our kai basket by adding a couple of pieces of fruit each week.

Children need to bring a lunch box with sufficient food for their morning tea and lunch. We encourage healthy food and ask that you help us with this by ensuring that packets of chippies, and other packaged snack food is left at home. We also offer kindergarten lunches for purchase at \$2-50 per day. You can order this at the kitchen where there is an envelope payment system.

In the interest of eliminating risk to children with nut allergies we are a “Nut Free” zone. Nut allergies are very common and can cause a severe reaction (sometimes anaphylactic) amongst young children so we ask that you do not provide any food that may contain nuts. (peanut butter, nutella, muesli bars. If a mistake occurs and any child brings food containing nuts including sandwiches containing nut spread, it will be immediately removed from the lunch box and stored in a safe area for collection. We ask that parents share any information about children’s allergies or food intolerances with us on enrolment, and this information will be kept in our Medical File and information shared with teachers and kaimahi.

Water is available to the children throughout the session so we ask you not to send drinks along. Our kindergarten has a healthy food policy and the details of this are in the attached *Food and Drink Procedure*.

4. What are our kai routines?

As mentioned we have morning tea from 9-15am till 10-00am. We remind children to wash their hands and they sit at the kai table near the kitchen. At 11.30am the children who are staying for the 6 hour session have a short mat time and sit down to have their lunch together by 12-00noon. A karakia for kai is sung before the start of the meal.

We run a “Brush In” programme to support our tamariki oral health, and children who stay for lunch brush their teeth after their meal. This programme is kindly funded by Levin Rotary, so there is no cost to families.

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

Children enrolled in the Tamariki area come in and take their name from the easel in the entrance. Parents then help them to select a cubby for the day by putting the name tag on the Velcro dot. Parents then sign their child/children in on the Sign In sheet on the right hand wall next to the office door. Activities for children are available from the time they arrive and we encourage you to settle your child at an activity before you leave, or ask a teacher for support.

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 our sessions and spend time with the children. There is always tea and coffee available so feel free to help yourself. If you have some spare time please choose to spend it with us and there is always something you can do to lend a hand. Just ask one of our kaimahi or teachers. 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 whānau 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.

8. Does our kindergarten have a committee or whānau group?

Our committee supports the kindergarten by fundraising, applying for grants undertaking small maintenance tasks and supporting the teaching team. Parents and whānau 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 our 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 sun hats outside during the summer, Term 4 and Term 1, and we actively remind children to keep their hats on. We also have some sunscreen available for you to use if you forget to apply some at home.

10. What are our toilet routines?

If your child needs help 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. When we change children a record is kept so if you want information about this please let us know.

11. What community partnerships does our kindergarten have?

We support the Before School Check health programme. Their coordinators come in to kindergarten to carry out their checks in the year prior to each child starting school. With our proximity to Taitoko Primary School, we regularly meet their teaching team to work on our holistic education programme (a seamless education programme from ages 0 to 12 years).

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 lunch box and drink (unless your kindergarten provides).

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 familiarizing 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 them 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 kindergartens excursion policy for more information.

*Thank you for choosing to bring your child to Taitoko
Kindergarten*

Please feel welcome to spend time with your child, and we hope you will bring younger siblings or extended family members to spend time with us as well. 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.