



# Otaki Kindergarten



Waerenga Road, Otaki

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<b>Licence:</b>	<b>40 children</b>
<b>Staff:</b>	<b>1 x Head Teacher 3 x Full Time Teachers 1 x Part Time Teacher 2 x Teacher Aides 1 x Part Time Administration Assistant</b>
<b>Hours of Operation:</b>	<b>8.45 am – 2.45 pm Monday, Wednesday and Thursday 8.30 am – 12.40 pm Tuesday and Friday</b>

## History:

Otaki is located mid-way between the cities of Wellington and Palmerston North, with the Tararua Ranges behind and the Tasman Ocean to the front. It has a strong cultural history - this is reflected by the local marae and the Maori educational options which begin with several Kohanga-reo and go through to tertiary level at Te Wananga o Raukawa.

Sheep & dairy farming and market gardening were once central to the local economy - these still occur but to lesser extent.

Montessori, Playcentre, 3 play groups, two child-care centres (one bi-lingual , nga kohanga-reo and Otaki Kindergarten are the early childhood educational options.

The Kindergarten was opened in 1974 and is a purpose-built building. Several trees have gained maturity and add their strength and interest to the outside area. In 2009 the building was extended to include an office/whānau space and a boundary was shifted. This gave us access to another piece of land for gardening.

## Programme:

Our philosophy is based on supporting children’s learning and development, valuing and encouraging whanau involvement, fostering children’s connections with the natural environment and incorporating taha Maori into the curriculum. There is a strong focus on sustainable practices and environmental education. In 2008 we were part of the Ministry of Education’s “Centre of Innovation” programme, and supported by Researchers we were investigating ways children develop respect for the natural environment.

*“Looking after each other, ourselves and our place”* challenges us to monitor practice and to be mindful of ways we can reduce, re-use, re-cycle and re-think about the resources we use.