

Email: taitamariki@wn-kindergarten.org.nz

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| Licence: | 30 child places (including up to 9 under 2's) |
| Staff: | 12 Teachers 1 Part Time Admin Assistant |
| Hours of Operation: | 8.00 am to 6.00 pm Monday to Friday |



Because the service is principally used by Te Papa staff and families employed as public servants, flexible enrolment times are developed to reflect the flexible time arrangements offered in the public sector.

Background:

In 2006, Te Papa secured capital grant funding to build an early childhood centre in part of its premises in Cable Street, Wellington. Staff changes saw key people move off the project. As a result, Te Papa needed external expertise to establish the centre, which was intended to provide services principally for its 400 employees.

In 2007, an agreement was reached between Te Papa and the Association to work together to establish a kindergarten – Tai Tamariki Kindergarten at Te Papa. The Association leases the space and runs the kindergarten – a similar arrangement to many of its other kindergartens. This was documented in a Heads Of Agreement which encapsulated the vision for the service and the relationship between the two parties:

Te Papa and the Association are committed to providing high quality learning experiences for all young children. Together the two parties plan to establish an early childhood education service on the premises of Te Papa that nurtures lifelong learners from birth onwards. The service will provide the children, their parents and whānau, and the staff who are part of it, with transformative experiences in a rich cultural context.

As a world leader in early childhood education, New Zealand has much to be proud of and celebrate. With leadership comes responsibility, including responsibility to provide examples of best practice, to show in tangible ways what quality early childhood education means – particularly within a bicultural context. The respect that Te Papa enjoys, combined with the expertise of the Association, creates a unique opportunity to provide that leadership in a way that could benefit children the world over, both now and in generations to come.

(Purpose, Heads Of Agreement)

It is believed to be a world first for a kindergarten to be established within a national museum. Now a year on, the vision has developed in to a reality where the children are benefitting from regular visits into the museum as exhibitions are used within the Te Whariki teacher led programme at the kindergarten.

Researchers from Waikato and Deakin (Australia) Universities are using the opportunity to research:

- How the children are gaining knowledge from hands on exploration and observation as they interact with the exhibitions at Te Papa;
- The children's learning of tea o Maori (including language, artifacts and cultural values) from interactions with the exhibitions and which exhibitions most motivate the children in this area;
- The reciprocal teaching and learning relationships between families and children who work at Te Papa (for those children whose parents work at Te Papa) and attend Tai Tamarki.

The research so far has been looking at what sense the children are making of the exhibitions 'upstairs' in Te Papa, and how resources and conversations at Tai Tamariki are assisting with this.

The teachers and researchers have become interested in the possibilities provided by what we have called 'boundary objects': resources and ideas that travel across both contexts. Drawing books for instance have been a great source of sense-making and conversation. We hope that investigating the role of some of these 'boundary objects' may be helpful for other learning environments - early childhood settings, families and schools - to make the most of museum visits.



Tai Tamariki Kindergarten was opened in February 2010.

