

Whānau Handbook



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Welcome

We are pleased to welcome your family to Whaingaroa Childcare which we trust will be an extension of your home. Working together we will provide an environment that promotes quality care and education to our tamariki.

This handbook is a guide to commonly asked questions along with an outline of key points of our learning program and schedule. If you have a question that is not covered in this handbook please feel free to contact us.

We hope that your time here is enjoyable.

About Us

We are situated in the middle of beautiful Raglan township, a few minutes' stroll from the lovely cafes, galleries and boutiques. Our central location allows us to utilise many community facilities. We regularly take the children for visits to the local library, the beach, the playground, the domain (Papahua) and the fire station.

Iti Kahurangi room (three months - two and a half year old)

Offers for our younger children the Peaceful Caregiving as a Curriculum approach to teaching and learning which supports our youngest children to be nurtured in an environment of utmost respect.

Maunga Teitei room (from age over two)

We encourage children to become active explorers of their environment, to question and wonder about the world, to make discoveries and to set their own goals.

We have several mat times throughout the day. This is a structured time for songs, music, storytelling etc. Children have opportunities for free play, as well as exploring provocations and individual interests throughout the day.



Whaia te iti kahurangi ki te tuohu koe me he maunga teitei

Seek the treasure you value most dearly: if you bow your head, let it be to a lofty mountain.

At Whaingaroa Childcare, we cherish the formative years as the most precious time in a child's life. Inspired by the meaning of "Whaingaroa" – long pursuit – our daily curriculum is designed to foster a love for life-long learning, a passionate thirst for knowledge, and a sense of happiness and confidence in our tamariki when they leave our Centre.

Childhood is not a race; it is a joyful journey. With our hearts and souls invested in early childhood, we believe education should be delivered with respect, kindness, and aroha (love). We weave together the diverse thoughts of various cultures with aroha, creating a tapestry of understanding and unity.

We believe that our partnership with families is essential for achieving the best outcomes for children. We hold each family's child as a taonga (treasure), aiming to honor and cherish every individual. We believe that children are shaped through what they bring with them and their relationships with others and the environment they interact with. It is our role as educators to guide them, modeling and assisting with skills in problem-solving, self-control, and conflict resolution.

Our environment plays a crucial role in our philosophy. We are committed to creating spaces that are safe, stimulating, and reflective of the natural world and our connections to our taiao, maunga and moana, encouraging children to explore and connect with our communities surroundings. We value sustainability and aim to instill a sense of responsibility and respect for the environment in every child.

Our goal is to create an environment where our tamariki and their whaanau feel safe, welcome, and trusted. Guided by the NZ National Curriculum "Te Whaariki" (Te Ara Whaanui), we support and teach our tamariki through open-ended play, encouraging exploration, experimentation, discovery, and problem-solving. Together, we embark on this beautiful journey of growth and learning.



Meet the Team

Head teacher:

Amy Mitrovic - Registered Teacher

Over Two Room:

Ruby Coulson - Registered Teacher

Young Yu - Registered Teacher

Kat Ranga

Raiha Flood

Kim Le Lievre

Under Two Room:

Maddison Roberts

Jashandeep Kaur - Registered Teacher

Julie Parker - ECE Student Teacher

Admin and Management:

Sarah Adams - Operations Administrator

Shamal Fernando - Owner/Manager

Imali Ilanco - Owner/Manager

Relieving Teachers and Support Staff:

Anne Snowden - Registered Teacher

Amie Ward

Amanda Berry - Registered Teacher

Kearna-Leigh Hemopo

Organisational Structure

Shamal Fernando is the centre Licensee and is responsible for all communications with the Office of the Ministry of Education for funding requirements, and regulation compliance monitored by the Education Review Office. Parents are asked to Contribute to policy development, review and decisions concerning their child's care and education regularly following these regulatory requirements.

We are committed to staffing the Centre with skilled caring people. The teachers also participate in professional development programs to upskill.

The Ministry of Education regulates our teacher-child ratio. That is 1 adult to 4 for under 2 year old children and 1 adult to 8 for over 2 year old children to provide better care.

Orientation and Settling

Starting at Preschool is an exciting time, but it can take time for your child to get used to the new environment. Once you have a confirmed start date, we ask that parents bring their child to visit the centre at least three to five times to build their confidence before their first day

You know your child best and we are here to make sure it is a smooth transition for you and your child. Parents are encouraged to stay with their child to settle them into the Centre, and to demonstrate that they feel happy and comfortable with their new environment. Our teachers will ask many questions about the child's liking, and behavior so we understand and make it easier to create a bond and trust.

Parent Involvement

We have an open door policy, where parents and family are welcome into the Centre at any time. Parent participation sends strong positive messages to your child that you support them and are part of the child care environment. The teachers sincerely wishes for you and your child to be happy and feel welcomed at our Centre. Communication is a vital ingredient to the success of this partnership.

Visitors and Relieving Teachers

From time to time, you will see new faces at the Centre. Relief staff and service providers are screened before participating in our daily activities and must adhere to our philosophy whilst at the Centre.

All visitors are to sign in on arrival and departure from centre.

Communication

We value quality communication with parents, caregivers and the wider community. Methods of communication include emails, Story park, newsletters, the website, community notices posted at the doors and walls around the centre and Facebook. We have an open door so you are always welcome to talk to the teachers, team leaders or the administrator at any time.

Family Ketes

Above the sign in desk are our family ketes. Please check these regularly for notices and outstanding paperwork that require immediate attention.

Enrolment

After the space availability is confirmed, the orientation day will be set. Then we will set the visiting plan, discuss the days and times enrolled and confirm the starting date.

Any changes to the agreed enrollment required two weeks' notice in writing.

Attendance

Tablet sign in

All parents are required to sign their child in and out of the Centre every day on the iPad using their PIN. It is also a safety requirement in case of an emergency evacuation we can be accountable for the children.

We are required by the Ministry of Education, to ensure all children are signed in and out of the centre.

Fees

Weekly Fees

Please refer to the Fees Schedule that is attached to your child's enrolment form. Invoices are issued weekly and payments can be made through a bank transfer. For the smooth running of the centre, your fees must be paid on time.

Early Drop off and Late Pick up Fees

Early drop off and late pick up fees are incurred for any hours attended over and above your booked start and finish time.

Holiday Discount

Each child is entitled to one fee-free week (pro rata) of their usual booking. The child becomes eligible for this after 3 months of enrolment.

ECE Hours

We offer 20 hours subsidy which is provided by the Ministry of Education, to all the children who are above the age of 3. To be eligible parents must complete an Attestation Form which confirms the child's attendance.

WINZ Subsidy and Family Boost

Work and Income subsidies are available for some families to help with the cost of childcare. It is the families that should contact WINZ. You must pay the total fee amount until your subsidy is approved.

Family Boost is available for families to apply through myIR every three months.

Absence

If your child is absent for longer than three consecutive weeks their WINZ and government funding will stop and the parent or caregiver may be liable to cover these costs. More information on Fee and Payment Procedure.

Paperwork

Every child requires an enrolment form signed by the legal parent/guardian. Each section needs to be signed and dated before the visits start.

The child's weekly attendance needs to be verified by signing the attendance verification report every week.

Every change for the enrolment needs to be signed on or before the actual change effect.

Program

Our program is based on 'Te Whāriki', the national curriculum for early childhood education. Children are encouraged to make choices and are given opportunities to explore their world through play. Our program is developed by observing the children and assessing their development.

The curriculum blends a mix of free play, activity choices and group learning times which run throughout the day.

Storypark

To document each child's learning journey a Storypark portfolio is developed over time. This is a valuable resource full of learning information and photographs. Parents are in control over who they invite to see their child's learning, this could be family members and close friends from near and far.

Food

Children will need a prepared lunch box sent from home each day. This will need to be sufficient for your child for the day, with structured meal times of Morning Tea, Lunch and Afternoon Tea. We are a nut free centre, so please take special care with pre-packaged food items that contain traces of nuts.

Sick Child Policy

We ask that any child or adult who is unwell be kept away from the centre, especially at drop off and pick up of children/siblings, so illness does not spread through the Centre.

Please refer to our Health and Wellbeing Policy for further information regarding the specific time periods that you should be aware of.

Medication

Please advise the staff if your child is taking any medication. All medicines must be kept away from the child and a form needs to be filled in before we can administer any medication. The only medication that has a label stating your child's name and expiry date will be administered.

Rest and Sleeping

For our children, we follow home sleeping patterns and will discuss your child's individual needs and requirements with you. You are encouraged to bring a blanket or teddy, to the centre for their rest times.

Lost Property

In case we find unclaimed or lost items at the centre we will store them in the office for a period. You are most welcome to come by and check through the items if you have lost something. Any unclaimed belongings will be donated to the op shop at the end of the month.

List of things to be provided by parents

Clothing

Play is a lot of fun and it is often messy and wet! Please ensure you bring at least two changes of clothes for your child each day, along with a hat and shoes. To ensure your child's things come home in the right bag, all clothes, hats and shoes must be named.

Nappies

Your child will most likely have their own locker space to keep nappies in. Please keep this stocked up.

Sunblock

As per our Sun safe policy, all children are required to be sun blocked BEFORE they arrive at centre. Please let us know if your child has not been sunblocked and we will apply it at the start of their day. Your child can bring in their named sunblock as needed.

Excursions / Trips

Whenever the excursions are planned the center will send all the detailed information to the parents. We will request written permission from the parents, providing all the details of the trip including the transportation and teacher to children ratios. We might ask for parent volunteers to help with these trips. All the trips will be planned and based on guidelines provided by the Ministry of Education.

Safety

Regular safety and hazard checks are conducted at the centre. The same is reinforced by various policies and procedures that have been put in place at the centre. Some of the checks that are regularly carried out. We have staff that are certified in carrying out first aid at the centre. This certification is renewed every two years.

Emergency & Evacuation Procedures

In case of an emergency every effort will be made by the centre to contact parents to collect their child. The Centre is fitted with fire safety devices, that are maintained regularly. Regular fire drills are carried out at the centre as per the ministry guidelines. If you happen to be at the centre during one of these drills you will be required to follow instructions given by the personnel carrying out the drill.

Emergency evacuation plans are displayed close to the exits at the centre and staff are familiar with evacuation procedures and policies.

Complaint Process

Parents should feel free to discuss any queries or problems with the centre leaders. However, remember that busy drop off or pick up times may not always be an appropriate time to have detailed discussions. You may need to schedule an appointment with the leadership at another time. A policy for dealing with complaints is displayed in the reception. If you have any concerns or complaints relating to the operation of the Centre please email info@whaingaroachildcare.co.nz.

Your participation in the running of the Centre is welcomed and will help to ensure your family enjoys their early learning experience.

The above are a brief overview of the Policies and Procedures that govern the operation of the Centre. A full copy of the operative Centre Policies and Procedures is available at request. Parent involvement is an important part of policy review, and we include Parent Feedback as part of our review cycle.