

# Kindereen

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION ESTB 1986



## Preschool Handbook



Connected to Nature in the Heart of the City

Updated June 2016



## All about our Preschool

*Please be assured that the teachers at our Preschool all care very much for children, they are there to comfort, support and teach and will ALWAYS contact a child's parent if they find the child is distressed and they are unable to comfort them.*

### COMMUNICATION:

Kinderen's preschool has a higher than ministry requirements staff:child ratio so there are always plenty of adults available to children. Teachers will often be busy with a group of children but never feel as though you are not important! Teachers are more than happy to help your child say goodbye to you when you are leaving, please ask if you want that help. Each child has a pocket with their name on it in the bag room and here you will find memos and information. There is also a parent notice board located on the wall opposite the daily roll. Please do not hesitate to approach a teacher if needed at any time as well as feel free to ring through if you want to check how your child is or pass on information—(06) 758 8518.

### INDIVIDUALS:

The preschool teachers treat each child as an individual, although older children do tend to start socialising a lot more than their younger peers, we still recognise that each one is different, they have different interests and skills and our low teacher:child ratios (1:6/7) means that we have plenty of teachers to notice your child and what is important to them.



## FOOD:

Our Preschool provides, breakfast (if needed), morning tea, lunch, afternoon tea and a late snack (if needed). We welcome you to bring special food from home if you need to, we have lots of children on special diets for various reasons and we are more than happy to cater for these.

Preschool lunches are generally 'lunch type' food (like children might take to school) e.g. sandwiches and yoghurt – **always we supply fruits with every meal**. Cooked lunches are supplied between one and three times a week, especially during the colder winter months, the weekly menu is displayed on the wall outside the kitchen gate. Water is offered at every meal, children are encouraged to bring a drink bottle from home so they have free access to water through the day.

A teacher sits at each table and supports the children to eat healthily as well as socialise with their peers and enjoy the ritual of eating together. We encourage good choices and remind children about portion sizes when needed.



## RATIOS:

Our preschool is licensed for 28 children and has a 1:6/7 staff ratio, this number is deliberately small to allow for a strong focus on building relationships with teachers and peers and learning through engagement with the environment and people.

The outside playground has plenty of area for each child to spread out and challenge their physical skills and abilities, there are lots of play spaces so children can choose their own area and engage in play of their choice.

There is always a teacher outside, a teacher inside and several teachers floating to where they are needed, teachers follow the children's needs and interests and position themselves where the children need them.

## CHOICES:

It is very important to us here at Kinderen that we respect children to make their own choices about things that affect them – we have safety rules and we are very strong about the appropriate way to treat others – while still allowing our children to grow confidence and demonstrate independence. The teachers are all aware that there is a vast difference in the way a 2 year old and a 4 year old are able to think and assess so we bend and balance our strategies and approaches as needed. For example: We have a ‘Rolling Morning Tea’ – children are informed morning tea is on the table (always supervised by an adult), and are supported to choose when to come and eat, 4 year olds understand that if they choose not to come now, they may miss out, 2 year olds do not always understand that concept so we tend to ‘tell’ rather than ‘ask’ until they are a little older e.g. “It’s morning tea time, let’s go and wash our hands and sit at the table together”.



We also encourage choice when deciding what resources to use and what children wish to learn about as well as who they wish to interact with. Teachers set out equipment, based on the children’s current interests, then support children to use their imagination in how they use it—or to choose something else if they would rather. Again the age of the child determines how much support they require from the teachers.



## CURRICULUM:

Our preschool uses Te Whāriki (the New Zealand early Childhood Curriculum) to provide a planned as well as emergent curriculum for children. This means that they follow term plans that focus on the seasons of the year, the Māori guardians, celebrations and traditions. They also follow children's **emerging** interests and extend on current learning and skills. You can find the planning and continuing activities on the program planning wall. We also post photos onto our Facebook whānau page so you can check them out at home – please feel free to add your comments on our photos!

At our preschool, resources are readily available to the children and they can choose what they wish to learn with. Art activities are always available and you will find any artwork in your child's art folder located on top of the cubbies in the bag room.



## Transition to School:

Our preschool runs an in-depth 'Transition to School' programme for children who are nearing school age. We regularly consult with new entrant teachers (and often invite them to speak at parents evenings) to make sure we are contributing to making this next transition an exciting and happy time for children. The teacher running this program focuses



on self-help skills, social skills and numeracy and literacy, using a range of teaching strategies and resources that are interesting and challenging for children.

If you would like more information about the transition to school programme, please ask for a handout.

## ROUTINES:

Routines are an important part of the day for everyone, they help us to know what is coming next and what is expected of us. The preschool caters for children who wear nappies (you will need to supply your own), learning to use the toilet and those needing sleeps. The days looks a bit like this:

7.30am – Open. Free choice of activities, toast and breakfast available as needed.

10-10.30ish – Rolling morning tea. Morning tea is set up and children are invited to come to eat, however we do not require them to stop what they are in the middle of or pack everything up. The morning time is an opportunity for sustained learning and focus and we encourage children to take a break for food and drink then return to their play. If any child chooses not to come and eat at this time – a teacher is more than happy to offer them a piece of fruit from the kitchen if they get hungry before lunchtime. Some children have just had breakfast when they come in and others are so immersed in their work it would be wrong of us to direct them to eat when they do not wish to –however – younger children are encouraged to come and eat as we feel it takes time for them to understand that lunchtime is a while away...

After morning tea – Free choice play and learning, activities and resources are offered and set up for children to choose from. Teachers engage in learning opportunities with small groups – there may be trips at this time or specialist teaching e.g. Transition to school program.

11.45ish –Clean up and Mat times. Our preschool has a mat time session every day before lunch, this helps children to transition from free choice play into their lunch time ritual. There are usually several separate



mat times for the different ages (although children can choose to attend whichever they wish as long as they are not disrupting others – children can also choose not to attend if they are very busy with what they are already doing).

The older children's mat time is a mixture of stories, discussion, rhyming etc. The purpose for them is to sit and concentrate for a period of time, take turns, become confident speaking in a group etc.

The younger children are not expected to sit for so long and usually engage in action songs and/or dancing. They head off to the bathroom first to wash their hands ready for lunch.

12.00 – Lunchtime. Lunchtime at our preschool is a social ritual where the children sit together with a teacher at each table to eat, chat and help each other. We encourage asking for what you need and passing to each other, also serving themselves along with making healthy choices and trying new things.

After eating, the children take their plates and utensils up to the trolley then head off to brush their teeth (it is a good idea to supply a **new** toothbrush when your child starts at preschool)

After lunch – Some children have a sleep at this time, others are encouraged to spend some time in quiet activities or outside.

2.30ish – Mat time. There is often a mat time for all the children at this time of the day, they tend to have some quiet music and come together for things like; finding their shoes, jerseys and other belongings. They may have a story or song then head off to wash their hands and eat afternoon tea together.

After afternoon tea. This is an opportunity for small group activities and one on one teaching. Often the children will come together close to 5pm for a late snack.

5.30pm - close



## TRIPS:

Our preschool makes good use of the Kinderen van which can transport 8 children at a time to various planned and spontaneous trips. Starting at preschool is an adventure in itself so your child will likely have been there for a while before they head out into the world in the van. Once they are comfortable with the teachers (and have turned 3), they will be included in Forest Trips and other outings into the local community. We write out Safety Action Plans (SAP) forms for all trips that you need to sign so you will always be aware of what we are planning and what your child will need. Some trips will incur an extra charge which you will always be made aware of before giving permission for your child to participate.

### Forest Trips

#### **Intended learning outcomes:**

- That children experience an opportunity to grow a strong and lasting bond to a specific natural space where they solidify positive, exciting and peaceful memories that will sustain them through hardship and chaos.
- That children learn interesting and exciting facts about the natural world that supports them to feel and experience amazement and magic.
- That children learn life skills, problem-solving, confidence and relationship expertise. E.g. Risk assessment, asking for help and helping others.
- That learning and experiencing these things will create resilient children who live life to the fullest and believe that taking care of the environment is an important part of their every-

The **Ratapihipihi** forest trip leaves Kinderen at about 9.30am, taking a picnic morning tea and arriving back by 12.00pm (there is no charge for this trip). An important part of these trips is allowing the children freedom to explore, without the constant rules or directions they often experience. We will expect everyone who attends to be kind to our natural world and to each other; as well as following the few safety rules (e.g. staying reasonably near to the teachers). Children who struggle to listen and stay safe may need to miss a few trips while they are still learning these important skills.



**Nicola's farm** is located about 15 minutes out of Inglewood and provides many exciting opportunities with chickens, cats, dogs, horses, ducks, emu, cattle, sheep, pigs, geese, goats, deer and many birds and insects as well as a forest with native trees and bushes the children can explore. The days out there are full and exciting and we have watched the growth and learning in our children as we take them each fortnight. We are still amazed at the huge leaps in confidence and physical as well as social competence they display as a direct result of taking part in these experiences. The trip has a charge of \$8.00 to cover the van costs and is restricted to 4 year olds due to the strong need to be able to follow safety instructions.



Older children go to **Nicola's farm** for a whole day every second week and 3 year olds go up to **Ratapihipihi Forest** for the morning on the in-between week. Parents are very welcome to join us! Also if your child is not booked in on a trip day, feel free to ask for details and bring them along.

### **Spontaneous Trips into the local community**

Usually these trips will be a result of a current interest from a child or the program planning. They are organised before the day and there will always be a SAP form for you to sign to say your child can attend.



Please do not hesitate to contact Nicola or Eme if you have any queries about trips.

## Playball:

Once a week, during the school term, the Kinderen Preschool take part in a private Playball session run by the Taranaki Playball coaches right here in our backyard. The session is run by one or two coaches with our teachers supporting. The main objective of Playball is to provide children with the opportunity to develop a host of necessary social, educational and personal skills. This is important to understand! This is a sports program - but with the underlying goals firmly based in developing the child as a person, not necessarily as a sports person.

What is Playball? Playball is a movement and sports development program for children aged 2-7, in which they are exposed to an array of sporting skills and important physical attributes such as coordination, balance and spatial awareness. Children also learn essential life skills such as confidence, concentration, self-discipline and independence, all vital early learning goals that are basic building blocks for living successful lives, and essential to be put in place in these formative years of the child's life.

## Portfolios:

Kinderen uses an on-line portfolio system called [Storypark](#). Portfolios belong to each individual child and are storybooks of that child's learning pathways, interests, and skills as they grow and learn. It records teachers words, often with photos and/or videos, of the activities your child takes part in at Kinderen, it is very interactive and parents are invited and warmly welcomed to record their own stories, photos and videos as well as commenting on the teachers entries.



**Fees Structure:** Please talk to Shona at the office regarding the fees structure as there are different rates depending on hours and subsidies available.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

### **How will my child cope with the bigger/older children?**

This is often a concern for parents of 2 year olds, but there is no need to be worried. The teachers will definitely keep an eye on new children and spend time supporting them to join in but the really lovely thing about Kinderen is that being so small, we find our older children have a very nurturing way with smaller people. They look out for the younger children and help them when they need it. The older children are like big brothers and sisters and feel such a strong sense of belonging at our preschool, they take the initiative to support others often without being asked. Spending time with the older children is very beneficial for your 2 year old, they will learn so much - particularly language and social skills, this is a marvellous opportunity for scaffolding and Tuakana-teina relationships between children (where an older or more experienced child teaches a younger or inexperienced child).



### **Will my child feel comfortable with the teachers?**

Remember that your child has been visiting preschool and the teachers have been intentionally interacting with your child. After a few visits, the preschool teachers will start to ask your child if they can help them with nappy changing, toileting, eating etc and children don't take long to realise these are nice people who have lots of fun. It will help your child if you are able to form a relationship with the preschool teachers too so you can role model feeling calm and confident about leaving your child in their care.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

### **How do you supervise the tree in the playground?**

Our preschool playground is set up to be challenging for children and the tree is an important part of our intention to teach about the natural world as well as providing us an opportunity for intentional risk assessment in play. The rules about the tree are that a child can climb the tree as long as they can do so without any help. Once a child is competent to climb the tree unaided, they have spent enough time learning about the limits of their strength and balance to be able to get themselves down from the tree, they will also know about the rough bark and the handholds etc. The sense of achievement in climbing the tree independently after trying for a long period of time is priceless. Although we support independent climbing, there is always a teacher outside and if children are intent on climbing the tree, that teacher will be at the tree with them.



### **When do you read with the children?**

Books are always available and teachers read with children every day, both inside and outside. Whenever a child asks to read a book with a teacher, that teacher will make time (either right then or soon after) to read that book with that child (often they are joined by more children and one book turns into many).

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **Do the teachers know my child and what his/her interests are?**

You will be asked to fill in an "All about Me" form as part of the enrolment package, which will ensure the preschool teachers have some knowledge already about your child's interests. The teachers are very interested in your child and will often sit down and ask him or her what they like to do, if they have any pets etc to form that relationship.



### *What happens now?*



If you are confident that Kinderen preschool is where you would like to enrol your child, you need to fill in an enrolment form and start visiting (Kinderen does not charge parents for visiting with their child). The amount of visits you do with your child before you leave them will depend on how well they settle within the preschool environment. Once you (and we) are happy they will be okay without you, we encourage you to leave your child for an hour or two a few times before leaving them for a full day.



Once your child has successfully transitioned to preschool, a whole new world of learning opportunities will open up. New friendships will be made and skills learned.

**Congratulations and WELCOME to Preschool!**



NOTES:

Contact details:

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New Plymouth

administration enquiries  
Phone: (06) 758 2884  
66 Buller Street

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Phone: (06) 758 8518  
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