

WHĀNAU MANAAKI

For Whānau, not for profit

Whānau Panui # 4

August, 2025



Nau Mai Haere Mai | Greetings and Welcome to our Whānau Manaaki Parent & Whānau Pānui | Newsletter.

This pānui is produced by Whānau Manaaki.

Although you receive regular communication from your child's kindergarten or service, we decided to produce a regular newsletter that is published every 2 months or so, to provide you with information that impacts our network and Early Childhood Education in general.

This is the fourth of our pānui, if you missed the first three they can be found on our website.

In this issue you will find:

- Change To Fee Structure
- Family Boost Support
- All Year Education And Care
- Advocating For Whānau
- Winter Around The Regions

Featured image: Miramar Central Kindergarten,

Kia ora e te whānau

As we move through the winter months our youngest learners continue to celebrate and learn from the diversity in the world around them.

During June and July kindergarten kaiako explored traditional Matariki customs, including the useful skill of Māra kai - gardening for food.

Pacific Language weeks were also recognised, with lots of dancing, singing, food and fun!

This newsletter features the activities of our kindergartens in regions reaching from South Otago to Central Plateau.

You can also read more information about government funding and its impact on our fees.

If paying fees is difficult for your family, please reach out to your Head Teacher.

visit us to find out more
www.wmkindergartens.org.nz



Government funding and fees

Fee Increase

Letters were sent to whānau last week, explaining the need for an increase in fees. This increase is due to increasing operational costs and decreasing government funding.

Budget 2025 saw funding to early childhood education increase at a rate less than inflation.

In response to these challenges, our Board of elected parent and community representatives made the difficult decision to increase fees from October 6 this year.

Fees in most services will be going up by \$1 per child, per hour. You should have already received details of how it impacts on your kindergarten.

We know that the cost of living is already impacting on families, so will be employing additional administrative support to help you claim your fees back where you can.

Fees are only charged if your children attend more than 20 hours per week, through the government fees free policy. This will not change, and your education and care will remain free.

In cases of hardship, we want to hear from you, and we may be able to help.

Please talk to your Head Teacher in the first instance if you want to know more about this new fee structure, or need support paying fees.

We are dedicated to helping all families to access high quality early childhood education.

Family Boost

The government will reimburse some fees for many families, through a scheme called Family Boost.

From October, statements will be sent every three months, so you can claim this money more easily from IRD.

You will be able to claim up to 40 per cent of your fees back, if your household earns less than \$229,100.



You need to register for My IRD to make a claim. If you need assistance with this you can email familyboost@wmkindergartens.org.nz.

Full Year Opening for 2026

All our kindergartens are planning to be open for 49 weeks of the year from January 12 2026.

Most kindergartens are already open during term breaks (school holidays) but now all of them will be staying open, in response to the growing needs of our families.

This will also help our services remain financially viable. We will close for around three weeks at Christmas and three days for our conference in October each year.

Each kindergarten will also take 4x teacher-only days during the year that families are informed about in advance.

There will be more information coming out to families about these planned changes over the coming weeks and months.

Thank you for your continued support.

Featured images top to bottom: Piri'anga Alofa Pacific and Community Services in Porirua, Brooklyn Kindergarten in Wellington.



Are you following us?

Facebook [whānaumanaakikindergartens](#)

Instagram [whānaumanaaki](#)

Tik tok [whānaumanaaki](#)

E Tū Kaha

STAND UP STRONG



E Tū Kaha is a campaign that encourages our staff and kaiako to advocate for early childhood education (ECE) as a public good and a right for all tamariki in Aotearoa.

Day of Action

Whānau Manaaki kaiako and staff continued to advocate for free high quality early childhood education (ECE) and took part in the NZEI Te Riu Roa day of action in late June.

The action was to urge government to:

- Put children at the heart of all decisions that will impact the ECE sector
- Value all ECE teachers with pay parity- the same rates as primary and secondary school teachers
- Honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi in education
- Respect regulations around teacher qualifications, teacher to child ratios
- Increase funding so that every whānau can access free and quality ECE



Advocating for Whānau

Kindergartens continue to advocate for tamariki and whānau through their local MPs.

When ministers visit our services, they can witness the essential teaching and learning that happens at kindergarten, and speak with teachers and families about issues effecting them.

Throughout June and July we engaged with a number of MPs from various political parties.

In the Wairarapa National MP Mike Butterick visited Meta Riddiford Kindergarten and Labour MPs Kieran McNulty and Jan Tinetti visited Manaia and Masterton West Kindergartens. In Wellington Green Party MP Tamatha Paul visited Campbell Kindergarten and Karori kaiako visited NZ First MP Andy Foster.

In the Manawatū Kimbolton Kindergarten hosted National MP Suze Redmayne.



Featured images from top to bottom: Jan Tinetti & Kieran McNulty visit Masterton West Kindergarten, Tamatha Paul visits Campbell Kindergarten and Suze Redmayne visits Kimbolton Kindergarten

Teaching & Learning

Validating Children's Emotions Supports Learning

Young children are still developing the ability to deal with their emotions, and adults play a vital role in supporting this growth. Often, children feel emotions like sadness, anger, anxiety, and joy and are still learning the language to express them. By naming and validating these feelings—e.g., “I can see you may be feeling sad that you can't go with your brother”—we help children feel understood and seen.

Validation opens the door to co-regulation, where adults guide children through emotional experiences. Since the brain areas that are responsible for self-regulation are still maturing in early childhood, adult support is essential.

Talking about emotions helps children first understand their own feelings, then empathise with others. Their ability to regulate emotions can vary daily, so consistent support is key. Teachers often use play as a natural context to explore emotional skills, encouraging children to identify feelings and practice calming strategies.

Children also learn by observing adults. How we respond to everyday challenges teaches them how to deal with frustration, resolve conflicts, and find solutions. For instance, reframing a struggle “Maybe more practice will help you climb that” can foster resilience and a growth mindset.

In kindergarten settings, play provides rich opportunities for children to practise emotional regulation with the support of attentive teachers. These interactions help children build confidence and competence in managing their emotions.

For more information, see:

Ministry of Education (2019). He māpuna te tamaiti: Supporting social and emotional competence in early learning. Wellington, NZ: Ministry of Education.



Around the regions this winter...

South Otago

Clutha Valley Kindergarten held a 'Day of Action Red & Green Themed Dress Up Day'



Wellington

Northland Kindergarten brightens a cold winter day with a colourful cardboard box city



Whanganui

Harriette Vine Kindergarten welcomed whānau to learn more about Matariki



Kāpiti

Ōtaki Kindergarten created a wonderful world of clay



Wairarapa

Kahurangi All Day Kindergarten have been harvesting magical rainbow corn



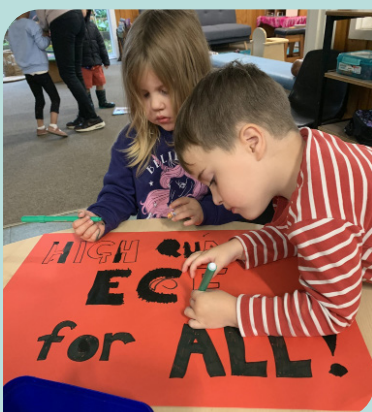
Horowhenua

Taitoko Kindergarten delighted over a very special visitor



Hutt Valley

Cottle Kindergarten is standing up for high quality ECE.



Porirua

Piri'anga Alofa Pacific and Community Service celebrated one year of the Mau Te Rongo Initiative that employs navigators to help the public to safely use public transport in Porirua. This initiative is supported by the Ministry of Social Development and the Ministry of Education

