

WHĀNAU MANAAKI

For Whānau, not for profit

Term 1, 2025



**Kia Ora, Fakaalofa lahi atu, Talofa
Lava, Malo e lelei, Kia Orana
Malo Ni, Namaste, Witam,
Welcome to our Whānau
Manaaki Parent & whānau pānui |
newsletter.**

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Welcome back

This is our first pānui (newsletter) for 2025. We hope you had a relaxing break and have been enjoying the summer!

Of course, many of our kindergartens now operate for most of the year and many tamariki have been back for a while.

It is wonderful to see the many outdoor activities that tamariki are engaged in around our kindergartens – from gardening to watching insect life, water play and sand play, climbing, running and jumping, outdoor art or enjoying quiet activities in the shade.

This year, we know changes are in store for our sector, and we may not necessarily agree with them, but we will keep you informed, and we will work together to uphold the proud tradition of kindergartens serving our communities.

Cover image : Tamariki cooling off & making bubbles at Waitangirua Kindergarten in Porirua



Government funding and fees

Our kindergartens get most of their money from a government grant, through the Ministry of Education, which is paid out three times a year. This is paid out per child, per hour, for a maximum of six hours a day – this is one reason why many of our kindergartens only open for six hours.

If we open longer hours, we need to charge fees to offset the costs. We do have a few long day services around our regions, charging higher fees for this reason.

We also need to charge fees if children attend for longer than 20 hours a week or attest their “free” hours if they’re 3 or older) to another early childhood service.

As you can imagine, this is all quite complex!

We keep our fees as low as possible, but we are still increasingly financially challenged by rising costs compared to our funding. Because our funding does not meet the costs of providing our services, we need to find other ways to increase our income.

Many of our communities fundraise we also apply for grants from charitable organisations and foundations.

In addition, we look for government contracts that complement our early childhood services – for example in areas such as health or financial literacy, or social support.

The government has recently introduced Family Boost, which meets up to a quarter of the cost of fees for families earning under a certain threshold.

We are providing support for our families who are eligible to get a refund from IRD through Family Boost to help minimise the impact of fees.

Some families can get a subsidy from Work and Income (WINZ). We can support parents and whānau navigate this process.

If people face financial hardship we encourage them to talk to their head teacher in the first instance. We want early childhood education to be available to all!

You can follow us on:

Facebook [whānaumanaakikindergartens](#)

Instagram [whānaumanaaki](#)

Tik tok [whānaumanaaki](#)



Visit our
website



WHĀNAU MANAAKI

120 years

Jubilee



Mary Richmond with her kindergarten class at Richmond School, c.1893, ATL

Kindergartens started in Wellington in the 19th century, following a movement in Germany that supported learning through play, then a very radical idea.

Friedrich Froebel developed this philosophy in the 1830s, and believed in children learning through song and movement, crafts and nature.

Generations of children and their whānau have enjoyed the kindergarten experience taking their confidence, curiosity and creativity to school and beyond!

This year, we take time to appreciate the proud history of kindergarten, acknowledging how we have adapted, moved to honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi, to celebrate diversity, and to promote sustainability around our regions in Aotearoa, New Zealand.

We are grateful to renowned Emeritus Professor and historian Helen May, author of several books on kindergartens and on early childhood history and politics, who is guiding and helping shape our project, sharing her expertise and her time.

World Children's Day

World Children's day is on Sunday 02 March, and we're using the week beginning with Children's Day to highlight important issues in early childhood education.

We are proud to support this kaupapa. This week we are running a campaign called *E Tū Kaha Mō ā Tatou Tamariki* – Stand Up Strong for All Our Children. Our kindergartens will be promoting high quality early childhood education and why we need to oppose any government policies that may undermine it.

Children are our greatest gift ●

He taonga te tamaiti

02 March

#ChildrensDayNZ #TeRāoNgāTamariki





E Tū Kaha - Stand Up Strong



Regulatory Review

The government has been reviewing our regulations, and we are strong in our desire to see regulations that support safety and quality for children.

We stress to MPs that we need qualified teachers, good ratios of teachers to children, adequate space for calm learning environments and safety regulations in areas such as medications and sleep arrangements.

Unfortunately, some early childhood providers are more interested in profit than in supporting children's education and wellbeing, and they have been lobbying government to reduce regulatory

requirements and accountability for the taxpayers' money they receive.

We are expecting changes shortly and we will keep you updated about anything that we consider harmful to children, families and education generally.

We appreciated a recent statement from Education Minister Erica Stanford recently that supported the need for qualified teachers for our youngest children, and we publicly commended her stand.

MP Visits Make a Difference

We encourage all our kindergartens to engage with their local MP or MPs as it is important that those in parliament know the importance of early childhood education for our children, families and society.

We regularly engage with MPs from all political parties. MPs are also keen to meet parents – their constituents – on visits.



Head Teacher and Board Staff Representative Anne Prescott talking to visiting National MP Katie Nimmon

New kindergarten for Clutha Valley

Whānau Manaaki opens a new kindergarten in Clutha Valley in South Otago this month, sharing premises with the existing Playcentre.

This brings our number of kindergartens to 110, stretching from Waiouru in the Central Plateau to Balclutha in South Otago.

Clutha Valley Kindergarten in the Clydevale/Greenfield area, 25 km inland from Balclutha, will be open from Monday to Thursday, with the Playcentre operating on Fridays. A dawn blessing has been held at the site.

The kindergarten came about after parents approached the Playcentre seeking more early childhood education for their children. Parent Natalie Tunnah has been one of those working with Whānau Manaaki to get a kindergarten established. She says it will be great for the children, families, and the school.

Parents currently often travel to Balclutha for early childhood education, and this takes up to half an hour and involves significant travel costs. Some parents will be able to work on the farm more, and the kindergarten will also offer support to migrant families who work in the dairy industry.

Natalie says the whole community benefits from the school, kindergarten and Playcentre working together.

Whānau Manaaki senior teacher Gill Crawford says everyone has worked together to advance the proposal, with strong support from the school. "It's really trying to be a solution for rural communities", says Gill.

Playcentre regional support lead Judy Hinton says the initiative has been community-driven, and it's been a positive experience to work with the kindergarten. "It's been awesome, to work to suit the needs of the community so all children get high quality early childhood education."



Pupils from the local primary school attend the Clutha Kindergarten blessing.

We must make sure that early childhood education is just that – education and not a baby sitting service because if you want young people to be school-ready and hit the ground running they need to have good oral language skills, good numeracy skills and self-regulation and that requires qualified teachers in the classroom.

- Education Minister Erica Stanford

Around the Regions



South Otago

Tamariki at Goldfields enjoying a picnic in the sun.



Horowhenua

Tamariki at Te Manawanui in their brand new whare, built by kindergarten whānau.

Wellington

Children at Tui Park Kindergarten have been learning about the lifespan of a caterpillar.

Porirua

In honour of Matatini Katoa Kindergarten have been making tīpare, doing their own moko, and performing on stage with the costumes .





Kāpiti

Paraparaumu Kindergarten created a mural for a local chorus box.



Central Plateau

Ohakune kindergarten picking blueberries on the blueberry farm



Manawatū

Team Kimbolton fundraising at the Apiti show.



Upper Hutt

Silverstream Kindergarten tamariki celebrating Valentines Day



Wairarapa

Masterton West tamariki learning how to care for chickens.