

Board Newsletter

Napier Kindergarten Association

August 2017

The joy of teaching, the love of learning

From The President

We had a fabulous turnout to our Association AGM on the 12 April at which we fare welled Board members Rhonda Parsons, Nicola Eustace and Anna Wairama.

Our Board extends a big welcome to newly elected members Jo Coffin and Janelle Hutchings and to our co opted member, Alison Donovan.



Since our AGM we have been busy with:

- Inducting our new Board members
- Attending a New Zealand Kindergartens meeting in Palmerston North
- Attending a meeting with parents of the Taradale community
- Attending Board meetings in June and August

Our Board would like to thank our kindergarten families for the fee and donation payments received. These funds will make an invaluable contribution towards our kindergarten operations and maintaining the excellent standard of education we provide.

Unfortunately the 2017 Government Budget announced in May did not increase the hourly funding rates for early childhood education (which have been frozen since 2008). The Government continues to focus additional ECE investment in the growth of new places in the sector, rather than additional investment in raising quality.

Cohort entry into school is now a very real possibility. Schools have to go through a consultation process with parents and stakeholders (such as ourselves) before they can introduce or end cohort entry in their school.

Rather than children starting school from their 5th birthday, cohort entry offers places for children as young as 4 years and 10 months old to start school, in large groups, at fixed times. This may have unfavourable implications for the transition of children to school and certainly impacts on kindergarten funding. In addition, the exiting of groups of children to school means we would also have to start enrolling new children in groups. As children need additional individual support and care when starting kindergarten this would place a significant strain on our ability to meet their needs. Please let your kindergarten know if your school is considering cohort entry, so that we can ensure we are part of the consultation process.

We hope you enjoy Term 3, spring and summer are not too far away now!

Nga mihi

Jessica Uri, President

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Our Board Members are:



Standing left to right: Sarah Beckett, Sarah Nash (Vice President), Jo Coffin, Janelle Hutchings, Jessica Uri (President)

Seated: Ingrid Squire, Rachel Murray and



Rob Barzey



Alison Donovan

Updating Your Contact Details

Do kindergartens have your current address and phone contact details? This information is particularly important in the event of an emergency. Please check with your teachers if you are unsure if we have your correct information.

Congratulations to

- Tamatea Kindergarten for completing their Bronze Enviro school Reflection Day
- Carlyle Kindergarten for completing their Enviro school Bronze Reflection Day
- Tamatea Kindergarten for winning the NCC ECE garden award third year running

Mobile Phone Application

We have a free phone mobile application available via which you can receive phone alerts, reminders and your kindergarten newsletters. Go to the App Store and download Napier Kindergartens.



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The upcoming government elections

What happens in early childhood matters for a lifetime. High quality ECE is an investment on the future. We need the government's support to help keep high quality ECE affordable.

If you are considering each party's election policies we recommend you check out whether they

- Champion high quality ECE as a right for every child
- Restore the requirement that all 'teacher-led' services to have 100% qualified teachers
- Meet the cost of a 100% qualified teaching workforce.

Napier Kindergartens' Philosophy

The Free Kindergarten system in New Zealand is directly inspired by the teachings of Frederich Froebel (1782- 1852) who was a German scientist, philosopher and educationalist. The German name *Kindergarten* translates into English as meaning 'a child's garden'. Kindergarten is both a name and an analogy for how children flourish through freedom to play in natural settings.

Kindergartens in Aotearoa were established and continue to uphold the principle of inclusion for all. They are founded on the belief that children learn more profoundly through play than any other educational approach. Children's need to be creative and expressive in their play is nurtured and promoted. The holistic kindergarten approach envelops the child as a physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual being.

Kindergartens in Aotearoa/ New Zealand are committed to honouring the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and as such, authentically encompass a Māori world view in their practices, settings and beliefs. These understandings sit alongside the national bi-cultural early childhood curriculum, Te Whāriki which guides teaching and learning in all of our kindergartens.

Froebel established a set of occupations¹, gifts² and Mother Songs³ that shaped much of the curriculum seen in kindergartens today. Some examples of these are gardening, sewing, weaving, scientific study of living things, singing nursery rhymes, Māori and English poetry, building with mathematical blocks and carpentry. Furniture and equipment in kindergartens is child sized and suitable for children. The tools children use in their occupations are functional and reflect the child's play as their work, as opposed to being merely toys. Kindergarten settings are structured to ensure children have free access to the outdoors. Kindergarten teachers and visionaries protect and promote the child's connection with nature and papatuanuku (earth mother).

Following from Froebel's vision the primary adults who work in Kindergartens are teachers who are specifically qualified to teach young children and embrace ongoing learning themselves. Our kindergartens are staffed in ratio by 100% qualified, registered teachers. Kindergartens are established to serve their local community and governed by not for profit Associations. Community involvement underpins the ethos of the kindergarten movement.

¹ 'occupations' refers to materials chosen to empower the child to develop skills and innovations

² 'gifts' refers to a set of carefully chosen and crafted play materials made of natural materials

³ 'Mother Songs' refers to collection of rhymes, poems and songs for mothers, teachers and children

Who Are Members Of Our Association?



Our Association Members are:

- Parents and caregivers with children enrolled in our services or on our waiting lists
- Board Members
- Life Members

Members have voting rights at all General Meetings.

Our staff are employees of the Association, rather than Members, so they have no voting rights at these meetings.

Napier Kindergartens' Vision Statement

Our Board has recently amended our Vision Statement 2015 – 2019 to:

'Our Association provides flourishing environments where learning is child's play and teaching is a passion'

The Board's focus at present is on the word 'flourishing' which has been defined for our Association as being relevant and thriving.

This focus forms the basis of a series of strategic conversations the Board undertakes at each Board meeting to debate, exchange views and ideas and agree on what that means. This shapes how our kindergartens will be best supported and positioned to continue to be 'flourishing'.

