

## Napier Kindergartens' Membership



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## **Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi engari he toa takimano**

*My strength is not that of an individual but of the collective*

### **Part One – becoming a Member**

#### **We need members**

We're thrilled that you're thinking about becoming a Member of Napier Kindergartens. We hope you'll agree we're an organisation worthy of your support. As an organisation we are about children and education. Relationships are important to us, outcomes for children are important to us, our Members are important to us. We want every child and their whānau to have the most amazing kindergarten experience possible.

We rely on having Members in order to operate as a not for profit, community organisation. As an incorporated society we are legally required to have a minimum of 15 registered Members at all times.

Our Members share a common interest in what we do within early childhood education. Becoming a Member is a great way to show your support not only for a particular kindergarten, but also for our wider network of kindergartens and the kindergarten movement.

Members support the purposes and achievements of the Association, are willing to advocate for the Association, question the Board, speak their minds about remits or proposals, stand for positions of governance on our Board and some are able to exercise voting powers on certain matters.

How much you contribute as a Member in terms of time, energy or commitment is up to you. You may choose to be a Member for any number of reasons such as ensuring we have the legal number of Members we are required to have, to represent your kindergarten at General Meetings, to stand for election to the Board or to support our work in education.

It is important you are aware of your rights and obligations before making a decision about applying to become a Member.

This booklet gives you information about how to become a Member, what our Members can do, and how to cease being a Member.

We value our Members, and warmly invite you to consider if membership of Napier Kindergartens is right for you.



## About Napier Kindergartens

Napier Free Kindergarten Association Incorporated was established in December 1951 as an incorporated society. As such, we form one of approximately 23,500 incorporated societies operating in New Zealand.

Incorporated societies:

- Operate under the Incorporated Societies Act 1908 (and its amendments)
- Are membership based organisations
- Must be 'not for profit' organisations

We are primarily established to:

- Provide, establish, manage and control kindergartens and early childhood education or early childhood services in our area
- Represent and promote the interests of the Association and our members
- Promote the development of kindergartens and early childhood education or early childhood learning services in New Zealand and
- Lobby Government to promote the interests of the Association and/or early childhood education

Our Association is made up of:

- Board Members
- Ordinary, Voting and Life Members
- Employees

We operate 16 kindergartens across our Napier and Wairoa communities, with an annual income exceeding \$5 million and we employ approximately 100 people. Each of these kindergartens were established by their local communities through extensive fundraising, lobbying and support of local parents and businesses.

We are 100% New Zealand owned and operated and proud to be a part of the iconic New Zealand kindergarten movement which is over 100 years old.

We deliver the New Zealand Te Whāriki curriculum through the kindergarten philosophy – which is inspired by the teachings of Frederick Froebel (1782 – 1852). We are recognised for our strong commitment to education which is backed up by our employment of fully trained and registered teachers in all teaching positions.

As an organisation we have a strong commitment to Te Tiriti O Waitangi, with many teachers supported to develop and strengthen their skills in using te Reo and deepen their understanding of tikanga Māori. We believe every child in New Zealand is entitled to access early childhood education services in their local community – services that meet quality indicators, are affordable, support their parents aspirations for their child and prepare children well for their educational journey.

As a not for profit organisation we are able to ensure that the costs of kindergarten are kept to an absolute minimum for parents, while focussing our financial resources into providing beautiful environments, plentiful resources for children and recruiting the best teachers available.

We believe teaching should be a joyful vocation and children's love of learning nurtured and grown.

We are passionate about sustainable education; passing on to children knowledge of and respect for the health of our planet, how to care for it and live well in harmony with it.



## Napier Kindergartens' Board

We operate under a governance model, with a Board comprised of up to 9 elected Board members. Eight of these members are elected by the Association's Voting Members and one member is an employee (usually a teacher), who is elected by other employees.

Every two years the Board elects a President and annually it elects a Vice President.



Board members govern the Association and their primary responsibilities are:

- Development of the Association's Strategic Plan (our visions & long term plans for the Association)
- Employment & monitoring of the General Manager
- Monitoring of strategic outcomes
- Management of risk
- Monitoring of legal compliance
- Setting and reviewing of policies

The Board employs a General Manager to manage the Association on its behalf.

A management team attends to the day to day operations of the Association which includes providing advice and support to the Board, professional supervision of teachers, recruitment of employees, payroll management, financial management, financial reporting, property management, HR Management, oversight of Health and Safety, meeting of licencing criteria and policy development.

An Annual General Meeting (AGM) is held each year, at which the activities and finances of the Association are reported to our Members.

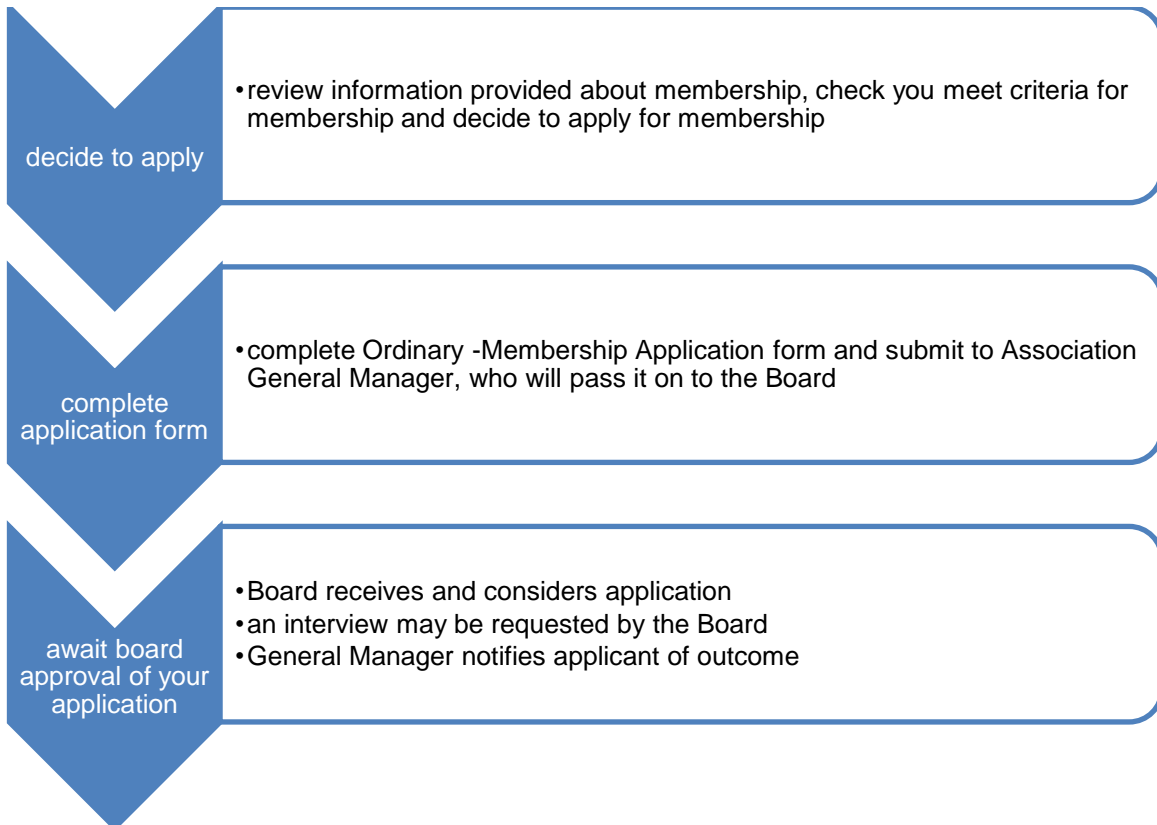
We operate under a Constitution, which contains rules about what we can do, and how we do it. A copy of our Constitution is available on our website ([www.napierkindergartens.co.nz](http://www.napierkindergartens.co.nz)) or can be requested from our office (email: [gm@napierkindergartens.co.nz](mailto:gm@napierkindergartens.co.nz)).

A copy of our Constitution will be given to each new Member.



## How to become a member

Any person who meets our Membership criteria may apply to be accepted as a Member by following this process:



## Membership criteria

Any person who meets the following criteria may apply to be a Member:

- you are 18 years or older
- you are of good character and reputation in the community
- you have an interest in early childhood education and/or supporting Napier Kindergartens
- you have no criminal convictions for which you have been imprisoned
- you have no criminal convictions pending for which you may be imprisoned
- you have no prior declarations of bankruptcy, insolvency or made an agreement with creditors to only pay off part of a debt to avoid bankruptcy
- you are not an employee of Napier Kindergartens



## Part Two – membership types

Napier Kindergartens has the following membership types:

- Ordinary Members
- Voting Members
- Life Members
- Board Members

Here is a quick summary of what each membership type can do:

	Ordinary Members	Voting Members	Life Members	Board Members
Accept new members				•
Terminate a membership				•
Readmit former members				•
Eligible to be a Board nominee	•	•	•	•
Endorse Board nominees for election				•
Call General Meetings				•
Call Special General Meetings		•		•
Receive AGM reports, financial reports, give notice of motions & recommendations		•		•
Attend and speak at General meetings	•	•	•	•
Elect Life Members		•		
Attend and vote at General Meetings		•		
Act as proxy voters at General meetings	•			•
Vote at General meetings if a quorum of Voting Members or their proxies not present	•		•	
Raise a Member grievance or complaint	•	•	•	•
Appoint a subcommittee or decision-maker to manage a Member grievance or complaint				•
Request to view or receive a copy of the Constitution, by laws or policies	•	•	•	•
View the Membership Register (regarding your own information only)	•	•	•	•
View the Register of Disclosures	•	•	•	•
Access the financial statements presented at the last AGM and minutes of any previous General Meeting	•	•	•	•
Access Board minutes, Board subcommittee minutes, Association records				•
Member able to access Association information held about themselves	•	•	•	•
Able to set membership annual subscriptions or fees at a Board meeting				•
Board can set Membership levies or General Meeting can set Membership levies		•		•

### Ordinary Members

Ordinary membership is open to:

- Individuals who are interested in education
- Any parent or guardian of a child attending or about to attend an association facility
- Any representative of a Napier Kindergartens early childhood or other type of educational organisation

This means that people other than parents, such as extended family members (eg grandparents, aunts, uncles), former employees, community leaders and volunteers etc, can apply to be Ordinary Members.

To become a Member you must complete an application form which is available from your local kindergarten or early childhood service, our website, or the General Manager.

Only the Board has the discretion to approve or decline membership applications. The Board is not required to give a reason for declining membership.

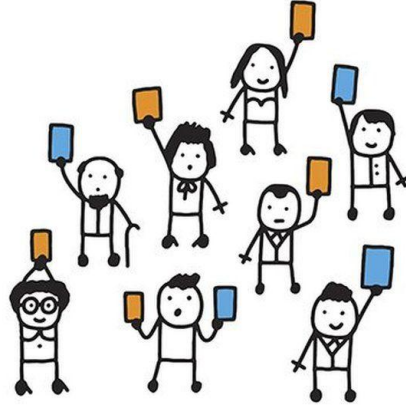
Ideally each kindergarten or service will have several Ordinary Members who are associated with their community, so that they have a pool of Members from whom a Voting Member can be appointed or elected.

An Ordinary Member is able to be on their Kindergarten committee, or be in a Friend of the kindergarten group.

### *Voting Members*

Voting Members are elected by their kindergarten community. They carry an additional responsibility to gather the views of their communities and to cast votes at Association General Meetings on behalf of their community.

There is usually only one General meeting held each year (Annual General Meeting (AGM)), however additional meetings may be held if a matter cannot, due to its importance or urgency, be deferred to the next AGM.



The types of matters Voting Members might be expected to vote on are:

- Acceptance of activity and financial reports presented by the Board to its Members
- Motions or remits presented at General Meetings
- Election of Board Members
- Awarding of Life Membership
- Setting of membership levies
- Changes to or rescinding of the Constitution
- Winding up the Association

Each kindergarten community (other than those in Wairoa) appoints or elects one person from its pool of Ordinary Members to be their Voting Member, provided that person is eligible to be a Voting Member. To be eligible to be elected or appointed as a Voting Member a person must:

- be an Ordinary Member,
- have their child attending kindergarten
- not have a financial interest in another ECE service provider, or have a close family member (including a spouse or partner) who has a financial interest in another ECE service provider

Due to their distance from Napier, each kindergarten or service located in Wairoa **must** appoint a sitting Board Member to represent and cast votes on their behalf at any General or Special meeting (which will be held in Napier). The Board Member appointed by a Wairoa community must abide by the direction of those communities as to how to vote, or represent their views.

The Board appoints one of its Members to be their Voting Member at Association General Meetings.

Ideally each kindergarten community and the Board will have a Voting Member present at General Meetings, ensuring each community is represented.

Voting rights at any Association General Meeting are only able to be exercised by:

- elected Voting Members who are present at the meeting, or
- a Member who has been given proxy voting rights by a Voting Member, because the elected Voting Member is not able to be present at the meeting

In the event there are not enough Voting Members (or their proxies) at a General Meeting, then Ordinary and Life Members present at the meeting may be granted voting rights so that the meeting can proceed.

Apart from Wairoa, a kindergarten or service Voting Member must be:

- An Ordinary Member with a child attending that kindergarten or service
- Up to date with any membership fees, levies or subscriptions payable
- Elected or appointed by their local committee or 'Friends' of the kindergarten or service

- Willing to participate in this capacity, available to attend Association General Meetings and cast votes on behalf of their community

'Friends of the kindergarten' can be any group of people who support the kindergarten in some way, for example with fundraising activities.

In all communities the election or appointment of a kindergarten or ECE service Voting Member will be undertaken by:

- the kindergarten committee or
- in the absence of a committee, a 'Friends of the kindergarten' group

The process of election or appointment shall be by:

- whatever process the committee or 'Friends of the kindergarten' agree is appropriate and
- Ordinary Members and parents or caregivers of children attending the kindergarten may participate in the election process if that is considered desirable by that community

We recommend Voting Members are elected for a term of up to a year; however they may stand for additional terms provided they still meet the criteria for a Voting Member and are elected again.

If an elected Voting Member becomes ineligible to be a Voting Member (for example they have resigned as an Ordinary Member or Voting Member, or they no longer have a child attending kindergarten, or they have had their membership terminated), then a new Voting Member should be elected. More than one election or appointment can be undertaken in a year if necessary to replace departing Voting Members.

A Voting Member is able to be on their Kindergarten committee, or be in a 'Friends of the kindergarten' group.

A person who is no longer a Voting Member will revert to being an Ordinary Member, unless they have resigned as an Ordinary Member too, or have had their membership terminated.

The Association General Manager must be notified by the kindergarten or service communities as soon as practicable and at least 30 clear days before a General meeting:

- who has been elected as their Voting Member and
- if a Voting Member has ceased to be a Voting Member

Voting Members need to gather the views of their community so they know how to vote. The Association does not stipulate what that process involves however it could include such methods as:

- having conversations with parents and Ordinary Members of the community
- having conversations with the kindergarten committee or a group recognised as 'Friends of the kindergarten'
- putting out a ballot box at the kindergarten for Members and parents to vote
- inviting kindergarten parents to contribute opinions or feedback on a notice board





### *Life Members*

Life Members are people honoured for highly valued services to the Association.

There is a process for nomination to award Life Membership, following which 2/3<sup>rd</sup>s of Voting Members attending a General Meeting must vote in favour of awarding Life Membership.

Life Membership can only be awarded with the consent of the prospective Life Member.

Life Members are exempt from paying membership fees or subscriptions.

Current employees of the Association cannot be awarded Life Membership until they have ceased being employees.



### *Board Members*

Board Members are Members who have been elected or re-elected to a Board position at an Annual General Meeting (AGM), or in the case of a vacancy that arises between AGM's, have been appointed by the Board.

Board Members are responsible for the governance of Napier Kindergartens and accountable to our Members for its performance. They are responsible for the appointment of the General Manager and oversee the General Manager's performance.

Board Members have additional obligations to other membership types, such as a requirement to declare conflicts of interest and abide by a Board Code of Conduct.

Board Members are unable to be on their Kindergarten committee and must immediately resign from their committee if appointed to a Board position. They may however continue to contribute to, or participate in, their kindergarten fundraising or social occasions/functions/excursions.

Board Members are elected for a 2 year term, and may stand for re election for a further two terms, up to a maximum of six years in total on the Board.

Board Members would revert to Ordinary Membership upon finishing on the Board, unless they have resigned or otherwise had their Ordinary Membership ended.

### *Membership Register*

The General Manager is required to maintain a register of all Members which records their:

- names
- postal and email addresses
- phone numbers
- occupation
- membership dates (start and finish)
- membership financial status with regards membership fees, subscription or levies

Members must advise the General Manager of any changes to their information.

Members may view any information we hold about them in the Membership Register, but not about any other Member.



## Disclosures Register

A Disclosures Register is maintained by the General Manager and records any disclosures by Board Members of any interests that may be perceived as a conflict of interest.

Any Member may inspect the Register of Disclosures.

## Part Three – Membership rights and obligations

Members, depending on their membership type, have the following rights as outlined in our Constitution:

- To attend, speak and vote at meetings
- To call Special General Meetings
- To give notice of motions for consideration prior to an AGM
- To receive, question and approve reports outlining the activities and financial positions of the Association
- To vote on remits presented at General meetings including proposed amendments of the Constitution, setting of Member levies, winding up of the Association
- To stand for certain positions within the Association (such as Board Member, Voting Member)
- To award Life Membership
- To make a complaint or grievance claim against another Member
- To have the opportunity to respond to any complaint or grievance claim in accordance with procedures outlined by the Constitution
- Members may view or obtain copies of certain information held by the Association
- Members may exercise the rights of membership only if subscriptions, fees or levies have been paid by due date

Membership carries with it the following obligations:

- All members shall promote the interests and purposes of the Association and not bring the Association into disrepute
- Members must abide by Association Rules, by-laws and policies
- Members must not engage in conduct likely to cause distress, embarrassment or concern to other Members, or members of the public
- Members must pay any Association membership fees, subscriptions or levies by due date unless the Board has exercised its discretion to allow payment by installments or reduced the amount payable on grounds of hardship
- Members must notify the General Manager of any changes to the information held about them in the Register of Members
- Board Members must declare conflicts of interest or loyalty
- Membership resignations must be provided in writing to the General Manager
- Members must supply information requested about them for Association purposes (such as maintaining the Membership Register, General Meeting minutes and Membership fees, subscriptions or levies)

Members are not liable for the debts of the Association.



## Part Four – termination of membership

Membership is terminated by:

- written resignation of the Member (submitted to the General Manager) OR
- the Member ceasing to meet the membership criteria OR
- having membership revoked by the Board following certain events such as:
  - a complaint or grievance against the Member which is upheld or
  - failure to pay membership fees, subscriptions or levies
  - the member being convicted of a crime for which they may be imprisoned, or
  - a member being declared bankrupt, or Insolvent OR
- death of the Member

## Part Five - Miscellaneous

### Membership fees, subscriptions, levies

The Association has the right to set annual membership fees, subscriptions and levies for all members, apart from Life Members, who are exempt from payment.

We do not want fees, subscriptions or levies to hinder anyone from applying to become a Member therefore the Board has the discretion to reduce the amount payable and/or allow payment by installments (for example on the grounds of hardship).

The membership fees, subscriptions or levies contribute towards such costs as maintaining the Membership Register, notifying Members of General meetings, sending AGM reports to Voting Members and responding to complaints or grievances raised.

The amount of fees, subscriptions or levies payable is posted on our website.

### Grievance or complaint

Our Constitution outlines the process by which a grievance or a complaint against a Member may be made. It also outlines the steps by which a grievance or complaint may be investigated, and the potential outcomes for a person's membership.

### Interpretation of Constitution

Any interpretation of the Constitution shall be as defined in the Rules of the Constitution.

Any queries about the Constitution should be directed to the General Manager in the first instance.

Where any Member disagrees with the Association's application of its Constitution's Rules the matter shall be settled by the Association by referral to appropriately qualified legal counsel.

### Membership information confirmation

The Association will from time to time request Members to confirm the information we hold about them is still valid and current, and that they wish to continue their membership.

"There is no power for change greater than a community discovering what it cares about."

– Margaret J. Wheatley

