

Kindergarten Committee Review

(Helen McNaughten, General Manager)

July 2011

The Kindergarten Committee Review meetings have now been completed and this document summarises their recommendations to the Board.

The review was completed over a series of 5 meetings, with participants from amongst the Board, parents, management and teachers who engaged in wide ranging discussions around kindergarten committees and the issues they face. The Review Committee considered NKA guidelines, policies and bylaws (rescinded) as well as information from other Associations.

It was quite clear from the participants that:

1. parents are interested in being involved in their kindergarten community and take pride in their achievements and
2. lively, effective committees are a valuable resource for kindergartens

The Review Committee identified the main barriers to parents joining or forming committees and sitting alongside that they identified the advantages of having committees operating in kindergartens.

The recommended changes reflect the environments within which our kindergartens operate and hopefully provide an incentive for more parents to join or form committees, by allowing a greater range of freedom about how a committee functions.

It is anticipated that at the end of the process, a booklet will be prepared as a resource for committees and/or parents considering forming or joining a committee. The booklet will be comprehensive, and will contain a much greater depth of detail, as well as examples, templates and guidelines.

Helen will be able to address any queries regarding the recommendations either before or during the Board meeting.

It is proposed that discussion will be held at the August 2011 Board Meeting regarding the key recommendations made, before decisions are made by the Board about whether it endorses the recommendations.

Process Timetable

	Date	Event
√	11.04.11	Announce Review at Assn AGM & invitation to participate in the review process
√	13.04.11	Distribute Board invitation to Kgtn communities and staff
√	06.05.11	Close off date for participants of review
√	16.05.11	1 st Review Group meeting 7:00 to 8:30 pm
√	30.05.11	2 nd Review Group meeting 7:00 to 8:30 pm
√	14.06.11	3 rd Review Group meeting 7:00 to 8:30 pm
√	27.06.11	4 th Review Group meeting 7:00 to 8:30 pm
√	11.07.11	5 th Review Group meeting (if required) 7:00 – 8:30pm
√	01.08.11	Review Group feedback presented to Board
√	31.08.11	Revised guidelines draft feedback presented to teachers at Teachers Meeting
	03.10.11	Revised guidelines draft presented to kindergarten communities for feedback
	28.10.11	Close off date for Community feedback
	05.12.11	Feedback presented to BOT
		Finalised Guidelines issued to kindergarten communities for Term 1, 2012

Summary of key recommended changes:

Current	Recommended
Committee responsible for running of the kindergarten apart from Curriculum and Employment areas	Committee supports teachers and the Association to ensure the kindergarten runs smoothly (excluding Curriculum and Employment areas)
Committee responsible for general upkeep of buildings, grounds and equipment	Limited responsibility for kindergarten maintenance
	Kindergartens and Committee Members establish a 5 year strategic funding plan for resources or projects for which the committee will fundraise
Fundraising required to cover costs of running the kindergarten as well as projects (used to include payment of power, phones, materials, food etc if needed)	As the basic operating costs of kindergarten are now covered by the Association fundraising is required to cover resources not provided for in the kindergarten's operating budget and/or which supports the kindergarten's strategic funding plan
Fundraising grant applications and other initiatives implemented by the Committee. Fundraising ideas shared at Council meetings (these meetings no longer occur)	Fundraising support provided by Association for grant applications as well as providing written resources and website access to help committees with fundraising ideas. Possibility the Assn will run a large fundraising event with assistance from various kindergarten committees, with proceeds being shared with kindergartens.
All Kindergarten expenditure ratified by Committee	Kindergarten expenditure ratified by Association. Funds raised by Committee – expenditure from this source ratified by Committee & separate accounts provided to Committees to track their fundraising results and expenditure.
Formal committees operating, within a formal structure Burden of most of committee responsibilities fall on Committee Members	Provision for informal, more relaxed committees to operate Committee may co-opt parents or form sub committees to share responsibilities
Committee Members shall support the teachers and co operate with them in encouragement of parent participation and the running of the kindergarten	Committee Members will liaise with the teachers regarding appropriate ways to welcome new families into the kindergarten community & new parents onto the Kindergarten Committee. In liaison with the teachers, may organise whanau events that provide an opportunity for families and extended families to engage with each other outside of a fundraising context.
	Introduction of a Code of Conduct agreement for every Committee Member to sign

The Kindergarten Committee Review members recommend that a review of any changes adopted be conducted after one year of implementation (beginning of 2013), to gauge their effectiveness and/or make further changes if required.

Barriers to parents joining or forming committees

Formality	“committee” name/meeting structure/roles
Meetings	time of day, duration, need for childcare for evening meetings, time commitment, frequency, care of children present when meetings held at end of session
Fundraising	constant need for, access to resources, networks, large fundraising projects may not be completed before parents leave kindergarten
Participation	predominantly female, internal politics/disagreements, lack of participation or sharing of work, differing personal agendas, differing values & beliefs, lack of understanding about the roles & responsibilities, perception of required skills & experience levels needed, English as a second language, time & availability constraints

Benefits of having committees

- You have a group of parents able to act as powerful advocates or ambassadors for kindergarten
- Relationship building, networking & friendship building (across the kindergarten & the Association)
- Community voice/Parent representation
- Assistance with kindergarten tasks
- Assistance with fundraising
- Access to and awareness of community agencies
- Communication and information sharing, via formal and informal mediums
- Personal growth opportunities for committee members
- Support for kindergarten staff, with a focus on children as the heart of the kindergarten
- Encourages sense of belonging and contribution for parents
- Reporting back to the kindergarten community both formally and informally gives greater accountability and awareness of kindergarten achievements
- Sense of structure within the kindergarten community
- Greater awareness & understanding of children’s learning environment

Kindergarten Committee Role

To act as ambassadors and advocates for both the kindergarten and high quality early childhood education.

To support the teachers in their encouragement of parent participation and the running of the kindergarten.

To assist kindergarten staff in the provision of a warm, welcoming, inclusive kindergarten for children and whanau.

To represent the parent voice within the kindergarten community.

Responsibilities

In carrying out their responsibilities Kindergarten Committee Members must abide by Association policies and guidelines at all times.

Kindergarten Committee Members are not expected to do everything themselves however they will have overall responsibility for ensuring that the kindergarten is well supported to run smoothly. They may co-opt other parents or form sub committees to assist with various activities.

In carrying out their responsibilities they must have regard to the kindergarten as the place of employment for kindergarten staff, therefore the committee cannot alter or use the premises in any way without consultation with the staff or without regard to Association policy.

The teaching team will guide and support their kindergarten committee, taking an interest in committee activities however the Committee should understand that volunteer input is not expected of staff (eg fundraising functions, working bees).

In all areas of responsibility Committees will always act in the best interests of the children.

Specific Responsibilities:

Strategic Fundraising Planning – in conjunction with the teaching team, develop and review a 5 year fundraising plan for improvement and development of the kindergarten. Set annual funding targets and develop a plan to meet those targets. Some short term goals may be planned in advance, others will be decided on in the year in which they are to be fundraised for.

Fundraising – assist with fundraising initiatives for resources which are not covered by the kindergarten's operating budget and/or which support the kindergarten's strategic plan.

Induction – identify, in liaison with the teachers, appropriate ways to welcome new families into the kindergarten community and new parents onto the kindergarten committee.

Kindergarten Whanau Events – in liaison with the teachers, organise whanau events that provide an opportunity for families and extended families to engage with each other outside of a fundraising context.

Communication – Committees may wish to communicate with families or other kindergartens within the Association regarding fundraising or other activities. Any communications with families must be approved by the Head Teacher and all communications must reflect the philosophy, values and professionalism of the Association.

Low level maintenance – ensure that volunteers are only organized to undertake low level routine maintenance and repair work within the kindergarten or grounds where there is no element of risk to themselves or kindergarten property.

Ratification of Resource Expenditure – Kindergarten Committees will ratify expenditure on any resources purchased from funds they have raised.

Media – committees wishing to involve the media in promotional or any other matters must obtain Association approval first.

Meetings – establish, in liaison with the teaching team, regular Committee meeting dates and times.

Association and Kindergarten AGM – to have committee representation at the Association and Kindergarten Annual General Meetings.

Specific Responsibilities – Further information

Strategic Fundraising Planning

The introduction of a new funding system in the early childhood sector has enabled the Association to allocate sufficient operating funds to each kindergarten to cover their basic operating costs, including some provision for new and replacement resources. It has also enabled the Association to pick up more of the costs of running and maintaining kindergartens and shifted this responsibility away from kindergarten committees.

As a result kindergarten committees are able to focus on fundraising for projects that either enhance the learning environment or contribute to the provision of a warm, welcoming and inclusive kindergarten for children and whanau. This may mean that the projects undertaken are larger and have longer term implications (for example, large playground redevelopments). Kindergartens also need to plan for the future cost of replacement of significant items (such as bark, shade sails, sand and matting) or maintenance (such as tree pruning).

It is therefore desirable for the committee to work alongside the teaching team to develop a 5 year plan which will provide consistency of development over a longer time frame, during which committee members may often change. It also provides a great way to encourage committees to engage with their teaching team and the community to talk about what high quality early childhood education looks like in relation to their particular kindergarten.

Having agreed on a 5 year plan, the committee can then work towards establishing the potential costs of the projects they are working towards and an annual fundraising target.

The 5 year plan should be reviewed on an annual basis to review achievements towards the goals or revise and agree to any changes to the goals.

An example of what a Strategic Plan might look like is attached as **Appendix 3**.

Fundraising

1. Fundraising should not be onerous

Kindergarten fundraising is an important function of the kindergarten committee but is also one of the greatest barriers to attracting people onto committees as a result of the constant drive or expectation to fundraise. Often the burden for fundraising falls onto the shoulders of a few parents who may be discouraged by the amount of work involved and time taken to reach fundraising targets or who lack experience, ideas or resources for successful fundraising. Realistic fundraising goals need to be set, resources provided to help committees with fundraising ideas and information and the committee should be able to co opt other parents to assist with fundraising initiatives.

2. Fundraising should be for defined purposes aligned with NKA Constitution

Fundraising should be undertaken for resources that are not covered by the Kindergarten's operating budget and should be for the purpose of furthering the education of young children in Aotearoa. This would include helping to create or maintain attractive buildings and grounds for children to enjoy and learn within.

3. Association assisted fundraising

There is support for the concept of Association-wide organized fundraising which benefits all kindergartens. With a representative from each kindergarten (excluding Wairoa), an Association fundraising committee may be formed to organise one large fundraising event as and when required eg book an entertainer to perform at the Municipal Theatre or organise an on line auction, with all proceeds allocated either equally or in an agreed manner to every kindergarten (including Wairoa). This would benefit kindergartens that struggle to fundraise successfully and would raise public awareness of our Association. The fundraiser should focus on activities that require minimal organisation and maximum returns.

Induction

Committees to be part of the induction of new families into the kindergarten community.

Committee Members can be included in the process of inducting and welcoming new families into the kindergarten community. As advocates for the kindergarten and as parents they can extend a warm welcome to new comers, tell them about the various committee activities and organise opportunities for new families to get together or join in other whanau events at the kindergarten. The teaching team would be available to make those connections between new families and one or more committee members when they judge it is appropriate and after the family has had an opportunity to settle into kindergarten.

Kindergarten Whanau Events

The kindergarten community can be an invaluable source of support for parents new to parenting, Napier or New Zealand. There is an opportunity for the Committee to help foster community relationships further by organizing events which include the children, parents and extended family members (grandparents, aunts, uncles etc). There might, for example, be a mid term BBQ, an end of term disco or a party to celebrate the completion on a project. To encourage participation, it is expected that no fundraising occurs at these events.

Communication

A place on the website is created for kindergarten committees to share projects, fundraising and other ideas.

Low Level Maintenance

Changes in both the ACC Act and Health and Safety Act mean that the Association carries a greater level of responsibility for any injury to or damage caused by volunteers. Although it is more expensive it is often more desirable to employ registered trades people to undertake maintenance or repair work in our kindergartens or grounds which carries any element of risk to it. Reputable experienced trades' people have their own equipment, Health & Safety policies, must operate within accepted industry relevant compliances and carry public liability insurance. It is therefore seen as more appropriate for committees to not be responsible for calling in volunteers to undertake routine maintenance and repair work within the kindergarten or grounds which carries any element of risk to themselves or Kindergarten property.

Ratification of Resource Expenditure

The Association to provide kindergarten committees with regular separate financial reports which track funds raised by committees, expenditure authorized by committees and net surplus of funds held. Committees will no longer be required to authorize or ratify kindergarten expenditure which is covered by their operational budgets. Committees can authorize and ratify expenditure on resources they have fundraised for, within Association guidelines or with regard to the provisions of any grants received from charitable organizations.

Media

From time to time Committees may wish to use the media to help promote their kindergarten or a project which they are raising funds for, or they may be approached to comment on an ECE issue. Great care must be taken in dealing with the media, hence the need for Association approval before any contact is made. An inadvertent statement taken out of context may cause harm or misrepresent the Associations' position on any matter.

Meetings

The frequency, length and formality of meetings were identified as major barriers to parents joining committees. Meetings should be brief, as frequent as required, well run, enjoyable, informative and create a sense of achievement. Formality should be relaxed if necessary, although there will be a requirement to maintain a record of the meeting and it's outcomes.

- 1) The minimum number of times a committee should meet is once a term. They may meet more frequently if they wish.
- 2) Ideally meetings should not exceed 1 hour in length, if they are held after a session, a half hour meeting might be preferable.
- 3) If meetings are held after a session, with children still present while the meeting is held, at least one teacher and a parent should supervise the children to avoid constant interruptions and ensure a shorter meeting occurs (while children are present on our premises we have an OSH obligation for them even though the session has ended).
- 4) Meetings should have an agenda.
- 5) Meeting minutes are required to be kept which record the outcomes of any discussions. For kindergartens with an informal committee it may be teachers who record the minutes.
- 6) The venue for the meetings should be the kindergarten.
- 7) Meetings must occur outside of session times.
- 8) Quorum for formal committees is 2/3rds of the members of the committee, for informal

committees (which are likely to have significantly less members) the quorum is 2 parent members.

Association and Kindergarten AGM

It is desirable that the Committee appoints at least one parent who is willing to attend the Association AGM as well as the Kindergarten AGM. These meetings are an opportunity for the parent voice to be heard on matters affecting the Association or the kindergarten, and will often require Members to vote on important matters.

Committee Operation

Committees may operate formally or informally.

Some kindergartens may find they work better with an informal committee such as Friends of the Kindergarten or Whanua groups therefore kindergartens should have a choice about whether they have committees that operate formally or informally, and what they choose to call themselves. The possible differences between 'formal' and 'informal' committees identified as:

Formal Committees	Informal Committees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accept all the roles and responsibilities of a committee • Are structured with defined roles such as President, Secretary • Operate better in a kindergarten that has had a committee with high levels of support for some time • Most members are in place for a minimum of one year, may co opt other parents or form sub committees to assist with various functions • Committed to fundraising as required • Use the term 'Committee' when identifying themselves • May have 5 or more members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May only be responsible for one or more of the roles and responsibilities of a committee • Are less formal or structured with regards to meetings and roles of members • May suit a kindergarten that has not had a committee for some time or is struggling to attract parents onto the committee • May have variable terms of office, less than one year, may co opt other parents in to assist with various functions • May have lower expectation regarding fundraising • May opt to use a term other than 'Committee' when identifying themselves • May have a smaller number of members

Committees may form sub committees.

Committee Members should not be expected to do everything themselves; they should be able to form sub committees or co opt other parents to assist with various activities such as fundraising or organizing whanau

kindergarten events. This allows other parents or caregivers to participate in areas they feel they can contribute to or that accommodates other commitments they may have, without tying them into the full obligations of being a Committee Member.

Code of Conduct for Committee Members

All Committee Members should agree to sign a Committee Code of Conduct form. This will establish expected behaviors of Committee Members and reinforce expectations about confidentiality. It's not expected that parents who opted to assist with projects or involved in a subcommittee are required to sign a Code of Conduct. **(Appendix 1)**

Conflicts of interest to be declared

Committee Members are required to declare if there is any possible conflict of interest with regards to either being on the kindergarten committee or participating in certain dialogues and/or activities. The Committee can then determine if it is a conflict of interest and how that might affect the Member's ability to participate in the discussion/activity or with regards to any voting.

Relationship between committees and kindergarten staff

The relationship between Committee Members and kindergarten staff should be supportive, cooperative and respectful and should operate in a climate of harmony. Focus of both staff and Committee Members should be on the health and wellbeing of children, great educational outcomes for children, creation of a warm, welcoming environment and working towards the aspirations of parents for their children. Committee Members to respect that the kindergarten is the workplace of the kindergarten staff and that teachers first priority is delivery of the curriculum and safety of the children.



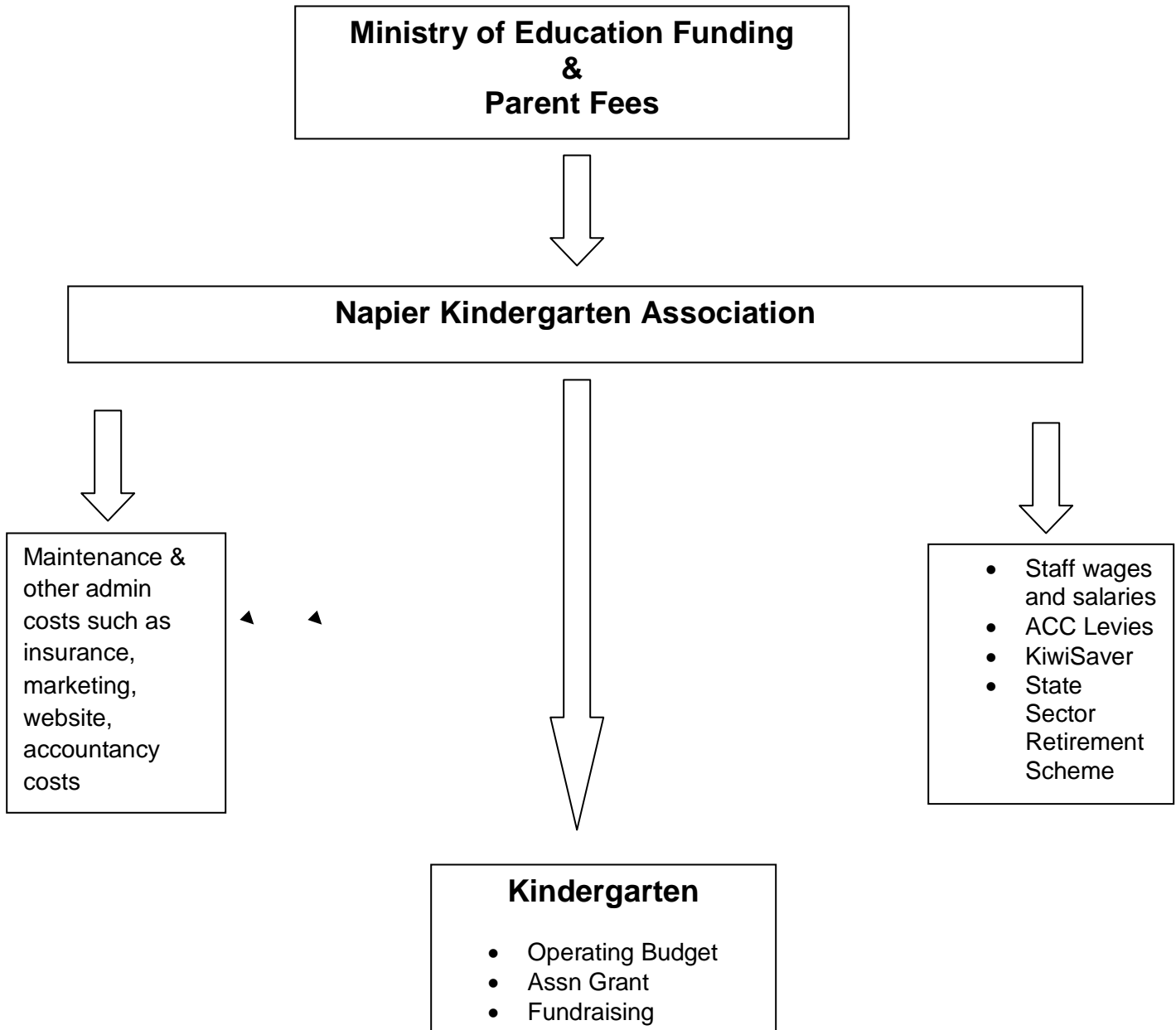
Kindergarten Committee Code of Conduct

As a Kindergarten Committee Member I agree to:

1. Keep the needs of all children and their learning paramount.
2. Be honest, reliable and trustworthy in all dealings.
3. Maintain the confidentiality and trust vested in me and act with discretion.
4. Ensure that where I disagree with the committee stance on any matter, this disagreement is resolved within the committee.
5. Respect the function of the kindergarten local committee and ensure that I do not act contrary to the Napier Free Kindergarten Association Policies, Early Childhood Acts and Regulations.
6. Ensure that all actions on behalf of the committee are approved by the committee, respecting that no individual member shall make decisions on behalf of the committee.
7. Display loyalty and respect to fellow Committee Members, teachers and Association staff.
8. Declare if there is any potential conflict of interest with regard to any information or matter being considered by the Committee.
9. Direct any media approach to the General Manager if the issue concerns the Kindergarten Association or the wider Kindergarten movement.

Name:.....Signature:.....Date:.....

The Funding Flow



Ministry of Education Funding

Bulk funding is received from the Ministry of Education based on:

- The percentage of trained teachers employed
- The number of children attending
- The number of hours they attend
- Regularity of attendance
- The All Day licence rate
- Attestation of 20 hours

Parent Fees

Parent fees represent 2% of the Associations income. No child is excluded on the basis of non payment of fees.

Annual Operating Budget Allocation to Kindergartens

Each year we allocate to kindergartens funds to cover their basic operating costs. This is calculated on a lump sum basis plus an amount per child place. These allocations are reviewed each year.

In 2010 the lump sum was \$ 16,200 and the amount per child place was \$ 240.

Kindergartens receive this money irrespective of whether parents pay fees or not.

Each year the teaching teams review and sign off on their kindergarten budget – thereafter they are responsible for managing their expenditure within their budget.

Association Grant

The Association sets aside funding to assist kindergartens who may be struggling financially or who need assistance with raising funds to complete a project. Kindergartens have to apply to the Association for this assistance. Once the available funding has been allocated no further grants can be made until the following budget year.

Fundraising

We recognise that kindergartens are dependent on fundraising and Grant Applications to help the kindergarten provide resources that enhance quality education and which fall outside of their annual operational funding provision.

For external Grant Applications the Association provides assistance via our Finance Support person (Julie Crook) who prepares and files applications on behalf of kindergartens (using quotes they have provided). She then completes the audit requirements for kindergartens who were successful in their applications. Julie has developed good working relationships with various charities and is able to ensure everything is in order to ensure favourable consideration.

Association Maintenance & Administrative Costs

Administrative costs: Those costs covered by the Association for items which are not apportioned out to kindergartens as kindergarten costs. They cover things such as computer software, web hosting, insurance, accountancy fees, auditing fees etc as well as Management team costs.

Maintenance costs: Larger items of maintenance such as painting building exterior, signage, replacing roof, fences etc are covered by the Association.

Association Financial Year

Our financial year is 1 Jan to 31 December.

Salaries and wages

Staff salaries and wages are paid by the Association. Each kindergarten has Kindergarten Support Worker or teacher aide support provided by the Association. As the employer, only the Association, through the General Manager, can make employment offers or offer contracts.

Example: Kindergarten 5 Year Strategic Fundraising Plan

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
	Stage One	Stage Two	Stage Three	Stage Four	Stage Five
Long Term Goal: Playground redevelopment	Consultation & plans drawn up Estimated Cost \$ 2,600	New sandpit with sand & outdoor storage boxes Estimated Cost \$ 11, 000	Sensory garden with seating & murals Estimated cost \$ 5,800	New swings & Shade Sails Estimated cost \$ 15,000	Raised Planter Boxes for children to grow vegetables & flowers Create large lawn area Estimated cost \$ 5,500
Short Term Goals	Replace dress up clothes \$ 250 Repaint family corner resources (cots, beds, kitchen etc) Cost of paint \$ 100		Carpentry area resources – tidy up & replace missing/broken items \$ 300		Replace puppets and toy baby clothes \$ 150