



# FERNSIDE

PRE SCHOOL

NEW PARENT HANDBOOK

# Welcome to Fernside Preschool

We are pleased to welcome you to Fernside Preschool as part of our Parent Community

This handbook contains answers to some of the common questions from new parents to the Centre, along with an outline of key points of our learning programme and schedule

Should you have any queries around this, or have questions around areas not covered by this handbook please do not hesitate to give us a call on **03 313 6733** or email

[info@fernsidepreschool.co.nz](mailto:info@fernsidepreschool.co.nz)

## Settling your child

Starting at Preschool is an exciting time, but it can take time for your child to get used to the new environment. Once you have a confirmed start date, we ask that parents bring their child into visit the centre as much as possible to build their confidence before their first day.

If you are unable to bring your child in to visit the centre before their first day, we ask that you stay with them for a short period of time before leaving them. The time it takes to fully settle into Preschool will vary with each child—from a week to several weeks. The staff will observe each child's progress closely and discuss this with the family.

We work closely with parents and children to establish a positive bond of trust with our Teachers, and to ensure each child and their family enjoy their transition to our Preschool

## Attendance Register

As you drop off and collect your child each day, there is a Daily Sign In Tablet for you to complete at reception. Your child's name can be found on their room list. Please enter the time of drop off or collection.

## Collecting your child

As we manage our staffing to match the booked enrolment times across the day, it is important that children are picked up on time each day. Late collection within Centre Opening Hours can be pre-arranged with the Centre office with reasonable notice (minimum 48 hours notice) at normal hourly rate. Please note a Penalty Fee of \$15 per 15 minutes can be charged for unarranged late collection. The Centre is closed on statutory holidays and in the weekend.

If someone other the parents, caregivers, or those noted on the Enrolment Form are collecting your child, written permission with details on must be given to a Head Teacher. Please don't be offended if we ask for their identification.

### **Bags**

Please pack a small bag for your child, with a named spare change of clothes, socks and underwear, lunch and a drink bottle of water. For Nursery Children, Bag Hooks are located next to the Green Door. For Toddler Children, the Bag Hooks are located in the Classroom. Preschool Children use the hooks in the Hallway.

As children are not allocated a specific hook, please take your child's name tag from the wall and place it on the velcro dot above your bag.

### **Parent Information**

Each family is allocated a "Pigeon Hole" for receiving important notices, fee invoices, copies of forms, newsletters etc. These are located in the reception area, and are identified by your child's Surname. Please clear these regularly.

### **Health**

We are required by law to keep a copy of the Certificate of Immunisation and Birth Certificate on file. Please bring this with you on or before the first day. Please let your room Head Teacher know of any Health Requirements.

### **Personal items**

All personal items brought into the centre must be clearly named.

Personal toys can be easily misplaced or broken and we suggest that they are not brought to the centre. However, a blanket or soft toy that your child uses as a comfort is welcomed as long as it is named. Please note Preschool do not take responsibility for any lost items.

### **Sun Smart**

We love to get the children outdoors, especially on sunny days. To keep children safe from sunburn we require Parents to provide a sunhat in your child's bag for the summer periods. We have a 'no hat no outdoor play' policy during terms 1 & 4.

Sunscreen is provided free of charge by the centre, and applied in the morning and afternoon. If your child has skin irritations, a sensitive sunscreen can be supplied by parents and kept onsite for your child.

### **Footwear**

We are flexible around what footwear is worn by children, but would remind Parents that it does need to be suitable for a range of play including on bark areas, crusher dust paths, sandpits etc. Preschool can be hard on shoes, so is a good idea to keep their best shoes in the cupboard at home!

In summertime, where possible, we often will encourage bare feet on the grass areas. We also recommend gumboots during the winter periods. These must also be named and can be kept at the centre.

## **Lunches**

Children will need a prepared lunch sent from home each day. This will need to be sufficient for your child for the day, with structured meal times of Morning Tea, Lunch and Afternoon Tea. For younger children who attend until later in the day, staff will also feed a late snack as required.

We are a nut free centre, so please take special care with pre-packaged food items that contain traces of nuts, and avoid items such as Peanut Butter or Nutella in sandwiches. Please also no juice, soft drinks, lollies or chocolates.

We encourage children to make Healthy Choices when eating, and to eat a healthy option first. We are an accredited "Healthy Heart" participant by the NZ Heart Foundation

When the weather gets cold (Terms 2 & 3) we provide a Food Warmer in the Over 2 Kitchen. This provides the option for parents to send food that can be served hot at lunchtime such as Jacket Potatoes, Toasted Sandwiches, Paninis etc. If using the Warmer, please wrap your child's food in tinfoil and label in vivid.

## **Programme**

Our programme is based on 'Te Whāriki', the national curriculum for early childhood education. We endeavour to provide a warm and friendly atmosphere at Fernside Preschool, and a stimulating and challenging programme and environment for every child.

Children are encouraged to make choices and are given opportunities to explore their world through play. Our programme is developed by observing the children and assessing their development.

The curriculum blends a mix of free play, activity choices and group learning times which run throughout the day.

We encourage parent involvement in our curriculum planning – please feel free to discuss ideas or opportunities for learning with your room Head Teacher. We also like to hear constructive criticism and where we can develop the Preschool, and encourage you to make use of the suggestion box in the foyer.

## **Assessment**

Children are observed while at play in order for the teachers to understand, appreciate and respond to the development of each child. These observations are then recorded in the form of anecdotes, photographs, and samples of artwork.

This information is collected and presented in a Learning Journal for your child during their time here at Fernside Preschool. This will be collated for you in both a Hard Copy Folder that will stay with your child as they move through the Centre, as well as electronically via our Parent Portal

## **Parent Portal**

When enrolled at the Preschool, you will receive a secure login to view your child's Learning Journal online via our Parent Portal. This login for the portal is found at [www.fernsidepreschool.co.nz](http://www.fernsidepreschool.co.nz) at the top of the page, and will take you to a secure area to view your child's information and learning journey.

You can also use the Portal for dialogue with your child's teachers, and to add interesting stories from home or comments for your child's portfolio. You can also grant access to friends or family members – a great tool for Grandparents that live outside of the area.

## **Rest time**

Children at the centre have the opportunity for an afternoon nap/quiet time in an assigned bed. For our nursery children, we follow home sleeping patterns and will discuss your child's individual needs and requirements with you. It is encouraged that your child brings a comfort, such as a blanket or teddy, to the centre for their rest times.

## **Bumps & Scrapes**

Children are active at play, particularly as they grow older towards school age, and the odd bump or scrape can occur. All of our staff are First Aid qualified with current certificates, and will treat your child from our First Aid supplies.

Parents will be informed of any incidents at collection, and will be recorded in the Accident Register (signed by both Parent & Staff Member)

## **Illness**

The Centre has a detailed policy around Infectious Diseases (illness). Where a child is presenting as ill at the Centre, we will have a staff member accompany them to a Non-Contact Area (usually the main office) and make contact with Parents for collection. Where Parents cannot be reached, we will contact your Emergency/Alternate Contacts.

## **Prescription Medicines**

When a child is under medication from a doctor, we require for Parents to sign the medicine book (ask a Teacher for this as required), and that the medicine be given to a member of staff and not left in the child's bag.

It is vital that medication is clearly named and prescribed by a doctor. We are not able to give out medicines that are un-prescribed.

## **Individual Health Plans**

Every child suffering from any ongoing allergy or medical condition must complete an 'Individual Child Health Form'.

This gives us details of the allergy or medical condition, symptoms and response plan. Here you can give instructions for medicines to be given. This way we do not need signed permission that day but it must be signed off on collection of your child.

### **Fees**

We charge our fees at an hourly rate, offering a discounted rate for those booked to attend 20 Hours or more per week (per child).

Note this discount will only be available for children under 3 years age, as we offer the 20 Hours ECE (free hours) scheme for fees once the children turn 3.

### **Please contact our office on 03 313 6733 for our current hourly fees schedule**

We offer the '20 hours ECE' with no additional charge on top of this. Please ensure you have completed a **20 Hours ECE Attestation Form** to be eligible for this funding.

Fees are invoiced 2 Weeks in advance, and Parents are required to give two weeks' notice prior to any change of booking. We do not charge for days when the Centre is closed, such as Public Holidays, but we do charge fees for absences.

Any fee changes are at the discretion of the Centre Manager, and are reviewed in line with our Parent Fees Policy.

Each child has 10 holiday days per year from joining date, that can be used any time to cover an absence, however please note these do not carry over from year to year.

If you are eligible for a WINZ subsidy for your child, please advise the office (you will need to complete some forms for this).

### **3 Week Absence Rule**

All child places at the Centre are funding to differing amounts by the Ministry of Education. Where a child is absent from a session for 3 consecutive weeks in a row, the Ministry funding for the child place is stopped (and backdated to first time absent).

Where this occurs, the Centre policy is to recoup this unfunded portion from Parents at the prevailing Ministry of Education ECE Funding Rate for that space (per hour)

### **Facebook**

Follow us on Facebook and Keep Updated!

You can like our facebook page 'Fernside Preschool' for updates and closures. You can also check out our website <http://www.fernsidepreschool.co.nz> or follow us on Instagram

### **Policies**

The above are a brief overview of the Policies that govern the operation of the Centre. A full copy of the operative Centre Policies are available in the Foyer. Parent involvement is an important part of policy review, and we include Parent Feedback as part of our review cycle