

Welcome to Little Kiwi Explorers

Thank you for considering Little Kiwi Explorers as the early childhood environment for your child to spend their very important early years of care and education.

Background

Little Kiwi Explorers Infant & Toddler Centre has been purpose built using the 'original' cottage to create a 'home away from home' feeling. The indoor spaces will provide children with age appropriate programmes and an environment that stimulates and develops their social, emotional and physical skills.

The outdoor area allows for children to explore a natural environment freely. It will provide physical challenges that build children's confidence and supports the development of important skills that lead onto children being capable formal learners.

Centre Philosophy

We believe that when teachers nurture children's interests with warmth and caring, both adults and children grow and learn together.

At Little Explorers we provide a stimulating and safe environment that promotes challenges. We provide an environment which stimulates child initiated activities with uninterrupted periods of play alongside teachers acting as resources themselves, facilitating and scaffolding children's endeavours.

We incorporate our four guiding principles:

Empowerment;

Our curriculum builds on "the child's own experiences, knowledge, skills, attitudes, needs, interests, and views of the world." (Te Whaariiki, 1996). To learn and develop to their potential, children must be respected and valued as individuals. We encourage children to become independent and lifelong learners by providing equal educational opportunities for all and by recognising the significance of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. (Te Whaariiki, 1996, pg 40)

Holistic development;

"Learning and development will be integrated through: tasks, activities, and contexts that have meaning for the child, including practices and activities such as care routines, mealtimes, and child management strategies; opportunities for open-ended exploration and play; consistent, warm relationships that connect everything together." (Te Whaariiki, 1996, pg 41)

Family and community;

We foster children's well-being by supporting families, respecting their culture, knowledge and community and aiming to build strong connections and consistency among all aspects of the child's world.

Relationships;

At Little Explorers we work to establish high quality relationships. Teachers are open in communication, engaging active listening skills and building a shared understanding between children, whanau, colleagues and communities through positive, responsive, reciprocal and respectful interactions. We understand that modelling appropriate social behaviours gives children the chance to learn this too. "We provide encouragement, warmth, and acceptance, challenges for creative and complex learning and thinking, helping children to extend their ideas and actions through sensitive, informed, well-judged interventions and support." (Te Whaariiki, 1996, pg 43)

At Little Explorers dispositions are important "learning outcomes". To encourage robust dispositions to reason, investigate and collaborate, children will be immersed in a community where people discuss rules, are fair, explore questions about how things work, and help each other. Our holistic approach to teaching benefits infants and toddlers in their social, emotional and physical development, preparing them for their transition into the next stage of development confidently and competently.

Hours

Little Kiwi Explorers is open from 7:30am to 5:30pm Monday to Friday.

We do encourage parents to enrol their children for at least 3 hours per visit and at least 2 days per week. This helps children settle into the programme and become confident in the learning environment.

School holidays - Little Kiwi Explorers is **open** during the school holidays as normal. During school holidays bookings are as normal and any absences will be charged at the full rate.

Statutory/public holidays - Little Kiwi Explorers will be **closed** on all Statutory/public holidays. A 50% discount will be applied to Statutory/ Public holidays when the centre is closed.

Fees

Fees are payable in advance by cash, direct debit or automatic payment. Payments are strictly weekly unless by prior arrangement with management. Invoices, statements, are given to parents weekly or when required. These are emailed via the parent portal or printed and placed in your parent pocket.

Enrolment fee

We charge an enrolment fee of **\$50.00** to cover administration costs and to confirm a place for your child in our centre. This is payable before your child's start date or with the first weeks fees.

Fees

Part time \$8.00 per hour

Full time (35 hours plus) \$265.00 per week

Cancellation of enrolment

Two weeks paid notice is required to cancel your child's booking.

Unpaid accounts

If your account goes into arrears and is not being paid regularly we will try to organise a payment plan with you. If your account is still not paid up to date we will send the debt onto a Debt collection agency and you will be charged 20% plus GST on top of the amount owing.

Subsidies

You may be eligible for a childcare subsidy through WINZ. We do have forms available but you will need to enquire at your local WINZ office or online at www.workandincome.govt.nz.

Late fees

Ministry of Education Licensing Regulations require us to have staff based upon the children's enrolled hours. If we do not receive at least 1 days notice that your child will need to be dropped off early or picked up late an extra fee will be charged of \$10 every 5 minutes after the first 5 minutes. Please phone the centre to ensure we have adequate staff ratio's to accommodate your child's extra time.

Signing in and collecting children

Please ensure you sign the day sheet both on arrival and before departure. These records need to be accurate for funding purposes.

If you are running late it is important that you ring and let a teacher know.

Only people on the enrolment form are able to pick your child up. Please let a teacher know if someone different is dropping off or collecting your child.

Holidays and absences

Please remember to contact the centre if your child is going to be absent for any reason.

Sick days

10 sick days per year discounted at 50% for children under 3 years old. Please notify the centre 1 hour before your child's booked start time if they are unwell and unable to attend.

Holidays

Children receive 3 weeks of their usual attendance as holiday leave per calendar year. A 50% discount is offered for holidays (3 weeks per year) provided the centre receives a weeks notice before the holiday is taken. If adequate notice is not received the normal hourly fee rate will apply. Once the annual holiday allocation has been exceeded the normal hourly rate will apply.

To be eligible for the 50% holiday discount:

your child's account must be paid up to date; you must notify us at least one week before the absence begins; holiday discounts apply for a maximum of 3 weeks at any one time; discount applies after WINZ deductions.

Sleeping

Cots and mattresses are available for children who require a sleep. Each child will have an individual set of linen, provided by Little Kiwi Explorers. If your child requires a sleep during their time at Little Kiwi Explorers you will be shown our sleep areas and our 'Sleeping Children policy'. We do try to keep sleep routines similar to the one your child has at home however due to the environment being different their patterns may change slightly. We will endeavour to follow your wishes keeping in mind the children's well-being throughout the day.

Food and nutrition

Little Explorers have a healthy eating policy and the teachers can help you with ideas for nutritious food and drink choices for your child. Little Explorers will provide fruit at morning and afternoon tea times for all children. Healthy food habits learnt at a young age will last a lifetime. For this reason we ask that no lollies/treats are sent in your child's lunchboxes. Lollies and treats can be had at home. Thank you for your co-operation with this.

A copy of our policy is available for you to read in the operations manual located by the sign in desk.

Parent information and involvement

We have an open door policy at Little Kiwi Explorers. Parents and whanau are welcome at any time. Each child has a profile folder which documents their learning and development. These folders can be taken home at any time to share with your whanau. We appreciate any contributions you wish to add e.g. photos, stories from home or comments on our learning stories. We also upload children's learning stories and photos on the Parent Portal which you have access to via email.

Parents are kept well informed through conversations with staff, parent notice boards, parent portal, emails and regular newsletters.

Centre newsletters and notices are uploaded through the parent portal, put in your parent pocket or emailed.

Please feel free to ask our teachers if you have any questions or would like any other information.

Bags and belongings

Please name your child's bag on the outside, this helps the teachers keep your child's belongings in the correct place.

Please ensure all your children's clothes are clearly named, this helps the teachers return them to the correct families and helps eliminate lost property.

Please make sure that all spare clothing is weather appropriate.

We encourage parents to keep all children's personal toys at home. We do not accept responsibility for lost or broken toys.

Children's health

It is important for the well-being of everyone at Little Explorers that any unwell child is kept at home (refer Illness and Infectious Diseases policy).

We do have Ministry of Health guidelines that state 'children are kept away from the centre for at least 24 hours after a high temperature and 48 hours after any vomiting or diarrhoea', this can be longer depending on the individual child's well being. We will communicate with parents if we feel a child is generally unwell and on occasion may ask for them to be picked up and taken home or taken to the doctor before they return to Little Explorers. This is to ensure the overall health and well being of all children in our centre. When we are aware of communicable diseases in the community and our centre we will put up signs by the signing desk to inform parents.

If your child requires medication due to illness you will need to complete the Medication form and give the medicine to a teacher for safe storage. Please make sure all medication is clearly named and labelled, from the doctor or pharmacist, with your child's name, dosage and frequency required (refer medication Policy).

Programmes

At Little Explorers we have two developmentally appropriate programmes for children: infants & toddlers.

Each programme runs day to day, weekly and termly. Each programme fosters skills and focuses on the interests of the children attending in that age group at any given time.

Please take time to look at the programme boards to see what the children are interested in and working on developmentally.

Benefits of providing regularly planned programmes

At Little Explorers we have a daily routine consisting of play times, group times and meal times. These are at the same time every day. Consistency in routine helps children relax with the knowledge of what comes next during a typical day. Building confidence in children helps them become positive capable learners. By creating an environment in the classroom that is similar to the one at Kiwi Explorers and then school helps with the transition process.

Small groups allow close interaction between children and adults. Children benefit from small group activities by getting more opportunities to participate and by learning to work and play well with the other children in the group. Teachers benefit from small groups by being able to engage each child in the activity and conversation; observing them more closely than they could in a large group setting. (Mary Davis)

The balance between communal, small group, and individual activities should allow opportunities for interaction, co-operative activities and privacy. Te Whaariki (1996)

PMP—The Perceptual Motor Programme (Connell and McCarthy, 2014)

PMP is a programme which aims to develop the child's perceptions and understandings of himself or herself in relation to her/his world, through movement/motor experiences. Above all it aims to give the child confidence to manipulate him/herself in their world to suit her or his own best interests. PMP is seen as part of the programme of total experiences. It is not a physical education programme alone, or music, or fitness, or dance, or gymnastics. It is a programme that uses facets of all of the above in order to develop children's perceptions.

- PMP is different because it aims to develop the child rather than the skill. It is not purely a motor programme. It is a perceptual motor programme where language is the key factor in providing the **perceptual knowledge** about the motor experience. The programme has its roots in the development of language, the gaining of problem solving skills, and general readiness areas.

The Perceptual Motor Programme (PMP) is a step-by step programme, designed and individualised for the development of PERCEPTUAL KNOWLEDGE and JUDGEMENT.

Perceptual knowledge/judgement comes from physical and sensory experiences that are repeated over and over. The perceptions that are formed over time help determine how children react to their environment, to others, and to new ideas.

When this is well developed, consequential reactions are more likely to be appropriate for any given situation. When it is not, it can impede learning. Children with common problems such as inattention, day dreaming, wandering, laziness, clumsiness, and disruptive behaviour are often those with a poorly developed "perceptual world." These children risk becoming frustrated and stressed which can shut down their ability to concentrate and comprehend.

A consistent and varied "diet" of physical and sensory experience is the key to developing perceptual judgments. The greater the store of experiences the better developed the perceptions and motor reactions. And when those perceptions and reactions become automatic, the brain is free for higher thinking tasks.

In short, refining perceptual judgments prepare the brain for learning.

At Little Explorers part of our philosophy states:

“.....we provide a stimulating and safe environment that promotes challenges. We provide an environment which stimulates child initiated activities with uninterrupted periods of play alongside teachers acting as resources themselves, facilitating and scaffolding children's endeavours. “

“A young child is a literal, physical creature who needs to experience life in her own way, in her own time, on her own terms, and with her own body. And when she does, she's learning all she needs to know, and then some” (Connell, G., & McCarthy, C. 2014, p.9).

Here at Little Explorers we incorporate The Perceptual Motor Programme (PMP) into our weekly programmes for all age groups.

Introducing the Kinetic Scale

In order to understand not only the moving child but the learning child we need a deeper understanding of movement itself. So let's start by breaking down the basic elements of movement-the raw ingredients, if you will. And to do that, we've designed a tool to help you visualise the dynamic relationship among all of those ingredients. We call it the kinetic scale.

The reflexes underpin and enable all early childhood movement, triggering critical development stages. Since all early movement depends on the reflexes, they serve as the platform for what we call the six physicality's. Together, they ensure a rich movement “diet” which builds the body and fosters the deep and intricate neural wiring in the brain that occurs in the early years.



The Kinetic Scale

