

Newsletter

POHUTUKAWA KINDERGARTEN ELLERSLIE

Term 2 2025

We welcome several new friends to our Pohutukawa Family with Audrey, Rayn, Junchen, and Nahlia all starting in the last couple of months. They have all settled in so well to our kindy environment and we look forward to watching them grow. We have several siblings ready to start and we look forward to this fun bunch of young ones to join us.

LITERACY LEARNING

We would like to say thanks to the parents who joined us for our recent literacy information evening. We hope you found the session informative, engaging, and useful.

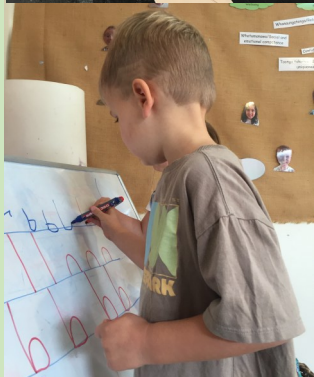
Literacy in early childhood education (ECE) can be a complex and sometimes controversial topic, with differing philosophies and expectations from various stakeholders. Many early childhood approaches emphasise play-based learning and the organic development of skills through rich experiences within the environment. External agencies, such as the Education Review Office (ERO), often express a preference for minimal structured group times or teacher-led activities in early childhood settings.

Conversely, primary school teachers frequently highlight the importance of school readiness, which includes not only a child’s ability to self-manage but also to sit still, participate in group activities, engage in conversations, and use tools like pencils, glue, and scissors with confidence. Recognising their name is also seen as a key foundational skill for a successful transition to school.

At Pohutukawa Kindergarten, we consider all of these perspectives when developing our programme. Our local curriculum, underpinned by our centre’s philosophy and the aspirations of our community, guides us in striking a thoughtful balance.

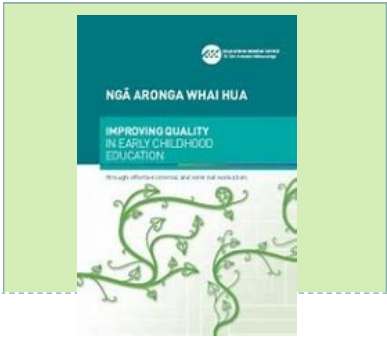
Pre-literacy development encompasses much more than language alone. It involves fostering confidence, resilience, and a genuine interest in reading and writing. It also includes the development of essential motor and cognitive skills, such as hand-eye coordination, cross-lateral movement, and physical strength to support posture and arm control—all of which contribute to brain development and future literacy success.

Our programme is designed to support a wide range of foundational skills, including auditory and visual processing, physical movement, and an awareness of print and language. We aim to cultivate joyful, capable learners who are prepared for the next stage of their educational journey.



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“Internal evaluation is a systematic process used to evaluate what is and is not working, and for whom, and then to develop our practices and make improvements as a result of evaluation” p15 Ngā Aronga Whai Hua



Mahi Wha Club

The teachers have engaged in some extra learning around teaching phonics, and have decided to use the Yolanda Soryl Literacy resources to support the development of letter sounds. We continue to use the Smart Words programme to support letter formation and are combining these resources in our afternoon programme.

INTERNAL EVALUATION

How well do we use the art of music in our local curriculum to support tamariki in their learning ?’

The music and movement professional development has enhanced my mat times by helping me incorporate a variety of songs and movement activities tailored to the needs, preferences, and energy levels of different tamariki. It has been especially useful for supporting new tamariki as they settle in, and for redirecting play during session. I’ve particularly enjoyed using “stop/go” games—tamariki seem to love the challenge of making big, loud movements or small, quiet ones, and then stopping completely before starting again. I’ve also noticed that they respond well to active weight-bearing and proprioceptive input, especially when using the stretchy lycra.— Annie

One of my favourite parts of the music personal development course was teaching tamariki about rhythm and beat through engaging songs like *Baby Butterfly*. Singing together and patting along to the

beat had a calming effect and helped them connect with the music. I also enjoyed introducing stop-and-go songs, such as *Red Light, Green Light* and freeze games, which supported their ability to follow instructions and improve listening skills. Additionally, we explored using tempo changes in our voices to reflect different kinds of movements—big and fast versus small and quiet—which helped tamariki develop better body awareness and control, learning how to shift from high-energy actions to calm, focused ones.—Alyse

I have been incorporating the Rocket game from Mauri Tui Tuia during mat time to assist the tamariki in focusing and releasing energy. During the Rocket game, we focus on stop-and-start movements, which include both slow and fast actions. We then land our rocket on different planets, which I ask the tamariki to choose, encouraging them to use their imaginations. After taking part in the Rocket game, I have found that the tamariki are more engaged in listening to books and singing songs.- Kate

INDIVIDUAL PLANNING

Last term, during our planning time, we focused on developing individual learning goals for each of our tamariki. This process has been a collaborative effort involving both our teaching team and whānau, ensuring that each goal is meaningful and tailored to the child’s unique learning journey.

As we continue with these individual planning cycles, we have now identified a *learner focus* for most children. These are short, child-friendly statements that clearly outline each child’s current learning goal and help to support their developing learner identity.

We are documenting this ongoing learning in two key places: in each child’s *kete ako* (learning portfolio) and on our planning wall. We encourage you to check both regularly to stay connected with your child’s learning journey.

Teachers will continue to observe and document the progress each child makes as they work towards their learning goals. We warmly invite you to take the time to read your child’s *kete ako*, explore the planning walls, and engage in conversations with the kaiako about your child’s development.



STAFF NEWS

As most of you will have heard we are so delighted that Annie and Josh will be having their first baby in October. It has been a long journey and we know this summer will be very special for their family of three. We will start the process for looking for a new kaiako and hope that we have found an amazing team member by the time she leaves mid-September.



Kiki is here with us for five weeks for her final practicum as she gains her Masters in Education.

We also had Anniah with us on the last 5 Wednesdays last term and Junnah is here this term. These lovely students are from One Tree Hill College gaining experience through the Gateway programme to explore if teaching is something they would like to do.

ENROLMENTS

Word of mouth is definitely our best marketing tool. We currently have vacancies every day if you would like to extend your enrolment days.

If you know of any families in the neighbourhood looking for excellent care and education for your children we would love you to send them our way.

www.pohutukawa.net.nz

MATARIKI

This term, Matariki will be a central focus of our learning as we explore its cultural significance to *tangata whenua*. Each of the stars in the Matariki cluster holds a unique meaning, and we will take time to learn about each one in depth with the tamariki.

Matariki is also a time of reflection and renewal—a special season to remember loved ones who have passed and to set aspirations for the year ahead. We will embrace this spirit through meaningful discussions, creative activities, and shared experiences.

To celebrate, we're planning several exciting events:

- **Kindy Disco** – Held on the last day of term as a joyful celebration of Matariki.
- **Shared Soup Day** – A collaborative cooking experience where tamariki help prepare and enjoy a warm, nourishing lunch together.
- **Star Cookie Baking** – Fun baking sessions where children will create star-shaped cookies, linking to the Matariki theme.

As part of our exploration, we will also delve into concepts such as stars, shapes, clusters, planets, galaxies, and all things space-related—nurturing curiosity and wonder about the universe.

We look forward to sharing this special time of year with our tamariki and whānau.



TE WHARIKI -TE ARA WHANUI : OUR CURRICULUM

ASSESSMENT

Assessment will be a mana-enhancing process for children, parents and whānau, conducted in ways that uphold the empowerment | whakamana principle. Children have increasing capacity to assess their own progress, dictate their own learning stories, and set goals for themselves (for example, learn to climb something, write their name, pursue or expand an interest or project or lead a waiata). As they learn to assess their own achievements they also become increasingly able to plan new challenges, for example, transferring their learning to a new context, taking on a new responsibility, strengthening a disposition, extending their knowledge or skills, or refining an outcome.

REVIEWS AND TESTIMONIALS

We are still looking for some new testimonials and google reviews. If you have the time please click on the link on the bottom of my email signature and give us a review, even if its just to click the stars.

Please remember to comment on Facebook especially the community pages looking for ECE recommendations.



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IMPORTANT DATES

- Mothers Day Play – **9th May (8.30-10)**
- Pink Day—**16Th May (all Day)**
- Matariki Disco —**27th June (6-7.30)**
- Kings birthday —**2nd June (no kindy)**
- Matariki— **20th June (no kindy)**

Thank you Kimi and Emi for making Sushi with us for Japanese Children's Day. Lovely to have you share your special knowledge and expertise.



REMINDERS

With winter upon us its important your child has enough spare clothing and a wet bag for any wet items (there is always plenty of water and messy play at kindy). Please name things as much as possible and we will do our best to return it.

With building and site preparation beginning next door, we ask that you take extra care in the carpark and footpath area. There is a lot of congestion with commuters parking, cones and large vehicles entering next door.

FAMILY BOOST

The Family Boost payment is now up and running. It is made directly to families with young children to help with the rising costs of early childhood education (ECE). The Family Boost payment will be equal to 25% of ECE fees already paid by households, maximum of \$975 every 3 months, have a household income of less than \$180 000 a year, effective 1st July.

Families can claim this every 3 moths by applying through IRD. We have had several families successfully apply. If you want to do this then please let me know if you need an updated version of our invoice (License numbers must now be included).

You will also need an IRD# for the child you are claiming for so need to apply for this if they don't yet have one. You will then login through your own IR login to process this. You can claim for previous 3 month periods.

ENROLMENT CHANGES

With our new Student Management System, each time there is an enrolment change you will need to sign the piece of paper acknowledging the change.