

Newsletter

POHUTUKAWA KINDERGARTEN ELLERSLIE

Term 1 2026

We happily welcome Mickey, Lenny and Finnley to our Pohutukawa Family. We are looking forward to getting to know you all and your Whānau over the next few weeks.



WAITANGI DAY

Waitangi Day is a special day in Aotearoa and every year we like to share with the children the significance of it. We explain that it's a day when we remember a very important agreement called Te Tiriti o Waitangi (the Treaty of Waitangi), which was signed a long time ago in 1840.

Why it matters

- It was a promise made between Māori chiefs and the Crown about how they would work together.
- It helps us remember to be kind, fair, and respectful to each other.
- It's a day to celebrate the people, cultures, and stories that make Aotearoa a special place.
- Many families spend the day together, enjoying kai, fun, and time in their community.



We use Waitangi Day to remind us to:

- Work together
- Share and take turns
- Look after each other
- Make sure everyone feels they belong



WAITANGI DAY

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Poipoia te kakano kia puawai – Nurture the seed and it will blossom.



INDIVIDUAL PLANNING

We are committed to identifying a unique learner focus for every child and creating an environment that supports them in achieving their goals. Throughout their journey of exploration, creativity, and play within our kindergarten, we actively document meaningful moments that reflect each tamariki’s progress.

Collaborating with whānau is incredibly valuable as we shape and support each child’s learning focus. We warmly invite you to share your thoughts and ideas—whether through portfolio contributions or conversations with our kaiako. Your insights enrich our understanding and strengthen our shared approach.

Together, we provide the most powerful support for our children to thrive and reach their full potential.

MAHI WHA CLUB

We are returning to our focus on letter formation and phonic awareness.



Our plan is to explore a new letter everyday Monday– Thursday and then re-cap our weekly learning on a Friday.



There will be a mat-time where we can sing the relevant phonics verse, look at the strokes that create the letter shape and see how many words we know that start with that sound. We will then move to the tables to complete a related activity.

If you would like to learn more about this process and any tips and tricks to help your child with school readiness please come to our information evening on Thursday 12th February 2026.

These skills will be used throughout the kindy everyday alongside developing fine motor skills, pencil grip and writing for a purpose.



OUR VISION

Pohutukawa Kindergarten is an environment where all akonga (learners) are valued as unique individuals. By developing respectful positive relationships, each tamariki and their whānau (family) experience a learning journey where they are supported through an engaging environment, with equitable opportunities to grow as confident, competent learners .

OUR PHILOSOPHY

We aim to ensure each child has a positive experience at Pohutukawa Kindergarten, to feel acknowledged as an individual, supported as a learner, and enriched with skills and abilities to make a constructive contribution to society.

We value and honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi in all that we do.

Whanaungatanga (relationships) are vital, including kaiako-tamariki, tamariki-tamariki, kaiako-whānau, tamariki-whānau, whānau-whānau. Solid relationships must be created so we can learn, teach, communicate, and grow.

Manākitanga (showing care and respect for each other) and kaitiakitanga (guardianship and care for the environment we learn and live in), guides our curriculum, and supports the programme we offer. We recognise and promote ranga whatumanawa (the development of social and emotional competence).

It is important that every child develops mana (authority and control) over their learning within each strand of Te Whāriki, so they are active participants in their learning journey. Kaiako (teachers) support this through acknowledging their taonga tukuiho (identity and uniqueness), interests, strengths, needs, and achievements including these in the learning planning and documentation.

We will support all children to reach their goals by meeting them wherever they are at, understanding their individuality, supporting their unique needs, and walking with them on their learning journey to grow to their full potential.

Reviewed January 2026

THE VALUE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

We know that as families, you understand just how important high quality early childhood education is for your tamariki. Over the past year our sector has been in the spotlight, and it's likely to stay that way as the current government uses ECE to demonstrate the purpose of the new Ministry of Regulation.

The Education and Training (Early Childhood Education Reform) Amendment Act 2025 brings a range of changes designed to modernise the ECE regulatory system and strengthen its effectiveness for children, parents, and caregivers. These updates include clearer purpose and guiding principles for regulation, a new statutory role – the Director of Regulation – and more defined responsibilities around licensing criteria. We also expect further changes to licensing regulations in April.

Alongside this, the Teaching Council has updated the professional standards that all teachers are assessed against for their Registration and Certification. This means a significant amount of additional work happening behind the scenes to ensure we continue to meet these expectations. The government is also reviewing the funding system, with a focus on distributing the existing funding more fairly.

However, what remains unaddressed are the challenges we all feel daily: the ongoing teacher shortage, the need for improved pay parity, and better ratios for our youngest learners.

Through all this high level discussion and change, our focus in the Pohutukawa classroom remains steady and unwavering. We continue to provide **teacher-to-child ratios well above the minimum**, tailor our **programme to each child's unique needs**, and work closely with you to ensure your tamariki experience a **warm, responsive, and enriching start** to their learning journey.

Your children's wellbeing, growth, and sense of belonging are at the heart of everything we do – no matter what shifts are happening around us.

DRESS-UP DAY

Friday 17th March

Come dressed up in green, from head to toe or just choose your favourite green thing to wear.



KETE AKO/ PORTFOLIOS

We love sharing your children's learning and development with you. Please feel free to take these home and share with your whanau and then return so we can add some more pages as we create them.



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IMPORTANT DATES

Oven Hungi - Wednesday 4th February

- Please bring a root vegetable to share.

Literacy Evening– Thursday 12th February 7-8pm

- Come and learn about the phonics and letter formation we teach your children

Chinese New Year 16th– 20th February

- A range of focused activities

Sea week - 27th Feb–6th March

- A range of focused activities

Children's Day - Monday 2nd March

- A day the teachers will celebrate each of your special tamariki

Dad's Night Thursday 12th March 5–7pm

- Bring your Dad along to play at kindy and share in some fish n chips

St Patrick's Day–Tuesday 17th March

- Dress up in green for a fun day



FAMILY BOOST

The Family Boost payment has **increased**. It is made directly to families with young children to help with the rising costs of early childhood education (ECE).

Please contact Mel if you need help claiming this payment.

Quarterly household income	Maximum quarterly refund
\$35,000	\$1,560.00
\$40,000	\$1,210.00
\$45,000	\$860.00
\$50,000	\$510.00
\$55,000	\$160.00
\$57,286 or more	\$0.00