



All About Children
EARLY LEARNING CENTRES



Parent Information Pack

Who we are?

Kia Ora!

Welcome to All About Children, where a lifetime of learning begins.

We are a leading provider of quality and affordable early childhood education in New Zealand. We have many centres in North Island, each imbuing our central philosophy of “belonging”. Yet every centre has a distinct flavour, reflective of the communities and environment they flourish within, and the needs of the children and families that form a part of it. Every centre complies with the regulatory requirements set by the Ministry of Education. You can be assured that your child has access to the very best resources and equipment.

We are a **family-owned and professionally managed** group of early education and care centres. The management works closely with experienced and passionate educators to ensure a high standard of care, attention and education is maintained at all times.

Thank you for entrusting us with the care of your child in these formative early years. My team and I look forward to working with you and delivering a personalised learning programme within the **safe, fun and stimulating environment** of our centres so your child grows into a confident and happy learner.



Trina Tuki
Group Manager



All our centres have a passionate team of **qualified educators** who take pride in growing and nurturing lifelong learners. We follow a **child-centred approach** that promotes development of creativity, individuality and self-confidence, whilst delivering the highest standard of care for your child. Learning is turned into an adventure at every age and stage of your child's development, with **hands-on experiences** forming an integral part of this journey.

Our Beliefs

The central philosophy of All About Children is “**belonging**”.

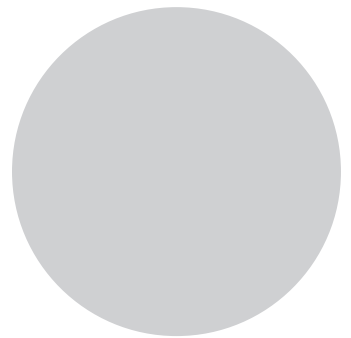
If someone feels like they belong they will want to interact with each other, their peers, the teachers and the parents. They will want to participate in the programme we offer and the inspiring environment we create.

Our philosophy is drawn from the core principles of the Ministry of Education approved early childhood education curriculum - Te Whariki. These guiding principles include empowerment of children, holistic development, recognising family and community as integral in every child's development, and recognising that children learn through responsive and reciprocal relationships.

“Belonging” is wrapped around and built on these Te Whariki principles. It encompasses the well-being of our tamariki and values the contribution of each child.

Communication is adapted to promote New Zealand's cultural diversity and engagement by encouraged through active exploration by every child.

Our core belief of “belonging” is the prime enabler for us working with the children, their parents, extended families and the community as a whanau.



What “belonging” means?

Be a part of an **effective and communicative team**. This team includes the educators, centre management, parents, extended families, the community and, of course, our children.

Environment is **challenging, stimulating and culturally inclusive**. We celebrate diversity and strive to ensure that the centres and educators are equipped with the best to deliver an early childhood programme par excellence.

Lifting the spirits of our tamariki. These are the most important years of a child’s life; we want to make them **safe, fun and happy**.

Ongoing professional development for all our educators to deliver a **high quality learning programme**.

Never give up and to **keep trying**. Perfection is a constant process of improvement.

Going the extra mile to ensure that we are providing a **warm, welcoming and home-like atmosphere**. Our educators offer unique experiences that help your child develop, make friends and flourish emotionally, physically and academically.

Interactions are **positive and respectful**. We respect that every child is unique, and have different interests and learning requirements; hence we tailor the early childhood programme at every centre to meet these individual needs.

Natural **learning occurs for all**.

Goals and **aspirations are valued** and are in consultation with parents and whanau.



Ages and Stages

(Under 2's, our babies and infants)

At this delicate and early stage of their life, infants require observant adults who will respond to their needs calmly, treat them gently, and understand and respect their special routines. Our experienced educators provide a **loving and nurturing environment** to every baby – it is like a **home away from home** for them.

Babies' needs and providing for them

Supporting the babies' **physical development**, which at this age is tremendous, is the focus at this stage along with assisting in **emotional, social and language development**.

Even though your infant may not be independently mobile we ensure that there are numerous opportunities throughout the day for him or her to experience a variety of

settings. Curiosity is a motivator for physical activity so playthings are available in the nursery section of all centres which encourage pushing and pulling, twisting and turning with minimal adult assistance.

We provide babies' with support and encouragement, freedom of movement to practice and perfect their skill at their own pace. Yet they are supported and supervised through their journey of discovery. Our role as caregivers is to recognise their individual needs and support them with their choices and guide them to new and exciting experiences.

The **stimulating environment** for the babies is combined with the **right proportion of calm**, as it is equally important for children at this age.

Separation is tough, but important

Leaving your baby in anyone's care at this age is tough for every parent. But remember, human beings are social by nature and thrive in the company of others. They need to start building meaningful relationships with groups and society right from birth.

And so it is important for them to interact with the wider whanau, the community and children their own age. An early childhood education centre is the perfect platform to do this.

One of the things that make the separation harder for parents is the fear of missing out on your baby's mile stones – the first step, the first word... Our educators capture these special moments and share them with you, so you don't feel left out.



Ages and Stages

(Under 2's, our babies and infants)

There is much to do and a world to discover within the safe, fun and stimulating environment of our centres, and the fun extends beyond the babies' room or nursery as centres such as Titahi Bay call it.



What are babies and infants typically get up to?

- **Looking around** and absorbing the colourful atmosphere of the babies' room.
- **Exploring** new things, messy play, outdoor stimulation, toys and textures. Our attentive carers recognise your infant's needs and develops a plan to best boost their brain and encourage them to make new friends.
- **Singing**, reading and talking.
- **Napping** as per their needs.
- Interacting with the other children at the centre.
- Participating in centre activities and celebrations.
- **Enjoying nourishing, shared meals** freshly prepared at the centre and supplemented by their individual requirements (special formulas or breast milk).
- Getting lots of **hugs and cuddles** from everyone!

What to bring to the centre?

- Bag with name.
- Change of clothes, including a sun hat with their name on it.
- Shoes, sandals or slippers.
- Bottle (named).
- Nappies.
- Wet wipes.
- Milk formula or breast milk (if required). The centres provide milk.

Ages and Stages

(2 – 3½ years, the toddlers)

Growing active learners

Toddlers love to get physical! They learn significantly through play, and the programme for this age group involves a lot of it.

While physically they are still developing, this is also the age when children gain many self-help skills. We support this development with carefully planned activities based around their interests. Language is another key development milestone for this age, and the activities at our early learning centres have a strong focus to support this.

As part of our group philosophy to allow every centre to retain its individuality, representing the community within which it thrives, our Titahi Bay centre has rolled up the toddler and pre-school sections into one happy environment. So when, around the age of 2, when your child is ready, they move into the pre-school building.

Mixed emotions

Toddlers are in a unique stage of transition where they are regularly faced with conflicting emotional feelings. One minute your toddler child may feel like they can do everything; the next minute they may dissolve into tears. It takes experience and specialised individual attention to care for a toddler and their varying needs. With a low teacher to children ratio at our childcares, we are well placed to provide this care.

What our toddlers typically get up to?

- Plenty of planned activities throughout the day, including art and sensory time, dress-ups, painting, working with play dough, building blocks, puzzles, etc.
- Literacy – learning through story-telling & art.
- Outdoor play – sand, water, obstacle courses etc.
- Getting closer to science and nature, the best place for curious little minds to expand.
- Interaction with the other people.



What toddlers need?

Toddlers' needs are not too dissimilar from the needs of infants. However, they are much more capable and independent – ready to explore and eager to discover. Our role as educators at this stage is to encourage their discovery and support their independence, carefully combining it with assistance when they need it. Some say this is a tough age group. But at All About Children, we love the challenges this rewarding age group presents.

- Group projects where everyone contributes to a growing area of interest.
- Regular trips outside the centre.
- Participating in centre activities and celebrations.
- Sharing freshly prepared meals and healthy snacks.

What to bring to the centre?

- Bag with name.
- Bottle for water.
- Change of clothes, including a sun hat with name.
- Shoes, sandals or slippers.
- Nappies & wet wipes (if necessary).
- Milk formula (if necessary).

Ages and Stages

(3½ 5 years, pre-schoolers)

Meeting the needs of our young children

A day in the life of your pre-school child at All About Children is full of promise and prospect. Intertwined with play is a need to **encourage self-help**, ensuring your child eats, drinks, uses the toilet and has a sleep if required. With this age group we also focus a lot on **positive attitudes, developing social skills and self-esteem**.

Preparation for school and formal learning is a key focus of the pre-school programme (a part of the early childhood education curriculum). We want our children to be **competent and confident learners**, healthy in mind body and soul. At our centres, we support this by providing a challenging and stimulating environment for every child.

Transition to School Programme

All About Children is also proud to run a comprehensive transition to school programme. It is designed to support children and their families when starting school. The details of this programme are included on a separate sheet on this information pack.

What will your pre-schooler typically gets up to?

- Learning through play. There is a lot of dramatic play, block building and puzzles, sand and water play, and science and nature related activities and projects.
- Plenty of outdoor play – running, jumping, catching, throwing... such activities develop hand-eye co-ordination and support future brain development.
- Literacy at mat time, and developing the foundation skills needed to read and write.
- Learning to take responsibility of their belongings.
- Class projects based on a child's interests.
- Interactions with the younger children at the centre.
- Regular excursions into the community and trips outside the centre.



This stage of early childhood education is all about self-help – getting them ready to transition to primary school.

- Participating in centre activities and celebrations.
- Shared healthy meals (freshly prepared at the centre) with children at the centre.

What to bring for your pre-schooler?

- Bag with name.
- Change of clothes, including a sun hat with their name on it.
- Shoes, sandals or slippers.

Ages and Stages

(Transition to School Programme)

Self-help skills, self-control and communication form vital pillars of this programme. These do not just begin when your child starts attending the Transition to School Programme; they kick in from birth. Our role as educators is to nurture these from that day forward. Your child must go through this before they can read or write and this forms the foundation of our **Transition to School Programme**.

It is a commonly known fact that children who've attended a quality childcare or kindy settle more easily at school. They have learnt to **think clearly and solve problems**. These **confident children** have the courage to ask questions and expand their knowledge. Hence this transition programme forms an integral part of our curriculum.

What is included in the Transition to School Programme?

This especially curated programme is very **tangible in results**; parents can see clearly what progress their child is making at our centres and their journey to the next chapter of their learning.

The programme is designed to help your child **understand the world** through activities like growing gardens, caring for animals, etc. They are encouraged to **express their creativity** through arts, music, dramatics and similar activities. Use of numbers, object sorting, puzzles, counting games etc help them with their maths skills. Songs, games, rhymes, plenty of writing activities, using computers etc helps with their reading and writing abilities.

Physical and physiological development is equally stressed as part of this programme.

How can you support?

- Take the free B4 School Health & Development Check.
- Establish routines and rituals to make their mornings and afternoons more manageable.



Key components

- Foundation skills for learning. Teachers at the school would like your child to be able to ask questions, sit still, pay attention, carry out small individual tasks like opening their school bag, etc. These skills are foremost on this programme.
- Empowering children with responsibility of their belongings.
- Individual writing books.
- Focused learning through play.
- Book bags with readers.
- Portfolios.
- Termly school visits.
- Curriculum experiences (Science, Maths, Physical, Literacy, Art, Music).
- Parent involvement.
- Focused on learning dispositions.
- What school am I going to?

- Start getting familiar with the parents in your child's class.
- Monitor food and sleep carefully.
- Help manage their anxiety by talking to them about their experiences every day.
- Extend the centre learning at home.
- Reading to them
- Do fun family activities.

Rhythm and routines of our centre

(What typical day look like at our centre?)

No two days are same at our centre. Every day is a different journey, a new learning and more fun than the day before. And while our educators work tirelessly to create a framework and grand plans for a day, these are evolved with and based on children's inputs.

Routines at our childcare are flexible and totally child-led. We respect every child's interests and the fact that everything that occurs with or for a child at the centre forms a part of their learning – the curriculum.

You're welcome to call the centre at any time to know what your child is up to or talk to any of our friendly staff. Daily activity charts and online updates are also provided.

Nursery (babies and infants)

The routines in the nursery building are completely run by individual needs to maintain continuity between the home and centre environment.

Morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea are shared at kai time with milk offered as per the child's requirements at other times. Individual cots and beddings are provided for rest.

Throughout the day they engage in a wide range of activities to support learning and development. They are provided an environment of fully-accessible toys as well, so each child is able to choose their own area of interest, set their own goals and challenges.

Nappies are checked regularly throughout the day. We offer good storage facilities for parents who like to buy and provide their nappies in bulk. We are also able to provide nappies at cost, for those days when you're running short on time.

Pre-school (toddlers and pre-schoolers)

Not forgoing the individual needs of your child, the programme in this building is geared to connect children with nature and prepare them with the skills and attributes required to set each child up for success at school. is



provided for the children who arrive early, followed by free play and preparation for mat time. Mat time is followed by morning tea and activities set-up for the day, or children are free to choose their play – indoors or outdoors.

Morning: Breakfast is offered first thing in the morning for those children who arrive early. Children work with the support of a teacher to prepare and eat the food of their choice.

Thrice weekly, a group of 10 children head out for nature walks – an integral of our centre's learning programme. Free play and a wide range of experiences are offered to children who stay behind at the centre.

Afternoon: Free play for all children and a activities that integrate their morning's findings on the forest walk followed by afternoon tea.

Evening: Free play continues and a late snack is offered to children who are picked up later in the evening.

Things we get up to at our centres

(Trips, excursions, activities and celebrations)

Excursions

As part of the curriculum at the centres, our pre-schoolers regularly take trips out into the community – in most instances, at least once a week. They visit local libraries, parks, shops or businesses and other **events of interest in the vicinity of the centres**.

Centres choose excursions based on their children's interests and the community within which they are located. Our Titahi Bay centre is known to run thrice-weekly nature walks that are extremely popular and representative of their "close to nature" belief. All excursions are supervised and conducted under regulatory requirements. Parent helpers are always welcome. We believe these excursions are an opportunity for children to explore the rich resources in the community and apply or use the information they learn at the centre.

Each of our centres tries to organise a trip outside the centre **at least once a quarter**, if not more. Trips are open to all children in the centre over 2 years, and are another great way to enhance their learning in a fun, hands-on way. We visit zoos, aquariums, parks and

playgrounds, museums, entertainment areas, fire stations, police stations, special events and similar activities of interest. Children are encouraged to participate in the planning of the trip, increasing their excitement and encouraging learning.

All trips are conducted under regulatory requirements and supervised. Parent helpers are encouraged to join. Nominal fee may apply.

Centre activities

In order to add variety and flavour to the curriculum, you'll often see us run **special activities** such as Zumba, hip-hop dance classes, play gym and similar experiences within the centre. The activities are chosen in consultation with parents and children's interest at the time. As interests vary across locations, each centre offers its own unique set of activities.

We invite specialists to train the children on the chosen activities. They typically run for a few weeks and may have an additional charge.



Things we get up to at our centres

(Trips, excursions, activities and celebrations)

Special guests at the centres

We constantly ruffle the feathers to make the days exciting for our children. In doing so you'll often see 'special guests' at the centres. These include **police men in their squad car, fire engine** with fire men telling the children about exciting tales of rescue, **ambulance** visits, **farm animals** and much more.

Themed days

The excitement never really ends at our centres, where themed days fill up gaps left by excursions, trips and centre visits by people of interest. We have **pyjama parties; special colour days; get your bike day; and many more**. Learning is weaved into every aspect of centre life – but it is always fun, never boring.

Children-led projects

Toddlers' and pre-schoolers' sections have one or multiple emergent ongoing projects that **encourage well-rounded learning**. Projects often emerge from topics of interest – sometimes it is vehicles, at other times the lifecycle of a butterfly, and even growing and caring for their own garden.

Children are encouraged to take the lead on the project and are well supported by educators who carefully and non-intrusively plan activities around it.

Celebrating cultural diversity

We recognise New Zealand's and our centres' cultural diversity, and celebrate it by marking the special festivals of everyone. Matariki is celebrated with as much gusto as Christmas, Diwali, Eid and Chinese New Year. Parents and the wider whanau is invited to join in the celebrations. We also mark important milestones of our children – birthdays and graduation are a special affair at our centres.



We work with you

(Communicating with parents)

While we're grateful to you for entrusting us with the enormous responsibility of caring for your little ones and setting the foundations for their learning, this is certainly not a journey we embark on alone.

Family values and community involvement are central to our early childhood programme, and we encourage you to be involved – even shape your child's learning at our centres. Tell us what your child loves so together it forms the platform for their individual learning programme.

We keep you involved through regular feedback on your child's progress and invitations to be involved hands-on at our centres. Here are some tools and ways for us to do this. However, we're always keen to improve and your inputs are valued.

Orientation:

Before joining a centre, we introduce the child and his/her family to the centre with an orientation programme to make them familiar with the surroundings, the educators and peers. We encourage you to discuss your child's needs, interests and routines with the educators so the foundations of a successful partnership can be laid.

Regular feedback:

Talk to the teachers when you pick-up or drop-off your child; they have a wealth of tales to share and are always keen to hear about your child's evolving interests. Some centres have an **online feedback** forum to keep parents informed about a child's daily activities.

Portfolio:

Every child at our centre has portfolio of their learning stories. This is an important record of your child's progress and crucial milestones. It is also a place for you to add your child's learning stories from home.

Monthly newsletters:

These keep you informed on topics and areas of study presented to children's groups, upcoming centre activities, round-up of what has been happening and announcements.

Parent participation:

Parents are encouraged to be actively involved in developing the centre's programme and interacting with the children in the day care. Come in and read books from the library; join us for trips and excursions; and share your special talent with the whole group.

We also hold regular **parent evenings** where you're invited to know about current centre activities and plans going forward. Your feedback is sought at this session on what activities you'd like us to undertake and how the learning programme can be improved.

Cultural celebrations:

Parents are invited to share their cultural experiences and perspectives on culture days that are organised to recognise our diversity.

One-on-one meetings:

Centre managers are always available to alleviate concerns and help with a child's developmental plans. Some of our centres have even set up regular one-on-one meetings between parents and centre managers.

Notice boards:

In the reception area and around the centre, you will find parent notice boards, which will also give you relevant centre information, including activities, upcoming events, menu, policies and staff updates. We encourage you to read the notice board regularly.



Health, safety & nutrition



Fresh and nutritious food

Children attending All About Children experience **a variety of healthy balanced and nutritious food**. The quality of food served in our childcares is such that we believe it will give them the energy they need for a busy day of play, learning and development.

Menus are carefully planned and **freshly prepared on-site** by a trained cook. A supporter of the Healthy Heart Programme, we believe that good habits should be encouraged from an early age, and hence we encourage our children and their families in eating healthy and being physically active.

All centres offer a seasonal and delicious menu. While nutrition is at the core of the menu, we never forget the fussy tastebuds we cater to. Variety is weaved into the menu. Our day cares **cater for vegetarians and any food allergies** your child might have.

Preventing illness and hygiene

To maintain a healthy environment at our centres and protect all staff and children from illness, infection and contagious diseases, we ask that if your child is unwell, you keep them at home. The Centre Manager reserves the right to refuse attendance or send a sick child home.

A doctor's certificate is required to clear your child's attendance if they've had an infection or illnesses. Please advise the centre as soon as possible if your child has been exposed to, or has, a communicable disease to prevent it from spreading. Parents or your emergency contact will be reached immediately to pick up a child who is suspected of having a communicable disease.

Hygiene is paramount to help prevent spread of germs. Children have to regularly wash hands, before and after meals, toileting and play.

Accidents or injuries

Members of our staff hold current First Aid Certificates that are regularly updated. If required, medical help will be immediately sought and parents or the emergency contact advised appropriately.

Medication

All medication requirements must be written in the day book and signed by the parent/guardian. Please hand over the medication to the educator for safety and label it correctly with the child's name and dosage.

Immunisation

Keeping an immunisation register is a legal requirement for all early childcare centres. Once your child is immunised, please provide the centre management with a copy of the immunisation certificate for their records.

Sun protection

Sun safety is important, and we require all children to wear sun hats and appropriate clothing when outside in the summer months. Sun block is provided at the centre, however, if your child is allergic to common sun blocks or has sensitive skin; please provide a named and suitable sun block for their use while at the centre.



All About Children

EARLY LEARNING CENTRES



Admin stuff

(legal requirements, fee and policies)

Enrolment and changes

You are required to complete and sign an enrolment form prior to your child starting at any of our centres. Any changes to enrolment, including change of hours, admission days, medical conditions, contact details or change in persons collecting your child must be notified to the centre management immediately. Please note that some notice may be required to change booked days or hours.

Parents are required to give at least two weeks' notice if withdrawing their child.

Fees and WINZ subsidies

We offer quality childcare services at a **very affordable cost**. Fees are calculated on a weekly basis and required to be paid in advance. If your fees are not up to date, management reserves the right to refuse entry of you and your child into the centre.

Fees are payable even if your child is absent, as our licensing regulations require staff as per the number of children enrolled. If the absence is more than three weeks, a holding fee must be paid. If a child takes holidays without informing staff, then your full fee is payable. Full fees are also payable for public holidays.

Casual days are offered, subject to availability, for children not enrolled full time. This can be done through prior arrangement. Please speak to the centre manager.

Work and Income New Zealand (WINZ) operates an income-qualified subsidy scheme.

We honour this subsidy for qualifying families. However, payment of full fees is the parent/guardian responsibility and will be required until the subsidy has been approved by WINZ.

20 Hours Subsidy

The Ministry of Education provides **20 Hours subsidy to ALL children between the age of 3 and 5 years**. Please complete an attestation form (available at the centres) to be eligible for this subsidy. This form confirms that you're not attending another early childhood centre at the same time as you've applied for funding at our centres. If you change your enrolment hours, you must complete another form.

Late pick-ups

As per Ministry of Education guidelines and licensing requirements, late pick-ups of any length are unacceptable as they have financial and staffing implications. Please pick up your child before closing time. A late fee is charged for parents who arrive after this time.

Essential guidelines and policies

As per the Ministry of Education's requirements and to ensure smooth functioning of all our centres, we've carefully developed policies and practices that will ensure your child's safety, security and well-being at all times. Copies of these policies and practices are available at our centres' offices. If you have any queries about the policies, please contact the administration staff or centre manager.



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www.allaboutchildren.co.nz

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