

Whānau Communication Policy (formal and informal)

Rationale:

The Orchard Child Care & Preschool will ensure that all whānau are given the opportunity to discuss the development of their child with teachers or management. Parents/ guardians and whānau should feel a true sense of belonging and are as involved as they choose to be in their child's development and education.

Objective:

- To ensure whānau are aware of different ways that teachers will communicate with them about their child's learning journey and development.
- To ensure that families are aware of opportunities available to them to communicate their decisions about their child's holistic development.
- To encourage responsive/reciprocal relationships between all parties.

Guidelines:

- Children up to 2 years of age will have a notebook which teachers write in daily. The information includes bottles, nappies, food and sleep times and a small blurb on their child's day. This is a two-way communication tool that parents are encouraged to use. The notebook may be used after 2 years of age if a teacher or family feels this is appropriate. This is especially important where English is the family's second language.
- Daily sleep charts are kept for all children in the bedrooms. Whanau are shown the location of these on enrolling.
- On enrolment all children are given a "Play Memoir Treasury" which documents their learning journey at The Orchard Child Care & Preschool. This is a shared book that parents/ whānau are encouraged to contribute to. Decisions about future development and learning can be a united decision which is documented in these books. Children are encouraged to revisit learning through reading their own portfolio and to take them home to share.
- Once a year, parent & Whanau times will be held at The Orchard where parents and teachers meet one on one to discuss their children, this is optional based on whether the parents wish to attend. Extra meetings are always welcome should whanau request.
- Te Whāriki (Ministry of Education, 2017) New Zealand's national early childhood curriculum is basically outlined in children's treasuries to parents/ whanau, so there is a shared understanding of learning and development.
- On enrolment, whānau are shown where to access information on sleeps, nappies, children's interests and Play Memoir treasuries in the house.
- Verbal communication is of paramount importance every day for every family. Teachers are expected to welcome each family at drop off time and talk with each parent honestly about each child's day at pick up time.

- If there is something important such as an accident - teachers will send an automatic notice on the sign in tablet device, to alert the family.
- Newsletters will be issued to each family regularly via email, where families have access. Printed copies will be given to families without email access. These will contain information about current events and happenings at the centre.
- Families will be issued with questionnaires when an area of the centre is under internal evaluation. This will ensure whānau ideas contribute to decision making.
- Regular, informal whanau events are scheduled bi-monthly for all of our Orchard family to come together and fellowship.
- The communication white board (located in the entrance way) is to be written on each day, informing parents what is happening in the centre on a weekly basis.
- The Orchard Child Care & Preschool operates an 'open door policy' where whānau are encouraged to spend time with their children and join in activities where appropriate.
- Whānau are always invited to excursions and are provided with opportunities to have input on where we go and what we do.
- There is always an opportunity for whānau to have meetings with management if issues with their child/ren arises. This may be initiated by the whānau or management.
- Parents and whanau are encouraged to assist with specific learning activities, encouraging them to share their expertise and knowledge - empowering them, their children and all centre attendees. This may be in the role of teaching around an area of interest, sharing knowledge for their culture/life or sharing resources of theirs.
- In order to ensure children's safety and well being, parents or caregivers are asked to text or phone in on the first morning of their child's un-notified absence (eg sickness, non attendance) so staff can be assured of the children's care. If no notification is received from the child's whanau by 9.30am, a short text message will be sent to the primary caregiver to follow up.

Regulation: C12