



Ruahine Kindergartens

Inspiring Young Minds

Te Whare O Tamariki O Ruahine



Up with the Play

Below: Let's dance - A good workout for body and mind



A Moving Experience

"No matter how slow you go, you are still lapping everybody on the couch."

These words taken from the BNZ workplace challenge could almost be a mantra for teacher Tamsin to use at Feilding Kindergarten. As part of her teacher registration, Tamsin is focusing on promoting active movement, not only for children in the Kindergarten but also within the community.

Already, the children have had a dancing session led by parent, Anna. All was well until the other teachers realised that Tamsin was not going to allow them to settle down for a relaxing snack while Anna was putting the children through their paces.

'We all thoroughly enjoyed Anna's session. It was very active and it got our hearts racing ' said teacher, Maree.

Tamsin has more exercise planned. "I'm looking at organising children from local schools to come in to take our children through

one of their Jump Jam sessions and possibly organising Zumba sessions for parents and children"

Active movement is more than just exercise, "apart from the obvious health and fitness benefits, it helps children to understand their bodies, improve their coordination and balance, work as part of a group and switch on their brains for learning," explained Tamsin.

Involving the community helps children to continue what they have learnt at home with the support of their family and whanāu. So, for example, Tamsin has enrolled the Kindergarten in BNZ's Workplace Challenge and has a group of parents signed up to run/walk a 10km event.

Keep an eye on the notice board to see what Tamsin has in store next.



Welcome to Up with the Play...

2011 has been a busy, exciting, challenging and rewarding year, which seems to have flown by in the blink of an eye.

It's been a year of big changes in the Association and I want to thank all of our dedicated and passionate teachers, support staff and families for their patience, flexibility, enthusiasm and support. Change is never easy, but as I constantly remind myself, it usually comes bearing gifts.

One of the most recent changes has been the relocation of the Association's office, from 441 Church Street to our new home at 597 Main Street (next to Para Rubber). With a new Association office structure, purpose and function, and an inspired and enthusiastic team to deliver our new purpose, we had

simply out-grown our previous building, which has served as a wonderful home for the Association for more than fifteen years. We feel very fortunate to have found a new office that meets our needs now, and provides flexibility for the future.

The new Association office provides the space we have been looking for to enable us to actively fulfill our desired role as the hub of not only the Kindergarten Association, but our whole Kindergarten community. We look forward to welcoming our staff, families and community to share this wonderful new space with us, and

invite you to pop in to see us at any time.

Finally, best wishes to you and your family for the festive season. I look forward to continuing our journey in 2012.



Louise Bartholomew
General Manager



From the Boardroom...

Well Spring has sprung, the grass is riz, and we know where the World Cup lives.

Looking back over the last twelve months, I find it hard to believe that the end of another year is upon on us. It has been an extremely busy year for Ruahine Kindergartens, as we have embraced a variety of positive changes and new developments.

We owe the whole Ruahine Kindergarten's team a huge vote of thanks for their commitment and loyalty, including our devoted kindergarten teams, and the those at the Association office, all of whom are so very well lead by Louise and her management team. There have been some new faces joining the Association over the 2011 year and they have all settled in well and added real value in their respective areas.

I would also like to thank the board for their commitment to the cause,

willingness to partake in considered discussion and ability to "think big" on behalf of the Association. Again, there are many new faces on the board in 2011 and we are steadily building into a great team who are absolutely committed to ensuring a positive and sustainable future for Ruahine Kindergartens, where the quality of education and facilities provided are of the highest standard.

I am pleased to report that plans are now in place for the redevelopment of several Ruahine Kindergartens, ensuring that previously delayed maintenance is now either underway or about to start.

I recently had the privilege of speaking on behalf of Ruahine Kindergartens at World Teachers' Day in Palmerston North. It was

another wonderful opportunity (and very easy!) to talk about what makes Ruahine Kindergartens early childhood education services GREAT - basically it all comes back to the people involved, and we certainly have a GREAT team that includes staff, parents and our communities - everything that we do depends on every part of the whole working together.

Finally on behalf of the board I would like to wish everyone a very happy and safe festive season and we look forward to working with and for you in 2012.

Kindest regards,

Bruce Pearson
Board Chairperson



Ruahine Kindergarten Association First to Head into the Cloud

Ruahine Kindergarten Association has become the first early childhood education provider to use the Ministry of Education's cloud based online e-portfolio site.

'My Portfolio', is an online personal learning environment. Currently it is available free to all New Zealand schools, which use it primarily for their pupils to document milestones and achievements.

Two of the Association's teachers however, recognised the potential for 'My Portfolio' as a professional learning tool. One is working towards her teacher registration and the other is her mentor. The pair shared their experience and information at a provisionally registered teacher workshop, where there was great interest shown in the site's potential for teachers' professional development.

The professional services managers from the Association approached the Ministry of Education to request access to the system. Based on the trial information, they were able to negotiate access for the Association, a first for any early childhood education provider.

The Ministry provided some basic training to the Association, which plans to roll out the e-portfolio system to teachers and their mentors working towards their registrations. My Portfolio will then be introduced to other teachers as the skill level with the system grows.

"We are very excited to be the first early childhood provider to use this site.

The great thing for us as professional service managers is that we will be able to make comments and support teachers on line which will make learning much more authentic," said Professional Service Manager, Sally Roberts.

All teachers in the Association are fully qualified and it is one of the key attributes at the twenty-five Kindergartens within the Association. My Portfolio, says Sally, is a valuable tool in maintaining the excellence of the teaching, which in turn means better learning experiences for the children in their care.

Smoothing the Pathway to School

Being on the doorstep of Parkland School has some distinct advantages for children as they take their next steps towards a lifetime of learning. The Kindergarten has worked closely with the school to make the transition as seamless as possible.

The transition to school has been a recent area of focus both for the Education Review Office and the professional service managers at the Association. Parkland Kindergarten has introduced a number of initiatives aimed at reducing the worry that children often experience on their first day.

The key to the success of their 'Transition to School' plan is the excellent relationship that has been built between the school and the Kindergarten. Junior children from the school are often involved with the kindergarten children in activities such as buddy reading, gardening, library visits, shared projects and sports days, making the younger children feel part of the school before they leave the Kindergarten.

In addition to the normal ten-week school afternoon inductions, the Kindergarten arranges morning visits, where children spend time in their new

entrant class several weeks before starting school. It's not just a handover. It's a team effort in which ideas, knowledge, viewpoints and resources are exchanged between, school, kindergarten and parents.

The teaching team at Parkland Kindergarten attended a specialist 'Transition to School' course at Massey University. Within hours, they had implemented a new practice whereby the teacher taking the children on their school visits now takes a camera, with the children deciding what pictures to take. This process recognises that everyone has funds of knowledge based on their experience, knowledge and skills. By documenting the visit from a child's own viewpoint as a learning story, it gives teachers, children and parents the chance to share their experiences and perhaps discover concerns that they can help to overcome. During one such visit, for example, children didn't know what the



Above: Children from Parkland School often act as reading buddies for the younger kindergarten children

signs on the toilet doors in the school meant. By discussing the images, this was easily addressed.

Head teacher, Heidi is pleased with the 'Transition to School' process, saying, "Children already feel part of the school when they're still at kindergarten. They know their new teachers, they've interacted with other children and they find the transition extremely smooth."



Artistic Inspiration

A lesson learned during a national arts conference has had an impact on the children at Milverton Kindergarten.

Teacher Jo attended the conference, where one of the most prevalent messages throughout the presentations was the importance of the exposure of art and artists to children's experiences.

As a result, Jo was inspired to find a local artist who could accommodate visiting children. After some time talking to people in the art industry, Jo was introduced to Jack Register, a local artist who exhibits his work nationally and internationally.

Unfortunately, Jack's studio was unsuitable for young children, but he was more than happy to pay a visit to the children at the kindergarten.

Jack's cheerful personality really connected with the young children. After demonstrating his painting skills, he encouraged the children to have a go at drawing and painting themselves.

"He had an incredible way of reaching out to those children who were still in the scribbling stage of drawing. He was quick to visualise what the child might be drawing and then helped them to bring the picture alive," said Jo.

And Jack's visit had a profound effect on one boy, who had never ventured into the art area. Jo commented, "Jack had really inspired this boy as we had never seen before. This experience has provided the young boy with such



Above: Drawing them in - Jack Register inspires these young artists

a positive affirmation that he has since returned back to drawing."

Jack Register's visit provided the children with a valuable experience, which enabled them not only to see an artist at work, but also to work alongside him.



Moving their Feet to the Levity Beet Beat

Too many instruments and not enough hands was the problem for children at Makino Kindergarten to solve, when Levity Beet paid a visit.

Levity arrived with heaps of instruments and a problem. He had clickers and a drum to play, but as the children were eager to point out, only two hands.

Fortunately, Makino children are very resourceful and quickly came up with a solution. So, after Levity had put the clickers on his feet and strapped a drum to his waist, the children enjoyed a sing and dance along.

Levity also showed different ways in which plastic bottles could be used as musical instruments, by blowing into them or tapping them with drumsticks.

Levity taught the children some of his songs, which they all sang along to. A favourite was 'Doggy Scratch' because it was funny and catchy. All the children joined in the singing, dancing and laughter.

Head teacher Alison was impressed with Levity Beet, who won the 2009 APRA Song of the Year in the Children's song category,

"The team thought it was great that Levity was able to incorporate the whole thinking about recycling materials for making his instruments. He also showed some great examples of how children can use their own bodies to create music, developing their sense of body awareness. Children develop an ability to be creative and expressive through a variety of activities such as making music," she said.



Tui Girls, Hot laps and Dan Carter's Underwear

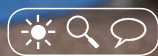
It's a headline worthy of a sleazy tabloid. But there was nothing sleazy about Pahiataua's second Spring Fling celebration.

The Pahiataua team headed for the Tui Brewery at Managatainoka for the evening's festivities. The "Tui girls" were joined by Association office staff dressed in western themed costumes which were very much becoming of the Spring Fling.

The evening started with a round of cow pat Bingo, which netted one lucky punter \$1,000. Then followed an auction, with notable lots including hot laps in a Holden and Dan Carter's signed underwear (not worn during any hot lap, fortunately). After a delicious meal, the team got down to some serious dancing to the sounds of local band, Murray's Tractor.

The event was a huge success thanks to a small committee of dedicated organisers. The Kindergarten now has an additional \$6,000 to use towards upgrading the outdoor space.

Head teacher Julie was pleased with the result and said, "We will put the money towards new outdoor equipment and the children will have the opportunity to increase their physical skills and extend and enhance their learning".



Focus on water play



Above: Designers in the making - Children oversee the landscaping at Bulls Kindergarten



At all our centres, you'll see children playing with water. It's not just something to pass the time. Children are learning valuable lessons as the team from Feilding Kindergarten explains.

Through exploration, children experience an environment where they develop working theories for making sense of the natural, social, physical and material worlds. So, for example when playing with water, children are:

- Exploring the different properties of water.
- Developing science and maths skills, through pouring, mixing, splashing, floating and sinking.
- Being creative through role-playing different experiences and ideas.
- Using a wide range of resources and using water for many purposes.
- Exploring different sensory experiences.
- Developing coordination through pouring and transferring water.
- Gaining opportunities to develop social interactions with other children and teachers.
- Relaxing and having fun!

Bulls Kindergarten Dealt Winning Hand

Children at Bulls Kindergarten will soon be enjoying a revamped outdoor area in time for summer thanks to the success of the Kindergarten's 'Chip and Kick' casino night.

\$19,000 was raised for the Kindergarten at the casino night, where 270 punters spent several hours betting to accumulate chips, which could be used to bid on items for auction. The star lot was an original piece of artwork, signed by the Turbos together with a jersey signed by legendary All Black, David Kirk, which attracted a huge bid of \$1,200.

The money raised is enough for the Kindergarten to complete the final push on their three-year landscaping project, which will provide excellent facilities for the children. Head teacher Kerri said, "It is hugely important. We really value the skills that children can learn in the outdoor environment and how the physical skills they gain help in their overall development. Active movement and exploration is essential: co-ordination and motor control, using their senses and being a part of the natural world were all briefs in our design plan. We planned an environment that is stimulating, sustainable, exciting, natural and functional"

The whole project has been undertaken while the Kindergarten is open. That was a conscious decision to involve the children from planning to completion and has provided a multitude of learning opportunities and a real sense of ownership. The workers have engaged with the children throughout by providing a safe environment for them to take part in the project.

The community involvement has been vital to the success of this project. From families that have contributed to fundraising to organisations that have sponsored events or provided grants, it has been very much a team effort. "The casino evening was a great example of how all areas of the community came together to organise an event that was enticing, fun and focused on its goal. It far exceeded our expectations," said Kerri

Work is expected to be completed by the end of term, subject to weather conditions.



Campbell Street Learns how to Haka

The spirit of the Rugby World Cup is still strong at Campbell Street Kindergarten. Almost daily, children are singing the national anthem and performing the Haka before getting down to the serious business of playing their own version of the France versus All Blacks final*.

The teachers noted that the children were beginning to teach each other Haka moves and words, but that they didn't necessarily understand the meaning or have the actions quite right. So they decided that an official lesson from Palmerston North Boys' School would be an ideal way of getting the children up to speed.

First the boys showed how the Haka is performed at full speed and at full volume. The children were astounded!

Then Josh, the teacher from PNBHS led the children through the Haka slowly and in bite sized chunks. He explained what the words and the actions meant as the children copied their guests.

As the children's confidence grew, so did the volume of their performances. Finally, the boys joined the children for one combined Haka, which included everything they had learnt.

As a thank you, the whole Kindergarten sang the national anthem in Māori and English to show their appreciation for the schoolboys, who had taken time out of their exam preparations.

Head teacher Jocelyn explained, "Activity such as this teaches the children valuable lessons such as pride in their culture, citizenship, respect and awareness of their bodies. The Rugby World Cup has been a wonderful format and a great tool for teaching. We've strengthened many of our community relationships through events such as this, as well as sharing children's interests and knowledge from home."

* In case you're wondering: the All Blacks always win!



Above: Singing loud and proud, Campbell Street gets to grips with the Haka



Visit us on Facebook
www.facebook.com/RuahineKindergartens



Te Whāriki Icons

Icons below newsletter articles indicate how play and learning related to the strands of Te Whāriki permeate kindergarten activities. To learn more about the Te Whāriki curriculum visit our website www.ruakind.org.nz

♥ WELL-BEING

The health and well-being of the child is protected and nurtured.



☀ CONTRIBUTION

Opportunities for learning are equitable and each child's contribution is valued.



🔍 EXPLORATION

The child learns through active exploration of his/her environment.



👤 BELONGING

Children and their families feel a sense of belonging.



💬 COMMUNICATION

The languages and symbols of the child's own and other cultures are promoted and protected.

Term Dates

Term Four

Starts Tuesday 25th October
Finishes Tuesday 20th December
66 Sessions

2012

Term One

Starts Thursday 26th January
Finishes Thursday 5th April
80 Sessions

Term Two

Starts Monday 23rd April
Finishes Friday 29th June
76 Sessions

Term Three

Starts Monday 16th July
Finishes Friday 28th September
88 Sessions

www.ruakind.org.nz