

TERM 4-2017

NEWSLETTER



FROM FLORENCE, CENTRE LEADER

Kia ora koutou,

Here is our last newsletter for 2017...already! And as usual, this term will be as busy as the others, with the frenzy of Xmas just around the corner.

First of all: our garden... soon to become a proper learning environment! If you haven't seen the changes in the garden yet, you must come and have a look! Namloc Build Ltd did a wonderful job, beyond our expectations. The 2nd stage of the renovation will take place over the summer holiday. As we have said many times, we are working extremely hard to raise money to cover some of the cost of this grand project. The Quiz Night was very successful. But now is the time for everybody to come on board: we really need all our community to contribute in any way possible. Lots of events are happening this term. Please check further down in the newsletter to see how you can contribute.

The Council and I have been delving into our new Strategic Plan, for 2018-2022. We have already had a few sessions and have developed our 4 strategic aims and connected goals. I am attaching the draft for you to consult and give feedback. Please, spend some time to read it and tell us what you think about it: your opinion matters.

In parallel, on Saturday 14th Nina, Mary, Steph and I attended a whole day seminar to learn more about the revised edition of Te Whariki, the NZ Early Childhood Curriculum. It was interesting for me to realise that our strategic plan is looking at some of the issues raised at the course, and is trying to address them. There is a clear, intentional focus on "Identity, Language and Culture", with a strong commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi; biculturalism is reinforced and all centres have a responsibility to constantly weave te ao Maori into their daily programme. How does Te Whariki help us in our responsibility as educators to promote education about environment sustainability and protection? The concept of Kaitiakitanga (guardianship, environmental stewardship) is emphasised in the new version. One of the aims of the curriculum is to foster global citizenship in every child so they know how to look after our planet. What does kotahitanga (unity, togetherness, solidarity, collective action) look like in our curriculum and environment? How do we practice "Mana Hatua" (well-being of the child) holistically? The last keynote address focused more on the transition from ECC to Primary and what the new Te Whariki recommends for tamariki. There is a lot of research out there about best practices and strategies to help children transition. For us, one way to support that transition is to offer full days for 4 year-olds and to highly recommend a full time programme after 4 and a half, while advocating keeping children beyond 5 at Preschool. It looks like it will be the topic of our next Parent Education session later in the term!

I believe our vision

Nourishing the human spirit to create a better world
Ka kai atu te mōhiotanga o te tangata,
Ka aohia te wairua,
Kia puta atu ki te ao mārama ara te taiao

supported by the Montessori philosophical ideals, is so much in line with all those profound, important questions and concepts that were discussed at the seminar. It was truly inspiring to see that our national curriculum aims high to deliver excellent quality education, reinforcing how crucial those first 6 years are for the holistic development of each child!

Hei konā mai – Bye for now

Ngā mihi nui – kind regards

Florence

FROM RICHARD, PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Kia ora and welcome back to term 4.

While we were sad to see Bronwyn go at the end of last term, we give a very warm welcome to our new teacher Steph, who is settling in to Kauri with Julia.

Otari Montessori Preschool is a not-for-profit school and as such the costs are kept as minimal as possible so everyone can access our excellent preschool. Funding from the Ministry of Education has remained at the same level for the last 6 years and school income has remained static and nominal. In addition, outgoings have increased. This means the school is running at a substantial loss this year, a level of loss which is not sustainable going forward. Consequently, the school council is looking at reviewing the fee structure and operational model to ensure we can continue looking after our children in the best way possible.

One of the best ways that you can support our school financially is by helping with fundraising. You can help by sharing our events and fundraising offers with friends, family and work colleagues. This will help to pay for our fantastic new play area and can contribute to school running costs.

The council is working very hard at the moment to write a 5 year strategic plan. Please feel free to contribute and give any feedback you have. If you do have any contributions to make, you are more than welcome to talk to a council member or attend our next council meeting.

Richard

From the council

This term's newsletter we will be introducing our council member Tammy:

Who belongs to your family? The Smith family include; Wayne and myself (Tammy) taking the reins, followed by Kyle, Blake, Lucy and Oliver (Kowhai room) and not forgetting our delightful addition, Ruby the cat.

What made you join the council? The main reason I joined the council was to feel connected to our community. Being involved with the preschool council is not only the best way to know what is going on with events and activities, but also what challenges the preschool is facing and what victories they are celebrating. It's important to me to be able to give back to my community, not only to make myself feel worthwhile but, in the grand scheme of things, volunteering a couple of hours each month helps make the preschool a better place for my child and yours.

What do you enjoy about the council? Through the council, I've met some great people and made friendships and connections that I would not have had the opportunity to establish. Equally valuable, I've had the chance to get to know the school administration and the teaching staff. Being on the council gives me an opportunity to contribute verbally, with ideas and concerns, and physically through fundraising, for the progress of our preschool.

What is your role? As a general member of the council I can put my hand up to help out where ever it is needed. I have established a fundraising sub-committee, we would love to hear from everyone in our community regarding fundraising ideas and contributions that would financially benefit our garden project.

Thank you Tammy for your contribution.

Current Council Members and Positions:

President - Richard Wall (father of Florence, Kauri)
Treasurer – Gwyn Bareta (mother of William, Kauri)
Secretary – Rebecca Reedy (mother of Eleanor, Kauri)
Staff Liaison - Jane Ward-Marshall (mother of Lottie, Kauri)

General Council Members:

General – Tammy Smith (mother of Oliver, Kowhai)
General – Bernhard Resch (father of Juri, Kauri)
General – Fiona Boucher (mother of K-J, Kauri)
General/Website – Lara Charles (mother of Evan, Kowhai)
General/Newsletter – Fiona Miles (mother of Zelly, Kauri)
Enrolments – Martin Vere-Jones (father of Amber, Kauri)

Property – Richard Wall (father of Florence, Kauri)
Playgroup Liaison – Stefanie Dixon (mother of Frank, Kauri)

Introducing our Families

This term, we are introducing Zelly's (Kauri) family:

Who are the members of your family: Me (Sam), Mum (Fiona), Zelly and our 2 cats: Arthur and Louis.

Why did you choose Montessori @ Otari preschool? We felt the Montessori teaching philosophy would suit Zelly, and we had enjoyed the Montessori playgroup. We were also very impressed when we came to an open evening at Otari.

What's your favorite thing to do in Wellington with kids? I love going to museums, but Zelly is unfathomably scared of the shark in Te Papa (and says she won't go again until she's an adult!), but she enjoyed exploring the Wellington Museum so I would have to say that..

Apart from yourself (of course) - who would you like to think is a role model for your child and why? Zelly has lots of strong women in her family to provide excellent role models. She is particularly close to Fiona's sister Karen (now known as Aunty Me-me) and it is great to see her forming deeper relationships like that.

Where is your favorite place to go on holiday with your family or where would your dream family holiday be and why? London to visit my sister and her family - Zelly's older cousins adore her, and when we took Zelly as a baby she took the busyness of the place in her stride. Zelly loves to sit back and observe/absorb what's going on, so it is the ideal destination.

What is one of your favourite books, why would you recommend it to others? Always a Julia Donaldson book, but hard to pick a favourite from them. Maybe Room on the Broom - I love the rhythm of the language, and the witch is a good role model!

Thank you Sam.

FROM CAMILLA, PLAYGROUP SUPERVISOR

Welcome to term 4 at Montessori at Otari Playgroup.

To those of you just starting out at playgroup, we hope your time with us will be very happy. My experience at playgroup, when I was the mother of a young child, was that I

attended as much for me, as I did for my son. It was a place where could go and connect with other parents and caregivers, and work through some of the challenges I faced with a very active little boy. If you are feeling challenged, please share you struggles with us and let's do our best to support and encourage each other.

Playgroup is the place where we can begin planting seeds of positive ideas with very young children. For example, the idea that when you use something, it needs to be put back afterwards. It's also a place where children, even very little ones, can be empowered to make their own decisions about what they would like to do. It is a place where we have the time to truly go at the pace of the child. Let's always remind ourselves to slow down and move calmly, gently, and quietly.

If you see that your child is concentrating and engaged, take a step back, and observe in silence. Allow them to come to you when they have finished. And then you can acknowledge the work they have done with enthusiasm: "I saw you climbing up and down the ramp!". In a Montessori environment, concentration is gold so we do our best not to interrupt it.

Please don't feel bothered if your child does not cooperate with your desire to do a certain thing or to out things away. As I said, we are just planting the idea of good practice. It will take time for these ideas to sink in. At playgroup, everything is a collaboration between the child and the adult.

Please remember to sign up for two duties for this term, and bring a couple of pieces of fruit to each session, for our morning tea preparation. Also, please bring either a packet of your favourite tea or coffee to go in the morning tea box for the adults.

A final reminder of the importance to sign in at each session please. We are only funded for attendances, so even if you can only make it for a short time, we would love to see you.

And just to end, there is a beautiful Maori proverb which reminds us of that unlimited potential that exists in the heart of the child:

He kakano ahau i ruia mai i rangiatea

I am a seed born of greatness

Ka Kite Ano

Camilla

Montessori Playgroup

The Montessori-at-Otari playgroup is a not-for-profit cooperative run by parents. We offer a friendly and fun playgroup environment for children aged 0-3 years. A Montessori-trained supervisor runs the sessions. We have Ministry of Education certification and meet on Tuesday and Thursday mornings in St Luke's Hall, Wadestown. We have close links with the preschool and our equipment is especially chosen for a 0-3 Montessori environment. Attending playgroup makes the transition to preschool very easy.

To find out more, or to organise a visit, contact Nicola in the preschool office on 475 9688

or email wcmp@xtra.co.nz.

UP COMING FUNDRAISING EVENTS

Thursday 26 October: Isabell (Juri's Mum from Kauri) is going to take the children on a magical journey through the classic children's book "We're going on a bear hunt". The interactive storytelling session will be recorded (audio only) and turned into an audio play, which will be available as a fundraiser before Christmas.

Thursday 9 November: This is our biggest fund raiser of the year.... Movie Night: "Murder on the Orient Express"... get your babysitting plans organised now and grab a friend! There will be raffles, a cake stall, a silent auction, and of course a great movie too! Please read the details we have put in your child's pocket as there are many ways you can contribute to make this night a success.

Saturday 11 November, from 10.15-12.15, in the School hall: Kapa haka for the whanau with an awesome Maori teacher. \$20 per family. Just turn up and have fun!

The Village Press olive oils: Are you after something a bit different as a Christmas gift? Or are you looking forward to eating some lighter healthy salads as we head towards Summer? To support our Garden Fund we are selling Village Press Olive Oil Gift Packs. \$29.50 per pack of 3 gift x 250ml olive oil bottles. The flavours will tantalize your taste buds. Flyers and order forms have been placed in your child's pocket. Please complete and return to Nicola by 17 November 2017. If you have any queries please contact Sarah Chainey (Maria's mum) on 0275200454 or via email catwomanis@yahoo.com.

Hats and Tee shirts: the colours are bright and amazing... order one or more, simply ask Nicola.

AlphaBeats: singing and dancing at Preschool, on Wednesdays, from 1-1.45...Thanks to Doro, (supported by Stef and Inge) for organising this opportunity...but we are full already with our 8 lucky participants!

NOTICEBOARD

Parent Library

Our preschool has a selection of books, small in size, but big on quality and relevance for the free use of all preschool families (including those on the waitlist). The Parent Library will open every first and third Friday on display in the foyer or by negotiation with Nicola.

Just start a file for your family from the record folder and get the borrowed or returned books signed in or out by Nicola. Please return your book after one month by replacing it in the bookcase and by getting it signed in by Nicola.

If you know of a good book which you can recommend for our library please do so. We are always interested in good ideas.

Can parents please remember to return the borrowed items!

Morning/afternoon Tea Lists

Please check the lists in the foyer for this term's roster. Every family has to provide food for morning tea once or twice a year. Thank you.

Working Bees

The final working bee of the year is on Sunday 29th October (Q-Z). Working bees normally take place from 9am to 12 noon. This is a fun morning where families have an opportunity to get to know each other, have some morning tea and do a few indoor and outdoor jobs at the Preschool.

We rely on parents to help with the annual working bees to clean and repair the classrooms, equipment and outdoor areas. This helps us keep our costs down and the fees affordable. Families that do not wish to take part, or do not turn up on the day, will be invoiced a \$75 non-participation fee.

Driveway Duty

We have a drop-off system in place to help with the busy morning school run. From 8.40 am to 9.05 am two parent monitors are on duty at the bottom of the driveway. They will escort children into the Preschool. This service is parent-run and relies on volunteers. Every parent/caregiver is required to sign up to do three monitor duties a term even if your child does not yet use the system.

Monitors are to be at the Preschool by 8:35am. Duties include opening the car door, assisting the child to exit the car and escorting the child into the Preschool foyer.

Please do not drop your child off before 8:40am as the door into the corridor does not open until 8.45am. And please do not park your car in the driveway and walk in with your child. It is dangerous. Use the gate monitor system instead!

The two car parks at the bottom of the drive way that are reserved for preschool are for the use of pregnant woman and families with infants only. Please help by keeping these reserved car parks free for their use.