

Philosophy : Wee Nippers Invercargill

Our Philosophy is one of our guiding documents which reflects how we work and is at the heart of our decision making about the Centre, the programme, and the environment. This extends to the kaiako and team members we employ. It is a representation of who we are and what is important.

Our practice is underpinned by Te Tiriti o Waitangi and Te Ao Māori and we value and embrace the cultural diversity of our community. Our programme is grown from within the learning outcomes of Te Whāriki.

We foster an environment where tamariki and whānau of the community come together in our respectful, nurturing, inclusive environment. We value the importance of relationships as these form the foundations of learning and growth within our tūrangawaewae.

Our learning environment encourages equitable opportunities for akonga to be creative, independent individuals. Kaiako guide tamariki as they grow their social and emotional confidence to enable them to have the foundations for life long learning. Akonga have the freedom and confidence to explore and construct knowledge through our learning priorities.

Relationships are the key to all that we do and without strong responsive reciprocal relationships we are unable to support each other in the partnership of your tamaiti's learning journey here at the Centre. You will see that Relationships are a prominent part of the Centre Philosophy as we know that these are the solid foundations that are needed to grow from.

We have two whakatauki which sit alongside our Philosophy and support our journey in the Centre.

Whakamaua te pae tata kia tina - Take hold of your potential so it becomes your reality ...

Whaia te pae tawhiti kia tata - Explore beyond the distant horizon and draw it near!

Learning Priorities

We have five Centre Learning Priorities. You will notice these on the wall in each room. They are the same in each room, a small kete on the wall with the priority and the explanation of what it means. Beside one or two of these you will see a picture of your tamaiti and this is a visual way for you to know which learning priority is their current focus. The focus for your tamaiti comes from what we notice about them in the learning environment, our conversations with you and each other. We are currently working to strengthen our links with whānau around how we can understand your aspirations better and for you to understand the learning that is happening in the Centre.

Following are each of our learning priorities and how they will look on the walls in each room. (There are 20 learning outcomes in our curriculum Te Whāriki, these are all covered within the different learning priorities.)

Social and Emotional Competence – nurturing the skills for managing myself

This supports the sense of well-being and belonging tamariki have in the learning environment, enabling tamariki to establish connections with kaiako and other tamariki. These connections provide the foundations for working with and alongside others as they create and manage friendships. Tamariki build the confidence to share their thoughts and ideas in small and large groups. We scaffold and support tamariki as they work to create an understanding of their emotions, how they affect them in different situations and how to manage them, so they do not become overwhelmed by them.

Foundation Skills – developing oral language, early mathematics, and early literacy

We provide a language rich environment which supports tamariki as they explore and develop their oral language. We support them as they use this for a range of purposes through learning experiences, daily routines, and play. Tamariki are supported as they navigate and grow their working theories and create the skills of negotiation and compromise. There are opportunities through the programme in each room for tamariki to become familiar with basic mathematical concepts, including colours and numbers. Tamariki are exposed to literature in a variety of formats, and they become familiar with text in many different forms. We take our cues from the tamariki about when they are ready to explore these areas in depth as this is very different for each tamaiti.

Independence – Growing resilience and confidence

We support and guide tamariki as they develop a range of strategies that enable them to take responsibility for themselves, for others and for the environment. We encourage tamariki to take ownership of their own learning and support them to confidently lead and explore a variety of learning experiences with and alongside others. Tamariki are challenged to enable them to explore and grow their resilience and problem-solving skills.

Inclusiveness – embracing culture, language, and identity differences

We embrace and support tamariki in a safe environment which encourages them to explore their own identity. We create an awareness of the cultural diversity within the Centre and the wider world through their language, identity, and symbols. We provide tamariki with the opportunities to connect to their heritage through language and values. We provide opportunities to achieve equitable outcomes through a bi-cultural program that reflects the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Our programme is designed as an inclusive and supportive one which supports all children including those who have diverse learning needs to reach their potential.

Creativity – inspiring wonder to explore and discover

Our curriculum supports tamariki to use their creativity through their imagination or original ideas to create something new. Creative experiences help acknowledge and celebrate children's uniqueness and diversity as well as offer excellent opportunities to personalise our teaching and focus on each child. The created items may be intangible (such as an idea or scientific theory) or a physical object (such as an invention, or a piece of art). Creativity is often more about the process rather than the outcome and we support and encourage tamariki as they work to bring to life the picture in their mind. Creativity is an important part of developing children's problem solving and innovative thinking and we stimulate this through a wide range of open-ended resources which supports the interests and ideas of the tamariki.