

Welcome to:



Parent Information Handbook

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Contents

Kia ora and Welcome	3
About Ako Adventures	3
Our Philosophy	4
Teachers and Staff.....	4
Students, Volunteers and Visitors	4
Our Programme	5
Hours and Days.....	5
Settling In	5
Parent Involvement.....	5
Communication	6
Emergency Contact Details.....	6
Fees	6
Payment of Fees	6
Fees Schedule.....	6
20 Hours Free	7
Childcare Subsidy – WINZ.....	7
Attendance	7
Holidays and Absences	8
Annual Leave Fee Discount	8
Withdraw of your Child	8
Dropping off your Child & Signing In and Out	8
Collecting Your Child	8
Positive Guidance	9
Looking After Your Child	9
Meals – Lunches	9
Allergies.....	10
Rest Time.....	10
Clothing	10
What to Bring	10
Lost Property	10
Trips.....	11
Emergency and Evacuation Procedures	11
Child Health	11
Medication	11
Immunisation	11
Incidents.....	12
Concerns and Complaints.....	12

Kia Ora and Welcome

Tohu nga whakatipuranga ki te inu I te puna

O te Matauranga

Kia hora ai te whakaruruhau o te oranga

Ki runga I te Iwi

Kia Kaha, Kia Toa, Kia Manawanui

Teach the generations to drink at the spring

Of knowledge

So that the warmth of well-being may be

Widespread over the people

Be Strong, Be Brave, Be Steadfast

Kia Ora and Welcome to Ako Adventures Childcare. We welcome you and your family to a home away from home atmosphere.

The following information is intended as an insight on what we offer for your child.

We are privileged to work in partnership with you and your family to an enriched lifelong learning journey.

About Ako Adventures

Ako Adventures is a purpose built Early Childhood Education Centre where children from four months to school age are cared for in a warm, stimulating learning environment, with a primary focus on positive social development and education. The centre is open plan with large indoor areas and aesthetically pleasing outdoor areas, as we believe that children need space to grow and learn!

The infant area is from four months to 2 years, the over 2 area is from 2 years to 3 years, and the preschool area is from 4 years to 6 years. The preschool area will focus on becoming ready for school, with an emphasis on providing links to learning in school settings.

Here at Ako Adventures we provide quality, qualified early childhood teachers and resources to enhance children's learning, their development and wellbeing. Staff are trained in First Aid and CPR alongside their Early Childhood Teaching qualifications. We have a cohesive team of enthusiastic, caring, and experienced educators.

We encourage, nurture and guide our children to strive in learning, creating and growing in our environment.

We have a Speech Language Therapist who works alongside Kaiako to support the children's language development. She is there 2-3 days per week.

License: Full Day Licensed Centre

Licensed Hours: Monday to Friday 7.30am to 5.30pm

Centre closed: Statutory Holidays

Ages: We care for children from 4 months to 5 years old

Our Philosophy

We believe children are unique and are a special gift to us. We provide a warm, caring and friendly home away from home environment.

We encourage and nurture children's learning through their interests and strengths. Teachers take pride in creating a stimulating and safe environment to enable your child to reach their full potential.

We value and respect all children as individuals and as teacher expose them to positive and equitable opportunities for learning.

The parents, whānau, elders and wider community are an important part of our centre's curriculum and are seen as partners in contributing toward their child's learning and development.

Tikanga Māori and Te Reo are incorporated into our daily practises. We will also be introducing some New Zealand Sign Language. We celebrate the cultural diversity of our centre by observing and celebrating all cultures.

We embrace all areas of development in accordance with Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the Early Childhood Education Curriculum, Te Whariki which enables children to reach their potential.

Teachers and Staff

We are committed to staffing our Centre with skilled, experienced and qualified caring people. We have fully qualified staff and staff who are in training. Staff participate in professional development regularly to ensure we are update to date with teaching changes. We aim to have at least 80% of all staff qualified.

Students, Volunteers and Visitors

From time to time, you will see new faces at the Centre. Relief staff and volunteers are screened before participating in our daily activities and they embrace our philosophy whilst at the Centre. They will interact with the children, giving help and attention as needed under the supervision of the Teachers.

Early Childhood teacher training students are also supervised at the Centre during the practical component of their course.

Our Programme

We provide child led and interest-based learning programmes. The programme is based on observing children on a regular basis, evaluating their needs and planning learning experiences from the observations to enhance the child's learning and development.

Our groups are under two-year olds, two year olds to 3 year olds and the Preschool age group children. All our children share a group time as Teina/Tuakana – Older children nurturing younger children before moving into their own rooms. All our learning groups enjoy a mat time each day with their teachers that teach children numeracy, literacy, colours, community, about themselves and culture etc through activities and stories.

Children are encouraged to make choices and are given opportunities to explore their world. They can choose between supervised indoor and outdoor play and have many activities available.

All our children have a portfolio of their learning which is updated and includes learning experiences, artwork, photos and events. All parents and whānau are encouraged to keep up to date with their child's portfolio.

Hours and Days

The Centre is open Monday to Friday from 7.30 am – 5.30 pm. We will be closed on all statutory holidays. Our Centre caters for 4 months to 5 years of age.

Settling In

We recommend that parents and children visit the Centre prior to enrolling, to meet staff and familiarise themselves with our environment. The settling in time for each child could vary from a week or more. Teachers will observe the child's progress and discuss with the parent. Parents are welcome to phone during the day for an update on their child.

Our aim is to have happy, relaxed, secure children who have developed a relationship of trust with their teachers. We work closely with parents and children to establish a close positive bond of trust to ensure each child and their families feel secure that Ako Adventures is a great place to be. Very soon your child will not want to leave the Centre!

Parent Involvement

We operate an open-door policy, where parents and family are welcome at the Centre at any time. Parent participation sends strong positive messages to your child that you support them and are part of the childcare environment. We encourage you to take part in regular parent meetings and look forward to any ideas or suggestions you may bring to these meetings.

Communication

Our Centre aims to make communication with parents as open, regular and informative.

We provide a variety of ways to communicate:

- * School term newsletters
- * Notice board
- * Programme planning is displayed on classroom wall
- * Website: www.akoadventures.co.nz
- * Parent and Teacher Profile and artwork evening
- * Children Art and Portfolio Programme
- * Cultural and Centre events and trips

Emergency Contact Details

Please keep your emergency contact details updated on the enrolment forms.

Fees

Payment of Fees

We aim to keep our fees as low as possible to allow all children to attend our Centre.

For the smooth running of the Centre, it is vital that your fees are kept current.

You are still required to pay fees if your child is absent for the day they are booked in and for statutory holidays. The Fees Schedule and Fee Policy is attached to your enrolment form.

Fees Schedule

Under 2 Years	\$5.00 per hour
2 – 3 Years	<p>\$4.00 per hour</p> <p>Full Week (30 hrs) Mon – Fri 9am to 3pm (6 hour Days) *10 Hours Scholarship +\$80 per week</p> <p>Sessions (20 hrs) Mon – Fri 8am to 12pm or Mon-Fri, 12.30pm to 4.30pm *10 Hours Scholarship + \$40.00per week</p>

<p>3 – 5 Years</p> <p>20 HOURS FREE PER WEEK</p>	<p>Full Time 5 days 20 Free Hours per week Then \$4.00 per hour</p> <p>Sessions 5 days (20hr maximum) AM: 8.00am - 12.00pm PM: 12.30pm - 4.30pm</p>
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All fees must be paid by Direct Debit to be filled out upon enrolment.

20 Hours Free

Our Centre offers the free 20 hour subsidy which is provided by the Ministry of Education for 3 to 5 year old children. To be eligible you are required to complete the Attestation part of the Enrolment Form which confirms you are not attending another Childcare Centre with the same booked hours and days as our Centre.

Childcare subsidy – Work and Income Support

Work and Income New Zealand operates a subsidy for parents whose children attend our Centre. Many families are entitled to the subsidy and our Administrator will assist you with the process to see if you may be eligible and complete an application form for WINZ.

Attendance

Participation in your child’s learning and education is important to us and we believe the attendance of your child will also help with the smooth running of our centre.

You must contact us if your child is away:

- * away on holiday for more than 1 week
- * regularly absent each week
- * regularly late or early to leave

If your child’s attendance becomes irregular, you are required to reconfirm your enrolled days and times at the Centre. This will also capture any changes where your initial enrolment no longer suits your circumstances.

If your child is away for 2 weeks without contact from a parent or guardian and the centre has also made effort to call the parent and we do not hear from anyone, the Centre may un-enrol your child from the Centre and a final statement and letter will be posted to you.

Holidays and Absences

Statutory Holidays, Sick days and any absences are charged in full for the days you have booked. You must notify the Centre as soon as possible if your child is absent due to illness

Annual Leave Fee Discount

You may be eligible for up to 2 weeks for a reduced fee of 50% discount over the Christmas period. An Annual Leave form will need to be filled out stating the dates on leave and returning. This form is required in November each year for approval. Conditions apply.

Withdrawal of your Child

Two weeks written notice is required when withdrawing your child from the Centre.

One-week written notice is required if you wish to change your child's hours, days, sessions and this is subject to availability.

Dropping off your Child & Signing In / Out

- * Ensure that your child arrives to the Centre in good time
- * Come in the Centre with your child to ensure their safety
- * Sign the in / out attendance daily form
- * Medication handed to the teachers and recorded
- * Acknowledge the teacher and exchange brief information
- * Say goodbye to your child and pass on a positive comment

All parents must sign their child into and out of the Centre every day. The sign in / out sheets are provided at the front door near the office. This is a legal requirement by the Ministry of Education and can be audited at any time to ensure compliance with our roll returns (the basis of bulk funding).

The sign in / out attendance form is also used as a safety requirement. It is a roll call for your child's attendance in the case of an emergency evacuation from the Centre, therefore it is a very important part of your drop off and pick up routine. You must sign in as soon as you enter the gates and sign out as you leave (not before collecting your child/ren).

Collecting Your Child

- * Acknowledge a staff member
- * Greet your child and admire their work they have done during the day
- * Ensure your child is collected on the times stated on your enrolment form
- * Collect their artwork
- * Sign your child out daily

- * Take home medication daily
- * Collect any belongings and have a safe journey home.

Your child must be dropped off and collected by a responsible adult known to the staff and Centre Manager. Only authorised persons (as indicated on the Enrolment Form) will be allowed to collect children from the Centre. Please notify the Centre Manager in writing of any changes to the adult.

Positive Guidance

Teachers will use their skills as professionals to observe, listen and discuss with children in setting positive behaviour guides and rules that are reinforced daily. Child management is a partnership between the parent, families, and centre for the benefit of the child.

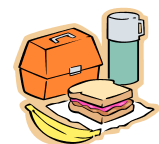
- * Using our “inside voices”
- * Kindness to each other in actions and words
- * Sharing and taking turns
- * Asking for help
- * Using our manners
- * Looking after things
- * Listening carefully and being helpful
- * Acknowledge positive behaviour with praise
- * Intervene and explain inappropriate actions and providing acceptable options and solutions
- * Offering children choices and encouraging decision making
- * Encourage children to share their feelings

We encourage parents and whānau to actively use these values at home.

Looking After Your Child

Meals – Lunches

Ako Adventures promote healthy eating programs to your children. Nutritious and healthy meals are all prepared by our hospitality staff on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. Morning tea and afternoon tea is provided by the Centre every day.



Ako Adventures promotes a “Monday and Friday packed healthy lunch day”. This encourages preparation for school, social skills, communication skills, discussion on right food choices.

A weekly menu is available on the Centre's notice board and in the kitchen.

Allergies

It is important that all allergies including food allergies be advised and recorded in the enrolment form. The Centre Manager will ensure all staff are notified and strictly followed.

Rest Time

All children are offered the opportunity to have a special time to relax or rest during the day; it enables them to gather their thoughts and strength for the rest of the day. It is our policy that if a child falls asleep, they need a rest and will not be woken unless parents have requested otherwise. Some children may not need sleep, but quiet activities will be available for selection.

Clothing

All clothing, shoes, cuddlee's and bags must be **clearly named**. Play and exploration can often be wet or messy, children should be dressed in old or play clothes and a spare change should be packed every day. In winter warmer clothing are essential, and in summer sunhats are to be provided for outdoor play.

What to bring

Parents need to bring the following items daily in a named bag.

Under Twos

1. Enough nappies for the week
2. Special milk or milk powder – enough for the week
3. Complete spare set of clothes and extra t-shirts
4. Sunhat in summer / warm, waterproof outside clothes in winter.

Over Twos

1. Nappies if still needed
2. Complete change of clothes (more when toilet training)
3. Sunhat in summer / warm, waterproof outside clothes in winter.

Lost Property

At the Centre there is a container for unnamed and lost property. It would be appreciated if parents could check this regularly as the amount builds up. Items that are not collected after two weeks will be donated to a local charity.

Trips

Visits to new and exciting places are a natural part of child's learning and experience.

We welcome all parents' to be part of the outing. Children who are unable to attend the excursion will remain at the Centre with a trained staff member. Children may be taken on local trips out of the Centre. Approval for local trips will be completed on the enrolment form.

Emergency and Evacuation Procedures

Regular fire and earthquake emergency evacuations are practiced and give your child an opportunity to become familiar with the routine and planned evacuations. All Staff are familiar with the emergency procedures and policies. Should you be present at our drills you are required to participate.

Child Health

We ask that any child who is unwell be kept at home, so illness does not spread through the Centre. Any child who is deemed to be unwell by the Centre Manager will be sent home.

A list of illnesses is displayed at the Centre.

With any of the listed illness, especially vomiting and diarrhoea, parents are required to keep their child at home until these symptoms are cleared. Usually 24 hours before returning to the Centre.

Children with communicable illness will be required to have a doctor's release for clearance before returning to the Centre.

Medication

Please advise the staff if your child is taking any medication. All medicines must be kept in the kitchen and the medicine book must be filled in by the parent before we can administer any medication. Only medication that has a label stating your child's name and expiry date will be administered. The Centre keeps a first aid kit, which includes some non-prescription and homeopathic medications for emergencies. You will need to bring in and take home your medication daily.

Immunisation

We are required by law to keep a copy of the Certificate of Immunisation on file. Please bring this with you when you enrol your child. Children who are not immunised in the case of an outbreak will be required to remain at home for the duration of the outbreak.

Incidents

All child incidents or accidents will immediately be attended to by teachers. Parents will be notified of the incident and it will be recorded in the Incidents book.

Concerns and Complaints

Parents should feel free to discuss any queries or problems with the Centre Manager.

Please remember we may be busy at times and may need to schedule an appointment with the Centre Manager.

A policy for dealing with complaints is displayed on the parent's notice board. If you have any concerns or complaints relating to the operation of any Centre, please refer the matter to:

Ako Adventures
PO Box 97514
Manukau City, 2241

Or speak to the Centre Manager.