



FOSSIL BAY

school & kindergarten

Parent Handbook for Kindergarten

Fossil Bay Kindergarten - Parent Handbook

Educating the head, the heart and the hands

Welcome

Dear Parents and caregivers,

Welcome to Fossil Bay, School & Kindergarten. The school is a member of the Federation of Rudolf Steiner Schools in New Zealand and our approach is based on the philosophy of Rudolf Steiner.

We believe in order for a child to develop into a resilient and rounded individual all aspects of the child need to be developed in a gentle and non-competitive way. We teach in small classes, ensuring the needs of each individual student can be met.

We believe children do best in the early years without technology and that children thrive when given lots of opportunities to experience movement, arts, creativity and the natural world around them. The skills of creative thinking, collaboration and problem-solving are given more importance than memorising information.

We also believe that the future generations will look better after our planet if they spend a lot of time in nature. That is why our beautiful outdoors become our classroom for the day every Friday on top of daily outdoor activities.

We encourage people to learn more about Steiner philosophy. On joining the kindergarten you will have had an opportunity to meet with your child's teacher and to hear more about our educational approach. We also have a small library of books on Steiner Education in the office which is available to everyone. You are invited to learn more through discussions with the teachers, particularly through attendance at parent information evenings.

Please take time to read this handbook carefully. If you have any questions, suggestions, or concerns, please let us know so that we are all working together for the good of each child and the good of the whole community.

Iris Richter,
General Manager



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Who we are

We are a community of teachers, parents, and whānau here on Waiheke Island who are committed to creating a better future through the education of our children. We are passionate about Steiner-based education; an approach that provides holistic education, helping to develop well-rounded people who can think creatively, compassionately and independently.

“Receive the child in reverence

Educate him in love

Let him go forth in freedom”

Rudolf Steiner (1861 – 1925)

Vision

Our vision is to offer holistic education that nourishes our children, enriches our community and inspires innovative learning and creativity.

Mission

We offer Steiner education to children from 3-14 years of age in small classes in an unhurried and screen free way in a natural setting.

Strategic Pillars

Our strategy outlines that in order to achieve our vision we need to stay true to our values and balance our strategic pillars. Our strategic pillars are to DEEPEN the education offered while we EXPAND the offering to more students and families. The balance between the two must be maintained at all times.

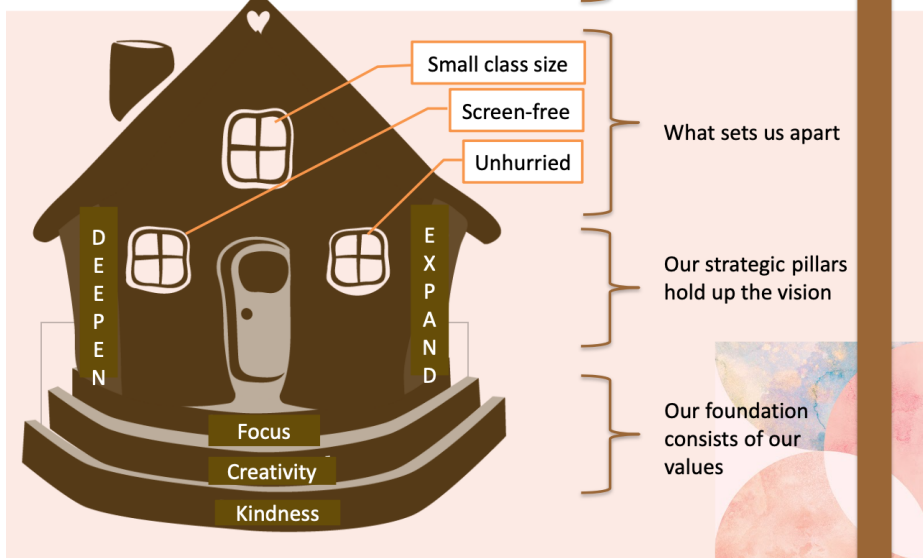
Values

Our values are the foundation of who we are and how we act. They were defined by our trustees in 2019 and are kind, creative and focused. These values guide us when recruiting for our teams and when faced with decisions. We always want to ensure we stay true to our values.

- Kind
- Creative
- Focused

Strategy in a picture

We believe in holistic education that nourishes our children, enriches our community and inspires innovative learning and creativity.



Philosophy Statement & the Kindergarten Environment

The philosophy of Fossil Bay Kindergarten is based on the guidelines given by the philosopher, Dr Rudolf Steiner, in his lectures on education and child development. As such, our kindergarten seeks to understand the physical, emotional, social, cognitive and spiritual aspects of the child whilst recognising and supporting the unique needs of each individual child in the developmental stages of childhood.

The kindergarten strives to provide a warm meaningful environment worthy of imitation to support the healthy development of the senses and to strengthen the child's developing will forces. Sensory impressions are carefully selected within the kindergarten environment and opportunities are provided for children to experience a range of purposeful activities and to experience caring and respectful relationships with both adults and children. Children model their behaviour on the examples they see around them. The efforts of teachers and adults to provide good human role models is seen as being paramount in the education of young children and in supporting positive behaviour.

In providing an appropriate environment to best support the healthy development of the young child we consider several key areas;

The Use of Rhythm to Support Physical and Emotional Well-Being

Rhythm helps children feel a sense of security and belonging and supports the healthy functioning of the body. In our kindergarten we work to provide a strong and consistent daily rhythm of activities including indoor and outdoor playtimes, meal-times, tidy time, circle time with song and movement and story time. The kindergarten rhythm also extends into a connection with the natural world. The foundation of the curriculum is the natural cycle of the year with its subsequent activities and seasonal festivals.

Development, Protection and Nourishment of the Senses

The child's developing senses in the early childhood years are characterised by a great openness and vulnerability. The child literally soaks up the impressions provided in the surrounding environment. Our kindergarten strives to provide an environment that nourishes and protects the senses of the child. Avoiding overstimulation of the senses helps to create a calm and harmonious environment in which a child can comfortably explore and learn. Our modern world is a vastly over stimulating world for the little child, who has to cope with a barrage of impressions flooding in every day. Consequently, sensory impressions are carefully selected within the kindergarten environment with deliberate use of natural materials and simple toys to delight the senses and encourage the imagination.

Learning through Doing

Children lay down the foundations for later abstract learning by first of all exploring through action. Learning begins with material, concrete experience and abstract thinking has its roots in such play in early childhood. Children explore willingly and creatively and without the need for adult intervention. In our kindergarten we believe that given an appropriate environment children learn at their own pace. Respect for the child's self-directed process of learning is vitally important and teachers are aware of supporting children's needs as opposed to interfering in their processes.

Learning through Imitation

Imitation is the primary way that children learn. Children model their behaviour on the examples they see around them. The task of teachers in our kindergarten is to be adults 'worthy of imitation' in every way. The children not only imitate our actions but also our attitudes, gestures, speech and ways of relating to others – in short; who we are. The efforts of teachers in providing good role models is of prime importance and requires the development of a degree of self-awareness and a willingness for self-development. Role modelling also requires teachers to be involved in their own purposeful work during the day. All activities are led in an inclusive way using these examples of role modelling and imitation. Oral language, listening and attention span are developed through song, rhyme and verse at circle time and through oral and puppet storytelling. The use of repetition and imitation at circle and story time is considered conducive to children's learning.

Play and the Imagination

The importance of self-initiated creative play in children's healthy development cannot be overemphasised. Play provides the basis for boundless learning opportunities including language skills, social skills, problem-solving skills, creativity and imagination. Ensuring adequate time and opportunity for creative play is an integral aspect of the daily rhythm of the kindergarten. The development of the imagination is acknowledged as a foundation for later creative thinking. In the kindergarten, imaginative play is nurtured through careful selection and quality of natural and simple play materials which offer a range of experiences arising out of a child's connection to daily life. We also include storytelling as a way to introduce the fairytale story world which children so readily inhabit. Simple toys extend the child's imagination and allow them to bring their own ideas and imaginative pictures into play. We believe that, for a child, play is an activity that demands full, serious and undisturbed application. In play children develop skills on the physical level and their senses and thinking ripen and diversify. As Rudolf Steiner said, "If a child has been able in his play to give up his whole loving being to the world around him, he will be able, in the serious tasks of later life, to devote himself with confidence and power to the service of the world."

The Importance of Physical Exploration and Movement

The provision of an outdoor play area is considered an essential aspect of our kindergarten environment providing ample opportunities for children's movement development. Indoor play is also a rich opportunity for children to explore movement. Teacher led movement at circle time encourages group interaction and further movement exploration.

Respect and Wonder

The fostering of a child's natural sense of wonder and the development of a respect for nature as well as humanity is an essential focus in our kindergarten. Children are encouraged to engage in respectful relationships with one another and to help care for the environment.

Nutrition

In the kindergarten mealtimes are an important aspect of the day. Teachers and children sit down for meals and we encourage healthy eating habits. Including children in food preparation (e.g. kindy buns) and mealtimes is an essential aspect of our curriculum.

Festivals

Festivals give opportunities for children to experience joy and wonder, a connection with the seasons, a gathering of community and a sense of belonging. Festivals, including birthdays, seasonal and cultural festivals, Easter and Christmas are celebrated within the kindergarten year. They are an important part of the yearly rhythm and an essential part of the calendar of nourishment for the human soul and spirit. The kindergarten celebrates both seasonal and Christian festivals and includes the wide community in these events. Festivals include, where possible, the culture of Aotearoa, by using the symbols, stories, or traditions of this land. Cultural experiences for all children are expanded in the kindergarten by acknowledging all children and their diverse backgrounds wherever possible.

Parents and Whanau

The kindergarten acknowledges the importance of the relationship between kindergarten staff and parents and whanau which aims to rest on mutual respect and communication.

The Treaty of Waitangi

The Bi-cultural heritage of Aotearoa is acknowledged and respected and teachers at the kindergarten work to authentically and meaningfully weave Te Reo into their teaching through song and story, as well as daily language. Tikanga Maori is a living practice flowing within the rhythm of daily work and play within our environment. Te Ao Maori is a treasured curriculum, and we seek to strengthen the relationship between indigenous and pakeha understanding.

The importance of the early years in laying foundations for a healthy and happy life is profoundly apparent. Through these principles and practices, the kindergarten endeavours to create a climate of early years' education which enables children to grow and develop into "free human beings who are able of themselves to impart purpose and direction into their lives". (Rudolf Steiner)



Rhythm of the kindy rooms - *An example*

Rhythms are different in each room and change depending on the children and seasons. Current rhythms can be found outside the kindy rooms.

8:30 am *Arrival and settling in.* Children are dropped off at the door, and welcomed inside. Inside activities include food preparation, baking, painting, drawing and craft. Children engage in free play with peers or in activity with or alongside a teacher.

9:45 am *Tidy time,* Children and teachers tidy the room together before gathering on the mat for Morning Circle, a joyful time of singing, verse and movement.

10:00 am *Morning team,* Children and teachers all sit together and enjoy their morning tea together after a food blessing. .

10:30 am *Outside time,* children play and explore the outdoor environment

11:30 am *Meal time.* Children and teachers all sit together and enjoy their lunch after a food blessing. Sometimes the children have baked the bread that they enjoy at the table.

12:15 pm *Free Play.* Children have the choice to engage in free play within the room, or outside in the garden and playground with the other kindergarten class.

1:30 pm *Snack and rest time.* Children have a small snack inside and then have a rest on a pillow while listening to singing or gentle music.

2:15 *Story time.* Teachers tell seasonal puppet stories

2:30 pm *Home time.* Children come out one by one as their parents or caregivers arrive.

Settling into Kindy

Following your expression of interest, a day for a visit will be scheduled. For your first visit you are invited to come with your child at a set time, preferably during our kindergarten outside time.

We encourage parents to let their child explore the environment and begin to connect with their peers and teachers. If you are busy it is helpful for the child to venture off and get busy too. Choose a spot to sit and let the child know that is where you will be. They can then come and go from you as they need to.

When the child is comfortable coming in independently they can begin joining us for full days from 8:30am. On these days, parents will be expected to say goodbye shortly after arriving.

We ask parents to please say goodbye at the door in the mornings and wait for your child at the door in the afternoons. Our space is small and children are just getting used to being without their parents, so having parents and caregivers come inside can be disruptive and sometimes upsetting to other children. We find this consistency is supportive to the children and to the group. Thank you for your understanding.

We respect that the process of settling is a unique journey for each child and family. We are here to support this to be as smooth a transition as it can be so please feel free to discuss this process with a teacher at any time. It is not ideal to chat during the session so a time can be made outside of session time to discuss things in more depth.

Practical Points

Arriving on time or notifying absences

As there is a rhythm to the day it does make a difference if children arrive into the group late, so it is important every effort is made to have your child ready to start at 8.30am.

If something interferes with you arriving at kindergarten on time, please text Kindy on **022 480 1002** before 8:30 am to let staff know that you will be late. Similarly please inform a teacher or leave a message with the office if you will be late to collect your child. If your child is absent, please text the number above.

Kindergarten doors open at 8.30am, please do not leave your child unattended in the playground before this time.

Signing in and out

It is a Ministry of Education requirement that the times you drop off and collect your child from the kindergarten are documented. **It is very important that parents and caregivers remember to write down and initial these times on the sign-in sheet at the beginning and end of each day.**



If someone else is to pick up your child, please also make a note of this on the sign in form and let a teacher know. If someone new is picking up your child please be sure to add their name and contact details to your child's enrolment form.

What to wear

Please bring a bag for your child with at least one full spare set of clothes and a wet gear bag each day.

- Named clothing
- Appropriate for the weather
- Minimal slogans, advertising or licensed pictures on clothing (such as Batman, Spiderman, Disney etc)
- Slippers or socks for inside
- Shoes or gumboots for walks (ideally shoes that are easy for the child to get on and off themselves)
- Sunhat (required outside at all times in Term 1 and Term 4)
- Warm hat for the cooler months
- Raincoat

Physical warmth is extremely important to the growing child. Please ensure they come with plenty of layers in the colder weather.

Sunscreen

If you wish for your child to wear sunscreen we encourage you to apply this before the session. If you would like us to apply sunscreen for them please give us permission on the enrolment form and preferably bring their own named sunscreen and speak directly with a teacher to arrange this.

Toys

It is preferable that children are discouraged from bringing toys from home. They can be distracting from their engagement here and create issues between children. We do acknowledge that sometimes a special toy can provide an important bridge between home and kindergarten when a child is settling. If your child has an essential need for the comfort of a home toy please let a teacher know and it can be stored in a basket in the room until your child can manage without it.

Food and Nutrition

Food and nutrition is of course an important part of a growing child's healthy development. In keeping with our philosophy we buy and encourage the use of nutritious, organic whole foods. We ask you to bring your child's morning tea and lunch packed in a lunch box. *On **birthdays** the child's family generally brings a cake or sorbet for sharing at morning tea. Please keep it simple with low sugar and no colourings and make sure it is allergen free (we have recipes if needed).*

Sleep and Rhythm

It is important that children with growing bodies have ample time for relaxation and sleep. They need to go to bed at a reasonable and regular time. Children who have not had enough sleep are often unable to participate in activities the following day. Lack of sleep also impedes their ability to learn.

The kindergarten day is based on a regular rhythm. Children greatly benefit from regular meal times, bed times, and activities at home.

Screen Time

Television viewing is now widely acknowledged as being harmful for young children. (The American Paediatric Assoc. recommends zero TV for under 2 year olds.) The teachers find it detrimental to the aims of Waldorf education and for this reason television and video viewing are not recommended at all. Similarly, computer games are equally harmful, damaging and inappropriate. For the young child, excessive nerve-sense stimulation will not help build a healthy mind, body or strong soul life. The following books/ articles will help explain further the issue surrounding television/ videos and computer viewing.

- *Four arguments for the elimination of television*, by Jerry Mander
- *The plug-in drug*, by Marie Winn
- *Who's bringing them up*, By Martin Large
- *Television*, By Mary Tait-Jamieson

Becoming Involved

Our kindergarten was founded on parental involvement. Today we continue to foster a cooperative community which is stimulated by the parents.

Voluntary work is crucial to the wellbeing of our kindergarten, and we ask that each family contribute in whatever way they can. With the rotating and sharing of roles the wellbeing of our community as a whole is maintained.

To ensure the continued smooth running of the kindergarten, we ask that families: *participate in fundraising, attend parent evenings and parent education events, assist in property and maintenance tasks where able, support in the coordination of Festivals and communicate ideas or concerns clearly to the appropriate person.*

The annual **Harvest Fair** is held at the end of Term 1 each year. This is our main fundraiser for the Steiner Community, and we ask for your commitment and contribution towards this event.

These activities add to the social and physical development of the kindergarten, and strengthen the commitment of our community through a sense of purpose and shared contribution.

Your family might have particular talents that could benefit the kindergarten. Please approach the General Manager if you would like to offer your special skills and ideas.

Parent Teacher Meetings

Individual parent teacher meetings are offered regularly. This is an opportunity to discuss your child, their progress, goals, and any concerns you may have. If you would like to arrange a meeting outside of the scheduled times please ask.

Parent Evenings

Meetings with the whole parent body are held regularly to support your understanding of and connection to your child's education. There will be discussions on Steiner education, child development, coming events and other relevant themes. The evening can also involve an artistic activity and there is always something delicious to eat and drink. We ask that **a representative from each family attends each meeting**. They are an important part of our special character, as a non profit, parent supported kindergarten. These events also offer valuable opportunities to connect with teachers and the greater parent community.

Parent Education

Throughout the year, and also in conjunction with the festivals, seminars and workshops are offered to parents to deepen their understanding of child development in the light of Steiner Education and Anthroposophy. Parents are encouraged to attend for their own benefit and for the benefit of the education initiative as a whole.

Fundraising

While parent contributions and Government funding pay for the day to day running of the Kindergarten, fundraising brings improvements and renewal. We would love to hear from you if you have ideas or enthusiasm to support this very important task. Every member of our community is called on to contribute to our fundraising efforts during our largest annual event which is the **Harvest Fair**. Additional fundraising is done in the form of grant writing and the solicitation of donations from other sources. Fundraising deepens our profile in the wider community and brings parents together as a community working toward a common goal.

Working Bees

We have termly working bees during which parents work together to care for the Kindergarten environment. Some terms we have big projects on the go and other times it is more maintenance and repairs. Working bees nurture community spirit in our Kindergarten & School and help to maintain a beautiful and safe environment for the children. We ask that a representative from each family attend **a minimum of three working bees per year**. If you have any specific skills that you can offer – building, plumbing, gardening, sewing etc. please let the manager know. The children love observing their parents taking interest and pride into their environment.

Festivals

The rhythm of the year is marked by celebrating the seasonal and Christian festivals such as Autumn, Winter, Spring, Easter and Advent. Many of these festivals are celebrated with the wider community. We strongly encourage families to attend these festivals. In kindergarten, preceding the festival the children work on activities and learn songs that come to fruition at the festival. There is a sense of disappointment and non-completion if the festival is missed. Certain festivals, such as the lantern festival require contributions from families in the form of food, time and organisation. They are special events and involvement from our parent community supports us in making them possible.

Parent Library

For further reading, please feel free to borrow books from our parent library, located in the office.

Craft Group

If you are interested in being involved to reinstate a parent craft group that regularly meets and makes crafts for Kindergarten fundraising please let a teacher know.

Newsletter

Newsletters are sent out at regular intervals throughout each term via email. Please take the time to read these. The newsletter has important information around upcoming events as well as offering a glimpse into the recent happenings in the kindergarten. If you wish to include anything in the newsletter please email comms@fossilbay.co.nz

Building Relationships

In the morning prior to class, staff spend time preparing inwardly and outwardly for the day ahead then greeting and settling children when they arrive. Like all Waldorf teachers, they begin their day with a verse together before opening the doors (another element of our special character).

While a quick message is fine in the mornings, please refrain from entering into lengthy discussions with teachers at this time.

The teachers do want to hear your questions and concerns; the appropriate time for this is either after the session or at a pre arranged appointment.

It is very important that close contact between teacher and parent is maintained. Parents are asked to discreetly inform the teacher, if there has been some upset or change which might affect the child's emotional state at kindergarten (e.g. death of a pet, parent away, poor sleep, not eating breakfast etc).

Teachers will visit a child at home when there is a need. These visits help to grow the picture of the child for the teacher, and strengthen the relationships between child, teacher and family.

Documentation

- Journey books with the children's learning stories are sent home at the end of the term with an invitation for families to add to it. We ask for them to be returned after the holidays for further additions.
- Unless a court order rules otherwise, all parents and guardians (whether separated or not) have access to the below. Please ask your teacher.
 - Reports about their child's participation in ECE and learning experiences
 - Participate in the opportunities provided by the ECE service to engage with parents
 - Have access to any official records held at the service related to their child's participation in that service



- The kindergarten's Education Review Office reports can at all times be found on Fossil Bay's website. Reports from ERO are also free and available from the local ERO office on request. They can also be downloaded from the Education Review Office (<https://ero.govt.nz>).
- The Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008 are available printed in the office at all times or can be viewed here:
 - <https://www.legislation.govt.nz/regulation/public/2008/0204/latest/DLM1412501.html>
- The Licensing Criteria for Early Childhood Education and Care Centres 2008 are available at the office at all times or can be viewed here:
 - <https://www.education.govt.nz/early-childhood/licensing-and-regulations/the-regulatory-framework-for-ece/licensing-criteria/centre-based-ece-services/>
- Fossil Bay is a registered charity and its annual reports (including finances and funding from MOE) are presented to the community at its annual AGM. This is an open meeting. Annual reports can freely be accessed via the Charities Services website:
 - (<https://register.charities.govt.nz/CharitiesRegister/ViewCharity?accountId=adf74a4a-f18b-dc11-98a0-0015c5f3da29&searchId=fe53d603-2a38-4e00-93a6-bdab0e12635c>)

Management and Governance

Waiheke Island Rudolf Steiner Education Trust

Fossil Bay Kindergarten is a fully licensed Early Childhood Centre. As such it is required to have a licensee and must consistently work to meet all relevant government legislation and regulations.

The kindergarten operates under the umbrella of the **Waiheke Island Rudolf Steiner Education Trust**. The Trust is registered under the Charitable Trusts Act and a not-for-profit organisation. The Trust is the legal owner of the school & kindergarten and is responsible for providing land, buildings and other resources. The Trust has delegated the daily running of the school & kindergarten to the General Manager with support from the Staff and the Parent Support Group. The Trust also provides support for the Playcircle (0-3 year olds) group.

Management & Administration

The General Manager, Administrator and Finance Officer deal with the overall running of the Kindergarten and the Administrator is the first point of communication for most areas. Please feel free to email info@fossilbay.co.nz or call 09 372 2152 with any questions you may have.

The College of Teachers

We always fulfill legal requirements for qualified teacher to child ratios in our kindergarten. The teachers take responsibility for the harmonious running of the curriculum in each room.

We endeavour to employ teachers who are ECE qualified and Steiner trained and support further Steiner training through our professional development programme.

Teachers in Rudolf Steiner schools and kindergartens meet weekly, being responsible for the educational and spiritual well-being of the Centre. This work includes professional and personal development, child observation and study, curriculum matters etc. All of our teachers are part of the College of Teachers which works with a lateral, non-hierarchical structure.

Policies and Procedures

Copies of these documents are in the Operations Manual in the office. Parents are encouraged to contribute their ideas and opinions and you will be invited to make comments on the policies as they come up for review. Please look on the notice board and read your emails for current policies under review.

Funding

The Kindergarten is a registered Early Childhood Centre and as such receives 20 hours ECE subsidy from the government for children aged 3-5. However, this is a long way short of covering our expenses hence we ask for an additional optional charge. Optional charges are a request for a

payment that parents may choose whether or not to make for specific expenses that are above what is required to meet the minimum regulated standards, such as high level of staffing, organic food staples as part of the food preparation curriculum, additional natural first aid supplies, festivals and events. Once an agreement to pay has been reached on the enrolment form then the service may enforce payment. Should there be reasons for financial difficulty, please arrange for an appointment with the General Manager to discuss.

All enrolled days (not including public holidays) must be paid for even if your child is absent.

Statements outlining the parent contributions are sent out once per term. Please contact the Finance Administrator on finance@fossilbay.co.nz if you have any issues around paying these invoices promptly. This allows us to buy products in bulk and reduce overall costs considerably.

We are also required by law to have our accounts audited each year for the Ministry of Education and the Charities Commission.

Optional charges for parents

Within ECE government subsidy

| | 2024 |
|---------------------------------|-------|
| PLAYCIRCLE, 0-3 yr olds, | |
| Donation per session | \$12 |
| KINDY, 3-5 yr olds | |
| P operating wk enrolled 3 dys | \$65 |
| P operating wk enrolled 4 dys | \$97 |
| P operating wk enrolled 5 dys | \$126 |
| P day in holiday program | \$29 |
| KINDY, 6 yr olds | |
| P operating wk enrolled 5 dys | \$197 |

Fortunately there is a memorandum with the ministry that Steiner children can stay in a kindergarten while they are 6, even though the law states that 6 year olds need to be attending school. This exception does not translate to ministry funding. Once the child turns 6 we stop receiving ECE funding from the government. The kindy fee to parents thus changes from kindergarten fees to school fees (please see above), which is a flat 5 day a week fee. Unfortunately at the same time this is an increase of fees to families, it is a decrease of income to the kindergarten.

Concerns and Complaints

The health of our community depends on establishing and practising open lines of communication. This involves trust and taking care that issues are raised in a constructive way for discussion.

We strongly encourage all parents to approach their teacher first with a concern or complaint. It is normal for issues to arise from time to time, and very often a quiet chat, at a time when the teacher can listen fully without responsibilities for the care of the class, is all that is needed to set minds at ease. If you feel that no progress has been made, then your concerns should be communicated to the General Manager who will meet with the college of teachers and/or the Trust to discuss the issue. The complete Complaints Procedure can be found in the policy folder in the office.

Enrolment procedure

Families considering enrolment of children into kindergarten are asked to read this parent handbook thoroughly and discover the principals which rest at the heart of the Waldorf/Steiner curriculum and methodology.

When an Expression of Interest form has been completed online a child can then be put on our waiting list. When a space becomes available in the kindergarten, the parents/caregivers will be sent an online application form to fill in and then contacted for an interview with a teacher to discuss the offered education and the child's biography and kindergarten readiness. A meeting with the manager to sign the application form on paper needs to be arranged prior to starting.

Priority Groups

If there are more applicants than there are spaces available, the following groups will take priority when accepting applicants:

- Children with siblings currently enrolled in Fossil Bay Kindergarten.
- Children of permanent staff.
- Siblings of current Fossil Bay School students.
- Children who are currently enrolled at other Steiner Schools or Kindergartens in New Zealand or overseas.
- Other preference applicants, eg home-schooled with a Steiner Curriculum.

The enrolment process for children entering kindergarten is managed by the Administrator, General Manager and Teachers. Please feel free to contact the office at any time with questions or queries about the process.

Withdrawal

If withdrawing your child from the kindergarten, whatever the reason, it is helpful for us to have feedback and an understanding of your decision. Acknowledgement of the departure is an important process for both the child leaving and also the friends they are leaving behind, and will be marked in an appropriate way for the child.

Three weeks' notice (or payment in lieu thereof) is required before withdrawing your child. Please pay all outstanding contributions at the time of notice or make arrangements to pay them.

Absence

Please notify the kindy on the morning when your child will not be attending by texting 021 174 2445. Parents are expected to pay for all days your child is enrolled to attend.

Long term absences

If parents intend to remove their child for three weeks or longer, the Kindergarten requests and appreciates a letter to be written to the General Manager advising of this extended absence.

Options to hold a place upon return:

- Pay 100% fees while away to ensure a placement upon return.
- Pay 50% fees while away to have priority placement on return.

These pledges are necessary, as the kindergarten loses funding for that child from MoE after three weeks of absence. There are limited places available and if no payments are made, the space will be filled.

Health and Safety

Illness

If your child has a communicable disease such as mumps, measles, whooping cough, chicken pox, impetigo (school sores) this must be communicated promptly to the teacher or office and they **must be kept home**. If you suspect this is the case or are uncertain please seek a medical practitioner's advice. The Health Department recommends **48 hours lapse before a child returns to a centre after they have had fever, diarrhoea or vomiting**.

Teeth

The Te Huruhi School Dental Therapist manages the dental needs of our children and encourages the enrolment of preschool children.

Head Lice

In a kindergarten environment lice can travel easily from head to head and it is important that parents check their children's heads and hair weekly. If you should come across lice for the first time, do not be alarmed. Please start treatment straight away, keep your child home and ensure your child's head and hair is clear before returning to kindergarten. Your teacher can offer advice on identification and treatment.

Vaccination

Fossil Bay Kindergarten respects the right of parents to choose, but we are required by law to maintain a register with evidence of vaccination or non vaccination for children in the kindergarten.

Medicines

On enrolling your child you have the option to consent to the use of Weleda homeopathic creams and other natural medicines. If your child is required to take a medicine for a specific purpose it must be handed to a teacher directly and signed into the medicine register. Please discuss this with a teacher as needed.

Fossil Bay Steiner Playcircle

Playcircle is an opportunity for parents and caregivers with young children (from birth to 3 years) to come together for a relaxed and rhythmical morning of baking bread, singing, free play, and a simple seasonal puppet story.

It is a wonderful introduction to Steiner education and assists the children in their transition into our kindergarten environment whilst fostering a spirit of parent community and connection. Playcircle currently runs on Mondays and Fridays from 9:00am – 11:00pm in the yurt..

For information and enrolment please visit our website or email info@fossilbay.co.nz

Fossil Bay School

In order to continue with Steiner education on the island, families can enrol their children at Fossil Bay School. When children turn 5, we recommend they remain at Fossil Bay Kindergarten until the end of the year, then begin school at the start of the following year. Fossil Bay School is a fully-registered, independent school. This incarnation of the school began at Fossil Bay in May 2017 with Classes 1 through to 4. The school is working with mixed aged classes. The children move through their schooling together, ideally with the same teacher, which ensures strong bonds between the children, teacher and families.

In Steiner education, the primary years focus on education through inner engagement. Imagination, storytelling and the arts are of paramount importance. The approach to learning is unhurried and joyful. The aim is to provide a balanced education for the head, the heart, and the hands.

Festivals, connection with nature, and the rhythm of the seasons continue to be central in the primary school years. Each year, week and day is carried by regular rhythms, predictable yet flexible. The rhythm of the day begins with Morning Circle, which includes verse, singing, movement and coordination activities so that the children are alert and ready for focussed learning. This is followed by a Main Lesson, an in-depth study of a particular topic every day for 3-4 weeks, for example 'People at Work' in Class 3 or 'Ancient Greece' in Class 5. Following morning break, there is time for practice lessons, for example mathematics or reading. After lunch, are the practical lessons, such as painting, handwork, or gardening.

Te reo and tikanga Māori are woven throughout the school. All children participate in kapa haka. The curriculum is grounded in the here and now, content from Aotearoa New Zealand runs in parallel with aspects that are likely to be found in Steiner schools all over the globe.

Parental commitment is required to ensure its continued growth and success. A strong sense of community is being built through these collective efforts. For further information, including the current fee structure, please contact info@fossilbay.co.nz

Who was Rudolf Steiner?

Rudolf Steiner (1861 – 1925) was born in Kraljevec (which was then part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and is now part of Croatia), to Austrian parents. At age 11 he attended the Realschule in Wiener-Neustadt, Southwest of Vienna. On attaining his school leaving examination certificate at age 18, Rudolf Steiner attended the Technical College in Vienna where he studied biology, chemistry, physics and mathematics.

During this period, he furthered his interest in natural science and developed an interest in philosophy. Between 1882 and 1897, Rudolf Steiner was active in teaching and writing, including the editing of Goethe's natural-scientific writings, and he worked at the Goethe-Schiller Archive in Weimar. In 1891, he submitted his PH.D thesis on philosophy at Rostock University. The content of this later appeared in his book "The Philosophy of Freedom" (1894).

As a scientist, artist and philosopher, looking at the problems facing the 20th century, Rudolf Steiner saw that science, religion and art had taken separate paths. Science was becoming coldly factual, art too personal, and religion too often academic. He realised that if a new and positive culture was to arise, then science, art and spiritual experience must be renewed and brought together again. Where their special qualities affect and help each other positively, science becomes morally creative, art universal, and spiritual experience more real. In such a way, social life, based on the individual's concern for the welfare of others, would develop in a beneficial manner.

Through his own insight, and with disciplined research into the spiritual nature of man and the universe, Rudolf Steiner spent the last 25 years of his life bringing a new understanding of man to the world, Spiritual Science, which became known as 'Anthroposophy' (wisdom of man). By his living experience he shared it with thousands of others through conversation, lectures, books, sketches, paintings, sculpture and architecture. In response to requests from his contemporaries, he also gave new impulses from his experiences of Anthroposophy to those working in the artistic realms of drama, speech and movement, architecture, sculpture, painting and music, as well as in education, the sciences, medicine, agriculture, astronomy, politics and sociology.

Waldorf Education

Rudolf Steiner schools had their beginnings in the midst of the social chaos of Germany in 1919. Emil Molt, owner of the Waldorf Astoria cigarette factory, bought and equipped school buildings for the

children of his workers and invited Rudolf Steiner to help create an educational method and a curriculum that would work positively towards social development. Rudolf Steiner created a school which would enable the children to develop personal capacities in such a way that they would have the strength, integrity and hope, to work for a positive economic, cultural and spiritual future.

The first school, known as the Free Waldorf School, grew rapidly to a thousand pupils, from kindergarten to high school. Soon, other schools opened worldwide.

Rudolf Steiner community in New Zealand

The Federation of Rudolf Steiner Waldorf Schools in NZ - www.rudolfsteinerfederation.org.nz

Anthroposophical Society of NZ - www.anthroposophy.org.nz

Weleda - www.weleda.co.nz

The Biodynamic Farming & Gardening association in New Zealand - www.biodynamic.org.nz

Taruna College/Essential Adult Education/Waldorf, Steiner learning - www.taruna.ac.nz

The Team

Trust members

Mike Delamore, Arne Nieuwenhuys, Sally Howe, Chris Howard, Rachel Barrington

Trust chairman

Arne Nieuwenhuys, trust@fossilbay.co.nz

Lead Teacher - Kindergarten

Emma Cole, emma@fossilbay.co.nz

Teaching Principal - School

Donna Smith, principal@fossilbay.co.nz

General Manager

Iris Richter, management@fossilbay.co.nz

Finance Administrator

Helen Smith, finance@fossilbay.co.nz

The Final Words

Fossil Bay Kindergarten welcomes feedback arising from your transition into our environment. Please drop your feedback into the office or contact the office by email: info@fossilbay.co.nz. If you would like us to contact you about your questions and suggestions, concerns or feedback, please also leave your contact details.



Welcome and thank you for taking the time to read the parent handbook.

This handbook was updated on 14/12/23