



Policies and Procedures

Current as of September 2026

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Assessment, Planning and Evaluation Policy

Te Whāriki: Whakamana | Empowerment, Kotahitanga | Holistic Development, Mana aotūroa | Exploration

Licensing Criteria: C101 | C102 | C103 | C107 | C111 | C112

Policy Statement

At Play and Learn we aim for assessment, planning and evaluation to be a mana-enhancing process for tamariki, parents and whānau. It is conducted in ways that uphold the principles of Te Whāriki. Our curriculum is informed by ongoing assessment, planning and evaluation, and by meaningful partnership with tamariki, whānau, and the wider community.

Purpose

- To gather and use information about tamariki learning to inform curriculum planning and improve learning outcomes.
- To plan programmes which reflect Te Whāriki, the Early Childhood Curriculum, and is based on the strengths, interests and life contexts of individuals, and groups of tamariki.
- To reflect on and evaluate the effectiveness of the programme, and the progress of children.
- To use that evaluation to improve teaching practice and outcomes for tamariki.
- To partner with whānau and tamariki in the assessment and planning process, recognising their knowledge as essential.

Assessment

Assessment is the process of noticing children's learning, recognising its significance, and responding in ways that foster further learning. At Play and Learn, assessment is both informal and formal, and is used to make learning visible and to inform teaching.

- Kaiako gather information about tamariki through observation, conversations with tamariki, whānau and kaiako, and through participation in everyday experiences.
- We use narrative assessment to record observations and learning stories, linked to theory and next steps for tamariki.
- Documentation such as Learning Journeys, Storypark and learning notes are used as records of learning and assessment, and are available to tamariki and whānau at all times.
- All kaiako contribute to the observation, assessment, planning and evaluation process for all tamariki.
- Kaiako keep up to date with current developments and best practice in early childhood assessment.

Primary Kaiako

- Each tamaiti has a primary kaiako who works to know that child well, assesses their strengths, interests and areas for development, and oversees and maintains their Learning Journey.
- Whānau are encouraged to discuss their child's documentation with their child's primary kaiako at any time.
- Student teachers/kaiako on placement may contribute to tamariki Learning Journeys under the guidance of a registered kaiako.

Planning

Programme planning is based on the strengths, interests and areas for development of tamariki, developed in consultation with whānau and tamariki.

- Kaiako develop and implement plans for learning that reflect the curriculum priorities and learning outcomes of Te Whāriki.
- Planning incorporates both individual plans for tamariki and the learning of the group as a whole.
- Kaiako regularly discuss, reflect and plan with tamariki, respecting their preferences and involving them in decisions about their learning.

- Planning is responsive and flexible, adjusted as new information about tamariki learning, interests and needs becomes available.

Whānau Voice and Partnership

- Whānau are encouraged to share their aspirations, knowledge and observations of their tamariki in a variety of ways, including kōrero, parent voice contributions in Storypark, and through regular formal and informal opportunities to communicate with kaiako.
- Kaiako actively seek and incorporate whānau perspectives into planning and evaluation.

Tamariki Voice and Self-Assessment

- Tamariki are encouraged to reflect on and assess their own learning as part of the assessment process.
- Kaiako create opportunities for tamariki to revisit their Learning Journeys, contribute their own observations, and be involved in decisions about their learning.

Evaluation

Kaiako regularly reflect on and evaluate the effectiveness of the programme offered to tamariki. This evaluation is used to inform future planning and improve outcomes for tamariki and their whānau.

- Kaiako discuss, reflect and evaluate the programme as a team, considering how effectively the curriculum is meeting the strengths, interests and needs of all tamariki.
- Internal evaluation considers how well the service's curriculum planning and implementation is supporting children's learning and progress, and what changes would strengthen practice.
- Findings from internal evaluation are documented and used to set priorities and inform planning at programme, team and service level.
- Assessment information is used to identify where additional support may be needed for individual tamariki, and to connect with external agencies or specialists where appropriate.

Confidentiality

- All assessment documentation, Learning Journeys and information about tamariki and their whānau is treated as confidential.
- Assessment records are accessible only to the tamaiti's own whānau, their primary kaiako, other kaiako working with that child, and — where required — relevant agencies or professionals, with whānau consent.
- Kaiako maintain confidentiality in accordance with the Privacy Act 2020 and Play and Learn's Privacy Policy.

Related Policies: Privacy Policy | Parental Involvement Policy | Social and Emotional Development Policy | Review Policy

Legislation: Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008, Regulation 43 | Education and Training Act 2020 | Privacy Act 2020 | Licensing Criteria C101, C102, C103, C107, C111, C112

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Parents informed:	Policy distributed via parent policy book each December and available on request at any time.

Play Policy

Te Whāriki: Exploration | Mana aotūroa

All tamariki are intrinsically driven to play. Play is an inborn and natural activity, a behavioural imperative that has its roots in the evolutionary experience of mankind (*Play Wales*).

The United Nations "Recognises the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts" (*UNCROC: Article 31*).

Play is a behaviour which is:

- **Freely Chosen** - tamariki choose WHAT they do, themselves.
- **Personally Directed** - tamariki choose HOW they do something.
- **Intrinsically Motivated** - tamariki choose WHY they do something.
- Performed for no external goal or reward.

Purpose

Play is a child's first-hand learning, undertaken by trial and error. Through play tamariki develop:

- Neurological foundations enabling problem solving, language and creativity.
- How to relate with others.
- How to calibrate their muscles and bodies and how to think in abstract terms.
- Social skills such as rules, communication, negotiation and listening.
- Skills and attitudes about themselves, others and their world.
- To experience the fundamental joy of Play

Through the freedom, choice, control, and experience they learn:

- About themselves and how to interact with others and their environment, including the natural world.
- Physical, social, mental, emotional and creative skills which are critical to the creation of self-esteem and confidence. These skills encourage emotional intelligence, an increasingly important attribute for successful functioning in the 21st century.
- Enriched play experiences are crucial - these have lasting effects on later cognitive development and the capacity to think and process information.

Procedure

- Operate a democratic child-led play programme.
- Recognise tamariki as competent and capable, in contrast to vulnerable or cute.
- Kaiako and tamariki have a voice and influence plans, goals, policies, activities, rules and the programme.
- Child initiated play does not mean a "free for all" - everyone, including tamariki, must respect the rights of others and their environment.

Everyone has the right to:

- Express and influence their preferences, ideas, reasons and the programme.
- Express their views and influence rules and policy about health and safety, behavioural management, play, and games.

Environment

The environment is maintained to support play - it is essential for rich experiences. Tamariki begin to understand themselves and to respect, create and make sense of their geographical world, together with the significance of being a citizen of their own and the wider community. Kaiako plan a safe, realistic play environment which:

- Provides invitations and provocations for tamariki.

- Stimulates the senses through music, sounds, tastes, smells, colours, and different textures.
- Engages with the natural world including direct experience and opportunities with fire, water, air and earth.
- Provides a varied landscape and access to materials, tools, loose parts, challenge and safe risk taking, with opportunities for technology, construction and change.
- Provides opportunities to explore and play with literacy, numeracy, science, engineering, art, and technology.
- Provides opportunities for tamariki to view themselves as autonomous, competent, confident and capable.
- Includes traditional knowledge, stories and local histories.
- Provides for autonomy, variety, creativity, challenge and safe risk taking.
- Provides for enjoyment, choice, joy and a sense of freedom.
- Develops an appreciation, respect and appropriate use and understanding of different spaces.
- Encourages testing and trying out ideas or concepts with language with each other and the wider world.
- Provides a safe place where emotions can be experienced and understood, where slowing down, time and space are seen as part of that safe place.
- Provides space for practice at emotional flexibility through surprise and the unforeseen.
- Provides opportunities to play with identity, and to see this as valued - who they are and what they look like, and with the concept of identity in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Aggressive, Rough and Tumble, and Superhero Play

Aggressive, rough and tumble, and superhero play develops alertness and imaginative responses, while tamariki learn to be observant and study other children to identify strategies. Tamariki understand that play has structure and rules, which they recognise when created by themselves. They use their imagination to explore moral values and dilemmas to establish what they and others perceive as right and wrong. They learn to set and comply with rules.

Kaiako will ensure all feelings and ideas can be safely expressed. They will:

- Ensure safety practices and strategies (rules) are in place, and tamariki who do not wish to be included in this type of play are kept safe.
- Tamariki learn that STOP means Stop
- Discourage aggressive toys such as guns and swords from being brought to the service.
- If tamariki choose aggressive types of play, ensure they are aware of the strict rules around safe play - kaiako may intervene if play becomes unsafe.
- Inform whānau and discuss behaviour guidance techniques if their child is frequently displaying aggressive behaviour.
- Place safe limits on aggressive play, whether physical or verbal, to ensure a safe environment for all tamariki.

Sex Play

Sex play may be typical for some children. It involves children touching, pointing and naming parts of the body. There may need to be limits put around some types of play.

Age-appropriate behaviour includes:

Two and three year olds may:

- Show interest in the different positions adopted by boys and girls while urinating. Talk about the differences between sexes. Attempt to urinate standing up (girls).
- Masturbate.
- Be interested in the differences between the sexes.
- Learn to name body parts.
- Not want anyone to touch their buttocks.

A four year old may:

- Be extremely conscious of the navel.
- Under social stress, hold genitals and need to urinate.
- Play the game of "show".
- Be very interested in other people's toilets.

- Call others names related to toileting, and make jokes related to toileting.
- Masturbate.
- Demand privacy for self, but be interested in the toilet behaviour of others.
- Be inquisitive about each other's bodies.

Children will be taught that their body belongs to them.

Kaiako will observe and discuss with the team instances of frequent or inappropriate sex play. Whānau will be notified of any inappropriate sex play involving their child.

Related Policies: Physical Activity Policy | Social & Emotional Development Policy | Risk and Benefits Policy | Child Protection Policy

Legislation: Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008 | United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child – Article 31 | Licensing Criteria C107, C108, C109, C110

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Physical Activity Policy

Te Whāriki: Wellbeing | Mana atua | Exploration | Mana aotūroa

Purpose

To promote the benefits of physical activities and to ensure tamariki experience safe physical activity in all dimensions of play.

To provide ongoing education for kaiako, whānau and tamariki about the benefits of being physically active.

To encourage an enjoyment of movement and physical activity - a lifelong disposition.

To encourage tamariki to develop an understanding of their bodies and their capabilities

To ensure tamariki are supported to move confidently and challenge themselves physically.

Procedure

- Outdoor areas will be available to all tamariki at all practical times. Limiting outdoor access may be appropriate at times for health or safety reasons, such as extreme weather conditions or hazards requiring resolution.
- Physical activities will be available to tamariki at all times.
- Appropriate equipment will be provided and resources will be well maintained, including climbing equipment.
- As part of the daily programme there will be planned and spontaneous opportunities provided to develop:
 - General stamina and fitness; gross motor skills; throwing and catching skills; eye/hand coordination; balance; challenge; locomotor and non-locomotor movement; midline exercises; and sensory experiences.
- Where possible tamariki will have the opportunity to participate in swimming lessons. Preference will be given to tamariki who attend four or more days a week.
- Tamariki will have regular opportunities to participate in physically active excursions and hikoi. Tamariki will be supported to develop an understanding that skills and knowledge can be built up and used in a variety of places, including forest and beyond.
- Tamariki will have the opportunity to increase their level of physical fitness and stamina.
- Funds will be allocated for the purchase of resources for physical activity and for professional development for staff.

Related Policies: Play Policy | Water Safety Policy | Tree Climbing Safety Procedure | Risk and Benefits Policy | Excursions and Outings Policy

Legislation: Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008 | Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 | Licensing Criteria C108, PF101, PF112

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Play and Learn

Social Competence Policy

Comply with Children's Action Plan & Children's Act 2014

Belonging | Mana whenua 4: Children experience an environment where they know the limits and boundaries of acceptable behaviour.

Purpose

All tamariki come with unique individual potential. This should be nurtured through understanding and effective, gentle, respectful guidance.

From a traditional Māori perspective, the child is endowed with spiritual potential or a divine spirit which must be upheld.

Respect, affection, acceptance and self-confidence are goals which guide our practice when working with tamariki.

To provide an environment where tamariki do not hurt themselves, or others, disturb others' work or misuse property.

To provide an environment where

- Tamariki are respected as unique, capable and competent.
- Kaiako recognise that social competence is an ongoing learning process. Clear expectations, limits and goals for behaviour are understood.
- There are genuine opportunities for uninterrupted play, active exploration, challenge, cooperation, problem solving, discovery and enjoyment, where tamariki are free to choose from a range of appropriate learning opportunities that enhance their interests, skills and abilities, to provide a safe and positive social environment.
- Tamariki are supported to develop emotional literacy where they learn to recognise and understand feelings, behaviours and responses, over time.
- Developmental understandings, expectations, space and set up of the environment, is taken into consideration.

Strategies

Positive and respectful methods for kaiako to use will include:

- verbalising acceptable behavioural expectations to tamariki, not what they don't want.
- modelling positive pro-social skills — tamariki will always be observing you.
- empowering tamariki to use language and communication to solve their own problems. Providing coaching on peaceful problem-solving strategies is sometimes necessary, e.g. “tell Sam you would like a turn when he is finished” NOT “use your words”.
- allowing tamariki time to react and to process information, i.e. by approaching the situation and asking “what's happening here?”, empathising, and reflecting, then offering choices to the child on how to try things differently.
- ensuring tamariki have time to complete work, or their turn, before moving on.
- offering choices and empowering tamariki to have a voice in decisions concerning them.
- using both verbal and nonverbal strategies to ensure tamariki understand.
- assisting tamariki to verbalise the actions they want to happen — not “use your words”.

- offering explanations about why behaviours are unacceptable, inform tamariki of the desired behaviour and then move on. Not “we don't do that here”.
- empathising, listening, talking, reflecting and explaining — relating behaviour to safety concepts, rules and emotional harm that may be caused to others.
- thinking about, accepting and naming the emotion the tamaiti is feeling e.g. are you feeling disappointed, frustrated, sad, angry.
- talking calmly, empathising, but firmly, explaining appropriate or unacceptable behaviour, highlighting that the behaviour, and not the child, that is unacceptable.
- occasionally choosing to ignore or redirect some behaviours, i.e. guide tamariki towards more appropriate activity.
- respecting tamariki's right to play and to have their work valued. Conversations are about taking turns, instead of sharing.
- for extremely inappropriate behaviour, one-on-one time, or “sit and watch” with a kaiako may be used. This offers tamariki time away from others and stressful situations.

Resources and Assessment Tools

Kaiako strengthen and inform their practice using guidance and assessment resources including He Māpuna te Tamaiti (Ministry of Education, 2019) — Supporting Social and Emotional Competence in Early Learning — and Kōwhiri Whakapae. Communication-specific strategies are supported by resources such as Te Kōrerorero — Talking Together (Te Whāriki Online).

A calm and peaceful, but firm manner should be used to ensure dignity is upheld and respected, while expectations are clarified.

No tamariki will be subjected to any form of physical ill-treatment, solitary confinement, immobilisation or deprivation of food, drink, warmth, shelter or protection. Corporal punishment or any kind of physical ill-treatment, solitary confinement, or deprivation of any kind is unlawful under the Education and Training Act 2020; blame, and harsh or degrading language, are not acceptable management strategies at Play and Learn.

Kaiako must maintain consistency when managing inappropriate behaviour, however a holistic approach will consider individual differences in age, ability, social, cultural and personal backgrounds.

Kaiako will work with whānau, team leaders and managers to develop individual guidance plans where appropriate. All behaviour is recognised as a form of communication — kaiako will look beyond the behaviour to consider any underlying issues or needs. As part of our commitment to open communication, and working in partnership, we will converse with whānau about inappropriate behaviours and consult about plans to modify this. If difficulties persist despite whānau involvement and guidance strategies, parents will be asked to seek further professional guidance through early intervention, learning support services, or health professional services.

We are reflective practitioners and are aware that our own beliefs, values and biases have an impact and can influence our responses to tamariki and whānau.

Tamariki do need to acknowledge when they have hurt someone by finding ways to make amends, such as a cuddle or a cold cloth. Saying sorry is often meaningless and will not be insisted on.

Staff will be aware of the reporting procedures under the Children's Act 2014. Privacy of tamariki and whānau must always be respected.

Relevant Background

- Licensing Criteria 2008, Curriculum, Children as Learners — C110: the service curriculum supports children's developing social competence and understanding of appropriate behaviour.
- Education and Training Act 2020.
- Ministry of Education (2017) Te Whāriki. He whāriki mātauranga mō ngā mokopuna o Aotearoa. Early childhood curriculum.
- Ministry of Education (2019) He Māpuna te Tamaiti. Supporting Social and Emotional Competence in Early Learning.

Authorisation

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Date:	August 2026
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Parents informed:	Finalised policies for the following year are sent to all parents in December as part of the annual policy book. If a critical update arises outside this cycle, it is communicated to parents at that time. Updated policies are available on request.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi / Treaty of Waitangi Policy

Te Whāriki: Belonging | Mana whenua

Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi engari he toa takitini. I come not with my own strengths but bring with me the gifts, talents and strengths of my family, tribe and ancestors. — Te Whāriki, p.12

Purpose

We respect and embrace the unique position of Māori as tangata whenua in Aotearoa New Zealand and encourage an awareness and appreciation of our bi-cultural heritage. We support Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the use of Te Reo Māori as a living language, and recognise the core values of Māori and reflect these in daily practice.

Core Values

- Ako -Reciprocal Learning and Teaching
- Tuakana/Teina - Relationship between an older person and a younger person
- Mahi Tahi —Collaboration and Participation
- Kotahitanga -Oneness/Unity
- Kaitiakitanga - Guardianship
- Mauri - Life Essence, flows through everything
- Wairuatanga - Spiritual Connection
- Oranga -Health
- Manaakitanga - Hospitality/Care
- Whānaungatanga -Relationships and Connections
- Mātauranga -Knowledge
- Rangatiratanga - Leadership
-

Procedures

Procedures are required to be implemented.

- We will consult with whānau Māori about their aspirations for tamariki.
- All kaiako will work towards knowledge of tikanga and Te Reo Māori and are encouraged to use Te Reo Māori in daily practice.
- All kaiako will demonstrate respect for tikanga.
- Kaiako will discuss and inform others of appropriate practice with regard to tikanga Māori.
- Outings and excursions will include cultural events and experiences.
- Visual aids and language prompts are displayed in and around the centre where possible.
- Kaiako will greet tamariki, whānau, colleagues and phone enquiries in both Māori and English.
- Māori frameworks such as Te Whare Tapa Whā (Durie, 1998), Te Wheke (Pere, 1991), Te Whatu Pōkeka (2009), Tātaiako (2011), Te Ara Poutama: Māori and indigenous development (2020), will be used appropriately within documentation.
- Professional development is encouraged for kaiako to extend understanding of Te Ao Māori me te reo Māori.
- Kaiako and management endeavour to make, find and provide Māori and natural teaching resources.
- We recognise the unique place of Māori in policies and practices.

Related Policies: Inclusion Policy | Assessment Policy

Legislation: Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008 | Education and Training Act 2020 | Licensing Criteria C105, C106

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Settling Policy

Te Whāriki: Belonging | Mana whenua: Licensing Criteria: C111 | GMA103

Belonging | Mana whenua — Goal 3: Tamariki and their whānau experience an environment where they feel comfortable with the routines, customs, and regular events.

To be read in conjunction with the whānau information booklet. On enrolment, whānau view/receive a copy of the parent information booklet and policy book, and are encouraged to read and discuss these with kaiako. They are also available on our website

Purpose

To support whānau and kaiako to transition and settle tamariki.

To support positive learning experiences in an environment where tamariki feel safe and comfortable.

Procedures

- It is important whānau spend time familiarising tamariki with our programme before care is due to begin. We recommend a minimum of 2–3 visits, in conjunction with kaiako. Some programmes are able to offer Stay and Play, over an extended period.
- Whānau are welcome to stay at any time and are encouraged to observe and take part in our programme. Allow time for tamariki to settle into the new environment. Every tamariki (and whānau) settles at their own pace. The transition process will continue until such time as tamariki feels secure enough for you to leave. After discussions with whānau, an individual settling plan will be implemented, based on individual strengths, preferences and interests.
- Notify us of any medical or behavioural conditions or allergies before enrolment, and a plan may need to be developed and put in place.
- In order for us to understand tamariki better, whānau should complete and discuss the information sheet including routines, interests, special needs, culturally appropriate aspirations/practices/customs, limits for behaviour, likes/dislikes etc.
- Keeping to a daily routine helps tamariki to understand what to expect, e.g. arrive, read a story, have a cuddle, say goodbye, then leave. It is important to be predictable and to stay within the routine as much as possible. Changing, or coming back and forth, makes the process harder for tamariki, as well as for whānau. Crying can be a normal part of the settling process; we do not leave unsettled tamariki to cry alone, there will always be a reassuring adult nearby. Don't leave without saying goodbye as this creates uncertainty. Please discuss with kaiako if you are uncertain.
- Whānau are welcome to phone at any time to check on tamariki.
- Please label lunchboxes, drink bottles and clothing clearly, so as to avoid mix-ups —this also develops early literacy skills.
- For their wellbeing, we recommend that tamariki should not attend another early childhood service while enrolled at a Play and Learn centre (please discuss with us).

For more information on how we communicate with whānau throughout the settling process and beyond, see our Communication with Whānau Policy.

Related Policies: Communication with Whānau Policy | Enrolment Agreement

Legislation: Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008 | Education and Training Act 2020 | Licensing Criteria C111, GMA103

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Transition to School Policy

“Children, parents, and whānau will experience transitions to and within early childhood services, and later from early childhood education to school or kura. He whāriki mātauranga mō ngā mokopuna o Aotearoa (2017), p. 51

Purpose

To ensure children, parents and whānau experience a smooth, well-managed transition from Play and Learn to school or kura. That tamariki settle, feel confident, and continue to enjoy positive learning experiences.

To understand that under the Education and Training Act 2020, tamariki are legally required to start school by their 6th birthday. While most start school at five are welcome, to keep their child enrolled at the centre until that point if this best supports their child’s learning and wellbeing.

Procedures

Building the foundation, before transition begins

Much of the groundwork for a positive transition is laid well before the final year at the centre, through:

- Consistent, unhurried and familiar routines that support tamariki to anticipate what happens next and tamariki feel secure.
- Listening to, understanding, and following instructions,
- Tamariki being talked with and read to regularly, and mixing with a range of other children.
- A wide range of stimulating experiences, both within and outside the centre, that build confidence, independence and social competence.
- School being portrayed in a positive manner.

2. Preparing tamariki and whānau for school

As tamariki approach school age, kaiako liaise with parents/whānau and the local school on the most practical ways to support a positive transition, which may include:

- Talking with tamariki about their school and transitions.
- Organising and planning regular visits to school and discussing basic school routines.
- Assisting whānau with information about schools.
- Portraying school in positive ways, reading books/stories, talking about school.
- Encouraging early literacy and numeracy skills
- Supporting tamariki to explore relevant skills, e.g. recognising and writing their name, colours and shapes, and using pencils and scissors.
- Encouraging independence and self-help/self-care skills, such as blowing their nose, dressing themselves and toileting, and taking responsibility for their own belongings and lunch box.
- Supporting tamariki to follow directions, work in groups and develop good communication skills.

The most important factor in a positive transition is the quality of the child’s and the parents’/whānau’s relationship to the experience.

3. Partnering with schools/ kura

Kaiako build and maintain intentional, ongoing relationships with local schools.

- We share information about our curriculum and priorities for children’s learning with schools.

- With whānau consent, share useful information about a child's strengths, interests, learning, progress, and developing literacy and mathematical understandings, to promote continuity of learning as tamariki move between settings.

4. Supporting whānau Māori and transitions to kura

Kaiako take positive steps to respect and acknowledge the aspirations whānau Māori hold for their tamariki, and:

- Engage with whānau Māori as tangata whenua about priorities for their child's learning and transition.
- Support tamariki transitioning to kaupapa Māori settings in ways that reflect and affirm their identity, language and culture.
- Integrate tikanga and te reo Māori into transition conversations, displays and activities for all tamariki, not only those transitioning to kura.

5. Enrolment and starting school

- Many schools operate an enrolment scheme. Families should contact their preferred school directly, well ahead of their child's start date, to confirm enrolment procedures, zoning and timelines, as these vary between schools and can change.
- Most schools offer pre-entry visits. Parents/whānau are encouraged to arrange these directly with the school; the centre will assist where needed.
- Play and Learn centres develop a programme of pre-entry visits to local schools.

6. Individual and additional learning needs

For tamariki with additional learning needs, kaiako work with whānau and, where appropriate, external agencies well in advance of transition to ensure the receiving school has the information and support plan needed for a positive start. This is documented in the child's individual child plan.

7. Review and evaluation

We appreciate feedback from parents and whānau about their experience of the transition process.

Related Documents

Individual Child Plans, Enrolment Policy, Privacy Policy, learning documentation

Legislative and Regulatory Framework

This policy gives effect to, and is reviewed against, the following:

- Education and Training Act 2020 – compulsory enrolment at school from age 6; parents'/whānau's right of entry to information held about their child (s 626).
- Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008.
- Licensing Criteria for Early Childhood Education and Care Centres 2008 (as amended 20 April 2026),
- Te Whāriki: He whāriki mātauranga mō ngā mokopuna o Aotearoa (2017).
- Privacy Act 2020 – governs how children's information is shared with receiving schools and kura.

Authorisation

Authorised by licensed service:	Jan Beatson
Date:	September 2026
Review Date:	March 2028

Nature School/Kindergarten Policy

Te Whāriki: Belonging | Mana whenua

Purpose

Through outdoor and nature-based experiences:

- Provide outdoor experiences where tamariki learn to know themselves, respect the environment, assess and take manageable risks, and foster strong relationships with others and with place.
- Reflect the core values of Māori, such as kotahitanga, kaitiakitanga, mauriora, wairuatanga, oranga, manaakitanga, whānaungatanga, mātauranga, rangatiratanga, akonga, tuakana/teina relationships and mahitahi into the programme.
- Provide significant opportunities where tamariki can be, and get to know and understand themselves: to run fast, climb trees, make huts and play in mud, use tools meaningfully, learning through all their senses. Wild and natural spaces have profound effects on physical, mental health and wellbeing. Outdoor spaces provide exceptional opportunities for brain development, creativity, persistence, observation and many social skills which are essential for life.

Procedures

The setting is in a natural area, and tamariki and kaiako know and understand that different rules apply. Tamariki and kaiako become familiar with the environment and are aware of the boundaries, risks and challenges. All Government Regulations, permissions, and Play and Learn policies and procedures must be adhered to. A person responsible must take responsibility for staffing and safety.

Kaiako Will

- Ensure at least one kaiako with a current first aid qualification is present at all times.
- Be familiar with and adhere to Play and Learn policies and procedures for outdoor education, including meeting with tamariki about ways of keeping safe, discussion on rules, hazards, out-of-zone areas, toileting etc.
- Undertake Nature Programme induction focusing on philosophy and safety prior to working with tamariki, and undertake Play and Learn nature development and training.
- Always ensure there is a means of communication between kaiako and centre/management.
- Always ensure appropriate supervision of tamariki, e.g. close supervision until tamariki are familiar with the location. Tamariki must be in sight or in hearing distance at all times.
- Keep all groups within ratio. For safety and supervision, groups should be less than a five-minute walk apart and in constant communication.
- Identify hazards and discuss with tamariki on each occasion, including all risks, hazards, benefits and cultural considerations (particularly hidden hazards), then isolate, minimise or eliminate and record. New hazards will be noted on the risk analysis.
- Ensure accident and emergency procedures and plans are practised regularly, including meeting points, whistle drills, and what to do in the event of an accident, emergency or evacuation.
- Carry a whistle at all times in case of emergencies.
- Be prepared and plan for: emergency supplies, first aid kit, hygiene supplies, whistle, walkie talkies, cell phone coverage, contact information (whānau, management etc.), weather, equipment, roll of tamariki, and knowledge of individual tamariki and their personalities.

- Maintain a documented risk assessment and management system, including recording all hazards identified, actions taken and any new hazards noted.
- Onsite risk assessment completed and discussed with tamariki.
- **Whānau Should**
- Understand and be aware of the types of activities that tamariki will be participating in. Kaiako will discuss the risks and benefits beforehand and show examples (photos, video etc.) of the types of activities that will be undertaken.
- Give signed permission as to the level of sharing visual images.
- Read the risk/benefit analysis and give written permission to participate, including agreement to the proposed adult:child ratio, location and method of travel, beforehand.
- Have opportunities to stay with tamariki until settled.
- Have opportunities to view Facebook, Storypark etc. to view and understand daily programmes.
- Communicate and discuss with kaiako about any part of the programme they are uncomfortable with.
- Understand the policy whilst participating in the Nature Kindergarten Programme.

Related Policies: Hazard and Risk Identification and Management Policy | Excursions and Outings Policy | Risk and Benefits Policy | Medical Assistance and Incident Management Policy

Legislation: Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008 | Licensing Criteria C108, HS108, HS113, HS114

Authorised by licensed service:	Jan Beatson
Date:	September 2026
Review Date:	March 2027
Parents informed:	Policy distributed via parent policy book each December and available on request at any time.

Inclusion Policy

Te Whāriki: Belonging | Mana whenua | Wellbeing | Mana atua

Te Whāriki is an inclusive curriculum — a curriculum for all children. Inclusion encompasses gender and ethnicity, diversity of ability and learning needs, family structure and values, socio-economic status and religion.

Purpose

To cater for individual and differing needs of tamariki and their whānau.

Procedures

- If tamariki have known additional needs, this should be discussed before admission.
- Observation and factual information will be discussed with whānau and specialist services contacted if it is decided the tamaiti would benefit from these.
- Guidance and information may be sought from specialist services and/or others where appropriate.
- Kaiako will maintain confidentiality of records, and whānau permission will be sought before passing on information to other agencies.
- Whānau will be consulted and involved in all decision making about tamariki.
- Kaiako will work with specialist providers to provide individual programmes for tamariki, if appropriate.
- Every opportunity will be given for tamariki to access all curriculum areas and interact with other tamariki.
- Resources and specialist books, pamphlets etc. will be made available to whānau.
- Kaiako will liaise with all appropriate services/agencies if the tamariki moves away.

Where concerns arise about a tamaiti's learning or development, kaiako follow our Learning Support Referral Procedure to ensure a timely and whānau-centred response.

Note

If you have concerns that a tamaiti may need extra support, begin the early intervention process promptly. Acting early helps ensure that the child and their whānau receive the right support in a timely and culturally responsive way. Where additional support needs are identified, kaiako and management will work alongside whānau to explore options and find a solution that works for everyone.

Although we have an inclusive policy, we may not always be able to accept all enrolments of tamariki with additional needs where safety cannot be adequately assured. Decisions regarding this will be made in consultation with kaiako, management, and Learning Support.

Related Policies: Learning Support Referral Procedure | Social and Emotional Development Policy | Privacy Policy

Legislation: Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008 | Education and Training Act 2020 | New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990 | Human Rights Act 1993 | Licensing Criteria C107, C108

Authorised by licensed service:	Jan Beatson
Date:	September 2026
Review Date:	February 2028
Parents informed:	Policy distributed via parent policy book each December and available on request at any time.

Learning Support Referral Procedure (Draft)

Te Whāriki: Wellbeing | Mana atua | Belonging | Mana whenua

Purpose

This procedure guides kaiako through a consistent, thoughtful process when a concern arises about a child's learning, development, or wellbeing. It is designed to ensure that conversations with whānau happen within established relationships, that concerns are responded to in a timely way, and that every child who needs additional support has the best possible chance of accessing it. The procedure reflects our belief that whānau are partners in their child's learning, and that our role is to work alongside them, not ahead of them.

Step 1- Kaiako notices a concern

Any kaiako who has a concern about a child's learning, development, or wellbeing raises it with their team leader. Together they discuss the nature of the concern, what has been observed, and identify the most appropriate person to have an initial conversation with the whānau. This may be the team leader, a more experienced kaiako, or someone who already has a strong relationship with the family. The decision is based on skill, relationship, and the sensitivity of the concern, not seniority alone.

Step 2 -Whānau conversation

The identified kaiako initiates a conversation with the whānau. The timing, setting, and format of this conversation is guided by the family's preferred communication method and the nature of the concern. This may be a casual kōrero at pickup, a home visit, a phone call, or a more formal meeting. The conversation is strengths-based and collaborative, not deficit-focused.

Step 3 - Documentation

Following the whānau conversation, observations and agreed next steps are documented and shared with the whānau to confirm they are captured accurately. Documentation is an ongoing process, not a one-off event.

Step 4 -Observation and inquiry

The team makes intentional observations to gather information across multiple sources before drawing conclusions. This follows the Collect → Analyse → Act cycle from He Pikorua

Collect

Observations are gathered

- **A moment** (seconds, mid-play): a quick note of 3–4 words about what you noticed and who was there; a photo with a one-line caption; or the child's own words in response to a genuine question.
- **A few minutes** (end of session, handover, pick-up): 2–3 sentences capturing one interaction while it's fresh; or a brief kōrero with whānau - what have they noticed at home lately?
- **A planned slot** (non-contact time or a team meeting): a focused observation with one question in mind; a short video clip to watch back together; or one section of a structured team discussion completed as a team.

Gather more than one source -quantitative (how often, how long, with whom) and qualitative (words, interactions, kōrero) — before drawing conclusions.

Analyse

Look together, not alone. Bring observations to a team discussion and ask: What did we expect to see? What surprised us? Does this match what whānau have told us, or does it add something new?

Consider where the child sits within Te Tūāpapa, what is already working, and what additional support might be needed.

Act

Identify one or two specific next steps as a team, note who is responsible and when you will review, then collect again. The cycle continues.

Step 5 — Identify pathway

Based on observations and whānau input, the team identifies the appropriate pathway:

- Continue to support within the centre with adjusted strategies.
- Seek advice from external services without a formal referral.
- Make a formal referral to an external service.

The decision to refer is a collaborative professional judgement made with whānau, not a threshold that is automatically triggered.

Step 6 - Referral

If a referral is agreed upon, it is made as soon as possible given the reality of long wait times for learning support services. Care is taken to ensure the referral contains all relevant information to maximise the likelihood of timely and appropriate support. Whānau are kept informed and involved throughout.

Step 7 - Ongoing support

While waiting for external support, the centre continues to document, observe, and discuss with whānau. The child continues to be supported within the centre to the best of the team's ability. Whānau are updated regularly and their voice remains central to all decisions.

Underpinning principles

This procedure is guided by:

- He Pikorua — mokopuna and whānau-centred, strengths-based, collaborative practice.
- Family Centred Practice — whānau as partners, not recipients.
- Te Tūāpapa — universal, targeted, and intensive support as a tiered framework.

Related Policies: Inclusion Policy

Authorised by licensed service:	Jan Beatson
Date:	September 2026
Review Date:	May 2028
Parents informed:	Policy distributed via parent policy book each December and available on request at any time.

Wellness and Wellbeing Policy

Te Whāriki: Wellbeing | Mana atua — Goals 1 and 3

Purpose

To provide a safe and healthy environment where prevention is the best policy. To ensure that kaiako and whānau are aware of regulations and guidelines. To minimise the risk of illness spreading.

Procedure

Illness prevention strategies such as hand washing, safe coughing and nose blowing etiquette will be role modelled, practised and promoted.

Whānau and kaiako will be informed of education and health regulations and included in opportunities for professional development.

In case of emergency or suspected broken bones, dial 111 and ask for an ambulance. Whānau/tamariki details should be taken to the hospital.

Where there is a serious injury, illness or incident while at the service, Management must be notified, who will notify ERO.

All accidents will be recorded, analysed (by the team) and hazards identified through risk management procedures.

Kaiako and whānau must ensure that persons who are unwell do not come into contact with others.

Where required, ERO must be notified as soon as practicable. Refer to the Medical Assistance and Incident Management Policy for full notification requirements.

Tamariki

- If whānau have concerns that tamariki may possibly be unwell, this information must be shared with kaiako upon arrival. A medical clearance may be requested.
- Health regulations require everyone with an infectious illness, including vomiting, diarrhoea, fever (38°C and over), persistent crying, difficulty breathing, persistent coughing, persistent runny nose, or other signs of possible illness, or any infectious disease listed in Schedule 1 of the Licensing Criteria (such as conjunctivitis or unidentified rash), must not attend. A medical certificate may be requested.
- When tamariki have vomiting and/or diarrhoea, they must be symptom free for 48 hours before returning. For other illnesses, tamariki must be fever-free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication. health.govt.nz/products/infectious-diseases-1
- Tamariki who become unwell while at the service will be isolated and whānau contacted promptly. Refer to the Isolation and Exclusion Policy for full procedures.
- All whānau contacts must be kept up to date. If tamariki become ill while in care, whānau will be contacted as soon as possible. If they are unavailable or unable to collect tamariki promptly, the emergency contact person listed on the enrolment form will be contacted.
- If whānau or siblings are unwell, please call or text us to make safe arrangements before dropping off or collecting tamariki.
- In an emergency, tamariki will be taken to an accident/emergency clinic or hospital, or an ambulance called, and Management informed. A kaiako will accompany them taking their personal file and details.
- Whānau will be advised if anyone who attended develops a serious and/or infectious illness, including signs of the illness and what to look for.
- Individual health plans and/or chronic illness forms should be completed by a doctor for anyone with asthma, diabetes, allergies, or any other specific medical conditions and those that require ongoing medication.
- Good hygiene practices to minimise the spread of illness will be practised by everyone, e.g. handwashing before and after toileting and at food times, nose blowing, sneezing, coughing and hygienic nappy changing.

- Tamariki with contagious conditions or illnesses such as scabies, head lice or conjunctivitis must not attend until an appropriate treatment has been used. Centres will maintain a high standard of cleaning and disinfecting on a daily basis. Rooms should be kept well ventilated.
- All accidents or injuries which may be serious or alarming will be recorded and whānau (or an emergency contact) will be contacted immediately with a clear explanation. All head or other serious injuries must be closely monitored.
- Whānau will be given sufficient information in order to decide if they wish to collect tamariki or to seek medical help.

Kaiako Will

- Actively work to keep themselves and others safe and well.
- Implement health regulations which state: "If you have reasonable grounds to believe that any person has an infectious or contagious disease or condition, then you must exclude that person from the service and from coming into contact with children."
- Ensure at least one kaiako with a current first aid qualification is present at all times.
- Be alert to changes in behaviour or signs of illness, and respond promptly.
- Record details of any accident, incident and illness.
- Provide details of all tamaiti accidents to kaiako who will be working at expected pick up time.
- Kaiako or other adults who have an infectious or communicable illness must not attend the centre and must take sick leave or other appropriate leave.
- Complete a staff accident/illness form if serious and inform management.

Related Policies: Medical Assistance and Incident Management Policy | Isolation and Exclusion Policy | Infectious Illnesses Exclusion Policy | Hazard and Risk Identification and Management Policy

Legislation: Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008 | Health Act 1956 | Licensing Criteria HS120, HS121, HS122, HS128

Authorised by licensed service:	Jan Beatson
Date:	September 2026
Review Date:	May 2027
Parents informed:	Policy distributed via parent policy book each December and available on request at any time.

Hazard and Risk Identification and Management Policy

HS108 | Health and Safety

Policy Statement

Play and Learn Early Childhood Education Centres take the safety and wellbeing of our tamariki seriously. Management and kaiako do everything reasonably practicable to eliminate, isolate, or minimise hazards — whether infectious, chemical or physical — that may pose a risk to children and adults in our care.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to keep tamariki and adults safe by meeting Licensing Criteria HS108, which requires that:

- Equipment, premises and facilities are checked every day for hazards.
- Hazards are eliminated, isolated or minimised.
- Injury and incident records are analysed to identify recurring and emerging hazards, and appropriate action is taken.
- A documented risk assessment and management system (RAMS) is in place.

Issue Outline

Tamariki rely on adults to care for and protect them as they grow and develop. Play and Learn centres play an important role in the health and safety of the children and whānau who trust us with their education and care. Our whānau expect us to protect tamariki from injury or illness by regularly checking equipment, premises and facilities for hazards.

Definitions

HAZARD: A hazard is a situation or thing that has the potential to cause death, injury or illness to a person.

RISK: Risk is the likelihood that death, injury or illness might occur when a person is exposed to a hazard. Management ensures risk is managed and, where possible, eliminated. If elimination is not reasonably practicable, we will seek to minimise or isolate risk.

Managing Risks

We follow the hierarchy of controls — eliminate hazards where possible; if not, isolate or minimise them:

- **Elimination** — remove the hazard entirely. For example, empty the water trough when it is not being actively supervised.

- **Isolating** — separate the hazard from people. For example, covering electrical outlets prevents tamariki from inserting objects.
- **Minimising** — take steps to reduce the chance of harm. This includes securing furniture and guiding tamariki through safe, managed risk-taking experiences.

When assessing whether physical items and equipment are safe, each item should be:

- Safe to touch
- Unable to be swallowed - or non-harmful if swallowed
- Unable to cause strangulation
- Safe to fall over, from, on, into or against
- Safe to get into or onto

Our Centres' Risk Assessment and Management Measures

- **Active supervision** of tamariki is an essential component of our hazard and risk management. Kaiako maintain active, engaged supervision at all times, positioning themselves to observe all areas of the learning environment. Supervision strategies are discussed at team hui and reviewed as part of our internal evaluation cycle.
- **Daily hazard checks:** All indoor and outdoor equipment, premises and facilities are checked every morning before tamariki arrive, using the *Daily Hazards and Risk Identification Checklist*. Any cause for concern is recorded on the Hazard Identification Record Sheet. The kaiako opening the centre each day is responsible for completing the daily check before tamariki enter the environment.
- **Playground safety checks:** Documented playground safety checks are completed weekly by the team leader or delegated. Records are retained on site.
- A comprehensive risk review is undertaken annually, or whenever new information requires a review of practices. The risk register is updated accordingly.
- The centre maintains an injury, incident and illness reporting system. All incidents are documented on the day they occur.
- Incident reports and hazard records are reviewed to identify patterns and emerging risks.
- Accident, incident and hazard records are analysed separately monthly by the team and reported to the Operations manager quarterly. Management and the kaiako team determine appropriate action to be taken.

Risk Assessment and Management System (RAMS)

Our documented RAMS consists of:

- A daily hazard check sheet
- A detailed safety check
- A risk register (reviewed and updated annually, or when new risks are identified)

The Hazards and Risk Identification Register includes, but is not limited to:

- Cleaning agents, medicines, poisons and other hazardous materials
- Electrical sockets and appliances
- Hazards present in kitchen or laundry facilities
- Vandalism, dangerous objects and foreign materials (e.g. broken glass, animal droppings)

- Placement of play and other equipment (e.g. shelves, bookcases, climbing equipment)
- Condition of play and other equipment
- Windows and other areas of glass
- Poisonous plants (indoor and outdoor)
- Bodies of water
- Heavy furniture, fixtures and equipment that could topple and cause serious injury

Relevant Legislation and Regulatory References

- Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008
- Licensing Criteria for Centre-Based ECE Services (April 2026) — HS108
- Health and Safety at Work Act 2015
- WorkSafe NZ — [Risks in Early Childhood Education](#) | worksafe.govt.nz
- Manaaki Whenua Landcare Research — [Poisonous plants in NZ](#)

Authorised by licensed service:	Jan Beatson
Date:	September 2026
Review Date:	January 2027
Parents informed:	Parents are advised of policy updates via the centre newsletter and noticeboard. Policy is available for whānau on request.

Medical Assistance and Incident Management Policy

Wellbeing | Mana atua – 1: Children experience an environment where their health is promoted. 3: Children experience an environment where they are kept safe from harm.

Purpose

To ensure that any child who is seriously injured, becomes seriously ill, or is involved in an incident while at Play and Learn receives immediate and appropriate medical assistance. That parents/whānau are notified without delay, and that all injuries, illnesses and incidents are accurately recorded, reviewed and, where required, reported to the specified agencies.

This policy sits alongside the Wellness and Wellbeing Policy. Where that policy addresses illness prevention, hygiene, exclusion and immunisation, this policy sets out the specific steps kaiako and management must follow when a child is seriously injured, becomes seriously ill, or is involved in a notifiable incident, and the associated recording and notification obligations.

Definitions

Term	Meaning
Serious injury or illness	An injury or illness to a child, kaiako or visitor that requires, or would usually require, immediate treatment as an in-patient at a hospital, or medical treatment within 48 hours of exposure to a substance, or is one of the injury types listed in the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 (for example a serious head injury, serious eye injury, serious burn, spinal injury, amputation, serious laceration, or loss of a bodily function).
Notifiable event	A death, notifiable injury or illness, or notifiable incident arising from work, as defined under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015, which a PCBU (Play and Learn Early Education Centres) must notify to WorkSafe New Zealand as soon as possible.
Specified agency	Any government agency or statutory body the service is required to notify of a serious injury, illness, incident or allegation involving a child. May include the New Zealand Police, the Ministry of Health, Oranga Tamariki, the Education Review Office (ERO), WorkSafe New Zealand, the Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand, and the Office of the Privacy Commissioner.
Incident	Any event that is not a serious injury or illness but that affects, or could have affected, the safety or wellbeing of a child e.g. a child leaving the premises without an adult's knowledge, being locked inside after hours, being collected by an unauthorised person, or going missing on an excursion.

Procedure: Responding to a Serious Injury or Illness

If a child is seriously injured, becomes seriously ill, or a serious incident occurs, kaiako will:

- **Act immediately.** Call 111 and ask for an ambulance for any suspected serious injury (including suspected broken bones), loss of consciousness, breathing difficulty, severe allergic reaction, or serious illness. Do not wait to contact whānau first.
- **Keep the child safe.** Provide appropriate first aid and stay with the child until emergency services arrive or the child is collected. Keep other children safe and supervised.
- **Notify parents/whānau without delay.** Whānau will be contacted as soon as possible with a clear explanation of what happened and what has been done. If whānau cannot be reached, the emergency contact listed on the child's enrolment form is contacted.

- **Accompany the child.** If a child is taken to hospital or an accident and emergency clinic by ambulance, a parent, or kaiako, will accompany them, taking the child's enrolment file, individual health plan (if any) and emergency contact details.
- **Notify management as soon as possible.** The kaiako responding will notify the Team Leader, who will notify Management. Notify ERO at the same time as any specified agency is notified (HS128).

Recording (HS121)

Every injury, illness and incident that occurs at the service is recorded, regardless of severity. The record includes:

- the child's full name
- the date, time and description of the injury, illness or incident
- the actions taken and by whom
- evidence that parents/whānau have been informed, including how and when

The accident/incident/illness form is completed and signed on the day of the event, shared with whānau, and filed in the child's record. This provides information a medical professional can use if emergency treatment is later required.

Injury and incident records are reviewed regularly by the team to identify recurring or emerging hazards, and appropriate action is taken and documented as part of the centre's ongoing hazard and risk management system (HS108) and Ngā Aronga Whai Hua cycle of noticing, investigating and responding to patterns in the data.

Notification to Agencies and the Education Review Office

Where a serious injury, illness or incident involving a child must be notified to a specified agency (New Zealand Police, Ministry of Health, Oranga Tamariki, WorkSafe New Zealand, Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand, or Office of the Privacy Commissioner), management notifies the Education Review Office at the same time (HS128/HS34), and keeps a copy of the notification on file.

WorkSafe New Zealand – notifiable events

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015, management notifies WorkSafe New Zealand as soon as possible of any notifiable event arising from a work activity at the centre. For a child, this includes an injury or illness that:

- occurred as a result of a work activity (for example a fall from a height during a nappy change, ingestion of an unsecured hazardous substance, or a serious injury from play equipment), and
- needs immediate admission to hospital or needs treatment by a doctor within 48 hours of exposure to a substance.

WorkSafe is notified by phone on 0800 030 040 (available 24/7) or via the online notification form, and the scene of a notifiable event is preserved until an inspector directs otherwise. A record of every notification is kept for at least five years.

Additional notification triggers

The Education Review Office is also notified as soon as possible where:

- the centre's Child Protection Policy requires notification to Oranga Tamariki or New Zealand Police;
- a child leaves the premises without an adult's knowledge, regardless of duration;
- a child is locked inside the premises after operating hours;
- a child is taken from the service by someone not authorised in writing to do so; or
- a child is left behind or goes missing during an excursion.

A written notification is also made under Regulation 15 of the Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008 for any incident warranting investigation.

Administration of Medicine (HS122–HS123)

Medicine (prescription or non-prescription) is only given to a child by a doctor or ambulance personnel in an emergency, by the child's parent, or by a kaiako with the parent's prior written authority.

- **Category (i) medicine** (short-term, e.g. antibiotics, paracetamol liquid, cough syrup). Parents provide written authorisation at the start of the period the medicine is needed, stating what, how and when it is to be given. Parents acknowledge each dose administered.

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- **Category (ii) medicine** (ongoing, pre-diagnosed condition, e.g. asthma inhalers, epilepsy medication, allergy medication). Authorisation is provided at enrolment as part of the child's individual health plan and updated whenever there is a change.
- Before giving any medicine, the kaiako checks the medicine, dose and time against the parent's authorisation. A record is kept of the child's name, the medicine and amount given, and the date, time and name of the kaiako who gave it.
- Medicine is stored safely and out of children's reach and is returned to a parent or disposed of once no longer required.
- Kaiako administering medicine to a child, other than their own, are given the necessary information, training or instruction to do so safely, from the child's parent/whānau, a health professional, or a senior staff member such as management or team leader, as appropriate.
- Individual health plans and/or chronic illness forms, completed by a doctor, are held for any child with asthma, diabetes, allergies, epilepsy or another condition requiring ongoing monitoring or medication.

Excursions

Whenever children leave the premises on an excursion, the first aid requirements above (HS119) are met for both the children on the excursion and any children remaining at the centre, and a completed risk assessment, adult: child ratios, parental approval, and a communication system for the excursion are in place, consistent with the centre's Excursion Policy.

Roles and Responsibilities

Who	Responsibility
All kaiako	Respond immediately to a medical emergency; provide or supervise first aid; keep tamariki safe; complete injury/incident/illness records on the day; be alert to changes in a child's behaviour or health.
Team Leader	Ensure first aid ratios (HS119) are met each session; ensure records are completed and filed; notify management of any serious injury, illness or incident without delay; support kaiako and whānau through the process.
Team Leader management	Notify the Education Review Office and any specified agency (Police, Ministry of Health, Oranga Tamariki, WorkSafe, Teaching Council, Privacy Commissioner) as required; make WorkSafe notifiable event notifications; keep notification and investigation records for the required periods; review injury/incident trends with the team; keep this policy and related emergency and child protection policies up to date.
Parents/whānau	Keep enrolment, emergency contact, immunisation and health plan information up to date; acknowledge medicine authorisations and administration; collect their child promptly when contacted or authorise an emergency contact to do so.

Related Policies and Documents

- Wellness and Wellbeing Policy, Child Protection Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Emergency Management Policy and current fire evacuation scheme, Excursion Policy, Individual health plans / individual child plans

Review

This policy is reviewed at least every three years, or sooner following a serious incident, a change in legislation or licensing criteria, or as part of the centre's ongoing internal evaluation (Ngā Aronga Whai Hua) using patterns identified in injury and incident records.

Legislative and Regulatory Framework

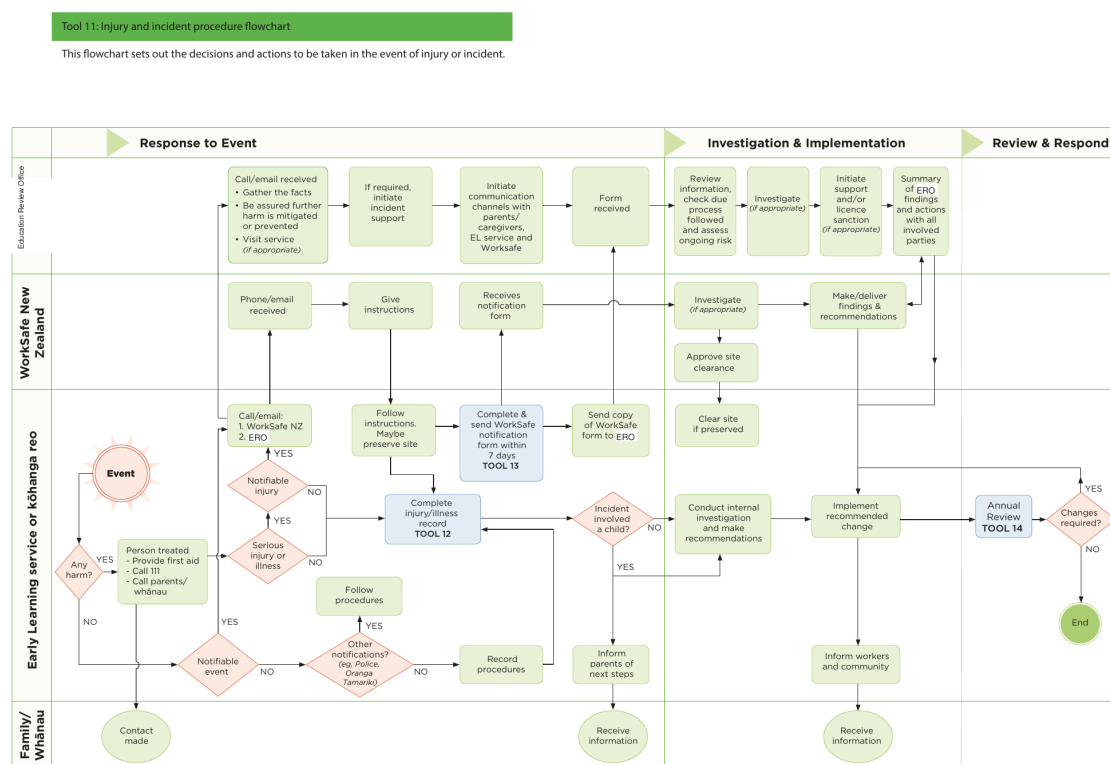
This policy has been developed with reference to:

- Education and Training Act 2020

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- Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008, Regulation 46 – Health and safety practices standard: general, and Regulation 15 – written notification for incidents warranting investigation
- Licensing Criteria for Early Childhood Education and Care Centres 2008, Health and Safety domain – in particular HS108 (hazard and risk management), HS113 (excursions), HS119 (first aid qualified adults), HS120 (exclusion of unwell persons), HS121 (immediate medical assistance, notification and recording), HS122–HS123 (administration of medicine) and HS128/HS34 (notification to the Education Review Office)
- Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 – the duty to notify WorkSafe New Zealand of a notifiable event (death, notifiable injury or illness, or notifiable incident) arising from work, which for an early learning service includes events involving children, parents and visitors as well as staff
- Children's Act 2014 – requirements for the centre's Child Protection Policy and the identification, response to and reporting of suspected abuse or neglect
- Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 – duties relating to the safety and wellbeing of children and reporting of concerns
- Privacy Act 2020 – the collection, storage and sharing of health and incident information about children and staff
- Ministry of Health immunisation requirements for licensed early childhood services
- Te Whāriki – the Wellbeing | Mana atua strand

Injury and Incident Procedure Flowchart (Tool 11)



Authorisation

Authorised by licensed service:	Jan Beatson
Date:	June 2027
Review Date:	September 2029

Isolation and Exclusion Policy

Te Whāriki: Wellbeing | Mana atua

Policy Statement

Play and Learn is committed to protecting the health and wellbeing of all tamariki and kaiako. We maintain clear practices for identifying illness, isolating unwell tamariki, and excluding those with infectious illness in order to minimise the spread of infection within our centres.

Purpose

- To keep tamariki and kaiako safe from infection.
- To provide clear guidelines about when a tamaiti will be excluded or required to be isolated.
- Exclusion of tamariki with infectious diseases is necessary where there is potential for further spread of infection.

Enrolment

- Enrolment forms ask whānau to share information about any chronic conditions or illnesses their tamaiti may have, and any information about appropriate care. Where relevant, an individual health plan will be developed in consultation with whānau and kaiako.

Arrival and Prevention

- If whānau have concerns that tamariki may be unwell, this information must be shared with kaiako upon arrival. We may request a medical certificate before allowing them to attend.
- To minimise spread of infection, whānau with an infectious illness must not drop off or pick up tamariki.
- Kaiako are vigilant, alert to and record changes in behaviour or signs of illness, and respond promptly and appropriately.
- Kaiako or other adults who have an infectious or communicable illness must not attend the centre and must take sick leave or other appropriate leave.

When Tamariki Must Not Attend

Tamariki must not attend if:

- They have a fever, (over 38 C), and must remain away until they have been fever-free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication.
- They have diarrhoea or vomiting, and must remain away until 48 hours after the last incident and must have had at least one normal bowel motion.

For specific infectious diseases (such as measles, chickenpox, whooping cough and others listed in Schedule 1 of the Licensing Criteria), the required exclusion periods in that Schedule must be followed.

Reasons to Exclude at the Centre

Kaiako may exclude or request collection of a tamaiti if:

- The illness prevents them from participating comfortably in the programme.
- The illness results in greater care needed than we can reasonably provide without compromising the health and safety of other tamariki.
- They show any of the following symptoms: fever (38°C and over), persistent crying, difficulty breathing, persistent coughing, persistent runny nose, or other signs of possible illness.
- Rash with fever or behaviour change, except if a doctor has determined it is not a communicable disease.

- Tuberculosis, until the doctor advises that the child is non-infectious.
- In cases of extreme behaviour where consistency and support from external agencies or whānau is not sufficient to support a safe programme.

Isolation at the Centre

- Any tamaiti showing signs of possible infectious illness will be isolated at a safe distance (minimum 2 metres) from others until collected, in order to minimise the spread of infection.
- An isolation kit is kept at each centre, containing a waterproof mat, blanket, pillow, and any other items needed to keep the tamaiti comfortable and supervised while awaiting collection. The isolation area meets the requirements of PF122.
- Whānau are contacted as soon as there are concerns. If whānau are unavailable or unable to collect promptly, the emergency contact listed on the enrolment form will be contacted.
- The unwell tamaiti is kept comfortable, calm and supervised at all times while awaiting collection.
- If a tamaiti's condition deteriorates while awaiting collection, kaiako seek medical advice or call emergency services immediately, in accordance with the Medical Assistance and Incident Management Policy.

Unimmunised Tamariki

In certain circumstances there is a requirement to exclude unimmunised tamariki who have had contact with certain diseases. These include measles, diphtheria and whooping cough, and would be at the directive of the Ministry of Education, or on the advice of the Medical Officer of Health. Public Health Service exclusion guidelines will be followed for any conditions not listed.

Infection Control

- After a tamaiti has been isolated or collected, the area is cleaned and disinfected promptly.
- Kaiako use gloves and appropriate PPE when handling bodily fluids, and follow safe disposal procedures.
- Regular handwashing is maintained by tamariki and kaiako throughout the day, and particularly after any contact with an unwell child.
- In the event of an outbreak of infectious illness, kaiako contact the National Public Health Service / Te Whatu Ora for guidance and follow public health advice on containment and communication.

Documentation

- A record is kept of all illnesses, including the tamaiti's name, date and time, symptoms observed, actions taken and by whom, and evidence of whānau notification. Where required under HS128, ERO is notified at the same time as any specified agencies.
- Any notifiable disease is reported to the Ministry of Health as required. Kaiako and whānau are informed of relevant health warnings in a timely way, with confidentiality maintained.
- Records are maintained in accordance with HS121, HS128 and Play and Learn's Privacy Policy.

Further information on infectious diseases: health.govt.nz/products/infectious-diseases-1

Related Policies: Medical Assistance and Incident Management Policy | Infectious Illnesses Exclusion Policy | Hazard and Risk Identification and Management Policy | Animals Policy

Legislation: Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008, Regulation 57 | Health Act 1956 | Licensing Criteria HS120, HS121, HS128

Authorised by licensed service:	Jan Beatson
Date:	September 2026
Review Date:	October 2028
Parents informed:	Policy distributed via parent policy book each December and available on request at any time.



Sleeping Policy

Wellbeing/Mana atua - 1: Children experience an environment where their well-being is promoted.

Purpose

Each tamaiti will have their individual rhythms and routines around sleep/resting. Kaiako will endeavour to follow these in a relaxed and familiar environment in consultation with whānau, and in line with Ministry of Health and Ministry of Education guidelines.

Procedures

This procedure is displayed in the sleep area.

Tamariki will be supported into sleep routines by familiar kaiako in an unhurried manner, and monitored every 5 minutes to ensure their health and safety. Kaiako will check for warmth, breathing, colour, and general wellbeing, in line with first aid criteria for signs of life. Kaiako will monitor noise levels, ventilation and temperature, which will be set at 18 degrees as per Ministry of Education regulations.

Sleeping tamariki will be supervised at all times. A kaiako will be present in the room, or when this is not practical, checked no less frequently than every five minutes to ensure their health and safety. Sleep monitoring will be recorded on the sleep chart by kaiako who is supervising the sleep area. The supervision chart will be completed and signed daily for parents/whānau to view.

Tamariki will have their own sleeping space and bed linen.

Pillows under heads will not be used for under 2-year-olds. For tamariki over 2-year-old a pillow may be used in consultation with whānau and in accordance with Ministry of Health guidelines.

Tamariki may sleep outside following the Ministry of Health guidelines, making sure that nothing covers their face or can choke them and that they are comfortable and have adequate shelter. Kaiako will assess weather conditions before permitting outdoor sleep and will move tamariki indoors or under full shelter if conditions become unsuitable. Kaiako maintain a clear, unobstructed sightline to each sleeping tamaiti at all times to meet supervision requirements in an outdoor setting.

Babies may be slept in prams(not pushchairs) following Ministry of Health recommendations for safe sleeping and in consultation with parents. The pram brake will be engaged, the harness undone once the pēpi is asleep, the canopy positioned so it does not restrict airflow, and the pram will not be left in direct sun.

Tamariki will be provided with their own individual sleeping space and bed linen.

Tamariki must not have access to food/drink (including bottles) while in bed.

In accordance with safe sleep practice (PEPE guidelines), pēpi and tamariki are placed on their backs to sleep and are not to be placed on their sides or stomachs for sleeping.

Kaiako will consult with whānau regarding the wearing of teething or cultural necklaces on sleeping tamariki.

Linen will be washed weekly or in between tamariki. Cot frames and mattresses will be wiped with disinfectant weekly or in between tamariki. Soiled mattresses will be sprayed with bleach and then wiped with warm water and then aired outdoors (where practical).

Kaiako will follow cultural protocols around sleeping. Where practicable tamariki will be slept head to head or feet to feet. Tamariki and kaiako are not permitted to stand on pillows and to walk around bedding, rather than over the top.

Mattresses will be stored appropriately, waterproof (or a non-porous surface) and replaced immediately if they are torn or have holes.

At least one evacuation cot will be provided for emergencies.

Ministry of Health guidelines for safe sleeping of babies and toddlers

Bedding and tamariki are safe when:

Cots have firm and flat mattress to keep baby's airways open.

There are no gaps between the bed frame and the mattress that could trap or wedge pepe.

The gaps between the bars of the cot are between 50 mm and 95 mm

There is nothing in the bed that might cover Pepe's face, lift their head or choke them – no pillows, toys, loose bedding, bumper pads or necklaces (including amber beads and 'teething' necklaces).

They have someone looking after them who is alert to their needs and free from alcohol or drugs.

They have clothing and bedding that keep them at a comfortable temperature.

Authorisation

Authorised by:	Jan Beatson
Date:	September 2026
Review Date:	July 2028
Parents informed:	Finalised policies for the following year are sent to all parents in December as part of the annual policy book. If a critical update arises outside this cycle, it is communicated to parents at that time. Updated policies are available on request.

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Nappy Changing and Toileting Policy

Te Whāriki: Wellbeing | Mana atua – :

Children experience an environment where their health is promoted.

Children experience an environment where their emotional wellbeing is nurtured.

Children experience an environment where they are kept safe from harm.

Purpose

This policy ensures that nappy changing and toileting are carried out safely, hygienically, and in a way that upholds each child's dignity and wellbeing. It reflects our commitment under Te Whāriki to nurture children's health and emotional security.

Policy Statement

At Play and Learn, nappy changing and toileting are recognised as important moments of care and connection. We ensure these experiences are carried out respectfully, hygienically, and with each child's dignity and independence at the centre.

Our kaiako are trained in safe nappy changing practices, and our facilities are maintained to ensure a hygienic environment that minimises the risk of cross-infection.

Procedure

Nappy changes are carried out by kaiako who have been inducted into this procedure. Parents and whānau may only change their own child's nappy.

Nappies are checked every 2–3 hours. Soiled nappies are changed as soon as possible; wet nappies are changed when necessary.

Before each nappy change or toileting assist

- Wash hands (see Handwashing Procedure).
- Confirm that the designated nappy changing area is clean and all necessary supplies are within reach.
- Support tamariki to use steps to climb onto the changing table independently where possible.
- Keep one hand on the child at all times to prevent falls.
- Put on disposable gloves before handling the child or any soiled items.
- Nappy changing must remain open and observable at all times.

During the nappy change

- Remove the soiled nappy, fold inward, and place immediately in the designated nappy disposal bin (lid closed securely after use).
- Wipe the child thoroughly, front to back, using appropriate wipes. Dispose of wipes in the nappy bin.
- If nappy rash cream is required, use each child's individually labelled cream. If using a shared container, use a disposable wooden stick for each application to prevent cross-contamination.
- Apply a clean nappy and re-dress the child.
- Play and Learn supports whānau who use cloth nappies. All cloth nappies (wet or soiled) are placed directly into the family's sealed wet bag or lidded bucket to be taken home. Cloth nappies are not rinsed at the centre and are not laundered at the centre.

After each nappy change or toileting assist

- Remove and dispose of gloves immediately.

- Wash and dry hands thoroughly — even when gloves have been worn. Handwashing is required after every nappy change without exception.
- Clean the nappy changing surface with a disinfectant solution containing at least 0.5% sodium hypochlorite (or equivalent), wiping down all contact surfaces.
- Record the nappy change on the daily nappy chart (see Sleep and Nappy Chart).

Bleach (sodium hypochlorite) dilution guide

The following dilutions may be used when preparing disinfectant solution from concentrated bleach:

Strength	Bleach (mL)	Water (mL)	Total (mL)
1%	100	900	1000
2%	50	950	1000
3%	33	967	1000
4%	25	975	1000
5%	20	980	1000

Note: Always prepare fresh solution daily. Store concentrated bleach and cleaning agents in a secure location inaccessible to children.

Disposable gloves

- Gloves are single use - change, and dispose of between each child.
- Gloves can carry and transfer germs as well as bare hands - they are not a substitute for handwashing.
- Wearing gloves does not replace thorough handwashing between nappy changes.

If a child requires washing

- If a child requires washing due to soiling or sickness, the dedicated washing facility is used (HS124).
- Kaiako wear disposable gloves during the wash and dispose of them and wash hands immediately after.
- The washing area is cleaned and disinfected after each use.
- Soiled clothing is placed in a sealed plastic bag (double-bagged where needed) and sent home with the child's parent/whānau. Staff do not rinse soiled clothing.

Supporting tamariki during nappy changes

Nappy changing time is recognised as a valuable moment of connection and communication between kaiako and tamariki. Kaiako approach these moments with care and attentiveness. All kaiako:

- Slow down and take the time needed to make the experience comfortable for the child.
- Use correct vocabulary for body parts.
- Are sensitive to individual differences and children's varying levels of comfort.
- Encourage active participation -inviting children to help where appropriate (e.g. holding a clean nappy, lifting hips).
- Use respectful, affirming language throughout.
- Support children's independence in managing their own clothing as much as possible.
- Never show displeasure -reactions to soiled nappies are always calm and neutral.

All children are supported to develop independence and capability in self-care appropriate to their age and stage. For children who are toilet training, kaiako collaborate with parents/whānau to ensure a consistent and encouraging approach across home and centre environments.

Toileting and Toilet Readiness

Toilet training is a significant developmental milestone that is led by the child and supported by a partnership between kaiako and whānau.

- Kaiako discuss toilet readiness with whānau and take a consistent, family-led approach across home and centre.

- We follow the lead of the child - no child is pressured or rushed into toilet training before they are ready.
- Kaiako assist children who need support using the toilet, using the same handwashing and hygiene principles as for nappy changing.
- Children's privacy and dignity are maintained during toileting assists.
- Girls are supported to wipe from front to back.
- Children are encouraged to wash their own hands after using the toilet, supported as needed.
- Kaiako, responsible for nappy changing, will gently remind and encourage children who are toilet learning to try, at regular intervals throughout the day.
- Language around toileting and toilet learning is always positive, encouraging, and free from pressure or shame.

Nappy Changing Facilities

The designated nappy changing area:

- It is separate from play and food preparation areas, and located near handwashing facilities.
- Has surfaces that are impervious to moisture and easily cleaned and disinfected.
- Is at a suitable height for adults to work comfortably and is appropriate for children's age and weight.
- Is maintained free from hazards and in good repair.
- Provides appropriate privacy while maintaining adequate supervision.
- Includes storage for supplies and a handwashing area accessible to children to support developing independence.

Implementation

Management ensures:

- All kaiako are trained in nappy changing procedures before undertaking nappy changes.
- The nappy changing procedure is displayed near the nappy changing facility and followed consistently.
- Supplies (gloves, wipes, disinfectant, nappy bags) are maintained and accessible.
- Nappy changes are recorded daily using the centre's nappy chart.
- Facilities are regularly checked and maintained in good repair.
-

Alignment with Other Policies

- Procedure for Washing Sick or Soiled Children (HS124)
- Infectious Illness Exclusion Policy (HS120)
- Medical Assistance and Incident Management Policy (HS121)

Relevant Legislation and Regulatory References

- Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008
- Licensing Criteria 2008 - HS103: A procedure for the changing (and disposal, if appropriate) of nappies is displayed near the nappy changing facilities and consistently implemented. The procedure ensures safe and hygienic practices and that children are treated with dignity and respect.
- Licensing Criteria 2008 - HS124: Children are washed when they are soiled or pose a health risk to themselves or others.
- Health and Safety at Work Act 2015
- Te Whāriki: Early Childhood Curriculum (2017)

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Review Date:	October 2028
Parents informed:	Policy distributed via parent policy book each December and available on request at any time.

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Procedure for Washing Sick or Soiled Tamariki

Tamariki must be treated with respect and dignity, privacy should be respected. Only kaiako, or persons who know tamariki well, will change sick or soiled tamariki.

Washing soiled or sick tamariki

- Ensure the area is contained to prevent other tamariki from entering.
- Wear disposable gloves.
- Ensure you have everything required e.g. soap, towels, change of clothing
- Wipe/wash soiled tamariki down.
- Use the shower/shub/tub as required. Use tepid water and test the temperature before putting the child in.
- Tamariki who have soiled outside their nappy or have vomited, will be body washed immediately using bottom cloths/wipes.
- Soiled clothing must be double bagged, Not washed, and stored securely out of children's reach (e.g. in the locked laundry or another secure area) until whānau collect the child. Soiled clothing is sent home unrinsed.
- All contaminated areas must be disinfected immediately using a suitable sanitiser, e.g. 0.1% hypochlorite (bleach) solution. All other tamariki must be removed from the soiled area until it has been completely cleaned/sanitized.
- Pay particular attention to high-contact surfaces including toilets, bathroom floors and walls, doorknobs, sinks, taps, benches, handrails and light switches — especially after vomiting or diarrhoea.
- After the washing, tamariki will be towel dried and dressed with clean clothes.
- If necessary, contact whānau and tamariki will be isolated until they are collected.
- Use the isolation kit if required.
- Saturate tub after fecal/body fluid contamination with suitable sanitiser, e.g. 0.1% hypochlorite (bleach) solution and leave as long as possible (minimum time ½ hour) then clean.
- Remove and dispose of used gloves, then wash hands thoroughly with warm water and soap, and dry with paper towels or hand drying cloths. Follow up with alcohol-based hand sanitiser.
- Follow wellness and isolation policies.

Mud and Dirt

Outdoor play is a regular activity at Play and Learn - Tamariki will get dirty and muddy at times. Dirt contains *Mycobacterium vaccae*, which strengthens the immune system and is important for health and cognitive development.

- Muddy tamariki will wash hands with soap and water (alternatively hand sanitiser) before eating.
- Any tub of water for this purpose must be supervised.
- Muddy shoes and gumboots will not be worn inside.

Authorisation

Authorised by:	Jan Beatson
Date:	September 2026
Review Date:	May 2027

Parents informed: Policies distributed via parent policy book each December; critical updates communicated promptly; available on request.



Tamariki Protection Policy

Principle 4 Relationships/Ngā hononga: Parents and whānau trust that their ECE service will provide an environment where respectful relationships, encouragement, warmth and acceptance are the norm.

Purpose

Play and Learn is committed to tamariki safety and wellbeing through child abuse prevention. Tamariki interests and wellbeing are paramount in all decisions regarding suspected child abuse.

Scope and Responsibilities

This policy applies to all employees, including permanent, fixed-term, and casual staff, as well as students, volunteers, consultants, and contractors. All staff, parents and visitors who may have contact with children must understand the policy's requirements for identification and reporting.

The centre's management, or the designated child protection person for each centre/programme (see Procedures below), is responsible for ensuring that the appropriate authority is notified when a staff member has a belief that a child has been, or is likely to be, abused or neglected. This extends to ensuring that all known information about the child and their family/whānau is shared in full with the appropriate authority.

Guiding Principles

- Tamariki rights, welfare and safety are first and paramount
- Protect and advocate for tamariki
- Bicultural approach; Māori tamariki assessed and managed in culturally safe environments
- Whānau and iwi participate in decision-making wherever possible
- Kaiako recognise and respect all cultures
- Cultural lens applied when working with tamariki, whānau and kaiako

Definitions

Child abuse: Harming (physically, emotionally or sexually), ill treatment, abuse, neglect, or serious deprivation of any child/tamariki. Includes actual, potential and suspected abuse:

- Physical abuse - acts resulting in physical harm
- Sexual abuse - forcing or enticing a child into sexual activities
- Emotional abuse - acts or omissions impairing psychological, social, intellectual or emotional functioning
- Neglect - persistent failure to meet basic physical or psychological needs
- Bullying: Using superior strength or influence to intimidate. Not tolerated from any employee, visitor, whānau or tamaiti.

Staff Responsibilities

All kaiako must:

- Provide safe environments free from abuse or neglect
- Proactively prevent child abuse and neglect
- Identify and address concerns confidently
- Comply with relevant legislation

Training & Review

- Child protection training every 2 years (maximum 3 years)
- Induction includes legal obligations, abuse indicators, outside agencies, environment planning, supervision strategies
- Policy review with kaiako at least every 2 years
- Review after any incident implementing this policy

Confidentiality

Written observations/communications kept sealed for confidentiality.

Privacy Act 2020 and the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 (formerly the Children, Young Persons, and Their Families Act 1989) permit information sharing for abuse reports/investigations.

Good faith reporters are protected from civil, criminal or disciplinary proceedings.

Recruitment

Safety checks per Children's Act 2014 (formerly the Vulnerable Children Act 2014). Exclude anyone with reasonable grounds for believing they have:

- Physically ill-treated/abused a child or committed crimes against children.
- Subjected children to solitary confinement, immobilisation or deprivation of food, drink, warmth, shelter or protection.

Procedures

Daily Operations

- Minimum two adults present when children attend
- Monitor all adults' locations and activities
- Doors open and unlocked when practical
- Tamariki encouraged to manage own toileting where practical
- Two adults on outings (unless specific exemptions approved)
- Identify unknown visitors
- No touching to gratify adult needs; respond to child-initiated contact for the child's needs
- Visitors/students visible, supervised, and sign register
- Practicum students: identified on arrival, never alone with children, never change nappies/toilet children, report any concerns to their A.T. immediately
- Each centre/programme has a designated child protection person liaising with management (usually team leader)
- Provide resources and professional development for kaiako and whānau
- Supply, if required, brochures/posters in appropriate languages
- Maintain documentation procedures for care/protection concerns
- Consult whānau/ management; include in decision-making where possible
- This policy is implemented alongside Play and Learn's *Smoke, Drug, Vape and Alcohol-Free Policy*; *ICT, Social Media and Screen Time policies*; and the *Isolation and Exclusion Policy*, which set out related staff conduct, technology and health-exclusion requirements in full.

Identifying Abuse/Neglect Indicators

- Consider all information before concluding
- Physical: developmental delays, physical/medical neglect
- Behavioural: disclosures, discussions indicating abuse, neglectful supervision, abandonment

Responding to a Child's Disclosure

Step	What to do
Listen to the child	Disclosures by children are often subtle and need to be handled with particular care, including an awareness of the child's cultural identity and how that affects interpretation of their behaviour and language. Tell them you believe them.
Reassure the child	Let the child know that they are not in trouble and have done the right thing.
Use open-ended prompts only	e.g. "What happened next?" — do not interview the child beyond open prompts, and do not make promises that can't be kept (e.g. "I will keep you safe now").
If the child is visibly distressed	Provide appropriate reassurance and re-engage them in ordinary activities under supervision until they are able to participate as usual.
If the child is not in immediate danger	Re-involve the child in ordinary activities and explain what will happen next.
If the child is in immediate danger	Contact the Police immediately.
As soon as possible	Formally record the disclosure: word-for-word what the child said, the date, time, and who was present.

Responding to Suspected Abuse/Neglect

- Report immediately to manager/team leader/coordinator
- Keep records and assist in formulating a response plan
- Oranga Tamariki/Police referral may be made at any time
- Manager reports all certified staff matters to the Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand

Recording and Notifying

Process	What to do	Key consideration
Recording	Formally record anything said by the child; the date, time, location and names of relevant staff; the factual concerns/observations that led to suspicion; the action taken by the centre; and any other relevant information.	Relevant information can inform future actions.
Decision-making	Discuss any concern with the manager/team leader or the designated child protection person.	No decision should be made in isolation.
Notifying Oranga Tamariki	Notify Oranga Tamariki promptly if there is a belief a child has been, or is likely to be, abused or neglected — 0508 326 459 or contact@ot.govt.nz .	Oranga Tamariki will decide whether to inform parents/caregivers and advise on next steps, including referral to Police.
Notifying the Director of Regulation (ERO)	Notify the Director of Regulation as soon as possible, and within 24 hours of managing the incident, whenever a report is made to Oranga Tamariki or Police under this policy.	Required under HS128 (Notification to the Director of Regulation), which the Education Review Office took over from the Ministry of Education on 1 September 2026.
Storing relevant information	Securely store: the record of concern; a record of related discussions and correspondence; a record of any advice received; the action taken and rationale; and this concern alongside any earlier concerns if part of a pattern.	Records assist in identifying patterns.

Responding to Child Disclosures — Immediate Safety Concern

- If there is an immediate safety concern, contact the manager as soon as possible

- Manager contacts Police/Oranga Tamariki
- If the manager is unavailable, inform Police immediately — don't wait
- The suspected person has no further contact with the tamariki concerned
- A risk assessment determines access to other children
- No unsupervised access during the investigation
- The suspected kaiako is informed of their full rights
- Both the tamaiti and the alleged kaiako are kept safe
- Privacy is maintained until allegations are confirmed
- Legal advice/union representation is permitted; an opportunity to respond is given
- Disciplinary action may follow if there is "reasonable cause to suspect" abuse

Allegations or Concerns About Employees

When a staff member is suspected, the same identification and response processes above apply.

If an allegation of ill-treatment of a child/ren against an adult at the service is received, the centre's Employment Policy/Procedures/Code of Conduct is implemented alongside this policy.

Addressing the needs of the child remains the first priority.

Mandatory Reporting

- Registered teachers must be reported to Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand (serious misconduct)

Oranga Tamariki Interviews

- Social workers have a legal right to interview tamariki in our care
- Parents/caregivers are advised of the interview
- The Team Leader/Centre Manager lodges an incident report

Related Policies

This policy operates alongside, and should be read together with:

- Smoke, Drug, Vape and Alcohol-Free Policy — substance-related conduct and premises requirements
- ICT Policy, Social Media Policy and Policy on Screen Time — technology and online conduct requirements
- Isolation and Exclusion Policy — exclusion of unwell individuals or those posing a health risk
- Safety Checking Policy and Procedure (GMA7A/GMA106) — pre-employment and periodic safety checks

Review Example

As part of the 2-yearly review of this policy, the following hypothetical scenario was used to test how well the policy would the service's response:

Scenario: A kaiako observes unexplained bruising on a child during a nappy change and the child appears withdrawn when a particular family member arrives at pick-up. Applying this policy: the kaiako reports the observation immediately to the team leader (the centre's designated child protection person); the team leader keeps a written, confidential record of what was observed and when; the team leader assesses whether there is an immediate safety concern and, if so, contacts Oranga Tamariki and/or Police without waiting for the Centre Manager if the Centre Manager is unavailable, and notifies the Director of Regulation within 24 hours of managing the incident in line with HS128; privacy is maintained and no unsupervised access changes are made until the assessment is complete; the family is engaged sensitively in line with the confidentiality provisions above, unless doing so would compromise the child's safety.

Conclusion: the current procedures gave staff a clear, step-by-step response, from initial observation through to notification, without requiring escalation beyond what the policy already sets out. The Director of Regulation

notification step was added to keep this current with HS128; no other changes to the policy were required as a result of this review.

Contacts

Oranga Tamariki 0508 326 459 | Education Review Office 0800 376 800

Reference: "Working Together: An Interagency Guide to Keep Children and Young People Safe" (Oranga Tamariki — Ministry for Children, 2021) Staff will be aware of the reporting procedures under the Children's Act 2014.

Note: Kaiako are not child abuse experts — consult supporting agencies when in doubt.

Authorised by licensed service:	Jan Beatson
Date:	September 2026
Review Date:	August 2028
Parents informed:	Finalised policies for the following year are sent to all parents in December as part of the annual policy book. If a critical update arises outside this cycle, it is communicated to parents at that time.

Sun Protection Policy

Te Whāriki: Wellbeing | Mana atua

Policy Statement

Play and Learn is committed to protecting tamariki and kaiako from the harmful effects of UV radiation. We promote sun-safe practices across all our centres and in outdoor settings, supporting the health and wellbeing of everyone in our community.

Purpose

- To provide safety guidelines for whānau, tamariki and kaiako, as we spend considerable time in outdoor settings whenever the UV rating is above 3.
- To promote a safe and healthy environment.
- To support ongoing education for kaiako and tamariki on the effects and dangers of overexposure to the sun.

UV Monitoring

- UV levels will be checked daily using Sunsmart, MetService or any other app recommended by the NZ Cancer Society, and recorded on the daily hazard checks when the UV is above 3.
- AI tools may be used to assist with checking UV levels. Any information from AI sources must be cross-checked against approved sources such as MetService and Sunsmart. Kaiako must apply professional judgement, verify the accuracy of AI-generated UV information at least weekly, and any time the information seems incorrect or inconsistent with actual conditions.
- Activities will be planned to avoid prolonged periods outdoors during the hottest part of the day, with peak UV times from 10am to 4pm.
- Kaiako promote sun safety education, being intentional in explaining why we need to be in the shade, apply sunscreen and wear hats, and teaching tamariki good choices of places to play, especially during the summer months.
- Tamariki will be included in discussions on ways to keep sun-safe.

Hats and Clothing

- When playing or working outside during summer months or when UV is above 3 tamariki and kaiako must wear sun hats.
- Whānau should bring a suitable named hat for their tamaiti. Hats that provide cover for the face and neck are preferable. Play and Learn will provide a limited number of spare hats.
- Tamariki who remove or choose not to wear their hat will be asked to play inside or stay in a shaded area.
- In hot, sunny weather UV clothing is recommended for daily use.

Sunscreen

- Whenever the UV rating is above 3, a broad spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen with an SPF of at least 30+ is supplied and applied regularly.
- Sunscreen should be applied 15–20 minutes before exposure to the sun and reapplied every 2–4 hours depending on the UV level, sunscreen type and exposure, and directly after swimming.
- Whānau may wish to provide their own sunscreen.
- Whānau must notify kaiako if their tamaiti has any allergies to sunscreen, and supply their own sunscreen if our sunscreen is not suitable.

Excursions

- The Cancer Society of New Zealand recommends holding programme excursions early in the day to reduce exposure to UV radiation.
- In hot weather, excursion venues where adequate shade is available will be planned for.

Shade, Environment and Hydration

- Sun-safe and shaded areas at each site will be utilised, and tamariki will have access to shaded play areas at all times.
- Trees will be planted to provide additional shade.
- Drinking water must be available at all times. Kaiako will monitor that tamariki have access to water throughout the day.

Whānau Communication

- Whānau will be informed at enrolment of the sun protection policy and encouraged to send tamariki with appropriate sun-safe clothing and a named hat.

Related Policies: Hazard and Risk Identification and Management Policy | Excursions Policy | Medical Assistance and Incident Management Policy

Legislation: Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008, Regulation 46

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Risk and Benefits Policy

Te Whāriki: Empowerment | Whakamana | Exploration | Mana aotūroa

Purpose

Children are valued as active learners who choose, plan, and challenge. The curriculum reflects the holistic way tamariki learn and grow.

It is vital for tamariki to develop good judgement, persistence, courage, resilience and self-confidence.

An element of risk is an essential part of tamariki's development through play. The reasons (benefits) give the context from which to judge the risk. Benefits must be great enough to warrant the associated level of risk and be maximised without creating unnecessary risk. Kaiako and tamariki must carefully plan and analyse the risks and the benefits in the environment then take the appropriate action.

All environments must be safe, but also stimulating with appropriate opportunities for tamariki to assess and take risks.

Procedure

Risk/benefit promotes a balanced approach to managing risk in tamariki's play. The goal is not to eliminate risk, but to weigh up the risks and the benefits.

- A risk/benefit analysis must be completed before any excursion. Whānau must view and give written permission that they agree to this, including kaiako/tamariki ratios.
- An onsite hazard check must also be completed upon arrival at each destination, taking into consideration the people involved, the activities planned and the group dynamics. Tamariki will be included in the daily environment and activity checks, including discussing risks and benefits.
- Hidden and non-physical hazards (e.g. emotional) must also be considered. Kaiako should consider ways to minimise risk without losing major benefits.
- Risks and hazards will be examined against the severity of harm and appropriate action taken: eliminate, isolate or minimise.
- There should be opportunities for reasonable risk-taking depending on the age, development and dynamics of the group.
- The programme will plan to enable active learning. The programme will plan for tamariki to develop and understand their own abilities and their relationship with others in the group and the world around them.
- All kaiako in the team will accept responsibility for the risk/benefit decisions.
- A documented risk assessment and management system must be maintained in accordance with HS108.

Related Policies: Nature School/Kindergarten Policy | Hazard and Risk Identification and Management Policy | Excursions and Outings Policy | Fire Making Procedure

Legislation: Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008 | Licensing Criteria HS108, HS109, HS110, HS111

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Outings and Excursions Policy

Purpose

Play and Learn is committed to keeping tamariki safe during outings and excursions, while giving tamariki rich opportunities to connect with people, places and things in the local community (Te Whāriki, 2017). This policy meets licensing criteria HS113 (Excursions), HS114 (Travel by motor vehicle), HS119 (First aid qualifications) and HS128 (Notification of incidents).

Guiding Principles

- Tamariki safety is paramount whenever leaving the familiar centre environment.
- Whānau consent is recorded before any excursion takes place.
- A risk benefit analysis is completed and reviewed for every excursion.
- Clear methods of communication are established and maintained throughout every excursion.
- Any tamaiti left behind or who goes missing during an excursion is reported to ERO without delay.
- Whānau are always welcome to participate in excursions.
- Whānau must be aware that significant experiences in the outdoors may include climbing (hills and trees), sliding, running, mud, tool use and outdoor play in all weathers.

Definitions

- **Excursion:** Being outside the licensed premises while receiving education and care from the service. Does not include emergency evacuations, drills, or receiving urgent medical attention.
- **Regular excursion:** An excursion whānau have agreed to at the time of their tamaiti's enrolment, or subsequent to it, forming part of an ongoing, planned and consistent local curriculum.
- **Special excursion:** A one-off or infrequent excursion outside the regular pattern, requiring specific whānau approval before it takes place.
- **Risk benefit analysis:** The process used to identify hazards, assess risk and benefit, determine ratios and manage risk before and during an excursion.
 - **Person Responsible:** The staff member who holds overall responsibility for approving and overseeing an excursion.

Staff Responsibilities

Kaiako must:

- Complete a risk benefit analysis for every excursion, identifying hazards and benefits (e.g. proximity to water, weather, nature connection, community relationships) and the children participating, determining the required adult:child ratio (see HS108).
- Ensure first aid requirements are met for tamariki on the excursion and any remaining at the centre (HS119). Obtain whānau written approval of participation, ratio, location and method of travel - for regular excursions at enrolment, and for special excursions before they take place.
- Maintain communication systems so that people always know where tamariki are (HS113).
- Gain approval from the Person Responsible before every excursion takes place.
- Person Responsible requirements must be met both at the centre and on the excursion - a Person Responsible must be present on the excursion, and if tamariki remain at the centre, a Person Responsible must also be present there.
- Notify ERO as soon as possible if a tamaiti is left behind or goes missing during an excursion (HS128). ●

Take a full roll of adults and tamariki before departure, undertake head counts at regular intervals, and take a roll again immediately on return to the centre.

- Ensure tamariki and kaiako wear Play and Learn identification (T-shirts or vests displaying the emergency contact number) for all excursions.
- Kaiako, who drive a Play and Learn vehicle must have completed Play and Learn driver training before doing so
- .

Training and Review

- Kaiako are trained in this policy and its procedures as part of induction and ongoing professional development.
- This policy is reviewed as per the centre's review schedule, or sooner if there is a significant change to the relevant legislation, regulations or licensing criteria.
- Whānau are informed of any changes to this policy.

Before an Excursion

1. Complete/Read a risk benefit analysis, specifying the method of travel and the names of adults and tamariki attending.
2. Determine the adult:child ratio required, based on the risk benefit analysis and environmental hazards - the more hazards present, the more adults required. The ratio must include all tamariki attending and must be at least the minimum required ratio, or higher where warranted (see Ratios table below).
3. Confirm first aid requirements are met for tamariki attending and any remaining at the centre.
4. Obtain whānau written approval of participation, ratio, location and method of travel (regular excursions at enrolment; special excursions before the excursion takes place). Whānau must be given the chance to see the completed risk benefit analysis.
5. Gain the Person Responsible's approval before the excursion takes place.
6. Ensure a roll of tamariki and adults is recorded at the centre and a copy is taken on the excursion.
7. Confirm all kaiako and tamariki are wearing Play and Learn identification (T-shirts, name tags, or vests with the emergency contact number).

Risk Benefit Analysis and Ratios

Planning for each excursion begins with a risk benefit analysis - identifying what tamariki gain from the experience alongside what hazards are present and how they will be managed.

- For regular excursions, the risk benefit analysis may be a new plan or an updated version of a previous assessment, with new risks identified, and made available for whānau to view at enrolment.
- For special excursions, a new risk benefit analysis and management plan is required.
- Consider: what could happen (hazard), how it will be managed (remove, isolate, minimise), what benefits the excursion offers tamariki, what ratio is needed, and whether any tamariki requires additional support or supervision.

Minimum adult:child ratios for excursions:

Children under 2 years	1 adult : 5 children
Children 2 years and over	1 adult : 6 children (or 2 adults : 20 children)
Mixed age (under 2 and over 2)	1 adult : 3 children

These are minimum ratios. The risk benefit analysis should determine whether additional adults are required, particularly where environmental hazards are higher (e.g. proximity to water, uneven terrain, road crossings). Accompanying whānau count as part of the ratio when they are actively supervising.

Medical Supplies

- Take a first aid kit, along with water, sunscreen, and any personal medication required for tamariki (e.g. inhalers, EpiPens) or accompanying adults. Cooler bag for medication requiring refrigeration.

Whānau must update kaiako of any known medical conditions or allergies, including eczema, asthma, and any other conditions relevant to the excursion. All medications and care plans must be taken on excursions.

Communication

- At least one kaiako carries a mobile phone at all times.
- The route, transport method, and the mobile number of the Person Responsible are shared with whānau in advance.
- The Person Responsible has up-to-date whānau contact details readily accessible (e.g. via Infocare or saved phone contacts).

Transport (HS114)

- Written whānau permission is obtained before travel by motor vehicle, specifically signed for this purpose.
- The Person Responsible approves the transport plan and can locate tamariki at any time (e.g. which vehicle a tamaiti is travelling in).
- All tamariki travelling by motor vehicle are restrained as required by Land Transport legislation (see Motor Vehicle Transport Policy, HS114).
- Required adult:child ratios are maintained in every vehicle.
- The driver holds a full licence, and the vehicle has a current WoF and registration.
- Kaiako must complete Play and Learn driver training before driving a Play and Learn vehicle on any excursion.

During the Excursion

- Brief accompanying whānau on the excursion's purpose, their responsibilities, and expectations around active supervision, including which tamariki they are supervising.
- Take a full roll of adults and tamariki before leaving the centre.
- Undertake head counts at regular intervals throughout the excursion.
- Take a full roll immediately on return to the centre, so that any tamaiti left behind or missing is identified without delay.
- Most excursions are included in the programme and there is no charge. Whānau may be asked to meet the cost of a special excursion, - with advance notice.
- Review the effectiveness of planning and risk benefit analysis after the excursion, and seek feedback from whānau and tamariki.

Emergency Response

In any emergency during an excursion, the priority order is:

1. Ensure the safety of all tamariki first.
 2. Assess the situation.
 3. Implement the safety plan.
- The Person Responsible contacts whānau as soon as possible.
 - If a tamaiti is left behind or goes missing, notify ERO as soon as possible (HS128), in addition to following the centre's usual incident and emergency procedures.
 - The centre's emergency procedures (including contacting emergency services where required) apply on excursions as at the centre.

Notification (HS128)

If a tamaiti is left behind or goes missing during an excursion, the Person Responsible must notify ERO as soon as possible, in addition to following the centre's usual incident and emergency procedures.

Record Keeping

A written or digital record is kept for every excursion, including:

- The names of adults, the person responsible, and the tamariki involved.

- The time and date of the excursion.
- Adult:child ratios.
- The location and method of travel.
- The completed risk benefit analysis, and evidence this has been discussed.
- Evidence of whānau permission and approval of ratios, location and method of travel.
- The signature of the Person Responsible approving the excursion.

Records are kept for the current year, plus one additional year.

Related Policies: Excursion Risk Assessment Form | Motor Vehicle Transport Policy

Legislation and Guidance: Licensing Criteria for Early Childhood Education and Care Centres 2008 (HS113, HS114, HS119, HS128), effective from 20 April 2026 | Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008 | Land Transport (Road User) Rule 2004 | Te Whāriki: He Whāriki Mātauranga mō ngā Mokopuna o Aotearoa (2017)

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Play and Learn Motor Vehicle Policy

Purpose: To ensure the safe and responsible transportation in Play and Learn vehicles, and that all precautions will be taken to ensure that where motor vehicle transport is used, that it is a safe and well-planned experience for all involved.

This policy applies to all Play and Learn employees authorised to drive centre vehicles and to all occasions where tamariki are transported as part of centre activities.

Vehicle Use

Play and Learn vehicles are for centre purposes only. Private use of centre vehicles is not permitted. Only authorised Play and Learn employees may drive centre vehicles. All drivers must:

- Be fully safety checked
- Hold a current New Zealand driver's licence, or another licence approved for use in New Zealand.
- Provide their current licence to the team leader - a copy will be kept on file and reviewed.
- Complete a vehicle induction with the manager or delegated person, before driving any Play and Learn vehicle.

Drivers must comply with all traffic laws and regulations. Any traffic infringements, fines, or court costs are the responsibility of the driver.

The driver must use the most direct, appropriate route to any destination.

When travelling to a destination for the first time, the driver must be accompanied by a person who has previously driven that route.

Driver Responsibilities

The Excursion Record must be completed before departure and include the signature of the Person Responsible approving the excursion before it takes place. (HS113/HS114)

The driver is responsible for the safe operation of the vehicle at all times.

A second adult must supervise and communicate with tamariki while the vehicle is in motion. If an unsafe situation occurs while driving, the driver must:

- Stop the vehicle as soon as it is safe to do so, and
- Contact the centre for assistance if required.

Drivers must not operate a vehicle while under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or any mind-altering substances, including prescription or non-prescription medication that may impair driving ability. If a driver is involved in an accident where alcohol or drugs are a contributing factor, the driver may be liable for the cost of replacing the vehicle and any damage to other vehicles or property.

Safety -The safety of all passengers must be maintained at all times.

- All passengers, including the driver, must wear appropriate safety restraints.

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- All tamariki must be secured in an approved child safety restraint/car seat appropriate to their age and size.
- All equipment and items carried in the vehicle must be secured to prevent risk to passengers.
- Tamariki who are unwell, or unsuitable for transport may be returned to base.
- Tamariki will not be left unsupervised in any vehicle.

Vehicle Safety Checks

Before each trip, the driver must ensure the vehicle is safe and ready for travel.

Drivers must check:

- Warrant of Fitness (WOF)
- Vehicle registration
- Road User Charges (diesel vehicles)
- Indicators
- Lights
- Tyres
- Fuel level and correct fuel type
- Fuel card availability
- Child restraints (rear-facing and forward-facing seats)

Drivers must also be familiar with the operation and features of the specific vehicle before driving e.g. wipers, indicators, lights.

Preparation -Prior to departure, the driver must ensure:

- All excursion regulations met including permission.
- The vehicle is in safe operating condition
- WOF, registration, and road user charges (where applicable) are current.
- There is sufficient fuel for the journey- know fuel type.
- Seat belts and child restraints are correctly fitted
- A risk assessment has been completed and discussed
- Vehicle safety rules have been discussed
- and understood

The following items must be taken on all trips:

- First aid kit
- Driver's licence
- Risk assessment documentation
- Charged mobile phone

Minimum supervision ratios when transporting tamariki are usually 2:10.

- 1 adult: up to 6 over 2; 1:3 under 2
- 2 adults: 4–10 tamariki

The maximum number of people permitted in the vehicle at any time is 12.

Vehicle Maintenance

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The team leader is responsible for ensuring that all Play and Learn vehicles are safe to operate, have a current Warrant of Fitness, mileage (diesel vehicles), and registration, and are maintained in a clean and presentable condition. Management will ensure all vehicles and drivers are fully insured.

Drivers must immediately report any problems including:

- Mechanical issues
- Vehicle damage
- Safety concerns
- Faults or unusual operation of the vehicle

All accidents/ near misses must be reported using the incident reporting process.

Use of Private Vehicles

Private vehicles belonging to staff or parents may only be used to transport tamariki in an emergency situation. These must meet Land Transport Act 1998 (driver licensing, vehicle safety compliance) and the Waka Kotahi/NZTA child restraint requirements

Procedure in the Event of an Accident -If a vehicle accident occurs, staff must:

- Ensure the safety of tamariki and all passengers.
- Seek medical assistance if required.
- If safe to do so, assist at the scene without putting tamariki at risk.
- Notify the centre/ manager immediately.
- Record all accident details.
- Do not admit liability.

Vehicle Breakdown

If the vehicle breaks down:

- Remain inside the vehicle if it is safe to do so.
- Call management/centre to request roadside assistance.
- Roadside assist **0800 837 676** Vero ECC 3789476

Ensure compliance with legal requirements, safety standards, and Play and Learn policies/procedures including HS113 (Excursions), HS114 (Travel by Motor Vehicle), HS125 (Child Protection/Tamariki Protection), Medical Assistance and Incident Management (HS121), Child Protection/Tamariki Protection (HS125), and Safety Checking (GMA106).

Authorisation

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Fire Making Procedure

Te Whāriki: Exploration | Mana aotūroa

Purpose

To give tamariki direct practical experience with the elements of earth, air, fire and water, and to ensure that everyone understands and follows safe procedures.

Procedure

- Fire making should only occur with groups of known children, who understand the “rules”
- Check weather conditions before lighting any fire. Do not light a fire in strong winds, very dry conditions, or if a fire restriction or ban is in place in the area.
- Make sure the first aid kit is suitable for burn treatment.
- Have water close and available before lighting the fire.
- Discuss fire making rules and safety procedures with tamariki.
- Keep all fire making equipment away from and inaccessible to tamariki.
- If there is a fire pit on site, always use it.
- Select a site that is away from overhanging trees.
- Clear the area of trip hazards and other debris.
- Create a fire circle of one metre around the fire pit, and a further boundary circle for safety.
- Clear the area for the fire pit of leaf litter and make sure the fire pit is on non-flammable material, e.g. clay, stony soil or muddy brown soil.
- If using fire at the centres, ensure the equipment used is safe and stable, e.g. barbeques or braziers.
- Keep fuel for the fire outside the fire circle.
- Fire making equipment must be kept away from the fire when the fire is lit, e.g. matches or fire lighter.
- Make sure the fire is of a small and manageable size.
- A minimum of two adults must be present during any fire activity. One adult is inside the fire circle when the fire is lit, and the other supervises tamariki outside the boundary at all times.
- Tamariki are not to be inside the fire circle boundary unless with an adult, and then only one tamaiti at a time.
- When making or cooking on the fire, adopt a one-legged kneeling position to avoid overbalancing and tipping forward.
- After the fire activity, make sure the embers are spread and doused with water until completely out and cold.
- All adults must be familiar with burn treatment first aid.
- Before any fire making activity, a risk assessment must be completed and recorded on the daily onsite risk analysis, covering the fire site, weather conditions and safety measures in place.

Related Policies: Risk and Benefits Policy | Nature School/Kindergarten Policy | Hazard and Risk Identification and Management Policy | Medical Assistance and Incident Management Policy

Legislation: Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008 | Licensing Criteria HS108, HS109, HS111

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Tree Climbing Safety Procedure

Te Whariki: Wellbeing | Mana atua | Exploration | Mana aotūroa

We empower children to be aware of their own limits, to climb at their own pace and level, to understand safety guidelines and to take measured risks in order to challenge themselves mentally and physically.

Rationale

Research shows that the benefits of activities such as tree climbing far outweigh the risks involved. The likelihood of serious life altering injury occurring is low, more serious accidents result from participation in organised sport than from tree climbing. Potential hazards are discussed and removed where possible.

The Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 is to protect people from death or serious injury, through negligence. Management and Leaders are responsible for ensuring Health and Safety procedures are in place. Kaiako are responsible for ensuring policies and training provided by Play and Learn are followed. Kaiako play an active role and are responsible for monitoring, assessing and testing risk on a daily basis.

Kaiako discuss safety processes with tamariki. They develop shared understandings of safe practice and rules at daily safety hui, through conversations and teachable moments. The kaiako team share understandings about acceptable limits/rules and communicate with each other if they have concerns.

Tree safety guidelines are discussed during daily safety hui (see daily on-site benefit/risk analysis form) and throughout the day

- Dead branches are not safe for climbing
- Use branches that are as thick as your upper arm to support your body weight
- Rule of 3 - keep 3 body contact points on tree/branches at all times (e.g. 2 hands, 1 leg...)
- Keep close to the trunk when climbing up
- Test branches for strength first before putting weight on
- Be aware of entrapment areas e.g. forks in branches
- Tamaiti fatigue is monitored. Kaiako may support tamariki to become aware of their physical needs - pausing for a break, having a drink or refuelling with food, taking time to rest the body and mind...

Further Tips or Strategies

- Some tamariki feel more secure climbing in bare feet/gumboots/grippy shoes... They explore these options - finding what feels comfortable for them
- Holding something while you climb can make it harder
- Slow and steady
- Try another way
- Big breaths help your body feel calm, a calm body and mind helps you to problem solve...
- Use other children - is there another child up there who can show you what they did?
- I can stay here near you while you figure this out.
- Sometimes a kaiako offering a child their hand on their back or leg is just enough support to scaffold them to take the next step
- Kaiako verbal support can support tamariki to feel calm, ready to take the next step and accomplish their goal
- Tell your brain - I've done this before, I can do it again
- What goes up must come down! Coming down the same way you went up can help

Consider Environmental Factors

- Wet branches can be slippery
- High wind means branches are unstable/not suitable for climbing

- The surrounding area under a tree - mulch, grass provides a safer fall
- Check for unseen hazards - rocks, debris and hard sand are not safe options
- No climbing during thunderstorms
- Children will often stretch themselves beyond their level of current development in a conducive positive environment and when they have strong relationships with supportive adults. The mutually trusting relationships kaiako have with tamariki provide the foundation for valuable risk taking - the jumping off point.
- As kaiako we have realistically high expectations of children's capabilities, gathered through deep and reflective observations. We make informed decisions about when to stand back or when to intervene. We intentionally avoid transferring our own anxieties to children, however we express our concerns and ask questions when we recognise the risk is increasing. "Here's what I'm noticing..... How are you feeling? What are your plans?"
- Kaiako know the children and their capabilities well. Kaiako may offer a new/unknown child a limited height until they become aware of their strengths and skills. An unpredictable child may be offered a limit to support them to develop healthy risk taking and assessment
- Because kaiako know the children so well they can assess and predict appropriate skill risks. An individual approach is used - a capable and confident climber may be empowered to climb higher than a new/younger/less skilled tamaiti.

When tamariki are pushing their limits we can scaffold "great height" climbing by engaging in korero

- What do you think might happen if you climb higher?
- Have you climbed this high before?
- How are you holding on?
- Can we decide a limit together so that you can enjoy climbing and be safe?
- Will you feel ok about climbing back down?

Our ultimate aim is to empower tamariki to gradually take responsibility for their own safety (while being actively supervised by engaged kaiako). They can then transfer these essential learning skills to other areas of their life (when they may not be actively supervised).

Related Policies: Hazard and Risk Identification and Management Policy | Daily On-Site Benefit/Risk Analysis

Legislation: Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008 | Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 | Licensing Criteria HS108

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Water Safety Policy

Te Whāriki: Wellbeing | Mana atua

Purpose

To ensure all water-based learning experiences and environments are safe and used safely.

To promote safe supervision of children and provide guidelines for persons working with children.

To ensure education and care situations comply with safety standards and all licensing and legislative criteria.

Procedure

On-site Water Features

- Children are not to be left unattended at any water feature, trough, water vessel, paddling pool, or similar. They must be closely supervised around water at all times.
- All water troughs, paddling pools, and water features must be emptied or covered when finished.
- Water confidence is an important skill to develop. Encourage opportunities for this when appropriate. On an excursion always adhere to the appropriate risk analysis.
- Any equipment that may collect water after rain should be checked and emptied as part of daily safety check routines before children arrive.
- Water play equipment should always be placed in open, visible spaces, whether outdoors or indoors.
- Kaiako must comply with all relevant legislation at all times.
- Whānau must give written permission before tamariki attend any other water-related facilities, such as the beach or swimming pools.

Natural Water Bodies (Beach, River, and Coastal Environments)

- When excursion activities take place near natural water bodies, including beaches, rivers, estuaries, and coastal environments, a site-specific risk assessment must be completed and documented before the group arrives. Water conditions must be checked on Swim Safe (swimsafe.co.nz) prior to departure, and findings discussed at the on-site risk meeting and recorded in the on-site risk analysis.
- Tamariki will not enter open natural water without a specific written risk plan in place that has been approved by the team leader prior to the activity. Water entry is limited to a maximum depth of child's knee height at all times.
- When near open natural water, kaiako supervision ratios must be maintained and at least one kaiako must maintain a dedicated supervisory role focused solely on water safety. Kaiako must be aware of swells and tides and identify the safest areas before tamariki approach the water.
- For beach water activities, tamariki must wear togs or wetsuits -not regular clothing - before entering the water.
- Kaiako will assess conditions on arrival and will make the final decision about whether tamariki may access any water area. Conditions including strong current, surf, or poor visibility are sufficient reason to exclude tamariki from the water, regardless of the planned activity.
- Kaiako must check streams and standing water for signs of pollution before tamariki approach. If water looks polluted it must not be touched. Tamariki will be taught to listen for stream sound and to understand that water levels rise after rain.
- Regular emergency drills using the whistle signal must be conducted so that tamariki know the procedure if they become separated from the group near water.
- Written permission from whānau for excursions to coastal and riverside environments must specify that the excursion involves natural water body environments.

Related Policies: Physical Activity Policy | Risk and Benefits Policy | Excursions and Outings Policy | Nature School/Kindergarten Policy

Legislation: Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008 | Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 | Licensing Criteria HS108, HS109, HS114

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Animals Policy

Te Whāriki: Exploration | Mana aotūroa — Wellbeing | Mana atua

Licensing Criteria: HS16/HS112 | Animal Welfare Act 1999

Policy Statement

Play and Learn recognises the positive learning opportunities that interaction with animals provides for tamariki. We implement safe and hygienic practices, treat all animals humanely, and ensure that any animals at our centres can be properly managed and, where necessary, restrained.

Purpose

- To ensure the wellbeing of tamariki and kaiako through safe, hygienic practices when animals are present.
- To ensure the humane care and respectful treatment of all animals.
- To support tamariki in developing connection, curiosity, and respect for the natural and non-human world.

General Hygiene

- Tamariki and kaiako wash their hands thoroughly after handling or touching any animal.
- Animals must be kept away from all areas where food is prepared, served, or eaten.
- Animals are not permitted in kitchens, bathrooms, toilets, under-two play areas, or sleeping rooms.
- Animal food and bedding is stored out of reach of tamariki and clearly distinguishable from human food.
- Any animal faecal matter found outside an enclosure is cleaned up immediately and the area disinfected.

Animal Welfare

All animals at our centres are cared for in accordance with the Animal Welfare Act 1999 and the Five Freedoms:

- Freedom from thirst, hunger, and malnutrition - including on weekends and holidays.
- Freedom from discomfort and lack of shelter ;appropriate enclosures, ventilation, and protection from extremes.
- Freedom from injury, disease, and parasite infestation - by prevention or prompt treatment.
- Freedom from distress - through appropriate care and handling.
- Freedom to display normal patterns of behaviour.
- Animals showing signs of illness must be quarantined away from tamariki and treated promptly. Where treatment is not feasible, the animal will be humanely removed from the centre.
- All animals are treated with respect. Tamariki are encouraged to participate in safe caring routines such as feeding.

Resident Animals

- Animals kept permanently at a centre are agreed to by the team and are the responsibility of kaiako.
- Enclosures, cages, and pens are kept clean and appropriate to the animal's needs, and checked daily.
- Food and water are checked and replenished daily, including weekends and holidays.
- Kaiako discuss safety and humane care with tamariki as part of the programme.

Insects and Invertebrates

- Insects and invertebrates such as worms, snails, and caterpillars may be kept for educational purposes, including observing life cycles such as metamorphosis. The same hygiene practices apply: tamariki wash hands after handling, and the animals are cared for humanely and released or appropriately housed.

Dogs at Drop-off and Pick-up

- Parents who bring dogs at drop-off or pick-up are asked to keep them restrained and at a safe distance from the entrance. Dogs must not enter the centre grounds unless the team leader has given prior approval.
- Guide dogs and working animals must be discussed with the team leader in advance to ensure appropriate restraint arrangements are in place.

Visiting Animals

- Visiting animals - such as those brought for pet days, farm animal visits, or educational experiences - must be kept properly restrained at all times. Kaiako supervise closely to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all tamariki.
- If a visiting animal cannot be adequately restrained, it must be removed immediately. The safety of tamariki is the first priority.

Safety and Restraint

- Animals at the centre must be appropriately restrained or enclosed to ensure the safety of tamariki and kaiako.
- Any person permitted to bring an animal on site gives prior consent to remove that animal immediately on request from kaiako or the team leader.
- Kaiako provide support and reassurance to tamariki who are wary or frightened of animals.

On Excursions

- Tamariki are reminded not to approach unfamiliar animals without the owner's permission.
- If approached by an unfamiliar dog, tamariki are taught to stand still with eyes down. Kaiako stay close and give reassurance.

More information: www.dogsafety.govt.nz

Related Policies: Hazard and Risk Identification and Management Policy | Excursions and Outings Policy | Food, Drink and Nutrition Policy | Isolation and Exclusion Policy

Legislation: Animal Welfare Act 1999 | Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008, Regulation 46 | Education and Training Act 2020 | Licensing Criteria HS16/HS12

Authorised by licensed service:	Jan Beatson
Date:	September 2026
Review Date:	February 2028
Parents informed:	Policy distributed via parent policy book each December and available on request at any time.

Teething Policy

Te Whāriki: Wellbeing | Mana atua

Purpose

To ensure infants and toddlers and their whānau have support while teething and to minimise the side effects.
To create awareness and support the health and wellbeing of tamariki.
To follow best practice recommendations on teething from health professionals.

Teething Aids from Home

- Whānau may provide teething rings and remedies for their tamariki as necessary.
- Medications (teething gels/powders) require a completed medication form.

Teething Gels — Important Clarification

Not all Bonjela products are the same. Whānau and kaiako should be aware of the following:

- **Bonjela Mouth Ulcer Gel (analgesic)** contains choline salicylate. It is a pharmacy-only medicine and is not recommended for children under 18 months.
- **Bonjela Soothing Teething Gel (non-medicated)** does not contain choline salicylate and is not subject to the same age restriction.

Under 2024 Ministry of Education guidance, all orally administered teething products are classified as category (ii) medicines and require a completed medication authorisation form before kaiako can administer them.

Common Teething Symptoms

Bowel Changes

- Tamariki may experience different bowel habits during teething (not diarrhoea).
- This may lead to nappy rash.

Temperature

- A slightly raised temperature is normal during teething.
- Fever threshold: a temperature above 38°C is considered a fever.
- Tamariki with a fever (above 38°C) will be sent home as per the Wellness and Wellbeing Policy.

Paracetamol Administration

- Paracetamol will be administered only for its prescribed purpose.
- It will not be given for teething pain unless specifically prescribed for this purpose.

Keeping Tamariki Home

- If teething pain prevents tamariki from participating in the programme, whānau may be asked to keep tamariki at home until they are feeling better.
- This is at the discretion of kaiako and the team leader.

Related Policies: Wellness and Wellbeing Policy | Medicine Administration Policy | Nappy Changing and Toileting Policy

Legislation: Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008 | Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 | Licensing Criteria HS122, HS123

Authorised by licensed service:	Jan Beatson
Date:	September 2026
Review Date:	February 2028
Parents informed:	Policy distributed via parent policy book each December and available on request at any time.

Smoke, Drug, Vape and Alcohol Free Policy

Wellbeing | Mana Atua 1: Tamariki experience an environment where their health is promoted.

Policy Statement

Play and Learn Early Education Centres Ltd is committed to providing tamariki, kaiako, whānau and visitors with a smoke-free, vape-free, alcohol-free and drug-free environment across every centre, vehicle and programme, including nature programmes and excursions. No person may smoke, vape, consume alcohol, use an illegal substance, or be on the premises, in a service vehicle, or engaged in a service programme while under the influence of any substance that has a detrimental effect on their functioning or behaviour, at any time tamariki are present or the service is operating.

Purpose

1. Tamariki experience a healthy environment, free from exposure to smoking, vaping, alcohol and drugs.
2. To promote healthy living and good habits among tamariki, kaiako and whānau.
3. To comply with the Smokefree Environments and Regulated Products Act 1990 (in particular sections 7A and 20D), the Misuse of Drugs Act 1975, the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015, and Licensing Criteria HS127.

Alignment with Policies

This policy is read alongside:

- Tamariki Protection Policy - for responding to a child who arrives at, or becomes, under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or discloses exposure to substance use.
- Motor Vehicle Transport Policy - for smoke-free and vape-free requirements in vehicles used to transport tamariki.
- Excursions and Outings Policy and Nature School-Kindergarten Policy - for maintaining a smoke/vape/alcohol/drug-free environment during off-site programmes,
- Visitors and Supervision Policy - for managing visitors and contractors on site.

Procedure

1. All property, vehicles and programmes operated by Play and Learn, including excursions and nature programmes, are smoke-free, vape-free, alcohol-free and illegal-substance-free environments at all times tamariki are present or the service is operating.
2. No person on the premises, in a service vehicle, or engaged in a service programme uses, or is under the influence of, alcohol or any other substance that has a detrimental effect on their functioning or behaviour (Licensing Criteria HS127).
3. No smoking or vaping is permitted on the premises, including car parks, or anywhere within view of tamariki, in accordance with section 7A of the Smokefree Environments and Regulated Products Act 1990.
4. No person may smoke or vape in any motor vehicle carrying a child, whether the vehicle is moving or stationary, in accordance with section 20D of the Smokefree Environments and Regulated Products Act 1990.
5. Smoke-free and vape-free signage is displayed at every entrance to the premises and to each building, and additionally in vehicles and car parks as a Play and Learn practice.
6. If kaiako smoke or vape off the premises, they must wash their hands and freshen their clothing and breath before returning to work with tamariki.

7. The Person Responsible will ask any person smoking or vaping on-site to extinguish immediately, or to leave the premises.
8. A parent or caregiver who appears noticeably intoxicated or otherwise impaired will not be permitted to collect a child. The emergency contact listed on the child's enrolment form will be contacted to arrange safe collection. If this is not possible contact Oranga Tamariki and/or Police as appropriate
9. If a child arrives at, or is believed to have been exposed to, alcohol or drugs while in the care of a parent or caregiver, this is treated as a child protection matter under the Tamariki Protection Policy: urgent medical attention will be sought if needed, and the matter will be referred to Oranga Tamariki and/or Police as appropriate. *The Education Review Office (enforcement@ero.govt.nz / 0800 376 800) is now the relevant contact for reporting serious incidents*
10. Any breach of this policy is recorded, *investigated* and reviewed by the Person Responsible.

Relevant Legislation and Regulatory References

Smokefree Environments and Regulated Products Act 1990, sections 7A and 20D, Misuse of Drugs Act 1975, Health and Safety at Work Act 2015, Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008, regulation 46, ECE Licensing Criteria (April 2026), HS127 , *Children's Act 2014*

Definitions

1. Smoke / Smoking: to smoke, hold, or otherwise have control over an ignited regulated product (for example, a cigarette, cigar or pipe).
2. Vape / Vaping: to inhale or exhale the vapour or aerosol produced by a vaping device, or to hold or otherwise have control over an activated vaping device.
3. Regulated product: has the meaning given in the Smokefree Environments and Regulated Products Act 1990, and includes tobacco products, vaping products and herbal smoking products.
4. Alcohol: any beverage containing ethyl alcohol (ethanol), including but not limited to beer, wine and spirits.
5. Illegal substance: any drug or substance whose possession, use or supply is prohibited or restricted under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1975.
6. Detrimental effect on functioning or behaviour: any impairment of judgement, mobility, coordination or bodily function that could compromise the safety or wellbeing of tamariki or others.

Implementation

Clear procedures have been communicated to kaiako and whānau, and smoke-free/vape-free signage is displayed as required. This policy is included in staff induction materials and is reviewed annually or when there is a significant change in the area of the policy topic.

Authorised by licensed service:	Jan Beatson
Date:	September 2026
Review Date:	December 2028
Parents informed:	Finalised policies for the following year are sent to all parents in December as part of the annual policy book. If a critical update arises outside this cycle, it is communicated to parents at that time. Updated policies are available on request.

Policies may not be copied or reproduced whole or in part without consent

Children's Worker Policy and Procedure

Licensing Criterion: GMA106 — Safety Checking

Applies to: Children's workers and, where specified, other workers and contractors

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to ensure that Play and Learn:

- employs and engages people who are safe and suitable to work with children;
- completes all required safety checks before a new children's worker begins work;
- periodically rechecks existing children's workers at least every three years;
- assesses all safety-checking information as a whole before making a decision;
- maintains appropriate records of safety checks and their outcomes;
- meets its Police vetting obligations for other workers and contractors where applicable; and
- complies with current legislative and Ministry of Education requirements.

The central purpose of safety checking is to determine whether a person poses, or may pose, a risk to the safety of children.

2. Legislative and Regulatory Framework

This policy and procedure is informed by:

- the Children's Act 2014;
- the Children's (Requirements for Safety Checks of Children's Workers) Regulations 2015;
- the Education and Training Act 2020, including Schedule 4;
- the Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008;
- the Privacy Act 2020;
- the Human Rights Act 1993;
- the Employment Relations Act 2000;
- Ministry of Education Licensing Criterion GMA106 — Safety Checking;
- relevant child-protection requirements; and
- any subsequent legislation affecting children's worker safety checking.

3. Policy Statement

The safety and wellbeing of children is Play and Learn's first priority.

Safety checking is more than completing a series of documents. It requires professional judgement and careful consideration of all available information about a person.

Play and Learn will:

- consider safety-checking information holistically;
- investigate inconsistencies or concerns;
- give people an appropriate opportunity to respond to relevant concerns;
- seek additional information or advice where necessary;
- clearly document its decision-making; and
- act in the best interests of children.

A serious breach of this policy may constitute serious misconduct and may result in disciplinary action.

Issue Outline

Not all children have the support and protection of a trusted adult, but they must at our centre. The risks to our children and their families of not safety checking robustly would be severe and potentially permanent, and the risks to Play and Learn's reputation would be significant.

Who carries out safety checks

Safety checks at Play and Learn are carried out by Iuliana Martin the Professional Services Manager or Jan Beatson, the Director, in keeping with the Children's (Requirements for Safety Checks of Children's Workers) Regulations 2015.

PART A – WHO MUST BE CHECKED

4. Children's Workers

A children's worker is a person whose work meets the definition in the Children's Act 2014.

This may include:

- service providers and owners;
- managers;
- head teachers;
- Persons Responsible;
- certificated and non-certificated teachers;
- permanent, temporary and casual staff;
- independent relief teachers;
- agency relief teachers;
- other staff who have regular contact with children;
- students working as part of educational or vocational training; and
- staff employed by other organisations who work as children's workers at the service.

Core children's workers

Nearly everyone working directly with children in an early learning service is likely to be a core children's worker, because at some point their duties may involve:

- primary responsibility for children;
- authority over children; or
- being the only children's worker present.

Non-core children's workers

A non-core children's worker has regular but limited contact with children and is not placed in circumstances where they are alone with children or have primary responsibility for them.

The classification of a role will be determined by the actual nature of the work, not simply the worker's job title.

5. Other Employees and Contractors

Some people working at the service may not meet the definition of a children's worker.

Play and Learn will nevertheless comply with Police vetting requirements applying to non-children's workers under the Education and Training Act 2020.

This includes obtaining a Police vet and completing a risk assessment where required for:

- non-teaching or unregistered employees before they begin work at the service; and
- contractors or employees of contractors before they have, or are likely to have, unsupervised access to children.

People who have not been appropriately checked for unsupervised access will be supervised while children are present.

Where practicable, building and maintenance work will be undertaken outside licensed operating hours.

6. Volunteers and Visitors

Volunteers are not automatically required to be Police vetted under the Children's Act 2014 or Education and Training Act 2020.

However, Play and Learn may require additional safeguards, Police vetting or safety checking where this is appropriate because of:

- the frequency of contact;
- one-to-one contact;
- overnight contact;
- the nature of the role; or
- any identified child-safety risk.

Visitors must:

- sign the service visitor record;
- comply with service safety requirements;
- remain appropriately supervised; and
- not have unsupervised access to children unless applicable legal requirements have been met.

PART B — GENERAL SAFETY-CHECKING PRINCIPLES

7. Safety Checks Must Be Completed Before Work Begins

A full safety check must be completed before a new children's worker begins employment or engagement.

It is not sufficient to begin the safety check before the person starts. The required components and final risk assessment must be completed.

8. Periodic Rechecking

Existing children's workers must undergo a periodic safety recheck at least every three years.

The recheck must be completed before the previous safety check expires.

Play and Learn will maintain a monitoring system showing:

- date of last completed safety check;
- date of final risk assessment; and
- due date of the next periodic recheck.

9. Safety Checks Completed by Other Organisations

Play and Learn must not simply rely on a safety check completed by a children's worker's previous employer.

Where another organisation undertakes components of the safety check on behalf of Play and Learn, Play and Learn must be satisfied that:

- there is a clear arrangement for that organisation to undertake those components on Play and Learn's behalf;
- the required components meet Children's Act standards;
- appropriate evidence or written confirmation is obtained;
- Play and Learn completes any components for which it remains responsible; and
- Play and Learn makes and documents the final risk assessment where required.

A Police vet obtained by another agency cannot simply be transferred to or accepted by Play and Learn as its own Police vet.

10. Safety-Checking Principles

Safety-checking decisions will follow these principles.

Information is considered as a whole. No single component should normally determine the outcome unless legislation expressly requires it. The assessor should consider whether there are:

- inconsistencies in information;
- unexplained gaps;
- patterns of concerning attitudes or behaviour;

- criminal offending;
- professional conduct concerns;
- adverse referee information;
- concerns arising during employment; or
- other relevant information.

Context matters. A conviction, complaint, negative reference or other concern may have different significance depending on its nature and seriousness, the person's age at the time, how long ago it occurred, whether there has been repetition, evidence of behavioural change, relevance to the role, aggravating or mitigating factors, and other available evidence.

Concerns should be investigated. Where appropriate, the person must be given an opportunity to explain or respond to relevant concerns.

PART C — NEW CHILDREN'S WORKERS

11. Full Safety Check — New Children's Worker

A new children's worker must complete the full safety-checking process, including verification of identity, interview, work history, referee checks, professional organisation/registration information, New Zealand Police vet, overseas Police information where relevant, consideration of any other relevant information, and a final risk assessment.

The risk assessment is the final step and must only be completed after all required information has been gathered and considered.

18. New Zealand Police Vet

A New Zealand Police vet is a required component of the children's worker safety-checking process.

The Police vet must be obtained and considered before the person starts work unless Play and Learn is lawfully relying on the Teaching Council Police vet for a teacher with a current practising certificate or Limited Authority to Teach.

A Ministry of Justice criminal-record or conviction check is not an acceptable substitute for a New Zealand Police vet.

19. Certificated Teachers and Teaching Council Police Vetting

Persons Responsible and teaching staff holding a current practising certificate or Limited Authority to Teach are Police vetted through the Teaching Council.

Play and Learn may choose to rely on the Teaching Council Police vet rather than obtain another Police vet.

Reliance on Teaching Council Police vetting satisfies only the Police-vetting component of the safety check. Play and Learn must still complete all other required safety-checking components.

PART D — EXISTING CHILDREN'S WORKERS

26. Periodic Safety Check

Existing children's workers must undergo a new periodic safety check at least every three years, consisting of: reconfirmation of identity; information from relevant professional organisations or registration authorities; New Zealand Police vet or lawful reliance on applicable Teaching Council vetting; and a new risk assessment.

The periodic check must be completed before the previous check expires.

PART E — RESPONDING TO CONCERNS

33. Concerns About an Existing Worker

Any allegation that a worker has abused, harmed or may pose a risk to a child will be taken seriously. Play and Learn will immediately consider measures necessary to protect children, follow its Child Protection Policy and applicable employment procedures, and contact the appropriate authorities where suspected abuse or neglect requires notification. Where a child is in immediate danger, Police will be contacted immediately.

Protected Disclosure

When a staff member or associate brings a case of child abuse to the attention of centre management or the authorities, Play and Learn will not disclose the name of that person without their permission, unless it is to Oranga Tamariki or the Police and is necessary to do so in the interests of the child.

PART F — RECORDS, PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

34–37. Records and Privacy

Play and Learn will maintain detailed records of each required safety-check component and its result, keep Police vet information confidential, and manage all safety-checking information securely and in accordance with the Privacy Act 2020.

Record Retention: consistent with Licensing Criterion GMA106, safety-checking records will be kept by, or available to, Play and Learn for as long as the person is employed or engaged. A blanket rule requiring all safety-checking and Police vet material to be retained for seven years after employment ends will not be applied where this would result in personal information being retained longer than lawfully necessary.

Alignment with Other Policies and Procedures

- Tamariki Protection Policy

Impacts of Policy on Staff, Parents, Children

Comprehensive safety checking of all staff gives assurance to parents, staff and children that Play and Learn takes child protection seriously and that our centres are safe places for children.

Implications and/or Risks

In making an appointment, Play and Learn applies a risk assessment by weighing up all information gathered and selecting a person who is a safe person to work with children, understands the needs and development of children, supports and adheres to Play and Learn's child protection policies, and will make the safety of children a priority.

Implementation

This policy influences Play and Learn's recruitment and HR processes and forms part of staff induction and in-service training.

PART H — RESPONSIBILITIES

40. Management Responsibilities

Management will ensure safety checking occurs before employment or engagement, three-yearly rechecks are completed before expiry, Police vets are obtained where required, Teaching Council information is appropriately checked, records are complete and secure, and concerns about worker suitability are responded to promptly.

41. Staff Responsibilities

Staff will prioritise children's safety and wellbeing, provide accurate safety-checking information, cooperate with periodic rechecking, maintain required professional certification, comply with child-protection policies, and maintain confidentiality.

45. Review

This policy and its associated forms will be reviewed at least every 2 years, or when legislation or regulations change, when licensing criteria or regulatory guidance change, following a significant child-safety or safety-checking incident, or where practice identifies a need for change.

Authorisation

Authorised by licensed service:	Jan Beatson
Date:	August 2026
Review Date:	April 2028

Parents informed: Policies distributed via parent policy book each December; critical updates communicated promptly; available on request.



Communication with Whānau Policy

Te Whāriki Principle: Whānau Tangata - Family and Community

Policy Statement

At Play and Learn we value open, respectful, two-way communication and partnership with whānau in the education and care of their tamariki. We are committed to ensuring whānau have access to the information they need, and genuine opportunities to contribute to their child's learning and to the centre's operation.

Purpose

To respect, value and promote open, respectful communication and relationships between kaiako and whānau. To work in partnership, finding the best ways of providing supportive education and care. To provide understanding and consistency between whānau and kaiako. To prepare children for 21st century learning.

Alignment with Policies

This policy should be read alongside the following policies

Settling, Complaints, Privacy Act, Medical Assistance and Incident Management, Excursions and Outings, Nature Kindergarten Policy, Fees,

Procedure

Before care begins, whānau complete the information sheet and advise us of any special or additional requirements, including health needs or other general information. Better information will assist tamariki to settle in, and this helps us to understand them.

We provide whānau with clear information about our programme, policies, fees, and requirements relating to food, choking prevention, excursions, and Nature Programmes. Our programme is child-led, play-based, this means we focus on each tamaiti's dispositions, interests, strengths and encourage learning through play. Whānau are encouraged to read our information book, policies and procedures, which explain our philosophy and the reasons behind our approach.

We value whānau as partners in their child's learning. Whānau are encouraged to contribute to planning and evaluation, share their aspirations, participate in setting goals, and offer suggestions and ideas that enrich our programme and support positive outcomes for tamariki.

- We invite whānau to an information session to discuss how our programme works. This is an important way of sharing our unique programme and objectives. We also arrange whānau evenings/events with social, educational and informative content. Whānau are welcome to offer suggestions for these evenings.
- Kaiako briefly discuss the day with you at pick-up time. You are also welcome to stay, phone in, participate in excursions, or make a formal appointment to discuss your tamariki at any time. Please keep phone calls brief, or text, in order to minimise interruptions.
- Remember to promptly sign in and out each day, this is important for records, safety and for us to know who here.

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- You are welcome to email or text; however we respect our kaiako's work hours, family time and privacy and do not expect them to reply to communications outside of work hours..
- Health regulations require us to exclude a child if we suspect an infectious illness. A medical certificate may be requested. Each day, please inform us of any health or wellbeing issues we need to be aware of, e.g. not enough sleep. This helps us understand behaviours and better care for tamariki.
- Serious or distressing accidents/incidents or head injuries will be communicated directly to whānau as soon as possible- see our Medical Assistance and Incident Management Policy. An information sheet for any accidents/incidents will be completed by kaiako and placed in your wall pocket or bag for you to know what has happened.. Regulations require this to be confirmed by a whānau signature.
- Tamariki have their stories and learning shared with you in their learning journey and/or Story Park (e-portfolio) or closed Facebook. We encourage whānau to share their own stories and ideas; you will keep this record when you leave. Further communications may be through a “closed” Facebook group for each programme, this is limited to whānau and kaiako, please respect everyone’s privacy - see our Privacy Act Compliance Policy. We will respect your decision if you choose to opt out.
- Noticeboards, wall pockets, Facebook and Story Park posts are used for daily activities and learning updates.
- We encourage whānau to participate in our policy reviews, surveys and evaluations, and to contribute to our annual and strategic plans, these inform our direction and programme. They may be used to show whānau contribution to the development and review of our operational documents.
- Discuss any concerns with your Team Leader or Centre Coordinator in the first instance -see our Complaints Policy.

Whānau Access to Information

In addition to the day-to-day communication described above, whānau are entitled to access the following information:

Information	How whānau can access this
Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008 Current licence certificate and any changes to status Most recent Education Review Office (ERO) report Complaints Policy	Displayed on Noticeboard
Fees charged by the service	Enrolment Agreement; see our Fees Policy
The centre's operational policies and procedures	Information book, Policy held at the centre; available on request and usually accessed through website
Planned policy reviews and consultation opportunities	Centre noticeboard; newsletters, surveys
Amount and details of Ministry of Education funding received	See Team Leader for a copy
Questions about our service or to raise a concern Names and qualifications of staff	See Team Leader

Authorisation

Authorised by licensed service:	Jan Beatson
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Policies may not be copied or reproduced whole or in part without consent

Date:	September 2026
Review Date:	September 2027
Parents informed:	<i>Finalised policies for the following year are sent to all parents in December as part of the annual policy book. If a critical update arises outside this cycle, it is communicated to parents at that time. Updated policies are available on request.</i>



Fee Policy

All fees are to be paid by the beginning of the week of care by automatic payment/internet banking. Late payments could incur a penalty. Weekly accounts will be available at the beginning of each week. Any outstanding fees must be paid before tamariki cease care.

Fee Schedule and 20 Hours ECE

See individual fee schedule for current fees. 20 ECE hours are in line with MoE rules. While the 20 Hours ECE funding helps offset some of the costs, it unfortunately does not fully cover the true cost of delivering high-quality early childhood education.

Absences/Holidays

Full fees are charged for all unbooked absences e.g. sickness as overheads such as kaiako salaries still have to be met. Holidays when booked a full week in advance will be charged a holding fee of 1/3 of usual payment. Holiday holding fee can only be charged for a maximum of three consecutive weeks, after which full fees are payable.

Closures

We are closed on public holidays, however weekly fees are based on an annual amount, so full fees are still charged for full time tamariki. Part time tamariki will not be charged for public holidays. For emergency closures a makeup day may sometimes be available, if requested.

Change of Hours / Termination of Enrolment

Changes to hours must be requested at least one week in advance. Two weeks notice must be given if you no longer wish to attend. Full fees will be charged if no notice is given.

WINZ Childcare Subsidy

Many whānau are eligible for assistance to help cover fee charges. Please check your eligibility with WINZ. Once payment is received by us it will be deducted from your account. It is your responsibility to cover all payments not paid by WINZ to Play and Learn.

Family Boost

Many families are eligible for Family Boost payments. You will need to register for FamilyBoost in myIR before you can make a claim. You only need to register once. Family Boost statements will be sent out shortly after the quarter has ended for you to claim your refund.

Late Pickup

All tamariki must be collected on time. Extra fees will be charged if tamariki are collected late (regardless of the time they arrive). For tamariki collected after closing time, you will be charged at a higher rate towards the cost of extra wages.

Please respect our kaiako, they have commitments and need to finish work on time.

Optional Programmes

Excursions do not generally incur a fee - they are part of our regular programme.

Nature programme and swimming lessons incur additional fees and will be invoiced termly.

Related Policies: Enrolment Agreement

Legislation: Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008 | Education and Training Act 2020 | Licensing Criteria GMA102

Authorised by licensed service:	Jan Beatson
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Date:	September 2026
Review Date:	February 2027
Parents informed:	Policy distributed via parent policy book each December and available on request at any time.

Privacy Policy *a whenua*

Purpose

This policy sets out how Play and Learn collects, uses, stores, discloses and disposes of personal information about tamariki, parents/whānau, staff, students, volunteers and visitors.

Scope

This policy applies to all people working at or for the service, including the licensee, managers, educators, relievers, students, volunteers and contractors. It covers all personal information held by the service, whether in paper or electronic form.

Information Privacy Principles - Summary

to follow 13

information is collected, stored, used and shared:

Information Privacy Principles - Summary

IPP	Principle (plain language)
1	Only collect the information you need.
2	Where possible, get the information directly from the person.
3	Be clear about what the information will be used for.
3A	Unless there is an exemption, tell the person when you obtain information about them from a third party.
4	Use fair and reasonable ways of collecting information.
5	Keep information safe and secure.
6	Let people access information about themselves.
7	Correct information if the person thinks it is wrong.
8	Make sure information is accurate before you use it.
9	Only keep information as long as you need it.
10	Only use information for the purpose you collected it for.
11	Only share personal information if you have a good reason.
12	Only send personal information overseas if equivalent safeguards apply.
13	Only use unique identifiers if clearly allowed.

Roles and Responsibilities

The licensee (**Jan Beatson**) has ultimate responsibility for compliance with the Privacy Act, licensing criteria and this policy; ensures resources and systems are in place; liaises with regulators; and approves major changes to this policy.

The Professional Services Manager (**Iuliana Martin**) has day-to-day responsibility for privacy compliance; leads privacy training; manages access/correction requests, complaints and privacy breaches.

Privacy Officers: Jan Beatson jan@playandlearn.net.nz and Iuliana Martin iuliana@playandlearn.net.nz are the privacy officers and the first point of contact for privacy queries, requests and complaints.

All staff must follow this policy, keep information secure, and report any suspected privacy breach immediately to a privacy officer.

Information We Collect

We only collect personal information that is necessary for lawful purposes connected with early childhood education and care, including:

- **Tamariki:** name, date of birth, gender, enrolment details, attendance, health and medical information, allergies, immunisation, emergency contacts, learning and assessment information, photographs and learning stories.

- **Parents/whānau and emergency contacts:** names, contact details, relationship to child, custody or court orders where relevant, billing and payment information.
- **Staff, students, volunteers and contractors:** employment and contact details, qualifications, safety-checking information, payroll and tax information.
- **Visitors and others:** name, contact details, purpose of visit, sign-in records where required.

We do not collect more information than is necessary and do not require identifying information where it is not needed.

How and Why We Collect Information

Information is collected:

- directly from the individual concerned wherever possible (e.g. enrolment forms, conversations, learning observations);
- from parents/whānau about their child; and
- from other agencies (e.g. health professionals, Oranga Tamariki, Ministry of Education, previous ECE services) where necessary and lawful.

When collecting information directly from an individual, we take all reasonable steps to ensure the person knows: why the information is being collected; who will receive it; whether giving it is voluntary or required; what happens if they do not provide it; and their rights to access and request correction.

Use and Disclosure of Information

Play and Learn uses and discloses personal information only:

- for the primary purpose for which it was collected (education, care, health and safety, administration, funding and legal obligations); or
- for a directly related purpose that the individual would reasonably expect; or
- with the individual's authorisation; or
- where authorised or required by law (e.g. to the Ministry of Education, ERO, Oranga Tamariki, NZ Police, health professionals in an emergency, or to prevent or lessen a serious threat to life, health or safety).

Staff must not disclose personal information informally or "in passing". Disclosures are limited to the minimum necessary and documented where significant. Information is not disclosed for marketing or unrelated purposes without explicit consent.

Sharing with Parents/Whānau and Regulators

Parents and whānau are entitled, unless a court order says otherwise, to:

- reports about their child's participation and learning; and
- access to official records held by the service about their child's participation.

Play and Learn provides parents with information on how to access the Regulations, licensing criteria, the most recent ERO report, information about their child, fees and funding information, operational documents, and the complaints procedure (including ERO contact details for concerns about non-compliance).

We may be required to provide information to the Ministry of Education (including Early Learning Information — ELI), ERO for licensing, monitoring and complaints, and other regulators or agencies where required by law. ELI information (including NSNs) is treated as private and accessed only for authorised purposes.

Separated Parents and Guardianship

Both parents with day-to-day care or guardianship rights are generally entitled to receive information about their child from the service, and to be involved in decisions about their child's education and care, unless a court order says otherwise.

Where a court order is in place that restricts a parent's access to information or contact:

- The service must sight the relevant order and retain a copy on the child's file.
- Staff will follow the order and will not share information with any person whose access is restricted by it.
- The service will not take sides in custody or access disputes and will direct parents to seek independent legal advice where needed.

Where no court order exists and access to information is disputed, the service will take a cautious approach and seek guidance from the privacy officer before sharing information. Any decisions made in relation to separated parents situations are documented on the child's file.

Storage and Security of Information

Play and Learn protects personal information with reasonable security safeguards, including:

- paper records stored in office areas that are not accessible to the public;
- password-protected devices and systems;
- role-based access to electronic records;
- secure email and approved cloud systems;
- screen-locking and safe handling of devices; and
- regular backups and controlled disposal of old equipment.

Information is not left where it can be seen by the general public or unauthorised people. Only staff who need access for their role may access personal information.

Retention and Disposal of Information

The service does not keep personal information longer than necessary. Key retention periods:

- **Enrolment and attendance records:** at least 7 years, as required by GMA109 and the ECE Funding Handbook.
- **Funding and financial records:** at least 7 years.
- **Health and safety, incident, medication and complaints records:** in line with licensing, health and safety and legal requirements and for as long as needed for risk management or potential claims.

When records are no longer required, they are securely destroyed (shredded or permanently deleted). Records may be retained longer if needed for ongoing complaints, investigations or legal proceedings.

Access to and Correction of Personal Information

Individuals have the right to ask whether the service holds personal information about them, request access to that information, and request correction if it is inaccurate, out of date, incomplete, irrelevant or misleading.

Requests should be made in writing (including email) to a privacy officer. The privacy officer will verify the requester's identity. The service will respond within 20 working days or advise if more time is needed and why.

Access may be refused or limited only where an exception in the Privacy Act applies (e.g. risk of serious harm, breach of another person's privacy, legal privilege). If a correction is requested, the service will take reasonable steps to correct the information or attach a statement of correction if disagreement remains.

Parents may request access to information about their child, subject to the child's best interests and any legal restrictions.

Privacy Breaches

A privacy breach occurs when personal information is accessed, used or disclosed without authorisation, or is lost. Staff must report any suspected breach immediately to a privacy officer and must not try to investigate or manage a breach themselves.

Privacy officers will: contain and assess the breach; decide whether it is likely to cause serious harm; notify affected individuals where appropriate; notify the Office of the Privacy Commissioner as soon as practicable if the breach is likely to cause serious harm; document the breach and actions taken; and review systems and training to prevent recurrence.

Where a breach may also be a licensing or safety issue, the service will notify relevant regulators (e.g. ERO or Ministry of Education) as required.

Photographs, Video and Digital Media

Play and Learn may take photographs and videos of tamariki for learning stories, portfolios, internal documentation, displays within the service, communication with parents/whānau, understanding the programme, and promotional use (website, social media, newsletters) where consent is obtained.

Photos and videos that identify children are stored securely and accessed only by authorised staff and parents/whānau as appropriate. Promotional or public use of images requires explicit parental consent, which may be withdrawn at any time. Staff and families must not share images of children on personal social media accounts without authorisation. All digital media comply with the service's ICT and social media practices.

Complaints about Privacy

If a person believes their privacy rights have been breached, they may raise the issue with a privacy officer in the first instance; request an internal review by the licensee if not satisfied; or contact the Office of the Privacy Commissioner (www.privacy.org.nz) for advice or to make a complaint.

This privacy complaints process operates alongside the service's general complaints procedure, which includes the option to contact ERO for concerns about non-compliance with regulations and licensing criteria.

Training and Accountability

All new staff receive privacy training as part of induction. Refresher training is provided at least every two years or when significant changes occur. Breaches of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment or engagement. Contractors, students and volunteers must acknowledge and follow this policy.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed at least every two years, and after any significant privacy breach, complaint, system change, or change in legislation or licensing criteria. The licensee is responsible for ensuring the policy remains current and that staff are informed of changes.

Legislative and Regulatory Framework moved to end

This policy complies with:

- Privacy Act 2020 and the 13 Information Privacy Principles (IPPs) — summarised below.
- Education and Training Act 2020, Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008 and current licensing criteria (including GMA109 enrolment and attendance records and GMA102 information provided to parents).
- ECE Funding Handbook record-keeping requirements.
- Children's Act 2014 (safety checking and child protection).
- Any other applicable legislation and regulatory guidance.

From 1 September 2026, the Education Review Office (ERO) investigates complaints about non-compliance with regulations and licensing criteria.

It ensures compliance with the Privacy Act 2020, the Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008, GMA101, GMA102, GMA103, GMA106, GMA109, GMA110, HS125, HS128, current licensing criteria, and guidance from the Ministry of Education and the Office of the Privacy Commissioner.

Related Policies: Complaints Procedure | Enrolment Agreement | Child Protection Policy

Legislation and Guidance: Privacy Act 2020 | Education and Training Act 2020 | Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008 | Children's Act 2014 | ECE Funding Handbook | Licensing Criteria GMA101, GMA102, GMA103, GMA106, GMA109, GMA110, HS125, HS128

Authorised by licensed service:	Jan Beatson
Date:	September 2026
Review Date:	September 2028
Parents informed:	Policy distributed via parent policy book each December and available on request at any time.

Appendix: Privacy Statement for Parents and Whānau

Who we are

Play and Learn is a licensed early childhood education service. Our privacy officers are Jan Beatson (Licensee) and Iuliana Martin (Professional Services Manager). Contact us at any of our centre locations or via the details in your enrolment agreement.

What information we collect

- **About your child:** name, date of birth, gender, health and medical information (including allergies and immunisation), emergency contacts, enrolment and attendance records, and learning stories and assessments.
- **About you:** name, contact details, relationship to your child, custody or court orders where relevant, and billing and payment information.

Why we collect it

To enrol and care for your child safely; meet our health, safety and legal obligations; comply with licensing criteria and Ministry of Education requirements; support your child's learning and wellbeing; administer funding and fees; and communicate with you about your child's education and care.

Who we share it with

We share information only when required or authorised, including with the Ministry of Education (funding, NSN assignment, licensing and compliance), ERO (monitoring and complaints), other government agencies where required by law (e.g. Oranga Tamariki, NZ Police, health professionals in an emergency), and staff within the service who need it for their role. We do not share your information for marketing purposes.

How we store it and how long we keep it

Paper records are stored in office areas not accessible to the public, and digital records are password-protected with role-based access. Enrolment and attendance records are kept for at least 7 years after your child's last attendance, as required by law. Other records are kept for as long as legally required or necessary.

Your rights

Under the Privacy Act 2020, you can ask whether we hold information about you or your child, request access to it, and ask us to correct anything that is inaccurate or misleading. Please contact a privacy officer in writing (including email). We will respond within 20 working days.

How to make a complaint

Speak with a privacy officer in the first instance. If not resolved, you may request an internal review by the licensee, or contact the Office of the Privacy Commissioner: www.privacy.org.nz or 0800 803 909. For concerns about non-compliance with licensing criteria or regulations, you may also contact ERO: www.ero.govt.nz.

Complaints Policy and Procedure

Principle 4 Relationships | Ngā hononga

Parents and whānau trust that their ECE service will provide an environment where respectful relationships, encouragement, warmth and acceptance are the norm.

Policy Statement

Play and Learn values open, honest communication with parents, whānau, and employees. We welcome feedback as an opportunity to maintain and improve the quality of our service. All concerns and complaints are taken seriously, treated with respect, and responded to fairly and promptly. Raising a concern or complaint in good faith will not have any adverse effect on a child or their family.

- We have established processes to engage with parents and whānau, which involves inviting and welcoming input and feedback.
- We take concerns and complaints seriously and will investigate in a thorough and transparent manner, reporting back to the complainant our findings and the resulting actions and outcome.
- We are committed to positive, supportive and low-key resolution of concerns and complaints.

Purpose

To establish a process for formal and informal resolution of concerns and complaints.

Parents, whānau, employees and visitors understand who they can contact for questions about the centre and/or to make a complaint about the centre's operation.

The Complaints Policy and Procedure is prominently displayed on the parent information board, in the policy book, and on request (GMA101).

Complainants are also advised that they may contact the Education Review Office (ERO), which is responsible for receiving and managing complaints and incidents relating to early learning services (see "Where to Escalate" below). All complaints should still be directed to the Team Leader in the first instance.

Concerns may be brought to the centre's attention verbally. Complaints must be made in writing.

Definitions

Concerns are low-level queries or statements by a parent, staff member or other individual relating to aspects, processes, or people within the centre. Concerns are likely to be resolved by discussion, clarification or simple information. We endeavour to resolve concerns by engaging with the person in the first instance, in a positive and supportive manner. It is important to distinguish between concerns and complaints, and to ensure the person raising an issue is clear about which they are making.

A complaint should be made in writing. It is a more serious statement, where expectations have not been met or acceptable conduct may have been breached. This is more likely to require corrective measures or disciplinary action.

Procedure

1. Receive a complaint

- If a parent/whānau has questions or minor concerns, they should first approach the relevant teacher or staff member involved. If the issue is not resolved or further clarification is needed, the Team Leader should be approached for a possible solution.
- If an employee has questions or minor concerns, they should first approach the Team Leader. If unresolved, the management should be approached.

- Concerns and complaints should be raised with the Team Leader in the first instance. If the complaint relates to management or governance of the centre, or is about the centre manager, it may be made to the licensee, Jan Beatson (see details below).
- Respect the need for confidentiality.
- Listen to the complaint and respond in a professional, factual manner.
- All enquiries, concerns, complaints about an employee, something that is happening at the service, or on an excursion, or issues of non-compliance, should (if possible) be discussed with the Team Leader in the first instance to see if the problem can be solved informally.
- If a solution is not found through informal discussion, a formal letter of complaint should be sent to the licensee, Jan Beatson, this should be factual and specific.
- All concerns may be made verbally. However, all complaints must be in writing. If verbal complaints are received, the complainant will be advised that the complaints process will be initiated once the complaint has been received in writing.
- Management will acknowledge in writing that the complaint has been received.
- Management will undertake an investigation into the complaint, ensuring all parties concerned are consulted, and respond in writing within a reasonable time as to the decision.

2. Confidentiality

- Where we receive a lawful request from a regulator or enforcement agency of the government, any information they request will be provided.
- Confidentiality will be maintained as far as possible, except where it would breach natural justice.
- Maintaining the respect and dignity of employees and complainants is important.

3. Investigation

- The complainant will receive reassurance that the complaint will be considered, and a response will be given once the investigation is completed.
- All complaints will be investigated by the Team Leader. If the complaint concerns the Team Leader, the licensee will undertake the investigation.
- If a complaint concerns the safety of children, immediate action is taken.
- Some complaints, because of their nature, may involve external agencies (e.g. Teaching Council, Oranga Tamariki). Where this is necessary, the complainant will be informed as soon as possible. Where external agencies are involved, the **Director of Regulation** will also be notified.

4. Types of events or situations that result in complaints, and responsibility. The Team Leader will have the support of the Professional Services Manager and the Licensee.

Situation	Nature of complaint	Responsibility
A parent complains about an incident/accident involving their child (e.g. wrong food/drink causing an intolerance reaction)	Against the centre	Team Leader responsible for centre Health & Safety processes initiates an investigation
A staff member is accused of theft or misuse of centre property	Against an individual	Team Leader investigates an employment matter
A parent complains that their child's nappies were not changed, or clothes are wet/not changed	Care and quality of service by staff	Team Leader or person in charge investigates staff performance
A parent complains their child was mistreated by another child	Care and quality of service by the centre	Team Leader reviews whether the learning environment and supervision were appropriate and whether supervisory procedures were followed
A parent complains their child was deliberately hit by an employed teacher	Directed to the Licensee; could also be directed to ERO or Police	The Team Leader/Licensee must immediately stand the employee down on full pay and investigate; the employee cannot continue to work with children while under

		investigation. If evidence of criminal offending is obtained, escalate to authorities., seek legal advice promptly. If the employee admits to deliberately hitting the child, they can be stood down without pay — seek legal advice before doing so. It is up to the Police to determine prosecution.
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5. Inform

- If the complaint concerns a staff member, they must be told of any likely investigation as soon as the complaint is received.
- Clear communication is kept with all parties involved.
- For serious complaints involving staff, strict employment processes are followed.
- Throughout all processes, a written record is kept.

6. Decisions Based on Fact

Our investigation process will endeavour to gather all relevant facts before reaching a decision on the cause. We do not subscribe to investigations that focus solely on finding fault with others. We believe some issues reflect a weakness in our processes, and some reflect the judgement and actions of individuals.

7. Conclusion

We will communicate the conclusion of any complaint investigation to the complainant and any external agency involved.

8. Anonymity and Natural Justice

Anonymity: A complainant may request anonymity, particularly for protected disclosures or health and safety concerns. However, anonymity cannot be guaranteed where disclosure is necessary for a fair investigation or disciplinary process. The complainant will be advised, where possible, before their identity is disclosed.

Under the Employment Relations Act 2000, employers must follow natural justice when investigating complaints. The employee must know the allegations against them and must have a real opportunity to respond.

Principles of Natural Justice (New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990): the right to be heard, no pre-determined outcomes, no bias, and procedural fairness.

Where the complaint concerns the actions of an individual, we will communicate the nature of that complaint to them; they have a right to know the full details, including the source, to fairly defend themselves.

Complaints of a serious nature involving child safety will include the immediate stand-down on full pay of any staff member who is the subject of that allegation/complaint.

9. Outcome

We will act on the findings of any complaint, in particular where this involves:

- An improvement or change to our policies and procedures.
- The training and education of staff.
- Disciplinary action taken against a staff member, noting our obligations under relevant employment contracts and employment law.
- Where disciplinary action has been taken or is in process with a teaching staff member, mandatory reporting requirements of the Teaching Council are followed.

Findings feed back into our quality improvement and service review processes. All documentation relating to a complaint is retained for seven years. Any outcome involving disciplinary action against a staff member is retained on their personnel file per our disciplinary policies.

Where to Escalate

If not happy with the response taken, the complainant may further address their concerns to the Education Review Office (ERO), which is responsible for receiving and managing complaints and incidents relating to early learning regulations, effective 1 September 2026.

- Email: enforcement@ero.govt.nz
- Phone: 0800 376 800
- Website: ero.govt.nz — “Make a complaint” and “Report an incident” pages

In an emergency, or where there is immediate risk to a child, call 111.

Relevant Legislation and Regulatory References

- Regulation 47, Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008 — Governance, Management and Administration standard: general.
- GMA101 — Display of information.
- GMA102 — parents and whānau are provided with information on how to access, among other things, “the service’s procedure for parents and whānau to follow if they wish to make a complaint about the service. The procedure should include details on who to contact and the contact information for the Education Review Office” (updated wording, effective 1 September 2026).
- New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990 — principles of natural justice.
- Employment Relations Act 2000.
- Protected Disclosures (Protection of Whistleblowers) Act 2022.
- Crimes Act 1961, section 195 (ill-treatment of a child).

Implementation

This policy and procedure is part of the centre’s induction for new employees, and forms part of the enrolment information pack for parents. Information on how to make a complaint is made available at reception for parents and visitors. Staff are regularly reminded of the complaints procedure at staff meetings, where complaint trends are also discussed.

Reviewed — September 2026

Authorisation

Authorised by licensed service:	Jan Beatson
Date:	September 2026
Review Date:	November 2028
Parents informed:	Finalised policies for the following year are sent to all parents in December as part of the annual policy book. If a critical update arises outside this cycle, it is communicated to parents at that time. Updated policies are available on request.

Licensee Jan Beatson jan@playandlearn.net.nz or P.O. Box 203 002, Waiau Pa 2345

Management refers to Management Team - License, Professional Services manager

Social Media Policy

Te Whāriki: Wellbeing | Mana atua | Belonging | Mana whenua

Purpose

Social media is a powerful communication tool that can strengthen connections between our service, whānau, and the wider community.

To maximise the benefits of social media while minimising risks to the privacy, safety, and wellbeing of tamariki, whānau, and kaiako.

To ensure all social media use by kaiako, whether professional or personal, maintains the safety, dignity, and reputation of our service.

Procedure

- Kaiako must conduct themselves professionally on all social media platforms. Any comments, images, or content that could reflect poorly on the service, tamariki, or whānau must not be posted.
- Personal use of social media by kaiako during work hours is restricted to agreed break times only.
- Permission to post images or stories of tamariki on the service Facebook page or Storypark or other digital platforms will be sought at the time of enrolment and can be changed at any time.
- Separate signed permission will be obtained before any other photos or videos of tamariki are shared on any social media or public platform.
- Kaiako must respect the privacy of their colleagues. Images or comments about other staff members must not be posted on social media without their consent.
- If whānau request to take photos of their child that may include other children, kaiako should sensitively remind them of the need to protect the privacy of all tamariki.
- Kaiako must not share any images, videos, or personal information about tamariki or their whānau with unauthorised persons through any social media channel.
- On excursions or in public spaces, if approached by members of the public requesting to photograph or film tamariki, kaiako must politely but firmly decline.
- All personal and confidential information must be handled in accordance with the Privacy Act 2020. Any breach of privacy through social media must be reported to management immediately.

Related Policies: Information Communication Technology (ICT) Policy | Policy on AI | Privacy Act Compliance Policy

Legislation: Privacy Act 2020 | Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008 | Licensing Criteria C110, GMA102, GMA103

Authorised by licensed service:	Jan Beatson
Date:	September 2026
Review Date:	November 2027
Parents informed:	Policy distributed via parent policy book each December and available on request at any time.

Policy on Screen Time

Te Whāriki: Exploration | Mana aotūroa:

Purpose

To raise awareness of the health and wellbeing implications of excessive screen time for young children, and to ensure that any screen-based technology used within our service is purposeful, age-appropriate, and supports the learning programme.

To ensure best practice guidelines around screen time are understood and followed by kaiako and whānau.

To prioritise verbal communication, physical play, and real-world interactions over passive screen-based activities.

Procedure

- Children under two years of age will not be exposed to screen time at the service.
- Children aged two and over may have limited screen time of less than one hour per week, connected directly to the learning programme and with clear educational purpose.
- Screens and digital devices will not be used as a reward or to manage behaviour.
- Devices such as tablets, computers, and cameras may be used by tamariki for recording, documenting, or educational purposes under kaiako supervision.
- Kaiako personal phones must be used only during agreed break times and must not be used in front of tamariki during programme time.
- Whānau are asked not to use their phones during drop-off and pick-up times, to support connection and positive transitions for tamariki.

Related Policies: Information Communication Technology (ICT) Policy | Policy on AI

Legislation: Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008 | Licensing Criteria C110, PF101

Authorised by licensed service:	Jan Beatson
Date:	September 2026
Review Date:	September 2027
Parents informed:	Policy distributed via parent policy book each December and available on request at any time.

Information Communication Technology/Cybersafety (ICT) Policy

Te Whāriki: Wellbeing | Mana atua — Goal 3

Purpose

At Play and Learn, we are committed to protecting the privacy and wellbeing of every child and their whānau. All data, images, and digital content will be collected, used, and shared only in safe, secure, and professional ways.

To maximise the benefits of ICT as a tool that supports learning, communication, and documentation within the service.

To inform and support whānau and kaiako in understanding how information and images are managed, stored, and shared.

To outline clear processes for the collection, storage, and use of data, images, and digital content.

To ensure ICT is used in ways that maintain a safe, respectful, and professional environment for tamariki, whānau, and kaiako.

Guidelines

- All kaiako, students, and volunteers must sign an ICT Agreement before using any ICT equipment or services at Play and Learn.
- Written consent must be obtained from whānau before any images or videos of tamariki are taken or used.
- No identifiable images of tamariki will be shared publicly without explicit written permission from whānau.
-
- Kaiako must be aware of each child's consent status and act accordingly at all times.
- Images and videos should focus on learning and activity, and must be appropriate and respectful.
- No inappropriate, offensive, or disrespectful images or content will be captured, stored, or shared using any ICT equipment.
- All data and images must be stored securely in password-protected systems approved by management.
- Images and content taken on personal devices for work purposes must be transferred to secure systems and deleted from personal devices before leaving the centre.
- Permission from a team leader is required before sharing any content off-site or with external parties.
- Images and digital records will be retained for a maximum of six months unless required for ongoing documentation purposes.
- Management has the right to monitor ICT use to ensure compliance with this policy.
- Tamariki's use of ICT and digital devices will be actively supervised by kaiako at all times.
- Personal phone use by kaiako during work hours is restricted to agreed break times, except in emergencies.
- Whānau are asked to minimise personal phone use during drop-off and pick-up to support connection and communication with tamariki and kaiako.

- All personal and confidential information must be handled in accordance with the Privacy Act 2020.
- All personal data will be collected and stored lawfully, used only for its intended purpose, and protected from unauthorised access.
- AI tools used within the service must comply with the Policy on AI and be approved by management before use.
- The safety and wellbeing of tamariki is paramount and will always take priority over any ICT use.
- Location settings on devices used for work purposes must be turned off when not required for operational purposes.

Important Terms Used

- **Cybersafety:** The safe, responsible, and ethical use of digital technologies and the internet, including protecting personal information, privacy, and wellbeing online.
- **ICT (Information Communication Technology):** Any technology used to manage, communicate, and share information digitally.
- **ICT Equipment:** Includes computers, laptops, tablets, the internet, cloud storage, cameras, mobile phones, audio and video recording devices, emerging technologies, monitoring software, and any other digital tools used within the service.
- **Artificial Intelligence (AI):** Technology that uses computer systems to perform tasks that would normally require human intelligence, such as generating text, images, or decisions.

Related Policies: Policy on AI | Policy on Screen Time | Social Media Policy | Privacy Act Compliance Policy

Legislation: Privacy Act 2020 | Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008 | Licensing Criteria C110, GMA102

Authorised by licensed service:	Jan Beatson
Date:	September 2026
Review Date:	November 2027
Parents informed:	Policy distributed via parent policy book each December and available on request at any time.

Policy on Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use

Te Whāriki: Exploration | Mana aotūroa

Purpose

To acknowledge the potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to positively impact early childhood, while ensuring its use is ethical, responsible, and safe.

To protect the privacy, safety, and dignity of tamariki, whānau, and kaiako.

To ensure AI supports, rather than replaces, human interactions and professional decision-making.

Guiding Principles

- **Human centred priority:** AI should enhance, not replace, human intuition, engagement, and creativity, while supporting learning goals appropriate for early childhood.
- **Child Safety and Well-being:** AI must be used in ways that prioritise child protection, learning, and development. Children's personal information, images, voices, and data must never be shared with AI systems without explicit written consent.
- **Privacy and Data Security:** Personal data must be handled with strict confidentiality, ensuring compliance with relevant data protection laws. We will only use reputable, secure AI platforms approved by management.
- **Transparency and Accountability:** AI tools should be used responsibly, with clear guidelines on their application and impact.
- **Cultural Values:** AI use must respect and support our commitment to bicultural values, ensuring Māori perspectives are valued and protected.
- **Equity and Inclusion:** AI should be accessible and support diverse learning needs, avoiding biases or discrimination.

Examples of AI Applications

- **Administrative Support:** AI may assist with scheduling, communication, and documentation but will not replace direct human oversight.
- **Planning and Documentation:** AI may assist with planning, stories, and policy edits.
- **Learning Enhancement:** AI tools, such as interactive storytelling, may complement traditional teaching methods under supervision.
- **Assessment and Observation:** AI may assist in documentation and assessment. Stories and final assessments must always be reviewed and checked for accuracy by the author.
- **Resource Optimisation:** AI may help identify trends in curriculum engagement and resource use, supporting informed decision-making.
- **Communication:** AI can help draft newsletters, notices, and general communications.

Ethical Considerations

- **Informed Consent:** Whānau and kaiako must be informed about AI use. No personal or identifiable data will be entered into AI without informed consent.
- **Bias and Fairness:** AI tools must be regularly reviewed to ensure they do not reinforce stereotypes or biases.
- **Human Oversight:** AI will not be used to make decisions about a child's learning, behaviour, or well-being.
- **AI-generated information** used to inform professional decisions or practice must be verified against authoritative sources before use. Kaiako must apply professional judgement and not rely solely on AI-generated content.
- **Limited Screen Time:** AI should be integrated thoughtfully, ensuring it does not lead to excessive screen exposure.

- **Data Protection:** All AI applications must comply with relevant privacy laws, ensuring child and whānau information is securely stored and not misused.
- **Professional Development:** Kaiako must receive appropriate training to use AI tools effectively and ethically.
- Team Leaders will monitor AI use for privacy and professional content to ensure AI is used responsibly.

Prohibited Use

Children's full names, photos, videos, voice recordings, records, portfolios or personal information will never be entered into unsecured or public AI systems.

Implementation and Review

- Reviewed at least every 2 years, or as needed to stay current with changes in technology and to ensure it aligns with best practices and technological advancements.
-
- Regular consultation with whānau and kaiako will help ensure AI use remains aligned with community values and educational goals.

By adhering to this policy, we aim to integrate AI thoughtfully and ethically into our setting, ensuring it enhances learning while safeguarding the rights and well-being of tamariki.

Related Policies: Information Communication Technology (ICT) Policy | Policy on Screen Time | Social Media Policy | Privacy Act Compliance Policy

Legislation: Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008 | Privacy Act 2020 | Licensing Criteria C110, GMA102

Authorised by licensed service:	Jan Beatson
Date:	September 2026
Review Date:	December 2027
Parents informed:	Policy distributed via parent policy book each December and available on request at any time.

Professional Growth Cycle (PGC) and Appraisal Policy

Aligned with the Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand's Professional Growth Cycle framework and the Education Review Office's internal evaluation approach

Policy Statement

Play and Learn is committed to supporting kaiako in their ongoing professional growth through reflection, feedback and collaboration. We recognise that tamariki learning and wellbeing is enhanced when certificated kaiako engage meaningfully in professional learning. We provide the support structures needed for kaiako to set and reflect on goals, and to attain and maintain their certification with the Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand through successful engagement in their Professional Growth Cycle (PGC). Professional goals and learning should be relevant to the needs of the kaiako, tamariki, whānau and the service, with evidence of professional growth reflected in strengthened practice and improved outcomes for all learner.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- describe how certificated kaiako are supported through their Professional Growth Cycle, in line with the expectations of the Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand; satisfactory completion enables a professional leader to endorse a kaiako for certification or re-certification every three years
- describe how Play and Learn supports and mentors provisionally certificated (Tōmua) kaiako towards full certification
- describe how fully certificated kaiako are supported throughout their PGC to maintain certification
- describe how professional development is linked to every certificated kaiako's PGC
- set out Play and Learn's own PGC/Appraisal Process, which brings the Teaching Council's PGC requirements together with our centre's annual performance review in a single, integrated cycle

This policy is designed to align with ERO's internal evaluation approach, in particular the expectation that collaborative professional learning and development builds knowledge and capability across a centre.

Definitions

Term	Meaning
Professional Growth Cycle (PGC)	The ongoing, evidence-based cycle of inquiry, action and reflection that every certificated teacher engages in, as set out by the Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand.
Internal Evaluation (IE)	The centre's own inquiry into its practice, used to identify a collective focus that individual kaiako PGC inquiries connect to and support.
Tōmua	A teacher holding a Provisional Practising Certificate, working towards full certification through an induction and mentoring programme.
Tūturu	A teacher holding a Full (Category One) Practising Certificate, having demonstrated they can independently use and meet the Standards Ngā Paerewa.
Pūmau	A fully certificated teacher maintaining their ongoing Practising Certificate through successful, continuous engagement in the Professional Growth Cycle.

Term	Meaning
Appraiser / Professional Leader	A registered, fully certificated teacher responsible for supporting a kaiako's PGC and, where appropriate, endorsing them for certification or re-certification.
Code Ngā Tikanga Matatika	The Code of Professional Responsibility, setting the standards of ethical behaviour expected of every certificated teacher.
Standards Ngā Paerewa	The Standards for the Teaching Profession, describing what high-quality teaching practice looks like.

Alignment with Policies

- Human Resources Policy and Code of Conduct, Safety Checking Policy and Procedure (GMA106), Supervision Policy, Assessment Policy, Privacy Act Compliance Policy

Procedure - Play and Learn PGC Process

The PGC/Appraisal Process is an ongoing, year-long cycle involving continuous feedback and discussion between a kaiako and their appraiser, team leader/buddy/mentor.

It involves the following steps:

1. Notice and Recognise

- Identify an area of professional interest or growth that has caught your attention.

2. Familiarise and Participate

- Become actively involved in team and centre discussions about the centre's internal evaluation (IE) inquiry.
- Familiarise yourself with the Play and Learn PGC document and how it works.

3. Reflect - Choose Your Inquiry Pathway

- Reflect on the centre's internal evaluation focus and begin thinking about your own individual pathway - an area to improve, understand more deeply, learn about, explore or strengthen.
- Choose a pathway that aligns with and supports the centre's IE inquiry.

4. PGC Initial Meeting

- Come prepared with your reflections and thoughts, along with notes or questions, to share and discuss in your PGC meeting (kōrero) with your appraiser.

5. Form Your Inquiry

- Form an inquiry focus based on your reflections, professional development, strategic goals, or mentor meetings.

6. Set Up Your Record

- Set up a record of your inquiry, establish realistic timeframes, and identify the support you will need.

7. Respond -Action

- Implement actions based on your inquiry, and collaboratively analyse the data and evidence gathered.
- Maintain records of evidence in Storypark or a designated folder, including professional development courses attended, mentor meeting notes, and peer feedback.
- Begin your action plan -share your inquiry with the team and start implementing it through reflection, conversation and discussion, ensuring others can contribute to your inquiry.
- Remember to also support other kaiako's inquiries and the centre's wider IE focus.

8. Reflect - Formative Observation

- At your first meeting plan and arrange for at least two formal observations of your practice, related to your inquiry, during the year.
- Reflect on the feedback received and adjust your practice based on the observer's insights.
- At a second meeting, share progress on your journey: what changes you have made, what new learning you have discovered, what challenges you have come across, and what you plan to do next.

9. Appraisal Meeting

- Discuss your inquiry, the steps taken, and the changes in your practice.
- Evaluate your progress with reference to the Code | Ngā Tikanga Matatika and the Standards | Ngā Paerewa set by the Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand.
- Identify next steps for your inquiry and any further support you need.
- Contribute to the final summary report, which is completed by your appraiser.

It is each kaiako's professional responsibility to ensure their PGC/appraisal document and supporting evidence are complete and brought to the final meeting. The summary report is completed by the appraiser. This is an ongoing process throughout the year, supported by continuous feedback and discussion between kaiako and appraiser.

Supporting Provisionally Certificated (Tōmua) Kaiako

Support for provisionally certificated (Tōmua) kaiako is aligned with the Teaching Council's Guidelines for Induction and Mentoring. To begin an induction and mentoring programme, a kaiako must be employed in a teaching position (not a volunteer or teacher aide role) and work at least 0.5 FTTE.

Mentoring is carried out by a registered, fully certificated kaiako or professional leader is, who will:

- set goals with the Tōmua kaiako
- reflect on progress together
- keep records of the kaiako's learning and development
- show how the kaiako is meeting the Standards | Ngā Paerewa

At the end of the induction and mentoring period, the mentor makes an evidence-based decision on whether the Tōmua kaiako can independently use and meet the Standards | Ngā Paerewa, as required for a Tūturu (Full, Category One) Practising Certificate.

Professional Growth Cycle for Professional Leaders

Professional Leaders who are also registered and certificated kaiako must also undertake a PGC of their own, focused on their professional growth and engagement in professional learning networks, in line with the Teaching Council's expectations for ECE professional leaders.

The Code and Standards

Progress is evaluated with reference to the Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand's Code of Professional Responsibility and Standards for the Teaching Profession | Ngā Tikanga Matatika me Ngā Paerewa. The Teaching Council's 2026 Standards build on the 2017 Standards, reorganising them into a more detailed framework intended to support consistent professional growth conversations, clearer assessment, and closer alignment with the PGC and certification processes.

If PGC Requirements Are Not Met

If, in the professional leader's judgement, a kaiako does not currently meet the Code or Standards, this is discussed with the kaiako, and support is provided to enable improvement. If sufficient progress is not made, formal performance management processes as set out in the kaiako's employment agreement may commence.

Relevant Legislation and Regulatory References

- Education and Training Act 2020
- Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand — Professional Growth Cycle framework
- Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand — Code of Professional Responsibility and Standards for the Teaching Profession | Ngā Tikanga Matatika me Ngā Paerewa
- Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand - Guidelines for Induction and Mentoring
- April 2026 ECE Licensing Criteria ,GMA104-GMA106, Professional Practices
- Education Review Office — internal evaluation for improvement approach

Implementation

This policy is an integral part of Play and Learn's employment process and is implemented as an ongoing practice throughout the year, through continuous feedback and discussion between each kaiako and their appraiser.

Authorised by licensed service:	Jan Beatson
Date:	September 2026
Review Date:	July 2028
Parents informed:	Via the standard December distribution to all whānau

Environmental Sustainability Policy (Te Toitūtanga)

Te Whāriki: Belonging | Mana whenua — Goal 3: Taking part in caring for this place

Rationale and Purpose

One of the values of Te Tiriti o Waitangi is kaitiakitanga, guardianship, stewardship, protection, and preservation. It is a way of respecting and caring for the environment, based on a Māori worldview.

Teachers support children to engage respectfully with, and to have aroha for, Papatūānuku. They encourage an understanding of kaitiakitanga and the responsibilities of being a kaitiaki by, for example, caring for rivers, native forest, and birds. (*Te Whāriki*, p. 33)

Play and Learn recognises the importance of caring for the environment and our world. We encourage tamariki to be immersed and involved in our local and wider community, developing respect for the environment and making it a better place to live. If we want tamariki to save the world, they must first learn to love and respect it.

We protect what we love.” — Jacques-Yves Cousteau

Three Dimensions of Environmental Education for Sustainability

- **Education in the environment** - visiting places of environmental interest.
- **Education about the environment** - researching places, things, and events, including cultural narratives.
- **Education for the environment** - tamariki as active citizens and agents of change, with action competence to advocate for a healthy environment and society.

Goals for Play and Learn

1. Develop and Embed a Sustainability Approach

Provide opportunities for children to play in and learn to Love the environment

- Embed sustainability as a core value.
- Lead by example within Play and Learn.
- Identify existing strategies.
- Build credibility through transparency and accountability.
- Incorporate Māori and Pasifika perspectives of sustainability.

2. Develop a Culture of Sustainability

- Raise awareness of our sustainability journey.
- Develop sustainability practices during celebrations and community events.
- Develop a culture of recycling and reuse.
- Support tamariki to develop action competence — being able and willing to be participants concerned with behaviours, movements, and habits.

3. Support Education for Sustainability

- Integrate sustainability into our daily programme.
- Increase sustainability literacy within Play and Learn.
- Advocate for sustainability within the wider community.
- Develop appropriate ideas and practices associated with sustainability, climate change, critical thinking, identity, community, and kaitiakitanga.

Procedures and Practices

Children's Involvement

- Tamariki will be involved as much as possible in procedures and practices for caring for the environment.
- When on walks, trips, and outings we will discuss and respect the environment including flora and fauna.
- Ensure opportunities include the wonder that nature has to offer.
- Litter collection; ensure health and safety by wearing gloves or using alternatives such as two sticks.

Waste Minimisation and Recycling

- Waste will be sorted to reduce landfill through reusing, composting, soft plastic recycling, and general recycling.
- Develop a culture of recycling and reuse.
- Paper waste reduction: reuse non-confidential office paper for art purposes; shred paper for pets; accept kind donations of paper and cardboard to reuse.

Energy and Water Conservation

- Reduce power usage: turn off lights when not in use; install eco light bulbs; turn off computers at night.
- Minimise water consumption.

Sustainable Purchasing and Materials

- Consider materials used in the programme and whether they are environmentally friendly, for example minimise items such as glitter and balloons.
- Encourage sustainable purchasing.
- When replacing resources, use second-hand where possible or resources which support environmental and sustainable practices.
- Recycled and reusable materials will be included within all programmes, for example art, carpentry, and outdoor play.
- Minimise plastic usage - only laminate for long term projects
- Support sustainable lunchbox practices.

Supporting Whānau Practices

- Support whānau who wish to use cloth nappies.

Communication and Education

- Information about our environmental practices will be shared with whānau through noticeboards, emails, workshops, newsletters, and daily conversations.
- Develop sustainability practices during celebrations and community events.

Related Policies: Play Policy | Nature School/Kindergarten Policy | Risk and Benefits Policy | Food, Drink and Nutrition Policy

Legislation: Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008 | Resource Management Act 1991 | Licensing Criteria C108, C109, PF112

Authorised by licensed service:	Jan Beatson
Date:	September 2026
Review Date:	November 2028
Parents informed:	Policy distributed via parent policy book each December and available on request at any time.

Policy Feedback

We value your input on our policies and procedures. Feedback on individual policies is welcomed throughout the year according to the review schedule.

If you have any feedback, questions or concerns about a policy, please:

- Speak with your team leader, or
- Email emily@playandlearn.net.nz

Triggers for Early Review

While all policies are reviewed on a two-year cycle, any policy may be reviewed earlier if:

- A change in legislation, regulations or licensing criteria affecting the policy.
- An incident or near miss that implements, or exposes a gap in, the policy.
- Feedback from ERO, whānau, or kaiako identifying a concern.

Play and Learn — Policies and Procedures — Current as of September 2026