



Information for parents & whānau Navigating your way around our preschool

Working in partnership for the love of the child
mahi i roto i te mahi ngātahi mo te aroha o te tamaiti

Inclusion

Independence

Inquisitiveness

Individuality



30 Cook Street Howick

09 533 0397

Minimum 3 days attendance

8.30am-3.30pm

Morning sessions available for younger children

Licensed for 34 children

Age 2 through to 6 Years

Welcome to our Preschool!

Thank you for choosing The Children's Corner Howick as a learning environment for your child. We warmly welcome you and your whānau to our preschool community!

Our Preschool Ethos

We pride ourselves on fostering a culture of openness and parent partnership. We believe in establishing a trusting positive relationship.

We regularly send questionnaires to parents encouraging feedback on a variety of areas; centre events, an annual satisfaction survey, your child's learning and so on. We encourage you to participate as your comments can help us respond more effectively to the needs and interests of our parent community.

We also seek feedback when we are reviewing policies and procedures and undertaking self-review as we firmly believe our parents and whānau should be involved in the life of our preschool.

Ministry of Education Funding

Please note that you are most welcome to request information on the funding we receive from the Ministry of Education and how it has been utilised.

Your Child's Portfolios

The children's portfolios are located within the classroom at children's height and these can be accessed by children and parents at any time. We also use Educa, an online software programme that allows us to share with parents what their child has been doing at preschool.

If you would like to add a "Parent's Voice" to the portfolio or on Educa you are welcome to do so; perhaps you have noticed your child enjoying similar learning at home or showing particular interests, you may want to share feedback on how you feel your child has developed since starting preschool or add a funny anecdote relating to your child.

Our Education Review Office Report

You can find a copy of our last ERO Report on our preschool noticeboard. You are welcome to read it at any time or alternatively we can provide you with a copy.

Our Centre Policies and Procedures

These are located beside in our Signing in Sheets for your review.

Staff Qualifications and First Aid Certificates

These are displayed on our main noticeboard.

If at any time you have any queries regarding our preschool or how you can access any relevant information please let us know.

We all look forward to building a wonderful relationship with your family and hope you enjoy being part of our preschool community.

Our Vision and Values

Our Centre Vision (Pou Whakahaere)

To provide children (tamariki) with the opportunity to learn and develop holistically (kotahitanga) within our Montessori focused environment. To provide a safe, nurturing place for children to flourish physically, academically and spiritually (hauora). Foster in children a compassion and respect for others, truthfulness, kindness, responsibility, harmony and co-operation (manākitanga) through meaningful relationships with others (nga hononga). Our teaching and learning practices will promote positive learning outcomes for all children - Tikanga Whakaako. Consistently strong teaching practices will underpin our 4 Core Values of Individuality, Inquisitiveness, Inclusion and Independence. These Core Values will be reflected throughout our centre and curriculum.

One: Individuality (wairua)

- Children develop positive self-esteem and a strong sense of belonging through adults providing encouragement, warmth, and acceptance.
- Children's individual ways of learning will be understood and accepted.
- Children will be respected and valued as individuals and our curriculum will build on the child's own experiences, knowledge, skills, attitudes, needs, interests, and views of the world within each particular setting.
- Children's learning and development will be fostered in partnership with their family and community with their culture, values and aspirations acknowledged and respected.

Two: Inquisitiveness (uiui)

- Our curriculum will invite and entice participation from tamariki.
- We will encourage the "what if?" approach to learning (he aha) and provide challenges for creative and complex learning and thinking.
- We will develop working theories using a combination of knowledge, skills and strategies. Developing attitudes in order to understand and make connections between themselves, their environment and wider world.
- We will help children to extend their ideas and actions through sensitive, informed, well-judged interventions and support.
- Our environment will assist children in their quest for making sense of and finding out about their world including providing opportunities for open-ended exploration.
- Learning and development will be integrated through: tasks, activities, and contexts that have meaning for the child, including practices and activities not always associated with the word "curriculum", such as care routines, mealtimes, and child management strategies.

- We will provide a curriculum which views the child holistically.

Three: Inclusion (tae ana ki)

- Children rights to personal dignity, to equitable opportunities for participation, to protection from physical, mental, or emotional abuse and injury, and to opportunities for quiet time and reflection will be respected.
- All tamariki will be viewed as "children of Aotearoa" and as such we will provide activities, stories, and events that have connections with Māori culture and heritage as an essential and enriching part of the curriculum.
- We will foster a three-way partnership with child, preschool and family (whanaungatanga).
- We will recognise the significance of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and reflect the multicultural nature of society with children encouraged to understand and respect others.

Four: Independence (mana motuhake)

- Children will be encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning and care, encouraging them to become independent and lifelong learners.
- Children know how to seek help and support from others.
- Children will have the opportunity to create and act on their own ideas, to develop knowledge and skills in areas that interest them, and to make an increasing number of their own decisions and judgments.

What is Montessori?



(Extracts from *How to raise an amazing child* by Tim Seldin)

- Montessori's principles for working with children are based on a holistic approach that begins at birth and builds over the years as children become more mature.
- Maria Montessori recognized that little children experience a sense of frustration in an adult-sized world, so she had miniature jugs and bowls prepared and found knives that fitted into a child's tiny hand. She had carpenters build child-sized tables and chairs that were light enough for children to move without adult help. The children loved to sit on the floor, so she gave them little rugs to define their work areas and they quickly learned to walk around them rather than disrupt each other's work.
- After spending countless hours observing and interacting with children, Montessori concluded that they pass through several developmental stages, each one characterised by specific inclinations, interests and ways of thinking. She found that children have their own logic at each stage of development, along with certain preferred activities and natural tendencies in behaviour.
- She observed how children respond to a calm and orderly environment in which everything has its allocated place. She gave them the opportunity to develop their sense of independence and recognised their increasing levels of self-respect and confidence as they were taught and encouraged to do things for themselves.
- A tireless advocate for the rights and intellectual potential of all children, Montessori continued her research until her death in 1952.
- Montessori's work lives on today. Some people are attracted to the calm, responsible behaviour shown by these students, and appreciate their love for learning. Others applaud the freedom, spontaneity and independence that Montessori gives young children.

- Montessori recognised that children go through stages of intellectual interest and curiosity - which she called "Sensitive Periods" in which they become intrigued and absorbed by particular aspects of their environment. Each stage represents an opportunity which, if taken advantage of, can profoundly influence the child's development. Montessori identified several different sensitive periods occurring from birth through to age six. Each one refers to a pre-disposition compelling children to acquire specific characteristics. For example, during the first few years of life children are in a sensitive period for language. They pay close attention to what we say and how we say it and before we know it they speak the same language as us and with a similar accent.

<u>Sensitive Period</u>	<u>Characterised By</u>
Movement (from birth to 1 year)	Your baby's random movements become co-ordinated and controlled as he learns to grasp, touch, turn, balance and walk)
Language (from birth to six years)	Starting with practice coos and sounds, your baby progresses from babble to words, phrases then sentences.
Small Objects (from one to four years)	Your child will adore small objects and tiny details as hand-eye co-ordination becomes increasingly refined and accurate.
Grace and Courtesy (from two to six years)	Your child will love to imitate polite and considerate behaviour leading to internalisation of these qualities into her personality.
Sense (from two to six years)	Sensory education begins at birth but from two your child will be fascinated with sensorial experiences (taste, sound, touch and smell).
Writing (from three to four years)	Montessori discovered that writing precedes reading and begins with attempts to reproduce letters and numbers with a pencil and paper.
Order (from two to four years)	Everything must have its place. This stage is characterised by your child's passionate love of routines and a desire for consistency and repetition.
Music (from two to six years)	When music is part of his everyday life, your child will show spontaneous interest in the development of pitch, rhythm and melody.
Toilet Training (from 18 months to three years)	As her nervous system becomes better developed and integrated your child will learn to control her bladder and bowels.
Reading (from three to five years)	Children show a spontaneous interest in symbols and the sounds they represent - soon they are sounding out words.

Spatial Relationships (from four to six years)	As your child develops and understanding of spatial relationships, he becomes increasingly able to work out complex puzzles.
Mathematics (from four to six years)	Montessori found ways to give children a concrete experience of maths in the period of sensitivity for numbers and quantities.

- Children who are treated with respect and who are encouraged to try new skills learn more readily to do things for themselves. Montessori taught that a child who feels respected and competent will develop a far greater level of emotional well-being than a child who is simply loved and doted upon.
- In a Montessori classroom there are basic grounds rules about behaviour and tidiness, but beyond these children are free to choose whatever activity they wish, and to work with it for as long as they want to. They are free to move about and work along or with others at will. Much of the time children select work that captures their interest, although teachers help them choose activities that will present new challenges and areas of enquiry. When they are finished with an activity, children are expected to put the materials back where they belong. Students are taught to manage their own community, and develop independence and strong leadership skills.

Our Fee Structure

	3 Days	4 Days	5 Days
20 Hours Rate (7 hour day) 3 Days Minimum	\$111	\$148	\$185
Non 20 Hours Rate (7 hour day) 3 Days Minimum	\$165	\$220	\$275
Morning Session 3 Days Minimum	\$87	\$116	\$140

If you are applying for a WINZ subsidy please ensure that you provide us with the application form as we need to complete a section to confirm your child's enrolled days and fees.

Payments

At a minimum you need to ensure that fees are paid every two weeks in advance. We do not accept cash payment but you can either pay by cheque or via direct debit to bank account 02-0191-0415881-000. Unpaid fees may result in your child losing their preschool place and a debt collection agency collecting monies on our behalf. *Any fees we incur through using a third party agency will be at the cost of the parent concerned.*

Mandatory Fee Charges

1. Montessori Aotearoa New Zealand

Montessori Aotearoa New Zealand is a collective of school, organisation and individual members who work together to provide and promote Montessori education in New Zealand. Montessori Aotearoa New Zealand is governed by a voluntary council and managed by an executive and administration officer, in consultation with members.

We are a member school of MANZ and as such there is compulsory fee per participating family of approximately \$11 per term.

2. Administration/Enrolment Charge (\$18)

This is a one off fee at the time of enrolment and covers administration time and purchase of your child's portfolio.

Optional Fee Charge

1. Sunscreen Charge

There is an annual charge of \$8.00 for sunscreen to be applied to your child during the warmer months. You are welcome to provide your own sunscreen and no charge will be applied.

Dropping off and Picking up

When does preschool open?

Our gates open at 8.30am to give parents and caregivers enough time to settle their child. Our morning mat time begins at 9.00am and we encourage parents to say a warm farewell to their child as this marks the start of their preschool day.

What do I need to do when I drop my child off?

- Sign your child in using the daily register located inside the gate. This MUST be signed each day when your child arrives and leaves. This is a Ministry of Education requirement and is essential to ensure your child's safety if we ever have an emergency evacuation and need to know how many children we have present on a particular day.
- Encourage your child to put their bag on our coat/bag stand and take out their lunch/drink bottle which should be placed on the trolley.
- If your child has settled well into preschool life and wants to spend some time with you prior to mat time commencing you are more than welcome to read with them, look at their portfolio or sit with them as they explore some of the learning materials.
- If your child is still settling and a little anxious please be assured that this is very normal and as teachers we are here to support you. We suggest you leave promptly and pass your child to a teacher who can help them settle into our morning routine.
- All children need to remain INSIDE during this morning period before mat time begins.
- Morning drop off is a good time to catch up with our team and your child's key teacher.

What happens at the end of the preschool day?

- Your child should be collected by 3.30pm latest at the end of our final mat time.
- When children are collected we ask that parents do not allow them (or siblings) to play in the outdoor area as this is only for use during centre hours by our pre-schoolers.

What happens if I collect my child later than 3.30pm?

- There is a late penalty fee of \$5.00 per every 5 minutes (or part thereof) of late collection.
- Please ensure your child is collected by 3.30pm LATEST as our teachers have their own after work commitments.

Who can collect my child from preschool?

We will not release your child to someone other than those individuals stated on your child's enrolment form unless we have permission from you in writing or verbal confirmation. If someone different from usual is going to be collecting your child please let us know and we will check that we have their details on our enrolment file. If not they will be asked to provide us with their drivers licence so we can verify who they are. Anyone collecting your child must be minimum age of 18 years old and therefore classed as an adult.

Where can I park when dropping off or collecting my child?

Either on Cook Street (not the 5 minute zone if at all possible as this tends to be heavily used by the senior citizens who use the community centre) or behind the preschool. Please drive slowly as there may be other parents and children around. *Please note that it is illegal to leave minors unaccompanied in a car for any length of time.*

Our Key Teacher System

The role of a Montessori teacher is different from other teachers; they truly get to know a child's learning style, personality, interests and guide them through the Montessori curriculum appropriately. Our teachers treat every child as unique and their learning journey specific to them encouraging in them a love of learning. Montessori teachers encourage children to ask questions, explore, investigate and discover. Their ultimate objective is to help their students to learn independently and retain the curiosity, creativity, and intelligence with which they were born. Montessori teachers are facilitators, mentors, coaches, and guides.

What is a Key Teacher?

- Every child is assigned a "Key Teacher" and this is the person that you will liaise with in the first instance should you have any questions or concerns about how he/she is settling and progressing at preschool.
- Our teachers work with ALL children but your Key Teacher is almost like your child's advocate within the centre.
- Your Key Teacher will ensure that your child's portfolio is being updated by other teachers and kept current, act as the liaison between you and the rest of the teaching team, undertake your parent teacher interview and your Key Teacher will be the person to schedule and run the "birthday walk" mat time for your child prior to them leaving for school.
- It creates an environment of shared teacher responsibility and so far we believe is working very well - again your feedback is always welcome.
- You will be notified in your child's first week who your Key Teacher will be.

What should your child bring to preschool?

- No toys please as these can prove disruptive and we cannot take responsibility for any damage.
- Books, cultural items, educational material that may interest children can be brought to be shared at mat time.
- Two changes of named clothing with each item clearly marked with the child's name, appropriate for the season including underwear and socks. If your child is in the process of toilet training please ensure extra undies are packed in their bag.
- A healthy and balanced packed lunch and water bottle. No fizzy drinks, lollies or nuts. Our lunch period is 30 minutes so your child's lunch needs to be appropriately sized to ensure children can consume their lunch easily within the time provided.
- Please provide a large enough bag for your child to enable them to easily place all their belongings, including lunchbox and drink bottle. This provides such a great opportunity for them to take responsibility for their own belongings and fosters self-help skills too.
- Any soiled or wet clothes will be sent home in a "wet bag" rather than a plastic bag as it is more environmentally positive and can be popped in the washing machine for multiple use. At the start of your enrolment you can either purchase a wet bag from preschool for \$6.00 or purchase one yourself. Please remember to put your child's name on their individual wet bag.

Our Preschool Routine



8.30am Welcome

9.00am Morning Mat Time

This is a time for teachers and children to gather at the start of the day. Please ensure that your child arrives on time and is sitting in the circle for 9.00am.

9.15am Work Time

Children have the opportunity to engage in individual, small group or one on one work with a teacher, depending on the learning activity they choose and their interests. Children are free to eat morning tea (which we provide) when they choose.

12.30pm Lunch

1.00pm Music and Movement

Children engage in singing and moving often to music and with instruments.

1.30pm Work Time - this may include:

- Extended Learning Programme (E.L.P.) - for children who are leaving for primary school
- Arts and Craft project work
- Developing Physical skills
- Exploring our Montessori curriculum

3.00-

3.20pm End of Day Mat Time

Children may share relevant news/reading of stories/poems etc.

3.30pm Farewell

All children are to be collected by 3.30pm.

Communication and Collaboration

How can I keep updated on preschool life?

There are many ways we keep in contact with our parent community. We value a close partnership and regular communication.

Facebook-www.facebook.com/thechildrenscornermontessoripreschoolhowick.

We also have a closed Facebook account for our preschool families (The Children's Corner Howick Parents & Whanau) and you will find this provides regular news, updates and photos.

Website-www.thechildrenscorner.co.nz

Ask a teacher-Preferable to do this in the mornings 8.30am-8.55am when there is a little more time. For lengthier conversations it is best to book a time with us.

Parent Teacher Interviews- These are held twice a year. Children must have been with us for a minimum of one term prior to having their first interview. These are facilitated by your child's key teacher.

Email-thechildrenscornerhowick@gmail.com

Monthly Newsletter- This will be e-mailed to you

Call-09 533 0397

Centre Noticeboards-Take the time to have a good look at our various noticeboards as you will find our centre diary, strategic plan, information on our Extended Learning Programme for children transitioning to primary school plus much more!

Changing or increasing your child's days of enrolment

If I want to change my child's preschool days how much notice do I need to give you?

- If you are looking to change your child's days (increasing or changing) please give us at least a terms notice if possible as we have a very full roll and can't always guarantee we can accommodate your wishes.
- You are required to give two weeks' notice if you are reducing your child's days or leaving preschool.
- We do strongly encourage you to consider increasing your child's days as they get closer to transitioning to school as this gives them more opportunities for extended learning throughout our curriculum.

Notice to Withdraw

You must give us two weeks written notice of any change to your child's enrolment such as reducing days of attendance or withdrawing from preschool.

Sickness/Illness

What if my child is ill?

- Children must be kept away from preschool whilst sick with any condition which could impact other children or teachers. This includes vomiting, diarrhoea, high temperature, green runny nose, flu like symptoms, conjunctivitis, an unidentified rash and any contagious illness.
- If they have had vomiting and/or diarrhoea they must not return until 48 hours has lapsed since the last episode.
- If your child is taking antibiotics they should not return to preschool until 24 hours after initially taking their medicine to allow time to become effective.
- Please call us on 09 533 0397 to advise if your child will be absent from preschool.

What happens if my child has an accident at preschool?

All accidents are recorded in the accident register and a staff member will advise you if your child has had an accident as you will need to view the register and sign it.

What if my child needs to be given medication whilst at preschool?

- If your child is on medication of any kind we need you to fill in the details of their medication, the time it was last administered, the time it is to be taken, exact dosage and then sign the medicine register.
- Our teachers are unable to dispense medicine unless they have been authorised by you or a caregiver. We will not give paracetamol unless it has been prescribed by your child's GP. If it needs to be given regularly then it is better for the medicine to remain at preschool.
- NEVER leave medicine in your child's bag - please pass to a staff member on your arrival and we can store them safely away from children.

What if my child becomes ill whilst at preschool?

If your child becomes ill, parents/guardians or your emergency contact person will be notified immediately to arrange for your child to be collected (please ensure they are collected quickly and no later than 30 minutes from the time you are notified). A sick child will be placed in isolation on a mattress but will always remain within view of one of our staff members.

Sun Safety

Do you sunscreen my child?

- You will be charged an annual fee of \$8 to cover sunscreen application throughout the spring and summer months. If you would rather provide your own sunscreen then please advise us to ensure we do not charge you.
- Any sunscreen you provide should be packed in your child's bag daily and named.
- In the Spring/Summer months children must come to preschool with a sunhat or they will not be able to spend time outdoors.
- PLEASE REMEMBER TO SUNBLOCK YOUR CHILD PRIOR TO COMING TO PRESCHOOL AND WE WILL REAPPLY AT LUNCH AND AS REQUIRED.

Casual Days and Taking Holidays

Do you offer casual days?

These can only be offered if we have space on a particular day.

What if we want to take a family vacation?

If you're going to be absent for up to 3 weeks during term time you will need to pay your fees for this period in advance to enable us to keep your child's place available.

Any vacation lasting longer than 3 weeks during term time you will be charged for the duration of your absence at our non-ecce rate as we do not receive Ministry of Education funding for absences longer than 3 weeks. Fees must be paid in advance of your vacation to secure your child's place. Failure to do so will result in you losing your preschool space.

Our Complaint Procedure

RATIONALE

In dealing with complaints we will be consistent in terms of fairness and procedures. We believe parents and families should feel able to forward any concerns ensuring their issues are acknowledged and dealt with.

TE WHARIKI

Belonging - Goal 2: Children and families experience an environment where they know they have a place

PROCEDURES

All parents need to follow the 'complaints flow chart for parents' (see centre noticeboard)

Documentation relevant to the issue at hand will be gathered and accurately recorded by the centre manager

The whole teaching team will be made aware of the complaint (if it involves the whole team to take action)

Advice will be sought before responding to the complaint

Issues will be addressed in writing as soon as practically possible

Total confidentiality will be maintained throughout by management (and teaching team if necessary)

Anonymous complaints will not be actioned

