

Connecting Steps

Kia Ora Parents, Whānau and Friends

Happy Mothers Day

We are now in Alert Level 3 and on Monday 11 May, a decision will be made by Cabinet whether New Zealand will move to Alert Level 2. The Prime Minister has said that the move to Alert Level 2 would occur within 48 hours' notice. That gives Schools and Early Learning services at least a week to prepare from the time we publish the public health requirements on Thursday. This is the information we received from the Ministry of Education (MoE) via email, through the He Pānui Kōhungahunga: The Early Learning Bulletin, Special Edition 5 May 2020 - COVID-19 update.

Parents, Whānau and friends since Monday 23 March 2020, we have been preparing for what the centre would like when we reopen. Throughout the lockdown your child's Kaiako (Teachers), Tiffany (our Regional Manager), myself and our sister services, Apollo Kindergarten and Natural Steps Eilerslie Village have been working. We have been following Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, WHO announcements and the daily 1pm news. Gathering research, together we have been communicating via email, phone calls and zoom meetings. (Zoom meetings can be a challenge when your laptop sound does not work).

Through this work, we were able to confidentially open our beautiful centre at Level 3 on 4 May 2020. Our Kaiako attended 3 days of professional learning in order to create a safe environment for children and adults and also to discuss strategies to support children's wellbeing, should questions or concerns arise about the lockdown and Covid-19.

We opened one bubble in the Pipi Room and it was a joy to see the children, Parents and Kaiako back after the lockdown. Monday was a bit unsettling for all, but by Tuesday children quickly settled and parents were great with our new drop off and collecting routines. We now have new safety measures in place that require Kaiako to action regular and tougher cleaning, but this did not deter from the enjoyment we had of being together.

May 2020

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OF KNOWLEDGE
SPRINKLES THEM
WITH LOVE
AND PATIENTLY
NURTURES
THEIR GROWTH
TO PRODUCE
TOMORROW'S
DREAMS

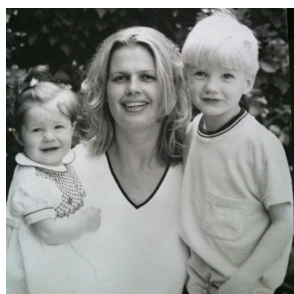
Staff and Centre News

Hi everyone, Maria here. I am a qualified Teacher and the owner of Natural Steps Albany. I am delighted and excited to be the new acting Manager for Natural Steps Albany.

Fay has taken up another roll within the management group of Natural Steps and we will be seeing her in June. This was all planned in March and staff were notified on Monday 23 March 2020. During this period, the lock down happened and we were unable to notify parents and families.

I have included a couple of photos so that you know more of who I am when you all return. Two of the photos below are of me with my children, Jack and Sophie (1998 and 2019) and another photo taken with Mamaengaroa, who is my niece and has been in my bubble.

I look forward to meeting you all at the centre very soon.



Opening in Alert Level 3

Opening our doors in Level 3 - we have gained valuable insight into operating safely. We had researched and created valuable documents to support Alert Level 3 and Teachers attended professional learning. We opened one bubble in the Pipi Room and had a wonderful week making Mother's Day cards showcasing photos of the days play and we now complete a daily notice on Storypark to share with parents.

Young children require a lot of physical support and it is not possible to explain or maintain a physical distance between young children and Kaiako in the centre. This means good hygiene practices are even more important. We have developed a sound system and you would have read it in our Covid-19 Management plan that you have received.

When **dropping or collecting your child** please sanitize your hands and your child's and remain two meters apart (identified by tape on the floor) in the entrance way. Inside your child's room is a safety zone. Adults please remain in that zone – one at a time. A Kaiako will greet you and your child and you will be able to farewell/welcome your child. Kaiako will assist your child to put their bag in their locker, wash or sanitize hands (if it has not been done) and greet friends. Children in the Pipi Room - Kaiako will wash your child's hands. Your child's Kaiako will be able to instruct you and answer any questions. Otherwise I will be at reception to greet you and support the transition.

If your child is nervous, the adult will be welcomed further into the classroom. Adult's please do not touch any hard surfaces. Only one child and a nominated adult will be allowed in the classroom at a time.

Kaiako will sign your child in and parents are asked to sign a weekly attendance form on the Monday (at the end of the week).

The centre's frequent touched surfaces (door handles, keypads, light switches, reception tops) are disinfected (using 0.5% sodium hypochlorite solution) at 7am, 10am, 1pm and 5pm.

Notes and Notices

Opening Hours

The centre opening hours are 7am to 5.30pm, Monday to Friday. Please be aware that we are not licensed to have children on the premises outside of these hours.

Kaiako will be arriving early to action hygiene practices and prepare for the day. This is not a time for parents to drop off children earlier. After 5.30pm, Kaiako have agreed to work later to action hygiene practices. Your child's Kaiako are dedicated to providing the best for your child's well-being. Please support them by abiding by our hours of operation, 7am to 5.30pm.

Staff also have commitments outside of operation hours and additional hygiene practices. A late fee of \$20.00 for the first fifteen minutes and \$1.00 per minute onwards will be charged to parents who arrive after 5.30pm. Parents are requested to give late fees to the Kaiako.

Toys

Please do not bring toys from home to the centre. This is even more important in today's new world. Lost or misplaced toys often upset children as well as having to share their personal toys. For young children who are new to the centre, we do recommend one transitional item from home, to help them settle while developing their sense of belonging, however, this will be put in the child's bag quickly and respectfully.

Winter Hats, Coats and Gumboots - NAMED

Winter is coming. Please provide a named winter hat, named coat and named gumboots for your child while they are at the centre. We request that these items are taken home EVERY Friday and returned on Monday.

No Lost Property

The centre will not be keeping a 'Lost Property' bin in the classrooms. Items of clothing need to be collected daily or by Friday.

Midday Monday all unclaimed items will be going to the clothing recycling bin. This is a basic hygiene practice that we have identified as essential to maintain our safe environment.

Sickness

Parents are asked to keep any sick children at home. If a sick child comes to the centre, they will be sent home.

Children must not attend the service if they are sick.

If parents or caregivers are sick, you must not come to the centre or bring their child to the centre.

If someone in your household is awaiting test results for Covid-19 please keep your child at home until you have a negative result.

Flu Vaccinations

The Ministry of Education (MoE), in association with Vitality Works has developed a Flu Vaccination voucher programme for the education workforce during the 2020 influenza season only.

All children will be washing or sanitizing their hands when they come to the centre. We will be teaching regular washing and drying of our hands as well as the reason why we need to do this.