



Early Learning Childcare Centre & Preschool
Otorohanga



Giving your child a jump start



Pānui Hongongoi Newsletter July 2020

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Diary Dates



3rd July: School Term Two Ends
13th July: Matariki Celebrations Start
14th July: Give back to the community
20th July: School Term Three Starts
30th July: Shared Kai Day/Teddy Bears Picnic - Preschool

Shared Kai Day - Teddy Bears Picnic at Preschool

Preschool will be having a shared kai day on **Thursday 30th July**. We encourage you to bring along a plate from your families culture. Boys can bring a savoury something and girls a sweet something. It does not need to be a huge amount, as it is just to contribute towards our shared kai. Please feel free to come in and enjoy the kai with your child on this day, the children will eat from **12pm**. We are also asking for your child to bring along their favourite soft toy on this day as a little something extra that is fun for our tamariki. Along with this day during the Matariki celebrations, we will also be doing artwork, learning new waiata(songs), and will be reading different Maori legend stories with the children.

The importance of family meals - Families who eat together, stay together

The sharing of food is an essential ingredient of Matariki as families, extended whānau and communities get together to savour the fruits of the harvest. Here are a few of the many scientifically proven benefits of eating together:

- Eating meals together has the potential to strengthen family bonds. For younger children, routine family meals can provide a sense of security and a feeling of belonging in the family. Older children and teenagers will use this time for talking, catching-up, and spending valuable time with family members. When children eat with their family regularly, they are more likely to be emotionally strong and have better mental health. Teens who eat regular family meals are also more likely to be adjusted, have good manners and communication skills.
- Eating family dinners is associated with healthy dietary food patterns. Family meals are the perfect opportunity to expose children to different foods and expand their tastes. Teenagers who eat dinner with their families most frequently consume more fruits and vegetables and less soda and fried foods. Family mealtimes are an opportunity for discussions around nutrition and healthy food choices which create good future eating habits for younger children.
- Studies have proven that there's a significant link between family dinners and academic performance. A report by the Clinical Advisory Services Aotearoa found that teens who have between five and seven family dinners per week were twice as likely to report receiving mostly A's and B's in school, compared to those teens who have fewer than three family dinners per week. In addition, only 9% of teens who ate frequently with their families did poorly in school, according to the report.

Policies for review

The following policies are due to be reviewed: Communication, Excursions, Sleeping Children, Transition to School (PS). Our policies are on our website, please take the time to read them and provide feedback to any of the staff. Thank you.



Winter Clothing

The weather has cooled down considerably in the last few weeks. Please remember to bring some warm clothes for your children as well as a spare set to change into if needed. And please remember to bring your WET BAGS as we don't have any plastic ones on site any more.



School Holidays

If your child is going to be absent during the school holidays 6th—17th July, please let a staff member know.

Mobile Ear Clinic



The mobile ear clinic will be visiting Otorohanga on Wednesday 29th July. This is a Free Ear Clinic Service for children. They can help with glue ear assessment and management, grommet checks, wax/foreign body removal and treatment of discharging ears. They'll be at the Otorohanga Club Carpark from 1.30 to 2.30pm. For enquiries regarding this service, please contact 07 838 3565.

Give back to the Community Day

Please keep an eye out in your pockets for more information regarding this event at Preschool.

Family Updates



Early Learning Centre

We welcome Arthur and Ellita to the Early Learning Centre.

We farewell Jaxon who is moving up to Preschool.

We also say goodbye to Tia who is leaving the area permanently.

Preschool

We welcome Braedyn to Preschool.

We also welcome Jaxon from the Early Learning Centre.

We say goodbye to Kahlin and Keela who are off to continue their learning journey at school.



Matariki

Twinkling in the winter sky just before dawn, Matariki (the Pleiades) signals the Māori New Year.

What is Matariki?

Matariki is the Māori name for the cluster of stars also known as the Pleiades.

Different tribes celebrated Matariki at different times. For some it was when Matariki rose in May/June. For others it was celebrated at the first new moon, or full moon, following the rising of Matariki. In the 21st century it is the new moon following the rising of Matariki that signals the New Year.

In 2020, Matariki, the Māori New Year, will start on July 13th.

Matariki literally means the 'eyes of god' (mata [ariki](#)) or 'little eyes' (mata riki). According to myth, when Ranginui, the sky father, and Papatūānuku, the earth mother, were separated by their children, the god of the winds, Tāwhirimātea, became so angry that he tore out his eyes and threw them into the heavens.

Cycles of life and death

Traditionally, Matariki was a time to remember those who had died in the last year. But it was also a happy event – crops had been harvested and seafood and birds had been collected. With plenty of food in the storehouses, Matariki was a time for singing, dancing and feasting.

Modern Matariki

Matariki, or Māori New Year celebrations were once popular, but stopped in the 1940s. In 2000, they were revived. Only a few people took part at first, but in just a few years thousands were honouring the 'New Zealand Thanksgiving'. A special feature of Matariki celebrations is the flying of kites – according to ancient custom they flutter close to the stars.