



**Newsletter- week ending 10 August 2018**

**To the Rangi Whanau and Community,**

We all want children to grow up in a world free from bias and discrimination, to reach for their dreams and feel that whatever they want to accomplish in life is possible. We want them to feel loved and included and never to experience the pain of rejection or exclusion. But the reality is that we do live in a world in which racism and other forms of bias continue to affect us. Discrimination hurts and leaves scars that can last a lifetime, affecting goals, ambitions, life choices, and feelings of self-worth.

How can we best prepare children to meet the challenges and reap the benefits of the diverse world they are part of? We can raise children to celebrate and value diversity and to be proud of themselves, their differences and their family's differences. We can teach children to respect and value people, looking at each individual's capabilities and not what they cannot do.

As professionals who partner with families to nurture young children, parents often regard us as a resource on a wide range of issues connected to diversity. We are in a unique position to engage in conversations that ask us to consider important questions such as:

- What does it mean to be a young child growing up in this diverse world?
- What does it mean to be a parent raising a child in this diverse world?

Because young children form ideas about themselves and other people long before they start preschool, it is important to begin teaching respect and appreciation for differences in others early on. If we reinforce these lessons, children will learn to appreciate, rather than fear, differences and to recognise bias and stereotypes when they see them. Children learn early on — from television, books, magazines, photographs, and, of course, interactions — how others view people like themselves. Uncomfortable reactions can alert children to the negative significance some people put on differences.

As some children begin to compare their abilities, appearance or life with others, they may start expressing their concerns about being different. We know that all children need to be reassured that differences are fine. More than that, we need to work with you, our parents, to help bridge the norms, the attitudes, and the ways of doing things in your child's world — and to counteract any demeaning and harmful messages.

The following are some of the things we consider in our programme and are designed to help teach children to not only value diversity in their relationships with others, appreciate that others often learn differently to themselves but also to resist prejudice and discrimination.

- With your help we teach children to be critical thinkers, specifically about discrimination and prejudice (generally not with these specific terms though). Critical thinking is when we strive to understand issues through examining and questioning. Young children can begin to develop these skills, to know when a word, response or an image is unfair or hurtful.
- We respond to children's questions and comments about differences even if we're not sure what to say. Children often interpret a lack of response to mean that it's not acceptable to talk about differences.

- By listening carefully to what children are saying. Asking a few questions before answering to get a clearer idea of what they really want to know and the ideas they already have on the subject.
- We shape our response to the child's age and personality. Generally, children want to know why people are different, what this means, and how those differences relate to them. Children's questions and comments are a way for them to gather information about aspects of their identity and usually do not stem from bias or prejudice.
- We model the behaviors and attitudes our families have identified they want children to develop. We pay attention to situations that can either promote prejudice or inhibit a child's openness to diversity.
- We create opportunities for children to interact and make friends with people who are different from them. As you know, children learn best from concrete experiences.
- We strive to involve families in sharing their traditions. Rather than we, as teachers, deciding which traditions we'd like to expose children to, we ask families what they would like to share.
- We endeavour to expose children to role models from their own culture as well as to those from other cultures. Remember: Seeing adults developing positive relationships with people who are different offers an important model and teaches children to value such relationships.
- Our programme reflects diversity in books, magazines, dolls, puzzles, paintings, music, and so on.

As a small centre, we are immensely proud of the diversity that exists within our community. We believe it is another reason why Rangi Ruru Preschool is such a special place. With your ongoing support, we can continue to raise children who celebrate and value diversity and are proud of their differences. Exploring diversity as part of what occurs here at Rangi Ruru Preschool, supports and teaches children to value their relationships with others and increases their own sense of self-worth.

*Warm regards,*

*Linda*

## **FAMILY & WHANAU QUESTIONNAIRE**

We would like to thank everyone who responded to our whānau survey. It is important for us to get feedback on how Rangi Ruru Preschool is doing – what we do well, and where we could do better. It is one of the indicators that forms our ongoing strategic plans, as well as giving our team and leadership some guidance as to how they are functioning. We are always happy if there are lots of responses, because then we know that we are hearing most people's opinions, not just a few. We don't know what we're not told!

I have been analysing the replies and will respond as needed to questions and suggestions. Overwhelmingly our families have shared what a beautiful place Rangi Ruru is to grow, learn, play, share, and make friends together. Our families have affirmed much of how we plan for your children, our priorities on social and relationship learning, our limited use of digital devices as a play resource and the amazing place the school connection provides to children's learning opportunities. Interestingly a few families discussed things to do with risk taking at Preschool. I thought I'd share a bit about this with everyone.

We all, as teachers, take our responsibility to keep your children safe seriously. However, it is also a usual part of children's development to be attracted to risky play. Indeed, we are all wired in

to that natural buzz – the adrenaline rush we get when we face an obstacle and overcome it. The bigger the struggle, the bigger the thrill of success. Risk-taking challenges may come in many different forms.

At Rangi Ruru, our teachers understand that risk and challenge is individual to each child. For one child, it might be leading karakia in front of the whole group, risking perceived humiliation if they get it wrong. For another, it might be working out how to join a group at play, risking social rejection. For someone else, it might be balancing on and walking across a suspended plank, risking a bruise or two and dented pride if they fall off. Whatever the context, teachers watch and listen sensitively so that they can recognise when a child is taking on a risk, and then support the child in that challenge. This might mean words of encouragement to give something a go, acknowledging repeated attempts and pointing out progress, talking about how to overcome problems and barriers, comforting in failure and helping the child see this as but a short term stop on the way to success, and celebrating together when the risky challenge is conquered. We also pay attention to our environments to ensure that there are ongoing opportunities for children to take safe risks. That's how we help grow courageous learners who will become resilient in every aspect of their lives.

We really appreciate that many of our families took the time to question how we support children with this aspect of learning. Do chat with our teachers if you have noticed something challenging for your child that we could assist with. And remember when your child is drawn to trying something risky, they are actually learning how to be safe.



## UPCOMING EVENTS ...

### Blessing of our korowai cloak

**Families are invited to attend the school assembly next Friday, 17<sup>th</sup> August at 1.45 – 2.15 pm for a blessing of our centre Korowai Cloak.**

Working on the Korowai has been a privilege and joy for many of the children. We love working with the Art Department and this experience has really cemented our connection to them. It is great to have opportunities to work alongside older students up in the art rooms. It has been wonderful to see our korowai develop from initial ideas on paper, through to explorations using monoprint and screenprint to print feathers on fabric.

The Reverend Kirstie McDonald, Dr Sandra Hastie, our School Principal and Connor Matthews, Te Reo Teacher will all be involved in blessing our completed Korowai. The Korowai is a symbol of each of us being part of a the larger Rangī Ruru family.

We would really love for families to join us in this celebration. If Friday is not your usual day of attendance, please do not let that stop you from coming along. We will travel over to the school chapel together, **so come and meet us at the Preschool first, by 1.30 pm.**

We are so fortunate to be able to participate in this blessing with your children. This will be an experience to remember!

### Trike-a-thon

#### **Friday 24<sup>th</sup> August 2018**

We will be holding our Annual Trike-a-thon on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> August 2018, between 11.00-12.00pm (with a postponement date of the following Friday if wet). Hopefully you have all collected your notice & sponsorship form from your child's information pocket (in the entrance foyer).

We would like everyone to participate if possible, so trikes, balance bikes and scooters will be accepted as entries. Children can bring their trike, bike or scooter to preschool in the morning, then will have the opportunity to decorate them before doing as many laps as possible of the school rose garden. Bike helmets are required no matter what form of transport.

We really hope each family will get behind this fundraiser and charm their families, neighbours, workmates and friends into either offering a set amount per lap completed or donating for participating.

Please get those sponsorship cards filling up!



## **PLASTIC FREE JULY**

Thanks to everyone for your support in cutting down the amount of plastic rubbish coming into the centre. Please continue to be mindful of this and keep using those reusable containers (named of course) in the lunchboxes.

PLASTIC BAGS .... As you are aware, plastic bags are becoming a thing of the past – and here at the Rangi Ruru, we would like to reduce our use of these – so we are phasing out sending children's clothing home in plastic bags. We are looking at whether we get a supply of inexpensive reusable waterproof bags that we can sell to parents, but in the meantime, if you have your own reusable bag – please feel free to name it and pop it in your child's backpack – thanks.

## **SPACES AVAILABLE**

Thanks to those families who have made increases to their bookings and making better use of their 20 hours ECE. We still have spaces available across the week, but these are filling again. We are still happy to offer another free session to families who have not taken this up yet. These would be available on a Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday.

We continue to offer you a 'friends and family' credit of \$100 if anyone enrolls based on your introduction.

## **CONTACTING US & PRESCHOOL FACEBOOK PAGE**

Just a reminder of our Preschool number for text's only 021 0234 6060 so that you can text us to let us know if your child is going to be absent for the day. If you want to check on how your child's day is going, or for any other non-urgent messages phone the landline - 03 983 3757. Please bear in mind we are working with your children, so if we cannot get to the phone the first time, PLEASE ring back.

You can also send us an email on [preschool@rangiruru.ac.nz](mailto:preschool@rangiruru.ac.nz).

We hope you have taken the time to check out our new centre Facebook page. If you are accessing via an internet or Facebook search for [@rangirurupreschool](#), to find the page easily.

We also update our Facebook page regularly with photos of our children's learning, so you can keep other family members 'in the loop'. This is where we post up to date information about the centre in the event of an emergency, so 'like' us on FB now!



The page has our Yellow RR logo. If you get this, you know you are on the right page.

## **STUDENT TEACHER**

You will have noticed that Maggie Sun is now with us. Maggie is on a five-week placement from NZ Tertiary College. She joins us until Friday 7<sup>th</sup> September. We know you are all making her feel very welcome.

## **HAPPY SCHOOL DAYS and TRAVELS TO YOU...**

We have recently said our goodbyes to Hunter, Charlotte, Olivia and Celine. We know that their primary schools will love having such enthusiastic and joyful learners. Ka kite friends, we know you are ready for this new adventure, so enjoy!

We have also said our farewells to Monty and Renny who are heading to Tauranga to live. We hope the new adventure brings you great joy.

**Congratulations to all five families – you have made it through the preschool years! Our love travels with you all, and your families, from all your friends here at Rangī Ruru Preschool!**

## **WELCOME TO RANGI**

We have recently welcomed new friends to our Rangī family. Annakiya & Liam, Enzo, Charlotte, Athena and Adele (who is a returning friend) have all quickly found their place in our family and certainly are making the most of their days each week. New friends Thomas, Naomi and Ella will be joining us next week. We trust that Annakiya & Liam, Enzo, Charlotte, Athena, Adele, Thomas, Naomi, Ella and their families will enjoy their time at Rangī and we know everyone will make them feel extremely welcome.



**Me mahi tahi tātou mō te oranga o te katoa  
Let's work together for the wellbeing of us all**

Ngā mihi nui  
Linda & the team from Rangi Ruru