

Kia ora whānau

Teaching team as at May 2016 Jeannette, Sheona, Cerise, and Jan and Denise as our kindergarten administrator.

The AGM always provides a great opportunity to look back on the previous year and celebrate what we have achieved.

Over the past few years it has been our goal to deepen our understanding of the Enviroschools kaupapa. The heart of ES is about creating a healthy, peaceful, sustainable world through people, learning and teaching. Our centre philosophy links perfectly with this and we as teachers have become more passionate about learning together in practical ways so that sustainability becomes an integral part of what we do throughout our centre and community. Our aspirations as teachers are to live and breathe this philosophy so it is clearly evident when you walk into our centre. This was something that ERO recognized on their visit early this year.

The five Enviroschools guiding principles include:

Empowering tamariki, sustainable communities, Māori perspectives, learning for sustainability and respect for diversity of people and culture.

So what did that look like?

Exploration, decision making, collaboration, taking action, reflecting positive behaviours, building trusting relationships, making connections in authentic ways and transforming our practices.

Highlights over the past year:

Through our intentional teaching we have provided an environment that fostered children's dispositions of learning. We encouraged children to take an active part in the program and drive their own learning; encouraging them to become confident and competent learners. We did this by setting up an emergent program that reflects individual children's strengths and interests, alongside teaching strategies which provided tamariki with rich opportunities in literacy, numeracy, sciences and the arts.

We have continued to focus on social and emotional competencies, working hard to embed this into our daily teaching practice. This was recognized as a strength by ERO in our review this year. We have created a culture where children feel comfortable to let us and their peers know how they are feeling, helping them to develop reciprocal and responsive relationships. Teachers also foster the virtues language which supports this development.

The sustainable garden projects: Our tamariki have been a part of planting and harvesting (by the moon). We have focused on the worm farm (living world) and compost processes including a new garden bed and bird house provided/donated by the Goodin family. Our Taniwha (our kaitiaki/guardian) continued to provide tamariki with a te ao Māori perspective in our outdoor environment and has become a favourite place for children to hang out and play. ERO recognized that Te reo me nga Tikanga Māori is meaningfully integrated throughout the curriculum and all children are immersed in valuable bicultural learning.

Our environment has continued to provide many opportunities for exploration and discovery with the bugs, insects, native birds, rabbits, mice and the opportunity to watch caterpillars turning into butterflies as the seasons change. Our spring bulbs have again fascinated and delighted the children as they planted and watched them grow and bloom.

Linking sustainable practise in the garden to the food we eat, sparked a review of our food and nutrition policy which has a focus on healthy eating and healthy hearts. This informed our parents/whānau/caregivers, which empowered our tamariki to make positive choices for themselves. Our menus for the children are still a very positive visual tool and

the learning, conversations and opportunities from this simple strategy continues to amaze us. This certainly has empowered our tamariki.

Kai time at Kahikatea continued to be a big part of our culture where children and teachers/parents enjoyed sitting around the kai tables chatting, reading stories or sharing knowledge. Teachers provided many literacy opportunities for children by spending the time and giving them the opportunity to choose their favourite stories or by extending their knowledge by introducing new ideas to think about.

Playball sessions with Coach Mike and Coach Carlin continued to provide opportunities for active movement, team play, building confidence and allowing the body to teach the brain how to think. Physical experiences also helped to develop a children's balance, their senses, intuition, power, coordination and control.

This past year it has been a year for art and creativity. We highlight and celebrate children's artwork providing many opportunities for them to be creative and expressive. We celebrate the way art allows children to tell a story and to discuss their families, making those important links to their home life. They have become a way of introducing their family which is a pepeha.

Excursions out of the Kindergarten:

- Gymnastica
- Frankley School
- Levity Beet
- Puke Ariki to see Voyage to the bottom of the sea.

Sustainable Communities.

We have continued with our transition program, making visits each term to Frankley School, helping to make the move from Kindergarten to school less daunting for both Tamariki and whānau. We have an excellent working relationship with the school and liaise with staff on a regular basis. We also made contact and had visits from other schools which we feed into.

Strategic plan.

Teachers and committee worked their way through the annual plan. A huge thank you must go to our **committed** and **enthusiastic** committee for the combined efforts in planning and fundraising. Without these people our Kindergarten would not be so well resourced.

Projects which were completed:

- The Whare redevelopment.
- New aluminium door leading out onto the deck.
- New awning on two sides of the deck.
- New climbing boxes and planks.
- Replacement of KA computer and one teacher's laptop.

Plumbing, septic tank and burst water pipe problems plagued us last year. We have spent much time making sense of these two major problems which we hope have now been resolved.

Teachers Strategic plan goal: How will our practice change as we support mixed age groups.

This goal came about because we had twenty under 3 year olds start in our centre so we needed to look at our practices, routines, facilities and resources to ensure we were providing a quality program to all age groups including the older children. We used the ES action cycle to work our way through this review with very positive outcomes and we now

have amazing capable 3 year olds who are independent and happy with a strong sense of belonging.

Due to a drop in roll numbers across the association Kindergarten Taranaki developed their plan for sustainability which meant teacher's release time was cut, KA hours and session time changed so we could accommodate more 6 hour days for children. This was a huge change for teachers and we had to rethink the way we did our work during our non contact time.

Visitors:

- Liz Clegg our Professional Leader – termly visits, Dennis Dawn – playground checks, Cherie our Chief Executive
- Fire Service for attended Fire Drill and the Get Out and Stay Out programme.
- Junior teachers from Frankley school for transition meetings
- Coach Mike and Coach Carlin -- Playball sessions
- Puke Ariki story tellers
- Damon Ritai – making visits to chat with parents about Frankley School
- Arbour day work group initiated by Bruce McDonald

Leadership in ECE

Over the past year we have attended the following professional development:

- GOSH training (OSH health and safety).
- Children's Working theories.
- Enviroschools hui working towards our bronze.
- Head teacher Hui.
- Kindergarten Taranaki hui – Appraisal and Internal Evaluation.

Thankyou

To Sheona and Cerise and Jan for their commitment and passion that they brought to their teaching every day, it was a pleasure to work alongside such inspiring teachers.

We farewelled Sheona at the beginning of February and welcomed Lizzy Brouwers to our team in May this year. Lizzy is an Enviroschools facilitator and we are looking forward to working on our bronze reflection this year with her support. We farewelled Cerise in April as she went off on maternity leave and Petrina Broughton started with us at the beginning of term Two.

Our team would like to acknowledge and say a big thank you to our committee members and the wider community. Your continued support to give your time, organise events, fundraise and work alongside us during session to provide a rich learning environment does not go unnoticed. Thank you to you all and a special thank you to Bruce McDonald, Helen Fuller and Sue Simons for your leadership, dedication and enthusiasm, and of course Rachel Marsden and Livi Kerr for their roles as fundraising co-ordinators.

Thank you to our head Gardener Helen Fuller, our resident arborist Bruce MacDonald and handy man Gareth Goodin. We appreciate the time you gave to keep our environment looking good.

Thanks to all the families who raked the sand pit, did our washing, (Shelly Albrett) mowed the lawns, cared for our gardens, repaired equipment and the many other things that went on behind the scenes to support our program, we thank you all very much. You have all made a huge contribution to the kahikatea community. This involvement was also recognized by ERO.

A huge thank you to Denise our KA who kept things going smoothly behind the scenes through many changes. Denise left in February this year to take up full time work and we welcomed Jude Maaka last week as her replacement.

Nga mihi mahana

Jeannette, Cerise, Sheona, Jan, Lizzy and Petrina.