

EDUCATION PHILOSOPHY POLICY

Purpose	To set out the organisation wide education philosophy, and the key principles and practices that inform Central Kids delivery of early childhood services.
Explanation	<p>Central Kids has been offering high quality, affordable early childhood education and care since 1951. We offer tamariki led learning through a play philosophy that enables tamariki to grow at their own pace, socially, emotionally, physically, and cognitively, building foundations for the future.</p> <p>Central Kids services operate in different communities, with unique characteristics. The curriculum and education philosophy must be applied in a local context and this Policy gives guidance to kaimahi in how to implement it.</p>
Scope	This Policy applies to all Central Kids kaimahi, enrolled tamariki/mokopuna and their whānau.
Philosophy statement	<p>Central Kids is a bicultural organisation that demonstrates a commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi.</p> <p>The philosophy statement is:</p> <p>To provide the highest quality early education service for young children in the Central North Island, that is both accessible and affordable.</p> <p>The whakatauki is:</p> <p>Anei te moemoeā mō ngā ririki tokomaha. Here is the dream for our tamariki.</p> <p>Whāia te kahurangi, rewa ki tawhiti. We want tamariki to follow their destiny and seek their rightful place by pursuing the gifts for a strong cultural identity.</p> <p>Kia tiaho Tamanuiterā, kia tiaho tamariki mā. Our kaiako shine brightly on our tamariki mokopuna so that their potential is realised.</p> <p>Central Kids values must be upheld in all interactions between kaimahi, whānau and tamariki and all stakeholders.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ko ngā tamariki te pūtake – children are central to all that we do. • Mana ki te tangata – maintain the dignity and standing of others. • Tiakina a Papatūānuku – protect and enhance the environment. • Manaakitanga – gain mana through generosity and goodwill. <p>The statement, whakatauki and values will be displayed in all Central Kids early childhood services.</p>

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Kaimahi Employee responsibilities	<p>All Kaimahi employees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kaimahi will be active role models and advocates of te reo rangatira revitalisation. • All kaimahi will be supported to reach their full potential by knowing who they are, where they come from and the language of their ancestors. <p>Kaiako</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kaiako are registered early childhood educators within the Aotearoa context. • Central Kids will employ Kaiako who have a minimum qualification of a Diploma of Teaching (Early Childhood Education). • Kaiako are focussed on growing and developing tamariki. • Kaiako will take personal responsibility for their own professional learning. • All Kaiako will be in a journey of learning and using conversational te reo in practice. • All Kaiako will use the principles of Te Whatu Pōkeka for tamariki assessment and planning. <p>Kaiwhakaako Head Teachers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kaiwhakaako are responsible for all aspects of oversight, leadership, and management of their assigned early childhood service, including curriculum delivery, whānau engagement, regulatory compliance, financial performance and team management. • Kaiwhakaako have delegated authority to make decisions for the service as per the Delegations of Authority Policy. • Kaiwhakaako will ensure that ratio of Kaiako to tamariki maintains quality standards of care and education and is within budget. <p>Tokotū Whakahaere Administrators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tokotū Whakahaere provide administration expertise to the service. • They are often the first point of contact whānau will have with a service and demonstrate manaaki in all interactions. <p>Kaiako Tautawhi Teacher Aides</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kaiako Tautawhi are unregistered support staff who work under the guidance of Kaiako in the curriculum implementation.
Participation	<p>A place where all tamariki are welcome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central Kids operates in communities across the central North Island. • It is a priority for Central Kids to reduce barriers to education for all, including for Māori and Pasifika ākonga, those with additional learning needs, and diverse ways of being and learning. • It is a priority for Central Kids that our services are safe, inclusive, and free from racism, discrimination and bullying.

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	<p>Whānau involvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Central Kids recognises the importance of services incorporating the hopes and dreams of whānau for tamariki when designing and implementing the service curriculum and meeting needs. To ensure strong two-way flow of information, whānau pānui will be shared a minimum of four times per year by each service. Online portfolios, email, and text will be used to communicate tamariki learning journeys and consult authentically with whānau. Opportunities for kanohi ki te kanohi engagement will be maximised through touch points, such as pick up and drop off time, whānau hui, whānau events, excursions. There will be a minimum of two whānau events held at each service per year to support whānau connection with each other, community building and connection between tamariki.
<p>Curriculum</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Central Kids services will apply the Central Kids Philosophy Statement in their local context and will develop a supporting statement that reflects characteristics of their community, people, places and things. The supporting statement, at the local level, will link to Internal Evaluation for the year ahead, based on tamariki interests and need, whānau feedback and aspirations, and learning priorities identified by Kaiako. See Internal Evaluation Procedure. Te Whāriki provides the framework for each Central Kids service to weave a localised curriculum that reflects its own distinctive character and values. <p>Tamariki led</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Central Kids programmes are play-based and holistic where tamariki can engage in uninterrupted learning and develop in their own time – ā tōna wā. Education experiences are led by tamariki, and their choices are respected and incorporated into the curriculum. Tamariki are involved in decisions about their learning. This is evidenced in learning stories that demonstrate tamariki have agency what they choose to participate in. <p>Tamariki and whānau are proud of their identity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whāia te kahurangi, rewa ki tawhiti. Central Kids goal is for tamariki to be confident in their own culture and develop respect and understanding of other cultures. <p>Language</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kaiako thoughtfully and intentionally give priority to oral language, recognising that it plays a crucial role in identity development and in learning across emotional, cognitive, physical, social and spiritual domains.

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- As the Māori language is a taonga under Te Tiriti o Waitangi, it is a standard of practice within Central Kids to integrate conversational te reo Māori kōrero into the daily life of the service.

Mātauranga Māori

- Traditional Māori knowledge and practices will be celebrated and shared through the curriculum, including oral histories, karakia and waiata.
- Tikanga Māori will be integrated into everyday practice at Central Kids services.
- Central Kids will build strong reciprocal relationships with whānau and local iwi to grow capability in sharing stories.

Resources

- Central Kids will provide a range of education resources that support growth and learning, appropriate to tamariki.
- We will invest in resources to meet the needs of tamariki with additional learning needs.
- Programmes are based on social cultural practice that include tamariki, Kaiako, whānau and community perspectives.

Excursions

- Excursions are a part of the curriculum that support tamariki exposure to new experiences, environments, and learning.
- Excursions to local areas of cultural significance for Māori, such as ngahere, marae, cultural festivals, are encouraged.
- All excursions will occur as per the Excursions Policy.

Care routines

- Care routines such as nappy changing, sleep and eating are structured around tamariki rhythms and their choices about their day.
- Tamariki bring their own kai to Central Kids services.
- Where access to kai is a barrier to education achievement, funding and/or access to programmes such as KidsCan may be sourced to provide kai.
- Tikanga for the preparation and access to kai that is appropriate for the community, will be part of the daily programme.
- See Care Routines Procedure.

Developing social competence

- The Developing Social Competency Guidelines inform the service in providing an environment where every tamaiti is given respect, dignity and the opportunity to gain knowledge, skills and attitudes to strengthen their developing social competence.

Additional needs

- Education services can connect with internal expertise such as the Education Team and Mātauranga Ake to provide additional guidance for tamariki and their whānau.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where tamariki additional support needs are identified, Kaiwhakaako and Kaiako will work with whānau to engage with external agencies (e.g. make referrals). Kaiako will complete referrals to Ministry of Education for learning support resource for tamariki. Where there are challenges with securing additional support and resources, from funded services, Kaiako will escalate to the Kaiwhakaako, and the education leadership team to advocate and remove systems barriers. <p>Transitions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kaiako will support tamariki to transition into the service. Kaiako will support the transition to primary school. Tamariki with additional needs will be prioritised for comprehensive transition planning and engagement with whānau and the primary school.
<p>Assessment, planning and evaluation</p>	<p>Assessment, planning and evaluation will inform curriculum development and implementation.</p> <p>Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Central Kids uses Te Whatu Pōkeka, a kaupapa Maori assessment of learning framework, for all tamariki assessments. Te Whatu Pōkeka is a tool to view tamariki learning through a Te Ao Maori and whakapapa lens. Te Whāriki goals, principles and learning outcomes will be clear in assessment and planning. The curriculum will be implemented in ways that celebrate the localised context and will reflect a commitment to authentic relationships with whānau, hāpu and iwi. Assessment will incorporate the beliefs, values, knowledge, and aspirations of tamariki and whānau. To build a holistic understanding of tamariki cultural identity, beliefs, and ways of being Kaiako will regularly engage with whānau. <p>Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kaiwhakaako, will lead the team to develop a set of quality practices that facilitate tamariki learning and development through thoughtful and intentional pedagogy that is well understood and can be clearly articulated by Kaiako. Experiences planned to support and enhance tamariki learning will be purposeful and meaningful to them. <p>Evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to the Internal Evaluation Procedure. Kaiako will identify tamariki progress and continuity of learning over time.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kaiako will identify tamariki capabilities and additional support needs. Kaiako will provide tamariki with feedback that acknowledges their learning and recognises their efforts, challenges, and successes. <p>Evidence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kaiako will use assessment information to make tamariki learning visible in the service. Each tamaiti will have evidence of assessment and learning in portfolios via Storypark.
The environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning environments are safe and well-resourced; are equitable, inclusive and affirming; encourage critical thought, wondering and creativity; challenge tamariki to explore and become fully involved in a wide variety of learning experiences. Tamariki have the opportunity to explore the indoors and outdoors environments, individually and in groups. The outdoor environment is valued and tamariki have access, always, to quality outdoor play experiences. <p>Sustainability and Papatūānuku</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Central Kids has a commitment to creating an environmentally sustainable programme and environment for tamariki in our present and their future. We encourage and teach our tamariki to be kaitiaki of our earth. Our initiatives are community driven and include initiatives such as Enviroschools, Para Kore, planting, recycling, both at Central Kids and in the local area. We minimise waste where we can by repurposing materials into creative projects and utilising local recycling initiatives.
References	
Guidelines	Social Competency Guidelines
Regulatory standards	<p>Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008 Licensing Criteria for Early Learning Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> GMA5: Philosophy Statement <p>Te Whāriki</p> <p>Nga Tikanga Matatika Code of Professional Responsibility</p> <p>Ngā Paerewa Standards of the Teaching Profession</p> <p>National Education and Learning priorities (NELP's)</p> <p>Effective Internal Evaluation for Improvement</p>
Relevant documents	<p>Rautaki Ahurea</p> <p>Excursions Policy</p> <p>Kai Policy</p> <p>Delegations of Authority Policy</p> <p>Property Management Policy</p> <p>Internal Evaluation Procedure</p>

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	Te Whatu Pōkeka Framework
References	Ka Hikitia
Policy review	As a default position, all policies will be reviewed every three years. An earlier review date or shorter review period can occur, as needed.