



Parent Handbook



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Welcome to Tots on Triton Early Childhood Centre

We welcome you and your child to what we trust will be an extension of your home. By working together we will provide an environment that promotes quality care and education for your child.

Tots on Triton is privately owned and is run by a team of caring and dedicated trained staff. We provide a balanced programme of learning and an extensive range of developmentally appropriate activities and experiences for children aged from 3 months to 5 years.

The management and staff at Tots on Triton aim to provide high quality early childhood care and education for young children and a supportive environment for parents and whanau. We intend to achieve this by providing superior facilities, quality educational equipment and programmes and well-qualified and caring teaching staff.

We are licensed by the Ministry of Education. Compliance with the early childhood regulations is adhered to and is monitored by the Education Review Office.

Within the building there are 2 centres – Under 3's and Over 3's. The Under 3 centre is divided into 2 rooms – 3 months to 18 months (Kiwi room) and 18 months to 3 years (Tui room).

The Over 3 centre is also divided into 2 rooms catering for 3 and then 4 year old children (the Rimu and Kauri rooms).

Children move between rooms and centres when the parent and staff feel that they are ready.

We hope you and your family enjoy your time at Tots on Triton.



Centre philosophy

The staff and management of Tots on Triton believe that relationships form the key to quality education. We believe that respectful, interactive relationships, between children and adults form the basis of a positive self-image for the child. When the teachers nurture the child's interests with warmth and caring, both adults and children grow and learn together. Adults respect the children as confident competent learners and communicators. They encourage their sense of belonging with increasing knowledge of their community and the world around them.

We provide a stimulating, interesting and natural environment that allows children to explore and engage in experiences that they plan and carry out. Children learn best when they engage in experiences that they are interested in and that the adults, teachers and parents work together to increase understanding, respect and knowledge.

Parent, guardians and whanau are encouraged to show interest and become involved in their child's learning. All children: infants, toddlers and the young child, with the support and increasing involvement of their teachers, family and whanau will continue to expand the child's concentration time, extend their knowledge and help them to grow in confidence.

Education programme

We believe that children learn and develop in an early childhood environment where the teacher has a respectful image of children as being competent and capable young people. The teachers role is a co-researcher and co-creator in the learning process which allows children to explore, question, reflect, problem solve, theorise and encourage self-expression.

Our programming is based on observing children on a regular basis, evaluating their needs and planning activities from these observations. We aim to develop programmes to meet the children's needs and therefore enhance individual development. We acknowledge that children contribute to their own learning through the relationships they form and the experiences they have. Each child will be guided to develop at an individual pace according to his or her unique, individual way.

Programmes are evaluated on a regular basis and are founded on the guiding principles of Te Whaariki the early childhood curriculum from the Ministry of Education and ideas, practices and values from Reggio Emilia.

Our practices reflect the multicultural heritage of our community, and emphasise non-gender stereotyped behaviour. We recognise that early childhood education facilitates the development of confidence, independence, and an interest in learning for our children. Indoor and outdoor experiences are an integral part of our programme and routine. Play is central

to children's development by providing opportunities for both structured and spontaneous activities. Play is a child's unique way to learn about their world. It is also a means of expressing knowledge from previous experience. We aim to provide opportunities for boys and girls to play freely regardless of any stereotype roles they may choose. Routines encourage independence and give children a sense of the passage of time as they move through the day.

Hours

The Centre is open Monday to Friday from 7.30 am – 6.00 pm. We are closed on public holidays.

We ask for your co-operation in dropping off and collecting children within our operating hours. If at any time you have an emergency and are going to be delayed, please contact the Centre staff so that they can allay your child's concerns and make plans for their own commitments. A late fee may apply if your child is left at the Centre after closing time. This payment is to be paid to the staff members who are working at the time of collection of your child.

Parental involvement

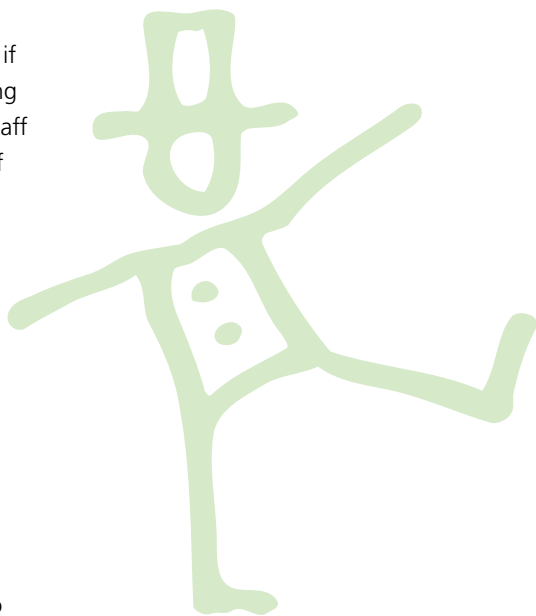
We operate an open door policy, where parents and family are welcome into the Centre at any time. Parent participation sends strong positive messages to your child that you support them and are part of the child care environment. The staff sincerely wishes for you and your child to be happy and feel welcomed at our Centre.

There is a three-way relationship between parents, whanau and your child. Communication is a vital ingredient to the success of this partnership.

There are many levels of parent participation. We appreciate that time is of a premium for all parents, but we aim to accommodate parental involvement in the Centre based on your desire, availability and commitments.

For example:

- ✿ Participate in excursions
- ✿ Attending special activities and functions in the Centre
- ✿ Suggestions for programming
- ✿ Feedback of our service through discussion and questionnaires
- ✿ Attending parent/teacher evenings



Parent communication

At Tots on Triton we believe that open communication with parents is extremely important, as this assists in the formation of strong relationships between parents, children and staff. We do this in the following ways:

Parent Evenings

Tots on Triton hosts a number of parent evenings throughout the year where the teaching staff share information about children's progress and development, and other current topics.

Newsletters

A regular newsletter/information sheet is given to all parents.

Notice Boards

Notice boards at the entrance to the Centre share information with parents.

Communication Notebooks

Communication notebooks are sent home daily with children under two. Parents are asked to write any notes in the book so that staff are aware of important matters. We keep records of sleep, nappy changes and fluids taken for under two's.

All children have a portfolio of their work, art and running records written by staff. These are shared with parents. And of course the staff are always available to discuss your child's progress with you on a daily basis.

Other

Books, pamphlets and recorded materials on a variety of early childhood related topics are also available for families to borrow from our library. If you need help or information on a wider range of topics we can put you in touch with a variety of services.

The Centre's policies are available for viewing by all parents at the Centre. As a parent you are just as much part of the Centre as your child. We therefore encourage parents to visit whenever they wish.

Staff

Tots on Triton is an equal opportunities employer, committed to staffing the Centre with dedicated and experienced early childhood education professionals. All of our staff are supported with regular opportunities to participate in professional development so that they can remain leaders in their field and provide the best possible care for your children.

All of our staff wear a uniform for easy identification. They are more than happy to discuss any areas of early childhood education with you.

Settling your child

Making a change to group care for your child can be very unsettling. Often children do not understand why they are feeling anxious and may be unable to tell us. Parents may also find it difficult and emotional adjusting to their child's new situation. We want to help make this adjustment as easy as possible.

We recommend that you and your child visit the Centre several times prior to starting.

We ensure that at least one staff member greets your child and creates a relationship with the family and your child. Please speak to staff about anything special that you would like us to know about your child.

Parents are encouraged to stay with their child to settle him or her into the Centre, and to demonstrate that they feel happy and comfortable with their child's environment. Children are welcome to bring their own (named) 'cuddly' or blanket or special toy from home during this settling period. However, all care but no responsibility taken.

If you are upset and emotional try not to convey this, as children are very tuned into how you are feeling. Never sneak out without saying goodbye. This can make the departure the next day more difficult. Staff can deal with upset children well and you are always welcome to call when you reach your destination. When it is time for you to leave, give kisses and hugs and say goodbye – don't delay your departure. Each child settles in differently and tears are common, but staff will provide comfort and support to ensure the transition is a positive experience.

Signing in/out sheets / Pick-up

All parents are required to sign their child in and out of the Centre everyday on the form provided at the front door. This is a legal requirement by the Ministry of Education and can be audited at any time to ensure

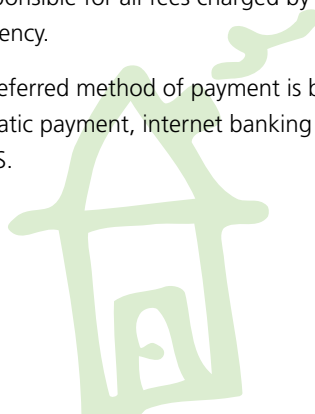
compliance with our roll returns. It is also a safety requirement in case of emergency evacuation of the Centre and is therefore a very important part of your drop off and pick up routine. Only authorised persons (as noted on your enrolment form or otherwise advised to the Centre) will be allowed to collect children from the Centre. Please notify the Supervisor in writing of any changes as to who may collect your child.

Parents with custody orders must provide a copy to the Supervisor. A child will not be allowed to go home with a parent/guardian in contravention of a custody/court order held at the Centre. However, in the event of a non-custodial parent gaining access to a child, the Centre cannot be held liable.

Fees

Please refer to the Fees Schedule that is attached to your child's enrolment form. For the smooth running of the Centre, it is very important that your fees are paid at least one week in advance. Fees are paid on enrolment of days, not on attendance; this includes absence through sickness. All overdue fees will be sent to a debt collection agency and the parents will be responsible for all fees charged by this agency.

Our preferred method of payment is by automatic payment, internet banking or EFTPOS.



WINZ childcare subsidy

Work and Income operates a subsidy for parents whose children attend the Centre. The subsidy is subject to an income qualification. Contact Work and Income for further information and forms. Full payment of fees is the parent's responsibility and will be required until a subsidy has been approved.

Absences

If your child is unable to attend the Centre for any reason, please phone immediately to advise the staff. This is particularly important if your child has a contagious condition that other parents need to be notified about.

Change of sessions

Parents must give at least two weeks notice in writing before withdrawing your child and at least one weeks notice if you wish to change your session days. Please ask the Supervisor for the appropriate form.

Changes of information

Please notify staff of any changes of address or phone details, or any changes in family or employment situations, which could affect your child. This will enable us to reach you quickly if required in an emergency.

Food

Parents are to provide their baby's formula for their bottles, which must be clearly labelled and placed in the fridge.

For all other children, food and drink is provided by the Centre. Our resident cook is trained in health and hygiene and provides nutritious meals which have been developed by a dietician.

A menu is available on the Centre noticeboard. If your child has special dietary needs please discuss these with the Supervisor at your time of enrolment.

It is important that any food allergies be advised to staff so they can be posted in the kitchen and strictly followed. Please note that Tots on Triton has a peanut free policy.

Toileting

Routine toileting times are provided before meals and naps to encourage good habits and independence in children who are ready. During toilet training, staff will endeavour to support efforts made at home. Please feel free to discuss any special needs with staff. Please make sure you send plenty of changes of clothes during this time, as a few accidents are unavoidable.

Parents must supply sufficient nappies for their child's day (this may vary from 4 to 8) as the Centre only keeps a limited supply for emergency situations. All nappies must be disposable.

Rest and sleep time

All children are offered the opportunity to have a special time to relax or rest during the day; it enables them to gather their thoughts and strength for the rest of the day. It is our policy that if a child falls asleep, they are in need of a rest and will not be woken unless parents have requested otherwise. Some children may not need sleep, but quiet activities will be available for selection.

What to bring

All clothing, shoes, cuddlys and bags must be clearly named. Because play and exploration can often be wet or messy, children should be dressed in play clothes and a spare change should be packed everyday. In winter, rain attire and gumboots are essential, and in summer, sunhats are to be provided for outdoor play.

WHAT TO BRING

Parents need to bring the following items in a named baby bag / schoolbag.

Under Twos

1. Milk or milk powder – enough for the day
2. Complete spare set of clothes and extra singlets
3. Disposable nappies
4. Items the baby is attached to i.e. dummy, teddy bear, etc.
5. Sunhat / warm waterproof outside clothes in winter

Over Twos

1. Complete change of clothes (more when toilet training)
2. Disposable nappies (if required)
3. Special items for sleep - i.e. cuddly, doll etc.
4. Sunhat / warm waterproof outside clothes in winter

Tots on Triton follows a sun protection policy. We ask that you send a named sun hat with your child each day in the summer months (October – May). Please apply sunscreen before arriving at the Centre each day. We will apply more sunscreen lotion throughout the day as needed. If your child is allergic to sunscreen, please provide your own special sunblock (named). Children who do not have a hat may have to play inside. Our staff will also educate the children about being sun smart.

Toys and other treasures from home

We have chosen a wide range of developmentally appropriate equipment and toys for our Centre. Please explain to your child that the toys at the Centre are for everyone to share and that they cannot be taken home. It would be appreciated if your child could be dissuaded from bringing in toys from home as they may get lost or broken. Cuddly or security toys are welcome but need to be clearly named.

Car seats

Car seats can be stored in the shelves located to the left hand side in the front entranceway of the Centre.

Lost property

There is a container for unnamed and lost property. Please check this regularly as the amount builds up. Items that remain uncollected after a period of time will be donated to a local charity, or disposed of.

Parking

You are only permitted to park at the Centre in order to drop-off or collect your child.

Excursions and trips

Excursions out of the Centre will be arranged from time to time as part of your child's experience. Parents are encouraged to participate. Excursion slips outlining the trip, transport, cost and adult / child ratio will be given to all parents to complete prior to an outing. Children who are unable to attend the excursion will remain at the Centre with a trained staff member. Children may be taken on small walks out of the Centre. Approval for these is given when completing the enrolment form.



Behaviour management

Our child behaviour management policy is based on the importance of respect and dignity for the child, acknowledging and accepting children's feelings and encouraging these feelings to be expressed. Steps that we take towards establishing good behaviour management include:

- ✿ Setting and maintaining appropriate limits of behaviour;
- ✿ Verbal redirection;
- ✿ Explaining the appropriate uses of materials and equipment;
- ✿ Reinforcing positive behaviour with praise;
- ✿ Explaining why a behaviour is inappropriate or unacceptable and providing acceptable options;
- ✿ Offering children choices and encouraging decision making;
- ✿ Setting realistic expectations which are age and stage appropriate;
- ✿ All staff are encouraged to model non-violent behaviour for the children's interactions with each other.

Child health

We ask that any child who is unwell be kept at home so illness does not spread through the Centre. The Supervisor may at his/her discretion refuse to accept any child deemed unwell to attend the Centre, as we do not

have the specialist staff or the space for sick children. Children with severe coughs or colds, vomiting, diarrhoea, conjunctivitis, rashes or raised temperatures cannot be brought into the Centre. If symptoms develop during the day the parent will be contacted to arrange for the immediate collection of their child.

WHEN IS A CHILD INFECTIOUS?

Common infectious diseases

1. **Measles** - Infectious up to four days after rash has first appeared.
2. **Mumps** - Infectious up to three days after swelling has disappeared.
3. **Chickenpox** - Infectious until last spot is covered by a scab.
4. **Whooping Cough** - Infectious until at least one month after onset.
5. **Rubella (German Measles)** - Infectious up to four days from when rash first appeared.

Common contagious parasitic conditions

1. **Headlice** - Please check your child's head regularly and treat immediately if head lice are found. Once a child has been treated she/he may attend even if eggs are still present in the hair.
2. **Threadworms** - Difficult to prevent the spread. Usual signs are irritability and an itchy bottom.
3. **Scabies** - An itchy skin condition which can be difficult to diagnose. A doctor should be consulted on any doubtful rash.

Infectious skin conditions

1. **Impetigo** - Bacterial skin infection, which is highly contagious. A doctor must be

consulted on any multiple sores. If on the face, the child should stay at home until no longer infectious. If on other parts of the body, sores should be properly covered.

2. **Ringworm** - Fungal skin condition.

Advisable to consult a doctor for the confirmation of diagnosis and treatment. Please keep lesions covered when your child is at the Centre.

Please note that any skin condition persisting for more than 24 hours requires a medical opinion.

Vomiting and Diarrhoea

Can be a serious health risk to babies. A baby should be seen by a doctor immediately. If a child has diarrhoea: keep him/her at home; give only fluid for 24 hours (10 mls per 10 minutes is recommended); then gradually introduce a light diet. If the diarrhoea still persists, a doctor should be consulted. Usually it is a problem which lasts only one or two days.

A child should remain at home for 24 hours after the last bout of diarrhoea or vomiting to ensure they do not infect other children.

The Centre should be advised if the child has contracted a notifiable or infectious disease such as giardia, mumps, chickenpox etc so that other parents can be advised.

The child should be kept away from the Centre for the required length of time as per the communicable diseases chart which is on display in the Centre.

Medication

It is our Centre policy that only medication that has a label stating your child's name and expiry date will be administered. Please advise the staff if your child is taking any medication. All prescribed medicine must be given to a staff member for storage in the kitchen fridge (no medicine should be left in children's bags). The medicine book, that is kept beside the sign in sheet, must be filled in before we can administer any medication. Staff will sign the medicine book after the administration of medicine.

Pamol will not be administered unless prescribed by a doctor as we believe if the child is unwell, they should not be attending the Centre. Pamol can mask more serious illnesses.

If your child requires medication such as an inhaler for asthma or an epi-pen for allergies, a special action plan must be written up for staff to follow.

Immunisation

We are required to keep an up-to-date list of all children at the Centre and their immunisation status. Please remember to bring your Well Child Book and a copy of your immunisation certificate with you when you enrol your child at the Centre. If your child is not immunised a letter confirming this needs to be attached to your enrolment form. In the case of an outbreak of such a disease your child will be asked to stay away from the Centre for the duration of the outbreak.

Allergies

Tots on Triton has established policies and procedures in place to manage children with allergies. We are able to cater for any special dietary needs (eg dairy free, wheat free etc) of your children. Parents must advise the Centre of allergies or other medical requirements or special needs.

No smoking

Tots on Triton has a strict no smoking policy. Smoking is not permitted anywhere within the Centre and its grounds. Staff are also not permitted to smoke outside of the grounds where they can be seen by the children.

Accidents and safety

Tots on Triton follows strict policies on safety. All appropriate measures are taken to ensure that children's safety is paramount. Staff are trained in hazard identification, hazard elimination and first aid. Unfortunately, although rare, accidents do happen.

If an accident does require medical attention we will contact you and if necessary, seek medical attention until you arrive. Our priority is the well-being of your child. If the accident is minor and the injury can be dealt with in the Centre, a first aid trained person will administer first aid and document the details of the accident and the treatment.

Emergency procedures

In case of an unforeseen emergency situation, every effort will be made to contact parents to collect their child. The Centre is fitted with safety devices, which are maintained regularly. Regular fire drills are necessary for regulation purposes. If you are present at a fire drill, you are required by law to participate. Emergency evacuation plans are displayed in the Centre. Staff are familiar with evacuation procedures and policies. Parents and visitors to the Centre will be asked to make themselves familiar with the evacuation plan and where hoses and first aid equipment is to be found. Every effort will be made to make evacuation procedures enjoyable rather than stressful events for the children. Regular emergency procedures give the children an opportunity to become familiar with the routine and planned evacuation.

Organisation structure

Tots on Triton is privately owned. The Centre owners have engaged ECE Management Ltd which is a specialist professional early childhood management company to provide the day-to-day management of the Centre, giving support to the Supervisors and staff. This ensures that the Centre adopts best practice in the provision of quality early childhood education and care for your child.

Parent concerns

Parents should feel free to discuss any queries or problems with the Supervisor. However, remember that busy drop off or pick up times may not always be an appropriate time to have detailed discussions on your child's or your needs, and you may need to schedule an appointment with the Supervisor at another time.

A policy for dealing with complaints is displayed on the parent's notice board. If you have any concerns or complaints relating to the operation of the Centre please refer the matter to ECE Management Ltd, PO Box 99-696, Newmarket, Auckland 1149, or telephone Diane Toal or Chris Cole on (09) 523-4300.

Your participation in the running of the Centre is welcomed and will help to ensure your family enjoys their early childhood experience.

