

YMCA Early Learning Centre

for babies and pre-schoolers

• HELPING YOUNG
PEOPLE CREATE
THEIR FUTURE

Welcome! Nau mai haere mai!

Welcome to the YMCA Early Learning Centre, where we pride ourselves on offering quality care and education for 0-5 year olds. We recognise the importance of a child's first years, and believe they are crucial to building the foundations of life-long success.

This belief is demonstrated in our day-to-day activities, placing emphasis on establishing supportive relationships with peers and adults alike. All our children are encouraged to make the most of their fun filled days, sometimes getting messy along the way! We love to see children grow in a safe, reciprocal learning environment.

We follow the National Early Childhood Curriculum, "Te Whāriki" which states that children aspire:

"To grow up as competent and confident learners and communicators, healthy in mind, body and spirit, secure in their sense of belonging and in the knowledge that they make a valued contribution to society."



Opening hours:

Monday to Friday from 6.30am – 6.00pm (closed on public holidays)

- ✓ Quality childcare for 0-5 year olds
 - ✓ A supportive and nurturing environment
 - ✓ Friendly qualified teachers
 - ✓ Up to 20 hrs care FREE per week for children 3+ years old
 - ✓ Competitive rates - we use an hourly booking system
- WINZ Childcare Subsidies and Early Learning Payments are available for eligible families

125 Grey Street, Whanganui
Entrance on London Street
Opposite the BP service station

Phone: (06) 349 6117



Effective communication is the key!

At our Early Learning Centre, we want you to be an integral part of what we do. You're welcome at the Centre any time to share your ideas, spend time with your child, or discuss their ongoing development.

Building relationships and communication with both you and your child is the key to our success!

We also have a bi-monthly newsletter that keeps you up to date with any special events, programme changes or developments, Ministry of Education policy updates, and other newsworthy items.

All documentation about our service, including licensing details, teachers' qualifications, policy and procedure manuals, latest ERO reports, is location in our office – which you can access any time.

While the children have their own scrap books to keep their art work in, we also use an online tool called 'Educa' to create portfolios for every child. This web-based format allows teachers and parents to document specific insights and give valuable feedback with the aim of providing the best possible outcomes.



How to access Educa?

We will send you an invitation via email. Just click on the link and load your login details, and you are all set to go.



What is your child doing today?

If your child is having especially good fun doing an activity, it is the perfect time for their teacher to take some photos and put them onto Educa - so you can see what they are up to today. You will receive an email advising you about the new entry that has been put onto your child's portfolio.

Learning Stories

You will receive at least one full Learning Story on Educa each month. This is where a teacher documents a special aspect of your child's play, or an observation about a particular learning situation. Emphasis is placed on the teacher recognising what is occurring developmentally, and how it will lead onto future learning opportunities. For example, if your 2 year old loves to "post" things, this may be about them discovering cause and effect relationships. They are realising that, "if I do this, then something happens" which can be transferred to other learning situations.

Availability of Pictures and Learning Stories

With everything being online, photos, videos and learning stories can be accessed from anywhere. It means you can download, print and frame pictures right away. Grandparents and extended family can also log-on and view your child's learning.

Mobile Apps

You can access Educa with iPhone and Android apps. So if you are out with friends and whānau, you can easily show off your child's pictures and learning stories for all to enjoy!

Secure Data

Educa puts children first – that means keeping the data safe. Only those who are allowed access Educa will get into it! It is the teachers and a child's parents/caregivers who can view the child's personal data. Everything is stored safely on the server.

All our children have a learning portfolio on Educa. Parents/caregivers must give signed permission for this – which is included in the child's enrolment form. An office computer is available for you to use alongside a staff member, should you need help to log-in and find your way around the site – we're happy to lend a hand!

Fee Structure

We use an hourly rate fee structure, which is \$6.50 per hour.

FREE 20 hours ECE for 3+ year olds

You can receive up to 20 hours per week FREE childcare for children aged 3+ years (with a maximum daily limit of 6 hours per day). Please talk to our Administrator about your eligibility for these hours.

NB: we provide morning and afternoon teas, sunscreen, nappies and wipes at no extra cost.

Payment options

Weekly childcare fees are to be paid one week in advance. You will need to pay the first week's care as a deposit at time of enrolment. Invoices are emailed to families every week. You can make payment via internet banking, or we can give you an automatic payment form to take to your bank.

If fees become 14 days overdue you will be advised in writing that your child's placement may be cancelled if the account is not settled within 7 days (refer to the Policy Statement enclosed in the Enrolment Pack for further details).

Work and Income Childcare Subsidies

Eligibility for a Work & Income Childcare Subsidy depends on your total household income, number of children you have, and how many hours childcare you need each week.

WINZ CCS RATES as @ 01 April, 2016:

No. children	Childcare Subsidy rates - Gross income per week				
1 child	Less than \$800.00	\$800.00 to \$1,199.99	\$1,200.00 to \$1,299.99	\$1,300.00 to \$1,399.99	\$1,400.00 or more
2 children	Less than \$920.00	\$920.00 to \$1,379.99	\$1,380.00 to \$1,489.99	\$1,490.00 to \$1,599.99	\$1,600.00 or more
3 or more children	Less than \$1,030.00	\$1,030.00 to \$1,539.99	\$1,540.00 to \$1,669.99	\$1,670.00 to 1,799.99	\$1,800.00 or more
Hourly rate that applies	Rate \$5.00	Rate \$4.00	Rate \$2.79	Rate \$1.55	Nil

Our staff will complete the necessary forms for you to take to Work and Income. A subsidy will only be approved from the date care starts OR the date you submit the application form to Work and Income, whichever is the later of these two dates.

It is **very important** to get your forms into their office ASAP so you don't risk missing out on your entitlement!

If approved, the Childcare Subsidy is paid direct to our Centre.

We will give you a copy of our Parent Payment Plan, which you will need to sign, so you will have all the information about payment of childcare fees.

General information – Centre procedures

Transition visits and settling in

We welcome parents and whānau to have at least 3 visits prior to starting at our Centre. This helps the settling in process as well as giving time for both child and family to get familiar with our staff and routines. Our teachers will discuss the best way to do this with you.

Parent involvement

You are an important part of our family and we encourage you to come along to the Centre at any time to spend time with your child, or share and discuss your ideas with our friendly teaching staff.

Our Staff - Ratios

Our teaching staff is made up of over 80% qualified Early Childhood Teachers, supported by Educators working towards their certification. The Centre Manager and Administrator also play an active role in establishing day-to-day relationships with all our children and whānau.

We work hard to achieve the best teacher to child ratios possible. Our aim is to have 1 teacher to every 4 children under the age of 2 years, and 1 teacher to every 8 children aged 3+ years. (The Ministry of Education national standard is a ratio of 1 : 5 children under the age of 2 years, and 1 : 10 children aged 3+ years).

The Oak Room and the Kowhai Room

When children are inside, they are in two main areas – The Oak Room and the Kowhai Room. You may hear staff refer to these areas as the ‘Under 2s’ and the ‘Over 2s’. Sometimes, children may move between the two areas. Your child will be a part of our 3 main groups for their day-to-day activities – the pēpi rōpū for Under 2s, tēina rōpū for 2-3 years, and tuākana rōpū for 3-5 year olds.

What to pack in your child’s bag?

Change of clothes – please pack **at least two sets - including** tops, pants, underpants, socks, plus hat and jacket for the colder months. Please remember to dress your child in clothing suitable for messy play – they will, and do, get dirty!



Car parking

Please use the YMCA's London St entrance (opposite the BP Station) and park in this area. There are a number of parks reserved for you to use, directly outside the Centre's main gate. Because it is a very busy road, we recommend that when you leave the car park you turn left into London St towards the traffic lights to avoid any accidents.

Food and drink

Morning/afternoon teas and lunches are provided by the Centre. We have a healthy food policy at the Centre, so encourage parents to support us in this approach. If your child has an early start with us, you can supply breakfast items in a clearly named lunchbox. We are happy to reheat, cut, dice, or slice any food that needs it – just let our staff know. Sugar is not a welcome visitor! *Please refer to the back page of this information booklet for more food information.*

Nappies and wipes

We provide all nappies and wipes. Please talk to staff if you have any special requirements regarding nappy changes, or if you want to bring any special creams or powders.

Sunscreen & sun hats

The Centre provides sunscreen for your child, which is applied throughout the day. Please talk to staff if you need to check on the brands used, or need to provide your own (named) sunscreen and we will apply it as per the instructions. We have sunhats for children to wear when they are outside.



Signing your child in/out – Day Sheets

All children must be signed in and out of the Centre each day by their parent or person responsible for them. Teachers are instructed to only permit children to leave the Centre with people who you have nominated on your enrolment form. If someone else is picking up your child, please let staff know.

It is important that you sign your child in each day because we use this information to check your child is present.

This is particularly important in case of an emergency.

Change of contact details

If you change phone numbers or move house, please let us know your updated details as soon as possible. This is a Ministry of Education requirement. Most importantly, we need to know we can contact you, or one of your emergency contacts, when your child is in our care.

Attendance - absences

Your child must attend the Centre for the booked hours as per the enrolment form. If you arrive early, then you must stay with your child until their booked start time. If you are late to collect your child you will be charged a penalty late fee, unless you have given at least 24 hours. If you have given adequate notice you will be charge the usual hourly fee (pro-rated).

If your child is absent, please phone us ASAP and let us know. If you do not call us within an hour of your usual arrival time, then we will contact your or your listed emergency contacts to check on your child's wellbeing.

Medication

Medication is the responsibility of the parent or caregiver. If your child is taking medication, you must take it out of their bag and hand to a teacher, so it can be put in a safe place. Administration of the medication can only be done with written instructions from a parent/caregiver, and will be entered into the Centre's Medication Book. If your child needs medication because they are unwell, they will need to stay at home until they are well enough to return to the Centre (see 'Child Wellness' section below).

Child wellness

If your child becomes unwell during the day, your teacher will contact you to discuss this. Following this, if the teacher is still concerned, you will need to collect your child ASAP and seek a doctor's advice. Examples of such situations would be if your child had any of the following symptoms:

- * high temperature (over 39°)
- * runny nose - coloured mucus
- * cough
- * diarrhoea
- * rash or spots
- * vomiting
- * not eating or drinking
- * unusually upset
- * unable to participate

The doctor must provide written confirmation that your child is well and able to return to the centre, or advise how long your child must stay away. Please contact us as soon as possible regarding the outcome of the doctor's visit – so that other parents can be advised if necessary, e.g. if it is a case of chicken pox. Just to note, there are copies of the Ministry of Health "Infectious Diseases" charts posted on the walls in the Centre, which you can read at any time.



Toys

Some children like to bring a comfort toy with them each day, especially when they are first settling into the Centre. If your child brings a toy to show their friends, we will encourage them to place it in their bag for safe keeping. As there is a risk that toys may get broken or lost, they will not be the Centre's responsibility.

Concerns or complaints

Please inform the Centre Manager if you have any concerns. They will be treated respectfully, and in confidence. It is our job to ensure we provide the best outcomes while your child is entrusted into our care.

Emergencies – evacuations

We conduct regular fire and earthquake drills on a monthly basis. This familiarises all the children on the procedures we must all follow in case of an emergency. If we need to evacuate the building all staff will ensure the children are accounted for. Our designated meeting place is at the tennis court on the northern side of our Centre.



The Ministry of Education

We receive operational funding from the Ministry of Education. With this funding we are able to employ qualified teaching staff, provide educational resources and a childcare facility geared towards providing the best possible care. We advise the amount of funding we receive, and how we have spent this. This information is placed on the parent notice board and will be outlined in a newsletter at the end of each financial year.

National Student Number (NSN) – Early Learning System (ELI)

All children enrolled in the centre must have a National Student Number (NSN). This is allocated by the Ministry of Education. Your child's NSN will remain with them through their school years, and for any further adult education, e.g. university or polytechnic training.

The Ministry of Education uses the NSN to track attendance so our Centre can receive the correct level of government funding. Information is also used for research purposes. The Education Act states that the NSN information can only be used for statistical, research, or resourcing purposes. So access to the information is strictly limited.

Healthy food

Early childhood is a time when lifelong eating habits are formed. We provide a culture of healthy eating - with staff leading by example and bringing their own healthy food from home. We want to help the children to see good food choices as being normal!

We provide nutritious and culturally appropriate lunches as well as morning and afternoon teas. This is consistent with the principles, strands and goals of 'Te Whāriki: Early Childhood Curriculum' (1996), which emphasises the "physical, mental, social and spiritual wellbeing of a child being inextricably entwined".

Our own vegetable patch is planted out by the children each season. We also have a worm farm and compost heap. The fresh produce is harvested and eaten by the children, so they can learn about where their food comes from.



Babies, toddlers and young children can only eat what they are given.

The responsibility of providing a healthy diet lies with the adults in a child's life.

We are committed to providing our children delicious healthy food to help them grow!

We offer food such as fresh fruit, baked veges – roast kumara, carrot, broccoli – banana on toast, and baked goods. Milk and water are the only drinks served at the Centre.

We have a 4-weekly rotation of the weekly menus which are displayed on the white board at the main entrance where you come into the Centre – you can check these each day.

Please talk with staff if you have any questions about the menus.

Menu for Week 1					
Week 1	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Morning tea- kai iti	Scrambled Eggs + Toast	Banana Wrap Bites	Spinach Pinwheels	Mini Hotdogs	Porridge + Fruit
Notes					
Lunch	Beef Cassarole + Potato & Kumara Mash	Vegetable Quiche	Roast Wednesday	Left Over Thursday	Chicken + Chips
Notes					
PM Snack Kai ahiahi	Fruit Kebabs + Fish Fingers	Date Scones	Rice Cakes, Cheese & Fruit/Vege Platter	Bliss Balls	Rice Cakes, Cheese & Fruit/Vege Platter
Notes					
All to be served with fresh fruits and/or vegetables					

Remember to note any food allergies or intolerances that your child may have on your enrolment form!