ST ANDREW’S CHILTON KINDERGARTEN

TRANSITIONS POLICY

Rationale: Young children and their families will be supported through the process of transitions both within the kindergarten and to school.

Purpose; To ensure children feel comfortable and knowledgeable about the transition from a familiar setting to an unfamiliar setting, and that families are informed and comfortable with the process of transition for their child/ren .

PROCEDURES

Transition visits for newly enrolled children

* Decisions about how long parents/whānau stay with their child will be made to ensure we support the best outcome for the child.
* Ideally, and where possible, begin with an introductory visit, with whānau present. The head teacher or the Finance & Operation Manager can then plan subsequent visits (and time frames around these) in consultation with whānau, culminating in a final visit when parents/whānau are given the opportunity to leave the child in the centre for a period of separation.
* Teachers are encouraged to involve whānau in decisions about the possibility of them leaving their child’s play area. If their child is settled, they could wait in another room or in their car during their visit. Alternatively, by mutual agreement, visiting families could leave the centre for a short time, but must remain close by and be contactable on mobile at all times, returning to the centre within the agreed time frame, or if a call is made requesting they return sooner.
* Children are supported by their teachers in transitions, and are encouraged to take responsibility through parts of our daily programme, that is morning tea, lunch times and mat times. Children are supported through the practices involved around hand washing, getting their morning tea/lunch boxes and their water bottles and sitting at the tables that have been prepared. They are also supported through the processes involved at mat time and rest time.
* Teachers are flexible within the daily programme so that children’s preferences are respected.
* If applicable, visuals will be used to provide support for new children, ESOL children and children with additional needs. These will be displayed prominently within the kindergarten.
* The head teacher will examine the choice to enrol and/or review the transition process in order to best help the child and whānau in the rare instance that a child does not settle. This review is only valid when all efforts to settle the child have been unsuccessful and the environment is, in our opinion, not suited to meeting the child’s individual needs.

Transition to School

* Teachers will work towards preparing children and their families/whānau for a smooth transition between St. Andrews Chilton Kindergarten and their chosen school.
* We believe strongly in learning through play and in supporting each child in their own learning journey. There are many skills that we seek to develop that help children feel confident and competent in both their learning and in their growing independence as they approach school age.
* In our programme, we will include:
* A combination of project-based learning and free play, where children are given the lead and teachers provide resources and opportunities for them to extend their skills and thinking. Children have many opportunities to learn from each other and work together.
* Routines and opportunities that encourage children’s independence and self-management, fostering positive attitudes towards self-help/self-care skills such as eating, dressing and toileting, as well as managing their personal safety.
* Develop early literacy and numeracy concepts throughout q planned programme, and this is done naturally through all areas of play and projects.
* Through our programme, teachers help children to develop their social-emotional skills to form close, secure relationships, engage in positive interactions with others, persist, problem solve, understand, identify, express, and regulate emotions, resolve peer conflicts, as well as a developing capacity to summon strength in adverse situations. Children also be able to develop abilities to identify and express emotions and to learn skills for initiating, maintaining, and enjoying relationships with others.
* Teachers will encourage parents and whānau to visit their prospective schools to talk to the principal and teachers. Parents are required to enrol their child at their chosen school, and discuss with the school their policy on enrolment, visits prior to starting, and find out that school’s specific transition-to-school process.
* School visits to new entrant classes are the responsibility for the parents and whānau, however, teachers are available to support children before and after their visits. Children receive positive feedback on their returns and are asked to share their experiences with the other children.
* If there are any issues that our head teacher wishes to discuss with the school, then permission will be sort from the child’s parents. This will be done with the intention of using the positive relationships between the whānau, early childhood centre and school to ensure the child and whānau with a smooth transition to school.
* Teachers will talk with children about school and all that it encompasses so that it becomes a familiar subject. We encourage your child to ask questions about school to help ease any anxieties they may have and help them feel more prepared.
* School life requires a lot of children’s social and emotional development and, while parents know their child better than anyone else, parents are encouraged to talk with us if they have any queries or concerns about the child’s emotional ‘readiness’ before they start school.
* If a child has a specific learning or developmental need, we encourage parents to talk to the child’s new school about this as soon as they can.
* Resources can be accessed through the Ministry of Education to further support the transition-to-school process for parents and their child (websites or phone numbers).
* We encourage parents/whānau to celebrate their child’s journey at St. Andrews Chilton Kindergarten. The child is invited to have a small graduation with teachers and children at mat time, to emphasise the significance of the child moving on to school. Parents and whanau are welcome to attend this ceremony.
* The kindergarten will give the children's portfolios to the family. Children are encouraged to share their portfolio with their new classmates and teacher in school so that the teacher can use the information to identify the children's skills, interests, strengths, and needs.