



Cato Road, Park Island, Napier

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## Parent Information

### The DEN Philosophy

The DEN is a purpose-built home like nature-based discovery education for children aged 2-6 years to foster passionately curious children with two acres of natural outdoor play space that provides rich and meaningful learning experiences to develop a sense of the joy of knowledge of learning both now and for the future. To develop globally aware inclusive, courageous kind active learners now and for the future.

### Cornerstone Values

To support

- **Belonging** - Children, whanau and community
- **Discovery** - Education
- **Nature** – Nature-based child development programme supported by TimberNook, see more at [www.timbernook.com](http://www.timbernook.com)
- **Movement** – A moving child is a learning child programmes supported by Moving Smart NZ, see more at [www.movingsmart.co.nz](http://www.movingsmart.co.nz)

### Hours and Pick-Up

We open at 7:30 and close at 5:30 throughout the year, closing only at weekends and public holidays.

We close at 5:30pm and request that you collect your child no later than this.

If we have not been able to contact you after The DEN has closed we will contact an emergency contact listed by you on your enrolment form.

Children may only leave The DEN with an adult listed on the enrolment for (parent, guardians and/or emergency contacts).

### Arrival

As you arrive at The DEN each day there is a sign in and settling area to ensure a smooth transition for the day for both child and parent.

### Child: Teacher Ratios

The Ministry of Education requires us to maintain a minimum of 1:10 child to teacher ratio however at The DEN we aim for a consistent lower ratio across the centre.

### Settling in at The DEN

Our aim is to ensure that you and your child have a smooth introduction. New families are encouraged to spend time at The DEN prior to the actual starting date. These visits allow you to get to know our team, routines and our unique environment.

Settling visits are to be arranged with the Manager and are individualised to each child and family.

We strive to run The DEN as an extension of home and we encourage families to become a part of our community and extend a warm welcome to visit whenever you wish.

## **Our Environment**

The DEN is a purpose-built, home like nature-based discovery education for children aged 2-6 years with two acres of natural outdoor play space.

## **Sustainability**

At The DEN we are committed to shaping the enjoyment of tomorrow by educating and inspiring our children about the wonders of the environment and the importance of growing up with a focus on sustainable practise. We seek to reduce and balance our environmental impact by improving the sustainability of our centre in the following ways:

- Reducing our consumption of resources that have an adverse impact on the environment (e.g. compostable nappy and rubbish bags, wetback fire for water heating)
- Reducing the waste, we generate by recycling and re-usage.
- Growing our own produce for consumption within centre

## **Educational Programme and Planning**

Our learning programme is based on the New Zealand Ministry of Education early childhood curriculum Te Whariki.

What is Te Whariki? It is New Zealand's Early Childhood education curriculum which is designed to:

*"develop confidence in children, to use their abilities 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."*

The DEN also offers a unique discovery education programme for children from 5 years, **5@TheDEN**.

The DEN curriculum is supported by TimberNook and Moving Smart affiliations (first in the world) so that children have times of the day which are directed activities (both group and individual) and self-initiated discovery.

## **Behaviour and guidance**

The DEN teaching team work from a strength based inclusive approach to guide and role model positive behaviours and global citizenship.

## **Individualised Learning Journals**

Every child will have a learning journal which includes photos, observations and learning stories about their adventures at The DEN. This becomes the child's property upon completion. Many of the stories in Storypark also feature in individualised learning journals.

## **Storypark**

We use Storypark to engage and involve you in your child's learning and to share and communicate privately with you and the people who matter most in your child's life. Photos, videos, observations and centre events can all be shared securely between teachers, families

and children. This information can be accessed anytime and will be available for you to cherish forever. You will find more information about Storypark online at [www.storypark.co.nz](http://www.storypark.co.nz)

### **Attendance**

We rely on funding from the Ministry of Education as well as fees. If your child is absent for extended periods it does affect our funding, so please keep us informed of your plans. If your child is absent due to illness or holidays, please make sure you advise your child's teacher or the manager.

The time of your child's arrival and departure must be written on the attendance sheet daily. In an emergency this attendance sheet is used to ensure all children are accounted for.

### **Nutrition**

You are required to provide your child with a drink bottle (water only) and lunch box including enough food to last your child for the duration of their day at The DEN. There is a fridge available for perishables. The children will be growing fresh seasonal fruit and vegetables so will be invited to help prepare and enjoy these at some time in their day.

### **Birthdays**

At The DEN we have a unique birthday ritual to celebrate children's birthdays. We request that birthday cakes are enjoyed at home with family.

### **Sleep**

A suitable space will be provided for all sleeping children.

### **Nappies/Toilet Training/Personal Hygiene**

Parents are required to provide enough nappies for the duration of their child's day and are to remain in their child's bag. Children using cloth nappies are required to provide a disposable liner and provide a suitable bag for returning soiled nappies home. If your child has toileting accident we have facilities available for all ages. Soiled clothing is rinsed, bagged and sent home.

### **Unwell Children**

We ask that you use common sense when your child is unwell keep them at home. It hard for a child to participate happily in centre life when unwell. The DEN does not have the staff or facilities to care for sick children and any illness could easily be passed on to other children and teachers. Your child needs to be kept at home if they have any of the following

- High temperature
- Inflamed throat or eyes, conjunctivitis
- Unidentified rash
- Upset stomach, vomiting and or diarrhoea (until 24 hours after last symptom)
- Scabies and impetigo (school sores)

More information about signs, symptoms and exclusion periods can be found in our Health and safety policy

Please make sure you have up to date contact phone numbers for both parents and your emergency contacts (work and home).

## **Medication**

Please do not leave ANY medication in your child's bag (this includes inhalers).

If your child is on prescribed medication which is required to be administered by centre staff, you must fill in the medicine book each day that the medication is required. All information including your child's name, medication name, dosage and times the medication needs to be administered must be filled in. A first aid trained staff member will administer the medication as required and sign the medicine chart when completed.

No prescribed medication will be given to your child that is out of date or does not have your child's name on it.

All medication will be kept securely out of reach of children. Medication requiring refrigeration will be kept refrigerated.

If your child has an allergy, asthma or similar condition please see the Manager to discuss a plan that is appropriate for your child.

## **Accidents & Medical Emergencies**

Accidents do happen and we are prepared. All registered Early Childhood Teachers at The DEN are First aid certified. Bumps and minor injuries are recorded on an accident form which will be given to you and discussed during pick-up time. For any moderate injuries we will give you a courtesy call to allow you to decide what action will be taken. For more serious injuries you will be phoned alongside an ambulance to ensure immediate action is taken.

## **Daily Clothing Needs**

Your child will have a cubby they are encouraged to find and attach their name to each day. Your child should always have a minimum of one complete change of named clothing, including shoes and socks. Teachers will put wet/dirty clothing in their DEN tote bag. For winter months layers of clothing allow children the opportunity to move about freely and regulate of the changeable temperature. Wet weather jackets are essential, gumboots, a woolly hat is essential and wet weather pants highly recommended. In summer togs including rash shirts are essential. At The DEN your child will get wet and dirty all year around, messy play is an integral part of early childhood and we emphasise that "best" clothes are not suitable.

Please ensure that all clothing is named.

## **Excursions**

Permission for excursions is given on the enrolment form completed when your child starts attending. There has been a thorough risk assessment on these excursions, to ensure safety is paramount at all times, which is available to view at the office.

Individual permission is sought from parents for any outings which take us further afield and/or are not regular/familiar to us.

## **Notice Board**

There is a notice board in the centre which displays current news, community events, regulatory requirements and items of interest.

## **No Smoking**

In accordance with the Early Childhood Regulations The DEN is a 100% smoke free zone. This applies to both parents and staff and includes **all** indoor and outdoor areas; playground, car park, any areas visible to children.

### **Concerns/Complaints/Queries**

Please discuss these with us as soon as possible. We wish to hear about any concerns as soon as they arise and you are welcome to contact the Manager at any time. Our goal is to deal with any concerns immediately and ensure peace of mind for all involved. Our team are always available to discuss any matter with you.

### **Emergency and Civil Defence**

Regular fire and earthquake drills are held to ensure, as best possible "what to do" becomes second nature to children and staff should a real emergency occur. In the event of an emergency occur children will be cared for until a person who is authorised by you comes to collect them. Emergency contact names and telephone numbers need to be kept up to date, please advise the Manager whenever change is required to be made.