

Rangiora
High School



Nga mihi o te wā ki a koe me te whanau!
Greetings to you and your family!

Parent Information Handbook

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Check us on Facebook: Rangiora High School Nursery School

ABOUT RANGIORA HIGH SCHOOL NURSERY SCHOOL

Rangiora High School Nursery School is a full-day licensed, not-for-profit, community-based early childhood centre with a strong sense of community and parent involvement. Unique as one of New Zealand's oldest preschools there is a proud tradition for many families who have had earlier generations attend since the Nursery School began in 1938. Licensed for 45 children, the current roll is capped at 40 children per day. Children are strongly encouraged to attend for a minimum of 2 days per week from the time they start. This helps your child to become more familiar with the environment and establish relationships more quickly, enabling a stronger sense of well-being and belonging to develop. It is important, if you would like your child to attend an additional day, to please place their name on the 'additional day/s' waiting list as soon as possible to assist with forward planning of the rolls. Management, depending on availability at the time, may also consider applications upon request from families who wish their child to attend more than 3 days.

BEGINNINGS

Rangiora High School Nursery School has proudly been a part of Rangiora and the wider North Canterbury Community since 1938. It was founded on the Wales Street site it occupies today to provide early childhood education for the children of the North Canterbury area and also to give Rangiora High School students the opportunity to learn about Early Childhood Education.

THE RANGIORA HIGH SCHOOL NURSERY SCHOOL TRUST

In October 2011 Nursery School became a Charitable Trust and has six community Trustee representatives each of whom have a longstanding history and relationship with Nursery School. The Rangiora High School Nursery School Trust has been set up as a requirement of the Ministry of Education and meets every three months to oversee the governance and management of Nursery School. Details of current Trustees are on the Noticeboard.

Our Mission Statement

We will promote and nurture feelings of self-worth, confidence, independence, creativity and a desire to discover, question and develop to become lifelong learners.

Our Teaching Philosophy

- We recognise play as the learning focus for our holistic curriculum, Te Whāriki, which encompasses all dimensions of a child's world and to provide experiences that are inclusive of their family, aspirations and opinions, and which promote all factors of learning and development.
- We will provide experiences that empower children's learning to provide them with the knowledge, strategies and skills for successful learning and achievement, and that provides for opportunities to extend current knowledge and develop future skills.
- As experienced and qualified teachers, we value reciprocal, inclusive and responsive relationships in partnership with the children, their parents, family and whānau.

- We endeavour to promote an inclusive teaching environment that supports and encourages individual and collective interaction, builds social competency, exploration, participation and contribution.
- We recognise Te Tiriti O Waitangi, as our founding document, and Aotearoa-New Zealand's unique and special cultural heritage, and provide an environment where all families/whānau are warmly welcomed, feel valued and where they know that they have a place as active participants in their child's learning.
- We are proud of Nursery School's history and heritage, and value the importance and respect, and the collaborative partnership that we and the community have together to ensure Nursery School continues to effectively provide quality early childhood education.

POLICIES

Rangiora High School Nursery School has policies and procedures, as required by the Ministry of Education (and Education Act) whom we are licensed to operate by, and these are available in the Operations Manual. We encourage you to read this and also welcome your feedback and input especially when reviewing policies and procedures, and when being reviewed make this documentation available through Management Committee meetings and adjacent to the register.

ENROLMENT

We welcome the enrolment of children at their second birthday on to our waitlist. Please visit Nursery School to spend some time in the environment and/or to enrol your child. Families on the waitlist are contacted approximately two to three weeks prior to a vacancy for their child to commence, or if able, confirmation of a starting day may occur more in advance depending on availability of vacancies at the time and the needs of the family. You are most welcome to visit at any time provided you stay with your child if they are not enrolled to attend on the day you visit.

PROGRAMME AND STAFF

A team of experienced fully qualified and registered teachers provide and facilitate a planned programme each day to cater for the physical intellectual and social/emotional needs of children aged 3 up to 6 years. Children are funded Free Hours to continue attending until the age of 6 years and many families do make use of this to accommodate family/school/child's needs. The environment is warm, safe and welcoming with a programme which allows children periods of self-selected, teacher-supported play balanced with periods of structured, adult-facilitated activity mid-morning, and at the end of the morning and in the afternoon.

Each child has their own Profile Book in which staff record your child's learning journey during their time at Nursery School, and which includes formal and informal written observations and samples of their learning. Families are strongly encouraged to collaborate with staff in their child's learning and to contribute to their child's profile book; it is about your child for your child! Children are presented with their books when they leave Nursery School and encouraged to share these with family members and their school teachers.

The Head Teacher/Manager holds the overall responsibility for the children who are present and for the smooth running of the daily program. The Head Teacher/Manager is available as are all staff- for consultation by any parent or caregiver. Information about the staff is located on the Staff Noticeboard. The Manager/Head Teacher is supported by the Teachers, part-time Administrator, part-time Finance Administrator and Teacher Supports. The Head Teacher/Manager teaches on all days with a maximum of 2 administration days per week. Required by regulation to have a staff/pupil ratio of 1 teacher: 10 children, Nursery school prides itself on having a Teacher Support to reduce this ratio, and also in maintaining a (historical) commitment to having only 100% qualified, registered, certified teachers as members of the permanent teaching team.

HOURS and ATTENDANCE

There are three attendance options available:

9am-3pm (6 hours),

8.45am to 3.15pm (6.5 hours = 'short' day)

or 8.30am – 3.30pm (7 hours = 'long' day) Monday to Friday.

'ECE 20 Hours FREE' are available for every child over the age of 3 years with a maximum claim of up to 6 hours per day, up to 20 hours total per week.

The hourly rate effective 1st February 2016 is \$8/hour, and may apply depending on your child's enrolment timetable, the number of Free Hours used

Nursery School uses the InfoCare database and sends an invoice to families via this (or hardcopy) at the end of each week. A statement for the month is sent or given at the end of each month. Children absent from Nursery School will be charged any daily fees as per their booked enrolment agreement.

IMPORTANT! Please communicate regularly with staff if there are problems regarding your child's attendance or with payment of fees.

Children absent for more than 3 weeks continuously will no longer be eligible to continue receiving Free Hours resulting in lost Ministry of Education funding to Nursery School; full fees will be charged to families to recoup this accordingly unless an exemption on the grounds of special, ongoing needs or medical grounds is made to the Ministry of Education through the completion of forms from Nursery School (this will prevent or reverse full fees). Similarly, children who are absent more often than they have attended in a month, or who 'form a regular pattern of absence' for the same period of time (for example, always arriving at 10am) may also have their ECE Free funding reduced or cut. When the child resumes attending, families are required to re-attest to resume receiving the Free Hours.

Early/Late Fees – children dropped earlier or collected later than booked times will incur a charge of \$6 per or part thereof of 5 minutes, in increments of 5 minutes unless prior arrangements have been made. Where no prior arrangement has been made, an additional \$20 penalty will be charged if you drop off or collect outside booked hours more than once in a week.

Children who attend shorter hours and are early or late to be collected more than 3 times will automatically be placed on the 'longer' day hours.

On occasions, dependent on roll availability and with advance arrangement, children can attend as a 'casual'. A timetable change and signed attestation in advance is required.

As a Ministry of Education requirement, families are required to sign the register for their child when arriving and when leaving. It is important that families strictly adhere to the hours enrolled and attested for.

FOOD

Morning Tea: Children bring a (preferably protein) snack from home (ideally in a small, separate and named container) that can sit on top of their lunch box; also please bring one piece of fruit or vegetable each day which is cut up and shared communally for morning and afternoon tea.

Water is provided for morning tea, afternoon tea, and lunch. Hot chocolate is provided in the winter for morning and afternoon tea. Children should bring water in a named drink bottle (which they can access at any time).

Children bring a healthy, well-balanced lunch, in a named lunchbox (this especially saves confusion with other identical lunch containers!). Please try to keep packaged food to a minimum, and no peanuts/peanut butter (for our friends who are allergic), lollies or chocolates please! PLEASE NOTE: Nursery School is not licenced for providing cooked lunches or for re-heating food. A record of all food offered to children (such as when staff bake with children) other than that provided by their own parents will be kept.

HOLIDAYS

Nursery School remains open for the year closing only for Statutory Days and at Christmas for six weeks (No charge). A Holiday intention form will be given out prior to the school term holiday periods throughout the year, children will be charged as per the intention to attend on this form.

FINANCES, FUNDING and FUND-RAISING

The Ministry of Education provides funding for the number of children present each day. Fund-raising is a necessary additional component that ensures specific projects (such as refurbishing the Wendy House, for example) can be supported and that all fees are kept to a minimum. Any profits raised are returned to the Nursery School to benefit the children by way of resources, experiences and equipment. '20 hours Early Childhood Education Free' is offered to children aged 3-5 years, with families needing to complete an attestation form in order to receive this. 20 hours ECE is available for up to six hours per day, up to 20 hours total per week. For hours that are NOT attested as 20 hours ECE, the hourly fee rate is \$8/hour. Children who are absent (whether due to sickness, holiday or other) are still charged if they are usually required to pay fees as per their booked hours on the day they are absent. Please note that if your child is absent for more than 3 weeks without an Exemption being completed (on special grounds or medical certificate), full fees will be charged for every day that your child is absent to cover the Ministry of Education ECE Free Hours funding lost until your child returns and you re-attest their hours. Please be aware that the Ministry audits attendance and so a regular pattern of absence during the days your child is enrolled for more than 3 weeks can also signify a loss of funding (for example, if you are regularly late or regularly collect your child early) for which you may be charged.

From time to time, we may also ask parents to pay for activities (such as trips and visitors) or to pay for fundraising items (such as calendars, tee-shirts etc) they wish to purchase through Nursery school- the cost of which will be added to your child's fees account. No fees are

charged for days when Nursery School is closed for Statutory, Christmas 'shut down' and Teacher Only Days, or Emergency Closures due to snow, for example. No fees are charged if your child does not attend during the termly school holiday period (we do ask for your intentions prior to this for staffing purposes), however please be aware that absence during this period will be calculated as part of the '3-week absence' funding rule should your child also additionally be absent either side of the school termly holiday period.

Prior to leaving Nursery School, families are required to give a minimum of two weeks' notice during which time fees will continue to be charged. Invoices for children's fees are confirmed the week after the child has physically attended and invoices are sent out weekly. Upon leaving, a final invoice will be sent. Any expenses incurred in the recovery of unpaid fees will be added to any outstanding payments and after 30 days of default the Nursery School may instruct their debt collection agency to list and provide information about the default as part of the credit reporting service, it will then be available to other subscribers who may ask for information about you.

Please see staff if there is a problem with either paying your account or a mistake with the account.

RANGIORA HIGH SCHOOL PUPIL INVOLVEMENT

This has changed somewhat over the years and we welcome some senior pupils who are contemplating a career in the field of Early Childhood Education and who spend time at Nursery School to work with the children and find out more about what the training for such a career involves. On occasions, we enjoy reciprocal visits with the Rangiora High School's music/drama/art and home economics departments so from time to time you may see pupils in uniform at Nursery School, or your child may be invited to visit the High School with a group from Nursery School.

COLLECTION OF CHILDREN

Staff are required to know the names of all persons who are authorised to collect your child from Nursery School in writing and also where applicable, the details of the persons who have or have no right of legal access to your child. Such information is recorded on the enrolment form and is confidential. On Nursery School days, if you will not be collecting your child yourself, please let a staff member know, and write the name of the person who will be collecting your child in the daily register (please note that this can be only be one of the 'authorised' people written on your child's enrolment form-this is strictly adhered to) beside their name. We are licensed by the MoE only for the hours your child is enrolled to attend and appreciate your understanding in adhering to these times.

PARENT-HELP and INVOLVEMENT

YOU ARE MOST WELCOME TO SPEND TIME AT NURSERY SCHOOL AT ANYTIME!!

YOUR TIME and INVOLVEMENT IS MOST APPRECIATED!! CHILDREN ALSO LOVE EXTENDED FAMILY SPENDING TIME WITH THEM, SUCH AS GRANDPARENTS, WHO ARE VERY WELCOME!

We strongly encourage you to be involved in the Nursery School programme; this is your Nursery School as much as it is your child's! We strongly encourage a 'parent-cooperative' involvement inviting families to contribute to our daily programme to enrich children's learning by spending time, sharing interests, skills or their culture and contributing to ways in which Nursery School is maintained to a high standard (such as repairing broken toys, for

example). Families are encouraged to have a turn at parent helping- there is no minimum or maximum number of times, and remember siblings are always welcome! Prior to each school term, the roster is available for parents to volunteer a duty (or two!) before the roster is finalized and distributed. We also welcome the assistance of grandparents, relatives, or adults your child is familiar with, if you are unable to assist, or you may contact and arrange a 'swap' with someone else from the roster.

Parents find this time an enjoyable and stimulating one and children are always thrilled to have a parent or family member spend time with them and their friends at Nursery School.

As parent help you can assist by:

- Preparing morning/afternoon tea as per list in kitchen
- Talking with the children about what they are doing, listening and being interested in what they have to tell you.
- Reading stories and singing songs.
- Helping the children as they 'create' by writing names on pictures, etc.
- Assisting with clearing up at lunchtime.

Please let us know if you are unable to help on your rostered day, or swap directly with another parent on the roster.

Nursery School has its own "Friends of Nursery School Committee" of staff and parents that help organise & take part in fundraising events which all parents are welcome to join. Parents are also welcomed on outings with the children and as parent-helpers during session time, and are welcome *anytime* their child is present! Parents are invited to contribute their ideas on any aspect of the Nursery School programme, give feedback during reviews and are especially encouraged to contribute about their child's learning in their child's portfolio; Portfolios can be taken home (for short periods) for other family members to share and contribute to.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

We do appreciate a phone call to let us know if your child is unwell and unable to attend Nursery School. Any child who is suffering from any infectious disease shall be excluded from attending until clear. If your child has an infectious disease (such as measles, mumps, chicken pox, Salmonella, campylobacter, head lice, school sores) please let staff know and consult your doctor as to the appropriate time for your child to return to Nursery School. If your child has had vomiting or diarrhoea or a high temperature, they will be required to stay at home until at least 48 hours after the symptoms have last stopped to prevent further contamination. Any child who becomes ill while at Nursery School will be looked after until their parents or emergency carers are able to collect them. If necessary, we will advise families via the Daily Noticeboard, phone call or newsletter if an infectious disease has hit.

LOST PROPERTY

Please name all your child's belongings including their backpack, lunch box, drink bottle and sunhat. This helps to save confusion and distress, especially when children have the same lunchbox, for example, or the same brand of clothing! Any belongings left behind are kept in the lost property basket situated by the front door.

TOYS FROM HOME

To avoid these getting lost, damaged or the tears when other friends want to play with them we would ask that you please refrain from allowing your child to bring 'home toys' and instead encourage them to play with 'Nursery School toys'; your support is appreciated.

PLAY-CLOTHES

Children's play is their work and through this they learn. We ask that you please dress your child in 'play clothes' and appropriate shoes that support their physical play and involvement in messy/sensory activities, and also send spare named clothing in case this is needed during their day at work. 'Play clothes' need to be appropriate for play and for the weather conditions- we do play outside on cooler and wet days (though not in the rain of course!). Spare named clothes kept in your child's backpack are helpful should your child need a change during the day.

BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays are celebrated with a whole group-time ritual in collaboration with families. The emphasis is placed upon the Birthday child and the special time provided for them through sitting on a special Birthday chair, wearing a crown, having a pretend or playdough Birthday cake, being sung to, and choosing a favourite book/song/game/story for the whole group to enjoy.

We love families to be involved and plan a time for the Birthday celebration that works best for families to attend if they wish or are able to. A photograph story is recorded for children turning 4 years and placed in their profile book.

We have a strict procedure around children's Birthdays at Nursery School - NO treats (eg: chocolates, lollipops, balloons, stickers, pencils, cupcakes) or Birthday cake.

If families wish, they may provide some specialty fruit for children to share via the communal fruit bowl, but there is no pressure or expectation to do so.

This procedure is to ensure the focus remains on the Birthday child on their special day, rather than on the many children who can become fixated on what special treats are being offered. It also helps those children unable to eat treats for medical, religious, cultural or health reasons. Keeping the focus on the child rather than treats or food builds inclusivity and makes the experience more enjoyable and without the added financial and emotional pressure for families when their child celebrates their Birthday at Nursery School.

CONCERNS OR COMPLAINTS

The procedure for this is available on the wall adjacent to the Licence, should you have a concern or wish to complain about anything that happens at Nursery School or about non-compliance with regulations or licensing criteria. We appreciate hearing directly about any queries or concerns you may have- never hesitate to discuss anything with staff.

WE WELCOME YOU AND YOUR CHILD TO NURSERY SCHOOL!!

Haere mai, nau mai!