



Information Booklet

2026

High quality care and education for

2 – 5 year olds

Open 7:30am – 5pm

Monday – Friday



What we have to offer:

We are a high quality, independently owned Early Childhood Education provider for two to five year olds in central Mount Maunganui.



Our Learning Environment

- A high-quality, safe learning environment where every child is celebrated.
- Place-based education that embraces our local community and meaningful real-world experiences.
- Individual and group learning programmes, beautifully documented in learning journals and shared online with whānau through StoryPark.

Our Community Connections

- Uniquely located alongside Omanu Primary School, supporting smooth transitions to school through regular visits, waiata, and shared community events.
- Regular excursions within our community.

Our Teaching & Care

- A highly qualified, passionate teaching team, with 100% of kaiako ECE qualified and certified.
- Relationship-based learning, with every child supported by a Primary Care Kaiako who nurtures secure relationships, supports settling, and provides consistent care during key moments such as toileting.

General Information

- Open Monday to Friday, 7:30am – 5:00pm, offering flexible hours for whānau.
- Nutritious morning and afternoon tea provided each day.

Led by...

The preschool is led by Helen van der Merwe, a passionate early childhood teacher, advocate for children and leader with over 20 years of experience within the NZ early childhood sector. Helen holds a Bachelors Degree of Teaching (ECE) and Full Teacher Certification from the New Zealand Teaching Council. Helen works closely together with our highly qualified, passionate teaching team to create an inspiring, empowering learning environment for all tamariki.



Rapunga whakaaro

Our philosophy

At Omanu Preschool, our philosophy is deeply rooted in the values of our whanau, mokopuna, and kaiako, within the vibrant tapestry of our learning community.

Our curriculum is guided by the principles of Te Whāriki, New Zealand's early childhood national curriculum, and the locally contextualized Te Tai Whanake ki Tauranga Moana curriculum. These frameworks shape our approach to nurturing the growth and development of our mokopuna, honouring their individual identities and celebrating the unique cultural heritage they bring to our shared learning journey.

Mauao, a revered symbol of strength and connection, is central to our educational philosophy. This iconic mountain embodies the values of mana, kaitiakitanga, maia, and manakitanga, which we strive to instill in every child who joins our preschool.

Mana

Mana reflects the inherent dignity and strength of each child. We honour the whakapapa, culture, and individuality of every learner, fostering deep connections with their whanau, whenua (land), and the wider world.

Maia

Maia symbolizes bravery and resilience. We provide a safe yet challenging environment where children are encouraged to take risks, embrace challenges, and develop the confidence to make thoughtful decisions.

Kaitiakitanga

Kaitiakitanga, the concept of guardianship, emphasizes our shared responsibility to care for people and the environment. We empower our mokopuna to respect and nurture the world around them, guiding them to become mindful stewards of their community and the earth.

Manakitanga

Manakitanga represents kindness, generosity, and hospitality. We cultivate an atmosphere of aroha (love), empathy, and mutual respect, fostering a sense of belonging and collaboration within our preschool community.

To further enhance our philosophy, we prioritize a primary care teacher system. This approach ensures every child feels safe, supported, and able to build trusting relationships, creating a strong foundation for their sense of belonging. Additionally, our curriculum incorporates loose parts play, which nurtures children's imagination and encourages the development of working theories through open-ended exploration and creativity.

By embracing these values and practices, we reflect the spirit of Mauao, guiding our mokopuna on a journey of discovery, growth, and empowerment. Our commitment is to provide a nurturing and inspiring environment where each child is celebrated and supported as they become confident, compassionate, and capable individuals



Fees Schedule – 2026

To build continuity, and support children to build relationships and a sense of belonging within their learning environment, we have a requirement that children attend a minimum of two days per week. Our minimum session time is 6 hours per day.

We aim to continue to provide a top-quality care and education service with 100% qualified, experienced teachers, who are there to ensure the best outcomes for you and your family.

Our Fee Schedule from Wednesday 1st July 2026 is as follow:

(2-3 year olds)		(3-5 year olds - using 20hrs ECE)
6-hour day:	\$55.64	20 hrs ECE – Free
Full day:	\$69.55	*Optional Charge of (\$8.56 per day)
Maximum weekly rate:	\$315.65	\$14.61 p/h for extra hours outside 20hrs ECE Subsidy
		Caping weekly fee at \$230

Three- to Five-year-olds:

- The government funds 20 ECE hours for children aged 3 years and over for up to 6 hours per day, to a maximum of 20 hours per week. These hours are not income tested and all children in New Zealand are eligible for these hours.
 - For children three and over who attend over the subsidised 20 ECE hours, or for children 3 and over whose families choose not to use their attested hours at Omanu Preschool the standard hourly rate of \$14.61 per hour will apply for these hours.
 - However, the Ministry of Education funding does not cover all Centre costs. To assist with expenses that will enhance your child’s early childhood experience, we ask families to support through an *optional charge of \$8.56 per day, for children using 20 hours ECE.
 - *Optional charges ensure that the centre continue to maintain a high standard of education, including employing trained, experienced, and registered early childhood teachers above required ministry ratio requirements.
 - All *optional charges received from families are channelled back into children’s learning and well-being and sense of belonging within the centre. These optional charges* assist with meeting the daily running costs of our service.
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- *The optional charge supports:
 - Morning tea/Afternoon tea (+\$2.56 per child per day)
 - Better than minimum Teacher to child ratio’s (+ \$6 per child per day)

Work and Income NZ Childcare Subsidies may be available to you based on income level, it is your responsibility to apply for these subsidies and advise us of this.

Sibling discount: 10% discount for the oldest child.

Terms and Conditions:

- 20 ECE hours for children over 3 years are subsidised hours. Parents/Caregivers must attest that they wish to use these hours with our service to be eligible. The maximum number of subsidised hours which can be used per day is 6 hours, with a maximum of 20 hours per week.
- A \$50 non-refundable enrolment fee is required to secure your place.
- We are open from 7.30am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday.
- Fees are payable 1 week in advance.
- 2 weeks’ notice in writing is required when terminating enrolment/or permanent changes to fees or enrolments.
- Automatic Payment and Internet Banking are our only accepted forms of payment.

We thank you for your prompt payment of fees and support in this area.

Important Information

Settling in, working in collaboration, how to access information, what to bring, transition visits and what we provide during our preschool days

Settling in

We understand that starting preschool can be a big step for children and their families. Our teachers are here to support you and your child every step of the way. We have an open-door policy and welcome you to bring your child in for as many transition visits as you feel necessary before their start date. We recommend a minimum of at least three visits, and we will confirm the best times for these to occur with you. These transition visits will support your child in becoming familiar with their new teachers, peers, and the learning environment building their confidence within the transition process.

We use a `Primary care system here at Omanu Preschool, this means that your child will have a special teacher whom they are connected with. We provide your child with some time to have interactions with all the teachers to help this process too. This provides your child to choose their Primary care Teacher too. This teacher will take the opportunity to spend time with you and your child within your initial transition time and communicate as much as possible about your child's journey at Omanu Preschool. The Primary care teacher will also carry out your child's routine and care moments during the day such as toileting while they are settling and will be your first port of call for any questions you may have. By having the opportunity to form a close bond with their primary care teacher, children will develop a sense of belonging within their new learning environment, confident that their needs will be consistently met. Your child's primary care teacher will also support them to develop relationships with their peers and other teachers within the learning community.

Working in Collaboration

Relationships are a key focus of our philosophy here at Omanu Preschool. As such we value and welcome the contribution of parents and whānau to our daily programme, planning, assessment, policies, and any other areas which you feel able to contribute to.

We review our policies and operational documents on a regular basis, there is the opportunity for you to contribute to these through discussions on StoryPark, and we look forward to your feedback and support in these areas. Please feel welcome to let us know if there were any area in which you would like to share your passion or strengths and contribute to the preschool learning environment. We love to learn more about your child's family and culture, so support with celebrations and traditions which are important to your family is always welcomed. Your child loves the opportunity to share their learning environment with you, you are always welcome to come and spend time here with your child, and our teachers will always welcome any help you can offer. Suggestions and feedback are also always welcomed, if you would like to talk to your child's primary care teacher about your child's progress, please let us know and we can arrange a suitable time. Helen is also available, feel free to pop into the office at any time, or email manager@omanupreschool.co.nz.

How to access information

Your child will have their own Learning Journal and all learning stories will be accessible through StoryPark. Once a child has started and they have their first story, your child's primary care teacher will send parents a link by email to set up a StoryPark profile. Teachers will give regular updates through StoryPark and will provide you with the latest news and events. We have a private Facebook page called 'Omanu Preschool Whanau' and we would love for our families to request to join to keep in touch, share, and keep up to date. Please note that we have some folders at our sign in desk with information that parents can access at any time – ECE Regulations / Licensing Criteria for centre based ECE services / Policies and Procedures for Omanu Preschool / Recent ERO report. We also have a events book close to our entrance for notices or events.

What to send with your child each day

As working parents ourselves we understand how busy mornings can be! Here at Omanu Preschool, we want to make your mornings as smooth as possible.

What you need to bring for your child:

- A named bag with at least three named full changes of clothes, (learning and play can be messy and wet work sometimes!).
- Lunch in a named lunch box.
- We are a nut free centre and discourage whole eggs, but eggs in baking is fine.
- A named drink bottle.
- A named sunhat - you are welcome to leave your child's named sunhat here at preschool, we will wash these as required.
- Nappies (if your child wears them), or spare underwear (please provide a few if your child is currently toilet-learning).
- In terms one and four we ask that you also sunscreen your child prior to arriving at preschool, we will apply sunscreen for your child again after lunch, (please advise us if your child has any known reaction to any brands of sunscreen).
- We are plastic bag free - please send along a wet bag for your child for wet and sandy clothes.

Transition Visits

We believe every child deserves to begin their preschool journey feeling safe, secure, and confident. To support this, we offer transition visits approximately 1-2 weeks before your child's official start date.

Transition visits are tailored to each child and whānau, however they generally begin with a shorter visit (around 30 minutes), followed by one or two longer visits as your child becomes more familiar with the environment, our kaiako, and the daily rhythm of preschool. If your child is feeling confident, we may also suggest a short visit without you, helping them build trust and independence before their first official day.

There is no 'one size fits all' approach to transitions. We work closely alongside whānau and follow each child's cues, ensuring the process unfolds at a pace that feels right for them. Our priority is building strong, trusting relationships so your child feels a genuine sense of belonging from the very beginning.

What we provide during preschool days

- A yummy, healthy morning tea and afternoon tea each day. Menu is available on the wall in our kitchen - we rotate our menu seasonally.
- Wet wipes.
- Sunscreen.
- Learning journals which capture your child's learning journey here at Omanu Preschool, ensuring that you get to share in the fun! These portfolios are kept in both a hard copy on site, and also online which will be shared with you via StoryPark. Access to this will be granted when your child starts with us.
- A joyful, play-based curriculum that nurtures confidence, creativity, and a lifelong love of learning!

