

# **REPORT FROM THE STAFF TO THE COMMUNITY OF Manaiā KINDERGARTEN**

**FOR THE MONTH OF February  
April 2009**

**MEETING DATE 6**

## **CURRICULUM**

The New Year started with many new children and families joining the community. We have enjoyed meeting and getting to know our new children and families and helping them to settle into our routines. New group dynamics have provided children with opportunities to explore their social skills as new and older children get to know each other and share their experiences. Our playground had been re-developed over the holidays into an adventure garden so there were many new things for us all to explore. The Pump has been a big hit with children having to work their muscles hard to pump the water. There have also been good opportunities for co-operation and sharing as children work to pump and collect water. Our new Whare has also been an area of high interest with children using the space for Marae style sleep overs and countless other dramatic play fantasies. The Whare has also provided a gathering space for small groups and a quiet spot for those in need of some space for themselves. With the weather so hot our outdoor area has been quite a focus. Many children have enjoyed rediscovering their skills in using the swings and the climbing equipment gaining confidence and agility as they achieve another level on the monkey bars for instance. Water of course has also been very popular with children drenching one another on particularly hot days – much fun and giggling was heard as the children enjoyed water activities. We explored concepts around Waitangi day with Beverly attending the day and taking photographs for us to look at. Indoors there has been lots of interest in puzzles with children sharing making large floor puzzles as well as our usual range being well utilised. In the playdough area many gingerbread men were being created and Beverly followed this up with Tanya Batts gingerbread man story telling and making real (delicious) gingerbread men. We have now begun baking on a regular basis using scones as our starting point. Children are creating individual scones each Tuesday and Thursday. We are hoping to extend this with adding cheese, sultanas, etc. Children have been very creative in the art area – exploring different mediums and sharing painting works together. The family area has been very busy with both boys and girls sharing ideas and dramatic play opportunities.

These ideas have extended outdoors. Mat times were a different routine for our new children, some who spent time observing. It didn't take long for everyone to become involved. One favourite – Pick a Bale of Cotton was discussed after one active song. Ideas were shared regarding the origin of cotton. This opened many doors and we explored cotton for some weeks – its origin, how it is picked, what it is used for. This investigation continues.

### **PREMISES AND FACILITIES**

Our wonderful new adventure playground was created by Green Gables during the holidays and completed by the end of our first week back at Kindergarten. This has opened wonderful opportunities for children who have enjoyed sitting under trees, touching different bark, counting branches, and dramatic play in this space. The pump has been well used over the hot summer days, as has the shade of the Whare and bridge. The terraced hill has been enjoyed during dramatic play with dinosaurs, cars, etc. There has been some issue with bark spreading across the concrete and off the hill. Thanks to Joshua Askew for building stairs, plank, and ropes to access our pump at the top of the hill. The grass is now re-growing after much sun watering and then the hot steamy rain.

### **HEALTH AND SAFETY PRACTICES**

There are no health and safety issues currently

### **GOVERNANCE, MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION**

We have received our Educational Review report final copy which is available for parents to view at Kindergarten or online through the Ministry of Education website.

The start of 2009 saw Tania helping out and relieving at Riverside Kindergarten. She remained in communication with the teaching team and posted comments regularly on the blog. Whilst Tania was supporting Riverside Kindergarten, Manaia Kindergarten was pleased to have Wendy Small relieving. Wendy has an established relationship with the Kindergarten and contributed substantially to the programme. Tania returned to her role at Manaia at the end of February.

## *EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION ICT PROFESSIONAL LEARNING*

2009 provided challenges to the ICT learning as two major computers crashed and had to have hard drives replaced. This created difficulties with movie creations and blog posting for two weeks. However new children were keen to be involved and used cameras to record their first days at Kindergarten or to share their home interests with their new friends at kindergarten. As soon as the computers were up and running (after some headaches with lost programmes) children were back making movies, posting on the blog, sharing photos, etc.

Naketa, our ICT Facilitator visited in February to discuss the final stage of the ICT ECE PL Programme. A plan has been formed to assess data, disseminate information, and deepen our research findings. We will continue to attend conferences, workshops and receive visitors from other ECE centres. Parent workshops will also be available throughout the year.

Tania and Beverly have participated in an Online Bloggers Café – meeting other ECE bloggers, sharing ideas, discussing cybersafety and sustainability. It was great to hear from other like minded educators, their achievements, shared difficulties and ideas for the future.

### *Active Movement and Healthy Heart*

We continue to encourage healthy eating at Manaia Kindergarten. A lunchbox book is now available for parents to gather ideas about their children's lunches.