

Welcome to



Information Booklet for Parents of New Entrants



*We hope your child enjoys being a New Entrant in our school.
We look forward to getting to know you.*

Prior to Starting School

Please make a time to meet with Sharon Livingstone, our Principal, for a chat with your child. Please bring your child's early childhood portfolio. You can either email her directly principal@otatara.school.nz or make a time through the school secretary Noelene Mitchell - admin@otatara.school.nz or 2131009.

The First Day of School



Upon arriving at school if enrolment forms have been completed you may head directly to Room 1 or please see Noelene at the office to complete the enrolment paperwork. You will need your child's birth certificate, immunization record, proof of address and any completed forms from the school information pack. We appreciate seeing early childhood portfolios as they provide useful background knowledge of your child's experiences to date and something for us to talk about to get to know one another.

Please don't worry if your child seems a little teary or nervous when you are leaving. We will keep them busy and it will be home time before they know it! From experience most children settle once their parent has left but you can call the school if you would like to check how they have settled.

Stationery Packs

These are made up and ready for you to purchase at the office. You are welcome to take home the exercise books and cover them but we like to collect in the pencils etc. Please drop the pack off to the classroom prior to your child starting school so the teacher can have everything ready for their first day.

Class Programme Outline

Morning tasks before the bell:

The children have before school responsibilities, and once they have become familiar with these we encourage them to carry them out independently.

- Hang up their jacket and bag on their named hook in the corridor
- Greet the teacher
- Put their lunch box and drink bottle on the shelves
- Put their name in the "Who is at school today?" book and put themselves on the interactive whiteboard
- Practice their words

- Put their reading bag in the reading bag box and library books in the library crate
- Find an activity they would like to do or a book to read (if it is unsuitable to go outside)
- When the bell rings, pack up what they are playing with and go and sit on the mat

At home time we expect the children to pack their own bags with their lunch box, book bag and water bottle.

Mathematics



Our programme has a strong focus on number knowledge at this level. The children may work in groups and rotate around a variety of activities.

Ideas to help your child with Numeracy/Mathematics

- 👉 Say the days of the week (in order)
- 👉 Say the months of the year (in order)
- 👉 Count things
- 👉 Count up to 5, then 10, then 20, then to 50, and on to 100
- 👉 Count backwards from 10, then from 20
- 👉 Name a number before, after and between any given numbers. First numbers to 5, then 10, then on to 20
- 👉 Write numerals correctly
- 👉 Count a given number of objects
- 👉 Play board games that include numbers and counting e.g. Snakes and Ladders, Snap, Memory
- 👉 Talk about shapes, size (bigger/smaller/taller/shorter), and time



Literacy

Writing/Reading

Children read and write every day. A reading book will come home in the book bag on a daily basis (Monday to Thursday). Please listen to them read their book and talk about the pictures and ideas with them and then fill out the reading log book as a record of your child's reading experience.



On Fridays we have library time and the children are able to choose two books to bring home. We hope you enjoy sharing

these with them.

Poetry

Each week there will be a poem or a piece of prose in their poetry book, which will be taken home on Fridays. **Please sign your child's home reading logbook on Friday once the poem has been shared with you.** Please return books to the Poetry box on Monday.

Handwriting

Please help us by checking that your child is holding their pencil correctly and forming the letters correctly at home. A letter formation guide sheet is in your enrolment pack.

Letter Sounds and Basic Word Knowledge



It is very important for the children to begin to develop an understanding and knowledge of letter names and sounds. The letter card that your child receives has the same pictures that we use in class. This helps to strengthen the link between letters, sounds and words.

It is very important for the children to learn their basic words as quickly as possible as quick recall is important; there is a checklist in the front of the reading log book. When your child can read their basic words it is a good idea to ask them to work on being able to write these words - first from copying off their word card, and then from memory. This helps during writing time, as they are able to concentrate on writing unknown words rather than spending too much time on the basic ones.

Ideas to help your child with Literacy

- 👏 Talk about school and what learning they might have been doing.
- 👏 Try to find a special, quiet space away from the television when reading with your child.
- 👏 Take your child to the Invercargill Library and encourage them to take out their own books. Let your child see you enjoying books and reading.
- 👏 Share picture books whenever you can and relate events in the stories to your child's experiences. Encourage questions and predictions about the stories. Children love rhyme and repetition.
- 👏 Read and sing rhymes and poems with your child. Play games like "I spy".


- ✋ Talk about print in the environment, e.g. advertisements, stop signs, menus etc.
- ✋ Show your child how you use writing. Write messages, shopping lists, telephone messages, letters and greeting cards in front of them and talk about what you are doing.
- ✋ Provide a special place for your child to write. Equipment such as a desk, an easel, noticeboard, plus a range of writing materials such as scrap paper, (lined, unlined, coloured or plain), used greeting cards, crayons, pencils, bank forms, mail order forms, envelopes and little notebooks are great.
- ✋ Talk about the alphabet. Provide magnetic letters or plastic tiles for your child to play with.
- ✋ Respond positively to the message in your child's writing rather than the letter formations or spelling. Celebrate your child's efforts and encourage them to have a go.

The Wider Classroom Programme

Fitness

Our fitness programme includes a range of activities, including Jump Jam on Friday mornings, exercises to music or dancing, running, relays, using sports equipment, partner activities and circuits. We try to do something every day so please ensure that your child wears suitable footwear.

Inquiring

 Inquiry learning is the approach we use for our Science, Social Studies, Health, and Technology. We focus on building knowledge of the world by close observation and noticing and using the children's questions for exploration and investigation.

Changeover/Rotations

Each class rotates around teachers for different subjects during the week in blocks throughout the year. The areas that may be covered include - P.E./Health, Music, Art, Maori and Drama.

Computers/Interactive Whiteboard



We have computers, ipads and an interactive whiteboard in our rooms. These support the children in all learning areas.

Homework or Home Learning

Reading and number knowledge activities form the basis of our home learning. Reading Books - Monday to Thursday, Poetry Book - Friday.

Please sign the reading log daily and use the guidelines in the reading log book when asking questions about what they have read. It is important to ask your child to retell the story. This is a little difficult at the emergent level, but as the children progress through the levels, books lend themselves more to opportunities for questions.

Please note if there is no book bag then school readers cannot be sent home sorry. **Basic words need to be reviewed each night.** They can be inserted into sentences and generally played around with so that they become familiar.

For our sound focus, children may be encouraged to bring something from home that begins with that sound. The "Sounds Alive" spelling programme operating within the school may involve some additional homework.

Six-Week Reporting Discussion with Parents

This discussion is to talk about your child's progress and how they have settled into school, as well as go over any questions that may have arisen since the beginning of their school journey.

Remember - please come and have a chat or send an email if you have any questions or concerns, no matter how small.

It is important to us that your child is happy and confident and that the transition to school is as smooth as possible.

If you wish to make an appointment, please be aware that we have meetings after school on Tuesdays.

We look forward to a successful home/school partnership.

Kindest regards from the Otatara Early Learning Team

Contact details

School email: admin@otatara.school.nz

Sandra Dolman - NE Teacher, email: sandrad@otatara.school.nz

Alison Rodway - Assistant Principal, email: arodway@otatara.school.nz