



JUST LIKE HOME WILDERNESS KINDY

Welcome Home

Dear Parents,

We are delighted you are considering joining our vibrant and nature-focused community.

At Wilderness Kindy, we embrace Te Whāriki's approach, weaving together the strands of well-being, belonging, contribution, communication, and exploration to create a holistic and nurturing learning environment for tamariki.

Child-Led Exploration: Our programme empowers tamariki to lead their own learning journeys through unstructured play, fostering working theories and creativity as they discover the world around them at their own pace.

Nature Immersion: Rooted in the exploration strand of Te Whāriki, our curriculum emphasises a deep connection to the rhythms of nature. Through immersion in the outdoors, tamariki develop an appreciation for the beauty and importance of the natural environment, strengthening their sense of belonging to Papatūānuku.

Safety and Well-being: The well-being strand guides our commitment to providing a safe and nurturing environment. With comprehensive risk management strategies in place, we ensure tamariki feel secure as they explore and grow in the wilderness.

Te Ao Māori Integration: We honour Māori values and practices, integrating them into daily activities to promote understanding and respect for Aotearoa's rich cultural heritage. Tamariki engage with stories, traditions, and concepts such as kaitiakitanga, aligning with Te Whāriki's emphasis on building secure attachments and a sense of belonging.

Kaitiaki – Guardians of the Land: As tamariki embrace their role as kaitiaki, guardians of the land, they learn to care for our environment and develop a lifelong commitment to stewardship. This approach nurtures their contribution as active participants in their communities.

At Wilderness Kindy, we believe that nature is not just a place to visit but a home. Our programme supports tamariki's emotional and physical well-being, resilience, and independence, guided by Te Whāriki's principles of empowerment and partnership.

We hope this gives you a glimpse into the transformative learning experience we offer at Wilderness Kindy. We would love the opportunity to discuss our programme further and answer any questions you may have.

Thank you once again for considering Wilderness Kindy. We look forward to welcoming you and your tamariki to our community.

Warmest regards

Jeanette Fotheringham

Founding Director (2020)



Our Logo:

What this represents to us

The natural elements of a seedling, sapling, and tree symbolises the care and attention we give to each child— from birth to school age. Just like a tree grows strong and tall over time, we believe in supporting every child's development with a solid foundation, watching them flourish as they explore, learn, and grow - all under the 'roof' of our home-based childcare environments.

The natural elements in our logo also tie into our evolving Wilderness Kindy Programme. Through this programme, we've deepened our commitment to helping tamariki connect more deeply with the natural world around them.

You'll also notice a couple of hearts sprinkled in our design - representing the heart-centred approach we bring to everything we do. We nurture happy hearts as we support, and care for every child with the same love and attention they would receive at home - just like they're part of the family. Our focus is always on connection, kindness, and creating safe, nurturing spaces for children to grow at their own pace.

Thank you for being a part of our journey as we continue to create spaces where children truly flourish.



Welcome To Wilderness Kindy

We are thrilled that you are interested in learning more about our Wilderness Kindy, where children engage in the natural environments of Hāwea and Wanaka.

At our foundation, we provide nature-rich learning environments for children aged 3-5, where they can explore, play, and learn outdoors, in spaces that allow children to connect with nature and develop a sense of turangawaewae (a place to stand). We champion unstructured, child-led play, allowing curiosity, joy, and wonder to drive their learning experiences.



Our Purpose

Our Wilderness Programme exists to immerse children in the natural world, where learning unfolds organically. We are committed to providing an all-natural environment that nurtures curiosity, resilience, and a deep connection to the land / whenua. Through child-led exploration, we empower children to develop self-confidence, kaitiaki (environmental stewardship), social competence, and emotional well-being. We strive to ensure every interaction is real, raw and rooted in the authenticity of nature.



Our Vision



Our vision is to grow a community where educators, children, and whānau walk together on a shared pathway of learning. Free from a set agenda, educators remain attuned to the children's natural rhythms, responding to their unique interests and needs. We believe that true growth comes from deep, meaningful experiences in nature. We seek to create harmonious, nature-rich spaces where the rhythm of the seasons and the wonders of the wilderness guide our daily activities, ensuring that all children experience the joy, calm, and challenges that nature brings. Together, we plant the seeds of lifelong connection to the earth.

Ka whāngaia, ka tupu, ka puāwai
That which is nurtured grows, then blossoms.



**HOME, LAKE HĀWEA STATION
& THE WILDERNESS**

Home, Lake Hāwea Station & the Wilderness



Our Wilderness Kindy embraces the benefits of immersing tamariki in nature, where every day is a new adventure. Guided by the strands of Te Whāriki, we provide an environment where tamariki experience well-being, belonging, contribution, communication, and exploration.

Children in this programme have a home base (educator's home), complemented by extended adventures to Lake Hāwea Station (LHS) and other wilderness locations in the area.

There will be time and opportunity to explore local forests, walking tracks, lakes, rivers, and nature reserves, fostering working theories about the natural world. However, the primary focus of our programme will take place at Lake Hāwea Station, offering tamariki the chance to develop a deep connection to Papatūānuku through regular and meaningful immersion in one place.

With supportive ratios of 4 tamariki per educator, we ensure secure attachments and safe scaffolding to guide their learning. In these diverse, nature-based settings, tamariki engage in natural play, which strengthens their sense of belonging and their connection to the environment and each other.

As educators and tamariki come together at LHS, the cohort of learning will grow to 12 tamariki with 3 educators. This is a perfect size for fostering social literacy and nurturing relationships that reflect the contribution strand of Te Whāriki. Tamariki have the opportunity to widen their friendship circles, engage in collaborative learning, and practice empathy and respect within a safe and adventurous learning environment.

By embracing Te Whāriki's vision, we create a space where tamariki develop independence, resilience, and a lifelong love for learning through their connection to the natural world.



Final Reflections

We have so much more we have to share with you!

**If you are interested in taking the next steps,
feel free to reach out to us at our email;
justlikehomewanaka@gmail.com**

OR

**Enrol your child and we will follow up with even
more exciting details!**

**Join us on this incredible journey!
www.justlikehome.co.nz**

