

Information for New Families

Cornerstone Christian Preschool

(06) 3565452 or supervisor@CCP.ac.nz



Welcome to Cornerstone Christian Preschool! It is lovely to have you as part of our Preschool Whanau and community. Coming to a new place such as a preschool can be a little overwhelming, as there is so much to get to know, routines and expectations that are unfamiliar. Hopefully this information will help, and give you something to stick on your fridge to refer to and revisit. The teachers are also all here to help you, so please don't hesitate to ask if you want to know something. There is nothing too big, and nothing too small; and we all understand that new things and new places can be confusing and difficult... and nobody can remember everything! It takes time, and we are here for you!

There is a lot of information in these pages; this is for you to refer back to, and not to frighten you away! Further copies of this information are available in the Whānau Room, and are also available online.

Enrolling your child

- The enrolment form contains a lot of information that is crucial to your child's enrolment, e.g. contact details, emergency contacts, etc. If addresses, phone numbers, email addresses, etc change, could you please let the preschool know as soon as possible. We need to use these to contact you if your child becomes unwell, or in the event of an emergency, so this information must be kept up to date. The Administrator is usually in the office on Monday and Tuesday, but if she is not there please see the Supervisor or one of the teachers. Changes to sessions need to be approved, and amended attestations signed, so please see the Supervisor or Administrator for this. Ratios of teachers to children must always be maintained, and the Preschool may not go over the licence and staffing numbers at any time.
- **Please inform the preschool if any information changes.**

These documents are kept on your child's file:

- Enrolment form, including permissions
- Copy of birth certificate/passport
- Copy of immunisation form (please update when your child has his/her 4-year-old immunisations)
- Allergy information
- Health plan if applicable
- Information regarding special needs; this may include referrals, individual MOE plans, etc.
- Attestation form/s

As a parent, you can access this information at any time, and make any signed changes as appropriate.

Available documentation

In the front office there are the legal documents that the Preschool abides by. These are:

- Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations (2008)
- Licensing Criteria for early Childhood Education & Care Services 2008

Other documentation displayed:

- Cornerstone Christian Preschool Operation Manual
- Teaching Qualifications of Teachers
- Teaching Council Certificates of Teachers
- First Aid Certificates and others
- Latest Education Review Office Report (2018)
- Complaints Procedure

Funding and Fees

- An Attestation Form must be signed in order to access funding for your child. Every child aged 3 – 6 is entitled to (MOE) 20 Hours ECE funding per week. This can be used over different services, but a maximum of 6 hours per day, and 20 per week can be used.
- There is another 10 hours funding per week that can be used, but this is at a lower rate, and so there is an additional cost to parents of \$5.70 per hour.
- In some cases further funding can be applied for through Work and Income Services. This is not done through the Preschool or Ministry of Education, but the Ministry of Social Development. Information and forms can be accessed through Googling “Childcare Subsidy – Work and Income”. As parents, there is a lot of information to fill in, including parental income and number of children; the preschool also has a page. The Childcare Subsidy is income tested, and if approved weekly payments will be paid to partially cover the fee. Please see the Supervisor to have this completed. You will need to make an appointment with WINZ to have this approved; they usually backpay this to the date of attending/change to sessions. As this is a partial subsidy, a reduced fee will apply as well.
- The Administrator puts out invoices each term for those paying fees. Fees can be paid online weekly, monthly or termly. We encourage setting up an AP, so that these don’t build up. Please see the Administrator if you would like an AP form to do this. Prompt payment is always appreciated; however, we do understand the pressures on parents and families at this time.
- We do not have “Optional Charges” at Cornerstone Christian Preschool. All costs for activities during the day are covered by the Preschool, e.g. the Life Education Bus.
- In the past the Preschool requested donations each term. We no longer ask for donations, as we recognise the expenses incurred in raising children. However, if families wish to give a donation, please see the Administrator.
- The audited annual accounts are available for parents to look at; please just ask to see these if you are interested.

Health, Allergies and Food Intolerances (e.g. gluten, dairy, nuts)

- We are required to provide a safe and healthy environment for your child.
- Each day the Preschool is commercially cleaned, with extra disinfecting and cleaning done around COVID-19 and other illnesses.
- The Preschool requires that all unwell children be kept at home. If your child is unwell, please call the Preschool on **063565452** or email the office at **supervisor@ccp.ac.nz**, giving the specific reason for the absence (including symptoms), as this information needs to be recorded. **There is a stand – down time if a child has been vomiting or has had diarrhoea, of 48 hours from the last bout (MidCentral Health).** There are no exceptions to this, even if you are a parent who works outside of the home. All unwell children will be sent home, so **please ensure you have at least one alternative person who can come immediately if a parent is unable to come.** All unwell adults must also stay away from the preschool.
- Please keep your child home if they have a “green” or runny nose, cold or cough, fever, sore stomach or any other physical ailment; these spread quickly in the early childhood setting. As stated above, all unwell children will be sent home.
- Allergies can be life threatening. If your child has an allergy, or develops an allergy, please contact the preschool immediately. Your child may need a health plan, so please see the Supervisor for this. Because there may be children who have nut allergies, **no food with nuts** is permitted at preschool. This includes peanut and other nut butters, Nutella and bars containing nuts, and all other kinds of foods containing nuts.
- If your child has a one-off health need that requires medication, the details must be entered in the medication register and signed by the parent. Please note; **medication must never be left in a child’s bag, where children can reach it. All medication must be handed to a teacher, and be put in the Whanau Room out of reach, and the medication register signed.** For longer-term health need, your child will require a health plan. If your child has a health plan, the medication must once again to be given to a teacher. **In either case, you will need to sign at the end of the day that you are aware of the medication that has been given to your child.**
- The Preschool also maintains a sunscreen register; times that sunscreen is applied to children is written on the daily sign-in sheet. Parents are asked to sign their permission on their child’s enrolment form for the preschool’s sunscreen to be used. If a child is unable for any reason to use the preschool sunscreen, they need to bring their own, and a health plan filled out; parents also need to sign the sunscreen register each day when they pick their child up. If the Preschool changes the sunscreen used, parents will be asked to resign permission for this to be used on their child.

Enrolling at School

- School enrolment is not automatic. Cornerstone Christian School has an enrolment scheme in place. The areas around the school are zoned, so those children living in Zone 1 are more likely to find a place at the school. There is a cut-off date for enrolments each year, and the process of priorities and balloting then takes place as per the enrolment scheme. You **MUST** enrol with all documents before this date. Enrolment forms and information can be accessed online at www.cornerstone.ac.nz, or by collecting this from the Cornerstone Christian School office.
- There are many other schools that you can send your child to. We can support you with this if need be.

Planning for Your Child's Learning

- The Preschool uses online profiles (Storypark) to record each child's progress through their preschool years. This is a co-operative online document, where parents are invited and encouraged to add to assessment and planning, by adding stories, photos and making comments.
- When a child starts Preschool, their Storypark profile is set up, and parents are sent an invitation to access this. You will need to accept the invitation to access your child's profile.
- Parents are the owners of this document; you can invite other family members to view your child's profile (grandparents usually love this), which is an amazing way to span the distance for family who live a long way away.
- This approach is sustainable, and enables the teaching to team to get information to you in a timely way; teachers are able to post stories and photos for you to engage with.
- We ask parents to fill out a ME form; this gives us the heads-up about your child's interests and giftings. What we do centres around what your child is interested in, and the talents that they have; this is a very effective place to plan from.
- Planning is centre-wide but also individually tailored to your child's learning needs.



Diverse Needs

- Sometimes the teachers notice that a child may need some extra support in different areas, e.g. speech and language, behaviour, etc. There are various avenues that we can explore with you to access this, e.g. Learning Support (Ministry of Education) and *Incredible Years Programme for Parents* (this is wonderful). If you have any concerns about your child, please see a teacher. If we have any concerns, the teachers will talk with you, and we can discuss these. No referrals are made without your consent as a parent, and referrals are generally written together with the parent; the whole process is done with you as parent central. (There are wonderful people in the MOE that give us excellent advice and support; we know them well, and hold a high level of trust in them. They make a huge difference for children and families.)

Hazards

The Preschool is very safety conscious; all involved parties are fully committed to promoting and maintaining a culture of child safety and protection. This takes everyone to work together and look out for each other. If you notice any other hazards, please let the teachers know immediately.

A copy of the Child Safety and Protection Policy is available for you to have.

1. Dangers Around the Car Park

- The car park is a very real hazard as it is used by both school and preschool parents. Please be very cautious, and take lots of care.

- The entrance is at the roundabout end; please do not come in the exit. If you are driving from Tremaine Avenue, please come right around the roundabout, and then turn left into the carpark. This is the only safe way to come in.
- Please do not double park.
- Please avoid the disabled car parks unless you have a disabled child. This has been a real problem for families with a child with a disability, as it can be a very difficult job to move their child out of the car and into school/preschool. To use this car park you must have a disability sticker. Having a baby does not count.
- If there are no car parks, Countdown very generously lets parent use their car park. There is a school patrol at the beginning and end of the school day, which makes crossing the road a bit easier. Please note; please do not cross the road by the roundabout; this is dangerous for both families and drivers. You will need to allow extra time at the end of the day for parking, as you need to be on time, please.

2. Preschool Gate

- At times we have had concerns about parents not checking that the gate has latched. If it is securely closed, it will click; this is VERY important.

3. Medication

- Medication left in bags is a very real hazard; please do not do this; please hand to a teacher and sign the medication register. The teachers cannot administer medication without signed parental permission. You will also need to sign this when you collect your child, to indicate you have been informed about what medication was administered.
- If you are staying as a parent, it is also vital that you do not have Panadol or other medication accessible to children; any medication that parents need must also be locked away out of reach.

4. Smoking/Vaping

- Smoking/vaping is not permitted on any part of the preschool or school property.

5. Sun Safety

- We keep children safe from the sun. The Preschool has a set of green hats; on entry to Preschool, each child is allocated a green hat. This is named, and is only worn by your child. The hats are kept at Preschool, and are regularly washed. Please do not send another hat from home, as our green hats give an instant sense of belonging. Wearing the same hat as everyone else is also a very small and easy way for children to learn to respect the routines, something that we all need to do in life (e.g. we all pay our taxes and drive on the left side of the road – otherwise chaos ensues!)
- We ask parents to ensure they have applied sunscreen to their child before leaving them at Preschool in the morning. There is preschool sunblock available if you have run out. Preschool sunblock is for preschoolers only please, not school children. The teachers apply more sunblock after morning tea, and again after lunch. If your child is allergic to the sunblock the Preschool uses, you will need to provide your own named bottle of sunblock and fill out a health plan.
- We aim to keep children cool, by providing lots of cool activities, encouraging them to play in shady areas or inside with the heat pumps on cool.
- Please encourage your child to wear clothes that covers the shoulders and chest, as covering up is also a safe way to prevent being sunburnt.

Being on Time

- It is very important to come on time each day, and to pick up your child no later than the end time. When parents are constantly late, it is easy for numbers to go over the limit, meaning that teachers forego their lunch (teachers really need a break in the middle of the day, and are legally entitled to this), or have to stay later than they are employed for. This is unfair, and may incur a fee. Also, please do not come before your child's specified start time, as this too, can create problems with numbers. We understand that this may be difficult for those who are "early birds"!

What to Do When You and Your Child Come

Signing in (and out) each day

- Parents are required to sign their child in each day on the daily sign-in sheet, specifying the time of arrival and pickup, and also specifying the person picking them up at the end of their time here. The person collecting your child will also need to sign them out, together with the time of collection. If something unexpected happens, and a person that is different to the one specified, please ring the Preschool before they are due to be picked up, and let us know. All people collecting your child need to be written on your child's enrolment form; teachers cannot hand a child over to unauthorised people.
- There is a COVID-19 tracing poster on the entry doors for your use.
- Your child then puts his/her morning tea on the blue tray on the bench in the second classroom, and their water bottle on top of the lunch cubbies. They can find their "apple name", and stick it on a lunch cubby; their lunch goes in there. (NB Please make sure lunch boxes are NAMED, as otherwise little ones can take the wrong lunch box. Unless it is named, it is impossible for the teachers to know which is which.)
- There are named cubby holes out on the veranda; one has been allocated to your child. This is where they put their bag, jacket, and things they make.



Then ... it's play time!

- Children play until about 9.50 (Sometimes later, depending on the day/session/children's involvement. There is a quick tidy up and tables are set with individually named placemats for each child.
- The children wash their hands on the way to the mat; a teacher supervises this. There is a short mat time, where the children enjoy songs, stories, and games together. Karakia is sung and signed (we use New Zealand Sign Language) and the children enjoy morning tea together. After morning tea, we have a te reo Māori story songbook. The teachers make sure every child has sunblock applied, and then it is playtime again.
- Lunchtime follows the same routine.
- The day finishes with a relatively quiet time – a story, or game. The children are tired after their day's work, and welcome a little bit of "down time" before going home.

Curriculum

- Our local curriculum, is of course, based around our Christian Character. This is the foundation of whatever is done here, and is evident in everything that is said and done. Children are encouraged to think in a Christian way, and to outwork Christian values in their everyday play. It is really exciting to see the growth and development in the children.
- The New Zealand curriculum, *Te Whāriki*, is play based. Children learn through their play, which is guided when needed. The teachers actively teach and support learning, encouraging children to negotiate and work things out for themselves whenever possible.
- We have a STEAM focus (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Maths); this has had a huge impact on children's learning. We encourage the children to find things out for themselves, often asking the questions instead of giving all the answers. If something doesn't work the first time, we encourage the children to explore why, and to try again. This has enabled children to develop problem solving skills, and a positive growth mindset – a “can do” attitude. We have had excellent feedback from the school teachers about the children coming from Cornerstone Christian Preschool.
- Wherever possible we have parental input. We appreciate that parents are busy, but we also know that there are many interests, talents and skills within the parent body, and a genuine willingness to share and be involved. COVID-19 has also meant that parental input has been less than before this health crisis; hopefully this is only short-term.

Parent Involvement

There are many different ways you can be involved as a parent.

- Parent help is always welcome! There are always swings to push, paths to sweep, children to talk with, dishes to stack (or unstack), puzzles and books to disinfect, etc. If you need to bring younger siblings, please check first, as we need to keep the number of children below licence numbers.
- We have many different cultures here. We all love it when families are willing to share their own special culture, language, songs, dress, etc. Please feel encouraged to share your culture with us!
- When we have projects and activities planned, we sometimes put out a call for resources. You may have some of these around your home that you don't need (feathers, corks, buttons and beads, shells and driftwood, etc). You may also like to come along and help with activities.
- We have parent evenings that happen throughout the year. Although Christmas and Matariki are regular events that happen annually, we sometimes have parent evenings as well (e.g. our recent STEAM learning evening.) These are a lot of fun, and are a great way to get to know other families. Once again, COVID-19 made holding these evenings more difficult, but hopefully we can continue to hold these as before.
- We have working bees, once again, a really good way to contribute, and to get to know others. These are usually “child-free”, for safety reasons.
- Sometimes there are parent-run evenings, which are, of course, under the “Preschool umbrella” and are Management approved.

- There are other ways to be involved, such as sharing a special talent or family interest. Please come along and share these with us. These could be a craft, a song, anything at all.
- Parents often ask to come to read stories at mat time; everyone loves these times. Being involved in this way is great for your child, and wonderful for all the other children.
- We also have parent representatives on the Management Committee. Elections are held every two years. We encourage parents to read policies under development and make comments. These are all taken into consideration. There is an Operations Manual in the front office here at Preschool; please feel free to access this. Policies under review are put in the Whānau Room so that parents can read these and make comments.
- Curriculum reviews are continually done; please read these and make comments on the comment pages in the back. We greatly appreciate your input, and note all of your thoughts, suggestions and comments. There are always “further actions” to reviews, and your input is important.
- In the past, donations have been requested from parents. No donations are being asked for this year (although you are more than welcome to make donations!), but other help is needed. This can take the form of working bees, helping during sessions, weeding the garden, etc.
- You may have other ideas about how to be involved; we welcome all your suggestions! We love families being involved! There is a suggestion box in the Whānau Room, so please put all your comments in here, or speak to a staff member.

What to bring:

Your child will need:

- A snack for morning tea in a separate named box/bag. We suggest fruit and a sandwich, or cheese and crackers, plain muffin, etc. This is put on the blue tray in the second classroom.
- Named water bottle (water only please, no juice, sweetened milk or cordial).
- Their own lunch in a named lunch box. Healthy food is encouraged, e.g. sandwich or wrap, yoghurt, cheese and crackers, boiled egg, muffin, pikelets, salad, pasta, thinly sliced fruit and vegetables, etc. Please note, new Anti-Choking Guidelines have been brought in, outlining the range of food that children can bring, and the way in which they need to be prepared by parents. We appreciate that can be difficult for parents; however, there are still plenty of safe foods that are perfect for snacks and lunches, and can be prepared to make them safe. The Preschool encourages healthy foods and snacks in preference to high salt/sugar/fat snacks and foods, which have no substance and little nutritional value.
- The Preschool is a nut-free zone, so please do not send food/snacks with any kind of nut, and no peanut butter or Nutella. Children are generally very understanding when the reason (other children’s allergies) is explained to them.
- We are also a lolly-free preschool; all lollies and lolly look-a-likes are sent home. This includes vitamin bears, fruit strings, snakes and other commercially advertised “fruit” jelly products, marshmallows and chocolates. We also ask parents to not bake lollies into biscuits and muffins for preschool – resulting behaviour speaks for itself. Please keep these treats for home.
- Your child will need spare clothes, as he/she will get wet and muddy. There are also occasional toileting accidents, so please send plenty of named clothes. Please also send a wet bag/plastic bag for wet clothes.

- Shoes please; we sometimes have honeybees in the grass, so shoes should help your child not to get stung. Bark can also sometimes be sharp, so shoes help protect little feet. Please make sure these are named. Gumboots are also an excellent idea! Jandals are not a good idea; children can trip when running, and they provide no support.
- Your child will need warm clothes and a waterproof jacket when the weather is cool. We encourage outdoor play all year round, unless it is very cold or wet.
- Please do not send toys from home. We understand that a little child may need something familiar from home, but this should only be an initial settling thing. What we have found is that when children continue to bring lots of toys, other children also start; they get lost and broken, and it becomes a great competition to bring the “best” toy.



Lost Property

- Please name all belongings, including shoes, gumboots and jackets, lunch boxes and drink bottles. Many children have similar items, so these can get mixed up easily, and conflicts can occur.
- There is a lost property box in the Whanau Room. Please keep an eye on this, as the teachers pop anything that is found in there. There is often a pile of forgotten lunchboxes as well, so please keep these named and keep an eye on what does not arrive home. Anything not collected is given away after a period of time, as we cannot store mountains of lost property.

Art Box

- There are two art boxes where the teachers file your child’s artwork. As this fills up very quickly, so please keep an eye on this, and take your child’s creations home. You may also find wet paintings on the art rack drying 😊

Parent Information Pockets

- Each family has a parent pocket, inside the front door of the first classroom. Although we usually put newsletters in a community post on Storypark, there will be other odd notes, invoices, bits and pieces in there. We will put a few extra newsletters on the stand in the Whanau Room. We often pop hair ties, beads, etc in parent pockets if children take them off.

If there is anything else you want to know, or have any questions, please ask a teacher, call, or email the Supervisor at supervisor@ccp.ac.nz.