

# Welcome to our Village Playcentre

Nau mai, Haere Mai. Welcome to Playcentre.  
Thanks for coming to visit us!



..... had fun at  
..... Playcentre today.

**Playcentre is your village. See children delight in their surroundings – play with them, alongside them, encourage them to interact with others while you meet other parents and educators.**

Parents are the first educators of children, and Playcentres around New Zealand foster the involvement of whānau through early childhood education.

Each Playcentre around New Zealand is cooperatively managed by parents and supported by Playcentre Aotearoa staff at a national and regional level.

*“It’s our village. Lifelong friendships and support for our whole family. Endless fun and learning opportunities for all of us.” - Rachel*

## The benefits of Playcentre

### Good for your child...

Watch your child’s confidence grow as they explore and foster their imagination through play and interaction with other children aged 0-6. From building sandcastles to baking biscuits, painting to singing, working with wood to sculpting with clay: every session will captivate and excite your child.



### Playcentre provides:

- A child-centred programme based on the individual child’s fascinations, strengths and interests
- A high adult to child ratio
- A rich variety of quality play and learning resources and experiences
- Caters for age ranges from 0-6 so that the whole family can come to Playcentre together
- A safe and secure environment
- Positive and sustained interactions with other adults

### ...and good for you

Be involved with your child’s learning; play with them and alongside them. Encourage your children to interact with others while you meet other parents and educators and become part of a fun, vibrant community where community and a sense of belonging is at the heart of everything we do.



### Playcentre provides:

- Support as a parent
- Involvement in your child’s early childhood education
- Confidence in yourself and your parenting
- Friendship with other parents and caregivers
- A free education programme to develop parenting skills and understand how children learn and develop
- Whānau social occasions
- Opportunities to take on new responsibilities and learn skills
- A sense of community and belonging

## How is Playcentre different from other early childhood education (“ECE”) options for your child?

Playcentre is a whānau-centred early childhood education service. You get to play alongside your child, encouraging them to interact with others while you meet other parents and educators.

This unique opportunity sets Playcentre apart from kindergarten, childcare, preschool and daycare options. Playcentre creates a sense of belonging as families share responsibilities and decision making. Playcentre is fully licensed and funded by the Ministry of Education and adheres to all early childhood education regulations. We invite you to view the ERO report of each Playcentre online at [www.ero.govt.nz](http://www.ero.govt.nz). Playcentre offers a high adult child:ratio (1:5 and often better). Parents are the first educators of their children, and Playcentres around New Zealand foster the involvement of whānau through free adult courses about early childhood education.

## What age can we come to Playcentre?

We welcome families with children aged 0 – 6 years. Mixed age play allows your children to engage with others older and younger than themselves. Young children learn how to communicate, share and negotiate with empathy for their younger peers.



## What will my child learn at Playcentre?

The curiosity and creativity of our tamariki is nurtured in a way that allows them to learn about themselves and their world.

Each centre has numerous areas of play and open-ended resources are always available, along with a changing array of special activities and experiences. Your child will be given a chance to explore, create, climb, read, sing, experiment, play music, wear costumes, have their face painted (or do it themselves!), garden, do carpentry with real tools, bake and cook, build sandcastles, swing, slide, dance, spend time in nature and get messy.

The activities change every day and the high adult to child ratio means there are a wide range of options. Playcentre parents all bring different skills, interests, and cultural backgrounds to

add to the rich learning environment. Playcentre is guided by the New Zealand wide Early Childhood Education curriculum Te Whāriki, which encompasses children’s learning in wellbeing, belonging, contribution, communication, and exploration.

## What do I need to bring to Playcentre?

Playcentre is always busy and sometimes messy! It is a good idea to dress yourself and your child in comfortable old clothing so that you can participate in the full range of activities.

We recommend always bringing at least one change of clothes for your children.



## What’s the best way to settle in my child?

There are several ways you can help your child to develop their sense of belonging at Playcentre.

- Greet other children and adults as you arrive, this helps your child (and you!) to remember names
- Remind your child of the routine
- Take time to explore the centre together learning about where things are located
- Linking Playcentre and home is a vital part of our philosophy, so remember to share with your family activities and creations from your day at Playcentre
- Seeing your child learning and gaining confidence with the support of other parents.

## Can I drop my child off?

Some centres have the opportunity for you to drop your children off on particular days when your child reaches a certain age and is confident to do so.

*“To build your own skills as a parent, gain support and also the for the education side of it for both tamariki and adults. New to the area I made great friendships in my 6 years at Playcentre and many skills to set me up for work when my kids are now set for school. - Lizette*



## Is Playcentre just for mums?

Mums, dads, and all whānau including grandparents, aunts and uncles, and other caregivers are welcome to attend Playcentre with the children.

This means our children develop supportive relationships with a range of adults, and it also adds to the rich array of experiences available as different adults bring new things to the play table!



## What Education Opportunities are there?

Because our learning journey is never over, we encourage parents to take part in the excellent educational opportunities available through Playcentre.

This is where you get to upskill, take part in workshops, first aid training and an accredited NZQA education programme that leads to the NZ Certificate in Early Childhood Education & Care.

Our NZQA programme provided for adults within Playcentre supports the informal learning taking place in a centre, leading to an expansion in parenting and early childhood education skills for anyone keen to learn.

## What is the involvement expected from adult members?

Because Playcentre is for families, by families, the support crew comes from inside the Playcentre community. Playcentre creates a sense of belonging as families share responsibilities and decision making. Playcentre offers parents opportunities to take on roles and responsibilities and gain new transferable skills for work. To ensure that things run smoothly, each centre has a number of officeholder roles. Related tasks are linked together and a person or team are given responsibility for them for a set period. Each centre is supported by a regional office and National staff.



## Will my child have a record of learning?

Each child at Playcentre has a learning portfolio where their experiences and their learning are recorded. The portfolios can include magic moments, photos, learning stories, special works of art etc. The material for each child's portfolio is provided by the duty teams on the day your child attends and, of course, yourself.

## How much does it cost?

Playcentre is usually free or very low cost and is subsidised by the New Zealand Ministry of Education. However, some centres do request a donation or small fee per term. On average these are \$30 per term.

When you visit a centre, they will advise if there is a donation request or small fee and how much it is.

WINZ subsidies also can apply to Playcentre fees.

## Can I try several Playcentres before I join one?

Every centre has its own culture and is unique. If you do not feel it is a good fit for you at one centre, then visit another. Every centre offer 3 free visits before membership.

We encourage you to visit several centres in your local area to find one that suits you and your whānau.

*Really great quality education for your little ones. And a supportive network for your whānau that is so much greater than you can anticipate at the beginning. – Jesse*

## Playcentre is committed to biculturalism

Playcentre acknowledges and recognises the partnership within Te Tiriti o Waitangi as the founding document of Aotearoa/New Zealand. We strive to understand, incorporate and celebrate Te Ao Māori at Playcentre. We also embrace the multicultural nature of New Zealand society and each centre offers a multicultural programme that is built on a bicultural foundation and reflects the members at their centres.

*“Ko koe ki tēnā, ko ahau ki tēnei  
kīwai o te kete”*

*You hold that handle and I at this  
handle and together we will carry  
the basket.*