



F A R M F R I E N D S

P A R E N T
I N F O R M A T I O N B O O K

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABOUT US	1
OUR PHILOSOPHY	2
PROVOKED LEARNING	3
OUR ENVIRONMENT	4
OUR TEAM	5
OUR FARM FAMILY	6
OUR DAY	7
OUR SETTLING PROCESS	8
WHAT TO BRING	9
PARENT INVOLVEMENT	9
NUTRITION	10
FOOD REGULATIONS	11 - 12
ILLNESS POLICY OVERVIEW	13
INJURY POLICY OVERVIEW	13
ABSENCE POLICY OVERVIEW	14
MEDICATION POLICY OVERVIEW	14
FEE STRUCTURE	15
LATE FEE'S	16
PUBLIC HOLIDAYS	16
CHILDCARE SUBSIDIES	16
ATTENDANCE AND GIVING NOTICE	16
CONTACT INFORMATION	17
POSITIVE GUIDANCE	17
EXCURSIONS	18
COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE	18

A B O U T U S

Farm Friends is located on a 10-acre lifestyle block in Swanson; only 5 minutes from Henderson. We have been open since 1997 and cater for thirty six 2-5 year olds each day.



Our setting is very unique, allowing for the appreciation and care of Papatūānuku (Earth Mother) and all she provides us with. Children are immersed in a plethora of nature and animals; including Walnut the Pony and Ozzy the Goat.



We pride ourselves on the strong relationships we form with our whānau and community, ensuring we support their needs, beliefs, cultures, and aspirations. We offer multiple flexible sessions as well as 20 free hours for 3 and 4-year-olds.

Children's play is well supported through a mix of self-initiated, planned, and spontaneous experiences. We provide a high teacher/child ratio of 1:7. Teachers work alongside children as positive role models and facilitators of learning, actively extending and supporting their play experiences. Children's language is enhanced through quality and responsive communication, in a relaxed and nurturing atmosphere.

Opening Hours: 8:00am-5:30pm
(5:00pm Fridays)

OUR PHILOSOPHY

Ko te piko o te huero e, tērā te tupu o te rākau.

The way the seedling is shaped determines how the tree grows.

We believe that it is the responsibility of each and every citizen of Aotearoa to actively engage in and understand their obligations to Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Māori are tangata whenua of Aotearoa (the indigenous people of New Zealand), and their language and culture are a living part of New Zealand society. Farm Friends is committed to upholding the guiding principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and doing all we can in our community and centre to ensure all Māori have rights of partnership, participation and protection.

At Farm Friends, we believe that our tamariki are unique and capable beings who can show us what is important to them through being given time and space to explore, discover and create. Our curriculum and environment provide children with opportunities to build strong and respectful relationships and learn alongside both kaiako (teachers) and other tamariki. Rangatiratanga (the right to exercise autonomy, ownership, and authority) is strongly advocated for our tamariki ensuring their right to explore social skills, problem-solving and develop independence at their own pace.

Kaiako role model social skills and values such as manaakitanga (kindness, empathy and care for others) while treating tamariki with respect and dignity. We believe our role as kaiako is to work in partnership with tamariki and their families, responding to the varied interests of both groups and individuals. These observations are shared with tamariki and whānau, we then use these collaborative conversations to inform our flexible curriculum and program planning.

Nature and our own connection to the earth is a huge part of Farm Friends. While exploring our natural environment tamariki embark on endless opportunities to develop self-awareness/risk management and learn how to explore safely through taking calculated risks. Through their exploration of our natural (10acre) playscape tamariki embark on real life, authentic and unhurried experiences to develop aroha, respect and empathy for the earth and share a deep and spiritual connection to their land (Wairuatanga). This connection leads to an understanding of how to care for Papatūānuku (Kaitiakitanga) to be advocates and guardians for her and her children (all creatures big and small). Together we discover how to make sustainable choices, preserving the wonders of nature for both ourselves and future generations to come.

We revere the role of whānau as children's first teachers and encourage whānau to become active members of our community, sharing with us their own knowledge and experiences. Whanaunatanga (partnerships with whānau and our community) are essential and influential to a child's own sense of belonging to our learning community. Strong connections between whānau and Farm Friends show tamariki that they belong here, their whānau belong here and we are their home away from home.

P R O V O K E D L E A R N I N G

A large part of our passion as Kaiako is providing children with provocations and resources that inspire imagination and curiosity. Our provocations are never set with the intention of being used in a specific way. We set them with the intention of wonder. "I wonder how they will use this. I wonder what they will make. I wonder what they will learn". We allow space for tamariki to be the writers, directors, and actors in their play.

At Farm Friends, we don't tell our children the way something should look or be. We don't instruct children on how to build a tower or draw an elephant. We don't tell them that mixing 6 different paint colours will make brown or that a dinosaur and a fish can't be friends. Why can't a screwdriver be used as a nail? We simply provide the resources and let their instinctive urge for creativity do the rest.

The moment we rob a child of their creativity, we interrupt a natural, innate process that they were born to experience.

Our unique and open-ended provocations provoke awe and wonder in our tamariki. They are enchanted and excited about the beauty that we've thoughtfully laid out for them. We have opened up opportunities for thinking, feeling, exploring and learning.



OUR ENVIRONMENT

NATURE WALKS

Each morning we ask our tamariki to vote on which part of our 10-acre playscape they'd like to explore. Each area has its own unique opportunities for play and learning. Tamariki form a strong sense of belonging in each of these destinations; forming a relationship with Papatūānuku before understanding how we can care of her.

Eel Creek



Sheep Hill



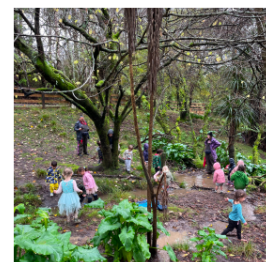
Farm



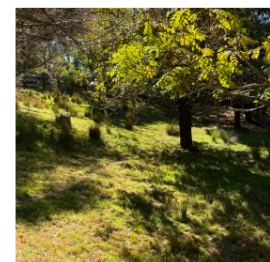
Roly Poly Hill



Mud Slide



Wishing Tree

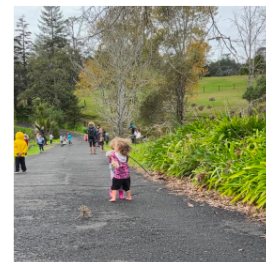


Where do you want to go for a hikoi today?

Pond Paddock



Driveway



Cow Paddock



OUTSIDE

Our outdoor environment within the centre is a representation of the trust we have in our children to assess risk and build on their capabilities at their own, unhurried pace. Outside consists of a carpentry table, sandpit, mud kitchen, rope swing, fire pit, playhouse, and playground.



INSIDE

Our inside environment supports children in meeting their innate urges and encompasses a feeling of home and comfort. The majority of our resources are collected from nature or are second-hand; enabling us to move towards being a more sustainable centre. Some areas we provide include the family corner, glue station, building nook, and a cosy reading space.



O U R T E A M

Glynis Hibbott- Centre Owner



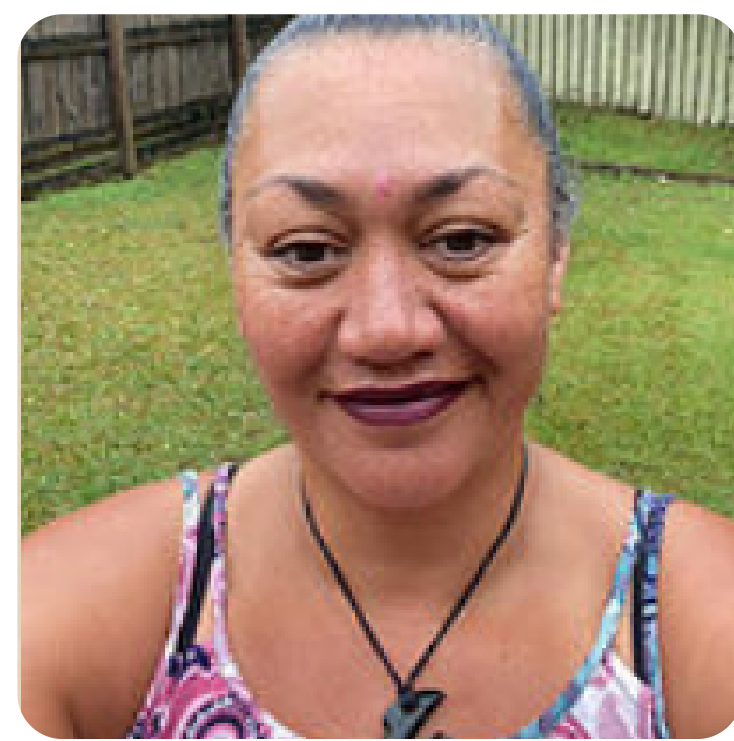
Rhiannon- Centre Manager



Hope- Head Teacher



Anja- Qualified and Registered Teacher



Chris- Qualified and Registered Teacher



Rhian- Qualified and Registered Teacher



Eva- Centre Cook



Amanda- Qualified and Registered Teacher



OUR FARM FAMILY

Walnut



Sheep



Ozzie



Chickens



She-Ra



Fish



Doris



Bill Feathers



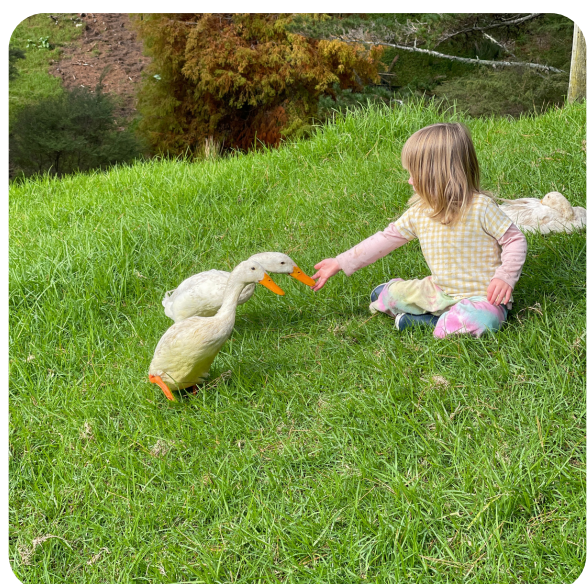
Ducks



Oscar



Swanny, Serena, and their babies



An outline of our day at Farm Friends

8 am

Our centre opens. Children and whanau are greeted with calming music, natural light, inviting opportunities for free exploration and full access to the outdoor environment in all weather.



9:30 am - 10:15 am

Children are encouraged to decide if and when they would like to eat, we call this floating morning tea. Children are invited to come together and share a variety of fresh and healthy food in a social and relaxed atmosphere.



10:30 am - 11:45 am

All seasons, all weather as a group we decide where we would like to go on our daily explorative walk. We vary our destination daily and explore the 10 acres of property which includes the farm, forest & ponds.

11:45 am - 12:00 pm

Children are invited to participate in a short mat time. A time to come together, dance, share stories and have collaborative discussions.

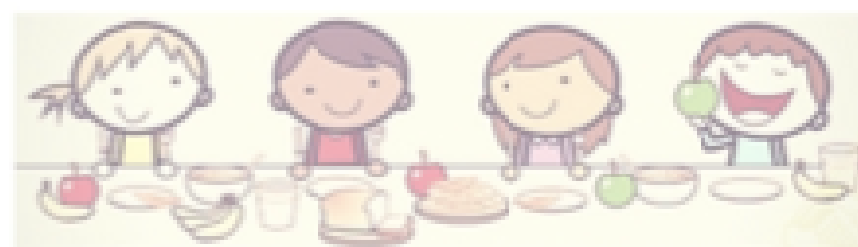


12:30 pm

A quiet space is available for those children who need a sleep during the day. Individual sleep plans will be discussed with families.

12:00 pm

Children and teachers enjoy freshly cooked, seasonally appropriate meals together. Prepared daily by our in centre chef. Meal times are a time to socialise and relax. Children are empowered to serve themselves, to understand their own hunger alongside each other.

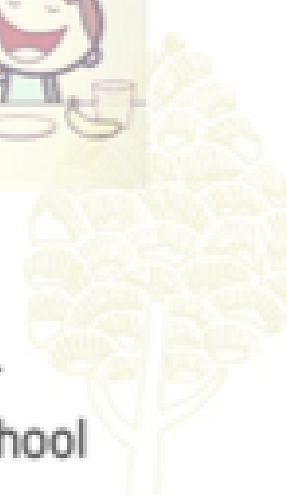


12:30 pm - 2:30 pm

Open exploration of both our indoor and outdoor resources is available. Teachers facilitate opportunities for a variety of experiences based on current interests of both groups and individual children. At 2:30 pm children are encouraged to tidy up alongside their friends and teachers and begin to prepare for the end of the day.

3:30 pm

It is home time for some of our children and the end of our "school day session". Children who are enrolled for a full day are encouraged to join their peers and share a healthy snack of fresh vegetables, fruits, protein and high fiber carbohydrates.



4:00 pm - Close

Centre closes at 5:30 pm Monday-Thursday and 5:00 pm on Friday. Children end their day engaged in wind down activities such as stories and puzzles. Teachers communicate with whānau and set up for the following day

Check our many displays of learning around the centre & to see our learning documentation. Our Daily Diary on Educa provides a snapshot of our day.



OUR SETTling PROCESS



We acknowledge that there is no right or wrong way to settle children or for parents/caregivers and whānau to say goodbye. Each family will come with their own ideas on settling and transition and their own lived experiences in this area; however, our teaching practices and advice will be based on our experiences, observations and early childhood education theory. We believe that routines create familiarity and a sense of security in the early days of beginning at Farm Friends.

We encourage parents to visit with their child at least 3 times before their first day. The initial visit allows the child to explore our different areas of play, begin building relationships with the teachers and children, and enjoy morning tea with us.

During the second visit, your child will join us on a nature walk and be picked up at lunch time. Depending on how comfortable everyone is, the child can come on this walk alone or with a parent.

We extend the last visit to 2:00 where the child is able to enjoy lunch with us and an afternoon play. This visit is solo and allows us all an opportunity to see how they are settling in to the Farm Friends family.

We are happy to book in more visits if needed.



WHAT TO BRING

- Minimum of four complete changes of weather-appropriate clothing (more in winter)
- A small comfort item if needed during the first few weeks
- Gumboots and wet weather gear (you are welcome to leave these within the centre)
- Sunblock and hat during daylight saving months
- A family photo for our whānau wall
- A wet bag for wet and/or muddy clothing (please note that these should preferably be reusable; not single-use plastic bags).
- A lunchbox if your child has any allergy or dietary requirements
- Nappies if your child requires them



PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Whānau is extremely important to us at Farm Friends. We welcome everyone in and want families to be fully involved in their child's learning. We want you to feel like family; stay and have a chat, this is a home to you as much as it is to your child.

We believe that feedback is essential to the growth and development of Farm Friends and our teaching team. We encourage any and all feedback.

This can be via our StoryPark website on children's learning stories, via email (Rhiannon.farmfriends@gmail.com) or in person.

Please also get in touch if you:

- Have any questions or concerns
- Have a cultural celebration you would like to share with us.
- Any special skills or interests you could teach us.
- Know of anything in the community we could be involved with



NUTRITION

Farm Friends provides nutritious meals for the children (morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea). These are healthy, well-planned and balanced meals made by our own in-centre cook. Children enjoy meals such as spaghetti bolognese, chicken chow mein, pita pockets, and shepherds pie.

We ask that any children who have allergies or dietary requirements bring in their own lunchboxes which are kept in the kitchen. We do our best to ensure that no cross-contamination occurs, and have all allergies and dietary requirements displayed so everyone is aware.

Birthday Cakes

We feel celebrating birthdays is very important. Families can choose to bring a cake or something similar to share on these special days. We just ask that families are considerate of the amount of sugar, artificial colouring and portion sizes (as we can have 45+ birthday cakes a year).



Reducing food-related choking for babies and young children at early learning services

March 2021

Fruit with skin

For example:



Choking risk

Fruit skins are difficult to chew and can completely seal children's airways.

Options for tamariki of all ages:

- Remove the stone and chop to an 8mm x 8mm size or smaller (about half the width of a standard dinner fork).
- Grate raw apple or pear, **or** slice thinly using a mandolin or vegetable peeler.
- Cook until soft³ and cut into strips (around 4–6cm long) that can be picked up with one hand.
- Finely chop tomato to an 8mm x 8mm size or smaller.

For tamariki aged 4–6 years you can also:

- Cut raw fruit into sticks (around 4–6cm long) that can be picked up with one hand.

Food with bones

For example:



Choking risk

Small bones present a choking risk.

For tamariki of all ages:

- Remove all bones.

Fibrous or stringy food

For example, pieces of:



Choking risk

Fibres make it difficult for children to break up the food into smaller pieces.

Options for tamariki of all ages:

- Peel the skin or strong fibres off where possible; **and**
- Slice these foods thinly across the grain of fibres.

Compressible foods

For example:



Choking risk

Can fit into the shape of the airway and get wedged tightly.

Options for tamariki of all ages:

- Mince, shred or chop meat to 8mm x 8mm sized pieces; **and**
- Cook meat until very tender.

For tamariki aged 4–6 years you can also:

- Offer thin strips of meat (around 4–6cm long) that can be picked up with one hand or with a fork.

3. 'Soft' means the food can be easily squashed between your thumb and forefinger, or on the roof of your mouth with your tongue. Tinned fruit (in natural juice and drained) is acceptable.

Providing appropriate food

Research shows that some food poses a greater risk of choking on. To reduce the risk, early learning services should not provide high-risk foods and change the texture or size and shape of others.

High-risk food to exclude

Exclude the following foods. They have the highest risk of choking on, and are either not practical to alter, have no or minimal nutritional value, or both:

-  whole nuts or pieces of nuts
-  large seeds, like pumpkin or sunflower seeds
-  hard or chewy sweets or lollies
-  crisps or chippies and corn chips
-  hard rice crackers
-  dried fruit
-  sausages, saveloys and cheerios
-  popcorn
-  marshmallows.

High-risk food to alter

Foods to alter, why and how to do it for different age groups¹.

Food with skin or leaves

For example:



Choking risk

Food skins and leaves are difficult to chew and can completely seal children's airways.

Options for tamariki of all ages:

- Remove skin from chicken.
- Finely slice or chop salad leaves, lettuce, spinach and cabbage.

Small hard food

For example, pieces of raw:



Choking risk

Difficult for young children to bite through and break down enough to swallow safely. Pieces can become stuck in children's airways.

Small round or oval food

Small round fruit and vegetables, and fruit with stones and large seeds or large pips, for example:



Choking risk

Small round foods can lodge in children's airways.

Options for tamariki of all ages:

- Remove the stone and chop to an 8mm x 8mm size or smaller (about half the width of a standard dinner fork).
- Remove large seeds or large pips.
- Quarter or finely chop grapes, large berries and cherry tomatoes to an 8mm x 8mm size or smaller.
- Cook raw or frozen green peas and squash with a fork.

For tamariki aged 4-6 years you can also:

- Cut into sticks (around 4-6cm long) that can be picked up with one hand.
- Halve or quarter grapes, large berries and cherry tomatoes.
- Whole cooked green peas are acceptable.

Thick pastes

For example:



Choking risk

Can fit to the shape of a child's airway or stick to side of airway.

For tamariki of all ages:

- Use smooth thick pastes sparingly, spreading thinly and evenly onto bread.

1. This advice is for children aged 1-6 years of age.

2. 'Soft' means the food can be easily squashed between your thumb and forefinger, or on the roof of your mouth with your tongue.

ILLNESS POLICY OVERVIEW

If a child is not able to fully participate in all elements of our curriculum, we recommend they stay at home as we believe that children need to be in a comfortable and quiet environment to recover. Our philosophy allows for constant access to the outdoor elements (water, mud, rain) and we do not enforce any restrictions in terms of keeping away from these; nor do we enforce specified clothing items.

If your child becomes unwell while in the centre, a teacher will call the appointed emergency contact for immediate collection. If a parent or caregiver is unable to come within a reasonable time period, other trusted adults will be contacted to collect the child. Upon collection, parents will sign our illness book to show that we have communicated the relevant information. Depending on the sickness, there may be a certain exclusion period you must adhere to before returning to the centre. This is in the best interest of all our tamariki, staff, and whānau.

We will not, under any circumstances, give a child pamol, nuramol etc. We strongly believe that if a child requires pain relief, they should be at home till they're well enough to return unmedicated.

Any and all illnesses that may affect other children or staff need to be communicated so that we are aware and can prevent the illness spreading

INJURY POLICY OVERVIEW

- Our curriculum encourages children to take risks and we believe that making mistakes is how children learn and adapt their methods. Sometimes this may result in a bump, cut or bruise. If a child is in need of first aid throughout the day, this will be recorded in our accident book and you will get a notification on the iPad. Please sign the ACC form in the accident book and take a copy with you.
- For any severe injuries or injuries that occur to the head, we will contact primary caregivers straight away.

MEDICATION POLICY OVERVIEW

Any and all medicine must be given to a teacher upon arrival and documented in our medicine register. Parents must fill in the dosage and time medicine must be given, which will be signed by a teacher, and must be signed by a parent again upon pick up. This is to show that you acknowledge the medicine has been given.

We do not give children panadol, nurofen etc. We will only administer doctor-prescribed, in-date medicine.

If a child requires medicine regularly, has an inhaler, or wishes to have medicine kept here for necessary circumstances (creams, hayfever tablets etc), we will ask you to fill out one of our allergy books with all the relevant information which will be kept in the children's bathroom at all times.

It is of paramount importance for us at Farm Friends to care for the wellbeing of all our tamariki. Therefore, we do have firm policies around illness, diseases and medication.

ABSENCE POLICY OVERVIEW

If your child is going to be away due to illness or holidays, please call on 09 832 3600 or email Rhiannon or Hope (contacts emails are included in this information booklet). Normal fees apply to all absences except for our Christmas/New Year shutdown period.



Our full policies are available to read next to the sign in iPad. Teachers are more than happy to discuss these with you also.

FEE STRUCTURE

FARM FRIENDS EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTRE Fees & Payment Options

Sessions	A Day Under 3 Years	2 Days Under 3 Years	3 Days Under 3 Years	4 Days Under 3	A Week Under 3
School Hours 9.00am to 3.00pm or 8.00am to 2.00pm or 10.00am to 4.00pm (6hrs includes morning tea and lunch)	\$42.00	\$84.00	\$126.00	\$163.00	\$200.00
Fully Day 8.00am to 5.00/5.30pm (9.5 hrs includes morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea)	\$51.00	\$102.00	\$153.00	\$199.00	\$245.00
WITH 20Hrs ECE					
Sessions	A Day Over 3 Years	2 Days Over 3 Years	3 Days Over 3 Years	4 Days Over 3	A Week Over 3
School Hours 9.00am to 3.00pm or 8.00am to 2.00pm or 10.00am to 4.00pm (6hrs morning tea and lunch)	\$22.00	\$44.00	\$66.00	\$106.00	\$145.00
Fully Day 8.00am to 5.00/5.30pm (9.5 hrs includes morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea)	\$27.00	\$54.00	\$81.00	\$127.00	\$173.00

Payment preferred as Direct debit or automatic payment to:
ASB Bank Account is Hibbott Simpson Education Services Ltd
operating as Farm Friends Early Childhood Centre:
AC#: 12-3252-0050411-00

Fees are to be paid in full weekly,
 Monthly or fortnightly payments can be arranged with management

L A T E F E E S

While we understand that unforeseen circumstances can happen, we do have a licensing criteria we must legally adhere to which states that we are unable to have children in our care outside of our registered operating hours. Bearing this in mind, if your child remains in the centre after closing, you may be required to pay our late fee of \$1 per minute.

If a child is left for half an hour after closing with no contact from their caregivers, we are required to contact the police.

P U B L I C H O L I D A Y S

The centre will be closed on all public holidays, along with approx. two weeks over the Christmas/ New Year period. This time frame will be dependent on the needs of our whānau and staff alike. There are no fees charged over our Christmas/New Year closure.

C H I L D C A R E S U B S I D I E S

We offer 20 hours ECE subsidy to all children over the age of three. We also support families who are eligible for a childcare subsidy through WINZ and have forms available for these subsidies.

A T T E N D A N C E & G I V I N G N O T I C E

Inconsistent attendance means that children will find it difficult to build relationships and a sense of belonging; both of which are essential in a child's development and learning. In extreme cases, sporadic attendance may result in the cancellation of enrolment due to our centre's legal requirements. The frequent absence rule will be discussed with individuals following recurrent, consistent absences.

If you would like to adjust your hours, add more days, or have pre-planned time off, please email Rhiannon or Hope in a timely manner. We require 2 weeks' notice for any reduction of hours.

Finally, if you would like to withdraw your child from our role, we require a two-week notice period. During this time, families will still be liable for two weeks of fees regardless of whether the child is physically attending or not.

C O N T A C T I N F O R M A T I O N

Centre Owner- *Glynis Hibbott*

Centre Manager- *Rhiannon Schroder*

Head Teacher- *Hope Wright*

Grumpy.dwarf@xtra.co.nz

Rhiannon.farmfriends@gmail.com

Hope.farmfriends@gmail.com

Centre phone number: 09 832 3600

Note: Please speak to Rhiannon or Hope to access any information about your child

You can view our ERO report online here:

<https://ero.govt.nz/institution/10008/farm-friends-early-childhood-centre>

P O S I T I V E G U I D A N C E

We have complete trust in our tamariki's abilities to learn through lived experiences. We will always allow a child ample time to problem-solve and work through a situation before intervening to offer support. There are circumstances (e.g. immediate danger) where we will step in straight away, but we do believe that the best way for a child to learn self-expression, social skills, and regulation is through real life experiences. Kaiako (teacher) are always near by to provide additional guidance when appropriate.

We use positive guidance to model what is and isn't acceptable behaviour at Farm Friends, and endeavour to have consistent conversations about the choices we make and the outcomes that occur. Kaiako empower tamariki to understand they are in control of their actions and are responsible for any consequences of these actions.

In using a positive guidance method, we see that children do not label themselves as 'naughty' or 'bad'. They are prompted to reflect on a choice with the support of their teachers, identifying what they could do differently next time.



EXCURSIONS

Often, our tamariki will all express a strong and ongoing interest in one particular area. When this occurs, we try our best to arrange out-of-centre excursions to extend on this interest in a real-life situation. Some of the outings we have organised include the butterfly gardens, MOTAT, Auckland Zoo, and Kelly Tarltons. We welcome any parent helpers to come along with us on these trips and endeavour to plan such excursions at least a month in advance.

While we do try to keep additional costs down for our families, we may on occasion ask whānau to subsidise more expensive excursions from time to time.



COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

At Farm Friends we believe in transparency. We encourage any and all feedback on all aspects of our curriculum. If you would like to make a complaint or are concerned about anything please contact Glynis Hibbott at grumpy.dwarf@xtra.co.nz or Rhiannon at Rhiannon.farmfriends@gmail.com.

