



Takaro Taiao - Nature Play

Rationale

Takaro taiao/Nature Play provides opportunities to strengthen connections with Papatūānuki, te taiao and the local community. Takaro taiao is more than just being outside, it is an opportunity for tamariki to explore and learn in authentic, dynamic, living, and captivating, natural environments.

Intent

- Kaiako will encourage a sense of kaitiakitanga by providing tamariki with regular opportunities to connect with the wider natural environment and materials drawn from nature.
- Takaro taiao opportunities will foster dispositional learning such as curiosity, imagination and wonder, as well as promoting health, physical development and well-being in the outdoors.
- Takaro taiao will actively support learning about te taiao, promoting experiences which develop working theories and an understanding of how to care for and respect the living world.
- Takaro taiao will encompass the principles, strands and goals of Te Whāriki by providing play based, mātaiti guided experiences.

Planning and Risk Assessment

- Before a Takaro taiao session takes place, all mātua communication will be completed and documentation created as per the procedure for outings and excursions.
- Kaiako will document the time, date, location, risk assessment, list of adults and tamariki taking part, and mode of transport used.
- Where a Takaro taiao session involves access to water, additional adults will be required, regardless of the age of tamariki attending. The ratio for this should be at least 1:2
- Mātua and whānau are invited to participate in these educational experiences and will be counted in the adult:child ratio.
- On site risk assessments will be carried out, on arrival, to eliminate any potential hazards or harm that could be caused.
- Kaiako will take with them a backpack of required equipment including first aid supplies and a cell phone in case of emergencies.
- If a child is injured and requires medical treatment that cannot be given by the attending first aider, emergency services should be contacted immediately by dialling 111.
- Mātua should be contact as soon as is practical to inform them of the situation.
- If a child is lost and is unable to be located after a brief initial search, emergency services should also be contacted immediately by dialling 111.

Respect and responsibility

- Kaiako recognise the relationship mokopuna have with the environment. They support them to fulfil their responsibilities as kaitiaki of the environment. For example, kaiako encourage mokopuna to observe nature without harming it.
- Positive learning experiences will include learning about native habitats and wildlife, flora and fauna as well as creating a sense of understanding about the world.
- We will acknowledge Tāne Mahuta and Papatūānuku during these experiences and celebrate children's spiritual connections with the earth.

- Respect will be shown for Māori views of the world, the natural environment, and the child's connection through time to whenua.
- Kaiako will develop understandings of how tamariki and their whānau make sense of the world and respect and appreciate the natural environment.
- Tamariki will have opportunities to develop knowledge about the sounds, patterns and diversity to be found in the natural world.
- Experiences will include, bush and forest area, beaches, wildlife reserves and places of significance in the local area.
- Kaiako will share the educational purpose of these takaro taiao experiences with mātua and whānau using Educa and other forms of documentation.

References

- Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008 Regulation 43
- Te Whāriki (2017)
 - Mana aotūroa - Tamariki see themselves as explorers, able to connect with and care for their own and wider worlds.
 - Exploration - Tamariki develop curiosity and the ability to inquire into, research, explore, generate and modify working theories about the natural world.
 - Belonging – Tamariki and their whānau experience an environment where connecting links with whānau and the wider world are affirmed and extended.
- Hands on Hearts in Nature; Into the Forest We Go; Nature Dates (The Heart School)
- Vitamin N (Richard Louv)
- Rituals: making the everyday extraordinary in early childhood (Childspace)