

# Information Booklet

**Whenuakite**



Early Childhood Education Centre

**2024**

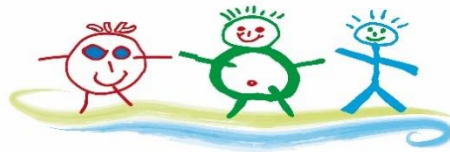


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# Our Philosophy Statement

*“Tangata ako ana I te kāenga, te tūrangā kit e marae, tau ana”.*

*“A person nurtured in the community  
contributes strongly to society”*



At Whenuakite Country Kids we provide an environment where tamariki, whānau and Kaiako feel loved, secure, and affirmed as individuals. The heart of our centre is built upon strong reciprocal relationships within our community. The very whenua that our centre is built upon was generously donated by our neighbours, for the benefit of our community. We have enormous gratitude for the many whānau and friends who have given their services to our centre over the years. We honour the wealth of knowledge and experience which everyone in our learning community brings to our centre.

Relationships and partnerships based on trust, respect and open communication are central to our provision of a safe and inclusive environment. We extend Manaakitanga to all and celebrate growth alongside tamariki on their learning journey. We acknowledge the dual heritage of Aotearoa/New Zealand and honour the spirit and intent of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, fostering an environment where tamariki experience the language, values and traditions of our bicultural heritage. Being welcoming and inclusive of the diversity within our centre and community is intrinsic to our practice.

We believe it is important to uphold the mana of each child. Tamariki are supported to develop a strong sense of belonging and are empowered to lead their own learning. We provide an environment where every child is nurtured to gain the knowledge, skills and attitudes they need to strengthen their social and emotional competencies. Our Kaiako are passionate educators who enjoy working within an inclusive and creative, play-based curriculum.

Our centre is a place where the needs and interests of tamariki are met through responsive interactions and meaningful experiences. We highly value the lens through which tamariki view the world and provide time and space for tamariki to explore and generate their own working theories. We incorporate a range of natural and open-ended resources, sourced from our local community.

We aim to support and nurture the hauora of all tamariki, whānau and Kaiako in our centre. We acknowledge the holistic nature of each child's learning journey and consider the Taha hinengaro /mental and emotional, Taha whānau /social, Taha Tinana /physical, Taha wairua /spiritual aspects to wellbeing.

Our curriculum provides tamariki with regular opportunities to build an awareness of the environment and issues of sustainability. A respect for Papatūānuku is promoted with tamariki throughout all aspects of our practice. Our regular excursion into our natural environment encourages tamariki to nurture their hauora/well-being while also strengthening connections within our local community.

# Learning Priorities



Relationships/Manaakitanga and Connection with whānau



Celebrating our bicultural heritage in partnership with whānau and iwi



Upholding the Mana of all and empowering Tamariki



Developing Kaitiakitanga, being respectful and protecting our environment.



Celebrating what is happening in our community within our centre.



Kotahitanga, lifting each other up, identifying as one, promoting the concept of togetherness.

# About Us

Whenuakite Country Kids was opened in July 2002, as a licensed and charitable not-for-profit community owned centre. We are an example of true community effort, with many local people and families coming together to create and maintain a quality early childhood education centre for the benefit of our community. We are situated opposite Whenuakite School, in a rural setting, 25 minutes' drive south of Whitianga and 15 minutes' drive north of Tairua.

The centre is licensed for 39 children, ages from birth to 6 years old, and has separate areas for Preschoolers - Kererū Room and Infant/Toddlers Tūi Room. We are extremely fortunate to have 2 large north facing outdoor play areas for our children to play and explore.

**The following information, will assist you to understand the policies, rituals, and procedures at our centre.**

## Hours of Operation & Holidays

We are open from 8am—4pm 5 days a week (Mon-Fri), excluding public holidays. WCK closes for the first week of the Term 3 July school holidays, reopening on the second week. The Christmas break is approximately 3 weeks long (dependent on dates) each year. Our opening hours, centre closures and after-hours contact number are displayed on the entrance door and our website.



# Teaching Team – Staff

At Whenuakite Country Kids the teaching team and staff have been selected for their natural ability and skill with young children. Our dedicated teaching team is friendly, highly knowledgeable, experienced and have a passion for learning. In the foyer of our centre are photos and qualification details of our individual kaiako and what rooms they work in.

## Management

Whenuakite Country Kids is a licensed and Charitable Early Childhood Education Centre and an Incorporated Society run by a governance committee (consisting of parents, staff from the centre, and local community members). The Governance Committee has officers of Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer and Secretary. The centre manager's role is to oversee the operation of the centre. Our centre manager is the link between tamariki, whānau, staff, management committee, Ministry of Education, other early childhood services, local schools, learning supports and the wider community. Please feel free to talk to the centre manager about any queries, concerns, or suggestions that you may have. A Whānau folder of information is available in the Whānau bookshelf at reception. Here you will also find a selection of parenting and educational books and resources available for whānau.

# Education Programme

We provide a play-based curriculum within a safe and challenging environment. We are a well-resourced centre with a wide range of resources, equipment, and experiences to meet the physical, emotional, intellectual, social, and cultural needs of infants, toddlers and young children. Our programme reflects the goals and strands of Te Whāriki, the Early Childhood Curriculum for NZ. Our curriculum affirms the identities, languages, and cultures of all tamariki, whānau, kaiako and community. We believe the wider world of whānau and community play an integral part of the early childhood curriculum.

Our localised curriculum reflects the day-to-day happenings in our children's lives. We greatly value parent, whānau, and wider community contributions to our programme. An assessment, planning and evaluation system is in place for each individual tamariki, which is led by whānau aspirations for each child. Kaiako scaffold and extend children's thinking in areas of interest and developmental needs through a play-based programme. Kaiako work alongside tamariki and whānau to develop positive, healthy relationships. Through role modeling, positive reinforcement, mediation, sensitive guidance and support we build effective communication and social skills.

## **EOTC** - Education Outside the Centre/ Excursions

We run a programme for our eldest tamariki to spend time learning together in our local natural environment. This programme has been inspired by the growing trend in nature pedagogy and aligns with our centre philosophy of offering natural experiences and connections with our local environment for tamariki.

**Excursions—Trips outside the centre** - any activity outside our centre gate is classed as an excursion and will require a signed parent permission slip. The centre will undertake a risk assessment for each excursion, which will be shared with you prior to the excursion taking place.

# Learning Journals / Portfolios (Storypark)

Each tamariki in the centre, has a Learning Journal which captures special moments and their learning experiences here. A Kaiako will be allocated to each child to establish a relationship with the child, and they will be the person that communicates with you. Your child's Learning Journal is a special taonga which contains written observations, photographs, notes on child's interests, artwork, interesting discussions held with the child and anecdotal accounts of events in their lives. Kaiako use assessment to discover what your child knows, can do, their interests, how their learning is progressing and what might be the next step in their learning. We encourage parents and whānau to regularly look through these with their children, to revisit learning and create discussion. Parent and whānau engagement in your child's planning and assessment is greatly valued. Whenuakite Country Kids also offers Storypark, an e-portfolio platform. Storypark is an easy-to-use, private, online service that supports teachers, parents and whānau to work together to record, share, and extend children's learning. You can capture a child's development by posting photos, videos, stories, moments, notes and responses. Storypark is 'child-centric' which means any account must be connected to a child's profile. If a child attends another early learning service that uses Storypark, a kaiako can be invited to access the child's profile. Kaiako will invite the child's parent to join Storypark. Then you as the parent become the admin of your child's account to then invite any whānau members to be part of the child's profile. Storypark have free webinars to support you to use this platform and please ask any of the teachers if you have any questions about Storypark.

# Starting your child at WCK

Transitions into and within the Centre are an important part of tamariki developing successful learning journeys. When settling your child into WCK for the first time, we suggest spending as much time as possible in the centre, supporting your child to familiarise themselves with their teachers, peers and environment. Please talk to the teachers who will work with your child to create a personalised transition plan for your whānau. Please share any information which you think would be helpful for teachers to know when settling your child into our centre.






We require a minimum of 3 visits prior to your child starting their enrolment. During your last few transition visits with us, we suggest that you may like to leave your child in the centre for a short period of time, to support their developing sense of trust and belonging in the centre with us. Please discuss this with us prior to you leaving.

When your child is ready, we will discuss a transition process for them between our two learning environments, The Tūi room (infants and toddlers) and the Kererū room (young children). This usually happens around age 2 years, and is dependant on individual child needs. We will always keep in close communication with you regarding your child's transition into and within the centre. If you have any questions about your child's transition process, please let us know.

Transition to School – Parents are responsible for enrolling tamariki at School. We also require a minimum of two weeks notice when your child is ending their enrolment with us. When your child is preparing to transition to school, we will discuss an individual transition plan with you. We work closely with our local schools, to ensure the transition runs as smoothly as possible. The process may include organised EOTC group visits to school with a WCK teacher and other 4 year olds, and Whānau Information evening's run in conjunction with the schools to help answer any queries you may have. Our centre manager is in regular communication with local School new entrant teachers, Learning Support Cordinators (LSC), and Principals to support each childs transition.

# Arrival Time





When you arrive with your child at Whenuakite Country Kids please take the following steps.

-  Help your child find their name on the name board
-  Sign your child in, on the iPad using your individually assigned pin number (please ask at reception for this).
-  Encourage your child to find their locker and put their bag, lunch box and drink bottle away.
-  Cold food is put in the fridge tray, lunch boxes and drink bottles on the shelf. We also provide a jug of cold drinking water for tamariki to access throughout the day if needed.
-  Settle your child into an activity and ensure that a staff member knows of your child's arrival.

**Please note our kaiako/child ratio is based on the enrolment times. Between 8-gam, we have only the necessary staff for the enrolled children during these times, so please advise us if you are going to be early.**

# Departure Time

For safety reasons your child will only be released to those authorised on your enrolment form. Each authorised pick-up is assigned their own individual pin number. When you need to make alternative arrangements, please inform the centre of these ahead of time. When leaving with your child please take the following steps:

-  Speak to a staff member about your child's day and inform them when you are leaving.
-  Encourage your child to collect their artwork, lunch box, bag, coat and shoes.
-  Check the notice boards, your child's pocket (in the entrance-way), and the iPad for any messages.
-  Sign your child out on the iPad.

*\*\*\*Once a week, you will be required to sign the physical attendance register, to confirm your child's hours from the previous week. The register is located on the front desk.*

**Please note our kaiako/child ratio is based on the enrolment times. Between 3-4pm, we have only the necessary staff for the enrolled children during these times. To avoid being charged a late fee please advise us ASAP if you are running late. Please refer to our fee policy for late fee charges. The centre is not responsible for children after hours, once the parent has arrived to collect the child, and while in transit to and from the centre.**

## Mealtimes

Please send along packed food for morning kai, lunch & afternoon kai in a named lunch box. Please also send a named drink bottle for your child. Fresh drinking water is always available to tamariki, and tamariki are encouraged to use their own drink bottles. Our morning kai is between 9.30- 10am, our lunch kai from 11.30-12pm and our afternoon kai is from 2.30-3pm. We encourage healthy food options and follow MOH guidance around reducing food related choking for babies and young children at early learning services.

## Bottles

If your child has a bottle, please ensure that these are named and placed in the kitchen. If the bottles are to be made up by our staff, please advise quantities. Any milk allergies need to be made known to a Kaiako and recorded on our allergy lists.

## Nappies

If your child wears nappies, please supply an adequate quantity of these. A named packet may be left at the centre for your child. We provide wet wipes, and basic nappy creams. Please provide and name any special nappy creams that you wish the staff to use on your child. The use of these will need to be signed for at the time of enrolment.

## Sleep Time

Tamariki are ready for a rest after they have spent a busy morning engaging in exciting educational activities. After lunch we encourage tamariki to rest or engage in quiet activities whilst giving the children who need to sleep the opportunity to do so. We try and follow infants home sleeping patterns as much as possible. Kaiako will discuss individual requirements with parents and whānau during your transition visits.

## Toilet Training

This is a natural process that all tamariki go through at different ages. Kaiako will work with parents and whānau to support tamariki with this developmental stage. Please let staff know when you are starting this process at home so we can continue it at Whenuakite Country Kids. Remember to bring lots of changes of clothes and underwear too!

## Medication

When your child has been issued medication from a doctor, details must be written in the Medication Register and signed by the parent or caregiver. The medication must be handed to a staff member and not be left in the child's bag. The staff member will sign next to the time the medication was administered. Please refer to our medication policy for further information.



# Sickness

Due to the risk of infection spreading throughout the centre, we are unable to take care of sick tamariki. Tamariki will need to be kept at home when they are ill and causing concern or:

- Have no interest in activities or play
- Have little energy, want or need sleep for long periods
- Cry easily, are irritable or in pain
- Constantly wanting to be held and comforted
- Have a fever
- 48 hours from last incident of diarrhea or vomiting
- 24 hours from first dosage of antibiotics

If your child becomes ill during the day, we will contact you so that you can collect your child as soon as possible. Please refer to our Infectious/Illness policies for further information.

# Accidents

Accidents do happen and we are prepared. All our permanent staff hold a current first aid certificate. At all times there is a certified First Aid kaiako at the centre and we are equipped with First Aid equipment. All accidents are recorded in our accident book and parents are advised of all accidents and incidents. Parents or caregivers will be required to sign the incident form and take a copy of this with them. All serious accidents are reported to the centre manager and follow a investigation process.

# Immunisation

When enrolling your child, you are required to produce your child's immunisation records where applicable. We encourage but do not enforce immunisation and take no responsibility for any disease your child acquires that would normally be preventable by immunisation. We will advise unimmunised children's families of any contagious diseases that occur and ask them to exclude their child from the centre until we have notification that the disease is not present in the centre anymore. Parents and whānau will be asked to bring along updated immunisation records when their child has further vaccinations.

# Sun Safety

In summer (term 4 & term 1) it is our policy to wear a sun hat when outdoors, unless advised in writing. Please ensure that your child has a named hat in their bag. We also expect your child to arrive at Whenuakite Country Kids with sunblock already applied. The centre provides sunscreen, and if your child is with us all day, we will reapply sunblock after lunch. If your child has an allergy to any sunscreen or if you prefer a specific brand, please name supply this. This needs to be named and handed to a staff member, to be kept out of reach of tamariki.

# Clothing

Your child is going to be busy, painting, dancing, eating, doing indoor activities, and playing outdoors. For these reasons we encourage tamariki to wear suitable clothes for the appropriate weather conditions. Please also include at least two spare sets of clothes in their bag, and a few spare pairs of underwear. We also encourage tamariki to wear shoes that they can get on and off on their own with ease. **Please make sure that everything is named**, including accessories, e.g., shoes, hats, etc.

# Lost Property

All unnamed lost property is placed in the lost property basket by the front door, and regularly displayed at the centre entrance for parents to collect. Any unclaimed items will be donated to local charity if not claimed after 1 term.

# Personal Toys

At Whenuakite Country Kids we have a wide range of exciting and educational resources for tamariki to interact with. Personal toys brought from home can easily be misplaced or damaged and we cannot assume responsibility for them. If your child has a special toy for sleeping with, we are happy for this to accompany them at sleep time otherwise we kindly ask that you leave personal toys at home or in the car. Please encourage items of interest for news, e.g., insects, postcards, photos, books, or verbal news.

# Centre Celebrations

We love to celebrate! Our curriculum is strongly linked to the seasons and as such, we celebrate the gifts that each changing season brings us. Birthdays are also a time for us to celebrate with tamariki. At the centre we celebrate birthdays together by singing and sharing a card. We have many special events in the centre and out in our community which we celebrate. Arbor day, Matariki, Spring Festival and Harvest day are also important ritual celebrations in our centre each year. You are always very welcome to join us for any of our centre celebrations. We love having parents, whānau and friends with us!

## Social and Emotional Competency

We believe that everyone should always be treated with respect and dignity in our centre. To ensure the safety and well-being of our tamariki, whānau and staff we provide positive guidelines for all to follow. Our centre is committed to enhancing and expanding the social and emotional competencies of all tamariki enrolled here. The ability to interact with others, regulate your emotions, and communicate with others is essential for life learning. As kaiako we will provide the environment, resources, and strategies for these competencies to develop. Staff and parents will be provided with professional learning and resources to support them to use developmentally appropriate strategies with tamariki. From time to time with reoccurring behaviours, we will need to seek support from outside specialist agencies. Parent's permission will always be sought.


## Car seats

Please ensure that your child travels to and from Whenuakite Country Kids in a current NZ Transport approved car seat. We realise that from time-to-time plans can change and that parents and caregivers may unexpectedly need to borrow a car seat. For this reason, Whenuakite Country Kids have a small number of NZ Transport approved car seats available to borrow for emergencies only. We ask that you sign for these in the register and return to the centre as soon as possible.

## Resources and koha

We are so grateful for the support which our community provides. There is a constant need in the centre for resources such as wood off-cuts, cardboard tubes, small boxes, ribbons, wrapping paper as well as natural materials such as eggshells, leaves, pinecones, shells, and wool etc. We gratefully accept resources, but due to health regulations we are unable to use toilet rolls and soap powder boxes. If you are unsure, please ask one of our staff. Ngā mihi, Thank you.

## Fruit and Vege Co-op

We maintain a māra kai, vegetable garden and fruit orchards in the centre alongside tamariki and we love to share the abundance from our mahi with tamariki, parents and whānau. Whānau and community members are also invited to share their excess produce and plants with our centre community. We believe this engages tamariki, whānau and staff in the cycle of growing and harvesting food as well as encouraging healthy food choices. Any koha/donation received will be greatly appreciated 

# Fundraising and Working Bees

As we are a not-for-profit centre, the funding provided by the government does not always cover the cost of running and maintaining a high-quality early learning service. Therefore, from time to time when we have a big project that we need to complete, it is necessary to hold fundraising events to cover any extra costs outside our budget. We do need parent and whānau support to run these events, and always welcome new whānau who wish to join our amazing fundraising committee.

The centre holds regular working bees twice a year to tidy-up and maintain the gardens and outdoor areas. These are always a fun opportunity for tamariki, whānau and staff to come together to keep our centre beautiful. Many hands make light work!

## Siblings at our Centre

Please note that any child not enrolled at the centre on a particular day, that is siblings (including school age children) are the responsibility of the parents, whānau and not the centre. If your sibling has an accident at our centre, please report this to one of our Kaiako.

## Social Media Photos

Parental permission must be received, prior to uploading to social media, or publicly sharing any photos taken of tamariki whilst at our centre or at centre related activities. Please refer to our Digital Citizenship and Technology policy (located in the office) for further information.

# Contacts and Communication

Please advise us if you change address, email, or phone numbers. This is important in emergency situations and centre closures. When enrolling your child, you are required to give details of authorised persons to collect your child and an alternative contact in case of an emergency when the parents cannot be contacted. Please make sure you notify us if there are changes to these. Centre communication will be posted on Storypark, emailed, placed in your child's pocket or via an alert on the iPad. The centre publishes a monthly newsletter, which will be sent to you via email. This is also posted on Storypark and available for downloading on our website: [www.wck.co.nz](http://www.wck.co.nz). A paper copy is available for viewing at reception.

## Fees and Childcare Subsidies

The centre is reliant on parent fees to continue to operate our beautiful community owned, not-for-profit centre. To assist with payment of fees, many families may also be eligible for a childcare subsidy from WINZ. Please ask our administrator for information or support with applying for a childcare assistance subsidy.

A copy of our current fees schedule is on the following pages. Please communicate with us if you wish to discuss our fees, the childcare subsidy application process, or our absence policy. We are here to help 😊

# Policies and Procedures

The centre's policy and procedure folder is always available for you to view in the office. From time-to-time, you will be invited to review our policies and consult on any changes. Centre policies are reviewed regularly. All policies currently under review are shared with parents and whānau in the 'Policies under Review' folder in the whānau bookshelf at reception.

## Queries, Suggestions & Complaints Process

We are a community-based centre and we greatly value whānau input. If you have any queries or suggestions, please speak to the staff about these or talk with our centre manager. From time to time, we have parent surveys where we encourage parent input on the daily running of our centre. We strongly encourage you to respond to these surveys so that we are meeting our whānau needs.

If you have a complaint, please refer to our complaint's procedure located in the foyer area. If you are not satisfied after speaking with the centre manager, please put your query/suggestion in writing or email and send it to:

Management Committee  
Whenuakite Country Kids,  
1052B Tairua-Whitianga Road,  
R D 1  
Whitianga 3591



# Fee Schedule

## GMA3 Appendix 2

This fee schedule shall be reviewed as necessary, normally early in the calendar year with a view to implementing any changes on 1<sup>st</sup> April each year.

- All fees are inclusive of GST.
- Fees are charged for a child’s permanently enrolled hours and for any extra hours attended.
- All enrolled 3 + year old children are entitled to 20 Hours ECE Funding (up to 20 hours per week, 6 hours per day maximum). Any additional hours on enrolled days \$6.50 per hour.
- All other enrolled children on enrolled days, \$6.50 per hour.
- If space allows casual enrolments (including for enrolled children attending on non-enrolled days) shall be charged \$10.00 per hour.
- For children who are not permanently enrolled, fees are payable in advance.

### **Additional Fees**

- A fee of \$1.00 per child is charged for every day that they attend. This fee covers better than regulated Adult/child ratios, periodic EOTC experiences in the centre van and consumables such as sunblock and wipes.
- An e-portfolio is provided for every child. A physical portfolio containing the same material will be provided for a fee of \$40.00 per annum which shall be charged bi-annually @ 2 x \$20.00.

Please note, for a child who is receiving 20 hours ECE funding at Whenuakite Country Kids, these are optional charges.

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## Absences

Sick Leave: We require sick children to stay away from the centre. Child sick leave means that no fee will be charged if a child stays away from the centre because they are sick. If your child is enrolled full time (5 days a week) they shall be entitled to 10 days sick leave per year. If your child is enrolled part-time, they shall be entitled to 5 sick days per year. Full fees shall be charged after this. Families of children who phone in because they have decided to keep their child at home for any reason other than sickness, shall be charged full fees.

### Other Absences:

- If 4 weeks' notice is given of your child's absence, no fees will be charged for up to 3 weeks absence. 20hrs ECE funding and WINZ Childcare Subsidies shall cease if your child's absence is longer than three consecutive weeks.
- If 2 weeks' notice is given of your child's absence, 50% fees shall be charged for up to 3 weeks' absence.
- If less than 2 weeks' notice is given of your child's absence, full fees shall be charged.

## Holding Fee

A holding fee holds a child's place for prolonged absences of 3 weeks or more.

- If 4 or more weeks' notice is given, a holding fee of \$10.00 per day shall be charged.
- If less than 4 weeks' notice is given, a holding fee of \$20.00 per day shall be charged.
- Holding fees are charged in the fourth week of absence.

For unusual situations a holding fee shall be determined and applied at the discretion of the Finance Committee.

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## **Late Penalty Fee**

So that the centre complies with the regulated adult/child ratios, it is imperative that children arrive and leave at their booked enrolment times and do not attend for longer than those hours without prior arrangement. It is also imperative that all children leave the centre on or before the centre's licensed closing time.

It shall be normal to charge a late penalty fee (over and above a child's normal fees) of \$2.00 per minute. This fee shall apply if a child's parent/caregiver is more than 10 minutes earlier or later than the child's enrolled hours. If a parent/caregiver picks up their child after the centre's licensed hours, they shall be charged \$4.00 per minute from the time the centre closes.

Late penalty fees shall be charged automatically to the bill payer's account.

Any potential adjustments to these fees shall be brought to the centre's finance committee for consideration.

## **WINZ Subsidies**

Many families are eligible for a childcare subsidy from Work and Income NZ. Please ask for information from the office. Please note, WINZ subsidies cease for 3 weeks or more of consecutive absence.

## **Financial Hardship**

If you are experiencing financial hardship and struggling to pay fees, you should have a confidential conversation with the Centre Manager to arrange a payment plan.

## **Termination of Enrolment**

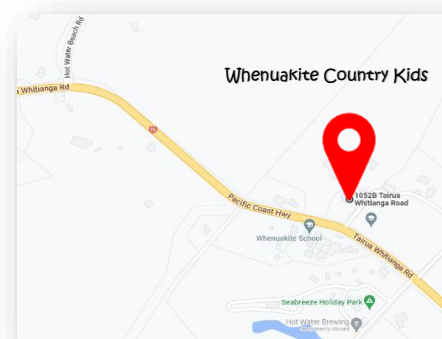
Notice required to cancel an enrolment is detailed in our Enrolment Process, GMA10 Appendix 1.

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# Contact Us

Whenuakite Country Kids is in the rural area of Whenuakite, on the stunning Coromandel Peninsula. We are located opposite Whenuakite School, on State Highway 25, between Tairua and Whitianga.



1052B Tairua-Whitianga Road  
Whenuakite, RD1  
Whitianga 3591

Phone: 07 866 3360

Email: [info@wck.co.nz](mailto:info@wck.co.nz)

Web: [wck.co.nz](http://wck.co.nz)



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