



FOREST EDUCATION POLICY

RATIONALE:

Forest excursions provide opportunities to strengthen children's connections with nature and their local community. Positive learning experiences include learning about native habitats and wildlife, flora and fauna as well as creating a sense of understanding about the world.

Akoranga Preschool encourages forest education to foster children's dispositional learning such as curiosity, imagination, and wonder, as well as promoting their health, physical development and well-being in the outdoors. We also acknowledge Tane Mahuta and Papatuanuku during these experiences and celebrate children's spiritual connections with the earth.

TE WHARIKI:

Exploration – strand: The child learns through active exploration of the environment

Belonging – Goal 1: Children and their whanau experience an environment where connecting links with whanau and the wider world are affirmed and extended.

PROCEDURES:

- Before going on a forest walk, all communications and procedures will be completed as outlined in the Excursions Policy
- An excursions record will be kept documenting the time, date, location, list of adults and children attending, and the mode of transport used.
- Akoranga Preschool has a RAMS/Permission form for each individual forest excursion.
- Kaiako will take with them a backpack which has the required equipment including a First Aid Kit, water, nappies (if needed), wipes, food, any medication, a list of primary contact numbers for all attending and a cell phone.
- Parents and whanau are invited to attend these forest excursions also.
- Akoranga Preschool will provide appropriate outdoor weather gear if needed to ensure all children can participate in the excursion.
- On site risk management will be carried out to eliminate/minimise any potential hazards or harm that could be caused.
- The person responsible is required to hold a current First Aid certificate and current ECE qualification.
- Roll calls and head counts will be carried out more frequently while on a forest excursion.

- Should an emergency arise a designated meeting place is decided upon prior to departure. Physical addresses of close by points are also known to the persons responsible.
- If a child gets lost the procedures outlined in the excursions policy and R.A.M.S are adhered to.
- When out on a forest walk experience, responsibility for caring for the environment will be promoted by respecting living and non living things.
- Forest excursions will actively support children's learning, promoting experiences which develop working theories and care for the living world.
- Kaiako will share the educational purpose of these outdoor experiences with parents and whanau using story park.

Date: July 2024

Review Date: July 2026