

The James St Preschool
 5 James St
 Redcliffs
 Christchurch
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The James St Junior School
 156 Main Road
 Redcliffs
 Christchurch
 3819008

www.jamesstpreschool.co.nz

April 2007



Early Childhood Education

Thank you to everyone who took the time to read our newsletter and consider the options available surrounding the introduction of 20 Hours Free Early Childhood Education (ECE). Thanks also to everyone who provided feedback via the survey. The results of the survey are shown below.

Number of Responses: 108
 Average Age of Respondents Children: 2 yrs & 7 months
 Average Number of Hours Attended by Children: 17

Option	Ranking
Option A - Do not offer Free ECE	4 th
Option B - Reduce quality of Service Provision.	5 th
Option C - Change fee structure to recover lost income from age groups that do not receive free ECE.	3 rd
Option D - Change fee structure to a base fee plus an optional charge for all services provided over and above regulation.	2 nd
Option E - Ask parents to make a small donation to cover the shortfall in income received from the Government	1 st

1st - Most Preferred Option, 5th - Least Preferred Option

Clearly the results of this survey show parents are keen to see 20 Hours Free ECE implemented, but not at the expense of the quality of Service Provision. Also parents were not happy to see parents of 0, 1 and 2 year olds charged more to make free ECE work.

The most preferred options were asking for a donation or implementing an optional charge to cover the shortfall between what the Ministry of Education will fund and the current preschool cost structures. The problem with the donation option (option E) is even though a parent may agree to make the donation, it can never be enforced. The preschool may be placed in the position of making a loss or having to pull out of the Free ECE scheme because insufficient parents are making the donation.

The problem with the optional charge option (option D) occurs if children are provided with a different standard of care and education depending on whether or not their optional charges have been paid.

In light of the survey results the James St Preschool & Junior School has decided to enter into the 20 Hours Free ECE scheme from 1st July 2007. The James St Preschool & Junior School has decided to

implement a system of fees based on a base fee plus an optional charge for all services provided above minimum regulatory standards. The optional charge will be set at \$2.00 per hour for each hour of free ECE received, however all children will be provided with the same high standard of education and care.

Below is a series of questions and answers which should help parents understand better how the new fee structures will work at The James St Preschool & Junior School.



Question: Who will be eligible for free ECE at The James St Preschool & Junior School?

Answer: All 3 and 4 year olds as well as 5 year olds with a 'transition to school plan' will be eligible for up to 6 hours free ECE per day and 20 hours free ECE per week. The daily and weekly limits include hours already used at another ECE provider, such as kindergarten. The Ministry of Education requires all parents/caregivers to complete an

Attestation Form before any Free ECE hours are received.



Question: Will the quality of Education and Care reduce after 1st July 2007.

Answer: The quality of Education and Care at The James St Preschool & Junior School will not reduce after 1st July 2007. In fact we would hope the quality of Education and Care will continue to improve as part of our ongoing cycle of Self Review.



Question: What does the \$2.00 per hour optional charge cover?

Answer: The \$2.00 per hour optional charge covers all services provided over and above what is required by Ministry of Education Regulations. This includes, meals, improved teacher-child ratios, administration time, teacher support time, outside child space in excess of requirements and Information and Communications (ICT) resourcing.



Question: Do I have to pay the \$2.00 per hour optional charge?

Answer: No. However if parents do agree in writing to pay the \$2.00 per hour Free ECE optional charge then it will be an enforceable fee. All children will receive the same quality standard of education and care, regardless of whether or not parents agree in writing to pay this fee.



Question: What happens to my fees if my child is not eligible for free ECE?

Answer: If your child is not eligible for free ECE then their fees will be same as they are now. This applies to 0, 1 and 2 years olds, children who attend more than 6 hours per day or twenty hours per week and children who have used their free ECE up at another ECE provider.



Question: What happens if insufficient numbers of parents agree to pay the \$2.00 optional charge?

Answer: The James St Preschool & Junior School must remain economically viable or we will quite simply close down. This is in no ones best interest. If the ongoing sustainability of The James St Preschool & Junior School becomes compromised then we will have to review our continued participation in the Free ECE scheme. If we were to withdraw from the scheme all parents would automatically revert to the existing fee structure. We do not think that this is likely to occur, given that 100% of the survey respondents said they would be prepared to make a \$2.00 per hour donation towards free ECE. More importantly we do need to remember that Governments can change the rules of schemes such as Free ECE as they please. We can only work with the rules as they are today. Education Minister Steve Maharey has already said that the scheme will continue to under go further review.



Question: Why can't I use my 20 Hours Free ECE as I please?

Answer: The Government have set the rules for the Free ECE scheme. We must adhere strictly to these rules if we wish to be apart of the scheme. We are well aware that parents are most concerned about the six hour per day limit on free ECE hours. We will continue to convey these concerns to the Ministry of Education. Feel free also to contact the Ministry of Education , the Minister of Education or your local MP's about your concerns.



Question: Why are all parents/caregivers being asked to sign The James St Preschool and Junior School Fee Structure Agreement?

Answer: All parents/caregivers are being asked to sign The James St Preschool and Junior School Fee Structure Agreement regardless of their child's age. The preschool must complete its strategic planning up to three years in advance. It is critical that we know the intentions of all parents/caregivers at the preschool so as we can predict income and expenditure in advance. Failure to do this would indicate poor financial management and in itself could threaten the long term viability of the Free ECE scheme at The James St Preschool and Junior School.



Question: Why do I have to complete an Attestation Form as well as the preschool enrolment form?

Answer: The Attestation Form is a requirement of the Ministry of Education. It is a legal agreement that you as parent/caregiver enter into with the Ministry if Education. In this agreement you are declaring that your child is not receiving more Free ECE hours than you are entitled. If this form is not completed The James St Preschool & Junior School is not allowed to offer Free ECE. If your child attends more than one ECE provider you must complete an Attestation Form at each provider. It is parents and caregivers responsibility to ensure you do not claim more than 6 hours per day or 20 Hours per week Free ECE at all ECE providers. Failure to ensure accuracy of information on these forms could result in the Ministry of Education claiming funding back from parents/caregivers or in cases of fraud pressing charges against parents/caregivers under the Crimes Act.



Question: Why are parents/caregivers of full time children receiving less of a saving than parents/caregivers of part time children under the Free ECE scheme?

Answer: There are two reasons for this. The Government has intentionally targeted Free ECE at the children attending up to 6 hours per day and 20 hours per week. Several Government Departments did advise the Government to allow parents to use their 20 hours as they wished, however the Governments objective in this policy is to

fund free Early Childhood Education as opposed to Early Childhood Care.

The second reason for full time children receiving less of a saving is that The James St Preschool & Junior School already provides large discounts to these children. For example a child attending 50 hours per week receives a 48% reduction in their hourly fee. As well they also receive 40% less Ministry of Education funding per hour than a child attending 30 hours per week. The child attending 50 hours per week still requires 50 hours of Registered Teacher time. The James St Preschool & Junior School wishes to maintain a level of discount for children attending full days and full weeks.



Question: Why is The James St Preschool & Junior School not waiting until the Free ECE scheme becomes more certain and predictable?

Answer: The James St Preschool & Junior School believe in offering high quality Education and Care to all children at a price that is fair and equitable. We think parents have the right to receive savings in ECE fees as early as possible. This is riskier and more complex for us because we are dealing with a system that may in fact

look quite different in time than what it does today. The savings available to parents far out weigh the risks.



Question: Will Work and Income subsidies still be available?

Answer: Yes, Work and Income subsidies will be available to eligible families for any hours that are not covered by Free ECE. For example a child attending 24 hours per week could receive 20 Hours Free ECE and a 4 hour Work and Income subsidy. Please check our section later in this newsletter because income thresholds have increased significantly for Work and Income subsidy eligibility.



Question: Will the \$940 per annum Tax Rebate still be available?

Answer: Yes. Any fees paid directly by parents and caregivers will be eligible for a \$940 per annum Tax Rebate. This does not include Free ECE hours or fees paid by Work and Income subsidies.



Question: What happens next?

Answer: All families are requested to fill in The James St Preschool and Junior School Fee Structure Agreement. This is attached to this newsletter. Please read this form carefully and contact Murray or Tonia if you have any questions.

In May all parents will be required to complete a Ministry of Education Attestation form for each child receiving free ECE. If this is not completed then your child will not be eligible for Free ECE.



Changes to Work and Income subsidy levels and Income Thresholds came into force on 1st April 2007. In some cases the income thresholds have been increased by 38%, so check carefully below to see if you are now eligible. These changes were only announced on the 29th March.

If you have*	And your family's weekly income before tax is less than	The subsidy per child per hour is up to
1 child	\$1,200	\$3.40
1 child	\$1,300	\$2.36
1 child	\$1,400	\$1.31
2 children	\$1,380	\$3.40
2 children	\$1,490	\$2.36
2 children	\$1,600	\$1.31
3+ children	\$1,540	\$3.40
3+ children	\$1,670	\$2.36
3+ children	\$1,800	\$1.31

Rates Effective 1st April 2007

What are the maximum hours for a subsidy?

If you are in work or study, or if you have special circumstances that mean you need access to childcare, you can get:

- A Childcare Subsidy for up to 50 hours a week

Special circumstances might mean, for example, that you need to care for a sick partner, or that you need to attend regular medical treatment for yourself.

If you are not in work or study you can get a Childcare Subsidy for up to nine hours a week.

* Number of children is the total number of children in your family aged under 16 (or under 18 and attending school)

For more information or an application form please see Tonia or contact Work and Income on 0800 774 004

CHILDCARE TAX REBATES:

The James St Preschool and Junior School will be posting out Tax Receipts for preschool fees paid between 1st April 2006 and 31st March 2007. These will be posted over Easter Weekend.

You can claim a rebate if you:

- earned taxable income (such as salary or wages, benefit or self-employed income) during the year you're claiming for
- were resident in New Zealand at any time during that tax year (including non-residents)
- are an individual (not a company, trust or partnership), and

your child was under 18 or unable to work because of a disability, and:

- you were a single parent, or
- you and your partner were both receiving income which had tax deducted (this doesn't apply to couples who are separated), or
- you or your partner were disabled or physically unable to care for your child.

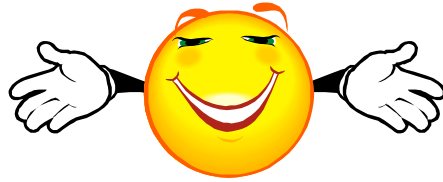
Exception: You can't claim this rebate if you live in a communal home, such as a rest home or a hospice.

The maximum Tax Rebate you can claim is \$940. This will result in a Tax Refund of \$310. If you claimed this rebate last year you will automatically receive a claim form from IRD. If not you can get a claim form by phoning IRD on 0800 227 774 or visit www.ird.govt.nz and type childcare into the search function.

Rebate forms can be downloaded directly at

<http://www.ird.govt.nz/resources/file/eb1a5b09fa298e1/ir526-2007.pdf>

WELCOME TO OUR NEW FAMILIES:



Thomas Beesley	Hannah Brookes
Sheridan Brookes	Ryan Cooke
Angelica Donnelly-Marcolino	
Clara Dujakovic	Nina Hayes
Magnus Heaphy	Althea James
Morgan Lewis	Bailee Pickering
Catalina Puska	

GOOD LUCK TO:

Jono Barnes & Sophie Barnes who are off to Hong Kong.
Lexi Kerr who is off to Morning Kindy.
Levi Wilson who is off to school.

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

Sonia Parsons on her engagement to Dion. We wish her well for planning the big day on 1st Sept.
Sarah, Blair & Benjamin Forgie on the birth of Henry.
Rachel, David, Rosie & Billy Knight on the birth of Poppy.
Victoria, Daryl & Luca Warnock on the birth of Isaac.
Jo, Warwick & Charli Watts on the birth of Harvey.
Alexandra, David & Olivia Moss on the birth of James.
Kay, Mark & Tarn Timmermans on the birth of Finn.
Rachel, Anthony & Mitchel Kane on the birth of Oscar.
Tanya, Laurence & Ryan Cooke on the birth of Alana.

STAFF:

Rebecca & Hayley will be returning from maternity leave on 30th April. Both will be resuming their original positions in the Nursery. Sonia will be returning to covering Teacher Release time, staff Holidays and sick leave. Tonia will be commencing maternity leave on 30th April, however she can be contacted at home on 3849553 for booking and general enquires. Lynda will be finishing on 30th April. She wishes to take more time to spend with her family and continue pursuing her Art Classes. We wish Lynda well. Lynda has said she will be interested in continuing in a relieving capacity, so hopefully this will not be the last we see of her.

REMI NDERS:

Spare Clothing

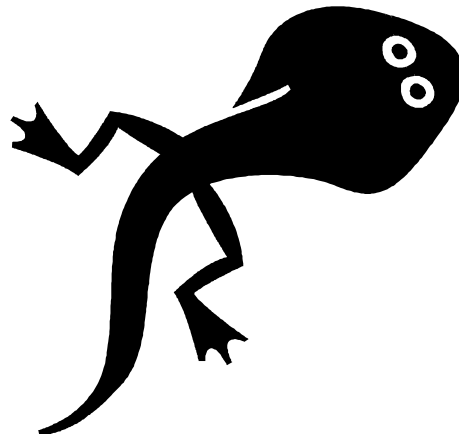
Ensure children have suitable clothing for the changeable weather. Please provide spare clothing especially during the hot months when children get wet from water play. Children who are toilet training will also need spare clothing. Please label children's clothing and footwear. It makes the job of matching clothes and footwear to children much easier, especially since many children often have identical clothing. A good example at the moment is the popularity of 'Croc' type shoes.

Profile Books

Could parents please remember to return children's profile books to preschool after taking them home. This assists staff in adding more material to the profile books.

THANK YOU:

To Harry Louw for providing the preschool with tadpoles. They have proved to be very popular with the children watching eagerly as the tadpoles undergo their transformation into frogs.



AND LASTLY:

Please don't forget to complete The James St Preschool and Junior School Fee Structure Agreement form on the next page. This needs to be completed by parents/caregivers of all babies/children attending the The James St Preschool and The James St Junior School.

Watch out for the Ministry of Education Attestation Forms arriving in May. These must be completed before your child becomes eligible for 20 Hours Free ECE.

The implementation of 20 Hours Free ECE has been extremely challenging. We believe that after 1st July we will have a fee structure that delivers considerable savings to many families. You can be rest assured that the implementation of 20 Hours Free ECE will not lead to a reduction of Education and Care at The James St Preschool and Junior School. We will be closely following developments in this area and will continue to keep parents informed.



Kind regards to you all,
Tonia, Murray, Tracy, Brydee, Gary, Emma, Sally, Lynda, Jenny, Rebecca van der Kley, Sonia, Hayley, Vanessa, Kylie, Sarah, Teryl, Mary-Louise, Rebecca McIvor, Denise, Kay & Sharyn

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The James St Preschool and Junior School Fee Structure Agreement

Standard Fees:

These fees apply to the following children:

- all children aged 0, 1 and 2 years old;
- all children who are ineligible for Free ECE;
- all children whose parents, caregivers have not completed the required documentation to receive Free ECE, such as Ministry of Education Attestation Forms (available May 07);
- all children whose parents/caregivers have chosen not to accept Free ECE.

** as at 1st July 2007*

Free ECE Fees:

These fees apply to the following children:

- all children aged 3 or 4 who have a completed Ministry of Education Attestation Forms (available May 07) and who have not used their Free ECE entitlement at another ECE provider, such as Kindergarten (Free ECE hours can be shared between different ECE providers).
- 5 year olds receiving special education support as part of a formal 'transition to school' plan.

Optional Charge:

The James St Preschool & Junior School provides Education and Care at a level higher than required by the Ministry of Education Early Childhood Regulations. This includes the provision of meals, higher teacher/child ratios, teacher non-contact time for writing learning profiles and improved teaching experiences, the employment of a full time administrator, the employment of a teacher support person to assist with Individualised Learning Programmes, significantly more outdoor land than required by regulation, Perceptual Motor Programme and considerable resourcing in Information and Communication Technology (ICT). The Ministry of Education funding received for Free ECE hours is not sufficient to cover all of these additional services. Free ECE at The James St Preschool & Junior School is only viable if parents contribute towards the cost of providing services beyond the minimum level required by regulation.

I AGREE / DO NOT AGREE (*cross one out*) to pay an optional charge of \$2.00 per hour for each hour of Free ECE received at The James St Preschool & Junior School.

I understand that I am not required to agree to pay this optional charge. By signing this agreement the optional charge will become part of my child's total fees payable.

I understand that if The James St Preschool & Junior School withdraws from the Free ECE scheme then I will be liable for fees as outlined in the Standard Fee Schedule.

Child's Name: _____

Child's DOB: _____

Parents Name: _____

Parents Signature: _____

Date: _____

STANDARD FEES	
Hourly Fee (min 3 hrs)	7.00*
Maximum Daily Charge	40*
Maximum Weekly Charge	180*

FREE ECE FEES	
Up to Six Hours per Day	Free
Up to 20 Hours per Week	Free
Bookings in excess of 6 Hours per Day or 20 Hours per Week	Same as Standard Fees for remainder of booking

Please return this completed form to the payment box at Preschool or Junior School