

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

[www.jamesstpreschool.co.nz](http://www.jamesstpreschool.co.nz)

# February 2007

Welcome back and a very Happy New Year to all our families. Thank you to everyone for all the support throughout the past year and a special thanks to those who attended the Christmas party. It was enjoyed by all.

The staff are looking forward to having another busy, fun and challenging year and we hope you are too.

2007 is shaping up to be a very eventful year. Of most significance will be the introduction of 20 Hours Free ECE in July, please check out the section on this later in the newsletter.

## 20 HOURS FREE ECE:

The upcoming introduction of 20 hours free ECE for three and four-year-olds has been widely discussed within the media.

What are the facts and what are the concerns? This is what we know:

1. The Government will fund 20 Hours free ECE for all three and four-year-olds that attend an eligible Early Learning Centre from 1st July 2007.
2. All teacher-led licensed ECE centres will be eligible to offer free ECE from this date. The James St Preschool is a teacher-led licensed ECE centre and is therefore eligible to offer free ECE.

3. The Ministry of Education will fund free ECE at a rate of between \$1.00 and \$4.60 an hour, depending on the type of ECE centre and the proportion of trained and registered teachers employed at the centre. The James St Preschool will be eligible to receive the maximum \$4.60 an hour, because we are an all-day centre and all of our teachers are fully trained and registered. The higher rate reflects the higher cost of employing qualified staff and the higher cost of

opening all day, as opposed to opening on a sessional basis.

4. Any centre that offers free ECE cannot ask parents to pay a compulsory charge for any of the 20 free hours that

their child attends. Parents, however, can be asked to make a voluntary contribution. Parents can also be asked to pay optional charges for any services provided over and above the minimum required by the Early Childhood Regulations. An example of this would be providing lunches. Several concerns arise from the free ECE proposal.

Many preschools are concerned the rate the Ministry of Education is paying will not cover the cost of providing free ECE.

James St currently charges \$7.00 an hour. If we provide free ECE we will have to budget for a reduction of income of \$48 per child per week. We would run at a loss in the preschool area with this level of funding.

So what are our options?

1. Do not offer free ECE, and continue with the preschool structure as it exists now. This would probably not be the most popular choice for parents.

2. Fundraise to recoup losses made by offering free ECE. We have always been opposed in principal to asking parents to assist with fundraising because they are already busy and already paying for attending preschool. We also prefer that staff devote their time exclusively to the care and education of children and not to areas such as fundraising.

3. Offer free ECE and ask parents to make a small voluntary payment to cover the difference between our current fee and the payment made by the Ministry of Education. This would be the simplest to administer, but would carry the highest fiscal risk for the preschool. We could be left in a position where parents simply choose not to make their voluntary payments and we are carrying a loss to be recovered from other areas.

4. Change our fee structure to break them down into base fees, plus additional charges for services offered over and above that required by the Early Childhood Regulations. This would not be easy for us as we exceed ECE regulations in most areas, and could not easily quantify the costs associated with this. Areas such as providing lunches would be easy to quantify, but how do you quantify areas such as providing more than twice the outdoor area of land required by regulation, or quantify the cost of providing better teacher-child ratios than required?

5. Reduce costs. This would require consulting with staff and parents to find out what areas they would be required to see a reduction in spending. Obviously the largest cost for us is staffing. The James St Preschool is committed to offering our teachers full pay parity with their Kindergarten, Primary and Secondary colleagues. This has enabled us to attract outstanding teachers, meet our target of 100% of all teachers being fully trained and registered, and enabled us to retain our teachers at a time when teacher turnover rates in ECE are at their highest across the sector. The only other way to reduce staffing costs is to reduce

teacher/child ratios back to the minimum level required of 1:5 (under twos) and 1:10 (over twos), or reduce teacher non-contact time. We personally do not support either option due to the effect they would have on teaching and learning.

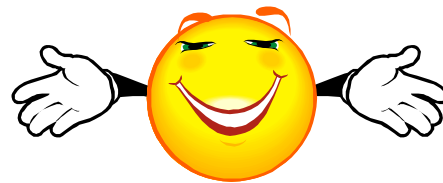
6. Wait and see if the Government revise the rates at which they fund free ECE.

What happens next?

We are going to investigate a range of financial models for accommodating free ECE. This should be completed by early March. We will then advise parents what options are available to us and the implications of each. We will ask parents to rank the various options and give feedback on how each option could be improved.

A final decision will be made at the start of April. This will give us time to put administrative structures in place for 1st July if we choose to offer free ECE.

Rest assured The James St Preschool is committed to offering the highest quality of education and care while maintaining affordability for all parents.



WELCOME TO OUR NEW FAMILIES:

Zachary Brown	Charlie Cameron
Wilbur Cameron	Polina Collins
Miken Freeman	Lucy Harcourt
James Hoole	Harriet Jolly
Lucy Kilpatrick	Saffron Megridge
Tom Rae	Cass Robertson
Macklan Robertson	Lucy Sawyer
Jace Stephen	Sid Strangwick
Jack Tulloch	Georga Watt
William Watt	Archie Whithear
Eva Wyllie	

FAREWELL TO:

Kaya Beal	Serge Beaton
Bo Brown	Paige Carey
Monica Fahey	Sarah Fraser
Ryan Gavaghan	Amelia Harris
Sebastian Hudson	Daniel Ineson
Anya Johns	Toby Kennedy
Rosie Knight	Sam McIntosh
Megan McMurtry	Cai McNab
Liam Philp	Thomas Pike
Caitlin Quinn	Tim Ward
Sarah Watt	Henry Williamson

Good luck to you all for school and kindy.

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

Jo, Richard & Riley Matla on the birth of Brennan.  
 Melinda, Nicholas & Noah Dent on the birth of Amelia.  
 Katherine, Rod & Polly Cross on the birth of Harvey.  
 Kirsten, Steve & Ned Page on the birth of Mackie.  
 Kylie, Daniel & Thomas Kamo on the birth of William.  
 Rico, Hugh & Alex Rickard on the birth of Matthew.  
 Rebecca van der Kley on the birth of Laura  
 Paige, weighing 5lb 15oz.



STAFFING:

Congratulations to Gary who has now completed his Diploma of Teaching and obtained his Teacher Registration. Gary has had an incredible 3 years completing his diploma, working full time, building a house, setting up the Cheeky Monkeys business and juggling a family of three children. We hope he can get some time now to also relax a little.  
 We also wish to welcome Kim Kyung to a team of relievers. Kim has a Diploma of Teaching in Early Childhood Education and is a Registered Teacher.

Kim will be working 10am to 3pm every day for the next three months, mainly covering Nursery and Junior School lunch breaks.

FOCUS:

Over the next month the Nursery will be focusing on settling children in and sensory experiences.  
 Junior School will be focusing on settling children in, physical skills and eating healthy food.  
 Preschool will be focusing on settling children in, exploration of the preschool environment, volcanoes and water play.

POLICY REVIEW:

We are currently reviewing the following policies:

February	March
Daily Programme	Accidents
Physical Activity	Child Protection
Food & Nutrition	Child Safety

These policies will be displayed on the sign in bench at preschool and the pin board at Junior School. Please feel free to make comments on the comment sheet next to the policies.

2007 FEES

We are pleased to announce that even though we have had significant cost increases over the last 12 months we are able to maintain our fees at the same level as 2006.  
 However from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2007 all Holidays will be charged at the normal rate to hold the child's space. This is in line with practices in most preschools and reflects the actual cost of maintaining staffing throughout the entire year in an all day centre.

We also ask that parents remember to pay their accounts in full each week. This significantly reduces the time and costs associated with following up overdue accounts. Most parents are now paying via Automatic Payment of Direct

Credit. We would be extremely grateful if you are not already doing this if you could consider the advantages to both us and the time savings to yourself in using electronic banking.

#### REMI NDERS:

##### Fruit

All children are asked to supply a piece of fruit each day to share for morning and afternoon teas.

##### Sign in/out Registers

Please ensure all parents/caregivers sign their child/ren in and out on the daily register. This is a requirement of the Ministry of Education. Also in the event of an emergency we need to know who is here.

##### Change of Details Forms

The Ministry of Education requires that any permanent change to a child's booked hours is agreed to in writing and signed by the parent. If you are changing your child's hours on a permanent basis please follow the following procedure:

1. If you wish to increase your child's hours, discuss with Tonia when the desired hours will be available.
2. If you wish to reduce your child's hours please give Tonia two weeks notice of your intention to do so.
3. Complete and sign a change of details form and place this in the payments box at preschool or Junior School. There should be a change of details form in your child's folder. Please do not take home Completed Enrolment forms or Change of Details forms. The Ministry of Education require that these are available on site at all times, should they choose to perform a spot check on the preschool.
4. Your child must not increase their hours until a signed change of details form has

been completed. It is not necessary to complete a change of details form when your child is leaving preschool permanently.

##### Transition

The James St Preschool and The James St Junior School are licensed separately to each other with the Ministry of Education. We generally treat the two preschools as one, such as with staffing, policies, billing, budgets and resourcing. However when a child transitions from one preschool to the other i.e. Nursery to Junior School or Junior School to Preschool, the Ministry of Education maintain the child has changed preschools. All that this means is a new enrolment form must be filled in prior to the child beginning their transition programme from one preschool to the other.

Eventually we would like to re-licence the Preschool and The Junior School as one preschool. However the Ministry of Education currently only allow 50 children on a preschool licence. The Preschool and Junior School have 46 and 20 licence places respectively.

##### 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.

##### Booked Times

All parents must ensure that children are not dropped off before, or picked up later than their booked times.
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It is essential that this is adhered to at all times. One child arriving early or leaving late can put us in a position of breaching Ministry of Education mandatory staff-child ratios. It may also place us in a position of breaching local

council LIM requirements at certain times of the day.

While staff are very accommodating at working on when this occurs we cannot keep relying on this goodwill. The Ministry of Education carries out spot checks of ECE centres. If we were found to have one child too many on our premises we would immediately lose our licence to operate a preschool and would only get this back if we could convince the Secretary of Education that we had put in place adequate steps in to ensure future compliance.

If you need to extend your booked hours then this must be agreed to with Tonia, Kylie or Tracy.

A charge of \$1.00 per minute will be added to any child's account who is present outside of their booked times.

### Preschool Gates

Could parents please ensure children do not stand on the self closing gates. When children do this the gates very quickly come out of alignment and may become a safety issue if they do not close correctly.

### NURSERY FISH TANK:

The small fish tank has been extremely popular in the Nursery. The babies are extremely fascinated by the fish and staff find that they are very calming for the babies. However due to the small tank size we have only been able to keep very small fish, some of which can be difficult for babies eyes to focus on.

We have decided to replace the small tank with a longer, taller tank that will be accommodate



larger colourful fish ideal for the babies.

### WORK & INCOME SUBSIDIES:

Family income thresholds were increased on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2006. Please check the table below to see if you are eligible for Work and Income assistance with Preschool fees.

Kind regards to you all,

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

Childcare subsidies are available to all families whose income falls within the following limits:

One Child*	
Weekly Income	Subsidy per hour per child (maximum 50 hours/week)
less than \$870	\$3.31
between \$870 & \$960	\$2.30
between \$960 & \$1050	\$1.28

Two Children*	
Weekly Income	Subsidy per hour per child (maximum 50 hours/week)
less than \$1050	\$3.31
between \$1050 & \$1150	\$2.30
between \$1150 & \$1250	\$1.28

Three or More Children*	
Weekly Income	Subsidy per hour per child (maximum 50 hours/week)
less than \$1210	\$3.31
between \$1210 & \$1330	\$2.30
between \$1330 & \$1450	\$1.28

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

Rates are effective from 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2006  
Please see Tonia for more information or phone Work & Income on 0800 559 009

or visit [www.workandincome.govt.nz](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz)