**December Newsletter 2023**

Nga mihi o te wa kia koe me te whanau. Greetings to you and your family. I am hoping that you will find time to sit down and read all our news in a leisurely fashion so that you are up to date with everything that is happening at the centre in the last month of 2023 and start of 2024.

**FUND RAISING & RAFFLE WINNERS**:

1. ***CALENDARS:*** Thank you for your support with the calendar fund raising . We are still waiting for the Calendar group to advise us of the money we have raised. The money will be going towards resources for the rooms.
2. ***END OF YEAR RAFFLE*:** A reminder to bring in your donations so we can make up our holiday hampers. Thanks to those of you who have already brought in your donation and sold tickets. Please return all tickets and money by Monday 11 December.

**PICNIC TEA ORGANISERS & ATTENDERS:** Remember to let us know if you are attending the end of year party at Anderson’s Park on Tuesday 12 December. Many thanks to Claire and the communication team for organizing this time for us.

**EARLY CHILDHOOD ACTION DAY**. Our education and care sector has been disappointed and frustrated by the on-going lack of funding. **On Friday 8 December**, you will see some teachers wearing special T-shirts. The NZEI (Teachers union) has organized a day of action where members will make themselves visible in special T-shirts and send photos of their day to make the incoming Government aware of the issues of child to teacher ratios and continued lack of funding. The ratios are currently funded to minimum standards; and our staff are funded less than kindergarten teachers, even though they have the same qualifications and training. The commitment of our staff to give their best when they could be looking at better paid jobs in the kindergarten sector is very much appreciated. You are welcome to send an email to your MP in support of improvements for early childhood.

**THANKS:** I would like to take this opportunity to thank the following people:

1. **OUR STAFF**, for their ongoing support of the centre. Sickness continues to have had a big impact on both staff and children and absences for staff and children were on-going throughout the year. Despite the interruptions, staff gave their all to make sure children had a learning environment of consistency, kindness, and fun. I wish all staff a well- deserved holiday.
2. **THE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**, for overseeing the direction of the centre with such commitment. It can be very challenging to have young children and make yourself available for evening meetings so the time you give to the centre is very much appreciated. We welcome enquiries from any parent interested in joining our committee. They meet on the fourth Monday of the month at the centre. Just let us know at the office if you are interested.
3. **THE ADMIN TEAM**- Karen for her thoughtful and considerate support of our staff and the tamariki through the varied and considerable issues that 2023 has brought; Claire for her tremendous organizational skills- keeping so many areas of the centre’s operations ticking along so well; Helen, for keeping all our compliance up to date by chasing the endless paperwork that is required on a daily basis and always completing everything with her friendly smile; Marion (and Janice) for taking on the challenge of providing our tamariki with nourishing meals and snacks each day; the Team Leaders- Christine Winder, Joanne Fukuda, Amy Mackay and Mike Richards for their passionate advocacy for children and for their staff; Tatsuya for working tirelessly to keep our very large grounds as clean and tidy as possible- and for sussing out how to work the new wood pellet boiler, and Andy for keeping on top of the maintenance and repairs, and his wonderful work at beautifying the centre.
4. **YOU**, the parents, for allowing us to get to know you and your children. We value the relationships that are built with our families and are always sad when we say farewell to children- for some we have known them from babies, and have watched them develop into independent young children, ready for the next chapter of life’s journey. Thank you for giving us the privilege of having your children at Surrey Park ELC Inc. We hope you will always share any concerns you might have so that we can continue to improve the quality of the education and care we provide for your children.

***REMINDERS.***

***2024 OPERATING HOURS***: The centre re-opens on Monday 22 January at 7.30am, unless you have received confirmation that your child has a place in the priority group for the early week.

***PRIORITY GROUP/EARLY WEEK BACK***. For those children who have a confirmed booking for the week of 15-18 January 2024, children from Koru, Te Rito, Waihopai, Kawakawa and Totara will start at 8.15 in the Te Rito room, and finish at 4.45pm Monday – Thursday. The way to access Te Rito is to park in our carpark off Isabella Street and enter through the office. We are closed on Friday 19 January for our staff training and set-up Day.

**Just a final reminder from our tired staff, yet to do their shopping, that we close at 3.30 pm on Friday 22 December. Please collect your children on time.**

*Kia taute maungarongo ki runga I te whenua - he whakaaro pai ki nga tangata-Let there be peace and tranquility on earth and goodwill to all people.*

Season’s greetings to you all. I wish you a relaxing holiday- and look forward to seeing you in 2023. Please phone 027 357 6998 if you have any queries.