



'Empowering a Community of Learners - Kia whakamana ai i to hapori akonga'

Welcome to Wānaka Primary School: Starting School

Preparing Your Child for School

Starting school is an exciting milestone! You can help your child prepare by focusing on these self-management and social skills:

Personal Independence: Practise opening lunchboxes, putting on shoes/coats, and using the toilet independently.

Social Skills: Encourage using good manners, taking turns, and listening to others.

Familiarity: Visit the school over the weekend to play on the playground or walk/ride the route to school together.

How can I Help my Child Get Ready for School?

There are lots of things you can do.

Here are some ideas to help your child become familiar with Wānaka Primary School:

- visit the school with your child
- have a play at the school in the weekend - run around, climb on the playground equipment, kick a ball on the field
- walk/ride the route to school.
- ensure adequate rest
- try a school lunch at home
- read to your child
- encourage a love of stories

Talk to the Teacher About Your Child

When teachers know children well they are better able to support their learning. Talk to the teacher and let them know things like:

- if your child has any special health needs, and what to do
- what your child likes to do, what they are good at and what makes them happy
- after-school plans and who picks up your child when you can't
- anything that might affect how your child is feeling.

Help Them Get Ready to Learn

They may find it easier to participate in the class if they:

- are comfortable being away from you
- can hold a pencil correctly and use scissors
- can write their name
- are able to hold a picture book and turn the pages carefully.
- can sit and listen to a story

Teach Your Child the Practical Skills They'll Need:

Before your child starts school, it's helpful if they can:

- blow their nose
- being independent at the toilet, including washing and drying hands and flushing the toilet unaided.
- unpack and hang up their own bag
- recognise when they are thirsty and get a drink of water
- ask for things they need.
- do up their shoes
- put on and take off their coat
- encourage care for property – especially books, toys, and clothing
- putting away things when not using them.
- use a tissue.
- able to open their lunchbox, and unwrap their lunch
- sharing with other children and taking turns
- good manners and consideration for others

Checklists for starting school and getting settled:

Starting school for the first time or beginning a new school is a new and exciting stage for all the family. These checklists cover some of the important things to help the first days run smoothly. They are also useful for settling your child in at the start of each new school year.

In your child's school bag

- Lunch and a water bottle. Get your child to help you pack their lunchbox. Talk about what is for morning tea and what is for lunch.
- Pencils, exercise books, and other supplies the school has asked your child to bring.
- In the spring and summer terms, a sun hat and sunblock (it's a good idea to apply sunblock at home before they leave as well).
- In the autumn and winter terms, a warm hat and some extra layers in case it gets really cold.
- Their name on everything particularly hats, shoes and sweatshirts. Show your child where to look for their name on their clothes.
- A change of clothes. This can be reassuring for a child starting school for the first time, especially if they are prone to toileting accidents.
- Reading Folder

In the morning, before you leave

- Get up early so that you have plenty of time to get ready and your child doesn't feel rushed and stressed.
- Have a nutritious breakfast.
- Allow plenty of time for getting to school. On the way chat about what they think their day will be like and what they want to do when they get home.

When you get to school

- Go into the classroom and say hello to the teacher with your child.
- Tell the teacher about after school arrangements if you won't be the person picking your child up
- Remind your child where the toilets are and where they will be collected at the end of the day.
- It helps children to feel they belong if they know other children. Make a point of stopping to chat with children and parents and/or carers you know as you arrive.
- Make goodbyes short. Teachers have a lot of experience helping children to settle in and managing an upset child.

After School

- If you pick up your child ask the teacher how their day went.
- Expect your child to be very tired in the first few weeks. Make time when you get home to just hang out. They might need to run around outside, chill out on a bean bag with some picture books, or just collapse in front of the TV.
- Don't schedule lots of afternoon activities to begin with - let them just get used to their new routines first.
- Offer them a nutritious afternoon tea. They will probably be very hungry!
- Let them adjust to being at home before asking too much about their day. It's a lot easier to get children of any age to talk about their day when they are doing something else with you – helping to make dinner, tidying up, or drying the dishes.
- Have a space where school papers go – this is the beginning of you being inundated with newsletters, permission slips, parent help requests etc. It's useful to make the space close to a calendar so you can write in important dates.
- Make time to read together. Get in the habit of having some shared reading every day, right from the start. This should be fun sharing and learning.

How to Enrol

We encourage early enrolment to help us with our strategic planning.

1. Check the Zone: Ensure your residence is within the school zone.
2. Contact Us: Get in touch with the office to complete the pre-enrolment form.
3. School Tour: We welcome parents to book a guided tour and meet with a member of our Senior Leadership team.