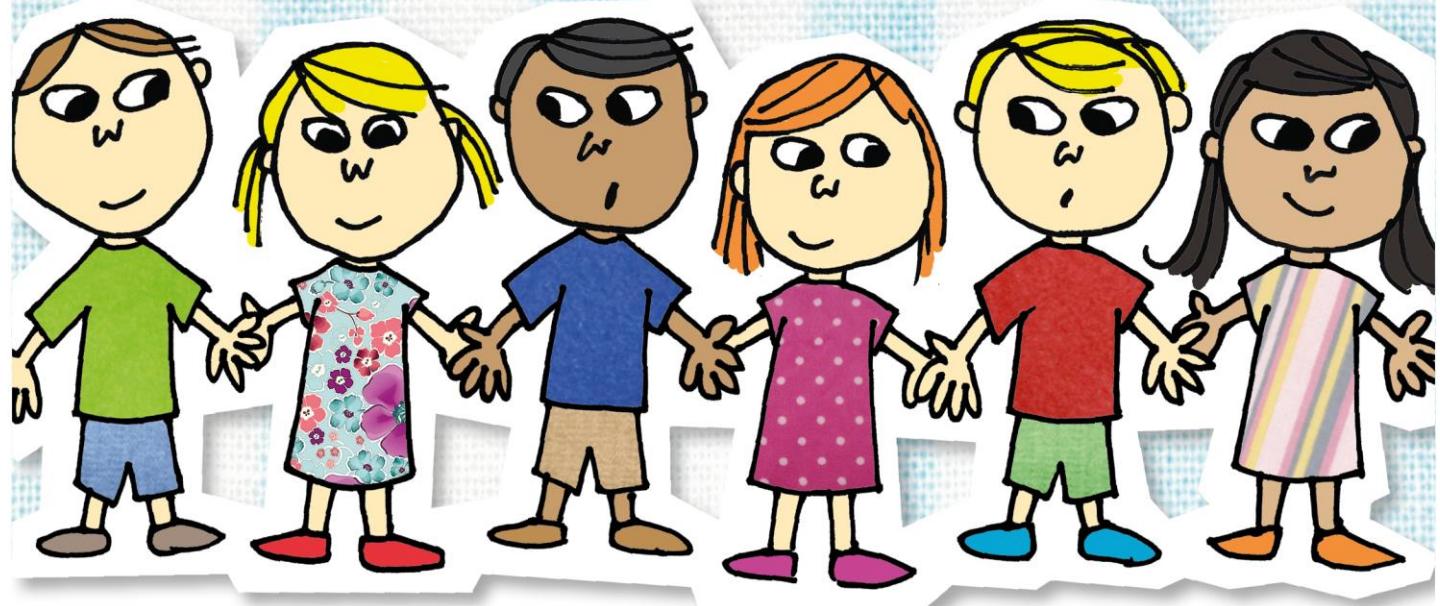


early childhood education

Parent Handbook



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1 Who we are and what we believe

1.1 About The Rumpus Room

The Rumpus Room was established by a local couple Beth and Cam who were inspired to create a centre they wanted their children to attend (which they did) and to this end the centre incorporates a home-like environment, an experienced, passionate and caring teaching team and great resources. They also have a strong commitment to ensuring that the centre becomes an integral part of the local neighborhood.

The Teaching Team ensures children have a sense of well-being and security in the centre, and provides them with the tools to be confident learners and communicators, so they leave eager for adventures and ready for school.

1.2 Our Philosophy

We want children in our care to feel secure, safe, loved and fully engaged in their learning environment. That's why we designed a centre that combines the look and feel of a home with all the benefits of a purpose-built centre. Staffed with caring, qualified teachers and stocked with great resources and plenty of room to play, explore and imagine.

We believe in creating an environment that is calm and respectful and recognizes that even the smallest baby is capable, competent and has a voice that deserves to be listened to. We believe that the primary caregiver approach is one of the best ways to achieve this and through adopting this approach for the first formative years we help grow a child who is independent, well-adjusted and ready to learn.

We also believe that children should be encouraged and enabled to explore their own interests and develop a greater understanding of the way the world around them works. We believe the environment plays an important part in a child's ability to learn and that its aesthetic properties are as important as the resources provided.

We believe that children should have access to exciting and challenging environments that provide them with the space to explore, have adventures and daydream.

1.3 Our Programme

To support our philosophies, we have developed a play-based, child-centred programme that allows children to explore their own interests and develop a greater understanding of the way the world around them works.

Our programme is based on Te Whāriki (the woven mat) which is the national early childhood curriculum developed by the Ministry of Education. Te Whāriki is woven from the principles of empowerment; holistic development; family and community and relationships and from the five strands of learning and development:

- Well-being;
- Belonging;
- Contribution;
- Communication, and
- Exploration.

Te Whāriki aspires for tamariki “to grow up as competent and confident learners and communicators, healthy in mind, body and spirit, secure in their sense of belonging and in the knowledge that they make a valued contribution to society.”

We also draw on contemporary educational philosophies to complement Te Whāriki. We aim to provide a program that recognizes the wider community outside the Centre walls - the natural environment and the people within it. Through being a part of this wider community children can really develop a sense of belonging and a greater understanding of the culture within New Zealand.

1.4 Our Policies

Copies of all our Policies are in a folder in the foyer and are available for you to read and become familiar with and we encourage you to do so. We welcome parent and whānau feedback and contributions to policy development, review and decisions concerning your child's care and education and you will see these from time to time.

1.5 Teaching Team

The Rumpus Room is committed to employing passionate, skilled and caring teachers and all our team participates in ongoing professional development.

In the foyer we have named photos of all the team, including our regular relievers so you can get to know them. To become a qualified ECE teacher requires a one-, two- or three-year tertiary course and so these teachers are very knowledgeable about young minds and behaviours, and well worth talking to. All our team are interviewed, reference checked, and safety checked to ensure your child's safety.

You will see new faces at the centre from time to time as we will have external casual relievers supporting our teaching team in our daily activities and experiences in case of illness or holidays of the permanent team. Casual relievers will wear a lanyard with their name and a Rumpus Room hoodie.

We also have good relations with the local teacher training institutions and have regular student teachers carrying out their practicums (on-site job training) for 4-7 week periods, or if we are their home centre then more regularly. An experienced staff member will supervise all student teachers and relievers while at the centre.

We aim to provide better than Ministry of Education ratios and on average we have at least 1 adult to 4 for our Nest, under 2 year old children and at least 1 adult to 8 for the over 2 year old children.

2 Teaming up

2.1 Parent Involvement

We are your partners in the care and education of your child, and we want you to be fully involved in your child's time at the centre. You are welcome to visit at any time and to join in activities, experiences and excursions.

We encourage mothers who are breastfeeding to feel comfortable visiting the centre to breastfeed their child as needed and we are happy to provide your expressed milk to your child.

The teachers are always available to discuss your child's progress and activities with you daily. Note this can sometimes be difficult or truncated during the busy drop-off or pick up time so if you want a longer catch up with any of the team, you are welcome to make a time to do so.

We will also arrange for a whānau hui (family meeting) during the year to offer an opportunity for you to meet up with the teachers to discuss your child's development.

2.2 Story Park Parent Portal, plus Weekly Newsletter

To ensure we can communicate with you, we need your help!

The key communication tool we use is Storypark which has an app for your smart phone or can be used on a browser. Through StoryPark, you can view learning stories, interact with the team, keep track of their daily routines, and receive important announcements. (app.storypark.com)

It is essential then that you please install the StoryPark app and turn on Notifications. We encourage you to become familiar with how it works as it is a great resource with many important uses.

You can also add other family members to your child's profile so grandparents, aunts and uncles can all keep up to date with what your child/ren are learning.

We also have a newsletter that goes out each week to let families know what has been happening at The Rumpus Room. We will subscribe new whānau to the newsletter on enrolment and you can ask for grandparents or other important whānau as you see fit to be included too if you wish. Just ask the Team Leader in your child's room or our Centre Manager. Please ensure to add info@therumpusroom.co.nz to your Contacts or Safe Senders List to ensure this gets through any spam blockers.

2.3 Settling in

We encourage you and your child to visit The Rumpus Room prior to enrolment to meet the team and make sure you are comfortable that The Rumpus Room is the right place for you and your whānau. We want to create a strong relationship of mutual trust with your family and child to ensure an easy transition into The Rumpus Room. We have a settling and induction programme that starts two weeks prior to enrolment in the centre where you will do several visits for both your child and you to become familiar with the environment, teachers and routines before you leave them on their first full day. This demonstrates to your child that you are building trust with the teaching team and feeling comfortable with your child's new environment. During your child's settling visits, there will be detailed discussions around your child's development, personality, likes/dislikes, sleeping and eating requirements.

All of our children in The Nest will have a primary caregiver, and our children in the Fledglings and Explorers group will have key carers. Settling visits will be organised with your primary caregiver or key carer that suits you, your child's routine and the centre.

Children adjust in different ways to change and new events, but our teachers are experienced at settling children and we are happy to call you or for you to call us during the day to let you know how your child is doing.

Your child is welcome to bring their own comforter or special toy from home during this settling period.

We feel that it is important to say goodbye to your child and let them know when you will be coming to get them.

We have an open-door policy and enjoy visits from parents, grandparents, younger and older brothers and sisters and friends once your child has settled in.

2.4 Events

For Children:

We believe that events and milestones in your child's life such as birthdays or graduations should be celebrated. We discuss with the children what they would like to do for their birthday or graduation celebration and ensure that each child's birthday is a special day. Similarly, if a child is to leave the centre we will organize a Happy Last Day. This may include choosing games to play, special stories at mat-time, using a special tea set for the day or a favourite afternoon tea. Please note that in order for us to be able to manage the allergies in the centre, parents cannot bring any food into the centre for these events (or any other time too).

We also have several special events throughout the year that parents are welcome to contribute to or be involved in, including:

- Wheels Days (when we close the carpark and the children can bring their bikes, scooters, etc)
- Language weeks (Te Reo, Fijian, Samoan, Tongan, and others)
- Chinese New Year
- Diwali
- Grandparents Day (when Grandparents or a significant elder are welcome to the centre for morning or afternoon tea)
- Mother's and Father's Day

Four Year Old Sleepover: Our four year olds have a special annual event where they sleep over at the centre on a Friday night during the winter. They plan this event with their teacher who stay over with them. This is a much loved tradition that has been happening since The Rumpus Room first started.

For Whānau:

We have several regular events in the centre for parents and whānau. With these we hope to strengthen the connections between families and so help build our Rumpus Room Community and so encourage you to come along. We try to help new whānau meet other parents and our team actively help to facilitate this. These events include:

- Fish and Chip Night at a local park in summer (or in the centre if it's raining)
- Matariki in June
- The Rumpus Room Birthday in October
- Whānau Christmas Party in December

3 Practicalities

3.1 Hours

The Rumpus Room is open Monday to Friday from 7.30 am – 5.30 pm, with School Hours enrolment also available from 8.30-3.30. We expect all children and their caregiver *to have left* the centre premises by 5.30 (or 3.30 if enrolled for School Hours) and so we strongly recommend that you arrive at least 5 minutes before this time to avoid distress to your child and to avoid the possibility of incurring a late penalty.

We ask for your co-operation in dropping off and collecting children within your enrolled hours. If at any time you have an emergency and are going to be delayed, please phone the Centre. Our team can then allay your child's concerns and make plans for their own commitments. A late pick-up fee will be charged.

We will be closed on public holidays and over the Christmas period, typically from Christmas Eve until January 3rd or the Monday of the first full working week after the New Year break. We will notify you of our closed down period dates over the Christmas break usually in November or before.

3.2 What to Bring

Parents need to bring the following items in a named bag.

1. **Milk powder or expressed milk if required.** Either bring enough for the day or feel free to bring in a named and dated when opened container of your preferred milk powder – we will let you know if we need more.
2. **Nappies** if required.
3. **Clothing** Your child will be doing lots of exploring and creating and often they will get messy or dirty. Please make sure you dress your child in clothes that are comfortable and weather appropriate. Preferably three spare sets of named clothes and extra named singlets and a named rash shirt/togs for summer water play, or warm waterproof outside clothes and gumboots in winter. In winter, rain attire and gumboots are essential as we try to be outside as much as possible regardless of the weather. In the Nest we provide waterproof pants for use by all children.
4. **Teddies, Cuddlies, Dummies, etc:** Items your child is attached to for sleep/settling i.e. dummy, teddy bear, named sleeping bag etc. You are also welcome to leave your child's sleeping bag and a named dummy/comforter at the centre.
5. **Sun Hats:**
 - a. *Fledglings and Explorers children:* We provide each child with their own sunhat when they start at TRR which will stay at the centre and all children will wear hats when in the play areas or on excursions during the summer months.
 - b. *Nest children:* Our Nest children often require smaller hats than we are able to provide and often are more likely to wear familiar sun hats from home so please provide a named sunhat that we can keep here at the centre.
6. **Sunscreen:** During the Daylight-saving period of summer, please also ensure your child arrives with sunblock applied in summer and this will be topped up during the day.

Please ensure all your child's belongings are clearly named, including socks (as these are the most common items in lost property). There is a container for unnamed and lost property. Please check this regularly as items that are uncollected after a period are donated.

3.3 Toys from Home

We have carefully selected fun and educational toys and resources for your child to use during their time with us. Apart from the time when they are settling in, when a familiar face or toy can be comforting, we ask that you leave your child's toys at home. Toys can be easily misplaced, and we don't want to be responsible for any heartbreak over misplaced or broken toys.

3.4 Security

We have a key tag entry system, and you will be issued with one or two tags as required when your child starts. A \$20 fee will be charged for lost, replacement or additional tags.

You must keep the tag in a fashion that does not associate it in any way with The Rumpus Room ie please don't write on it. Please notify us immediately if the tag is lost or stolen so we can cancel the tag. On leaving the centre, please return the tags to us.

3.5 Emergency Contacts

Please keep us updated on any changes to your Emergency Contacts, such as grandparents, whānau or friends. We will send reminders every six months for updates about these. Every month we update the printed Emergency Contacts for all children into our evacuation systems, and it is very important these are up to date in case of emergency. If you are not sure who you have listed currently, please ask and we can check for you.

3.6 Carpark Safety

Can you please always use the footpaths in the carparks to move between your car and the entry, rather than walk across the car park directly to the front door. This reduces the risk of accidents significantly.

It is also our preference that parents reverse into the car parks as it is widely considered safer.

4 What happens at The Rumpus Room

4.1 Arriving at the Centre

All parents are required to use their individual code to sign their child in and out of the centre every day using the iPad in the foyer. Do not use anyone else's code. This is a legal requirement by the Ministry of Education and a safety requirement in case of emergency evacuation of the Centre and therefore a very important part of your drop-off and pick-up routine. If you don't have a tag when you arrive, please push the doorbell and one of our team will let you into the centre.

We have bike parking for both adults and children's bikes outside, and to ensure access is not restricted they all need to be kept outside.

Car seats can be stored in the centre during the day if required, but as these are stored in the foyer, we cannot take responsibility for them.

4.2 Leaving the Centre

For safety reasons, entry to the centre can only be gained by a key tag or by being let in by a staff member.

Only authorised people as indicated on the enrolment form will be allowed to collect children from the centre. Where you need to make alternative arrangements, children will only be released to adults authorised by you who can provide positive ID and that we have been verbally informed will be picking up your child.

Please provide copies of any custody arrangements to the centre, as appropriate. A child will not be allowed to go home with a parent/guardian in contravention of a custody/court order held at the centre.

Please don't ever let your child push the exit button on the front door, even if you are carrying them.

4.3 Advising of Absences

We are always concerned about your child's welfare, so if you are aware of any intended absence or your child is absent due to illness, please inform the teaching team or your child's Team Leader.

Can you please use one of the following three options:

1. Email

Please email the teaching team of your child's room, as below. One email to two rooms if you have more than one child is welcome. But please don't email the Team Leader, Head Teacher or Manager in case they are also absent, or the info@ email address as it's not checked by the teachers.

At Point Chev:

The Nest: nestpc@therumpusroom.co.nz
The Overs: overpc@therumpusroom.co.nz

At Waterview:

The Nest: nestwv@therumpusroom.co.nz
The Fledglings: fledglingswv@therumpusroom.co.nz
The Explorers: explorerswv@therumpusroom.co.nz

2. StoryPark

You can create a Child Note from the StoryPark website (<http://app.storypark.com>). Note this feature is not available on the app as yet, only from the website.

3. Phone

Feel free to call us and we suggest saving the centre phone number into your phone, so you call the correct one:

Point Chev 09 845 0123
Waterview 09 820 9204

4.4 Positive Behaviour

Moderating our behaviour is something that we learn as we grow. At The Rumpus Room we acknowledge and accept children's feelings and encourage these feelings to be expressed in an appropriate manner.

Steps that we take towards establishing positive behaviour include:

- Setting and maintaining appropriate limits of behaviour.
- Praising good behaviour.
- Verbal redirection.
- Explaining the appropriate uses of materials and equipment.
- Explaining why behaviour is inappropriate or unacceptable and providing acceptable options.
- Offering children choices and encouraging decision making.
- Setting realistic expectations which are age and stage appropriate.
- Giving children clear boundaries and limits. Instructions will be clear, and children will be given advance warnings of things such as mealtimes, tidy up time, time to move inside etc.
- Providing a stimulating environment to prevent negative behaviour.
- Role modelling appropriate behaviours.
- Supporting children to deal with conflict, and
- Fostering strong social competence skills.

Guidance will never involve any form of physical ill treatment, solitary confinement, immobilisation or deprivation of food or drink.

We will consult with you if we are concerned about your child's behaviour.

We are also more than happy to share the strategies we use if you would like to replicate these at home.

4.5 Outdoor activities

We encourage our children to be in the outdoors as much as possible regardless of the weather and we have designed the centre to allow the children to access the outdoor areas easily. Our outdoor areas provide lots of scope for adventure and for getting dirty so hence our request for changes of clothes in the What to Bring section.

4.6 Sleep

After a busy morning playing, children need a rest.

We have a separate sleep room where children can sleep in accordance with their individual requirements. As part of our enrolment form we have a sleep contract that we require parents to complete alongside our team leader.

It is our policy to not wake before at least 1 sleep cycle– 45 minutes

For our older children, it is our policy that if a child falls asleep, they need a rest and will not be woken unless parents have requested otherwise. Children who do not need sleep will take part in quiet activities.

All children who sleep have linen stored in a named bag, which is laundered once or twice weekly.

4.7 Excursions

We want our centre and our children to be part of our fabulous local community and that means exploring it and getting to know other members of the community.

Excursions will include trips to local parks; local shops; the library; the beach or streams. Parents and whānau are always welcome to take part and, where a trip is planned, we will let you know what is on the agenda via StoryPark

Children aged 4 and over at our Pt Chevalier centre would benefit from having an annual/Friend of the Zoo pass. If your child doesn't have a pass, they are still more than welcome to come on trips to the Zoo, **but we may need to charge \$14 per child for those without a pass and who are over the age of 4 years.**

4.8 Toileting

Children are ready for toilet learning at different ages and it is something our team is very familiar with and so have proven strategies and methods. At the appropriate time, the team will share with you what we know has proven to work to support your child in acquiring this skill. The team have created a document with our tried and tested strategies to support both child and whānau with toilet learning – please feel free to discuss any special needs with our teaching team.

Please send plenty of changes of clothes during this time as a few 'accidents' are unavoidable.

4.9 Teaching team and whānau relations

The bonds between teachers and children and parents often become very strong, however there must always be a boundary, and it should be kept professional. Hence babysitting is not something any of our team members are able to do for whānau, and we also discourage our team from joining the social media of whānau.

5 Your child's well being

5.1 Food

The Rumpus Room has a full kitchen and provides nourishing and healthy meals for the children. We provide lunch, morning and afternoon tea and a late snack. We have a Kai Creator who prepares all of our nutritious meals and on occasion, we use a specialised company who caters for early childhood centres to supply our lunch if our Kai Creator is away. Our meals and menu are designed in line with the Heart Foundation Healthy Heart Guidelines and meet the children's nutritional needs. We have weekly rotating menus of hot and delicious meals for our children to enjoy. We can also cater for most dietary requirements so please talk to the team during enrolment if your child requires special meals.

Our centre is whole egg and nut free, and we aim to have no added sugar or added salt. Please advise us of any food allergies so our team and kai creator can be alerted. All allergies and intolerances of children are displayed in the kitchen and strictly managed.

The Weekly menu can be viewed in the foyer.

5.2 Medication

Please advise the teaching team if your child is taking any medication as we must follow very strict protocols for these.

All medicines must be kept in the kitchen and be signed into our Medication folder. You will be shown this as part of the settling and induction process. The Medication form needs to be filled in before we can administer any medication. Only medication that has a label stating your child's full name, name of medication, amount required to be given and the expiry date will be administered. There are very strict rules that we need to abide by with medication, and we thank you for your patience with this.

5.3 Immunisation

We are required to keep an up-to-date list of all children's immunisation status. Please remember to bring your Well Child Book certificate with you when you enroll your child at the Centre or on your first settling visit.

As your child gets older, they will be moving through the programme of immunisation. Can you please send these updates through to us as they are completed to enrol@therumpusroom.co.nz, or give a copy to your Team Leader. If there is an outbreak of an infectious disease such as measles, we are required by the Ministry to exclude children who we do not have immunisation records for. If your child is not immunised, a letter confirming this needs to be attached to your enrolment form. In the case of an outbreak of such a disease, your child will be asked to stay away from the centre for the duration of the outbreak.

5.4 Illness

Due to the risk of infection, we ask that any child who is unwell be kept at home. You will need to keep your child at home if they have any of the following:

- raised temperatures at 38 degrees or above (The Ministry of Education requires that children must stay at home 24 hours after the temperature has returned to normal),
- vomiting and/or diarrhoea (The Ministry of Education requires that children must stay at home 48 hours after the last bout of vomiting and/or diarrhoea),
- severe cough or colds,
- conjunctivitis: this is extremely contagious and spreads very quickly so is something we are very vigilant about
- rashes.

If symptoms develop during the day the parent will be contacted to arrange for the immediate collection of their child.

If your child has contracted a notifiable or infectious disease such as giardia, mumps, chickenpox etc please let us know so that other parents can be advised. Your child should be kept away from the centre for the required length of time as per the communicable diseases chart, which is on display in the centre.

We would appreciate it if you could advise us if your child has head lice/nits. Please be aware children are unable to come into the centre with head lice treatment in their hair due to allergies. All treatments must be carried out at home and rinsed out before returning to the centre the following day.

Illness and starting at the centre

It is common that when children first transition from home to a community environment such as ours they are exposed to coughs, colds and bugs going around at the time and often get sick. This can then be a difficult time for whānau to manage their own leave if they are working and so we suggest thinking about utilising any support available to spread the load from the outset. This likelihood is hard to predict as it depends on

the child and many other factors, but it is something we would say that happens often and lasts for a month or two and so is something to be mindful of and worth planning for.

5.5 Accidents

Accidents can happen but we are always prepared. There is always a certified First Aid qualified teacher at the centre, and we are equipped with first aid equipment. Any injuries are recorded in the incident register and reported to parents, which will need to be signed for.

In the event of an emergency, we will attempt to contact you or your authorised emergency contacts immediately. If we cannot contact you, we will seek medical or other advice in the best interests of your child.

5.6 Civil Defence Emergencies

We are prepared for emergencies and practice drills for fire and earthquakes regularly. Supplies are kept on hand for other emergencies and our team are trained to know what to do in those situations.

6 Fees and Funding

6.1 Fees

Please refer to the Fees Schedule that is included in your child's enrolment pack or on our website for full details, but please note the following:

All fees must be paid by automatic payment or direct debit in advance, preferably fortnightly. Fees are payable for the whole year other than an approximate two-week period during which the centre is closed over the Christmas period. Our program and licensing regulations require us to engage teachers based on the number of children enrolled so we cannot provide deductions for periods when your child is absent due to illness or holiday, or for statutory holidays.

The Fees Schedule also includes full details on:

- 20 Hours ECE
- Extended absences over three weeks (due to MOE funding rules, the extra fees due in this instance can be an unwelcome surprise)
- Our annual review of fees
- Late pick up
- Non-payment and bad debts
- Illness, outbreaks, etc

6.2 Ministry of Education: Funding and ERO

The Rumpus Room receives bulk funding from the Ministry of Education. This funding is used to provide a quality programme for the children that attend. The Education Review Office reviews the centre every three years of operation to ensure quality of education and compliance with regulations.

Our ERO reports can be found at www.ero.govt.nz

7 Enrolment

7.1 Notice periods to change of enrolment and of permanently leaving the centre

You must give us at least one month's notice before withdrawing your child from the centre.

If you wish to change your enrolled days, please notify us as soon as possible and we will endeavor to accommodate your requests or put your child on a waitlist for the requested days. Enrolment changes must be emailed to the Centre Manager, and we ask for at least two weeks' notice for any potential changes.

A child's last day at The Rumpus Room will automatically be set as the day after their 5th Birthday unless we are otherwise notified. Notification of this should be given to the Centre Manager as soon as possible as it may affect other children waiting for the space.

8 Feedback, Concerns and Complaints

Parents should feel free to discuss any queries or problems with their Team Leader, the Head Teacher or the Centre Manager and we really welcome your feedback.

Please bear in mind that busy drop-off or pick-up times may not always be an appropriate time to have detailed discussions on your child's or your needs, and you may need to schedule an appointment at another time. We will always make time to have these conversations with you at a time that works best for you and our centre.

Every year we send out a Whānau Survey where your feedback is also sought, and this can be done anonymously if desired.

We also update our Policies periodically and your input is sought for those.

Our Policy and process for dealing with complaints is displayed in the foyer.

Point Chevalier Centre
7 Moa Road
Point Chevalier
Auckland 1022
info@therumpusroom.co.nz
therumpusroom.co.nz

Waterview Centre
5 Alford St
Waterview
Auckland 1026
info@therumpusroom.co.nz
therumpusroom.co.nz

