

# Oamaru Kindergarten Association Newsletter

## OKA Website Updated

OKA have recently updated their website with new and updated material, including links to EDUCA and a portal for new and prospective enrollees to download documents.

The original site was established almost 10 years ago and has had regular updates as timely information was made available and considered necessary to be made available to OKA parents, caregivers and stakeholders.

Website upgrades were always planned, and information received by OKA following a recent survey of parents, caregivers and other stakeholders, was acted upon quickly by OKA General Manager Julie Craig in conjunction with Communications Administrator Sali Gough.

The new site contains profiles of each of the OKA kindergartens, including head teachers and contact information; and contains Board meeting minutes; Strategic Framework of OKA; Term Dates; ERO Reports for each of the OKA Kindergartens; and, the Child Protection Policy.

The web site is also flexible with the ability to upload vital information within hours of its announcement, such as Covid-19 updates.

Documents able to be accessed and downloaded on the website include enrolment forms; Fees and Funding; Term Dates and EDUCA material.

"The new website takes into consideration what our survey of OKA supporters wanted and the design work by Communications Administrator Sali Gough has given the website an up-to-the minute in look and information," OKA General Manager Julie Craig said.

I thoroughly enjoyed visiting all of the kindergartens to take photos and to meet the teachers while updating the website. I currently manage the website, uploading new documents and updated procedures regularly. I also post a lot of important information on Facebook and Educa in order to keep everyone up to date with new information. I look forward to getting to know you all and building an interactive online community together.

- Sali Gough, Communications Administrator



## Newly appointed to OKA – Shirley McVie

Shirley McVie, newly appointed as Family Whānau Support Worker in Early Childhood, with OKA (Oamaru Kindergarten Association), comes to the role with a suite of experience and qualifications.

Shirley holds a Diploma in Teaching (Early Childhood Education), and has over 30 years' experience working in the early childhood sector. During her career she has also worked with Plunket as a PAFT (Parents as First Teachers) educator.

This new role at OKA offers a range of services, free of charge, to assist children and their families or caregivers.

"I am here to give families the tools to cope with the issues they currently have or may have in the future," Shirley says.

"My vision is to empower parents and children to do well and to have happy, well supported lives and to ensure better outcomes for the child or children.

Initial contact is either by telephone, email or through a Head Kindergarten teacher.

"Parents who have concerns with issues such as behaviour; toilet learning which includes the transition from using nappies to using the toilet; child development and stages; cooking; family harm and grief and loss, are the prime areas my work covers and I welcome parents or caregivers making contact with me.

"They may also have issues, for example, with isolation, living a distance from town with limited means of access to a township and as a result, limited contact with other families.

I can assist with improving that contact.

"My vision is to provide better outcomes for parents, caregivers and children," says Shirley.

"My advice and help is free of charge, non-judgemental, aims to build better relationships, provide support, to listen and for parents to feel they can trust me and feel comfortable when we meet.

"Where other assistance is required such as budgeting or medical, these will be referred to the appropriate agencies."

"I look forward to meeting you and growing a partnership to nurture and support your parenting role. The Child, the Heart of the Matter, Ko to Tamaiti tu Pūtake o te Kaupapa."

### Contact details:

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## THANK YOU!!

At the end of 2020 OKA sent out a survey to all families attending and on the waiting list to gain information to support the OKA Board's decision making.

We got a great response with a wide range of amazing feedback that will be useful for the Board as they plan and make decisions during 2021.

Some of the feedback was about the OKA website and we have taken that feedback and updated the website and added in the information that you were looking for.

Because this survey was so useful, we will be doing it again at the end of 2021.

We will be keen to get your feedback again and we will be looking at different ways to engage with the wider community as we would love to hear from families who did not choose kindergarten for their children.

## A fun day for the OKA Governing Board

We were privileged to host Jill Bond the Chief Executive from the New Zealand Kindergartens on the 06th of November 2020.

The OKA Board are very committed to ongoing professional development so Jill was here to support them to continue with growing and strengthening governance for OKA. This was a great day with lots of new and exciting challenges for us all to work together on.

Having Jill visiting the Association also gave us an opportunity to hear first-hand about what is going on nationally with Early Childhood.

We look forward to working again with Jill in June this year.

If you are interested in finding out more about the OKA Board or are interested in becoming a Board Member do not hesitate to contact either:

**Rosalie Hyslop - President**  
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