

Enrolment and Maintenance of Special Character Policy for Wā Ora Montessori School

Wā Ora Montessori Area School's special character is built on the authentic Montessori experience of its new entrants and enrolments. Only 10% of ākonga in the area school can be non-preference. This policy defines preference and non-preference and the way new ākonga can be admitted into the school.

Definitions (in alphabetical order)

'Admission Priority' - Preschool - Admission priority is applied to pre-enrolled tamariki (child/ren) for an available space in a particular cohort in the following order:

1. Siblings of current ākonga (students) attending Wā Ora Montessori preschool or area school, who are intending to stay for the full programme through to 18 years.
2. Children of past ākonga (students) who attended six years or more from 3 years of age, who are intending to stay for the full programme through to 18 years.
3. Tamariki (child/ren) with previous authentic (see definition below) Montessori experience equivalent to at least 20 hours per week since three years of age, who are intending to complete the programme through to 18 years.
4. Tamariki (child/ren) of past ākonga (students), who attended for between 3-5 years at Wā Ora Montessori School and are intending to stay for the full programme through to 18 years.
5. New applicants intending to stay for the full programme through to 18 years.
6. New applicants intending to stay for the full preschool programme.

For tamariki (children) where everything else is equal, preference is given to the length of time on the waiting list. For tamariki (children) who have been on the waiting list the same amount of time and where everything else is equal, preference is given to those who have attended playgroup for at least two terms. *Please note that pre-enrolling tamariki (children) does not guarantee placement.*

'Area School' - For the purposes of this document, the area school is the primary school and the high school.

'Authentic' - For the purposes of this document, a centre or preschool will be deemed to be authentic when it uses only Montessori philosophy to determine its programme and where the child's classroom head kaiako (teacher) (with the child the majority of each day) has specialist Montessori qualifications for the age group they teach with a face-to-face component of more than 160 hours (3-6) and 320 hours (6-12) plus supervised practice and teaching

practice in Montessori classes as defined in Montessori Journey to Excellence (MJ2Ex).

'Non –Preference' – Area School - Applications from whānau (families) who do not meet either of the criteria for 'preference' will be classified as 'non-preference'.

Selection for the primary school and high school for ākonga (students) of non-preference whānau (families) is made during term 3 of each year for admission in term 1 of the following year and all applications on file as at 31st August are considered. These places are identified for ākonga (students) in particular year groups/cohorts – they are not general openings. The process to determine allocation is as follows:

1. The waiting list will be consulted to ascertain if there are applicants in the identified cohorts.
2. The whānau (family) of any applications in the identified cohorts will be contacted to attend an interview with the Principal and appropriate members of the Senior Leadership Team to determine their alignment with the special character of the school.
3. After the interview, the prospective ākonga (student) will visit the school for up to a week (primary and adolescent programme), to ascertain fit from both whānau (family) and school perspective. The prospective college ākonga (student) will visit the school for a shorter time.
4. At the conclusion of this visit, the Principal will seek feedback from both the family and the class teacher regarding the visit prior to making a decision.
5. At the conclusion of the visits of all prospective ākonga (students), the Principal will then allocate places on the following priority basis, the Board having delegated responsibility to the Principal in this matter. Should all of the following be equal, the place will be allocated by ballot:
 - a. Siblings of current ākonga (students) attending Wā Ora Montessori preschool or area school, providing there is a fit with the Montessori philosophy.
 - b. Applicant fit with the philosophy of the school
 - c. Length of any prior Montessori experience
 - d. Time spent on the waiting list
6. Places are offered after all interviews and visits are complete.
7. A family has two weeks to accept or decline a place.

If whānau (parents) turn down the offer of an area school place for their non-preference child, they can choose to have tamaiti (their child) remain on the waiting list, but tamaiti (the child) will be moved to the bottom of the waiting list.

If a child is withdrawn from the primary school, any siblings already in the preschool and those on the waiting list will lose their place. Those siblings not yet on the waiting list will be unable to apply for the waiting list.

'Preference' - Area School - Preference is given to pre-enrolled whānau (families) for an available space in a particular cohort of the area school if they meet one of the two following criteria:

- Whānau (families) whose tamariki (children) have been continuously enrolled at Wā Ora Montessori, since the age of three, for five days a week (including 9am–3pm from the age of 5 years).
- Whānau (families) who have enrolled tamariki (children) aged 6 years and older in an alternative authentic Montessori school (defined above), where they have attended continuously, five days a week since the age of 3 years, including 9am–3pm, from the age of 5 years.

Admission and Selection into Wā Ora Montessori Preschool

Enrolment in the preschool happens around a child's third birthday and is for a 'place' which is for 31.25 hours. 20 hours is covered by the '20 ECE funding from the Ministry of Education.' The remaining 11.25 hours is covered by fees paid by whānau (parents). The responsibility for paying for this place remains with whānau (parents) whether or not they choose to use it entirely. The minimum attendance is five full mornings, from 8.45am to 1pm. Tamariki (children) must be attending five days per week, 8.45am–3pm, by 5 years of age.

Where a child is absent for more than three weeks, Ministry of Education funding is no longer available to fund the place. Except in the cases of illnesses, where an exemption may be applied for, the loss in funding from the Ministry of Education will need to be covered by whānau (parents) in addition to their school fees or the place will be forfeit.

A restriction on the number of preschool places available is based on statutory and early childhood kaiako (teacher) / tamaiti (child) ratios.

Selection and admission into Wā Ora Montessori Area School

If there is room within the area school's roll cap, children of whānau (parents) whose applications meet the criteria for preference will be placed. Selection for the primary and high schools for ākonga (students) of non-preference whānau (families) is secondary and is also subject to a limit of 10% non-preference ākonga (students) in the school at any one time to meet Wā Ora's Integration Agreement. *Please note Wā Ora is not required to have 10% non-preference ākonga enrolled in the school at any one time.* Having completed a 3 year cycle within a 6-9, 9-12 or 12-15 class, a non preference ākonga (student) may be considered as having moved from non-preference to preference if they now display the dispositions and attributes of a Montessori child.

Notification of Withdrawal

Whānau (parents) with preschool children must give 10 weeks notice of removing their child. Where the notice period extends into the next term, a pro-rata amount will be charged in lieu of the full term's fees.

The intention of this condition (also laid out in the Enrolment Agreement) is not to unnecessarily restrict whānau (parents), but rather to allow Wā Ora Montessori School to plan with confidence. The school relies on whānau (parents) contributions and cannot budget efficiently if insufficient notice is given. Special circumstances, as always, will be considered if the Board/Council receives a request for dispensation in writing.

In the Area School if ākonga (a student) leaves Wā Ora and then later wishes to return, he/she must do so within six term weeks of his/her last day of attendance, otherwise there is no guarantee of the place still being available. If ākonga is away from Wā Ora longer than the 6 term-weeks period and his/her place is forfeit, he/she can go on to the waiting list for consideration for re-entry into the school at the time of the next annual consideration for placements for the following year. Their application will no longer qualify as preference.

The bond is non-refundable if the last tamariki (child) of a family leaves before full completion of our preschool programme.

Disenrolment in Area School

Students are required to attend school whenever it is open. A holiday is not a good enough reason to be absent, and holidays should be planned for outside of term time. If whānau (a family) wishes to take their tamariki (children) out of school for reasons other than sickness or an appointment, please make an appointment to meet with the Principal.

If ākonga (a student) is away from Wā Ora for more than 20 consecutive school days, his/her place will be forfeit and ākonga will be disenrolled accordingly as per Ministry of Education regulations. He/she can go on to the waiting list for consideration for re-entry into the school at the time of the next annual consideration for placements for the following year. Ākonga (the student's) application will no longer qualify as preference.

The following procedures exist:

- Enrolment, Admission, Withdrawal and Disenrolment
- Placement of Siblings

Signature of Chairperson, Wā Ora Montessori School



Date

23/11/21