



Job Description

Kindergarten Assistant

Purpose

The Kindergarten Assistant works with an assigned Kindergarten Teacher to ensure the smooth running of the daily routine, and thus enabling the teacher to deliver a high-quality Waldorf Kindergarten programme.

Employer:	Kapiti Waldorf Trust
Reports to:	Kindergarten Kaiārahi
Liaises with:	Kindergarten Teachers, Faculty, Administration
Hours:	8:45 – 2:00 (Mondays to Fridays)
Salary:	\$20.50 per hour, holiday pay inclusive contract rate; paid in arrears upon filing of a timesheet

Key Responsibilities

- To assist with a range of tasks in the Kindergarten: cooking, cleaning, gardening, dishes, washing linen, and other general housekeeping duties, as required
- To attend to children as required
- To supervise a group during brief teacher breaks
- To abide by the Code of Conduct and the relevant employment agreement

Person specification and selection

Qualification/experience

- Some experience working with children is desirable

Competencies and attributes:

- An openness to working with the principles of child development and education arising out of Anthroposophy
- Love for young children and compassionate warmth for parents
- Excellent relationship and people skills
- Excellent team working skills
- Sense of humour

Kindergarten Assistant – General Expectations

We would like the assistant to meet the daily tasks with slow, conscious, clear direction and intention. The children will see that you are busy at work, not flustered or rushed, and that you are calm and confident.

The assistant works quietly and methodically, not engaging directly with the children unless approached or asked to do so by the teacher. Kindergarten-age children live in a state of dream consciousness and learn through imitation. We like to keep conversation simple and clear; only giving instruction when necessary. For example, if a child asks to help chop fruit, we set them up with a board and a knife next to us and let them watch and imitate as we work. They will pick up the equipment and follow instinctively, more often than not. When folding muslins it is tempting to say "take the corners, fold it in half" but, experiment, try doing it without or with little words and see the result. Observe the children.

As an assistant you will hopefully gain and deepen your understanding of Waldorf education, its principles and practices. The teacher is happy to answer questions relating to our philosophy, at the end of the day, or discuss with you the day's events. Your observations of the children are most useful to the teacher and she may ask you on occasion to discuss certain children or write something down.

It is important to be punctual and tidy in presentation. It is preferred if plain, light-coloured clothes and little jewellery or perfume are worn. You will need plain slippers for inside and a hat for when you are outside. An apron is useful.

We ask that assistants arrive ready to convey a relaxed, peaceful and quietly joyful mood, and ready for work. It is important, however, that, if there are any unsettling issues or concerns that need mentioning, to let the teacher know briefly first thing, so as not to carry them unaided throughout the day. Similarly, let the teacher know if you have any difficulties arising through the day.

Confidentiality

The assistant will build up a close working relationship with one teacher. Confidentiality is vital at all times. Even the simplest of observations or comments can be taken out of context. Please do not discuss any of the children and actions, however fine they might seem to you or others. If a parent asks you about their child, please direct them to the child's teacher.



Special Character Guiding Principles

19 October 2014

Child Development

Te Rā is a Waldorf school. Understanding the child as a being of body, soul and spirit is a core principle on which Waldorf education is built. Teachers carry a loving respect for the dignity and unique individuality of each child, and recognize the child as a being of doing, feeling and thinking. These three soul faculties manifest in different ways at different ages, and the Waldorf curriculum is designed to work with, and support, their development.

For the child's body, soul and spirit to integrate in a healthy and age-appropriate way, we distinguish three phases of childhood which shape the way children learn: in the years 0-7, children learn, through imitation and play, about the essential goodness in the world; in the years 7-14, the school curriculum aims to inspire children with a sense of wonder at the beauty around them; in the years 14-21, young people are guided toward independent thinking through which they can endeavour to find their own truth, now imbued with the earlier foundations of beauty and goodness, and thereby become free, self-determining adults.

Waldorf Curriculum - Schooling the Hands, Heart and Head

The education from playgroup, nursery and kindergarten through to primary school is an integrated journey. The curriculum is comprehensive and holistic. Each part arises from this distinctive picture of child development in its own particular way. Teachers strive to educate and develop all aspects of the child's being in a healthy and unhurried manner: physical, practical, emotional, artistic, intellectual, moral, social, cultural and spiritual. In broad terms, the education aims to integrate art, science and spirituality. Within this framework, the curriculum is adapted to reflect the unique needs of each class.

Waldorf education nurtures a sense of wonder and reverence. It is open to all faiths without giving religious instruction, celebrating our common humanity. In marking the passage of time through the year, Christian festivals are celebrated together with Matariki and other cultural and seasonal festivals.

The school draws on a century of Waldorf practice, assessing applicability of practice within a contemporary light for the context of Aotearoa today. We are committed to the ongoing evaluation of curriculum content, current processes, structure and practices within the school.

Waldorf Teachers

Our teachers are informed by more than a century of Waldorf pedagogy and practice, based on an understanding of child development from both a physical and spiritual perspective. They are required to have training in Waldorf Education as well as a NZQA-approved qualification in teaching. Teachers are expected to commit to the ongoing study of Waldorf pedagogy, with a preparedness to take on their own path of inner personal development. Te Rā School promotes a setting in which teachers have the freedom to work creatively and artistically within the curriculum. Kindergarten teachers, where possible, remain with the child throughout their three-year kindergarten journey, and class teachers, where possible, remain with their classes for the seven-year primary school journey. This allows for a deepening human connection, and for a greater understanding of each child's development.

Waldorf Parents

Active partnership with parents in the educational process and cultural life of the school is a fundamental element of our "Special Character". To ensure the best outcome for the child's learning, parents are asked to provide a home life that supports and fosters the learning environment of the school and kindergartens.

College of Teachers

The College of Teachers is a group of teachers working at the management level. It is based on collegial leadership, collectively carrying the role of Principal as a team and sharing the responsibility for maintaining the special character that is inherent in all aspects of school life. The College exists to implement the principles upon which a Waldorf School is founded, i.e. 'self administration by the teachers in a non-hierarchical structure'. The School Coordinator carries the legal role and responsibility of the Principal within the framework of being an integrated school.

Waldorf Education in the wider context

Waldorf education was originally created by the Austrian philosopher, educator, artist and scientist Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925) and is based on educational principles arising out of anthroposophy. However, Te Rā is not bound to the words of Rudolf Steiner or anthroposophy. Te Rā Waldorf School also derives its impulse from its place on the Kapiti Coast, its time context as a school in the 21st century and its multi-cultural community built on the bi-cultural foundation of Aotearoa New Zealand.

Exploring anthroposophy beyond pedagogical principles is a matter of personal choice for teachers, parents and whānau. Examples of practical applications of anthroposophy can be found in economics (ethical banking, e.g. Prometheus bank), curative homes (e.g. Hohepa homes), medicine and pharmacology (e.g. Dr. Hauschka and Weleda products), performing arts (eurythmy, speech and drama), and agriculture (biodynamics, eg. Demeter certification).

Te Tiriti o Waitangi

Te Ra Waldorf School, as a school in Aotearoa New Zealand, is unconditionally committed to upholding the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi - the Treaty of Waitangi.

Equity and Diversity

Te Ra Waldorf School welcomes and celebrates the ethnicity and culture of every member of our community – child, parent, whānau and staff member – as enriching our diversity. While some of Rudolf Steiner's writings, originating at the turn of last century, contain discriminatory statements, at Te Ra we reject these and any other sentiments that have the potential to engender discrimination on any ground. In response, we have developed our "Declaration Against Discrimination" (enclosed herein or refer to www.tera.school.nz) to describe the ethos of inclusion and respect that we, as a community, are committed to upholding.



DECLARATION AGAINST DISCRIMINATION

Te Rā Waldorf School, on the Kapiti Coast, welcomes and celebrates the ethnicity and culture of every member of our community – child, parent, whanau, staff member – as enriching our diversity. The Kapiti Waldorf Trust, Board of Trustees, College of Teachers, Faculty and parent community board this waka which values our diversity and our great potential to contribute to the full embrace of Aotearoa’s bi-cultural status and multi-cultural identity.

Te Rā Waldorf School as a school in Aotearoa New Zealand is unconditionally committed to upholding the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi - The Treaty of Waitangi. Out of this commitment and within the worldwide Waldorf school framework, Te Ra Waldorf School does not support Rudolf Steiner’s statements on race.

Te Rā Waldorf School commits to the ongoing evaluation of current processes, structures and practices within the school to ensure our declaration against discrimination is fully realised. This is a living document, and as such informs the Te Ra Waldorf School Strategic Plan.

"Piki, heke, te mutunga he aiō - There are ups and downs, but in the end all is peaceful."

Waldorf Schools Framework

- Waldorf schools pursue their pedagogical tasks out of the spirit of human rights, thereby contributing to building a society founded upon mutual respect, tolerance and cooperation between all human beings.
- Waldorf schools do not select, stratify or discriminate amongst their pupils and consider all human beings to be free and equal in dignity and rights, independent of ethnicity, nationality or social origin, gender, language, religion, or political convictions.
- The spiritual science of anthroposophy, upon which Waldorf education is founded, today rejects all forms of racism and nationalism. The Waldorf schools are aware, however, that there are words, ideas and statements in Rudolf Steiner's complete works which are not in concordance with this fundamental direction, are discriminatory, and rightfully regarded as offensive in this day and age.*
- Racism and discrimination are not tolerated in Waldorf schools or teacher education institutes. The Waldorf school movement explicitly rejects any attempt to misappropriate Waldorf pedagogy or Rudolf Steiner's work for racist or nationalistic purposes.
- Waldorf schools have been working on the basis of these preceding principles since the first school was founded in 1919. Institutions working out of Waldorf education are today engaged throughout the world, on all continents.

Based on the Stuttgart Declaration by the Association of Waldorf Schools (Bund Der Freien Waldorfschulen), 2007.

Receive the child in reverence, educate him/her in love and let him/her go forth in freedom.

Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925)

College of Teachers of Te Ra Waldorf School and Kapiti Waldorf Trust, 21 November 2012

* Anthroposophy as spiritual science is not bound to the words of Rudolf Steiner. As is the case with all other sciences, Anthroposophy is constantly 'becoming'; concepts from 100 years ago may be discarded today as they are held to be no longer true.

Position elements table

Elements of the position:	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Level of skill and knowledge	The position requires basic skills and knowledge including communication, literacy, and the ability to interact and build relationships with other people.	The position also requires specific skills and knowledge relevant to the role.	Highly-developed skills and knowledge, relevant to the position, are required.	Advanced specialist skills and knowledge, relevant to the position, are required.
Degree of problem-solving ability	The position requires the ability to identify basic problems and take appropriate action.	The position requires the ability to identify and take appropriate action to solve intermediate level problems.	The position requires the ability to identify and resolve complex problems.	The position requires the use of specialist skills and knowledge to anticipate, identify and resolve complex problems.
Degree of freedom to act independently	The position involves following instructions and carrying out set duties and tasks within defined procedures.	The position allows a degree of initiative in carrying out duties and tasks within defined procedures.	The position allows for initiative and flexibility in carrying out duties and tasks, including implementing procedures and adapting these to suit particular situations.	The position also involves the development and maintenance of procedures and/or systems as required, as well as ensuring these are effective and followed appropriately.
Degree of accountability	As the position is likely to operate within defined parameters, there is minimal accountability associated with the position.	As the position involves some decision-making, within defined parameters, there is limited accountability associated with the position.	The position involves greater flexibility to make decisions which carry risk. Accountability in the position will therefore require such decisions to be explained and justified.	The position involves significant accountability and risk. There is expectation to report and justify decisions to the SMT and/or the Board.
Level of supervision and/or management	None.	The position occasionally involves supervision and/or oversight of others' work.	The position usually involves supervision and/or oversight of others' work.	The position will involve supervision of others' work and is likely to involve management of staff.