

MAGIC GARDEN – OUR THREE CENTRES

Welcome to Magic Garden and our community of families in Browns Bay, North Shore. For more detail you can visit our website, www.magicgarden.co.nz.

Magic Garden consists of three licensed centres in one complex, within the suburb of Northcross, upper Browns Bay. The first centre was built in 2001, while the other centres were built in the same architectural style after the first centre was established. Magic Garden is on an arterial route to Albany a major shopping centre, with the East Coast beaches of Browns Bay, Waiake and Long Bay in proximity. There are shops across the road from the centre and feeder schools nearby. The site is elevated with views of the Hauraki Gulf.

Magic Garden was purpose designed for childcare. It has trees, planting, grass and large buildings filled with glass. It reflects the type of community it is in - a suburb of houses with gardens. The structural usage of the centres inside and out is flexible with an emphasis on an appreciation of natural resources. We are rich in natural beauty in our community. With such richness in our locality it was obvious to adopt the Reggio Emilia approach with the environment being our third teacher.

The owner, Jenni Jones, is the manager and licensee, and she works at the centre alongside all the other staff. There are stable, friendly, and enthusiastic teacher teams. Children start as 'babies' and leave when it is time for school. It has become a mini-community of children, families and teachers with many families knowing each other or returning with new family members. Most of the teachers are qualified or are in training and represent different cultures. Professional development is a strong component of being a teacher here. Our environment is transparent with glass and natural materials supporting our approach, relationships are central to all that we do and our documentation is used to show families and children how their children learn.

We pride in being strongly influenced by the Reggio Emilia philosophy and practices, the RIE principles and the Magda Gerber approach. We see ourselves on our journey towards knowing the best way of children learning: our waka encourages our teachers to collect ideas, gather ferns of visiting speaker's ideas, experiment with the new alongside the paddle of familiar theories and thinking while continuing to fish for better ways of doing things. We move in the slipstream of Reggio Emilia and Magda Gerber. *Te Whāriki* is one of our paddles, schema another. Centre research projects guide our direction. We are busily eclectic, valuing each other in a voyage of respect and learning.