

Starting school at Marshall Laing

Starting School

Starting School is an exciting time and an important step in your child's and your family's life. At Marshall Laing Primary, we provide children with many new experiences as well as building on their prior experiences from early childhood and family life. At the new entrant level, developing confidence, independence, and social skills are as important as developing academic skills.

Enrolment procedures

We encourage whānau (family) or caregivers to contact the school as early as possible prior to their child's fifth birthday – at least six weeks in advance is advisable. We would love to give you a guided tour of the school and encourage whānau to make an appointment through the office.

When you come in to enrol your child, you will be given enrolment forms to complete, and the office staff will be able to answer your questions. We are required to take a copy of your child's birth certificate, and an immunisation certificate from a doctor.

For some children and whānau, a longer transition to school is beneficial. If you wish to enrol a child with any additional needs, we recommend you make contact at an earlier time – even up to six months or a year prior to your child starting. This way we can work together to make starting school a positive transition for your child.

School Visits

Visiting school before your child starts helps them to know what to expect and to become familiar with the school environment. We encourage at least two morning visits. All visits take place on a Tuesday morning from 8:55am – 10.20am. Please come to the office on your visit by 8:55am and we will show you to the classroom. We would prefer you to make alternative arrangements for preschoolers during these visits, but we appreciate that this is not always possible.

Staying with your child for some of the visit helps you to get to know what school is like so you can talk about it with your child later. Depending on how settled your child is, it may be helpful to leave them alone at some stage of the visit - you and your child's teacher can decide when is the best time for you to leave.

If you have any questions about this process, please contact Shilpa Soysa (Deputy Principal) - shilpas@marshall.school.nz

Starting School – The First Day

Come to the school office to complete the enrolment procedure before going to the classroom. Then, we will show you to the classroom where the class teacher will welcome you.

The school day starts at 8:55am. It is a good idea to be at school by 8:45am to allow time for your child to prepare for the day and to socialise with the class teacher and their friends.

School finishes at 3pm and we ask all whānau of New Entrant children to collect their child from the classroom. Please wait outside the classroom for your child. If you have alternative arrangements for home time, please talk to your child's teacher.

Home and school working together

At Marshall Laing Primary School, we have four values that underpin everything we do at school. These may be familiar to you from early childhood, or might be values that you hold at home.

Whakawhanaungatanga

Whakawhanaungatanga is about being cooperative, collaborative, empathetic and connected. A wonderful part of being at school is making new friends, and continuing friendships with people your child may already know. You can support their relationship development by

- Encouraging your child to expect equal relationships of giving and turn-taking.
- Practising sharing at home by asking, "Can I have a turn when you have finished?" and the other person handing the item over when they have had their turn.
- Working together with your child to complete household tasks.

Manaakitanga

Showing manaakitanga is being inclusive, generous and supportive and being a kaitiaki by caring for resources. Some ways to develop these traits at home are:

- Having a regular tidy-up time at home.
- Noticing and affirming when your child cares for others.
- Using the words *generous*, *helpful*, *including* and *supportive* (in English or your home language) to describe their behaviour.

Rangatiratanga

This value is about being resilient, confident, reflective and independent. Some examples of how you can help to develop these attributes at home are:

- Giving them opportunities in which they can experience success and are congratulated when doing new things.
- Talking to them about learning lots of new things at school, providing them with chances to take risks, and encouragement to try things they may feel insecure about.
- Allowing your child to hear the word “no” and for them to feel the disappointment that goes with it. Help them to think of alternatives and move beyond their disappointment.
- Having clear and achievable expectations about what your child is expected to do and helping them to be organised for this.
- Supporting them to develop independence at school:
 - Encourage your child to wear footwear that they can manage. Velcro shoes and sandals are much quicker and easier than laces and buckles. In wet weather, children sometimes need to remove their shoes.
 - Make sure their school bag is big enough to fit their lunch box, book bag, water bottle and a change of clothes with room to spare. It’s easier if they can fit *everything* inside one bag and don’t have to pack it in a special way to make it all fit.
 - Particularly for swimming, children need to be able to take off their own clothes and put them in a sensible place so they remember where they are.
 - Name every item of clothing your child brings to school.
 - Allow your child to carry their own bag and hang it up independently.

Mōhiotanga

In new entrants, we work on being problem-solver, language user, curious and creative, and critical thinker. Here are some examples of things you can do at home:

- Support your child to solve problems themselves in the first instance: instead of telling them how to solve the problem, ask them “What do you think we could do?”
- Provide opportunities for your child to actively listen to instructions to complete simple tasks.

- Continue using your home language if English is not your whānau's first language. When children have a strong understanding of concepts and ideas in their first language, it supports their English language development.

Food at school

Morning tea and lunchtime can initially be overwhelming for children when they first start school, and you may find they don't eat all their lunch in the first few weeks of school. As they become used to the morning tea and lunchtime routines, this will change. If you have any concerns, please talk to your child's teacher.

You can help by making sure your child can/are:

- Open their lunch box and drink bottle
- Open packets of food, eg. chips, muesli bars (*snipping the corner or semi-opening the packet is helpful*)
- Unwrap their sandwiches (*glad wrap can be tricky!*)
- Give your child food they can manage themselves – if there are packets in their lunch box, can they open them? Put a small slit in the package when you pack their food so they can just rip the packets open.
- Can they peel their fruit? You might want to put already peeled, and chopped fruit in a small container for them to eat, or cut up fruit like apples and pears. In general, children do not want to spend any more time eating than necessary.
- Work together with your child to decide which foods go in their lunchbox. If they like particular healthy foods you are giving them, they are more likely to eat!