We're YOUR LOCAL KINDERGARTENS

AND We HAVE BEEN FOR 100 YEARS!

THROUGH GOOD TIMES, TRYING TIMES, WARS, AND EARTHQUAKES... We're STILL HERE

GENERATIONS OF KIWI KIDS HAVE COME TO US TO LEARN, PLAY AND HAVE FUN...

100 YEARS YOUNG
1911~2011

THEN & NOW

WHILE MUCH HAS CHANGED, OUR VALUES HAVE STAYED THE SAME.

A century ago, our first kindergarten opened. Today this kindergarten is known as KidsFirst Sunbeam and it still welcomes excited and enthusiastic children through its doors.

The goal was to provide "a great start" for young children in terms of education and socialisation, because children were seen as the key to the future. That goal is still at the heart of what we do.

First and foremost, we are here for the children who come to us, their families and their whanau.

KidsFirst has always been about education and development, not just play. We're at the very heart of our communities, in the middle of our neighbourhoods and we've been here for generations.

A former Director of Education, Dr C. E. Beeby, said that kindergarten is

"a gallant story of the devoted work of many people for something which they thought worthwhile". That sentiment remains at the heart of KidsFirst today, as the combined efforts of our parents, teachers, supporters, donors, volunteers and funders ensure that a kindergarten education remains an option for generations to come. Kindergarten has long been an integral part of the Canterbury and West Coast family life. It remains a very 'Kiwi' way of life.

Today, more than sixty KidsFirst Kindergartens provide high quality, teacher-led services to about 4,500 children across Canterbury and Westland. We are proud to be a vibrant and successful organisation, with a remarkable heritage behind us and a great future in front of us.

ABOVE: Images from 100 years of Kindergarten in Christchurch, Canterbury and Westland, including our first kindergarten – Sunbeam – in 1911.

FAR LEFT: Inside Phillipstown kindergarten in 1931. Peter Fraser, Minister of Education opens the new Richmond Kindergarten in 1936. Edmonds Swirk Street in the seventies, teachers receive some instruction on painting and children playing dress-up in the toilet's.

LEFT: Home time in the thirties, a picnic celebration in the park.

There is something about the sound of a group of three and four year olds playing and laughing that crosses time and generations. Looking back at the photos from the past you see the same sorts of smiles on the same kinds of young faces, filled with wonder at discovering new things – excited about making new friends, being independent, giving things a go, painting or starting to read or write.

Kindergarten is a truly special experience.

It is so important for children of this age to get together and learn to socialise and interact with each other, to co-operate and have fun as a group.

Within these environments they can grow and develop. This is where some of the skills they need later in life begin to get formed. The early years are such an important foundation, educationally, socially and developmentally that they are our sole focus at KidsFirst Kindergartens.

We're sure we have some of the business leaders of tomorrow playing on our swings. We have artists and cooks helping with our community gardens. We have potential politicians leading mat time. There are future captains of industry on the computers. The builders, plumbers and electricians of tomorrow are working with hammers and saws – albeit plastic ones. Our hope for the children who come through our doors every day, is for them to grow into contented, successful and accomplished adults who are shaping their own worlds. We're proud to have a part in that.

For over a hundred years now, the richness of Kindergarten has served our society well. Our kindys are busy, colourful spaces with large natural outdoor areas in which to explore and play. There's always so much to do. Our fully qualified teachers make the most of all the opportunities children have to learn and grow, every day. Our parents and communities are often involved within and are an important part of who we are.

There's nothing like kindergarten.

You can get 30 hours free at KidsFirst Kindergartens with the government's ECE subsidy and choose whether you want to pay for your child to come for longer for just a few dollars more per hour.

At KidsFirst Kindergartens, our early childhood education programme provides a variety of experiences for your child, so that they can learn to make sense of their world. It is important that children embrace new challenges, that they learn to co-operate with others and set goals for themselves, assisted by qualified teachers. These experiences help expand their knowledge skills and attitudes and assist with a smooth transition into later learning.

We have a curriculum based on the principles outlined in Te Whariki – the Ministry of Education's early childhood framework for providing early learning and development within a sociocultural context.

We believe that children learn best when they are engaged in active play. We offer a safe learning environment where your child is encouraged to interact, explore and make decisions. We'll work with your child on an individual basis, as well as in group activities to develop your child's interests and abilities.

OUR FOCUS IS ON LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT. THAT'S WHY KIDSFIRST EMPLOYS 100% FULLY ECE QUALIFIED TEACHERS WHO CAN HELP TO MAKE THE MOST OF THESE VITAL, EARLY YEARS.

A note celebrating our adoption of the KidsFirst name in the late 1990's.

Children dressed in soldiers and a Pirate and present in the early 1960's.

HOW ABOUT YOUR CHILD?

KIDSFIRST HAS OVER 60 KINDERGARTENS ACROSS CHRISTCHURCH, IN CANTERBURY AND ON THE WEST COAST... WE'RE IN YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD.

THERE ARE VACANCIES RIGHT NOW AND YOU CAN ENROL FOR 2012...

Northeastern Christchurch:

Southeastern Christchurch:

Southeastern Christchurch:

Northeastern Christchurch:

Southeastern Christchurch:

Hornby:

Rangiora:

Rangiora:

Lincoln:

Rangiora:

Templeton:

Greymouth:

Greymouth:

Hokitika:

KidsFirst Kindergartens is a not for profit organisation, committed to the young children of our region. The Canterbury Westland Kindergarten Association (as we were known) has a rich heritage of which we are truly proud. Today KidsFirst is one of the largest and most popular early childhood education (ECE) networks in New Zealand. Our reputation speaks for itself. To find out more, visit our website or any one of our kindergartens.

kidsfirst
kindergartens

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