

Te Pito o Te Puna Wai o Waipapa/ Hagley Community Preschool



The beginnings

Hagley High School Creche was opened at the beginning of 1974. The establishment of the creche was initiated by the College principal of the time, Ian Leggat, in response to the growing number of adult students enrolling in the College. The mission of the creche was to support young parents to continue their education as adult students in the College by caring for their children. Under the leadership of Joyce Dore, the creche operated with three staff members in an old house previously used as the College staff room which was located where the current Simpson House is.

At a time when Kindergarten and Playcentre dominated the early childhood scene, Hagley creche became one of the first community early childhood centres to operate in Christchurch. The creche was notably different to other ECE services in that it also provided a Playcentre parenting programme for young parents, facilitated by the creche staff. Following major education change in the late 1980's the creche emerged as a licenced early childhood service now known as Hagley Community Preschool.

The location

Around 1987 the preschool moved from the original location to two redundant Ministry of Education owned school classrooms in the back staff car park area by Waller Terrace where it remained until December 18th 2020. In January 2021 the preschool opened in the temporary premises of Simpson House to enable the old preschool building to be demolished, making way for a relocated building to be erected and ready to open on July 19th 2021. The new building was erected on the same footprint of the old premises. The Ministry of Education provided this relocatable building which had previously served as Kidsfirst North Kaiapoi. It had been erected for the kindergarten community immediately following the 2011 earthquakes and used until it's closure due to declining roll numbers some years later.

The name

At the end of 1991 Hagley High School changed it's name to Hagley Community College to better portray this school's community involvement and difference to traditional high schools. It was important to the College that a Māori name be introduced at the same time and this is when the name Te Puna Wai o Waipapa was gifted by a Ngai Tahu kaumatua, Waha Stirling. Te Puna Wai o Waipapa relates to the many natural streams under the land where Hagley College sits, where in earlier times, Māori would come to collect water. The role of the College located on this piece of land is similar, with people coming from across this city for what the school offers as a regional hub for education

The preschool was gifted it's name Te Pito o Te Puna Wai o Waipapa by Waha Stirling at a blessing ceremony in 1998 for the newly landscaped outdoor play environment of the preschool. The preschool's Māori ingnoa/name built on the close relationship between the preschool and Te Puna Wai O Waipapa or Hagley Community College. Te Pito referred to the navel or belly button, as a point where the beginning of life is nurtured and, in relation to our location on this land, can be understood as the place where the very beginnings of the

underground streams bubble up to the surface. The streams in this location were also a place of Mahinga kai which gives value to the natural resources from the streams and waterways that sustain life. For Māori it was a very sociable place where they would meet together while gathering water and kai. There are similarities in the historical use of the site to the way our youngest learners come to this preschool where they are nurtured on their early learning journey.

Relationship with the College

Until 2007 the preschool operated under the governance of Hagley High School/Hagley Community College Board of Trustees. In 2007 Hagley Community Preschool Trust was formed to take over the governance role. Membership of the Trust Board retains a close link to Hagley College and the preschool has access to many of the resources of the College such as the library and grounds. Tamariki enjoy the additional benefits offered through being an integral part of the wider Hagley College Community. They attend College events and productions and make use of the environment for walks and exploration.

The community today

The preschool community serves tamariki and their whānau from all areas of Christchurch, including from local health organisations, Hagley Community College staff and students and local residents. The community is culturally and linguistically diverse with many newly settling whānau from refugee and migrant backgrounds. In 2021 the preschool continues its long tradition of supporting adult students to return to education at Hagley College or other nearby training and education facilities, as well as catering for those in nearby places of work, in the knowledge that their preschool child is in close proximity to them.