



Wild School

Useful Information for families

Kia ora! Welcome to Wild School! We exist to nurture wonder and wellness in children.

Wild School exists to support children to develop their wonder of the natural world, and to nurture their holistic well-being. This brief guide outside how and why. Further information can be found on our website. You can also stay up to date via Facebook and Instagram:

Queenstown Instagram - @whakatipu_wild

Wanaka Instagram - @wanaka_wild

Facebook - @whakatipuwildschool

Facebook - @wanakawildschool



Our Team

Wild School launched in April, 2022. Morgan Clode (left) and Sarah Bland are the Lead Educators you'll interact with. Morgan is a highly skilled teacher, trained Forest School Leader, creative, Mother, designer, and loves banter and laughter! Sarah is also a qualified teacher, holds quals in outdoor leadership and management, loves gardening, adventures, motorbikes, and foraging. We are both certified in Outdoor First Aid, qualified and registered teachers (Early Childhood & Primary) and combined have 31 years

experience in education. Launching Wild School was a heart-felt dream come true for us, and we love seeing the dream get bigger and brighter every session! As our opportunities and offerings grow, so will our team, which we aim to enhance with a diverse range of skills and experience.

A Typical Day

Wild School follows a typical school day, starting at 9am, in a natural local play space. Our skilled nature educators and tamariki gather to make a plan for the day, and move to our risk assessed play base. We supply a myriad of open-ended, age-appropriate resources and tools that promote invitations and opportunities to engage in child-led free play. Our days involve observing, designing, building, creating, collaborating, sensorial exploration, climbing, risk assessing, dramatic play, music, art, delving into big questions, and forming friendships and life-long memories. Children are given uninterrupted opportunities to explore nature, themselves, their friendships, and the richness of life. We enjoy a morning snack and lunch together, usually accompanied by a side of hilarious stories and laughter! At the end of the day we pack up together, gather to reflect back on the day's happenings and meet our families at 3pm.

Our Programme & Philosophy

We exist to nurture wonder and wellness. Wild School is inspired by the Scandinavian Forest School model, where nature is our ever changing learning environment. With this model and vision combined we strive to create opportunities for young children to fall in love with our world, to recognise and appreciate the little things beneath our feet and to treat our world with respect and care (Wonder). Through conversations, goal setting, and reflection we foster children to grow and know themselves, their strengths and encourage them to build trust in themselves and listen to their bodies and minds (Wellness).

Our Wild School days are refreshingly free-flow - intentionally void of rush. We promote our values of Care, Courage and Curiosity. Total immersion in nature allows children to pace themselves, with our educators weaving personal life skills through each day. Our ratio of 2:20 (plus additional parent help) allows for lush conversations, authentic connections, and real nurturing of each child's precious gifts. Our mixed age-range (4 to 12 year olds) allows us to curate our days with opportunities for children to shine in their talents and skills. We want kids to know how they are treasures, but also a step further into why their unique gifting is so beautiful. We have a 'whanau of learners' approach, where parents/family members are encouraged to share the experience of a day at Wild School with us and their child on a voluntary rostered basis. This is seen as an opportunity to share in the joy, develop a knowledge of our daily flow, create memories and have a foundation for future chats about Wild School on the way home or around the dinner table.

Our **One Day Nature Programme** is designed for sustained growth throughout the term. Children attend one day per week for the full school term. It is our most intentional and growth-oriented programme, where our team works towards goals set by the child and their family. Goals may include resilience, managing feelings, building friendships etc. Therefore a full term commitment is required (unless prior arranged).

We also offer **Holiday Programmes** which are nature-based. These are play-filled days, jam-packed with fun in the outdoors. An opportunity to spend quality time outdoors, helping to reset from a busy school term. Families can choose what days work for them or come for all.

Release from school - How does that work?

Under the *Education and Training Act 2020*, students in NZ schools can be released from school to attend a course or programme that supports their holistic development. There are 16 other nature based One Day Schools like us in NZ.

The process is smooth - discuss with your child's teacher the key benefits of your child attending Wild School. The Principal needs to give (verbal) approval to your child being released from school each week to attend Wild School. Parents enrol their child with us and the fun begins! We are happy to clarify this process further if you prefer to discuss it.

Health and Safety - Benefit vs Risk Assessment

Part of developing confidence and resilience is facing our fears with emotional and physical support and safety. For Gen Alpha kids (born between 2010 the same year as iPads, and 2024), there is an increased need for self confidence in their digital age where a million eyes will constantly be upon them. Wild School models conversations about risk assessment, self management, and what to do when those 'wobbly' feelings come. Standing beside amazing kids as they expand their comfort zone is a privilege we cherish. We encourage children to engage in risky play, such as tree climbing, mud/ice/water slides or sledding, zip lines and slacklines, plus tool use and fire lighting (when and if permitted).

Our sites are specifically selected with opportunities for rich child engagement and learning to manage risks. A thorough risk management assessment is completed by our lead educators when selecting play spaces. Each morning prior to children attending, a safety sweep takes place and boundary rope/cones are used to clearly set the physical boundary of our 'yes space.' In this 'yes space' children then have freedom and comfort knowing they can explore their own personal strengths and limits and challenge themselves safely. As educators we are skilled at balancing the need to supervise and scan, and also when to provide additional support and guidance, whether it be encouragement, verbal coaching, demonstration or physical assistance. You can find our health & safety documents and other policies on our website for your viewing at any time.

Fees

Wild School charges fees for attendance, and does not receive any funding from the Ministry of Education. Programme specific fees are outlined on our website in accordance with the programmes we offer. Wild School sessions are \$75 per day (including GST). Fees are invoiced for the full term and can be paid as a lump sum, or instalments. We honour generous donors who join us in making Wild School accessible through their donations. Wild School is a Registered Charity, and your donations are able to be offset at the end of your tax year. All fees cover costs and circle back into the running and growth of Wild School, keeping these opportunities for children available for years to come.

Locations, Days and Times

In Term 1 2023, Wild School operates 9am to 3pm in the following locations:

- Wednesdays: Frankton, Queenstown
- Thursdays: Wanaka (3 minutes drive from centre)
- Fridays: Arrowtown (5 minutes walk from centre)

Availability/Enrolments

Each group has a total of 20 spaces available for each term. Once this is full, you can request to join our waitlist and be next in line for spaces that may come available. If operating from multiple locations and days, we may not have space available in the group or location you prefer, but we will do our best to accommodate where possible to make it work for your family.

Each child requires an online enrolment form to be completed, which provides us with details around individual needs and goals as well as important emergency contact details. Once we receive your enrolment/s we will be in touch via phone for a chat to begin to get to know you and answer any questions you may have. When enrolling please carefully read our Terms and Conditions and the Consent to Participate documents linked in the enrolment form.

We require a full term commitment. This is key to building relationships, strengthening skills, revisiting learning and growth, and witnessing changes in the physical environment through the seasons. At the end of each term, we check in with each family to learn about their wishes for the following term. After this key consultation process we will know what spaces are available for the coming term and get in touch with families on our waitlist for enrolment.

For space availability and to enrol, please visit our website.

www.wildschool.co.nz

We're really excited to share this journey with you!

Stay wild,

Sarah and Morgan

