

# CASE STUDY

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## Peacocks Early Learning Centre



[www.littlekiwisnatureplay.com](http://www.littlekiwisnatureplay.com)



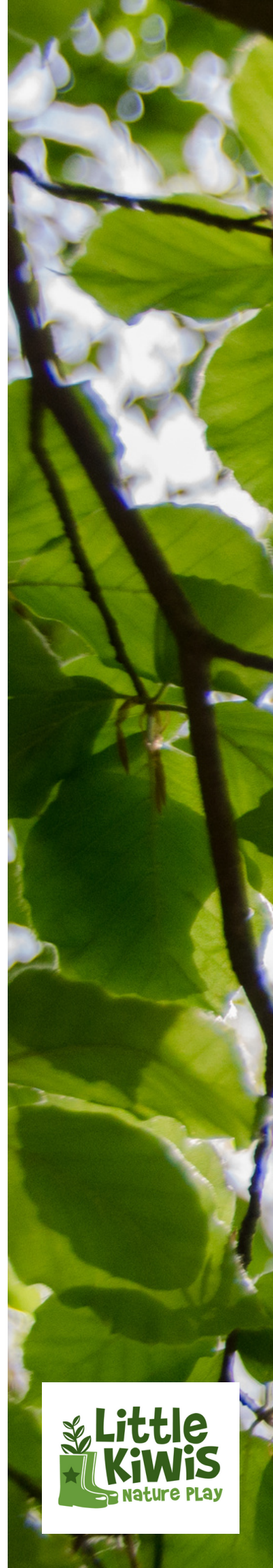
# Peacocks Early Learning Centre Auckland

Peacocks ELC is based in urban Auckland and in 2019 began taking tamariki of all ages (0-5) for nature walks to a nearby park.

They wanted to create a forest school within central Auckland, that connected to their Reggio Emilia inspired philosophy and Te Whāriki, where children spend longer in nature, have the flexibility and time to explore and imagine, challenge themselves, take risks, and are encouraged to support one another.

They strongly believe in the vital connection that we all need to have with Papatūānuku and the role (every New Zealander) plays in kaitiakitanga.

When choosing a space they choose somewhere that is a 20 van ride away due to the huge variety of environments it provides including wild areas, undulating landscape, bush, open landscape and water.





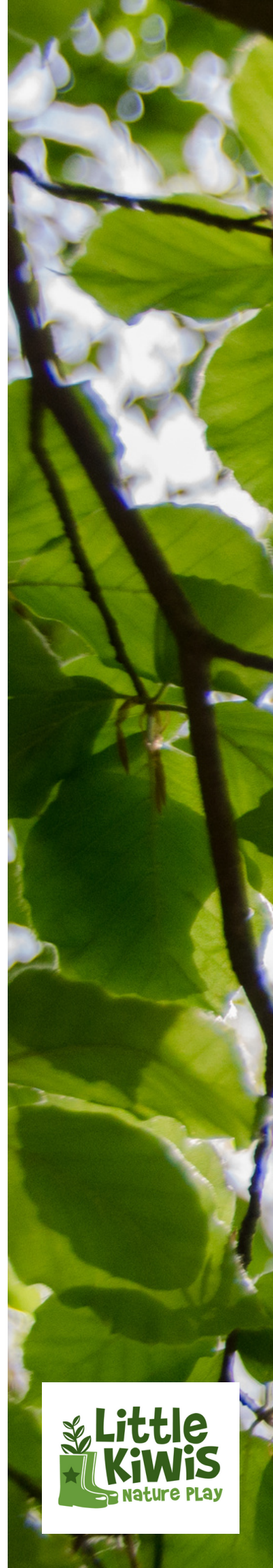
## HOW DO SESSIONS RUN

Two groups of nine tamariki per session aged 3-4 years visit a regional park weekly with 3 kaiako.

When they arrive in the van they often start with some morning tea, discuss where they want to go, and then roam until lunchtime. Lunch is back at the van which means they have less to carry while they roam in the morning. Then they explore a little more after lunch before returning in the afternoon.

The children choose what they want to do and where they want to visit during the sessions. They might leave bags in a space and explore it for a while and then move on. There are trees to climb, water to explore, knives for whittling, clip boards to draw and all of nature's treasures to create with.

The children take ownership of the space and have named a bridge the troll bridge over a stream and they often go underneath, collect clay or take turns at stomping their feet.





## HOW DO YOU MANAGE WET WEATHER

Tarps and ropes are used if it is raining. They also manage the water play and suggest that it is an afternoon activity on the colder days to help manage the wet.

There is a Fire ban at the regional park so they often head back to the centre and do a fire there. Or sometimes they take the whole preschool across the road and go climbing on the rocks.

## HOW DID THEY DECIDE RATIOS

Their first consideration was if ever separated, or if an accident happened and someone needed to go to hospital and one teacher went to hospital then could they still manage the group. This is great thinking and could be a good reflection for educators of their current practice.

With this in mind they decided that 3 educators is how they manage this and it also means there is an opportunity to separate if children want to do different things





## What are your key successes?

Tamariki have the space and time to just be, if that's what they want. They love and are very excited about their forest school day.

They are challenging and pushing what they believe they are capable of, while realising that mistakes are an opportunity to learn. Ideas are respected and they have the flexibility to follow interests (in and out of the centre).

Being in Papatūānuku gives tamariki the opportunity to connect with the place and what we find, taking care of themselves and others, while building an ecological identity.

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