

NATURE'S NEST FEATURE

# hatchingtime



## Childcare philosophy sits alongside environmental care

**Sustainability and the natural environment's role in children's development are two themes which underpin the new purpose-built early childhood education centre, due to open in Glenmore Drive, Warkworth, on August 10.**

Nature's Nest Early Learning Centre is owned by Hayley Hargreaves and Arnika Davies, who both have extensive experience in early childhood education.

Prior to starting Nature's Nest, Hayley was the licensee and owner of Lollipops Educare in Orewa for the past seven years and Arnika is a registered teacher who has been working at an Orewa childcare centre since 2004, mainly as the centre manager.

But the women have also drawn on their experiences as mothers when designing the new centre.

"We have created a place where we would be comfortable to send our own children," Hayley says. "We want the centre to inspire children to love learning and to appreciate and respect the environment."

The centre is licensed for 75 children, aged from birth to five years and will open Monday to Friday, from 7am to 6pm. It will employ around 15 staff, which includes both qualified and training teachers, and a cook who will provide nutritious homemade meals.

Hayley says early childcare is in her blood.

"My mother Suzanne Hargreaves founded the Lollipops Educare franchise and was an early childhood educator for more than three decades. As a parent of a 13-year-old son I have a good understanding of what parents face when choosing a childcare centre. My goal is to ensure that Nature's Nest offers the highest standard of care available for families, in a beautiful, welcoming and nurturing environment."

Arnika is a parent of two preschoolers and is committed to the values of teaching and inspiring children.

She says the centre will also be able to cater for children with special needs. "After having a discussion with the parents about their child's needs, we will be able to determine the best way to support the child whether it is a physical or learning disability, or if they have a specific allergy."

The 20 hours Early Childhood Education (ECE) subsidy is available at the centre and parents can also apply for subsidies in fees from WINZ.

The centre's philosophy is to encourage children from a young age to make a difference in the world, positively engage in sustainable behaviours and cooperative relationships with the earth.



Owners Hayley Hargreaves and Arnika Davies.

## Outdoor classroom set to inspire youngsters natural development

The outdoor play area at Nature's Nest has been custom-designed to invoke a child's imagination to explore and discover life, and to inspire them to look more closely at the natural world around them.

Using plants, trees, trails, mounds, natural sensorial sensations, sand and moving water, NaturePlay NZ has designed what business founders Anna Gentry and Dean Aplin say is a one-of-a-kind outdoor area at an early childhood education centre.

"We have created an outdoor classroom

where children can build a strong and healthy relationship with nature," Anna says. "Being in a sensory-rich environment, children will find their own learning naturally."

The design includes a worm farm, organic edible gardens, composting and native gardens. The children at the centre will be involved in the next stage of the development which includes an orchard and native forest. There are areas for children to climb and learn to balance, all in a safe environment.

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## Nature's Nest

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Wishing Hayley and Arnika all the very best  
in their new venture



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The outdoor classroom will provide a natural learning environment for children.

## Landscape for play

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“Our creations come from a team which includes educators, risk management advisors, designers and parents. Everything is built to NZ Safety regulations and standards.”

Anna says the playground design, which covers about 440m<sup>2</sup>, incorporates non-toxic materials such as hard wood (untreated) and locally-sourced resources. The total site is 2610m<sup>2</sup>, including the building, which is just under 500m<sup>2</sup>. “It is our endeavour to build and manage the playscape toxic free.”

Marsden Contractors, a Warkworth-based earthmoving company, spent around two months developing the site from initial excavations to laying the metal under the playground, drainage and supplying mulch and soil. Owner Tony Marsden says he was surprised at

the amount of earthworks required.

“Looking at the area now, a beautiful job has been done by everyone involved,” Tony says.

Treescapes supported the project by donating mulch and slabs of wood for stepping stones, pathways and outdoor tables.

Warkworth builder Peter Luyt was also involved in the playground from the beginning. His work included paving, building a raised stage, vegetable boxes, fencing and posts for the shade sails. Peter says the project is an innovative idea.

“I thoroughly enjoyed working on the project,” he says. “The centre provides a place for children to be children and to explore the world around them.”

## Peter Luyt Builder Ltd

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Proud to be involved with the installation of complex landscape elements at Nature's Nest. Wishing Hayley, Arnika and the team success for the future.

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## Nature PlayScape

by

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**Congratulations Hayley and Arnika and welcome to Warkworth.**

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