



## Their home away from home....

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After 2 happy years with Porse in-home carers we were faced with the working parent's nightmare. Two weeks notice by our carer – she was re-locating. Already on many waitlists with local and city centres as we felt our two and a half year old was ready for more stimulation. Suddenly we needed to urgently find 2 places for a one year old and two and a half year old boy - no easy feat!

Perseverance paid off when a family re-located and two spots became available at Karori Childcare Centre. On a scoping visit we liked the feel of it and look of it. My online research taught me it is a non-profit parent co-operative that is now in its 25<sup>th</sup> year– which felt like the kid's happiness and education came well before profits. For us, the shiny cookie cutter chain centre's just felt sterile and a little *TOO* slick. Larger centres often split the children into rooms but KCC with its relatively small size of 25 children means both our children could be together and interact. Meals prepared on-site was another bonus, and an early start and finish time of 7.45am and 5.45pm can make a difference to "how" two working parents can make it work.

Not having those frantic mornings finding drink bottles, snacks and lunch only became clear to us later and within a few weeks both boys had settled in well, helped greatly by the enormous sandpit, caring teachers and a general doting of our cherubic "Baby Cooper" by bigger kids. Seeing the older kids learn to be gentle and caring to the "babies" is really special and we attribute our 3 year olds fantastic language skills as a result of being at the centre since he was one .

The teachers at KCC have helped us nail a couple of issues along the way – a slight dummy habit picked up from an overseas trip, the toilet training, the clinginess of our youngest. The journey book KCC update has kept us up to speed with all the fun things they get up to, as does the quick chats we have when doing pick-ups.

KCC takes children 3+ to Gymtots down at the Karori Rec Centre (extra fee) on Thursdays which is a real highlight for the kids. The close proximity to Ben Burn Park is a brilliant bonus, and KCC make a real effort to get the children out and about, to shows, and to the library

When you think about how much time your kids spend at their childcare, it is important to find the right fit. We are completely satisfied with the experience we have had and would recommend you make an appointment to check the place out.

### **Tips when considering a centre:**

1. The basics: start times, finish times and meals included – these can become deal breakers!
2. Multiple children: Is this centre future proofed if you have a sibling to join the next few years – picking up from two places can be a pain.
3. ERO reports: Worth having a look at but don't use this as the only measure.



4. Visit the centre: Does it look like it will be pleasant all year long, good sunlight, warm and friendly to children – remember this is where your child(ren) will spend a LOT of time.
5. The staff. Do they look like they enjoy their job and are happy in their workplace?
6. Parking and accessibility. On foot or by car, is it going to be a pain to drop off and pick up?