

Dear Church Whānau,

It is with sadness that we let you know that the St Mary's Early Childhood Education Centre will be closing on 2 August 2024.

This decision has not been made lightly and is in response to the challenges of running an independent community-based centre in the current environment.

St Mary's has served our community for nearly thirty years, however, Vestry has made the very difficult decision to close after considerable discernment and prayer. Challenges that are facing the centre at present include sector-wide staffing shortage of qualified and experienced managers and teachers, pay parity, and the changing demographics and needs of the Karori population resulting from changing work patterns and recent job losses.

Over the last thirty years the provision of Early Childhood Education and care has changed considerably, with increased regulation and standards of compliance, as well as focus on the quality of teaching provision through registered teachers.

We have had a vacancy in the Centre Manager / Curriculum lead role since January 2024, for which we have been unable to recruit a suitably experienced replacement to lead the centre forward.

There has been a great deal achieved in the last six months following our license suspension in November. We have actively explored all other possible options, including merging or partnering with another provider, however this has not been possible to achieve within the time frame required to keep the centre financially viable.

We understand this news will have a significant impact on existing families and will be supporting them through this transition. All staff have been consulted on the decision to close, and we commend them for the supportive and constructive way they continue to work. We are confident that they will not have difficulty finding new roles in the sector.

Vestry are encouraged to believe, that while this is a season of pruning for our ministry in the pre-school space, this will allow new shoots of mission and service to our community to emerge.

We will be hosting a farewell function and AGM for any past families, teachers, staff or Board Members of the centre who would like to attend on July 18th 5.30pm. If you would like to attend please RSVP to kate@karorianglican.org.nz

Yours sincerely

Karori Anglican Vestry