



# Term 1 2023 Te Ara Whānui Newsletter

10th February 2023

Kia Ora Parents and whānau,

Welcome to 2023 from the Whānui team led by Jen Wilkinson, especially to children new to our ara, and their whānau. This year our teaching team remains the same as last year, with Jen Wilkinson, Rebekah Rasmussen, Emma Murdoch and Helena Goranitis.

To start the year, our priorities are getting to know your children, team, building our culture, and setting up our expectations and instructional routines.

This week the children are engaged in activities that encourage them to be expressive and creative; these will help us gain a picture of how your child learns. A key component to our program is developing the Key Competencies in our home learning teams. This is designed to give children that active sense of belonging and contributing, which is so important for wellbeing and self-efficacy. So, for this term, it is likely your child will spend much of their time until lunchtime with their Home Learning Teacher teacher, covering the core subjects of writing, reading, and maths. In the afternoon, as we cover inquiry (science, social sciences, and technology), Art, and PE, there are opportunities to work with others as we utilise collaborative teaching and other groupings. As we engage in the Key Competencies of Relating to Others, we support students to value, and learn from each other.



Next week, our Ara camp is at Makahika Outdoor Pursuits Centre (Feb 15th - 17th). This is a great way to further build relationships across the classes in a stimulating out-of-school setting.

Please find attached the gear list. Please feel free to contact your child's home learning teacher if you require any extra information.

## Our learning programmes for Term One

**Inquiry:** We are starting the year with a science unit titled 'Simple Machines'. The children will discover Physics, and how levers, pulleys and inclined planes can increase or change the direction of a force. We will see how simple machines are combined into everyday tools. The children will measure forces and experiment to see how machines make work easier. We want to engage with experts and so if you know anyone who applies a mechanical advantage in their work or sport, and would be willing to provide expertise and insight into this topic, please let us know. The children love to hear from the 'experts'.

**Literacy:** Throughout the term, children have many opportunities to practice and develop their oral language, and to make productive connections between reading and writing. Our spaces will be buzzing with oral language, as the children share their ideas, experiences, and language across the curriculum. In this strength-based approach to literacy; children will also have opportunities to develop areas such as their vocabulary, and their comprehension strategies. A key part of our literacy programme is blending literacy

and drama strategies to deepen engagement in literacy. The emphasis will be on improving confidence and outcomes in writing.

**Writing:** We will start the year with using our shared text 'Badger and Skunk' as a stimulus to base our writing on. This is a very engaging story about a rock-obsessed Badger who is forced into taking on a new roommate, Skunk. Badger, who is quite the crabby character, is eventually won over by Skunk, a quirky and very loveable rogue. This story allows for lots of creative and personal writing, and different genres of writing such as postcards, poetry, informative and story writing. Later on in the term we will use expressive and transactional writing to develop and explain our scientific thinking. Our 'Simple Machines' study will also give us practice in writing explanations.

**Maths:** Initially the classes will focus on problem-solving, basic facts, setting out work, and we will be getting insights into your children as mathematicians and also their understanding of numbers as we assess them over the next few weeks. After camp, we will extend children's addition and subtraction knowledge. Later in the term, we will extend into geometry and measurement.

**Technology:** Throughout the term we will be integrating our technology sessions with science; including detailed diagrams of our inquiry 'Simple Machines'. Towards the end of the term they will spend some time making their own creations based on their designs. Their technology challenge will be based on our shared novel 'Skunk and Badger'. Here they will build their own chicken enclosures incorporating some of their learning of simple machines. We will be asking the students to bring in some resources to help with their building project.

**Sport and physical education:** We will begin our year by playing cooperative and small ball games. As the Western Zone cricket is coming up, the children will have plenty of opportunities to learn and play cricket. For the last month of term, we will prepare for cross country in week 10. Of course, there will be regular fitness sessions as well. It is hoped an autumn cross country will offer good ground conditions. Please encourage your child to wear exercise-friendly footwear to school each day.

**Te Reo/Taha Māori:** This year we will build on our Te Reo Maori programme led by Jason last year. In these sessions the children strengthen their competence in te reo, as well as broaden their understanding of tikanga. Later in the year, all the children will be doing kapa haka with Jeremy. We are encouraging children to be part of our senior kapa haka with Henare on Friday mornings at 8.30. As part of our Health programme, we will unpack and model some of the concepts associated with the holistic approach of Hauora. This is important work and in line with the values of the school.

### **Home Learning:**

Given that camp is in week three, we will initiate home learning in week 4. Regular reading for enjoyment at home really supports children's language development, especially vocabulary acquisition at this stage. At this age tamariki should be reading quietly at home for at least 30 minutes per day. Please help your children get that reading mileage up and engage with them about what they are reading as this helps grow confidence and know they are supported and reading is an important and essential part of lifelong learning. Guide them to develop their understanding and comprehension strategies, which helps the children to ask better contextual questions at school.

To support embedding maths understanding, tamariki will be using a new online maths programme 'Maths Whizz'. Maths Whizz is a personalised maths programme that provides automated and personalised learning opportunities to your child. It includes parents guides and student videos. To get the most out of this programme it is helpful if parents spend time sitting with their child and working through the progressions with them. This way you can help them if they are struggling. In the next few weeks your child will be assessed and will begin at the appropriate level. Please note they will begin at an easier level so that they may gain confidence and enjoyment in the first instant. This is very important. Our recommendations are for them to complete three progressions per week. We will be sending home their log in within the next few weeks.

We have enjoyed meeting most of you this week at the parent-teacher conversations on Wednesday and Thursday. The purpose has been for you to provide information about your child to help us personalise their learning. If you ever want to discuss your child's learning with us, please contact us and we will be happy to arrange a meeting.

Ka kite ano.

Jen Wilkinson, Rebekah Rasmussen, Emma Murdoch

## **Makahika Camp**



### **Makahika Outdoor Pursuits Centre Camp**

The camp is an opportunity for the children to try new experiences. Makahika is a specialist outdoor facility and has stringent risk management protocols and trained instructors. The activities will include: team challenges, confidence course, tramping, river safety, cooking on a fire, ropes, orienteering and bushcraft. These activities offer children the opportunity to challenge themselves. No child will be compelled to do any activity; the policy at the camp is challenge through choice. Often in these situations, we see the support of the children working as 'teammates' and this manaakitanga can get those that are unsure through a challenge. Please refer to the following link for more information [Makahika](#)

### **Departure and Return**

We will depart Wednesday, February 15th by bus. We will assemble at 8.30am in the hall and leave by 9.30am. We will return on Friday, February 17th around 3pm. We are asking our whānau to pitch in and help get all the luggage off the buses before you take your child home. Please make sure you check in and inform your child's teacher on Friday before taking them home.

### **Permission, medical and dietary information**

Thank you for filling in the camp health forms. For those children that will be bringing medication we ask that it is clearly labelled with instructions. We will take the medication from the children and administer it as required at the camp.

### **Cost**

We are requesting a donation of \$335.00 per child to cover the costs associated with Camp Makahika. We appreciate that this is a significant expense. Please do not feel you need to pay the camp donation in full at once as you may prefer to pay in installments across the year. If you have questions please do not hesitate to contact Loraine or Natalie in the office. You can pay via a deposit into our bank account, 12 3223 0190001 00. (Please add your child's name and camp as a reference). You can also pay at the school office by eftpos.

## Gear List for Camp Makahika 2023

*To be followed by students AND adults, participating in the activities at camp.*

### *What to Wear for the Day (weather dependant)*

T – Shirt and/or polyprop top  
Shorts/and or polyprop leggings  
Long Sleeved top – warm  
Sun Hat – sun block  
Wet weather raincoat

\*Socks must also be worn with sports shoes (this helps to prevent blisters)

### *Footwear*

Covered in type shoes – lace up or slip on running shoes/sports shoes  
One spare pair of dry shoes for evenings (crocs and socks perfect)

\*NO open sandals / aqua shoes / croc's for the day tramp but can be worn during meals or down time.

### *Back-Pack*

A small school bag, (back-pack) to carry lunch, drink, wet weather gear, medicines etc.  
Ensure there are no broken straps/zips. Students will need their hands free for walking, climbing.

\*Supermarket plastic bags or over one-shoulder bags are NOT acceptable.

### *Additional Items you must bring:*

WARM Sleeping Bag (camp can lend some sleeping bags if required)  
Pillow (if desired)  
Long Pants (track– no jeans)  
Shorts x 2  
T-shirts x 3  
Warm long sleeved woollen or fleecy jersey  
Thermal - top or woollen singlet  
Light waterproof coat/jacket  
Warm hat or beanie  
Insect Repellent  
Underclothes (2-3 pair)  
Nibbles, and drink (i.e. pump bottle)  
Sports socks x 2 pair  
Towel  
Togs (There will be no swimming as such however, there may be opportunities to explore the river - supervised of course)  
Toilet bag - soap, toothbrush etc  
Camera (There is no cell coverage so we recommend you do not bring cell phones)  
Named plate, bowl and cutlery - in a named bag.

Personal Medication named
Sun Screen
Plastic rubbish bag (for wet gear)
Warm socks x 1 pair