



Term 1 2021 Te Ara Whānui (year 5&6) Newsletter

12th February 2021

Kia Ora Parents and whanau,

Welcome to 2021 from the Whānui team led by Jen Wilkinson, especially to children new to our ara, and their families. This year our teaching team remains the same, with Mrs Wilkinson, Mrs Rasmussen, Mr Kerr and Mr Bisley. We welcome back Mr Dobson who will be working alongside us every second Tuesday.

To start the year, our priorities are getting to know your children, team, and culture building, and setting up our expectations and instructional routines. In week two, the children will all be engaged in activities that will 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, or whanau. This is designed to give children that active sense of belonging and contributing so important for wellbeing and self-efficacy. So, for the first term, it is likely your child will spend much of their time until lunchtime with their whanau teacher, covering the core subjects of writing, reading, and maths. In the afternoon when we cover inquiry (science, social sciences, and technology), Art, and PE, we will mix up the groupings as we utilise collaborative teaching. As we engage in the Key Competencies of Relating to Others, we will support students to value, and learn from each other.



In week three, our syndicate camp is at Makahika Outdoor Pursuits Centre (Feb 17th - 19th). This will be a great way to build relationships across the classes in a stimulating out-of-school setting. Please find attached the gear list. The only addition to the gear list from last year is that the children need to bring their own plate, bowl and cutlery. Please feel free to contact your child's home learning teacher if you require any extra information.

Term One Programmes

Inquiry: We are starting the year with a science unit titled 'Simple Machines'. The children will discover how levers, pulleys and inclined planes can increase or change the direction of a force. We will see how simple machines can be combined in everyday tools. The children will measure forces and experiment to see how machines make work easier. 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'. It would be great if we could borrow a block and tackle or a crow bar to demonstrate how much force simple tools can deliver.

Literacy: Throughout the term, children will 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. We are pleased to be taking part in a project

involving an outside expert who will help us blend literacy and drama strategies to deepen engagement in literacy. The emphasis will be on improving confidence and outcomes in writing.

Writing: We will start with some autobiographical writing as we get to know each other, and also use our inquiry as a motivator for writing, and for becoming more resourceful. We will use expressive and transactional writing to develop and explain our scientific thinking. Our science study will also give us practice in writing explanations.

Maths: For the first two weeks the classes will focus on problem-solving, maths basic facts, setting out work, and we will be getting insights into your children as mathematicians and also their understanding of number. After camp, we will extend children's addition and subtraction knowledge. Later in the term, we will look at geometry and measurement.

Art: Throughout the term we will be integrating our art sessions with science; including detailed diagrams of our local environment and our inquiry. Alongside this we will be doing a portrait unit using paint and pastels.

Sport and physical education: We will play cooperative and small ball games. For the last month of term, we will prepare for cross country. 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 by moving into the online environment. As Rawiri has left, we are waiting till we have found a new kaiako to lead our face-to-face Te Reo Māori lessons. We will also be exploring the local environment and stories associated with it. At the same time we will be thinking about place names and their meanings. Later in the year, 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 in line with the values of the school.

Additional English: Children in Whānui belong to one of four English/literacy classes- either their home learning team or Additional English. This arrangement enables us to lower the class size in literacy and personalise learning for all children. These children have the same overall programme as the other children in the ara. However, the design of some components is different- it is less explicit and tailored for more divergent thinkers. The programme requires these children to adapt the way they have learnt in literacy hitherto. All children have opportunities to learn more divergently in areas like the arts and technology, and in inquiry learning.

Home Learning: Given that camp is in week three, we will initiate home learning in week 4. It is hoped your child will read most nights; regular home reading is a key factor in success at school. The children will be required to fill in a reading log at school, and discuss all their reading regularly. Your child will master all the times tables during the year and practise their maths skills at home with an online programme-Mathletics. We will monitor this from school.

We have enjoyed meeting some 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 arrange a meeting.

Ka kite ano.

Rob Kerr, Rebekah Rasmussen, Charles Bisley, Jen Wilkinson



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 as 'teammates' 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 17th by bus. We will assemble at 8.30am in the hall and leave by 9.30am. We will return on Friday, February 20th around 4pm. Please collect your child from the junior school playground and please make sure you inform the teacher so they can check off the roll.

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.

Cost

We are requesting a donation of \$329.00 per child to cover the costs associated with camp. 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 instalments across the year. If you have questions please do not hesitate to contact 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.