



Te Ara Whanake Term One Newsletter

2 February 2024

Tena koutou katoa nga Matua me nga Kaitiaki,
Greetings to all Parents and Whānau,

A very warm welcome to all the new and returning families to Te Ara Whanake. Te Ara refers to the pathway of learning, and Whanake; growing upwards and moving onwards. This year our teaching team remains consistent, with home learning teams being taught by Marianne Blair (Whanake Rua), Brooke Harper (Whanake Toru), and Sophie Bishop (Whanake Tahi).

It has been lovely to see the children reconnecting with their peers and building new friendships in their home learning teams over the past couple of days. We are looking forward to meeting and connecting with many of you through our meet-the-teacher meetings next week, and our ara information evening in week three.

What are we learning this term?



Our theme to begin the year centres on the concept of Turangawaewae ('A place to stand'). We will begin this by exploring who we are, where we come from, and how we relate to each other and our surrounding environment. As we build on existing connections and develop positive relationships with our peers, we will be discussing our shared values, and how we can work together to create a strong, supportive learning space. Underpinning this will be a story drama, entitled 'The Most Magnificent Thing', which centres on building resilience, manaakitanga and problem-solving.

In the second half of the term, we will be taking this learning further by exploring and discovering more about the places and spaces around us. We will be visiting Te Wharewaka for a walking tour to learn more about the history of Te Whanganui-a-tara (Wellington), as well as learning more about our local area. Alongside this, we will be exploring light and colour through our science focus, "How we see the world". This will also flow into our visual art learning. What an exciting term we have to look forward to!

Literacy

Our first literary topic will be focused on writing about 'first-hand experiences'. We all do storytelling naturally, starting at a young age, but there's a difference between good and great storytelling! The children will write, plan, invent, and draw out their interesting ideas to become great storytellers. Our writing will cover a range of genres this term, including poetry, narrative stories, recounts, explanations and descriptions.

Children will be reading a wide variety of different texts each day, with teachers focusing on the two domains of reading- learning to read, and reading to learn. Children will take part in whole-class shared reading, as well as in smaller groups. Our shared novel to start the year is 'Runt', written by Australian author Craig Silvey. We will be reading this book throughout the week, and coming together on Fridays for 'Chapter Chat', where we explore the themes, characters, settings and plot through a range of hands-on activities.



Key dates this term

7th & 8th February - Parent teacher conversations
13th February - Ara Information Evening
23rd February - Whanake Assembly
12th March - Te Wharewaka City to Sea walking tour.
22nd March - PTA School Picnic

Swimming dates:

Friday 9th, 16th, 23rd February,
Friday 1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd March,
Friday 5th April

Reading and writing opportunities are also integrated across all areas of the curriculum. This means children could be researching for information, and writing about their understanding of different texts in a wider range of topics and interest areas.

Mathematics

We begin the year by revisiting our place value and basic facts knowledge. We will be revisiting old favourite games, establishing routines for maths learning, and building positive mindsets towards mathematics through rich discussions and open-ended tasks. As the term progresses, we will focus on revising and extending each child's number knowledge and the strategies they are using, as well as developing their ability to share their thinking clearly with partners and group members. Later in the term, we will focus on statistical investigations by posing questions, collecting data, and interpreting and presenting our findings.

Science

To start the year, tamariki will be encouraged to explore the nature of science as they ask themselves, '*what is science and how do scientists work?*'. They will be participating in a variety of science investigations with an element of wonder to spark questions (*I wonder why...*) and the sharing of ideas about the science taking place. As the term continues, we will delve into our major science focus for the term. We will learn where light comes from and all about the different characteristics of colour through a range of hands-on activities and experiments.

Physical Education & Health



We start the year by taking opportunities for fun games to help develop team spirit and positive relationships within our teams. On Friday of week two (February 9th), we begin our swimming lessons at Karori Pool, and these will continue weekly until the Friday of Week 10. Alongside this, we will be running weekly sports rotations, focusing on ball skills, fitness and movement. Later in the term, the school cross country will have us increasing our fitness levels as we practise distance running. Each home learning team will also be running a daily fitness programme to support our focus and well-being.

In week two, our tamariki have the opportunity to do some first aid training through the 'St John's in School' programme. Alongside this, we will be learning about positive relationships, working together and navigating different perspectives through the 'Ka Puāwai, Ka Hiki Ki Te Haere' curriculum.

Innov8

Each Monday, we will be beginning the week with innov8. This is an opportunity for the children to work together and learn through an exploratory and playful context. Underpinning innov8 activities are a focus on STEM-based and/or creative provocations, as well as opportunities for children to reinforce their skills in mathematics, digital technology and literacy. Each week, we will have a key goal relating to one of the Key Competencies (managing self, relating to others, using text, symbols and language, thinking, and participation), which the children will reflect on together at the end of the session.

Art

We will begin the year with an exploration of observational drawing, taking advantage of our surrounding flora and fauna to support us with this. Later in the term, our arts focus will link closely with our science learning, as we explore the world of colour through a range of techniques and mediums. We will be learning about the colour wheel, the characteristics of colour, and even mixing and naming our own colours.



Tikanga me Te Reo Māori

Te Reo Māori is incorporated into our daily routines and activities. As part of our integrated topic, early in the term, we will be learning about and sharing our pepeha. In the first couple of weeks, your child will be bringing home some questions to share with you, so that we can help them build this around their individual heritage. Later in the term, we will be developing our Mātauranga Māori as we learn the pūrākau of Ranginui and Papatuanuku. Children are also encouraged to opt-in to our Junior Kapa Haka group, which takes place weekly on Tuesdays from 1.45-2.15pm.

Home Learning & Maths Whizz

Home learning consists of three main parts: home reading, spelling practise, and mathematics. This is designed to support your child's learning at school in these areas. The children will bring home their home learning notebook on a Monday (beginning in **week 4**), and we encourage children to return this to school by Friday so that it can be marked. To protect the home learning notebooks and any reading books your child brings home, we ask that your child bring a reading folder (book bag) to school each day.



Maths Whizz is an online platform that is individualised to your child's learning needs. The programme is designed to respond to your child's ability (assessed through an algorithm that measures accuracy and time spent on each question). We have found that children find this platform engaging and motivating, but also recognise that screen time can vary between households. If you would prefer 'unplugged' learning, we recommend hands-on games and activities (please see your child's teacher for some suggestions).

Our children lead very busy out-of-school lives. For this reason, out-of-school activities are perfectly acceptable to count as home learning during the week. Please rest assured there are no consequences for children not completing home learning.

Borrowing Books

We keep a wide selection of chapter and picture books in the Whanake space for children to read anytime. Each Friday, children will have a set time to borrow two books they wish to take home. This is an opportunity for children to select their reading material for daily independent reading, and home reading too. At the start of the year, the teachers may support your child (where needed) in choosing books.



You can help your child make good book choices by talking to them about what books *you* read and why *you* choose them, as well as taking them to the public library to select from a wider range of books. Remember the five-finger rule: your child reads the first page of the book, and every time they get a word wrong, they put up a finger. When they get to the bottom of the page, if they have four or fewer fingers up, they should be able to read the book; if they have five, it may be too difficult. This is just a useful but rough guide.

Seesaw



Students and teachers will soon begin posting snapshots of their learning to Seesaw. Your child's account will have moved over to their new home learning team with them, and you should be able to access this using your existing login. Seesaw allows children to share their learning with a wider audience, and they especially love being able to share with you! This year, teachers will also be utilising Seesaw to keep you updated about the learning taking place in our spaces, with a different curriculum focus each week.

We encourage parents to comment or post to their child's journal. This helps to build the connection between home and school, and provides a glimpse into some of the activities and learning your child is

engaged in. If you are having trouble connecting to Seesaw, please contact your child's teacher. Due to the increase in cost for this platform, we will be asking for a contribution of \$10 per student; this will be added to your student statement.

Sun Smart

In terms one and four, it is important children wear **sun-smart** clothing, including wide-brimmed hats, and have sunblock in their bags. Please help by checking they have a hat in their bag, or provide one they can leave at school. Please also check that your child has a full water bottle each day.



Tui Choir

Tui Choir takes place each Wednesday morning, where we start the day by singing with ALL our year 2 and 3 children. All children in year 3 will join for fun by flying along at 9.00am!

Piccolo Choir

The children meet in the big downstairs music room (Mahler room) for the Piccolo choir at **8:30am** on a Wednesday. This choir is for the year 4 - 6 if they want to join.

Little Xylofun and Xylobeats



Xylobeats will take place each Monday morning in the Mahler room, it too starts at 8.30am. Xylobeats is for the year 4 students if they would like to join.

Little Xylofun will take place each Friday from 8.30 am until 9.00 am in the Mahler room. This is for our year 3 students if they would like to join.

Housekeeping

- Toys: To alleviate social dilemmas and damage to personal property, we have a no-toys-at-school rule. Should these items accidentally end up at school, our process will be for the teacher to take care of them until the end of the day, when they can return safely home.
- Lost Property: It is crucial to have all clothing named so it may be reunited quickly with its owner. Encourage your children to look for their missing clothing as soon as it is lost. If clothing cannot be reunited with its owner, it may end up in the school's lost property located in the link.
- Beginning of the school day: When the bell rings at 8.30am, children are invited into Whanake to prepare for the school day. Before this time, teachers are in meetings, preparing resources for the day, or engaging in professional development opportunities. Children are expected to wait outside or, on wet or cold days, in the Link. Please, as much as possible, delay your child's arrival at school until 8.30am.
- Please provide suitable footwear at school; the children participate in fitness and often run around. Hair ties kept at school in the pencil case are often useful if a child has long hair.
- Break Times: At Kelburn, the children have two 10-minute eating times, at 11am and 1pm, as well as a 'brain food' snack break at 10am. Children will be encouraged to eat fruit or vegetables for their brain food break, and we appreciate your support with this.

Parent Help & PTA

We are very appreciative of parent helpers who support us to provide a range of learning opportunities for our tamariki. If you are able to help with putting reading books away this term, please email (sophieb@kelburnnormal.school.nz), or speak with your child's teacher. We will also be looking for parent helpers for our trip to Te Wharewaka, the waterfront and Te Papa later in the term.

The PTA does a fantastic job supporting our school and tamariki; this is a great way to get involved with our school community. If you would like to find out more, you can contact pta@kelburnnormal.school.nz.

Getting in touch

As always, your first port of call is your child's teacher. Teachers can be contacted by our email address (brookeh, marianneb, sophieb@kelburnnormal.school.nz). If you wish to talk about your child's learning at any stage of the term, your child's teacher will be happy to talk with you.

We look forward to an exciting year ahead!

Ngā mihi nui,
Marianne, Brooke, and Sophie (Team Leader)