



Kelburn Normal School

Ngā Tātarakihi o Ahumairangi



29 June 2023

Kia ora koutou

We hope this year is going well for you and your whānau. We wanted to update you on what we've been discussing at our meetings and the Board's priorities for the year ahead.

Property

It never fails to amaze me how time consuming and expensive property issues are for the school. Last year we commissioned a safety report on the Gully which produced a long list of minor maintenance issues to address to keep the area safe and usable for the years ahead. The school is starting to work through the list and we have asked the PTA if this could be a focus for fundraising this year, in an effort to get everything tidied up as quickly as possible. The tamariki are really lucky to have such an adventurous place to explore and we want to look after it and preserve it for future students.

If you are interested in the history of the Gully and how we came to inherit such a unique play area, please [click here to access the story](#) on the school's website.

The Ministry has advised the school that remedial work is required in two areas on the junior playground surface to improve the critical fall height measurements. The Ministry is endeavouring to arrange the work to be undertaken in the school holidays.

As part of our kaitiakitanga (guardianship), we have started preparations to plant native trees and flaxes at the very bottom of the Gully (the top of Ngaio Road) to tidy up the area and to help secure the slope in wet weather. This area isn't accessible by the tamariki, but it does need some care and attention. The Council is supplying some plants, which is a start. If you would like to be involved, please get in touch.

Other property matters on the list:

- Attaching a fence to the top of the wall in the middle court to prevent falls, particularly when our tamariki are hunting for missing balls in the garden!
- Lengthening the fence on Boundary Road to discourage climbing and walking along the top of the Upland Road retaining wall. If you see tamariki up there after school hours, please ask them to come down, it is quite a drop.
- Painting sections of the exterior walls of the school which have been damaged by the sun. We are going to choose lighter colours which will better withstand the summer sun, and we are thinking of having a little fun and adding a few different colours into the mix!

Communications

The management team and the Board are working through the feedback received from last year's community survey. In response to the survey the teaching team held an Ara information evening at the beginning of the year. Each Ara hosted whānau in their learning space and explained how learning happens for their age group. This is something the school plans to run annually, so parents know what to expect in the year ahead. The teaching team have also held three curriculum hui, with one more planned later in the year. The idea of the curriculum hui is to explain a subject area and how it is taught, and to discuss how parents can support learning at home. So far there has been an evening on Mathematics (in 2022), Te Ao Māori (term 1) and Literacy (term 2).

The school newsletters now include more schoolwide information about what learning is taking place in different Ara, which is a nice way to see what is happening in your child's Ara, and what's ahead for your younger children.

Student Achievement

The teaching team is regularly assessing student progress and the Board receives formal reports from Andrew across the year. In term 1 the PAT results showed that our tamariki collectively continue to perform well above the national average in maths and reading. We are very proud of the tamariki and the teaching staff to sustain this high achievement, considering the disruptions of Covid over the last 2-3 years. Each year the school produces an annual summary of achievements and you [can access this document here](#).

Thank yous

A huge thank you to our hardworking PTA and all the many helpers for the Family Picnic in term 1. It was a great way to kick off the year. It is so nice to be able to hold these occasions again. We also wanted to thank the PTA for their tireless fundraising efforts. The school relies on the fundraising of the PTA to help us provide the tamariki with things the school couldn't otherwise afford. Last year the PTA made a significant contribution to the school's balance sheet so the school could replace 50 chrome books and 10 iPads. This year we have asked the PTA to help us with the costs of upgrading and maintaining the adventure playground in the Gully and with purchasing library books. So thanks to everyone who bought a pie! Every little bit helps. These fundraising efforts make a huge difference to what we are able to provide for the tamariki.

So many of us are time poor, but if you are able to join the PTA or help with events, they would love to hear from you. Many schools don't have PTAs anymore, and our PTA needs whānau support to keep it running. It's a nice way to meet people and feel part of the community. If you'd like to get involved you can contact Anneke and Erica on pta@kelburnnormal.school.nz.

Thank you to our wonderful kaiako (teachers) after another busy term. The newsletters and class communications share with us the things our tamariki do at school, and there is a wide spectrum of learning activities and opportunities which we are appreciative of. A special thank you to Whānui and Whanake kaiako for supporting the tamariki to write, practice, and perform their plays this term. This is a special process that unites the class by working on a project together, but it does require a lot of time and dedication from the kaiako. The Board are grateful to all the multi-talented staff we have working at the school and we appreciate the role that each staff member plays, from Jason our kaitiaki and te reo teacher, through to the learning support staff, office staff, teaching and management staff, to make such an effective team. We are so lucky to have this team working with our tamariki, and we hope you all have a safe and enjoyable break with whānau and refresh for term 3.

School Donations

Thanks to everyone who has made a whānau and activity donation. The school receives the lowest possible level of funding from the government, so the general donation is used to provide higher levels of education and additional support to tamariki than we could otherwise provide. For example, we are able to keep classes smaller than funded by the Ministry, provide additional teaching and learning support, and run extra programmes such as choirs, kapa haka and te reo. The activities donation is used to cover the actual cost of activities your child will experience during the year, such as camps, sleepovers, swimming, trips, learning memberships and subscriptions. The school is very lucky that most people contribute (thank you!) as it makes a significant difference to what we can offer. Some whānau choose to make regular instalments rather than a single lump sum. If you would like to discuss this further, please email Loraine Best at loraineb@kelburnnormal.school.nz or call the office. All enquiries will be kept confidential.

If you would like to be involved with the planting in the Gully or get in touch with the Board please email us on bot@kelburnnormal.school.nz.

Ngā mihi

Nickie van der Beek
Chair KNS Board of Trustees