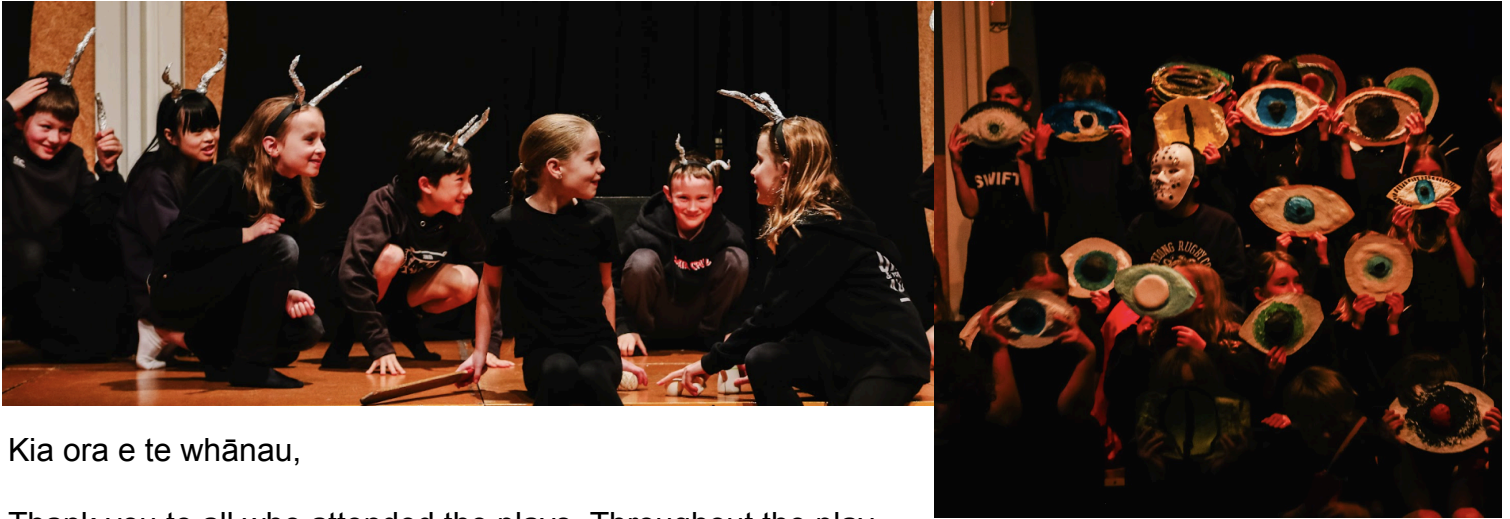




Te Ara Whānui Newsletter

Week 1 Term Toru 2025

Where students learn creatively and strive for excellence preparing for lifelong learning
Kia auaha te ako a ngā ākonga me te whai i te iti kahurangi mō te akoranga tūroa



Kia ora e te whānau,

Thank you to all who attended the plays. Throughout the play devising process, a lot of rich learning happens, and having a live audience is a meaningful way for the children to celebrate their mahi. It was a joyous occasion that the children could feel proud of. Here are some paragraphs from the children's post-play reflections.

My roles weren't exactly the best if you wanted to be the star of the show but for me, I'll admit I quite liked them. They weren't too hard, nor were they too easy. Not like I'm trying to boast, but I was kind of like the show's comedian. If you ask me, it was fun being the guy that on the night everybody laughs really hard about the jokes you crack, it kind of reassured me that the play was going well and all so that made me really happy.

- Louis.D

I was pretty nervous, and after all, it was my first play at this school, and it was my first play with so many people. But in the end I wasn't really that nervous. After the play, I just felt proud that I was able to accomplish my scene without spontaneously combusting it. And I was also just happy to get the play off my chest. And I also finally knew what the adults' reactions were to some jokes in the play, which I was for some reason wondering about. - Atila

...I went up stairs and said hi to the teachers. I was just talking with my friends and just relaxing. Then the teachers told everyone to sit down for the roll, then we took all our props downstairs and got into our starting positions, the lights turned off then the play started. I felt so nervous and excited, I felt like I was going to blow up like a balloon. - Isla. S

...I don't remember the exact order of our script writing tasks, but I think this was the first task we did. My personal favourite writing task was the day in the life of Medusa. I found it fun, and engaging. After we wrote our own versions of the Greek myths, Mr Miller set up a google form for the class, we then voted on what to do for the play. I think the finished results were amazing.

- Madeleine

Literacy

This term, we've been exploring the wonderful world of poetry, where words dance, rhyme, whisper, and shout! Through reading, writing, and performing poems, students grow their oral language, strengthen their speaking and presenting skills, and express themselves. We'll be using models, unpacking poetic devices, like similes, alliteration, onomatopoeia, and personification, and bringing poetry to life with in-class recitals and published anthologies. Our guided reading sessions have begun with ballads, helping us explore poems that tell stories with rhythm, repetition and structure. Whether reciting a verse, crafting a stanza, or performing a poem aloud, there's room for creativity, connection, and joyful language play. The Better Start Literacy Approach (BSLA) will also be built into our classroom programme, providing a structured foundation for supporting reading, writing, oral language, and phonological awareness.

Numeracy

We will continue with *Maths No Problem* to strengthen students' understanding of key numbers and problem-solving strategies. The children will also be working on a real-world maths investigation that involves holiday planning. Their investigations will include budgets, itineraries, making estimations and approximations, looking at maps, calculating distances and more. The project integrates digital technologies, as students navigate websites and online tools to help them in their planning and presentations. They will be using multiple strands of math in meaningful ways.

Visual Art and Social Studies

Culture, identity, and creativity are coming together in a unit that combines visual arts and aspects of the social sciences. We started by looking at some local works by Te Whanganui-a-Tara (Wellington) contemporary artists. The children will respond to various artworks by keeping a reflective art journal to document their ideas, inspirations, and creative processes. They will experiment with multiple techniques to create some of their pieces. Building on this, they will investigate the characteristics of Atua (Māori gods), connecting traditional beliefs and contemporary artistic expression, helping them to connect past and present.

Science

Children will be building their science capabilities by becoming little scientists themselves! Through a series of hands-on experiments, they will explore the properties of different materials, learning how to gather and interpret data, use scientific language, and critique evidence to make sense of their findings. Students learn how to interpret results and engage with science in meaningful, practical ways by thinking, testing, and observing like real scientists.

Physical Education

Students participate in swimming lessons each Monday, building water confidence, safety skills, and overall fitness. These sessions are held at the Karori swimming pool, and swimming instructors take small groups. When at school, they will enjoy circuit training, where they can design and set up their own exercise circuits. This gives students the opportunity to be creative, work together, and take ownership of their physical activity while developing strength, coordination, and teamwork skills.

Te Reo

Māori lessons with Matua Jason continue this term. We are fortunate to have Matua Jason bring and share his experience and knowledge. Ākonga have the opportunity to learn language through the lens of te ao Māori—the Māori worldview. These sessions help deepen their understanding of culture, Tikanga (customs), and identity while exposing them to the use of te reo Māori in everyday contexts.

Home Learning

The Whānui team recognises our students are involved in numerous extracurricular activities. These are valuable parts of their learning, and this is just a reminder of the importance of home learning. Our expectation is that children engage in two activities every evening:

- Reading before bed - at least 30 minutes most days. This could involve reading a chapter book from school, reading a chapter to someone in their whānau, or listening to audiobooks.
- MathsWhizz - 10-15 minutes three times a week. MathsWhizz is an educational resource that reinforces the significant learning occurring in the classroom. If your child does not have their login information or has forgotten it, please remind them to ask their teacher for the details.

Please contact your child's teacher with any questions about our programme.

Ngā mihi nui,

Rebekah Rasmussen, and Hugo Miller

rebekahr@kelburnnormal.school.nz

hugom@kelburnnormal.school.nz