



Kia ora koutou,

Welcome to the new school year. We have had a great first day today as students and teachers discover things about each other and start their learning journey for the year. Our Whāitaitai Hub students have made an excellent start in their new building. While the building is now materially finished and ready to use from the start of the year, there is still some work to do inside and particularly around the site. The artificial turf will be finished over the next few days and we will adjust the site fencing to allow this to be used. For now, this area of the school should only be accessed by walking up the ramp past the adventure playground, the gates from Raupo Street and Hamilton Road will not be used initially and remain closed off. I would like to acknowledge that there are challenges with finding a park near the school and thank our community for supporting us through cautious, courteous and legal driving and parking. Students have been using the pool today, this is accessed in the usual way. I have been delighted to see the pool being well used by our students during the holiday period. Our year 1-3 students have professional tuition from the Little Makos coaches in the first part of this term. Please do remember wide brimmed hats are also required this term and we would like all students to have a water bottle at school.

School picnic.

Our full school picnic is planned for next **Wednesday the 7th**, this is the day after the Waitangi Day holiday. There is no postponement date for this event. Our school will walk to Kilbirnie Park together soon after 9am before rotating hubs through games on the field and a session at Aquatic centre. Each Hub will provide you with more detail about the activities planned, gear needed and also their return to school time. There is a small cost for pool use which will be added to the term 1 activity fee notice. As this is classified as a local trip a permission letter is not required, talk to your homeroom teacher if you have any questions.

School organization:

In 2024 our teaching staff will again work with students in 3 teams or hubs. The names for the 3 hubs come from the Māori creation story of Hataitai depicted in our logo and school branding. This is also seen in the carved waharoa at the Hamilton Rd entrance.

- **Ngake hub:** Asha Patel, Juliet McPhee and Molly Hayes.
- **Whāitaitai hub:** Elaine Cooper and Glenys Johnston.
- **Matairangi hub:** Lou De Lange, Soazik Duncan and Peter Dobson.

Katrina Te Rito will work in Peter's room, she will also lead our sports programme. **Tina Davies** will work in Glenys' room. **Rachel France** will spend time working across the school providing both teaching and learning and teacher professional development in te reo and tikanga Māori. Rachel will also do work in Molly's homeroom. **Denise Copley** will work in Asha's room. **Aimee de Groot** will support student achievement in reading.

Peter Dobson and **Glenys Johnston** are our Deputy Principals. **Asha Patel** is our Senior Teacher and completes the school management team.

Home and school communication:

We always discuss and review the quality of home and school communication as part of our work together before school starts for the new year. I would like to emphasise that all our staff, including myself, intend to be highly accessible as usual to all parents and whanau. If you want or need to engage with a staff member you just need to ask. Staff email contacts are available on the school website and in emails sent to you. These emails are regular and focus on learning and organisational matters. Individual hubs and teachers will talk more about this at the hub meetings.

Hub information evenings- February 5, 7, 8 (week 2, next week).

These meetings will be held on separate nights to allow parents to attend more than one in person meeting where appropriate. All meetings start at **6pm and look to finish by 7pm**. Hub leaders will provide further information needed in advance of these sessions including the venue:

- **Monday 5th- Ngake Hub.**
- **Wednesday 7th-Matairangi Hub.**
- **Thursday 8th- Whāitaitai Hub.**

Student information form emailed to you today.

This form is for parents to complete about their child. The intention is to provide an opportunity for parents and whānau to give the new classroom teacher some insight into the interests, academic and emotional needs, strengths and personal context of your child from a parental perspective.

Teachers will use this in conjunction information from other teachers and their own observations and assessment activities early in the year. This confidential form is attached. Please return this to your child's classroom teacher **via email**. We would like this form to be completed for all students, a hard copy is available from reception if needed.

Meet the teacher appointments. Wednesday February 14 (week 3).

In week 3 we are providing an optional opportunity for parents to meet with teachers in person early in the year. This gives parents who wish to meet with their child's teacher a chance to talk through the student information sheet or in general terms without the child present.

Teachers will not be presenting student achievement information at these meetings. Bookings for these 10 minute meetings will be arranged using our usual on-line booking system, this will open on Monday next week at 6pm. We will email you with a link to the booking system earlier in the day.

Teacher only days.

At Kilbirnie School we use the 2-3 Ministry of Education allocated teacher only days to progress teacher professional learning and development related to our goals for school development and student achievement. One focus for this year is the refreshed New Zealand Curriculum. Another is to continue our work to implement a structured literacy approach across the school. Generally we don't take a teacher only day in term 1 but due to the opportunity to work with one of New Zealand's preeminent providers in structured literacy, we will be closed for a day of training on **Friday March 8**. This was the only option to work with this preferred provider.

Emergency Food and water.

Last year we did a full review of our emergency procedures including our procedure for reunification. This is when it is necessary to have whānau come and collect students from school in circumstances such as an earthquake. Our approach controls the release of students to those named as emergency contacts on the enrolment or annual contact information update form. This form came home late last year. Please return this if you haven't already and update the office immediately if you have a change in contact information for you as parents or those named as emergency contacts. We no longer ask you to provide an individual food box and water bottle for your child as we now have a centralised emergency food and water supply to use if necessary. There will be a small charge per student captured in the term 2 activity fee notice. At the end of the year this food will be donated to charity. We will repeat this process at the start of the new school year.

Me mahi Tahi Tatou Mo Te Oranga O Te Katoa. When we work together we all benefit.

Have a great Waitangi Day. School is closed on Tuesday.

Regards,

Tony Austin-Principal.