



Dear parents and caregivers,

When we returned to start the 2020 Kilbirnie School year we certainly weren't anticipating some of the things we have been through as a school and as a community. The Covid 19 Pandemic has made this a year we will never forget, I hope to never repeat my experience of working in a school without students. I am very proud of how our students, staff, whānau and school has met the challenges of Covid, 2020 has been a hugely exciting and eventful year for us all at Kilbirnie School. I have just been listening to our year 6 leavers rehearsing music and speeches for their graduation dinner on Monday. The speeches are full of anecdotes from a year which featured a camp, a production and a lockdown! The purpose of this special newsletter is to provide you with some important information regarding the organization and work of our school in 2021.

School organization:

In 2021, our teaching staff will again work in 3 teams or hubs. Our hubs are named after central figures in the creation story of Hataitai. This symbolism is also evident in our school logo and the carved waharoa at the Hamilton Road entrance to our school.

Jessica Thomson will lead a team of teachers working with year 0- 2 students in the Ngake hub.

Glenys Johnston will lead a team of teachers working with year 2- 4 students across the Whāitaitai hub.

Peter Dobson will lead a team of teachers working with year 5 and 6 students in the Matairangi hub.

These teams will plan and deliver the curriculum together. Teachers will continue to develop approaches to teaching and learning that bring students together across classes in these areas of the school. In some instances, the design of our buildings support this. For example, rooms 1-2 and 3-4 can utilize the opportunities for collaboration provided by the design of the learning studio. In a "hub" student have a homeroom teacher but work collaboratively at times with other students across the curriculum. Our challenge is to find opportunities to continue to bring different students together when and where this supports student learning, this challenge drives our work to develop Kilbirnie school property.

Property development- Matairangi hub (Room 8, 9 and 10).

I am excited to report that just this week the project was finally confirmed to begin in January. This is a \$600 000 modernization of rooms 8, 9 and 10. This comprehensive project will transform the block and create a terrific new learning environment for our senior school students. The project includes the addition of a new door connecting room 9 and 8. This glazed, aluminum door will be similar to that connecting rooms 10 and 9 and will make it possible for all students to move freely between rooms. It will also be possible to work as home rooms when this is appropriate for learning. Other improvements include:

- New flooring, ceiling, wall linings, windows and external louvres.
- New doors throughout.
- Additional of break out space.
- Addition of a new cloak bay area outside room 8.
- TV installation to replace data projectors.
- Improved temperature control, air flow and insulation.

We expect the work to complete by the start of term two. During term 1, Lou's class will work in the library, Peter, Soazik and Katrina will operate rooms 9 and 10 collaboratively in the multimedia room and hall. During term 1 we will work to distribute library books to classes, the hall will still be available for sports practices and Kilbirnie After School Care will operate as normal. Teachers will communicate with you regarding class operations and project progress will be reported regularly.

2021 Teaching Staff:

Ngake Hub led by Jessica Thomson (senior teacher).		
Teacher	Home room	Student year level
• Asha Patel	Room 1	Reception and Year 1
• Jessica Thomson	Room 3	Year 1 and 2
• Kay Mudge	Room 4	Year 2

Whâtaimai led by Glenys Johnston (Deputy Principal).		
Teacher	Home room	Student year level
• Elaine Cooper	Room 5	Year 2 and 3
• Glenys Johnston	Room 6	Year 3 and 4
• Alison Thwaites	Room 7	Year 4

Matairangi led by Peter Dobson (Deputy Principal).		
Teacher	Home room	Student year level
• Lou De Lange	Room 8	Year 5
• Peter Dobson	Room 9	Year 5 and 6
• Soazik Dunkin	Room 10	Year 6

Katrina Te Rito will work with room 9 on Thursday and Friday each week and **Tina Davies** will work in room 6 on Thursday and Friday each week. **Rachel France** will work providing both teaching and learning and teacher professional development in te reo and tikanga Māori, she will work in room 1 on Tuesdays and alternate her Thursdays in room 4 and with the Matairangi students. We are very fortunate indeed to have 3 excellent part time teachers who provide a range of opportunities.

Meet the new teacher, teaching team and principal.

On the Wednesday of the last week of term (December 16th), students will have an opportunity to spend some time with their 2021 homeroom teacher and new class mates. Where possible, classes will also meet with other classes in their hub. Early in the new school year there will be an opportunity for parents and Whānau to meet with the teaching teams and discuss the teaching and learning programmes that teachers have developed together.

2021 class lists will be available to view on Friday afternoon next week. Please be aware that no changes can be made to lists. A comprehensive and highly detailed placement process has taken place during which many factors related to student well-being were considered. In most cases date of birth is the prime consideration particularly when combining students in composite classes. I would emphasize that teachers focus on individual learning needs at our school. The composition of the class is irrelevant in this respect.

We ask that you encourage your child to think about the opportunities available in a new class with a new teacher and many potential friends that they will work with in the future at our school. Positive engagement in change is important in developing resilience in students. As mentioned earlier, we are working to develop collaboration between classes at similar and disparate levels within our school. Students will have many opportunities to work and spend time with peers in other homerooms.

In 2021, teachers, hub leaders and I will remain readily available to meet with parents to discuss students or issues that may arise. In addition to this, I will again set aside time at 9.00am every Friday morning to meet informally with any interested or available parents or Whānau that wish to chat with me about the current or future work of our school. No appointment necessary, I will gladly make you a cup of tea!

I am looking forward to meeting and working with parents, caregivers and Whānau in 2021 as we continue the development of our school.

Regards,
Tony Austin.
Principal.