



TĒNĀ KOUTOU KATOĀ,

Nga mihi o te ra (Greetings of the day)

Welcome to week 6. Half way through the term already and it seems like only a few days ago everyone was relaxing at holiday spots or beaches and enjoying the heat of summer. The days are starting to shorten now and we had our first wet day of the year last week. Sure signs that Autumn is on the approach.

Ako - Quality Teaching and Learning

Last Week was a busy one for the school. On Wednesday we invited our last year's year 8 children back to school for a catch up and conversation about how their transition into their secondary education had gone.

Here they are pictured. All reported that the school had set them up well for their next leg of the journey and that they were on a par or ahead of their peers in regard to knowledge and skills. They regarded Maths and Literacy as strengths along with Digital technology and social skills.

They mentioned one or two areas which they wanted us to consider and I will be having ongoing conversations about those. The unanimous view of the students I spoke to was that they felt very prepared and ready for high school. What was remarkable was the variety of experiences each of them reported at their different high schools.



First Aid Training

Last Tuesday, Doris from St John ambulance came to school to take the staff through phase one of their First Aid catch-up training. Pictured are Property Manager Blair and Teacher Pete learning how to attach the defibrillator to a patient having heart difficulties. We have one of these machines in the school that was won at Aims games by our students in 2019.



Manaakitanga - care for ourselves and others

House leaders

Friday saw us celebrating our houses. Children came along in house colours for Kowhai, Rimu, Kauri and Pohutukawa. We grabbed this picture first thing on the day.

Later the children met in their houses and some of year 7s and 8s put forward a short speech to inspire their house-mates to vote for them as leaders.

This involved the whole school and teachers. The results of the vote will be kept secret until Friday when the two leaders of each house will be announced at assembly and presented with a leaders badge.

Head lice

Occasionally we see an outbreak of head lice in school.

If we spot these your child's teacher will send home a letter highlighting the fact and suggesting remedies.

Please take action if lice appear and check your child's hair regularly for eggs and/or larvae.



WHAT'S COMING UP

MARCH

16-20 Te Rākau Camp

23 Year 7&8

immunisation

25-27 Te Māhuri Camp

APRIL

9 Last day of term 1

Awhina - Helping others to be the best they can be

Winter sports

A reminder from the Sports Committee the winter sports registrations can be found in the school website sports hub and are open until 13 March. Also school families can join the sports facebook page where lots of sports info is shared.

Fire drill

Last Friday we ran a trial evacuation for the event of a fire. We do these regularly to test our response capability. I'm pleased to report that we managed to evacuate and account for everyone in the school in 4 mins. I was very pleased with the calm and efficient response of all in the school. Nice to see our safety systems working.

School fence

I received notice the other day that construction on our front fence will be starting in three weeks. The fence will take about 8 weeks to erect and they intend starting at the eastern end of the front field. We are dealing with the health and safety considerations around having construction on site so that the children are completely safe.

Ngākau Pono - Doing the right thing

Visitors to the school

It is also timely to remind you that if you are visiting the school between 9.30am and 2.30pm to come to the office and sign in as a visitor. This is a legal requirement for the school to observe our health and safety obligations, so we know exactly who is on our site and are able to not only keep the children safe but also account for everyone in the event of an emergency. I know this can be an imposition if you are just ducking in to drop something off but your cooperation is appreciated. Clearly this doesn't apply for things like sports days or assemblies.

Immunisation Records

Today all oldest and only children will be given a form from the Waikato District Health Board regarding immunisation. This is to give our community health nurses permission to access your child's immunisation records instead of contacting the school. This will save them time and resources, so please can you fill in and return to the office ASAP. Thank you

Fees and Donations

This week we will be emailing out our donation invoice for 'school fees'. This is not a compulsory payment, however this does help with the day to day running of our school and the purchase of resources that is not covered under the MoE bulk grant.

Also a reminder that camp and summer sports fees are due. If you are having trouble paying for these please come and see Dee in the office to make arrangement to pay this off.

Heoi anō tāku mō nāianeī (That's all for now). Keith O'Donnell, Principal

Coronavirus Update MoE 06/03/2020

Kia ora

Many of you will be aware that three of the four cases of COVID-19 confirmed in New Zealand have had links to four school communities. I appreciate this could be unsettling for some of you so wanted to provide you with an update.

It was very reassuring to read the information from the Auckland Regional Public Health Service that the children in these families are not showing any symptoms of COVID-19 and are doing well. Because the children continue to not show any symptoms, they were not infectious when they were at school and the Ministry of Health is confident there is no risk for the students and staff in those schools.

You will also be interested to know that research published by the World Health Organisation notes that children and young people under 18 account for only 2.4% of all reported cases of COVID-19. This means we are unlikely to see widespread cases in schools and early learning services in New Zealand.

The Ministry of Health's current advice is that with continued vigilance, the chance of widespread community outbreak is expected to remain low. So we all have a role here to minimise the spread of COVID-19.

Our school staff and leadership remain well prepared for the possibility there might be a case in our community. If that were to occur we are confident we can put our plans in place and know we will be supported by regional health authorities and the Ministry of Education.

I am sure you are all keen to do what you can to prevent risk of infection. The best preventative steps are:

- wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and dry thoroughly
- avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
- avoid sharing anything that has come in contact with saliva, whether in your living or social environments
- stay home when you are sick and seek medical attention
- cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the rubbish
- get adequate sleep and eat well-balanced meals to ensure a healthy immune system.

Our school values continue to play an important part in all our activities. A reminder they are Manaakitanga - care for ourselves and other, Awhina - support others, Ngākau Pono - do the right thing and Ako - quality teaching and learning. It is so important we continue to care for and support all members of our wonderful school community, especially those who may be impacted by COVID-19 in some way.

If you want to know more about COVID-19 please make sure that any reading you are doing is from a reliable source. The Ministry of Health is the best source of information for New Zealand and they update this information regularly - <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus>

A reminder that anyone who is ill should not be attending school.

The COVID-19 symptoms are a fever, coughing and difficulty breathing. If anyone has these symptoms and has recently been to a country or area of concern, or have been in close contact with someone confirmed with COVID-19, please encourage them to contact Healthline (for free) on 0800 358 5453 (or +64 9 358 5453 for international SIMs) or their doctor immediately.

Ngā mihi

ACTIVITY FEE / STATIONERY CREDIT

Throughout the year we ask you to send money along to school for various school activities to cover bus trips, sporting activities or shows etc.

We offer all our families the opportunity to open a 'credit account' where you deposit money into the school bank account and whenever a trip or show takes place that requires payment, we deduct this fee from your 'credit account'.

When a trip or show is coming up, you will be notified and given the option to either pay cash/ internet banking or activity fee. If you have credit in your activity fee we can use this.

We recommend an amount of \$30 for our Te Kākano (junior) and Te Pihinga (middle) teams and a minimum of \$50 for our Te Māhuri (senior) and Te Rākau (intermediate) teams.

We offer the same credit system for any stationery that is needed throughout the year (although this is kept separate to activity fee). For any big stationery purchases ie jumbo pencils, a note will come home regardless of stationery credit.

At the end of each school year, if you still have credit in either the activity fee or stationery credit, this will be carried over to the following year, so you don't lose your credit.

If you would like to take up this opportunity please deposit funds into the school bank account 12 3171 0285630 00, reference 'family name / AF or SC. Please email the school on admin@gordonton.school.nz with the amount you wish to put into each credit.

If you have any further questions please don't hesitate to come see Dee in the office.

Thank you

Keith O'Donnell
Principal

PLEASE NOTE: Our activity fee and stationery credit are FAMILY ACCOUNTS



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