

Whānau Newsletter 14 April 2022



Message from the Executive Principal

Tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou katoa

Mā te kimi ka kite, Mā te kite ka mōhio, Mā te mōhio ka mārāma

Seek and discover. Discover and know. Know and become enlightened.

As we look back on the first Term for 2022, this whakataukī reminds us that learning is a journey of continual discovery. The changing environment of COVID-19 in our communities is keeping us on one of the biggest learning journeys of our lives!

It's a journey of discovery, learning, adapting, and growing that we are all doing together.

In times of disruption, having something to ground us can be helpful. Often it's the reassurance of belonging to something – or someone – which can give us the courage to be flexible and adaptable in challenging times.

This was demonstrated beautifully by one of our Tu Kokiri students, Rahui Lee, earlier in the term. We had an unexpected need for someone to step into a leadership role at a whakanoa ceremony – an important tikanga Māori ritual to remove tapu for a colleague returning from bereavement leave.

As you can imagine, this was a very sensitive and difficult situation. Two things impressed me about what happened. Firstly, Rahui didn't hesitate to step up and meet the need for his Ko Taku Reo whānau. Secondly, his words were very gracious, delivered with deep consideration and respect for our colleague and the occasion.

His leadership in that moment was an inspiration and I'm so grateful he belongs to our school.

Covid Update

Recent changes to the COVID-19 Protection Framework mean that since Tuesday 5 April vaccine mandates no longer apply in schools and Vaccine Passes are no longer required for anyone to be on site. This means all workers in early learning services, schools and kura will no longer be required to be vaccinated to work with children or students, or to work on site where children and young people might be present.

We appreciate that the removal of vaccine mandates may be concerning for some families. The Government's decision is based on the assessment that mandates are no longer appropriate for the current stage of our Omicron response. Nationally high rates of vaccination, along with other basic hygiene practices, have been very effective in protecting our communities from the more extreme consequences of COVID-19.

And – hot off the press – we are all now at the [Orange traffic light setting](#), just in time for the school holidays. This brings further adjustments, most of which will provide welcome relief for our ākonga, as face masks are no longer required when inside school and are optional. Visitors are encouraged to wear face masks on site but this is also no longer mandatory.

Thank you

I'm so proud of the way our students have coped with another term of change and variation. They've been an inspiration for our staff and we celebrate and thank them for keeping us all going!

Thank you also to all our staff for their continued efforts to support our learners. And thank you to you, our wider school whānau, for supporting your child in their journey of belonging to our school, wherever they are on their learning journey.

We're already looking forward to welcoming everyone back in Term 2 and deepening our sense of belonging together.



Message from the Board Chair

Tēnā koutou katoa,

I'm so pleased to be able to provide this update on behalf of the Ko Taku Reo Board. It continues to be a busy time for the board but also very exciting to see new initiatives and developments being rolled out throughout Aotearoa New Zealand. Being a national school board is unique and it is a

privilege to be able to work alongside passionate staff who are focussed on raising our students' achievements and well-being.

The theme of this newsletter is "Belonging" – not an easy thing to do when our Deaf and Hard of Hearing students are spread right across the country. However one way of belonging is by becoming involved with Ko Taku Reo's Board and so, as a board, we were extremely pleased to see 13 young people putting their hands up and being nominated as student representatives. As I watched their candidate statements I was impacted by the common wish to become involved, to belong to deaf education and the Deaf community while growing their own leadership skills. These young folks are well on the way to becoming leaders and developing skills and knowledge that will prepare them well for life beyond the school gate.

Do have a look at the [candidate statements](#) which are available on our [Ko Taku Reo Board page](#) and be inspired by these young people's enthusiasm to contribute in a positive way to the future path of deaf education in Aotearoa New Zealand.

So for now, noho ora mai - stay well, look after yourselves and enjoy the holiday break.



Message from Director of Teaching and Learning

Kia ora te whānau o Ko Taku Reo

Whoa! A pandemic, some pretty wild weather systems, and some significant educational change in our country and in our school! Term one has been a bit like a rollercoaster – well done for hanging on!

The theme of this term's newsletter is Belonging, and this is certainly an important concept in fast changing and sometimes uncertain times. A sense of belonging gives human beings stability and safety. And when we feel stable and safe we are able to do our best learning and our best work. It is in the best interests of all of us that we create a warm sense of belonging for each other, as this way we can make our school the best it can be.

So what can we all do to create a great sense of Belonging?

Barbara Bray, a Creative Learning Strategist, suggests some thing we could all do. They are easy and they feel good!

[adapted]

1. Great Greetings

take the time to greet people properly, look them in the eye, smile, make a genuine connection, if appropriate make a physical connection by shaking hands or hugging

2. Names

know peoples names and use them, maybe ask them about their name

3. Ask interested questions

encourage people to share something special or personal about themselves, and appreciate what they tell you.

4. Share a little of yourself in return

Identify connections or similarities with your own life and use these to have a discussion.

5. Remember people

When you meet them again, show you remember them and that you're glad to see them again.

6 Share work

Common learning and common work often leads to shared enjoyment of the learning or work – it feels good when we succeed and it's nice to succeed together.

As our school and our society strives to reconnect after recent breaks, and because we know that connectedness is an important part of learning, I encourage you all to actively use these easy strategies. We all have a role in making the world one in which all people feel a sense of belonging. When our learners feel confident and skilled in using these strategies, they will be part of building the better, tolerant, welcoming world of the future.

noho ora mai



Keeping Calm and Carrying On!

Auckland Preschool has been hit hard by Covid this term, but by working together and helping each other we have persevered.

Auckland Preschool draws children and staff from all over Auckland, so when Auckland is hit hard by Covid so are we! We have had multiple staff and children in isolation, sick or concerned about the Covid threat. We have had periods of low attendance and staff shortages, but we kept in contact and supported each other through it all. The preschool team, lead by Krista, have managed to keep our spirits up and always be present for our students. Now our students are flooding back in (even as some of us face floods at home) and are eager to

be back learning on site. We have such a strong sense of belonging at preschool and within our preschool family that a little thing like a global pandemic can't stop us! Check out the photos of some of the fun we have had this term. We are all looking forward to a more settled term two (fingers crossed) but we know that together we can get through whatever this year brings!



2022 is off to a busy start

The Christchurch Residential Campus welcomed new students Lily Ward, Starr Phillips, Lawsyn Bishop and Jame Te Huia-Kerr.

The term has been a little disrupted with our North Island students needing to fly back but they have all been staying in contact with their friends.

We have also had placement student Asinate Vucango from Greymouth spend time with the girls in Crawford House. This term the residential students have had less than usual activities due to restrictions, but still entered a team in the local Touch Rugby Tournament.

February was a busy month for birthdays in the Residences with four boys celebrating. Ryan and Thomas our twins turned 20 this year.

This term some of the activities we have enjoyed include Lots of basketball games and mini-tournaments, Uno Card games, Walks and icecreams, bike skills and races morning.

We are planning for Term two already. We are going to enter a team in a local Indoor Netball competition again and the boys have designed a great new basketball outfit for our teams events - watch this space.



Receiving the Christian Attitude Award

Rouel is 5 years old and she attends St Michael's School in Wellington. She always smiles, laughs and is so kind to her friends. Rouel works hard in class and loves to work in the school garden. At the end of 2021, she received an amazing award for Christian attitude. This means she thinks of others, includes others and is a kind and caring person. Awesome work Rouel! Keep up the great attitude. Malo lava le galue malosil!

Eli attends St Mary's School in Carterton and is a keen gardener who enjoys weeding during lunchtime with his friends. He had this to say about his time in the garden:

"We had so much fun when it was lunchtime because we did lots of digging. We had to dig out the weeds so we can grow new plants. It was hot work, but it was fun. Now I am tired and I want to go home!"

Both of these amazing students have shown how they 'belong' in their school and that they are working with and alongside their peers. Rouel is being recognised for her achievement within the school and Eli is becoming part of a group that involves working closely with his classmates. It seems they are both keen gardeners as well.

Keep up the great work Rouel and Eli!



Introducing Jean-Baptiste Liu

Hello, my name is Jean-Baptiste and I'm new. I came to Ormiston Junior College in 2022. It's a good deaf provision, in class I do writing and math. I do Deaf MAC (Mentor Advisor Coach). TAIP (Transdisciplinary Authentic Inquiry Project) is good. Whānau Ora is good, strong fitness good.

I feel happy to belong, school play is fun, thank you.



Exciting learning at Kelston Boys' High

2022 is looking very exciting at Kelston Boys' High School Provision. This year we have 7 students and there are 6 staff who work with our students. We began the year with the first week at Ko Taku Reo where the students did work at the Marae performing a powhiri for a new student – Hsawak Wah, learning about Maori culture, weaving flax leaves and eventually learning to make and enjoying sushi supervised by

Kaori Kobayashi.

I would also like to acknowledge last year's Annual prize-giving which did not happen due to lockdown. Fiero and Walter were given the awards this year.



Term one has been a busy one

Well hasn't it been a rocky, volatile start to the new academic year? This has not stopped Kelston Intermediate Provision in re-acquainting with our learning space and with each other after our long summer break.

We started the year with bonding activities with other western provisions at the Village. We played sports together, made sushi, and experienced Youth Theatre Project - so much fun!

We were also very excited to return to the provision! We saw some old friends from the mainstream who are now Year 8, we met our mainstream teachers again, we met some new teachers who were all very friendly and warm - it was wonderful!

One sad thing though, is we had to stay in strict bubbles no thanks to Covid. This was a little weird for us but we stayed hopeful that we would soon be able to mix with others at playtime and join our assemblies again.

We really enjoyed Food Technology! We made some pizza, crepes and cookies. We learnt so much about hygiene, safe cooking and cleaning up. We also experienced hard technology for a few weeks with a new teacher, making ping-pong bats. It is so cool to use those big tools and machines!

We also really loved seeing our mainstream friends for PE and other sports trials. We played Volleyball and Dodgeball - this was definitely our favourite.

The best news for us this term is that we have a new Year 7 in the provision. A big, warm welcome to Diamond-Eve Johnson, we look forward to having a great year with you.

One last great thing is that Kelston Intermediate has a new canopy shade area where we can have assemblies during Covid Red light setting! We can all sit outside in the shade, join in with Waiata and play some team sports games!

Can't wait to see what Term two will bring!



We love going swimming!

Every Monday morning we walk from Linden Primary Provision down to Tawa Pool. We have swimming lessons with Rachel and sometimes Sue helps too. We play in the pool until it is our turn. After the pool we have morning tea at the playground, then we walk back to school. We are all very tired on Monday afternoon.



Identifying and discovering where we belong

2022 has started well at the Hillmorton High Provision – this year we are fortunate to have 21 students, 9 who are new to Ko Taku Reo (seven new Y9 students and two new Year 10 students). All of our students engage in their learning both in the Provision and in our partner school, Hillmorton. We are really lucky to have a welcoming space to support our students to grow, explore their Deaf identity and discover

where they belong.



Online learning at Hagley Provision

At Hagley we have had students spread from Auckland to Christchurch, learning online.

Kia ora koutou from Hagley College provision. This year we have become a hybrid provision. Our teachers spend around 30 hours teaching NZSL online, to students across the country. We also have students at the provision who are hybrid learning, due to Covid. Everyone is getting used to our new

way of working! We say a huge thank you to our Hagley mainstream teachers, who have been joining interpreters and students in their classes.



Belonging to us means...

This term we have been thinking about what it means to Belong. We talked about belonging to our family, our culture, our country, our family values, and belonging to Ko Taku Reo.

Belong to us means

- B** – Being together is so much fun
- E** – Enjoying different cultures and learning about them
- L** – Lucky to be with our friends
- O** – Our own cultures are fun to share with others
- N** – Never stop being you – your culture is important
- G** – Get to learn in a fun, safe, and exciting environment

So, when we thought about our culture, we decided to look at the map of the world and see where each of us was either born or our whānau have come from. Below shows that we are all from different parts of the world - right here in Aotearoa, Fiji, India, and the Philippines. As you can see we're all from different parts of the world. We then drew our country flags and talked about how these were different, yet we felt connected to each other.

We then talked about connecting to and belonging to another amazing part of our culture, Ko Taku Reo Deaf Education.

When I asked the question "how do you feel about belonging to Ko Taku Reo Deaf Education?"

They told me all these amazing words:

- Proud
- Smiley
- Brave
- Amazing
- Happy
- Lucky
- Excited

We looked further into 'belonging' and we know how much we are connected and belong to our partner school, (Wharenu School). They are so amazing at including us in different things.

They make us feel so welcome and always ask us if we want to be part of an event or activity that they are doing with their tamariki.

Things like swimming at the Wharenu Pool, Sports Canterbury skills activities, being part of the Wharenu School library, working together as one and going to Technology with the Year 8 students.

We all agree that this whakatauki says....

That it is not 'me' by myself that I succeed and belong but with the help of others alongside my friends and whānau.



A young man who loves big toys

Ezekiel is a young man with a big heart and a big interest in big toys. Not far from his school is a new housing complex under construction. I had the opportunity to go along for a sunny morning walk with Ezekiel, his Teacher, and two other boys to look at the machinery and meet the Foreman.

Ezekiel asked all the important questions:

- What is your name?
- Why is the dirt going in that truck?
- What are the spikey things on that roller for?
- Why are you watering the dirt?
- Why are there rocks on the driveway?

It was all so very fascinating! We counted the number of scoops of dirt that the excavator put into the dump truck (16), we pumped our fists so the truck driver would 'toot', and we pondered the hole patterns that the roller left in the dirt – they look like a giant waffle, a garden waiting to be planted, or footprints left by a giant hopping in the dirt!

One day, Ezekiel would like to drive the excavator and put all the dirt into his dump truck 😊.



Whānau leader at Avondale primary

Hi, i'd like my name to be anonymous but here is my story.

A long time ago, when I was little like five years old, I wanted to be a whānau leader. Once, I was a bit confused about where my room was and I asked a whānau leader to help me and they did. Lucky, I found my room.

So now I am in Year Six, and we were about to hear who were going to be whānau leaders. My heart was beating so fast, and it wouldn't stop beating; and I couldn't stop breathing fast. When my deputy principal called out my name I freaked out and I stood up, but my legs and hands were shaking, and my hands were cold, I was nervous.

It is hard to be a whānau leader because there are a lot of jobs but is okay. I can just do it because I never give up. If you want to be a whānau leader just work harder and be resilient, careful and do many kind things, and don't bully.

If you are a whānau leader, just please tell the other students to stop bullying. I know bullying is bad. Did you know that some people died from being bullied, so maybe we can try and be nice to each other? Is that okay?

It is okay if your deaf and you can do it! Remember you must never give up on yourself.
