

Parent Newsletter 9th December 2021

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Message from the Executive Principal

He taonga rongonui te aroha ki te tangata

Goodwill towards others is a precious treasure

Tena koutou, tena koutou, tena koutou katoa

We are heading into the season of goodwill and cheer.
Something we all need to look to spread a little more thickly

this year. As the whakatauki says, a precious gift to give that we all could use.

I want to acknowledge the effort of all our students for their amazing efforts this year with having to work through some significant disruptions to learning, and for their engagement with online learning. Also to our families and whānau for your efforts in supporting your child's learning through these times. A very special mention for those students sitting NCEA exams in the next couple of weeks. Know the whole community are supporting and celebrating your efforts with this.

I need also to mention the efforts of our staff in your adaptability and creative approaches to supporting the school and students' learning from a stay-at-home environment this year. Our efforts in this area have given rise to new possibilities for the future to create better and more cohesive national connectedness with students and learning.

Vaccinations

It has indeed been an extraordinary year for all schools, staff, students and whānau across the country. It has been even more extraordinary lately for our communities in the Waikato and Auckland having to go through an extended lockdown period. It is great though to finally see students returning here in Auckland as we open for the rest of the year.

As we begin to look to a new start for 2022, we do know Covid-19 will be in our communities and we will need to use a number of strategies to help keep students and staff as safe as possible. Vaccination is the leading public health prevention strategy in managing the COVID-19 pandemic. As you will be aware as part of this strategy Ko Taku Reo has had to comply with the Public Health Vaccination Order. This means that since the 16th of November the Covid-19 vaccinations are mandatory for all school staff, workers, contractors and volunteers who may come into contact with children on a school site. Vaccination can help schools reduce the risks of outbreaks and potential school closure. I strongly encourage all whānau and eligible students (currently 12+) to get vaccinated to help keep all of us as safe as we can.

Mask Wearing

Mask wearing is another prevention strategy that will be compulsory in some areas. This of course proves a little bit more complicated for us. The Ministry state: "*The use of face coverings may have a particular impact on those who rely on visual signals for communication. Those who communicate with or provide support to this group of people, are exempt from wearing a face-covering in school settings.*"

We still want to encourage the use of masks but not at the expense of access to communication. We will be applying some different exceptions and protocols for non-mask wearing or removal in our provisions. When masks are not being worn we will look to observe the 2m distancing rule. This will also apply to staff. At Ko Taku Reo we have experimented with some masks with clear panels, but they tend to fog or the plastic distorts the view of the mouth. We will put a link in this newsletter to one of the more successful masks we have trailed.

For DHH students in other schools or in other environments, support with mask protocols may also be required. Exemption cards are available for those where wearing a face covering is unsuitable. While the cards are not a requirement for the individual, guidance on the Ministry of Health website notes it may make it easier to explain why wearing a face covering is unsuitable for them.

Organisations that can provide an exemption card are:

- Disabled Persons Assembly NZ – 04 801 9100 or info@dpa.org.nz
- Deaf Aotearoa - <https://www.deaf.org.nz/2021/08/exemption-mask-card/>
- <https://arrowuniforms.co.nz/products/vision-washable-facemask>

New Head of Enrolled School

You may be aware that Fiona Gordon has resigned from her position as Head of Enrolled School. She isn't completely lost to us however as she will still be working in support of some of our students as the new Manager of Disability Services at ARA in Christchurch.

It is my great pleasure now to announce Lisa Sharman as the new Head of Enrolled School from the start of term 1 2022. I am sure you will join me in wishing Lisa well. Lisa is the current Deputy Head of School and is currently in the Acting Head Position.

I wish all staff, students and whānau all the very best over the Christmas break.

Ngā mihi o te Kirihiomete

Ngā mihi o te tau hou

James Le Marquand



Message from the Board Chair

Kia ora Koutou

As we come to the end of our first full year as Ko Taku Reo - Deaf Education New Zealand I just want to say how very excited the Board is about the future for deaf education in New Zealand. It has been a hectic year for everyone with on-going impact of COVID 19 on education and life in general. We

continue to see wonderful ways of interacting virtually that probably would not have happened otherwise! It has raised our awareness of how we can reach learners and their whānau no matter where they are.

This year has seen Ko Taku Reo build on the existing limited NZSL Hub programmes which has included the extension of current NZSL Hub programmes, as well as informal playgroups for pre-schoolers in both Wellington and Dunedin. The board is very excited to see this happening as it cements the idea of pathways for students from early childhood through to life beyond compulsory schooling.

We will be holding our triennial Board elections next year so if you are interested in joining our team please feel free to get in touch with me directly to discuss.

Our Ko Taku Reo Facebook page continues to be a fabulous place to keep up to date with all of the really cool things happening throughout the year. You can see what our learners are up to around New Zealand and I encourage you to check it out.

Finally, have a wonderful Christmas and fabulous holiday break. See you back here in 2022!

Na mihi nui,

Denise Powell
Boardchair



Can you make a prediction?

Science experiments are always fun especially when you don't know what is going to happen. You don't need to be in the laboratory either to conduct your own experiments.

We all like to look at rainbows and wonder how beautiful the colours are. Ariana has been making rainbows for herself. She knows the colours in the rainbow. Red, Orange, Yellow, Green Blue, Indigo and Violet. An easy way to remember the order of the colours is to use a boys named ROY G BIV.

Ariana completed an experiment last week using 3 saucers of milk, cream and water. To each saucer, she added 2 drops of different food colouring and a drop of dishwashing liquid. She thought ..."the colours will mix together and not look like rainbow colours." I wonder if her prediction was correct? Try this experiment and see for yourself.



Wellington Lockdown Challenges

We had some amazing challenges throughout lockdown.

In Wellington, we survived lockdown by engaging in a number of different challenges and keeping in touch over Zoom. We had a fort challenge and a nature art challenge. Even our staff got involved in a funny photo challenge!



Auckland Preschool

Kia ora

we have been connected with our tamariki and their whānau through Story Park to share online activities. We've shared great activities about different cultural events and a range of lovely resources to learn about cultural diversity. Each week we have introduced a new core concept and demonstrated

how it can be used in different situations through story telling, music and dance and sharing real life experiences.

We have also had weekly Zoom sessions for those who were interested in having face to face interactions. A very warm welcome to two beautiful children, Alexia and Lukas who started with us recently. Some of our whānau made some posts on Story Park to share their children's experiences at home and we really appreciate their contribution. We know that some of our children are purely happy to come back to preschool. We are also missing our preschool and our children and we are looking forward to seeing them soon.



This is the year of 2021 at Wharenuui Provision

Our year at WPP has been amazing and we've captured it into each month with pictures.

Our year at Wharenuui Provision is broken down into months - check it out

January

- We made connections with our partner school classroom of year 2 -and taught them NZSL each Friday.
- Sunsmart came and taught us how to protect our skin against harmful sun rays.

February

- We had a visit from our Principal - James Le Marquand and Louise Roe
- We celebrated St Patrick's Day by coming to school in green clothes - this was fun.
- We attended a concert at the Christchurch Town Hall sharing in dance a Maori Myth and Legend.

March

- We went to Margaret Mahy playground and the Christchurch Turanga Library for a visit
- We learnt all about America's Cup and made our own boats and raced them.

April

- We did our learning around ANZAC day and our very brave soliders - we made poppies also.
- We made some yummy ANZAC biscuits and shared these with our whanau.

May

- We went to a fun Team Building Day at Nga Puna Wai - that was organised by the Halberg Trust. It was a fun day with lots of different activities.

June

- We stood up to BULLYS by wearing pink and learning of ways that we can help ourselves and our friends. We learnt that it is better to be a 'Upstander' - and not a 'Bystander'.
- We went to the Wharenuui Pool and learnt how to be safe in the water.

July

- WE celebrated Maori Language week by making some Rawena Bread - This is bread made from potatoes. It was so YUM.
- We also learnt about Matariki and went out to Sumner and shared this learning and activities with the other provisions in Christchurch. We also ZOOMED our friends in Auckland Provisions.

August

- We hosted a song at the Wharenuui School Assembly - We are One - and everyone loved it.
- We learnt how to write our names in Japanese language - this was part of learning about different cultures. We became experts at this new skill.

September

- OH NO .. WE went into LOCKDOWN - this was another way of learning - and it was quite tricky at first, but we did get the hang of it. We did ART and SCIENCE online as well as our reading, writing and maths. We must say we do prefer being in the classroom though.

October

- We tie dyed our very own LOUD SHIRT DAY T-Shirts - and wore them proudly to bring an awareness of the importance of supporting our Deaf Community.
- We took part in the Wharenuui School Athletics Day - We all tried everything - and although we didn't win, we gave everything our very BEST.

November

- We hosted our Primary Provision Hui - and Maraia and Parneet were the hosts. It was a fun time seeing all that the Primary Provisions have achieved in 2021.
- We farewelled the lovely, kind and caring Fiona who is leaving Ko Taku Reo and start work in a different job. WE WISH HER ALL THE VERY BEST - WE WILL MISS HER LOTS.

December

- We want to wish all our friends at Ko Taku Reo a wonderful Christmas, and a great start to 2022. 2021 has been a hard year of learning for us all, but in this we have amazed ourselves and others at how we can be flexible and try new things. Along with Wharenuui Students, everyone should all be very proud of what you have achieved.

Bring on 2022 - We're ready for you :)



Questions and Answers with Oteha Valley Provision

We have spent the last ten weeks learning online together. How are our students feeling about their time on Zoom, online learning and going back to school at Oteha Valley Provision?

What have you most enjoyed about Lockdown?

Susan: I have liked playing on the laptop but I miss school so much.

Blaze: I am in Rarotonga for Lockdown. I like spending time with my friends.

Kaya: Going swimming in my pool, playing on my grandma's computer.

What was hard about Lockdown?

Susan: It is hard not having friends to play with. I dream about going back to school.

Blaze: It's hard doing maths at my new school (in Rarotonga). It's hard in another language.

Kaya: Not being able to go to school.

The favourite activity you have been doing at home?

Susan: Watching movies is fun.

Blaze: I like going to the playground next to my house and going to the shop.

Kaya: Watching TV and making dumplings with my family.

Did you like Zooming with your teacher, teacher aide and classmates? Why/why not?

Susan: I like Zoom. It is more fun and easier to do work.

Blaze: I like joining in and seeing everyone in NZ.

Kaya: Yes, because I like seeing everyone.

What are you most looking forward to doing when we get back to Oteha Valley School on Monday 22nd November?

Susan: It will be good seeing my classmates and my teachers.

Blaze: I feel excited and I can't wait to see my old friends.

Kaya: Doing some art and drawing.

Are you worried about coming back to school at all? What is on your mind?

Susan: I am worried about wearing masks. It's hard to breathe.

Blaze: I'm not worried. I go back next month.

Kaya: I'm worried about my Kapa Haka Festival if it is still happening?

What would you like to say to all of the Ko Taku Reo families who will read this newsletter?

Susan: I will be going to a new school next year- Albany Junior School. Have a good Summer everybody.

Blaze: I can't wait till I see my friends again.

Kaya: I hope you have a great Christmas and holiday.



Ormiston Junior College and Homelearning

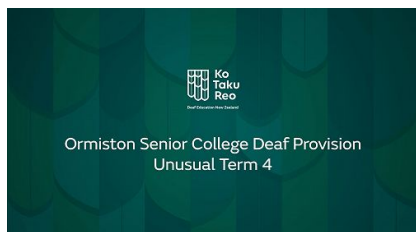
See what Angelena thinks 'Homelearning' means to her in one word!

'Homelearning' in one word - my word is 'LOCKDOWN'

Hello, my name is Angelena. I'm a Deaf student from OJC Provision Ko Taku Reo. 'LOCKDOWN' means to me staying

home, spending time with my family, being safe and Learning from home too.

Thank you



Ormiston Senior College Deaf Provision Unusual Term 4

The long Covid lockdown, which lasted eight school weeks, made online learning a challenge for everyone and was especially tough for some. However, it was pleasing to see the students' efforts on their return to school and their focus on achieving the different NCEA standards in the short time that

remained in the term.

The week before OSC reopened, the Deaf provision reconnected via an online Tik Tok challenge, with an independent judge – Assistant Head of Enrolled School Daniel Greenwood – deciding the students' entry as the winner. The staff graciously conceded that their opponents had indeed produced a highly creative and entertaining clip.

Ormiston Senior College's decision to split the school day between Year 11s on-site in the morning and Year 12s in the afternoon meant working to a revised timetable, but the students took that in their stride.

The continuing Level 3 lockdown in the community has also meant new safety norms at schools, such as mask-wearing and social distancing.

As the school year comes to a close, we farewell three of our students – Yuan Tsai, Kaylee Wipani and Markus Pakii William. Yuan is heading to Auckland University, Kaylee to Tu Kokiri, and Markus to the building programme at Massey High School. We wish them all the very best for the future.

Despite their departure, our roll will rise to 16 next year with the arrival of six new Year 11s from Ormiston Junior College.

Have a great summer holiday. We're all looking forward to greater freedom of movement under the Government's new traffic-light system and a return to a more normal 2022.



Amazing creativity during lockdown!

Whangarei learners show the way, with their artistic skills!

During lockdown, some of our learners were busy using their creative abilities in a variety of ways.

Sisters, Emma and Chloe, had fun creating origami with their RTD Claire. They followed instructions by watching and listening carefully to produce a range of animals and shapes.

As part of his lockdown activities, Shannon and his RTD Floyd viewed and analysed a Deaf cultural movie called, 'CODA'. Throughout the movie, Floyd asked prediction & comprehension questions, and they discussed the many themes of the movie.

Floyd also taught Shannon a range of shading techniques to create three-dimensional pencil drawings. He learnt about light and dark, perspective, and proportion. This led to Shannon producing a painting for his NCEA Art board.

Lynne, our Regional Coordinator, challenged Northland learners to construct a bird's nest from recycled and/or natural materials. Whakairo made a nest from twisted strips of paper for his colourful 'Bakugan' eggs.



Virtual Deaf Space: Students' Voices Being Heard

Early in 2021, high school Deaf and hard of hearing students in mainstream schools expressed their desire to connect with other Deaf rangatahi and Deaf adults, and to explore topics about navigating life as a Deaf person. From this, a Virtual Deaf Space for seniors was conceived and a trial initiated in

Term 4.

Kia ora koutou katoa! Greetings Everyone!

We are very excited to announce that a trial, Virtual Deaf Space for senior Deaf and hard of hearing students from mainstream settings, began in November with four weekly sessions, 1-hour long each. The team involved in the Virtual Deaf Space trial includes Denise Powell, Sarah de Heer, Thora Huebner and Angela Lindsay.

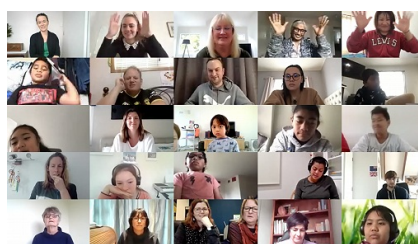
The Virtual Deaf Space trial focused on specific topics, as requested by the students:

- Identity / Deafhood: exploring own journey to self-discovery and belonging
- Preparation for Leaving school
- Navigating hearing world
- Improving NZSL skills
- How to use NZSL Interpreters
- Social and mental well-being
- Self-advocacy and resilience

Already, we can see that Virtual Deaf Space has much potential - to grow, be further developed, have other topics added to the programme and many other possibilities.

It's all very exciting!

If you want to register an Expression of Interest for your high school Deaf and hard of hearing child to enter the Virtual Deaf Space next year, please contact Sarah de Heer at: sarah.deheer@kotakureo.school.nz or phone 0800 332 369.



Auckland Primary Zui

Even during the lockdown, our bond is very strong!

During nearly three months of lockdown online learning, the three Auckland primary school Provisions (Kelston Primary, Ormiston Primary, Oteha Valley) had their weekly Zui (Zoom Hui) on Thursdays. There were 11 Zui's in total and each week was filled with a variety of thought provoking learning games and activities. Teachers each had a turn at being MC and some also organised and led the games. The Teacher Aides and NZSL tutors also took an active role in organising and leading the games and activities, coming up with new ideas. Each time we had fun games/activities, Kahoot! quizzes showed great Seesaw work to each other, sang sign songs and even dressed up.

The positive aspect of Zui is that we can meet people we wouldn't normally get to see due to the distance. It doesn't often happen that the three primary provisions in Auckland work together. However, Zui has given students and staff a chance to get to know each other's names, faces and sign names, which has increased the sense of connection while working together. Kelston Intermediate and later, Year 9 students from Kelston Girls College also joined Zui. They led Karakia and positively participated in games and activities as great role models. We even extended our Zui audience to Waikato, too!

The best thing is that everyone worked together and had great fun together, even during the lockdown, and everyone had a beautiful smile on their face. The bonds we have formed through this experience will continue to grow.



Lockdown Connections Central Auckland Style

One of the key focuses for the Central Auckland RTD team during the lockdowns was on learning and connection.

As part of this process, the team collectively set up Group Zoom sessions that appealed to both the younger and older students during the lockdowns. The focus was on language,

learning, critical thinking, social and emotional awareness, wellbeing, turn-taking and connection. There were many different options including, beginner Te Reo Maori, listening games, how words work, mathematical challenges, Minecraft magic, NZSL games, NZSL storytelling, philosophy for children, singing, themed storytime, and Tongan Language Week. As well as having special guests from Hamilton Zoo and The Auckland Museum. Students enjoyed meeting to learn and socialise together, to listen to the opinions and experiences of others and to share their own ideas.

Going forward, the Central Auckland team are looking at ways to continue building and fostering these connections between the students when they return to school and into the future.



Ko Taku Reo Residences Christchurch Campus

Christchurch residential students, activities and achievements for Term 4 2021

Term 4 has been very busy in the Christchurch residences this year.

We have had 5 placement students James, Lawsyn, Fynlay, Starr and Lily plus family stay with us weeks 2 and 3. Great

opportunity for them to have a taste of residential life.

Indoor netball season has finished so our residential students are back playing Touch Rugby in the local Sumner competition. As I type this message they have had three wins already. The team is faster, fitter and very motivated this term beating teams they lost to in Term 1. Steve has done a good job of co-ordinating the sports events for the students.

Students are continuing with their homework time 3 nights per week and we have added to this with a mini-library. We ordered 50 books to come from our KTR library - a variety of school and hobby topics as requested by the students.

Covid has had an impact on the start of our of site activities with a planned Ten-pin bowling event for the boys cancelled but they have been able to play mini golf outdoors to make up for it. The girls got to do their Lemur experience at Willowbank Wildlife reserve as well. We have done this activity before but with a new group of girls decided to do it again as very popular.

At the end of this year we are losing one of our students, Linh Da Tran. Linh Da is heading home to Nelson to continue her education by doing a course in Beauty Therapy. She is very much looking forward to this but we will miss her and wish her all the very best for the future.
