

# TERM 1 TEAM LETTER



## Walking Together in Our Story - Tō Tātou Kōrero

We are called to be people of aroha, learning and leading together in right relationship. We follow Jesus' call to walk with one another in love, faith, and mission, growing as servant leaders who uplift the dignity of all.

For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life. - Ephesians 2:10

"Let us thank God with all our heart and Mary our Mother and good St Joseph, for the special protection given. To show our gratitude let us remain constant in fidelity to our missionary way of life and the inspirations of grace. Let us be humble, obedient, gentle and faithful in our efforts to do well." - Euphrasie Barbier 1871

### Dear Parents and Caregivers,

Welcome back to school for 2026. We wish you a very special welcome, and we hope you have a wonderful time at our school. The teachers this year are:

**Aroha Years 0-1** - Mrs Lesley Wallace, Mrs Joanna Wilcox, Mrs Jess Knight, Mrs Ashley Clarke, and Mrs Fleur de Farias.

**Ako Years 2-3** - Mrs Linda Sokimi, Mrs Jenni Logan, Mrs Estelle Julius, Ms Sheri D'Souza, Mrs Sam Tino and Mrs Natalie Flynn.

**Arahi Years 4-6** - Mrs Tiana Farrell, Miss Sophie Pyne, Miss Nicole Sarginson, Mrs Flerinda Valondo, Miss Morgan Jones, Mrs Megan Webster, Mrs Sophie Hartnett, and Mrs Kerri Egelmeer.

**Attendance:** Attendance is a priority for our school as well as for the Ministry of Education. Please note that if your child is absent from school, we need to be informed for every day they are away, either through the eTAP app or by calling the school. If you do not contact the school, your child is marked as truant.

**Lateness:** Children should arrive to school by 8:30 to prepare for their school day. If your child arrives to school after 8:45am, they must be signed into the office and receive a pink slip, as attendance has already been taken and teaching has already started. Students who are very late in returning to class after lunch are marked as late on the roll.

**@School App:** Please ensure you have this app installed on your phone and notifications enabled. This app is our main form of communication.

### MOBILE PHONES & DEVICES

To comply with government regulations, students are not to use any mobile phones or smart watches during school hours, including break times. If a cell phone is brought to school it must be handed to the kaitiaki teacher for safekeeping until the end of the day. If a parent or caregiver needs to contact their child during school hours, they must call the office.

### SCHOOL FAIR

Our School Fair is on Saturday the 14<sup>th</sup> March - Look out for ways you can support our school from the PTA.

### PARENT PORTAL

For details about what your child is learning this year and ways to support their learning, please look at the Parent Portal on the Ministry of Education website.

### UNIFORM

In Term 1 all students should be in their full summer uniform. Hats are compulsory and can be left at school. Children not wearing a hat will be required to play under the shade areas and are not allowed on the fields or playgrounds.

All uniform items must be clearly named. Children with long hair must have their hair tied up, and the colour of the hair ties must be green, white, black or brown.

Permitted jewellery are: stud earrings and a watch only. Whānau who would like their children to wear Taonga are requested to advise the Principal as to identify the wearer. These must be limited to one taonga. Please make sure your child has the correct PE uniform (Years 3-6) at school every day.

### KICKSTART BREAKFAST

We are very fortunate to have a breakfast programme at school. Students are invited to eat breakfast and chat in the hall kitchen from 8:00 am. Breakfast includes Weetbix and milk, and varied fruit that has been kindly donated.

### BIRTHDAYS AND TOYS

As we are a health-promoting school and many of our children have food allergies we request that no sweets/cakes are brought to school to celebrate birthdays. Please do not allow your child to bring toys from home as they distract from their learning. If they are brought to school and lost, the school will not be responsible.

### CONNECTING WITH TEACHERS:

Connecting with families is an important aspect of our work at school. However, speaking to teachers while students are present can be difficult. We are usually available for parent meetings on Wednesday to Friday after school or by prior arrangement. We are also available via email. Please allow appropriate time for a response. If you need an urgent response, please contact the school office.

### CLASSROOMS WILL BE OPEN EACH DAY AT 8:30 am

**ENDURING UNDERSTANDING:**

**Y2 WE UNDERSTAND THAT WE ARE UNIQUE AND THAT GOD MADE US AS WE ARE**  
**Y3 WE UNDERSTAND WE ARE A PART OF OUR SPECIAL FAMILIES AND GOD'S FAMILY**

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION.**

This term, our Religious Education theme is 'Te Tātou Whakapono – Our Story'. Year 2 will explore the focus: 'We are loved – Who am I?' We are loved, we are precious, and we can love. Through this learning, children will discover that each of us was lovingly created by God, who thought about and wanted us. We will reflect on how special and unique we are, and how we can make a difference in others' lives through the way we show love and kindness.

Year 3 will focus on 'My Whānau, Jesus' Whānau'. Students will learn how we can show and share our faith in Jesus and pass on His wisdom to others. We'll also explore the importance of praying for and with our families, what it means to live a holy life, and how we are part of the Kingdom of God. We will also have lessons focused on Lent and Holy Week.

**MASSES & LITURGIES:** Ako will participate in some Masses on Friday mornings. We will also have several liturgies at school this term. Our school dedication Mass is at 1 pm on the 17<sup>th</sup> February. Many of these will look at Lent and the lead up to Easter, beginning with Ash Wednesday on the 18th of February. Look at the term dates to see further details. Whānau are invited to all assemblies, Masses and liturgies.

**ENGLISH:** This term, our literacy lessons will encompass writing, handwriting, reading, and spelling. In writing, we will develop sentence structure and correct punctuation. Reading lessons will be focussed upon decoding strategies to improve word recognition and comprehension strategies to deepen understanding of texts. Students will bring home a reader or decodable text to practise fluency at home. These will only be sent home if your child brings a book bag to school. Spelling and handwriting will be taught throughout the term.

**MATHEMATICS:** Our topics this term begin with numbers and patterns and lead into shape as the term progresses. All students will practise and learn their basic facts. These are also a part of their home learning sheets.

**OTHER LEARNING AREAS:** This term, students are learning about Ships and Seafarers to New Zealand, including Polynesian voyaging, European exploration, and ships from around the world. In Health and PE, our focus is on growing bodies and movement skills, developing balance, strength, flexibility, and swimming confidence. In Science, Year 2 students are exploring materials and their uses, while Year 3 students are learning about matter, energy, light and shadow, and sound through hands-on activities.

**HOME LEARNING:** All Year 2 - 3 students have Reading Eggs and Mathseeds, which they can access at home digitally. Each programme has the same logon. Look for the letter about this in your child's home learning book. Please read with your child and sign their home-learning book. Years 2 - 3 home learning will go home on a Monday and is due back on Fridays. Their home learning consists of a short worksheet with a small amount of spelling, writing and maths to complete over the week. All students will have either a home reader or a library book to read with a parent at home. Some students have longer books and may have these over a week or several nights, rather than a new book every night.



## **ENDURING UNDERSTANDING : WE UNDERSTAND THAT WE ARE UNIQUE AND THAT GOD MADE US AS WE ARE**

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:** This term, our focus strand is Ā Tātou Whakapapa Our Story, with an emphasis on the question, 'Who Am I?' The students will develop an understanding that they are unique and God made them as they are and loves them. They will recognise people are gifts from God, to each other and the world. We will also have lessons focused on Lent and Holy Week.

**MASSES & LITURGIES:** We will be attending some Friday morning Masses during the term. There will be a whole school Mass to mark the start of the school year, our School Dedication Mass, which whānau are most welcome to attend. This is Tuesday 17 February at 1pm. We will observe Ash Wednesday through a whole school Liturgy on Wednesday 18 February at 10:10am in our Hall. All of our assemblies open with a Liturgy. You are invited to all Assembly Liturgies and Masses on Fridays. Check the term dates for more information.

**ENGLISH:** Our Literacy programme focuses on learning letter names and sounds (phonics), mastering correct letter formation and beginning to decode words as students learn to read and write. We implement this through a structured literacy approach. From Monday to Thursday, your child will bring home their book bag, which includes a home/school book. They will also have some form of literacy homework. This may consist of a reader, a letter/sound book, a cut-up sentence, a poem, handwriting practise or a book for you to read to them. Please note that your child will not be able to take a reader home if their book bag is not at school. Daily reading (adult to child, together or child to adult), learning of letters and the sounds they make as well as correct formation of letters (handwriting) is vital for your child's learning progress in all areas of Literacy.

**MATHEMATICS:** Our topics this term are Statistics (collecting data, creating picture graphs to display data and interpreting the data), Number Structure and Algebra (patterns and recognising the unit of repeat).

**SCIENCE:** Our topic for Science is Materials and their Properties under Physical Science. The students will be observing the properties of different materials using their five senses, identifying the main material and comparing and grouping everyday materials based on their shared physical properties.

**SOCIAL SCIENCE:** Our topic for Social Science is learning about where we come from and that families come from many places. We will firstly look at our ourselves and our families and where we come from. We will then then learn about New Zealand and the first people who came to our country through pūrākau (traditional Māori stories, myths, and legends)

**THE ARTS:** We will have a focus on Visual Art this term. The students will be creating portraits and using different techniques and media to create these. We will also focus on directed drawing.

**PE:** We are very fortunate again to have Fulton Swim School coming into our school to teach our students swimming lessons. Please make sure your child brings their swimming gear to school on the days. It is an expectation that ALL students take part in these lessons. If they cannot take part, students must have a letter explaining why they cannot participate. If no letter or email is received, the students will be given togs to wear from our school supplies to take part. Please make sure ALL swimming and uniform items are labelled with your child's name. This includes underwear! Following on from swimming we will focus on balance, strength and flexibility.

**HOME LEARNING:** Our students all have a Home School Book in their book bag which will include their home learning tasks. Please refer to the above statement in English. Any notices from your child's teacher will be included in this and whānau can add notes for their teacher as well.



**OHO AKE - INSPIRED: WE UNDERSTAND HOW WE ARE A PART OF OUR SCHOOL AND OUR COMMUNITY**

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:** This term, our focus is “Our Story”. This theme focuses on stories, especially: The story of the Church from its beginnings to how it lives today in Aotearoa, including local stories and culture. Students’ own stories, including their family, community, and identity, and how these fit into the wider Christian and Catholic story. We will also have lessons focused on Lent and Holy Week.

**MASSES & LITURGIES:** We will be taking turns in our year groups to attend Mass on Friday mornings. Arahi Year 6 will attend Friday Mass alongside Aroha Y0/1. Arahi Year 5 will attend Mass with Ako EJ/JL. Arahi Year 4 will attend Mass with Ako LS/JW. We will have whole-school Masses throughout the year. All are welcome to attend Mass, and we will keep you updated on when they will occur. This can also be found on the school calendar.

**ENGLISH:** This term in English, we are focusing on sentence structure and punctuation. Every term, we will cover handwriting and spelling. We will continue to utilise the Writer’s Toolbox programme, where students can move forward with their writing learning journeys and receive up-to-date feedback. Whole-class and group reading lessons will continue throughout the term. We encourage all students to borrow books from our school library weekly.

**MATHEMATICS:** This year, our school will continue to use a ‘Maths No Problem’ resource to support the implementation of the new Mathematics curriculum. Our topics this term are whole numbers, addition, and subtraction. Students will also learn basic facts. Please support your child with this at home.

**CONCEPT/SCIENCES:** This term, Year 6 will learn about New Zealand trade and settlement, including missionaries, land ownership, and the Musket Wars. In Physical Science, students will explore the behaviour of light and learn about the Solar System. Year 5 students will explore significant natural events in New Zealand history, with a case study that builds on their Geography learning and focuses on recovery and regeneration. In Physical Science, they will investigate materials, forces, simple machines, and fluids, including resistance and buoyancy. Year 4 students will explore the significance of the Treaty of Waitangi and examine population change in New Zealand, including growth, migration, distribution, and global comparisons. In Physical Science, they will investigate heat and states of matter, with a focus on matter interactions and states of matter in the atmosphere.

**PE:** This term, our Year 4 students will be having swimming lessons run by Fulton Swim School in our school pool, starting in Week 2. Our Year 5 & 6 students will participate in lessons at the Rec Centre, Pukekohe, starting Week 4. We are very fortunate to have this opportunity, as it provides students with valuable life skills. Students will need to bring their togs and towels every day. All Year 4–6 students will need a school PE uniform, which is to be worn during PE lessons and at sports tournaments throughout the year.

**HOME LEARNING:** Home Learning starts in Week 2. Students will be expected to complete 4 Math-Whizz progressions and read for 15–20 minutes per night. Students are expected to complete homework every week.

# Healthy Lunch Box Tips



Think about filling the lunchbox in terms of the four food groups:

## **Vegetables and Fruits**

Vegetable sticks – carrot, cucumber, and celery with an optional dip such as cottage cheese, hummus, pesto, Greek yoghurt, tzatziki, or \*peanut butter.

Small (cherry) or chopped tomatoes

Fresh fruit – chopping bigger fruit beforehand will make it easier to eat – a variety throughout the week maintains interest and ensures a variety of nutrients

Fruit pottles

Mini salads – coleslaw or a lettuce salad with tomato, grated carrot, and cucumber

Small packet or handful of raisins or dried fruit

## **Grain foods (bread, rice, pasta, breakfast cereals)**

Sandwiches

Cereal bars, Plain biscuits, Plain popcorn, Rice crackers, Potato or pasta salad, Potato cakes

Leftover pasta and rice dishes

## **Dairy products (milk, cheese, yoghurt)**

Pottle of yoghurt or yoghurt squeezables

Cubes or slices of cheese

Cottage cheese – add to sandwiches or use as a dip for vegetable sticks

## **Legumes, nuts, seeds, fish and other seafood, eggs, poultry, and/or meat**

Meat or chicken sandwiches

Egg or tuna sandwiches

Hard-boiled eggs

Hummus – Add some to sandwiches or put a couple of tablespoons in a container to go alongside vegetable sticks

\*Peanut butter – add to sandwiches or use as a dip for vegetable sticks

\*A small handful of nuts and seeds

## **TIPS**

- Use leftovers wherever possible to put into wraps or on mini pizzas.
- Get the kids involved with the planning and lunchbox prep.
- Limit packaged snacks where possible. Snip the corner of packets for younger children so they can open these independently.
- Provide food your child likes to eat.
- Freeze a small container of water to put in alongside lunch as this will keep food cold and provide a cold lunchtime drink.
- Clean containers thoroughly after use with hot water and detergent.
- Throw out leftover food not eaten during the day.

**WE ARE A WATER ONLY SCHOOL - DO NOT SEND ANY OTHER DRINKS TO SCHOOL PLEASE**