



Kelburn Normal School

Upper Middle Syndicate Newsletter

Rooms 5, 6 and 7 - Term One 2017

10 February 2017

Kia ora, and welcome to 2017 with the Upper Middle Syndicate. Our year 5/6 syndicate includes Room 5 (Rob Kerr), Room 6 (Jen Wilkinson) and Room 7 (Gareth Rouch).

Focus for the Year

During their time in our syndicate your child will develop the Key Competencies. This will involve them working independently and in groups; they will express themselves appropriately and gain some self-direction over their learning. As classes we will be developing cultures where the KNS values are agreed to and upheld.

To achieve these goals, we will need to reestablish some basic building blocks such as organising our books, desks, classroom routines, homework, programmes, materials etc. Even the most academically-capable students will benefit from focussing on organisation, presentation and managing their work and behaviour.

Our children are members of the senior area of the school. They are taking on more responsibilities and have the opportunity to participate in sports and cultural events.

In our classroom programmes we will foster the ability to work with a range of children and develop resilience when facing a challenge. During the year many children will gain a realistic appreciation of their strengths, and the areas they can develop.

A big challenge for us, the parents and teachers, is to set up the conditions for success by providing just enough support for success to allow the children's resilience to develop as well.

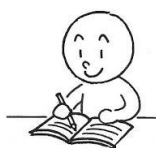
Modern Learning Transition

During the year we will look for opportunities to work as a team, and work with alternative groupings across the classes. Similarly, the children will need to develop their social learning further.

TERM ONE TOPICS

Water is the overarching theme to guiding topic work this term. In science we will recap the properties of water, states of matter, the water cycle, erosion, landforms and how water allows life to exist.

If time allows we consider the social aspects regarding the use and misuse of water, investigating simple water technology such as the lever and bucket, pumps, and hoses. We will also look at using materials to filter water.



In writing, we will write memoirs to retell significant experiences. We will also use diaries and journals to enhance reflection and the detail in our writing. Later in the term, after camp, we will write stories where the landscape or physical setting is the key factor driving the plot.

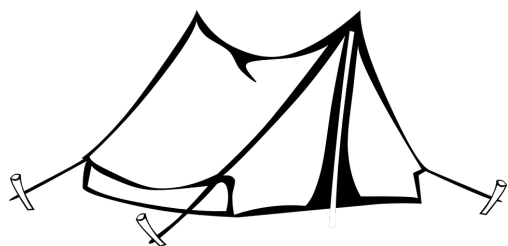
Geometry is our first maths topic. We will also have a period of informal assessment and standardised testing for diagnosing where students are up to. Then we will focus on number knowledge with a focus on addition and subtraction.

In sport and P.E. we will be having inter-class rotations and will provide a mix of cooperative games, small ball skill practice, and modified games. The key outcomes are for your child to have an effective overarm throw and the ability to catch a tennis ball in a game situation.

Art

In art the classes are all working with the medium of watercolours; however the classes will vary as regards the subjects and approaches taken.

CAMP



Our camp this year is based at El Rancho in Waikanae and is in week seven (21-24 March). This is a fully-catered camp with the children sleeping in bunk cabins. The activities include a hill walk, horse riding, orienteering, rock wall, go karts, archery, air rifle target shooting, rope work, kayaks, and team initiatives. We will also reinforce some of our topic work related to water and landforms.

We will send out permission, dietary requirement and medical forms for you to update next week. Please return to your child's teacher for them to collect and collate.

We are lucky to have plenty of parent campers for camp and have a ratio of one parent to 10 children.

The parent helpers are: Jake Pearson, Jacqui Matheson, John Sneyd, Thomas Song, Graeme Edwards, Kiri Cook-Green, John Townend, Phil Veal and James Firestone is available as backup.

Outdoor Activity

I hope you have all enjoyed some summer activities. Hopefully there is some decent weather for us to enjoy some education out of the classrooms (EOTC).

We will have regular sport and P.E. sessions and it is advisable your child is dressed appropriately for exercise. Trainers are a great footwear choice. Given Wellington's weather, when there is a chance to get outside for P.E. we often take it.

Starting in March some children will choose to play Tuesday lunchtime rugby at the Glen. All children playing must have a mouthguard.

Making Contact

Thank you to those parents who have been able to introduce themselves. Please come along to the meet the teacher evening on Thursday 23 February to get an overview of our programme, and ask questions.

If you have a query you could also call into the classrooms before or after school. However if you have significant concerns, or technical questions, your teacher will probably need to collect some information and schedule a more formal meeting.

HOME LEARNING

A streamlined home learning programme will start next week. One aim of home learning is to have the children be as independent as possible. They need to read at home, reinforce their crucial maths concepts, and practise their basic facts. Spelling for most children will not be part of their homework as they will carry out word study during reading time. Some children with spelling needs will learn essential spelling words at home. There will generally be no home learning worksheets but the children will need to provide us with succinct written comments about the reading they have done, and their work in maths. Maths work will be Mathematics and/or working on basic facts. As with other parts of our programmes, home learning will be coherent across the three classes.

AN EXAMPLE OF HOME LEARNING NOTES

Reading : I re-read Diary of a Wimpy Kid because I didn't have a library book. I still enjoyed it and laughed out loud. I read most nights this week.

Maths: I completed all the assigned Mathematics tasks but I only got about 60% on most of them so I will repeat them next week. I did practice my 7x tables in the car. With 7x8 and 7x6 I have to think hard to solve them.

Parents' comments and feedback can be invaluable, and the home learning book can be an effective tool for communication.

On Friday the teacher will look at your child's home learning book one on one. They may verbally quiz them on times tables. They will give verbal feedback and possibly provide a score, tick, stamp or sticker. They will not provide a written comment every week.

CLASSROOM-SPECIFIC INFORMATION

When necessary your child's teacher will include class-specific information and requests for containers, newspaper etc in the home learning books.

OUR CHALLENGE

Gareth, Jen, and I look forward to working with you to ensure your child has a successful year. Your child will have some fun and face some challenges. Sometimes we, the adults, will need to back each other up to achieve this. Gaining some hard-earned success will see them grow as confident, independent learners.

Here comes 2017. Let's start slow and steady so we can give it heaps.

Kind regards,

Rob Kerr (Team Leader)

Our email contacts are as follows:

Rob Kerr robk@kelburnnormal.school.nz,

Gareth Rouch garethr@kelburnnormal.school.nz,

Jen Wilkinson jenniferw@kelburnnormal.school.nz