

# Tōtara Syndicate Newsletter

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Dear Parents and Caregivers,

I trust you all had a restful and enjoyable summer break with your children. It felt far too short to me, but here we are at the start of a new year with plenty of interesting things to engage and challenge Tōtara students. This first newsletter of the year outlines what we will be covering over the course of the first term.

We continue with our structured literacy and reading programmes in the morning and then integrate our new learning into Inquiry in the afternoon. Our overarching focus for the first term is an inquiry we have called “Kō wai tatou”, or “Who are we?” We explore the cultural diversity of our classes, syndicate and wider community, learn about our own identities, as well as other cultures and celebrate differences.

Our maths focus will be on number knowledge and strategy with a series of targeted workshops throughout the term. We will also be exploring Measurement through class-based investigations.

Our Technicraft sessions are now underway, with students engaging in exciting hands-on learning opportunities. Please note that students must be at school by 8:30am on Thursdays so we can take the roll and ensure they're ready to catch the bus to Brandon Intermediate by 8:45 am. For safety reasons, students must wear closed-in footwear during Technicraft. Crocs and other open-toe shoes are not safe in these practical environments and should not be worn.

## GENTLE REMINDERS

### SCHOOL UNIFORM

Please ensure all clothing is named, including their bucket hats

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### BEING SUNSMART

Please ensure your child brings their bucket hat to school. We provide sunscreen, but it would be helpful if students apply sunscreen at home in the morning, before heading to school.

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### CHROMEBOOKS

There is some availability to school supplied chromebooks for students. If your child has their own device for their own use, can they please bring it in fully charged every day. This will help us in the delivery of the digital components of our learning programme.

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### NUT FREE SCHOOL

We have students with serious nut allergies at school. Please don't pack nuts or nut products into their lunchboxes.

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### EARLY START ON THURSDAYS

As already outlined in the newsletter, Please make sure you child is at school by 8.30am on Thursdays so that we can leave at 8.45am for Technicraft. Also make sure they aren't wearing Crocs or open toe shoe.

Languages will be starting in Week 3. Students will get an introduction in either French, Spanish, German or Japanese. Students also have the opportunity to engage in Kapa Haka and Pasifika groups, as they start up over the next couple of weeks.

Later in the term we have a couple of exciting events planned - a visit from the Blake Trust VR Team and a team sports day at the ASB Sports Arena in Kilbirnie. More information about both events will be forwarded to you closer to the date. Our PE/Sport within school will focus on ball skills (throwing, catching and hitting), as well as building teamwork through a series of interclass games. Can you ensure that your child has appropriate footwear such as sneakers with them at school, so they can participate fully in these activities.

There is much more that we will be putting into play over the course of this year, too much in fact to mention in this first newsletter. I would like to close though, by saying that we are all excited not only by the new opportunities and challenges, but also by the prospect of working with such a great bunch of students and a supportive community.

Thanks and regards on behalf of the Tōtara Syndicate.



**Mark Hughes**