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Newsletter

Number 1

9 February 2024



Website www.matarau.school.nz

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Welcome to the 2024 school year. A special welcome to our new families.

Term calendar ... More to follow as dates come to hand

12 Feb	Hearing and vision tests (New entrants)
20 Feb	Senior Surf Day
21 Feb	Parent Support Group Social Get Together ((5:30 pm)
26 Feb	Marine Reserve Trips (see later in the newsletter)
5 March	"Sea Week"
5-6 March	Kiwi North Programme
12 March	Enviro Day
12 March	March meeting of the Board of Trustees (6:00 pm)
13 March	Interschool Swimming Sports
18/19 March	Parent Teacher Interviews
21 March	Matarau School Swimming Sports
12 April	Final Day of term 1 (29 April first day of term 2)

Newsletters (Keeping Informed)

Newsletters are issued to the eldest child in each family every second Friday, or via the school app, or by email if this is your preference. On "in-between" Fridays electronic (reminder) newsletters are sent to all families. Copies of our newsletter are also available on our website and are emailed. Please check the newsletter each week to ensure you are up to date on events. If you have a particular preference for how you receive your newsletter please contact Paula.

Save the date...

Experiencing Marine Reserves - Save the date

We have just managed to secure bookings for Rooms 1-10 to have a trip to Reotahi to experience the marine reserves programme with The Mountains to Sea Conservation Trust. Please see the dates for class trips below. We will need a high ratio of parent help for these trips and are grateful to those who can attend. More details and consent forms coming your way next week.

Thursday 22nd February	(Rooms 5 & 6)
Friday 23rd February	(Room 7 & 8)
Monday 26th February	(Rooms 3 & 4)
Tuesday 27th February	(Rooms 9 & 10)
Friday 1st March	(Room 1 & 2)

Driveways near to the school carpark

Please ensure that you do not park across the driveways next to or opposite the entrance to the school carpark. Thank you.

Garnet Motor Services

WOF, Lubes & Tyres
46 Kaka Street Whangarei
Tel : 09 438 7209

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Daily Absences

Parents are reminded -

To please advise **the office** by 9:00am if their child will be absent from school that day with the reason for their absence (the Ministry of Education requires us to code each absence).

By 9:30am each day an audit is undertaken of all attendance registers. Unaccounted absences are advised to the office, which then has the responsibility for investigating those absences. **This can be a time consuming process and so parents are asked to help by keeping us fully informed.**

Children who arrive at school after 9:00am bell are asked to report to the office on arrival please.

Digital Devices 2023 - year 5 and up (NOT REQUIRED AT YEAR 4 IN 2023)

We prefer laptops and chrome books, as these fill our device needs better than an iPad, but whatever your child has we will work with. Parents should feel under no pressure to purchase devices for their children ... this is your call ... we will do our best to provide as many shared (non-take home devices) as we can.

We will continue to ensure that time on devices is not overdone, there will always be plenty of time for learning and interacting in a variety of ways.

End of Day Buses

If your child will not be on their customary bus at the end of the day please -

- Either 1. Advise the office before 2:45pm (in which case a note is put on the bus clip)
- Or 2. Drop by the office to let us know

This saves time searching for children and enables us to get buses underway on time.

If you wish your child to travel on an alternative bus (i.e. not their regular bus) the prior consent of the office must be obtained. Consent will depend on bus loadings.

School gates

The school gates help us to keep children safe. If you are entering, or exiting, the school grounds during school hours it is important to ensure you close these gates after you. If you are dropping a child at school after the morning bell please be aware that they may not be tall enough to open these gates on their own.

Public Health Nurse - Boostrix & HPV Vaccines - 26th February Y7 & 8

Information about immunisation you can go into YouTube and search "immunisation year 7" or "immunisation year 8" and the videos will come up or click on the below links: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OuwcOyMjAzc> & <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tNIKS9uQCQU>

Cell phones

We realise that some parents like their children to have a cell phone on them in the event of an emergency.

If your child does bring a cell phone to school, please note that these must be dropped to the school office on arrival at school and picked up on departure each day. If you want to get a message to your child during the school day this should be channelled through the school office who will deliver the message to your child.

Cell phone policy

We have been required to review and consult in light of a change in government policy. We have opted to pretty much adopt the Ministry recommended policy, with only a small number of adjustments. The proposed policy will be emailed to families this afternoon and hard copies are available on request. If you would like to feedback, or comment, on the proposed policy, please contact Kevin or speak to any board member. The policy, and feedback, on this will be considered at the BoT meeting on 12 March after which a trial policy will be put in place (to be further reviewed before the start of the 2025 school year).

Stationery

If your child does not have their stationery please organise this as soon as possible. All items can be purchased from **Baigents- Office products Depot, Commerce Street Whangarei** (class stationery lists are available from our office on request). Additional stationery can also be purchased throughout the year from the office.

Punctuality

In order to aid in the smooth operation of classes (and in order to teach an important life skill) we request that children are at school at least 10-15 minutes before the morning bell to give them time to settle, connect with their teacher, and prepare for the day ahead. If running unavoidably late please give the school office a call, we understand that sometimes things don't quite go to plan. Many thanks.

Learning Support Programme

A number of parents were advised last year that their children had been placed in Learning Support programmes to commence 2024. This is a valuable opportunity for a more personalized and intensive learning programme, in an area of need, and parental support with assigned homework tasks is expected.

Homework

.. information to follow within next week or two.

Medications

Medications should be held at, and administered from, the school office. **Where we currently hold medication for your child, please call by the office within the next 2 weeks to check expiry dates and arrange replacement where necessary.**

Bus Pick-up and Drop-off Times

Information on our bus routes can be found on our website or at: www.wntng.easybus.nz

More on buses

Parents are reminded that motor vehicles are required to reduce their speed to 20km per hour when passing a stationary bus.

PLEASE NOTE THAT BUS DROP OFF TIMES ARE HIGHLY DEPENDENT ON LOADINGS- PARTICULARLY WHEN THERE IS A MAJOR EVENT AT SCHOOL. ON SPORTS DAYS / CAMP WEEKS ETC. PARENTS SHOULD EXPECT TIMES TO VARY QUITE WIDELY.

Pick up of Children

1. Where possible parents are asked to pick their children up from the bottom bus bay or upper carpark (in the former case children are asked to wait by Room 13, heading down when they sight your car). This is a dangerous stretch of road and we request that all parents assist us to minimise risks.

2. If dropping children off in the upper car park please note the designated drop off zone.

Please do not park in the zone and move on as quickly as you safely can.

3. If you have made arrangements for somebody else to pick your child up from school, the office must be advised beforehand. Any visitors to the school should report to the office first.

4. Parents of non-bus children are asked to pick their children up by 3:20PM (or later by arrangement with the School Office).

Medical Forms/Address/Contact Details

On enrolment parents provide important details on contacts / custody issues / medical conditions / medications etc. Please continue throughout the year to keep us informed so that we can properly discharge our duty of care to your child(ren).



Communications

Over the course of the year you may have questions or perhaps even concerns. It is impossible for us to please everyone all of the time, but we have a strong desire to be fair, and will accommodate you where we can. Where an issue involves a dispute between children, please remember that the school is required by law to apply "natural justice" principles to every investigation, this involves hearing all sides and gathering good information, and keeping some elements of the outcome confidential. **Try to avoid settling on conclusions in advance of a thorough investigation by the school, as incidents always look a bit different when placed in their wider context.** In the first instance matters should be addressed to your child's teacher, but senior staff are always available down the track, or for issues of a general nature. We find that trust, communication and a positive attitude, ensures problems seldom develop. We know we will make mistakes from time to time and so please be patient and understanding when this happens.

Come in early with any problems ... **although, remember that a problem of monumental proportions in the mind of a child one week, may have entirely disappeared from their radar screen the following week, and a considered non-response can build resilience.** Remember, also, that when you question your child, there is a better than even chance that they will tell you what they think you want to hear. Parental concerns can sometimes disappear (or change) with a second, or third, or fourth piece of relevant information. We are more than happy to answer any questions and so ask...ask...ask.

Finally on this - It is critically important that you do not ever approach another person's child with the intention of reprimanding them. Please leave the investigation and consequences (if any) to us.

Creating optimal conditions for learning (just a reminder)

Research indicates that the following simple actions have a very positive impact on learning ...

- .. **drinking plenty of water.** Parents are asked to ensure children bring a water bottle to school each day. A reminder that water is preferable to sugar based drinks. We will encourage them to have their water bottle on their desks at all times during the day (a good idea when you consider the brain is 90% water).
- ... a **good nights sleep.** A target bedtime of 8:00 PM (or earlier) is suggested for all children.
- .. a **suitable breakfast and healthy lunch.** With food as close as possible to its natural form.
- .. don't forget to **show an interest** in what your child is doing at school. Share mealtimes with them if possible and don't let them overdo the homework - or device time - we all need time to play.

Have your residential / contact details changed?

... if so please let Paula know.

If you formerly resided out of zone, and are now residing in zone, we are particularly keen to hear from you. In zone children generate more funding ... which means more and better resources for students. So please let us know next week if your children were balloted into the school initially and have moved into our zone since then.

Attendance

Some of you will be aware that New Zealand has some of the poorest school attendance in the developed world. Schools have been asked to work diligently with families to determine, to the degree possible, that children are attending on every school day, unless there is a good reason for not attending. **If you think consistent and regular attendance might be a challenge for your child(ren), please contact Kevin, or your child's teacher, next week so that we can agree on a plan to overcome any barriers attendance.** The research seems pretty clear...regular attendance is a significant indicator of school and lifetime success, so let's do our best get children to school every day please, unless there is a very good reason for them not to attend.

If your child will not be at school, it is critical that you advise the school office please, including citing a reason for the absence. As every absence is coded and reported to the Ministry it is important that the information we send them is accurate.

Social Media

Social media is having a very significant impact on young people - both positive and negative. On the negative side it can engender knee jerk reactions ... social media posts are instant (and not always thought through) and very public (and not easily undone).

At school we work hard to encourage productive dialogue and appropriate resolution (face to face) and will continue to do so. We have also had wonderful support from parents when we needed this.

On some occasions hard won gains at school (and home) have been subsequently undone by a child who has made a single injudicious post on social media.

We are inviting you to partner with us this year in promoting the best possible use of social media.

We would like you to consider implementing the following measures.

Limiting your child's access to multiple apps (and accounts)

Limiting the amount of time they spend using apps

Regularly check your child's device(s)

Agree to let school know of social media breaches that may impact friendships (we will also commit to letting you know of any social media concerns that come to our attention)

Emphasising often that social media is never a place to settle scores or the thrash out complex issues.

We have seen the damage that ripples when children vent on social media ... so please assist us by driving the message at home, by monitoring what is posted, and by implementing the steps above. Please let us know where we can help. We are willing to organize meetings at school to share best practise if there is interest (just let us know your needs and where you may be able to help).

Final Word

A huge thank you to staff, parents and students for a great start this week. We have loved reconnecting with students, and they have certainly loved reconnecting with their friends.

We have an awesome year planned, including further work in the areas of Science and Technology (including lots of hands on learning), fine tuning our instructional programmes in reading, writing and mathematics, an enviro focus and a focus on getting back into books.

Finally, we want you to feel welcome when you visit the school. Feel free to ask questions, and let us know where you would like to be involved...and please tell us when we get something right as this encourages us...and we will do the same to you!

Let's together, make Matarau School a place where everyone matters, where we have each other's backs, where slip ups are tolerated, where people are given the benefit of the doubt, and successes shared as if they were our own.

We look forward to seeing you often.

Nga mihi

Kevin Trehwella
PRINCIPAL



We're very glad to let you know that we've recently joined the KickStart Breakfast programme! We believe breakfast is the most important meal of the day, and we'll now be providing Sanitarium Weet-Bix™ and Anchor™ Milk in a programme that is a partnership between Ministry of Social Development, Sanitarium and Fonterra, and has been running successfully nationwide for over 12 years.

Our Breakfast Club will be open Monday, Wednesday, and Friday mornings from 8:15 to 8:45 in the hall, starting Monday 12th February.

For more information about the programme, you can visit www.kickstartbreakfast.co.nz

Te Manawa Tahī

If you have a concern about your child's language development, learning progress, social and emotional wellbeing, or behaviour, Te Manawa Tahī have specialists available so you can discuss your concerns directly with them.

This is a free service and each site will be identified by a Te Manawa Tahī sign or flag. Drop into a hub or make an appointment by phoning 0800 524 842 or emailing TT.Support@education.govt.nz.

Please find the dates in the attached email