



Worser Bay School AUTAHI

Parent Information Evening Thursday, 12 February 2009

Welcome to 2009

Hamish and Suzanne are the home group teachers in Autahi. Suzanne is training to become a Reading Recovery Teacher this year. When Suzanne is either at a Reading Recovery training session or teaching a student, Marylyn will be teaching with Hamish.

This year our teaching and learning programme builds on from that of 2008. Our big overarching theme is "Relationships - Cause and Effect". This term we are mainly focused on connections and how these are made. We are looking forward to our Inventors' Workshop!

Key Competencies and Enterprising Attributes

This year we will be working on becoming an Education for Enterprise School. Education for Enterprise (E4E) is about promoting an *approach* to learning – one that is real, relevant, and gives students responsibility for their learning. The enterprising attributes represent many of the skills that students will need when they leave school. They also align to the key competencies of the *New Zealand Curriculum* which we started learning about last year. For example, as the students create their own 'inventions' for the Inventors' Workshop, they will be involved in the 'Thinking' Key Competency. The Enterprising Attributes that align with these include:

Key Competency	Enterprising Attributes	What this means for the Student
Thinking	Generating and using creative ideas and processes.	Thinking up new ideas and ways to do things that will work well.
	Identifying, solving and preventing problems.	Looking ahead for things that can go wrong, thinking of ways to solve problems and planning ahead to avoid them.

For more information on the key competencies, visit:

<http://www.teamup.co.nz/AllAges/Curriculum/SchoolCurriculum.aspx>

And for information on the enterprising attributes, visit: <http://education-for-enterprise.tki.org.nz/About-E4E/The-NZ-Curriculum-and-E4E/Enterprising-attributes>



TERM 1, 2009

Continuing with the strategic goal of 'Celebrating Our Place' the new beautifully carved kuaha/gateway and new school website will be welcomed this term. We also have a new karakia, specifically written for Worsler Bay with the input of our children. You will be hearing more about these soon. We will start the year off in our classes by getting to know each other and establishing our class culture. We will also be celebrating our new areas and further developing our culture of respect for each other and our environment.

Our big theme across the school for this term is 'Simple Machines'. We will be having a science and technology focus. The children will be working towards creating a simple machine. You will have an opportunity to learn more from the children at our "Inventors' Workshop".

What do we expect?

We are focusing on 'learning' and what this looks and sounds like. Our expectations are very clear and as a class we will be striving for excellence, another strategic goal. The children start the day with answering an opinions poll. The purpose of this is to provide an opportunity to improve oral language skills, build confidence, improve self management and thinking skills (all key competencies).

Mathematics and Statistics

At the end of last year we carried out the diagnostic survey, which is a one-on-one test that gives us information on progress and informs us of what students' next learning steps are. We have used this data to group students according to what stage they are in addition and subtraction. The Numeracy Project forms the basis for teaching problem solving, number knowledge and strategies.

This term we are beginning with Number Knowledge, Addition and Subtraction. We will also be focusing on Statistics. Where we can make links to other learning at school, we will. The data collected at the end of last year forms the basis for our starting place for numeracy teaching in 2009.

If you would like information on how to help your child develop the knowledge and strategies for their stage, please visit <http://www.nzmaths.co.nz/families/index.aspx>.

A numeracy advisor from Victoria University will continue to support our school-wide development and classroom practice.

English

The children are placed in literacy groups for reading and writing based upon their learning needs.

Writing

Our writing focus for the first term is recount and narrative writing. This falls under the poetic writing umbrella. We will be placing special emphasis on language features, sentence structures and spelling. All class areas - Tautoru, Autahi and Mahutonga - will collect a piece of writing from each child in the first couple of weeks of the term. We are learning to use the asTTLe indicators for writing effectively, as part of our teacher professional learning this year. If you would like to know more about the asTTLe tool, please go to http://www.tki.org.nz/r/asttle/index_e.php.

On the evening of 18 May, Murray Gadd, who is working with the teachers this year and who is an internationally recognised literacy consultant, will facilitate the Parent Information Evening on children's writing. It's a must - so please diary now.

Reading

The children will be focusing on different reading strategies and processes through guided and shared reading. Guided reading is when your child will read with a small group and their literacy teacher. We value the importance of being "read to" so this is also a regular part of our school week. Many of you already read to your child at home, if not, please try and find some time.

Library learning

Library learning is focused around library appreciation and developing and using Information Literacy skills. We will be transferring this learning into all curriculum areas.

Suzanne's literacy groups will go to the library on a Tuesday.
Hamish's literacy groups will go to the library on a Thursday.

Spelling

Spelling, which is one of the features of writing, is also a focus for us this year. We are implementing the Joy Allcock spelling programme in every class. It's important that we have consistency and minimise confusion for our children. You can find out more at <http://www.spelling.co.nz/>.

Your child, depending on their needs, will be learning about sounds, spelling patterns and vocabulary. They will also be learning High Frequency Words, Essential List Words and words they have misspelt in their writing.

Homework

Homework will be given every second Monday afternoon. This is to be completed over a two week period. It is due the following Friday.

Spelling words and tests will be fortnightly and each child will have 10-15 words. Learning these words is part of the fortnightly homework. We expect that each child will be reading for at least 10 minutes daily. This includes being read with, read to or independent reading of school readers, chapter or picture books.



PE/Health

Our PE unit is called 'Strike It' and it focuses on the skills needed for striking a ball in different sports. We will be using photos as part of our learning reflection. Our Worser Bay School swimming sports will be held on Monday 6 April with Eastern Zones swimming for Years 4-6 on Wednesday 8 April. There will only be 2 days notice if your Year 4 child has been selected, so we apologise in advance for this.

Book Expectations

Children are expected to treat their books appropriately. This means no scribbling! Mistakes (which are welcomed!) are identified by a single line drawn through the centre of the word or letter. Clear expectations and examples will be visible in the front of children's books. Books that are defaced will be sent home with your child and will need to be replaced.

Assessment

The main purpose of assessment is so we know what to teach and can ensure it's working. Most of our assessment is therefore on the spot in terms of teacher feedback and observation, and the child's self and peer assessment, across all learning areas and key competencies. It is also important that we know where our children sit against others their own age so we also use some nationally standardised testing. PAT reading and AsTTLe writing are standardised tests which will be undertaken over the next two weeks. We will also be administering "Switch on to Spelling" assessments to gather information about what our children's needs are in spelling.

The children will use reflective journals and learning scrapbooks. These will contain special work samples the children have selected to show progress against their individual goals. We want our children to be able to explain exactly what they are learning and why. The children will also be learning how to annotate their chosen pieces of work. The children will increasingly be using ICT to reflect their learning and progress.

Many of you will have caught up with us already, either over the phone or at school. We aim to have spoken with all parents before the end of Week 2. Student Led Conferences will take place over Weeks 7 and 8 this term.

We have started the year by reviewing your child's goals from their written summary at the end of last year and teaching from the data we collected at the end of 2008, so we are straight back into it!

Would you like to help us out?

If you are able to help out we would love to have you help us:

WE NEED INVENTORS!

- put away readers and journals
- read with children one on one
- by being part of the trained Parent Tutor Reading team with semi-flexible times to suit you
- help on school trips
- updating the reader boxes and labels
- by painting our 'ugly' grey table in the art area.

If you have any other ideas about how you could contribute or help out please let us know. You will have ideas that we have not thought of.

If you have an area of expertise that you would like to share we would love to know about it. Any help at all is always much appreciated.

If you have any worries about your child we encourage you to talk to us, so please feel free to book a time with either one of us. We look forward to catching up at the Family Picnic on Thursday 12th February at 5.30 pm.

Hamish and Suzanne

