



Kōwhai Area News

DEAR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS

Kia ora koutou katoa

A very warm welcome to our new students and their families who have joined us at Ss Peter and Paul School. It is lovely to have you as part of our school community.

The new school term is now well underway and the children are busy and involved in a wide range of learning experiences. A big thank you to all of our parent helpers for their support with our swimming programme last term. The walking safely to and from school, and help with changing is extremely valuable. Thank you also to our Zoo trip helpers. This was another big experience for our Kowhai students. No matter how big or small these extra learning opportunities seem, none of them would be possible without your continued support. We look forward to even more opportunities where you can join us in our learning.

Curriculum and Inquiry

We will continue this term with our overarching concept of 'Exploration'. A reminder that the 'Big Ideas' we have been relating our learning to this year are:

- Exploration is learning
- Exploration is when I wonder
- Exploration opens my eyes

Religious Education

Through the concepts of Aroha, Respect and Connection the children will come to understand that God is love, that Jesus loves us and wants us to follow in his footsteps. Our learning focus will help the children to develop an understanding that life is precious and the body is a gift from God. We will support them as they develop their understanding of how to be safe with their bodies (this will include learning appropriate vocabulary for different body parts within this context) and respect the boundaries of others, learning to describe ways to value themselves (emotions, hygiene and safety). As we move into our Social Sciences learning later in the term we will look at belonging, participating and celebrating in the church, looking at ways we can Follow the Footsteps of Jesus.

In Years 1 -3, the curriculum covers:

- Know how to make and be a good friend
- Express own feelings and needs, responding appropriately to the feelings and needs of others
- Know who to trust and how to ask for help

- Recognise and name body parts
- Know about body safety including hygiene

Health

Much of our learning in Health this term will be through the RE strand of Sexuality Education (please refer to the section above for what the learning will cover). The students will explore how we keep ourselves and others safe in a range of other contexts. These will be Road Safety, Scooter Safety and Fire Safety.

The Arts

Kowhai students will be developing their understanding of the Pūrākau; Te Ika A Maui and Rangi and Papa through our Te Reo learning and will show their learning through the Arts this term. We will explore movement through dance and the elements of dramatic storytelling. We will look at how sound is made and how it communicates a story through our own musical compositions. We will also have a variety of mediums to create and showcase Pūrākau through the Visual Arts. We will have a chance to listen, share and respond to many different experiences of this topic from our peers. Please join us as we share this new learning experience at the end of the term.

Understanding the Curriculum

Supporting Early Mathematics

It is important for children to understand that being good at Maths is more than getting things right and knowing the answer immediately. It is important to build children's confidence and ability to strive, explore, and work in different ways. At school we design learning that helps strengthen the children's confidence and ability to explore and work in different ways. We encourage you to praise your child not just for the right answer but for asking questions, making mistakes, taking risks and investigating real life problems. At home you can reinforce this as you explore maths together.

What can you do to support your child's early mathematics development at home?

- Have fun with numbers

Ideas to try: As you go for a walk read the numbers on the letterboxes; predict which number comes next; notice and talk about odd and even numbers.

How does exploring numbers support early mathematics? A fundamental understanding of how our numbers fit together is essential for addition and subtraction, then later on multiplication and division.

- Play Games together

Ideas to try: Playing board and other counting games helps your child to develop number sense. They serve as an early introduction to making numbers bigger and smaller through addition and subtraction. Dice, cards and dominoes are fantastic tools to use.

- Involve your child in cooking; this is an ideal time to learn about fractions, sequencing, temperature, weight and capacity.

- Explore patterns in nature, in architecture and in books. Be curious; try repeating them or making your own.
- Name shapes and make pictures from shapes.
- Draw treasure maps then write directions to find the treasure.



Supporting Early Literacy (taken from an article written by Amanda White, prepared for the Education Hub)

Literacy is the way that we communicate with each other using symbol systems. This includes reading and writing as well as a number of other ways of communicating such as drawing or using our bodies to create and convey meaning. Literacies vary in different cultures and languages, and children learn to communicate in ways that reflect their family and their culture.

The development of literacy begins from birth, well before children formally learn to read, write or experience other forms of media. Parents, siblings and other family members play a very important role in helping their children to develop literacy through everyday activities at home.

What can you do to support your child's early literacy development at home?

- **Play together**

Join in play with your child, following the things that they are interested in - this will vary for different ages but all children (even young babies) will indicate their preferences. Involve other family members at home with you too.

Ideas to try: Young children of all ages love activities like bubbles, playdoh, hide and seek, ball games, building with Lego or empty boxes, dramatic role play (such as dress-ups, shopping, being a doctor), and pretend play (such as playing with small toy dolls, animals or cars).

How does playing together support early literacy? Through interactive play, young children learn about listening, taking turns and expressing themselves using their bodies, gestures, facial expressions, words, and printed pictures or words - these are all symbolic forms of communication that support literacy! Pretend play and dramatic role play provide children with the opportunity to take on roles and make up stories, linking characters to actions or events as their stories unfold in the play.

- **Stop and listen**

Encourage your child to stop and listen to the sounds in their environment while you play and interact together.

Ideas to try: Stop what you are doing every so often for at least 10 seconds and ask your child to listen - what can you hear? You can do this while you are inside or out for a walk. You might hear traffic noises, people talking, the wind, someone mowing the lawns, birds singing, music playing...

How does listening support early literacy? Being able to locate and identify environmental sounds in the presence of other background noise is a playful way of introducing the notion of listening to sounds in words. Listening and speech sound awareness are a key building block for literacy, particularly for reading and spelling.

- **Sing songs and rhymes**

Engage in songs, rhymes and poems together - this is an activity that is free and available anytime, anywhere, and needs no additional equipment although you can use props if you want to!

Ideas to try: Young children particularly enjoy actions song and rhymes with silly noises, words and lots of repetition. Examples are 'Willoughby, wallaby woo', 'A Slippery Fish', 'There was an old lady who swallowed a fly', or 'Old MacDonald' - you can Google these and others! Make up actions or funny voices/noises and make it fun.

How do songs and rhymes support early literacy? Songs and rhymes are not only enjoyable, but they also support early literacy by providing children with opportunities to listen and express themselves using rhythm, rhyme, gestures, sounds and words.

- **Telling and reading stories**

Stories are one of the most common and well-loved forms of literacy that benefit children socially, emotionally and academically. The sharing of stories with young not only includes reading books, but also stories that can be told, sung or acted out.

Ideas to try: Talk with your child about stories of everyday things they have experienced, using photos or videos if you have saved them on your phone or camera (for example, 'Do you remember yesterday when we walked to the beach? Look at all the shells you found...'). Tell true or made-up stories with your child as the main character. Many songs contain stories too, such 'The other day I met a bear' or 'Little Bunny Foo Foo' (you can Google these too). Find books that you and your child enjoy reading together - this might be picture books, lift-the-flap books, Dr Seuss-style rhyming books, books about characters or even your family photo albums.

How do stories support early literacy? Telling stories and reading books together not only allows for snuggling up together and bonding but can also enhance children's listening, imagination, language comprehension and use, as well as their print awareness (understanding the conventions associated with books like reading from left to right) and their understanding of narrative (or how stories are structured).

- **Have conversations about everyday things**

Make the most of the opportunities to communicate with your child that are present during every day routines and activities at home and in your immediate environment.

Ideas to try: Mealtimes, bedtimes, bath times and getting dressed or changed are all regular routines that provide opportunities for communicating with your child (such as 'Time for a bath', 'Turn on the taps', 'Time to hop in!'). Outings like a walk to the park also offer a lot of opportunities to talk about what you see ('Let's go down the hill', 'Look at the big bus!', 'Can you see the fluffy black dog?'). Comment about what is happening, adapting your language to what you feel your child can understand. Use your body language, actions and tone of voice to help emphasise key words as you communicate together. Watch and listen carefully so you don't miss your child's efforts to take part in the conversation. Don't do all the talking - expect that they will take turns too!

How do everyday conversations support early literacy? Conversations allow opportunities for children learn the meanings of words, as well as how to use those words within familiar, meaningful situations that involve them. A child's vocabulary (the words that they can understand and use) is one of the key building blocks for literacy to develop. Happy reading!



Click [here](#) to find out more about Maths and Literacy at home.

Coming up this term

Cross Country Fun Run Tuesday 21 May at 1:45pm - all invited to cheer us on

Teacher Only Day Friday 31 May

Kings' Birthday Monday 3 June

Learning Conferences Thursday 20 June and Tuesday 2 July

New Entrant Welcome and Blessing Tuesday 25 June, 9:15am

Sharing of Learning this term - *Evidence of Learning will be shared with you at Learning Conferences this term. On Wednesday 3 July at 1:45pm, you are invited to come and share in an open afternoon where the students of Kowhai will showcase their learning of the Pūrākau (stories) from our Arts learning.*