

3/3/22

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

While we continue to have to maintain high levels of health and safety protocols to try to mitigate the spread of Covid-19 in school, we are determined to maintain a normal school experience for our children. Today I want to focus the newsletter on the learning and the experiences our children are having at school. It is a long newsletter, but it was nice to be able to share some of the learning and the usual school fun! There is some covid information and requests at the end!

**PRIDE Values:** We are always on the lookout for students going above and beyond, displaying our school values of Perseverance, Respect, Initiative, Diligence and Excellence. Congratulations to the following ākonga who have received certificates this week: Kaiser Foreman-Chittenden, Ryder Kirkland, Liam Palen and Jessica Allen.

### Sports

It has been great to see and hear about the participation in sports, both inside and outside school. The thing I am most proud of are the kids who give a new sport a try or those who may not be the sporting superstar, who are giving things a try and thoroughly enjoying the experience.

I'd love our kids to leave us with the attitude of trying sports and to continue with them for the love of the sport, the social interaction with others and just to have fun! We have had netball trials this week, the basketball teams are up and running and the touch teams started a couple of weeks ago. While we want our teams to do well, what I really want to hear is that our kids show sporting behaviours on the field or court and that they are having fun together.

### Mitey

The wellbeing of our children has been central to our thinking. We have spent time researching the best resources available to help our children develop the skills they will need to face anxiety and challenges that life and growing up can throw at our children. A team of our teachers have put lots of time and effort into finding the best possible approach for helping our children grow and be able to achieve their potential. After extensive research the team presented the case for the Mitey Programme, which is run by the Sir John Kirwan Foundation. There was a story on this Monday's episode of Seven Sharp about the implementation in primary schools. This is a New Zealand based approach designed for New Zealand classrooms.

Our teachers will be implementing and integrating this programme into our classrooms over this year. As the year progresses and we can start to run some school wide events there will be opportunities to learn more about the programme and how we are implementing it.

<https://www.mitey.org.nz/faqs>

### Nature Garden

The nature garden has now reopened at lunchtimes for some year groups as an area to play in. This is the area with trees and paths behind the swimming pool. I wandered through the area when the year 4 children were playing in there this week. They were having a blast! Building, talking, swapping resources (sticks!) and being kids! It was lovely to see the interaction between the children. Although all year groups are not using it at the moment, we hope as things return more to normal we can expand the use as the year progresses.

### Learning Focus

We have started our year with the school wide inquiry of "Where we are in time and place". This has a focus on local history and our local area. We are so fortunate to live in an amazing area with a rich past. While the children were enjoying the last few days of their holiday, the teachers were in school planning for these inquiry topics, examining the needs of their classes and planning exciting learning experiences for your child.

We had planned a parent maths evening, run by a leading maths expert last year, which we have so far had to cancel twice due to the Covid restrictions. The expert (Marie Hirst) has worked with our staff over the last year to ensure our maths teaching

remains at a very high level. This is something we will revisit this year, and plan to hold once we can have gatherings onsite again.

### **Enrolments**

It's lovely to see the children visiting and starting school with us. We are filling our existing classes rapidly! If you have a child who will start with us in term 2 or later this year, please contact the school so we can ensure we have time to recruit the best teachers we can to give our new children the best start to their schooling journey with us. Enrolment packs can be emailed out from the office or are available on the school website. If you have friends who may also have children starting with us this year, please encourage them to get in touch (09-4139838 or office@greenhithe.school.nz).

### **Absences**

If your child is away from school, for any reason, please let us know as soon as possible. If it is because of either household contact isolation, or your child tests positive, please give us a call or email.

We have plans in place to provide learning for periods of isolation or sickness for the children. Each year group has developed detailed plans. The way this looks will change if we get more cases or children in household contact isolation. Your child's teacher will be providing you with this information on the learning as required, in each classroom.

### **Lovely Acknowledgement**

It was lovely to receive a gift basket from Harcourts for engagement with the community. I have to admit it was a lovely surprise. However, it is also the favourite part of my day as well. When we are dealing with lots of compliance and health and safety protocols, keeping up with the latest Ministry of Education guidelines which is vital for mitigating as many risks as possible, the time at the gates is a way for me to ensure I get to see the kids. It always reminds me of why we do, what we do at school. Our kids are amazing young people and make me proud everyday.

I also want to acknowledge it is a team effort here at school. You will also see Michelle Butler, Kelly Knowles, Maeke Kiteao and Vicki Matheson at other gates. I know they also enjoy the time to say hello in the mornings or to hear about the children's successes during a school day. It is also a time when we are available to have a chat with our community, which we miss!

### **Just a little Covid Comment**

While we are mitigating as many risks as we can, we all know Covid-19 is in our community and we are getting a small number of cases in school. We ask that you continue to let us know if your child tests positive or is isolating due to being a household contact, so we can provide suitable home learning.

I have sought Ministry advice on how much we are allowed to disclose, with a view to privacy. While the advice is that we are unable to let you know of a case in a specific class, I am going to now let parents know of cases appearing in their specific year level. So if we have a case who has been infectious while at school we will disclose this to the parents of that year group. You will receive this email at the end of the day.

The best advice is to monitor your family for symptoms and keep them away from school if they are showing any. We will be continuing to send children home who develop symptoms while at school and we strongly recommend you get your child tested if they are sent home.

We are continuing to work closely with the Ministry of Education advice and our plans, processes and learning plans will adapt with the situation. We will continue to inform you of changes to learning plans through your class teacher. If you have questions regarding learning, please go to the teacher first.

Kia kaha and thank you for your support and understanding in these turbulent times.

Ngā mihi

Stephen Grady