

Kōwhai Newsletter Term 1 2018



Hello and welcome to term 1. A warm welcome to our new children and their families.

Staffing:

We have a strong and experienced team of teachers in Kōwhai.

Room 1 - Year 0 and 1 students - Mrs Helen Fairclough helenf@longbayprimary.ac.nz

Learning Support - Mrs Shelley Findlay shelleyf@longbayprimary.ac.nz

Room 3 - Year 0 and 1 students - Mrs Tarina MacKay tarinam@longbayprimary.ac.nz

Some gentle prompts to ease the children into school routines:

The **school day** begins at 8:55 a.m. Children settle better if they are early enough to unpack themselves and have a little play. Children can work quietly in the classroom after 8:30 a.m. but are **not allowed to play on the playground before school**.

Lunch time is from 12:30 p.m. The children are supervised during lunch eating. Please be aware of what constitutes a moderate amount of food for your child at lunch time. Some children struggle to get through the amount of food packed in their lunch boxes. Try to avoid too many high sugar, high colour foods and drinks. These can have an impact on children's behaviour and energy levels for the rest of the school day. **Please don't send nuts or peanut butter sandwiches to school as we have children in the school who are fatally allergic to them.**

Home time is 2:55 p.m. The end of the day is a busy time and we would ask that you wait away from the classroom, by the blue benches, to enable the children to organise their belongings.

Developing independence: Please encourage your child to take responsibility for belongings and to develop a sense of ownership about school. Have your child carry their own school bag in the morning and independently return their book bags into the classroom. If your child is having problems separating from you in the mornings, please make sure you arrive well before the bell. It is a good idea to find a buddy for your child to play with. Work towards your child entering school by themselves or with a friend. If you are concerned about anything, please ask. We are happy to help.

Toys in school: Toys or non-school items such as bracelets can be a distraction in class and are very likely to go missing. We would therefore ask that **all non-school items are left at home** unless it is a very special item for news.

Water: It is essential that every child comes to school with a water bottle. Young children find it very hard to drink adequately from a fountain. Unfortunately, fruit juices and sparkling drinks make everyone more dehydrated. Water is cheap, helps a person concentrate and wards off tiredness.

Uniform and Named Items: We would appreciate it if you could put your child's name on their clothing, including hats and shoes (where possible) and on lunch boxes and drink bottles. This helps with reducing the amount of lost property at our school. We encourage all the children to put anything they take off straight into their bags or on bag hooks and would appreciate your support with this. We would appreciate the children wearing the correct uniform at all times. We do understand that there may be times when it is



necessary for non-regulation items to be worn. An explanatory note would be appreciated. We would also ask that children have **spare clothing** in case of muddy falls, fun times in the water play etc.

Hats The children are required to bring a sunhat to school for outdoor activities in terms 1 and 4. Ideally the hat can be left hanging in your child's classroom or in their tote tray. The Long Bay bucket hat is ideal. Please ensure your child's hat is named. Unfortunately we do not allow hats to be shared. If your child has forgotten their hat, they will be asked to play in the shade at play times.

Head Lice. These little creatures love a clean head of soft hair and unfortunately appear too often in the junior classes of schools. In this instance, prevention is definitely better than the cure. Thorough brushing and combing nightly from the back of the head (child's head down) is a good technique as lice are fragile and are easily killed if touched. Lice do not jump but are quick to move to another host when heads touch. All long hair (below shoulder) should be tied back - braided is best. We encourage all parents to check your child's hair regularly - at least once a week and treat promptly, if necessary. Do let your class teacher know. Letters from school will offer guidance about head lice treatments and may prevent further infestations.

Curriculum Areas:

Oral Language: interpersonal discussions, news, presentations, drama, questioning.

News days: Your child may wish to bring a news item to share. Suggestions for ideas are current events - newspaper clippings; photographs; interesting finds and unusual or special toys.

Reading is an integral part of all curriculum areas and the classroom programme. Reading experiences involve shared books, graded readers, poems, own choice books, visits to the library, guided silent reading, buddy reading. The teaching of **phonics** which eventually leads onto spelling programmes plays an important part in the teaching of reading and writing.

Homework: Reading materials will come home on a daily basis. This may be in the form of instructional readers, library books, poem books or the children's own written work. Home reading should be encouraged as it develops good reading habits. If for some reason a reader does not come home, please do not assume that reading has not taken place that day, simply enjoy a story together from your child's home library of books. **Essential words:** On a weekly basis, children working at emergent levels or early red 1 will receive "key words" to practise.

Library Days: Each class is timetabled to visit the library once a week to borrow books. **Kōwhai team visits the library on Friday.**

Special routines are an important part of the daily life at school, particularly for junior children and we would ask that all books are returned on time. There are library boxes in the classrooms if you wish to return a book earlier.

Book bags: Please help your child get into the habit of looking after books and returning books in book bags. **The book bags protect our precious readers (and library books) from the rain and food/drink spills.** Please record the title of each instructional reader your child brings home in the back of the homework book.

Mathematics: The children study all the five mathematical strands - Number, Algebra, Statistics, Geometry and Measurement which encompasses time and temperature, mass, length, capacity and volume. Focus strands for this term are number knowledge and strategies; passing time, statistics.

At home, encourage your child to...

Count out groups of objects. Count by rote to 10, 20, 50, 100 and above.

Counting backwards from 10, 20 up to 100 and above.

Stating numbers that come before or after numbers.

Skip counting in 2's, 5's, 10's. Basic facts to 10.



All children are signed up to use **Mathletics** this year. The cost for this comes from the activity fee. They can also use this website from home as they are given a username and password.

Written Language: The children write daily in a number of ways - diary type writing, retelling of experiences (recount).

Writing linked with Topic Studies - (explanations, instructions, reports and letter writing).
Handwriting.

Term One Specials!

Integrated Studies: Social Studies, Science, and e Learning.

Throughout the year, classroom programmes foster an understanding that your child is in charge of their learning. Learning intentions are developed from initial/on-going assessments and are clearly communicated to the children - as are the reasons for the learning. The children are actively involved in the development of success criteria. These criteria map out the processes the children need to follow to achieve a piece of learning. By reflecting on the learning processes the children are able to gauge where they are in their learning and ways to improve outcomes. Hence the name 'Assessment for Learning'.

In term 1 the children in Kōwhai are developing an understanding of what learning is, what a good learner does and the barriers that can affect learning outcomes.

*The **Long Bay Way characters** are an integral part of the classroom programme. These are supportive spider, tidy tui, trying turtle, listening lizard and busy butterfly. These characters help our students to understand more easily the values that Long Bay wishes to foster throughout the school. We want students to learn by working hard; to persevere; to care for themselves, each other and our environment. ☺.*

***In e Learning**, we want all children to develop an understanding of digital citizenship. It is important that children have an awareness of how to be net safe, are considerate when using devices and can work collaboratively with others.*



In science the students will be inquiring into the earth as a closed system. The students will be inquiring into how we can care for earth's precious resources for all animals and plant life. There will be a special surprise later in the term!

Week 4 is the swimming intensive. Please look out for permission, ability and guidance letters.

Physical Education: PMP programme: *All Year 0/1 children in the team will participate in the Perceptual Motor Programme on Thursday mornings and Monday afternoons.*

Children in their first year of schooling are learning to:-

- *Maintain focus and concentrate in learning situations.*
- *Cross the midline for writing and reading.*
- *Improve gross motor movements: co-ordination, balance, throwing, catching.*
- *Improve fine motor movements: handwriting, cutting, drawing etc.*
- *Organise their bodies well to perform cognitive tasks through school-based activities.*

The programme aims to address these needs. Offers of parental help are most welcome. Please contact Tarina MacKay if you can help.

The Arts: *All children experience Maori, music, dance, drama and visual arts in the classroom programme. They will also participate in **Specialist Drama and Dance** later this term.*

Once your child has completed six weeks at school, *you will receive a report outlining how your child has settled into school. There will be an opportunity for you to discuss the report and initial assessments with your child's teacher at the goal setting conferences (outlined below).*

If your child receives their report later in the term, teachers are happy to discuss the report by arrangement after school.

Week 6 - Kōwhai Student Goal Setting Conferences on Tuesday 13th March from 3:30 until 5:30 pm.

By 13 March, Kōwhai teachers will have completed assessments in reading, writing and mathematics with each child and will be basing initial learning goals on these assessments. The aim of the interview is to foster a two way discussion on how to best support your child's learning needs. Interviews are for ten minutes. Should you need more time for discussion, please arrange a further appointment with your class teacher.

Please note: - Goal Setting Conferences on Wednesday 28th February are for students in Rimu, Manuka, Totara and Kauri students only. Kōwhai teachers will not be available on this date.

*The school runs a **book worm programme and writer's support group** for children who teachers feel need a boost with their reading or writing. The programmes run throughout the year. Parent help is needed to run these programmes. Please see your classroom teacher if you can help.*

Parent Help in Classrooms: *We welcome parent help in a variety of ways, so if you have some spare time and would like to help out in your child's classroom, please contact your child's teacher.*

Parents are always welcome to come and discuss any concerns they may have about their child's well-being or progress. Please feel free to email as well. Sometimes things can be discussed or clarified before or after school, however, if you require a longer interview it is advisable to make an appointment. We aim to provide a happy, secure caring environment with each child actively involved in the learning process. We look forward to sharing this special time in your child's development with you!

Yours sincerely,
Helen Fairclough (team leader), Tarina MacKay and Shelley Findlay

