



# Middle Team



## Kia ora koutou

Welcome to a brand new school year!! We are all excited to meet you and to get to know your children as we work together to continue their learning journey.

Below you will find an overview of our teaching and learning this term as well as some key dates for the term ahead.

## OUR LEARNING PROGRAMME

### LITERACY

- Our focus for writing this term will be on letter writing and emailing. We will also incorporate our writing programme throughout our topic study
- Sentence structure and punctuation will also be a focus this term to build accuracy and consistency in their writing
- All classes in the syndicate will be continuing their phonics based spelling programme
- Handwriting will be done at least three times a week developing appropriate letter size, shape and spacing. We will also incorporate our weekly spelling focus into the handwriting programme so it is reinforced

### READING

- Teachers will be starting the term supporting students to revise skills and strategies for both the mechanics of how we read, as well as how we can respond to texts to support our understanding of them. We will be using reading sessions to incorporate our topic work
- Your child will be reading with their teacher focusing on fluency, comprehension and implementing their phonological skills learnt from their spelling lessons
- There will be a greater focus on oral language which benefits both their speaking and listening skills

### MATHS

- Our focus this term will be on revisiting and extending number knowledge (how numbers 'work' and are put together), addition and subtraction strategies as well as applying knowledge to solving problems in everyday contexts
- We will also be exploring statistics, which will look at using data collected from surveys to construct a variety of graphs and analyse the results
- Throughout the term we will explore financial mathematics focusing on how we can represent money values, estimating total costs, including discounts and solving real life money problems

## HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION (HPE)

- We will be incorporating our health aspect into the term's topic with a focus around the te whare tapu whā model (see topic below for further details)
- During our class PE sessions, we will be doing a lot of team building activities as we get to know each other as a class, as well as developing small ball skills and games involving small balls
- All Year 5 and 6 students will be taking part in the Pedal Ready Grade 1 course with cycle instructors which looks at cycle skills, safety and bike maintenance. The Year 4 students will do a separate cycle program with class teachers

## TOPIC

During the first 4 weeks of the term our focus will be on building a respectful and collaborative classroom environment. We will look at developing the following

- Positive learning environment
- Relationships
- Learning about themselves and others
- Exploring the school values
- Being respectful and safe at school and online

The last 6 weeks of school we will focus on health by looking at the Te whare tapu whā model developed by leading Māori health advocate Sir Mason Durie. The model describes health and well being as a wharenuī/meeting house with four walls.

These walls represent the following

- taha wairua/spiritual well being
- taha hinengaro/mental and emotional wellbeing
- taha tinana/physical wellbeing
- taha whānau/family and social wellbeing

When all these things are in balance, we thrive. When one or more of these is out of balance our wellbeing is impacted. Our focus will be developing all of them so they have a great start to the year and carry it forward throughout their time at Discovery School and beyond.

## STATIONERY

A big thank you to all parents / caregivers who have already purchased stationery for the year. The Stationery lists can be found on the school website.

If you have not already done so, please ensure your child has all the supplies they need. Bring in all the stationery, including the glue sticks. We will store the excess supplies in class so they can access it quickly once they run out.

Please remember to name all of your child's stationery, drink bottles, lunch boxes, hats and clothing.

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR YEAR 6s

We will continue to look throughout the year to provide opportunities to grow our Year 6 students as leaders.

We always differentiate the curriculum to cater for student's learning needs no matter what year they are in, so these opportunities are more around leadership and culture. We will have a separate Year 6 leadership award that will be given out at a special hui during the last week of each term. Opportunities such as supporting the Junior Syndicate in sport events such as Athletics Day will be available.

## CHROMEBOOKS

The Year 5 and 6 students will be part of the BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) programme to support their learning. If they don't have a device, they can use a school one.

The Year 4 students will not need to bring their own device. The school will provide one for them to use when needed. Please do not send a chromebook to school with your Year 4 child.

If you are unsure of which type of Chromebook or the specifications that would be best, please contact your class teacher. They will re forward an email sent out late last year regarding this and also around setting it up.

In the first weeks of school we will revisit internet safety and expectations of responsible use of devices.

## MATHLETICS

The middle team will be using Mathletics this year (Years 4-6). It has been a huge success having access to Mathletics at school and at home. The teachers have seen an improvement in the students' academic achievement and attitude towards maths in general. Teachers have also noted that the programme reinforces classroom learning in a fun and rewarding way. We have enjoyed seeing many children achieve awards as they work their way through the programme.

We have incorporated Mathletics into the stationery list. It will cost \$26 per child. Without your contribution we would not be able to offer this programme.

## HOMEWORK

Homework will be different this year as we look at ways to make it easier for parents and more independent for learners. We are looking at setting up a homework grid on the website that has a variety of tasks that your child can complete over the term. The main focus will be around the following;

- Daily reading
- Maths activities on Mathletics (assigned by teachers or chosen by students)
- Basic facts on Mathletics or website
- Citizen aspect around doing something to help the household or community
- Topic related tasks

While students are encouraged to practise their basic facts at home and to read for at least 15-20 minutes each night, we also recognise that at this age, students often have a lot of extra-curricular activities after school. For this reason, we encourage students to do some school guided learning at home but we also would like to hear about what they're learning through their out of school activities.

Homework will start in week 4 but we encourage students to continue to read daily and complete activities on Mathletics each week.

## REMINDERS

Term 1 is a 'hat' term so students are expected to be wearing sunblock and a sunhat everyday this term.

We are continuing with our Hauora Kai. At 10 o'clock each day children have a 5 minute break to eat a delicious small snack (fruit or vegetables only please) and to have a drink of water. Please include an appropriate snack in your child's lunchbox.

## UPCOMING DATES

Mon 3rd Feb	Meet the Teacher meetings from 1-6pm in your child's class
Tue 4th Feb	First day of school for students
Tue 4th Feb	Mihi Whakatau - welcoming new students, whānau and teachers to our School - 9.15 start
Thur 6th Feb	Waitangi Day - public holiday - school is closed
Mon 24th Feb	Homework will start
Mon 17th Mar	Start of the Pedal Ready cycling course for Year 5/6 students
Fri 14th Mar	Curriculum Day-School closed for Teacher PD
Week 10	School Photos
Fri 11th April	Last day of term 1



## Contact Us:

Here are our email addresses in case you would like to make contact:

Andrew Knight (Rm 11) - [aknight@discovery.school.nz](mailto:aknight@discovery.school.nz)

Tam Dullabh (Rm 12) - [tdullabh@discovery.school.nz](mailto:tdullabh@discovery.school.nz)

Rhiann Wallace (Rm 13) - [rwallace@discovery.school.nz](mailto:rwallace@discovery.school.nz)

Vicki Howarth (Rm 14) - [vhowarth@discovery.school.nz](mailto:vhowarth@discovery.school.nz)

Rae Black (Rm 21) - [rblack@discovery.school.nz](mailto:rblack@discovery.school.nz)

Ailish Akavi (Rm 22) - [aakavi@discovery.school.nz](mailto:aakavi@discovery.school.nz)

Nat Dale (Rm 23) - [ndale@discovery.school.nz](mailto:ndale@discovery.school.nz)

Release Teachers for our Middle Team

Andrea Smith - [asmith@discovery.school.nz](mailto:asmith@discovery.school.nz)

Kristen Liddell - [kliddell@discovery.school.nz](mailto:kliddell@discovery.school.nz)

Please feel free to discuss any issues or concerns with us as it is important that we maintain a collaborative partnership.

Kind regards,

Middle Team Teachers