



KINGSGATE SCHOOL

To know, to love, to serve. Kia mohio, kia aroha, ki te mahi.

PRINCIPAL'S NEWSLETTER

10TH February 2023

Topics Covered

- Teachers are Your First Point of Contact
 - Staff at KingsGate
 - School Communications
 - School Assemblies
 - Communicating with Teachers
 - Teacher Well-being and Communication
 - Skool Loop Settings
 - Staff and Parent Interactions and the Importance of the Fruit of the Spirit.
 - Teacher and Parent Concerns or Complaints Regarding Student Behaviour and Wellbeing
 - Sunhats Terms 1 and 4
 - Testing
 - Student Reports
 - Formal Face-to-Face Meetings
 - Spotlight Student Progress
 - School Community BBQ
-

Tēnā koutou parents, caregivers and whānau.

I whanau mai au i te taha o te awa o Turanganui

I raro i te maru o te maunga o Titirangu

He uri ahau no Kotiana

Kei te noho au kei Hauraki Plains

Ko Jared Stein toku ingoa

Tēnā koutou katoa

I'd like to welcome everyone to a new year at KingsGate, and for every one of us, it's a beginning like we've never had before as we all make Blake Road our new home.

Many of you are new to KingsGate, so it's important that, as a community, we are all quickly singing from the same hymn sheet or paddling the waka in the same direction to use another analogy. Understanding how we go about things here is essential as it can often differ significantly from what you and your children have experienced at other schools. (For families already with us, the following is a good reminder). Please read:

Teachers are Your First Point of Contact

By the end of this week, you will know your child's whānau teacher. The whānau teacher is the teacher you will go to for all queries about your child's well-being and educational progress. All questions, concerns and compliments must start with your child's whānau teacher, as they will have the greatest knowledge of your child and be able to serve you in the best way possible to answer questions and resolve issues.

Staff at KingsGate

This year we welcome several new staff to KingsGate School.

- In Kauri Year 9, we welcome Mrs van Dam
- In Puriri, we welcome Mrs Pointon and Mrs Muller
- In Kahikatea, Mrs Joubert joins us for one day a week, as does Mr Gatehouse.

Although not new to the school, Mrs White has had a change of environment and is teaching in Totara Monday through to Thursday and then takes over in Kauri Year 9 on Fridays,

So our teaching staff looks like this.

Puriri Teachers: Mrs Pointon, Mrs Muller, Mrs Farley

Totara Teachers: Mrs Hegan, Ms Yelchich, Mrs White

Kahikatea Teachers: Mr Clark, Mr Kim, Mr Gatehouse, Mrs Joubert

Kauri Teachers: Mrs van Dam, Mrs White.

Please see our school website and click the "Our Staff" tab for a complete list of all our staff.

School Communications

The school uses four main methods of communication.

Facebook. This is where we place the goings on in the school and messages that need to be communicated with the community quickly, such as rain day LIFEspace pickups etc. Notices will appear here too.

Skool-Loop. This app can be downloaded from Google Play or the Apple Store. It is where we post notices that are "must reads" for parents and caregivers. We will do our best to post them on Facebook too, but Skool-Loop is the priority form of communication in this regard.

School Newsletter. Our school newsletter is published at the end of Weeks two, five and eight. It's important that you read these newsletters as they will have up-to-date information about what is occurring at school. As well as coming home in hard copy, it is posted to Skool-Loop and the website.

School Website: With the growing number of families with us, we know that some do not use Facebook, and some cannot download apps. With that in mind, we will put all schoolwide newsletters and notices on the school's website under the "Notices and Newsletters" tab so that everyone can access the information.

School Assemblies

These occur on Friday afternoons from 1:45 pm - 2:15 pm in weeks 3, 6 and 9 and are held in Tōtara LIFEspace. Parents, caregivers and whānau are welcome to attend. Indeed we encourage as many of you to attend as possible. At assemblies, we celebrate the students' achievements and sing songs of praise as we enjoy a time of fellowship. Just a note that due to timetabling, Kauri Year 9 may not be able to make it to all of the assemblies, but Mrs van Dam and Mrs White will let the parents of Kauri students know in advance.

Communicating with Teachers

Our teachers begin their duties and responsibilities towards each of our children the moment staff devotions are completed each morning. This time is incredibly important for staff to build

relationships with their students, so we respectfully ask that parents not blindside teachers before school starts or at the end of the school day and expect an in-depth conversation about their child.

If you wish to speak to a teacher and give the time your topic deserves, then you have two options: please call the school office, and Mrs Woodham will arrange a time for this to occur or email your child's teacher directly to arrange a time. All teacher email addresses can be found on our school website.

Teacher Well-being and Communication

Teaching can become an all-encompassing and overwhelming occupation if it is allowed. Many teachers in New Zealand suffer from chronic fatigue and, consequently, burnout because school life slowly erodes into time that in other occupations would be devoted to family, friends, their faith, passions and hobbies. This is why, as a good employer, we are putting guidelines around when teachers will communicate with parents, caregivers and whānau. Please read the following carefully.

Teachers may not respond to emails sent by caregivers to teachers after 5:30 pm until the following working day. To have the best teachers in front of our children, we need them rested, focused, energised and passionate about teaching. Making simple guidelines like this goes a long way to ensure it occurs.

Skool Loop Settings

For those who already have Skool Loop on your phone, please open your Skool Loop app and update the classrooms you are subscribed to, as these have changed. We suggest subscribing to your child(ren)'s LIFEspaces and the whole school. All notices will go through this platform, so it is essential to set it up correctly, so you don't miss any school updates.

Staff and Parent Interactions and the Importance of the Fruit of the Spirit.

For those new to our school, you will find that using the Fruit of the Spirit is weaved throughout our interactions. The Fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23). As Christians, we should be using no other standard. Therefore, it is important to understand that we will only communicate with one another when the Fruit is present. If a parent or staff member feels they cannot enter a conversation without the Fruit present, the discussion must be postponed until it can be.

Teacher & Parent Concerns or Complaints Regarding Student Behaviour and Wellbeing

If relationships between home and school are well developed, we are always confident that any concerns parents or teachers have about a child can be resolved at the informal discussion stage. However, suppose a parent or teacher believes that no progress is being made towards rectifying a concern. In that case, either party can implement our "Procedure for Teacher and Parent Concerns or Complaints Regarding Student Behaviour and Wellbeing". Implementing this school procedure begins the formalisation of the process and clearly articulates the stages parents and teachers must work through to reach a satisfactory conclusion. The procedure is available on our website under the School Information Tab.

Sunhats in Terms One and Four

KingsGate School is a SunSmart school. As such, we have a school Sunsmart Policy. Part of this policy requires all our students to be wearing the school sunhat when they are out at play in Terms 1 and 4. Our Year 9 students can bring their own hat this term but will need to wear the High School uniform cap when outside in Term 4. If students do not have one, they must stay under the shaded areas in

front of the LIFEspaces. Please ensure that your child's hat is named. They aren't particularly cheap, and you'd be surprised how many new hats we find left out in the fields that are unnamed.

Testing

Every child in KingsGate School will be tested in Term 1 to help teachers identify student strengths plus any knowledge gaps that teachers need to address. Students will be tested again in Term 4 to illustrate progress and assist teachers in making their final overall teacher judgment. Summative testing at the start of the year is helpful as it gives teachers a starting point from which they can begin to teach. At the end of the year, summative testing is an essential tool (but not the only one) that informs student progress.

Student Reports

Parents and caregivers of students in Years 1 to 8 will receive a progress report on their child at the end of Term 1 and the End of Term 4. If your child is new to the school this year, it will illustrate their progress for 2023. However, if your child has been with us for longer than a year, it will show their progress since they have been with us.

We are still in conversation with other high schools to determine what student progress reporting will look like for us at the secondary school level. Once we have decided upon the best fit, we will communicate it to the Year Nine parent body.

Formal Face-to-Face Meetings.

At the end of Term One, we have "**Three-way Chats**". Three-Way Chats are a reporting procedure in which the student is actively involved in the learning and reporting process. It is a fundamental shift away from the one-way transference of information from teacher to parents. It is consistent with the characteristics of effective assessment in The New Zealand Curriculum.

After teachers have published student reports at the end of the year, Three-way Chats are engaged for a second time, allowing students to highlight and talk about their progress over the year and where their next goals are. However, parents, teachers and students must communicate throughout the year, and it befalls us all to ensure this occurs. Parents, remember you are in partnership with the school, so please be actively involved rather than passive participants.

Spotlight Student Progress

This year we will be introducing an online application called Spotlight. Spotlight is an application for teachers, parents and students and assists each one of these parties in monitoring student progress in real-time. Once teachers have received training in its use, teachers will give parents access to the parent portal.

We're looking forward to getting this working as soon as possible, as it's a productive and supportive way to enhance relationships between parents, teachers and students.

School Community BBQ

Finally, we get to reinstate some events that haven't occurred since Covid arrived on our shores! We would like to invite you all to our School Community BBQ on the evening of Tuesday, the 28th of February. It's a chance for all our families to share some food, fun and fellowship. We'll fire up the BBQs and the kitchens and get some fun events going. More information will follow, but just as a general guide, families are free to start arriving from 5:30 pm, and we'll aim for a finishing time of 7:30 pm as it's still a school night, and we don't want too many tired eyes the following day! So book it out in your calendars now! We look forward to seeing as many of you there as possible.

Thank you for taking the time to read through this newsletter. A good start is helped when we all have the same information.

In the meantime, I look forward to renewing old acquaintances and making new ones this year. May Christ's blessings fill you all.

Noho ora mai
Jared Stein
KingsGate School Principal