

*Inspiring a love of learning through an education that values the development of the whole child*

1 August 2023

Week 3, Term 3

## Kia ora koutou

**Attendance** - There is a nationwide focus on attendance. Recently we have been notified that the Ministry of Education is implementing new strategies to address the worrying levels of non-attendance throughout the country. It is expecting schools to follow up on attendance concerns and all Boards to do their utmost to ensure children are attending school.



The Ministry now require us to send data for children, coded:

**E** - Explained but unjustified (e.g, "It was raining so I let him stay home")

**G** - On holiday

**T** - Truant

**Holidays:** The MoE has clarified that parents should not be taking children on holidays during term time. With overseas holidays, I have always been of the view that missing school is sometimes unavoidable due to the different holiday times in the other parts of the world and that seeing family can't always fit neatly in between New Zealand holidays. However, parents need to know that the Ministry now require all schools to send to them the data of children recorded as absent due to being overseas.

**Keep us informed:** Please continue to let us know if you are planning an overseas trip.

**Providing no reason:** Occasionally there are parents who do not tell us why their child is absent. This is not acceptable. If no reason is given then there will be follow up to find out why this is. Providing an answer such as "he/she had a day at home" is not a valid reason for non-attendance and will be recorded as E. Five or more unjustified absences in a term are now automatically sent to the Ministry of Education.

**Attendance at Otari School:** I have been analysing attendance over the past two terms. The overall attendance picture at Otari School shows that the majority of students (66%) have attended school 90% or more this year and a further 25% have attended between 80 and 90% of the time. Therefore most children (91%) have missed between 0 and 10 days each term. While this is not dire, even 80% attendance overall is not ideal, as that equates to 4 weeks of missed schooling thus far.

There are 18 students who have missed between 4 and 10 weeks of school over the past two terms. While most of these are explained, this is of concern. Regular attendance is imperative for learning to progress. Missed days add up and sometimes parents are not aware of just how much school a child has missed. It is an important consideration when looking at your child's progress and achievement, therefore this information will be conveyed to parents in reports from now on.

**Being on time:** The Ministry of Education is also very clear that parents/caregivers are expected to have their children at school, on time. Continuous late arrival to school is a problem. Too many children are arriving late and this needs to change. Every child deserves to start the day with their classmates. They greet and are greeted, begin the day with established routines, participate in waiata and karakia and are provided with an overview of the day. Thus they feel secure and calm, their minds set up for the learning that follows.

## What's Going On? - Events and Activities at Otari School



### STEM Opportunity (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics)

As part of Field Based STEM, Forensic Insights are coming to our school on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> and Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> to run sessions with years 3 to 8 about what forensic scientists do and demonstrating the science behind fingerprinting, shoe casting, footwear recovery etc in a fun and informative way.

### EPro8 (STEM based Interschool Competition)

Teachers are preparing for the EPro8 competitions this term. Deborah Sorensen and Erana Bouzaid are running the EPro8 competition. <https://epro8challenge.co.nz/>

### Mathswell (National School Mathematics Competition)

Children have submitted their names to Johanne who will be coordinating the teams, comprised of years 5-6 and years 7-8.

### Year 5 - 8 Choir

I am establishing a year 5 - 8 choir for children who like to sing. The definition of a choir is "a company of singers" and our sessions will focus on learning songs and enjoying singing them, on a Friday afternoon.



**Parent/Teacher Conferences are in Week 5, 14-16 August.** Use this website to make a booking: <https://www.schoolinterviews.co.nz/>. The school code is **utepn**.

These conferences offer an opportunity to discuss your child's progress. Children are welcome to wait in the Community Room (next to the office) whilst parents are meeting with teachers.

**EPro8** - We will be running our own EPro8 events again this year, with interested Year 5-6 and 7-8 tamariki working in teams of four to master engineering challenges. Within the year bands, we will run activities across two days, culminating in a two hour competition. Selected students will be invited to compete in inter-school competitions to be held in Term 4.



**Life Education Van** – Harold, Kyra and the Life Education Van will be on site in Weeks 7 and 8. All children will be participating. This is quite an expensive programme so the school will contribute \$7 and we ask that whānau pay **\$6 per child**.

**Yr 1/2 Netball Tournament** – It's not too late to register your Yr 1/2 child for a fun netball tournament on Saturday 12 and 19 August. Email Susan ([susan@otari.school.nz](mailto:susan@otari.school.nz)) by this Friday.



**Immunisations** for Yr 7/8 students is on Tuesday 22 March.

**New World Stickers** - Karori West School is hoping to update some of their cooking equipment with the latest promotion being run by New World. As this directly benefits our Yr 7/8 students we would appreciate any stickers you don't want. Just send them along to Jillian, in the office.





**Covid** – We currently have no known cases of Covid.



**Birthdays This Week:** Happy birthday to Kailah, Allysa, Walter and Koukou. Rā whānau ki a koe! We hope you have a great day.

**Taonga Horomata / Virtues: Honour/Hōnore and Friendliness/Whakahoahoa**

Honour is deep respect for what we know is right and true. It is living up to the virtues of our character. We honour our abilities by using them for a meaningful purpose.

Friendliness is reaching out to others with warmth and caring. It is the willingness to be an intimate companion. Friendship is essential to our souls.

*“I don’t believe that there is any true friendship without a bond on honour and the honour in friendship is the respect you give the other that she also gives you”. Dorothy Allison*



Activity	Who's Involved	Date & Time	Cost
Perform Education - Book Week	Tot/Ker students	Thurs 10 Aug	<b>\$5.00</b>
Parent/Teacher Interviews	Whānau	14-16 Aug	
EPro8 School Challenge	Interested Students Yr 5-6	Week 5 Thurs/Fri	
EPro8 School Challenge	Interested Students Yr 7-8	Week 6 Mon/Tues	
Trip to Government House	Tot/Ker students	Tues 29 Aug	<b>\$4.00</b>
Life Education	All students	4-8 Sept	<b>\$6.00</b>
St Brigid's Kapa Haka Festival	Immersion Strand	Sat 16 Sept	

Have a good week everyone.

Ngā mihi  
Clifford

**2023 Term Dates**  
 Term 3: Mon 17 Jul – Fri 22 Sept  
 Term 4: Mon 9 Oct – Fri 15 Dec  
**Teacher Only Day: Mon 13 Nov**





Dear parents,

We are delighted to invite you to book in for Marrzipan this term! Woo!  
This class will be taught by our wonderful new Marrzipan teacher, Holly Pears.

6 weeks of fun for \$125. [Click here for full details and to book.](#)

Please note you will NOT automatically be booked in this term (even if you did Marrzipan with us last term), so if you want to join the fun, please [click this link to confirm your booking.](#)

We only have a few spaces available.

Thanks for all your kind words welcoming us back this term. Any questions, please feel free to get in touch.

Kind regards,

Davina Gilbert  
Director  
Marrzipan Drama



**Do you want to have fun and become confident and fit while enjoying a super sport which you can do for the rest of your life?**

**Learn JUDO, an Olympic sport, with experienced nationally registered instructors, in a safe and nurturing environment. Bring your friends along. New to Club K, Salamanca Road, Kelburn, Wellington.**

**Beginners class starting  
Ring Alan (06) 3626 459 or 027 5635 579**

Juniors	(7-13 yrs)	Tue 5.30 – 6.30pm
Intermediates / Seniors	(14–90 yrs)	Tue 6.30 – 9pm

My name is Rachel Bullock and I am a casting director here in Te Whanganui-a-Tara. Myself and my co worker Liz Mullane ( casting director for LOTR / The Hobbit ) have started the casting process for Nathalie Bolt and Emma Slade and their film "Holy Days" - script by Nathalie based on the novel of the same name by Dame Joy Cowley.

We are searching for a young Maori boy aged about 7 or 8. This is a very large role in this film and will require a rather special young boy. So some details below.....

SYNOPSIS - It's set in NZ in 1977 and is a charming story about a 7 year old boy and 3 elderly nuns who make a hasty road trip from the North Island to the South Island and back in an attempt to save their Convent from being demolished due to lack of resources. It is both funny and heart warming with the Nuns relationships with each other and with the little boy at it's core.

**At this stage we are only looking for the role of Brian the 7 year old boy.**

Ethnicity - Maori / part Maori - Age: 7 (or small 8 / 9 year old) Description: Brian is bright boy and deep thinker. Physically, he is quite delicate, and tends to be introverted, becoming easily exhausted by noise and too much 'kid time'. At school he is easily bored, because he grasps complex concepts and then goes on to daydream and shirk on his schoolwork. Despite possessing an adorable sense of humour, Brian is not a rough 'n tumble boy. He prefers listening to and attempting to join in with adult conversation (if only his vocabulary would keep up!) which leads to his exclusion from games and feeling like a bit of an outsider and an easy target for bullies. He used to find solace in his mother, Paula, who understood him and made him feel like he had a place in the world, but when Paula dies, Brian is devastated and his life and behaviour quickly unravel. The changes at home only worsen his distress, as his father now has a new girlfriend, Liz, and his sisters seem to embrace her. Refusing to accept Liz as a replacement for his mum, Brian uses his vivid imagination to convince himself that there is a way to bring Paula back.

He increasingly seeks solace and companionship with the local nuns. Their tranquil environment contrasts with the chaos of his home. Moreover, the nuns' strong faith places them within the spiritual realm, which resonates with Brian's quest. Similar to Olive in the movie "Little Miss Sunshine," Brian sees no age difference between himself and his odd group of companions on the road trip. He values the nuns for accepting him as he is and providing him with the undivided attention he lacks elsewhere. Brian, in his innocence, sees the nuns, not as forgotten relics like the rest of his town saw them, but as interesting, playful, hilarious and at times even risk-taking trailblazers - just like him! Most importantly though, Brian believes that the nuns can drive him to the South Island to fulfil his mission of retrieving his mum from Aoraki and thus driving the imposter, Liz, from his home.

Filming will be largely in Wellington so given the logistics of age and hours that can be worked we will be very interested in people based closer to that area and also interested in twins. Do you think you might be able to circle this info within the school to see if there might be any young boys interested?

If there was someone who was interested would they be able to make contact with me and send with a current photo of their child. [rachelcasting@xtra.co.nz](mailto:rachelcasting@xtra.co.nz)