



NEWSLETTER

Week 3, Term 2 2024

Thursday 16 May

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He waka eke noa – we're all in this together
E so'o le fau i le fau – unity is strength

Mai te pene a te Tumuaki | From the Principals' Pen

Kia ora e te whānau

I hope everyone has settled into Term 2. The weather is obviously getting colder, but it is great that the majority of our days have still been fine. Thanks to everyone who supported their child to get dressed up for book week last week - we love a dress up! Remember it's **pink shirt day** tomorrow - I wonder if I will find something in my wardrobe?! 🤔

Following my message about **behaviour and our values** last term, we continue to focus on positive behaviour here at school. It would also be useful if you continue the conversations with your children around values and your expectations of them when interacting with others at school. Sometimes parents hear about issues that happen at school before we do and we appreciate those of you who let us know! We are always committed to dealing with any incidents that are not in line with our school values.

As you know, we have been working with the Porirua City Council on **improving road safety around our school**. The council have confirmed with us that they will:

- Mark a P5 pick up/drop off area along Spinnaker Drive adjacent to the school car park (area shown in picture);



- Clearly mark the areas opposite the intersections of Spinnaker Drive with Pullen Lane and Discovery Drive with broken yellow lines (note that vehicles are not allowed to park within 6 metres of a road intersection);
- Implement the reduction of speed in the school zone as part of the already approved Speed Management Project - scoping is currently underway and they will advise us of the timeframe for this.

The Board also requested that an additional speed cushion/judder bar be installed further down Spinnaker Drive (coming down the hill), closer to the school. The council have said this cannot be implemented at this stage due to cost constraints, but have agreed to carry out some speed data measuring.

We are very committed as a school to making the area around our school as safe as possible. Unfortunately, we cannot control the behaviours of drivers and pedestrians. There are some ways you can help us:

- Walk/scooter to school wherever possible using the walkways and safe places to cross roads;
- Abide by all road rules and road markings, both on the roads and in our carpark; and
- For those who need to drive, please find safe places to drop your child off and encourage them to use the underpass if they need to cross Spinnaker Drive.

You will have heard a fair bit in the media recently about **approaches to teaching literacy**. As a teaching team, we undertook some professional development in Structured Literacy last year and have been implementing these approaches in our programmes. Having said that, we have always taught phonetic awareness and understanding as part of our teaching programmes. We are highly trained professionals, many of whom have had lengthy careers in education. While we are implementing structured literacy as part of our teaching here at Discovery School, we are also using our professional knowledge and judgement to ensure we provide a programme that meets the needs of all our learners. Every child is unique, with different learning needs and preferred learning styles. We do not necessarily agree that there is 'one right way' to teach all the students in front of us and we will also continue to ensure we use varied teaching approaches to meet the needs of our learners. Reading Recovery is a programme that many of our students have benefited from over the years. While it doesn't suit all learners, it has really helped a number of our students who have found reading and writing challenging. We were disappointed to hear the announcement that funding for this will cease next year and we are hopeful the funding will still be available to schools in another form of intervention to support these students who need support.

The Ministries of Health & Education have provided [updated advice about attendance at school if children are unwell](#). Please familiarise yourself with this as it provides information about **attendance**. The link to [knowing if your child is well enough to go to school](#) is also very helpful. Sometimes, children seem ok in the morning, but then are not well enough or full of enough energy to learn in a classroom. If your child is too unwell to be at school, we will continue to contact you to pick them up. If your child is well enough to learn, they should be here. Attendance at school is important - every day missed is a missed opportunity to learn. If a pattern of non-attendance starts to occur, learning can significantly be impacted over time. If you have any issues getting your child to school, please contact your child's teacher, Claire Gubb, or myself. We are here to help.

Ngā mihi

Kaylene

Teacher Only Day 31 May - School Closed

Just a reminder that school is closed on **Friday 31st May** for a teacher only day. We will be undertaking professional development off site with Ūpane, the education professional learning group of Ngāti Toa Rangatira. Please ensure you have alternative care arrangements in place for your child.

Learning Conversations & Student Led Conferences

We are going to take a slightly different approach to our mid-year meetings with parents. We are going to trial moving to Learning Conversations this year, which provides students with a different way to share their learning with you. While the majority of parent feedback over the past 2 years has been very positive about Student Led Conferences, we know some parents would prefer a 1-1 hui (meeting) with the teacher. Next year we will move back to a Student Led Conference.

The Learning Conversation will be in the form of a 15 minute time slot booked just for you and your child with the teacher. Your child will still lead this conversation and it is important they are at the hui. If you want some 1-1 time without your child present, you can let the teacher know prior and this can probably be arranged within the timeframe or at another time, depending on what you want to discuss. Dates for these meetings have been set for **Tuesday 2 July** and **Thursday 4 July**. We will have an early pick up for those who can on the Tuesday so we can fit all the appointments in. If you can't pick your child up early, we will be able to provide cover for them here at school. Please mark the dates in your diary - more information will come to you separately about bookings.

Annual Charges/Donations

The annual charges, donations have been added to the Musac Edge portal. You can either pay through the portal using a credit card (surcharge applies) or pay directly into the school bank account (account details are on the stationery lists)

Emergency Contact Details/Medication

Please check your child's caregiver and emergency contact details in the Musac Edge portal. **It's a good idea to have a local emergency contact who can get here if we have an emergency that requires a school evacuation.** If you have any changes please email contactupdates@discovery.school.nz. Click on this link if you need instructions on how to download the app. [Musac Edge portal instructions](#) Please check that your child's medication has not expired, eg asthma inhalers, epi pens etc. If you are unsure please contact the office.

Musac Edge App - New Feature - Absences (preferred option)

You can now inform the office of absences via the app and it is super easy. We really encourage parents to use the app for absence notification if you can as it logs directly into the attendance register, which will assist with efficiency and accuracy at our end!

It's super easy to download the app (<https://www.discovery.school.nz/parentcaregiver-portal>) Access to the edge caregiver portal and app uses the existing email address that Discovery School has on record. This App allows you to view school information about your child(ren), notify the school of absences and view and pay school bills online (note there is a small surcharge for credit card payments). It gives you quick and easy access to the information for students in your household. Once you are in, click on 'notify school of absence' and follow the prompts. If your child is away sick, we do need the type of illness/reason noted. If you have any questions, please contact the office. You can also check your contact details and emergency contacts on the App. Please let the office know of any changes by emailing contactupdates@discovery.school.nz

Discovery School Facebook page



Please join our [school Facebook page](#). This has regular updates, reminders and notices as well as photos of school events. You need to state your child's full name and class to be accepted into this closed group. Please note that students won't be accepted to this page and commenting is always turned off on posts. Private messages to administrators will not be answered, please contact your child's teacher or the school office via email if you have questions about school programmes and/or events.

Community Notices

For information on activities in our community click on this link, these will be updated as we receive information regarding events in the community. [Community Notices](#).

Kelly Club Before and After School Care and Booking Teacher Only Day

Click on this link for more information about our before and after school care and the teacher only day bookings <https://www.discovery.school.nz/about-us/kelly-club-before-and-after-school-care>

DISCOVERY SCHOOL PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION

Start where you are. Use what you have. Do what you can.

About DSPTA

The Discovery School PTA are a group of keen supporters providing opportunities for the school community to come together and with fundraising opportunities to support the needs of the school community.

Helpers needed

The Discovery School PTA is looking for helpers to assist in a variety of ways, including; planning fundraisers, helping with school lunches, discos or school activities, becoming new committee members or embracing sponsorship opportunities through their own professional connections. It is a great way to meet families and staff, participate in your children's education and role and model giving back.



Funding

A large portion of the DSPTA's fundraising goes directly back into the school community, reducing the amount parents/caregivers are asked for throughout the year.



If you are keen to get involved in any way that suits you please join us for a meeting, email us, follow our DSPTA Facebook page or join our DSPTA Helpers page.

Please also look out for and participate in upcoming survey.

DSPTA Page- <https://www.facebook.com/discoveryschoolpta>

DSPTA Helpers Page- <https://www.facebook.com/groups/dsptahelpers>

DSPTA email dspta@discovery.school.nz