



NEWSLETTER

Week 3, Term 4

Friday 1 November 2024

CONTENTS

[Mai te pene a te Tumuaki | From the Principals' Pen](#)

[Staff Changes](#)

[New Discovery School vision update](#)

[Increases to Parking Infringement Fees](#)

[Grants Coordinator](#)

[School docs](#)

[School Donations/Annual Charges/Credits](#)

[Emergency Contact Details/Medication](#)

[Musac Edge App - New Feature - Absences \(preferred option\)](#)

[Discovery School Facebook page](#)

[Community Notices](#)

[Kelly Club Before and After School Care](#)

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

There is a lot in the media at the moment about schools and in particular, curriculum, attendance and teacher only days. I thought it might be useful to give you an update on the information we have.

Attendance is an increasing focus for the Ministry of Education. Our figures show that 59% of students attended school regularly during Term 3. 31% attended irregularly, 6% had moderate attendance and 4% had chronic attendance rates. Regular attendance is often lower during the winter months as you need to attend 90% of the term to hit this mark. It is worth noting the reasons for absences as well - 70% were for medical reasons, 20% for term time holidays, 6% for other justified reasons and 4% for explained, but unjustified reasons. I'm hoping in Term 4 we have a significant increase in the percentage of children attending school regularly. Irregular attendance patterns at primary school can have ongoing, detrimental impacts on education through into secondary school. Please do everything you can to make sure your child is attending school if they are well enough to do so. Holidays should be planned for the school breaks. When we notice patterns of non-attendance emerging, we make contact with you so that we can work together to support your child to attend school.

Curriculum changes are happening very quickly at the moment. Just this week, after a very short period of consultation, the refreshed maths and english curriculum documents have been released. It is expected we will implement these from the beginning of next year, however there is simply not enough time to learn about them between now and then. Unfortunately, they aren't all complete and we don't have all the information about assessment tools, etc at this point in time. We will work to implement these new curricula at a pace that is manageable for our staff and students. When ERO were here last term, they commented on the quality leadership and teaching in the school. Please be assured that your child will continue to be taught a quality programme as we learn about the new curriculum documents, then implement them in a manner that ensures they are well understood and any changes are embedded.

There was information in the media to say that **teacher only days** are no longer going to happen during the term. My understanding is this is from 2026. For 2025, the Ministry of Education had already confirmed that schools could take 2 teacher only days during the year to support teachers to learn about the new curriculum. These days are now called 'Curriculum Days'.

Structured Literacy is an approach to teaching literacy that is not completely new. We have been using aspects of this approach in our literacy programmes for some time. Having said that, we are working through professional development as it becomes available, to ensure that we are up to date with current practices. You may be aware that the government is no longer funding Reading Recovery programmes as of next year. Instead, they are providing support to schools to put in place a structured literacy early support programme which, like Reading Recovery, provides 1-1 and small group support for students who are still finding literacy challenging after a year of quality teaching. While we can't always access support for our students with limited resources, we have always been able to access the MOE Reading Recovery funding and had assumed we would also be able to access the replacement programme from 2025. Unfortunately, I was informed last week that our equity index is too low to receive any funding - this translates as your school is in a socio-economic area that doesn't warrant this support. I am currently challenging this decision. It is simply not acceptable for our children who need this resource to miss out on it. I am advocating for our children, their families and our community as a whole - even those children who don't require the support, benefit from others getting it as it means they are more equipped to cope in their classrooms and don't take up more than their share of teacher time in a classroom. I welcome any statements of support around this that I could share with the Ministry if needed - parent voice could be very influential if we don't see a change in position.

Thank you to those of you who completed our **learning conversation** survey last term. We have analysed the results of the parent and staff surveys. Based on the results, we will be making some changes for 2025, moving away from student-led conferences and doing learning conversations every year. The majority of parents seem to get more information from these and the majority of staff also prefer them. There will be some changes to the content and the way we share learning. More information will come next year.

Ngā mihi

Kaylene

Staff Changes

Nicky Kenny has accepted a teaching position at Papakowhai School starting next year. Nicky has been with us for 9 and a half years and has had a significant impact on sport (and in particular, netball). Kelly Gibbs will also be leaving us at the end of the year, after 7 years of teaching at Discovery. Kelly is moving to Taranaki to be closer to her family. We are very grateful for all the work both Kelly and Nicky have done and wish them all the best for the new adventure ahead.

New Discovery School vision update

At the end of last term, our Year 6 vision group finished their video and shared the process of how they created our potential new vision statements. They presented our new vision statements and we asked the students, staff and whanau to vote on the statement that best reflects our school. Thank you to all that took the time to watch the video and share your vote and thoughts with us.

The two statements that came out on top were:



DISCOVERY SCHOOL

Te Reo Maori Phrase here

We thrive and grow today for a better future.



DISCOVERY SCHOOL

Te Reo Maori Phrase here

We thrive and grow today, for an even better tomorrow.

After our earlier consultation with Ngati Toa, they suggested once we have our english version, they could then assist us with the te reo wording that supports it (metaphorical rather than a translation). The board are taking up this offer. Given how close the top two options were in voting, along with their similar intent, we have sent both we thrive and grow today for a better future and we thrive and grow today, for an even better tomorrow as a starting point. The te reo then may guide us as to the final wording of the english version of our vision. We look forward to sharing this with you in the near future.

Increases to Parking Infringement Fees



Safer school runs

If you're stopping and parking near a school, choose safe parking every time

When children arrive at or leave school each day, how you park and drive can protect them or put them in danger.

Drivers and children need good visibility around schools to be able to see each other. Parking restrictions are in place near schools for a reason – to protect our tamariki.

If you choose to stop or park illegally you could get fined.

Stopped/parked:

• on broken yellow lines	\$100
• within 6 metres of a pedestrian crossing	\$100
• within 6 metres of an intersection	\$100
• on the footpath	\$70
• over or within 1 metre of a vehicle entrance	\$70
• within 50cm of a fire hydrant with no one in a car legally capable of moving it	\$70
• closer than 6 metres to a bus stop or on a marked bus stop	\$70
• on roadside grass plot, shrubs or flower beds	\$70
• in a way that's inconsiderate to other road users, including pedestrians	\$100
• double parked	\$100



porirua city

porirua city.govt.nz

porirua city

Grants Coordinator

We would like to thank Jim Mew for stepping into this role from 2025. We'd also like to thank Helena Coulton for the huge amount of work she has done to generate funds for our school. Helena has been doing this for a number of years and we are so appreciative of her work. Thank you Helena!

School docs

We use School Docs to house our school policies. This system ensures we are complying with legislation and also allows for parents and staff to have input into board policy review. This term, we are reviewing the policies listed below:

- Concerns and complaints
- Media
- Performance management
- Professional development
- Protected disclosures
- Staff conduct
- Staff leave

School Docs enables parents to log in and give feedback on policies that are then considered when they are up for review. Please log into the system and use the review tab/comment function to send us your feedback. Log in details can be found on our school website:

<https://www.discovery.school.nz/charter/school-docs-policies-and-procedures>

School Donations/Annual Charges/Credits

Thank you to those parents/caregivers who have paid their annual charges/donations for the year.

All school donations are voluntary, but they are a crucial source of funding for our school. Some schools can opt into a scheme where the Ministry of Education funds an additional \$150 per student to the school. Unfortunately, Discovery School is not eligible to access this as it is assumed we can access additional revenue through parent donations. Discovery School's expenditure budget (in particular our curriculum budget) is prepared on the basis of providing the best possible education outcomes for your child. The reality is we cannot do this without your help. Your donation is spent on staffing to keep our class sizes smaller, curriculum resources such as art paper, physical education gear, mathematics books, library books, computer consumables, lessons with outside providers such as Big Air Gym, subscriptions and musical instruments, all of which are used in the day to day education of your child.

Parent donations are an essential part of ensuring that we resource our school adequately. Without donations many of our wonderful school activities would not be able to proceed. While we understand not all whānau are in a position to pay a donation to the school, we are very grateful to those of you who can assist us through providing a donation.

Please check your Musac Account <https://www.discovery.school.nz/parentcaregiver-portal> if you are unsure what you have paid. 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).

Please contact the office on 234 7103 if you have any queries/concerns.

Emergency Contact Details/Medication

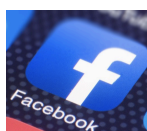
Please check your child's caregiver and emergency contact details in the Musac Edge portal. **It's a good idea to have a local emergency contact who can get here if we have an emergency that requires a school evacuation.** If you have any changes please email contactupdates@discovery.school.nz. Click 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.

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

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