



Kia ora koutou

Here we are at the last term of the year, already! What a wonderful term we had in Term 3 with many exciting learning experiences, including our swimming programmes and with our treasure hunt around Porirua. We have had an excellent group of students in our Middle Team this year and we will certainly make the most of the time we have left with our Year 6s and nurture our Year 5s and Year 4s to be the future leaders of our team in 2026.

OUR LEARNING PROGRAMME

LITERACY

- Our focus for writing and oral language will be on writing and presenting speeches. The students will be guided through the process of writing these and we will support students for delivery in a way that both challenges them, but does not overwhelm them. We will be encouraging those students who are confident and capable to do so, to present part (or all if they are confident) of their speech in te reo. As always, if students who have different cultural backgrounds would like to include aspects of their language and culture in their speech, we would love to hear it. We will guide students through this process as part of our class programme if they are wanting to do this.
- Oral language remains a key focus, with opportunities for students to share and discuss their ideas, supporting both their confidence and communication skills—important aspects of the Better Start Literacy Approach (BSLA).
- In literacy, all classes will continue with a structured phonics-based spelling programme, deepening their understanding of phoneme–grapheme relationships (how sounds match to letters and letter patterns) and the different prefixes and suffixes used to build on words. These skills will also be reinforced through handwriting practice, supporting spelling accuracy and writing fluency.

READING

- In reading, students will focus on developing fluency and expression, helping them read aloud with confidence and understanding. They will continue to build and apply a range of decoding strategies to tackle unfamiliar words, including using phonics knowledge, identifying chunks and patterns, and recognising prefixes and suffixes.
- Alongside this, we will be placing a strong emphasis on building comprehension strategies. Students will be supported to make predictions, summarise key ideas, ask and answer questions, infer meaning, and make connections between texts and their own experiences.
- This term as part of the reading programme we will be exploring a variety of chapter books and delving deeper into the messages within the text. This will also involve exploring characters and settings in greater detail. Follow up activities after each chapter will reinforce their understanding of the text and also give them opportunities to incorporate other areas of the curriculum.

ARTS

- Visual arts will be woven through our inquiry topics, giving students a creative outlet to explore themes and express ideas.
- All students have the opportunity to take part in regular **music and dance** sessions through **Poly Club** and **Kapa Haka**. There will be a whole school Te Moana Nui a Kiwa Performance to showcase what we have been learning this year during these times.
- Students will try different art styles and media. Finished products will be displayed in the classroom or in the hall.

MATHS

- This term, we will continue using the Oxford Maths programme to support students' maths learning. Alongside this programme we will continue to support student's problem solving and basic facts knowledge through a variety of rich learning tasks and engaging activities. This will ensure the delivery of an effective maths programme.
- Revisiting **place value** and practising their **addition and subtraction strategies**, while continuing to strengthen their **multiplication and division skills**.
- Building on their understanding of **fractions and decimals**, and applying this knowledge to **real-life problem solving**.
- Developing their knowledge of **financial concepts**, with a focus on **percentages and savings**, supported by our upcoming visit from **Getwise**.
- Working on their **basic facts**, with a strong focus on learning all their **times tables** and the related **division facts**.

TOPIC

Last term, our ākonga embarked on an exciting journey exploring the **places, people, and taonga that are special to Porirua**. Through our treasure hunt and classroom learning, we also delved into the **rich history of our city**, including the invaluable contributions of **Ngāti Toa Rangatira**, who have helped shape Porirua into the community we know today.

This term, we are taking that learning a step further by linking it to our **technology curriculum**. Students will be **designing and creating their own games** – such as board games and card games – that showcase Porirua's history, significant people, and treasured places.

Our goal is to ensure this important local history is not only learned but also celebrated and shared across our school, inspiring curiosity and pride in our city and its stories.

HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION (HPE)

- Athletics (weeks 1-3)

We have our Middle/Senior School athletics sports in Week 3 (Tuesday 21 October), so the first 2 weeks of this term lessons will continue to focus on teaching the students the skills required to successfully participate in the athletics sports events. We did start this late last term so that students have a good grasp of each technique.

- Gymnastics (Mid-Term 3)

During this time, students will take part in gymnastics sessions in the school hall, focusing on:

- Balance and coordination
- Safe movement and body control
- Rolling, jumping, and landing skills
- Using equipment like mats, benches, and small apparatus
- Creating short movement sequences and routines

These activities support students' physical development, confidence, and teamwork. If you have any questions or are interested in helping out during sessions or trips, please contact your child's teacher.

- Other PE activities

We will also be doing more work around developing cooperative and team work skills through a variety of games and activities. These will encourage students to work together, communicate and compromise.

HELPING AT HOME

We realise that parents are busy and a lot of students have outside of school extra curricular activities such as sports, music lessons and other clubs. These are very important areas to pursue to insure each child thrives in all areas.

Therefore our main ways we feel you can help at home to build on their academic success are the following:

- Daily reading (15-20 minutes) to build on their reading stamina. It would be beneficial to ask them some questions about the text or get them to recall the main ideas.
- Maths activities on Mathletics (assigned by teachers or chosen by students)
- Basic facts on Mathletics or through games or rote learning
- Telling the time using analogue and digital clocks

CHROMEBOOKS FOR 2026

Next year the current Year 4 students will be part of the BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) programme to support their learning. Below are some examples of the type of chromebook available. Please note that we are only recommending Chromebooks, as iPads are not fully functional with the software and platforms we use for teaching and learning. A durable and reliable Chromebook will greatly support your child's learning, both in the classroom and at home.

The key is to look for "education" or "ruggedised" models from major brands. These devices are specifically built with features like spill-resistant keyboards and reinforced chassis to withstand the bumps and drops that can happen in a school environment.

When you're shopping, keep these key specifications in mind:

Processor: An Intel Celeron or Intel N-series processor is perfect.

Memory (RAM): 4GB is the minimum, but 8GB will make the device feel faster and last longer.

Storage: 64GB of eMMC or SSD storage is ideal.

Durability: Look for "MIL-STD-810G/H" certification or specific mentions of spill-resistant keyboards and drop protection.

Here are a few examples of models that fit these criteria and are well-suited for student use:

Lenovo 100e/300e Chromebook: These models are highly regarded for their durability. The "e" stands for "education," and they are built tough with reinforced ports and rubber bumpers. They often feature an Intel Celeron processor and are designed to be a reliable and affordable option for students. The 300e is a 2-in-1 model with a touchscreen, while the 100e is a traditional clamshell, allowing you to choose based on your preference. These can be purchased from retailers like Harvey Norman and are the models we are currently purchasing for our school's own stock.

Acer 11.6 Inch HD Ruggedised Chromebook: This model is designed specifically for students and comes with the features you're looking for, including a durable, ruggedised body and a spill-resistant keyboard. It is an excellent, no-fuss option for schoolwork. We have used Acer Chromebooks in the past, and they have proven to be very reliable.

We also highly recommend purchasing a **hard shell case** to protect the device. For a 10-year-old, a case is an important layer of protection against the bumps and drops that can occur during the school day, whether a bag is accidentally dropped or a drink bottle leaks. A case will help ensure the longevity of the device, protecting your investment.

If you would like any additional information regarding BYOD for next year please contact Stacey Mew (IT Leader) smew@discovery.school.nz

SEESAW

We will continue to post photos and comments in relation to curriculum areas and school values. We will also use SeeSaw to distribute class notices and to share photos of class activities.

This term we will be reporting on their speeches and at the end of the term you will receive a separate report on Seesaw that will include the end of year curriculum levels for reading, writing and maths. It will also have a general comment that will focus around the school values. Finally, it will have your child's teacher for 2026.

SUNHATS & FOOTWEAR

Being sun smart at Discovery School is very important. All children need to wear a sunhat every day in term 4. We encourage each child to keep a named sunhat on their desk. It is also advisable to apply sunscreen before school, and then ask your child to reapply it at lunchtime.

One of our main focuses for PE this term is athletics. Please ensure your child wears appropriate clothing and footwear to enable them to participate fully.

CAMP FUNDRAISERS

Next term we will be running a Book and Soft Toy Sale on Thursday 30 October to raise money for the Year 5/6 and Year 7/8 camps taking place in 2026. These camps are a highlight of the school year and provide students with opportunities to build independence, develop teamwork skills, and create lasting memories. Fundraising helps us to keep costs down and make sure all students have the chance to attend.

To make the sale a success, we are asking for donations of children's books in good, usable condition and soft toys that your family may no longer need. These items are always popular with our students and families. Please note that we are only able to accept books and soft toys for this fundraiser – no other toys at this time.

Where to donate:

Drop items directly to Room 11

Or take them to your child's classroom

When to donate:

Donations can be delivered from Monday of Week 1 through to Wednesday of Week 4 next term.

Every book or toy donated will help us towards our goal, and every purchase on the day will directly support our students' camp experiences. We are very grateful for your generosity and support in helping us make this event a success.

Thank you for working with us to provide our tamariki with such valuable learning opportunities outside the classroom!

Te Moana Nui a Kiwa Performance – Celebrating Māori and Pasifika Learning

On **Thursday 11 December**, our whole school will come together on the Discovery School field for a special **Te Moana Nui a Kiwa Performance**. This event is a celebration of the learning and growth that has taken place in our **Kapa Haka** and **Poly Club** sessions throughout the year.

The evening will feature a vibrant mixture of **waiata, haka, and dance**, showcasing the rich traditions of **Māori and Pasifika cultures**.

We warmly invite all whānau to join us:

- **Kai from 5.00pm- bring a picnic dinner. Iceblocks for sale by the DSPTA**
- **Performance begins at 6.00pm**

This will be a wonderful way to celebrate our students' achievements and share in the pride of their performances. Further details will be shared in upcoming newsletters as the date approaches.

GETWISE FINANCIAL LITERACY PROGRAMME

During week 1 and 2 of the term we will take part in two 45-minute sessions on financial literacy. This programme has an outside provider that is sponsored by ASB Bank.

Students will learn about:

- Where money comes from
- Debit cards and how they work
- Earning money through chores or pocket money
- How to save through spending
- Comparative shopping

UPCOMING DATES

We are still finalising some dates for end of year events which we will inform you of once this has been done, but here are some key events to note for now.

Mon 6 Oct	First day of Term 4 for students
Mon 6 Oct	Mihi Whakatau - welcoming new students, whānau and teachers to our School - 9.15 start
Tue 7 Oct	Start of our Getwise Financial Literacy Programme
Tue 21 Oct	Middle & Senior Team Athletics at Adventure Park (pp 28 October)
Fri 24 Oct	DSPTA Disco-Halloween theme
Mon 27 Oct	<u>Labour Day - School is Closed</u>
Thur 30 Oct	Camp Fundraiser: book & soft toy sale
Tue 4 Nov	Parumoana Athletics
Fri 28 Nov	DSPTA Discover Christmas
Thur 4 Dec	Te moana nui a kiwa Performance (pp 9 December, ppp 11 December)
Thur 11 Dec	End of Year reports on Seesaw
Mon 15 Dec	Meet your new teacher and class for 2026
Wed 17th Dec	Last day of school

Contact Us:

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

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Tam Dullabh (Rm 12) - tdullabh@discovery.school.nz

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Rae Black (Rm 21) - rblack@discovery.school.nz

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Release Teachers for our Middle Team

Andrea Smith - asmith@discovery.school.nz

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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