



Happy New Year! Welcome to 2025 from the year 7&8 team.

We have four classes in the senior team. The teachers are Sarah Jenner, Nic Kibblewhite, Stacey Mew and Shaun Bishop.

[This newsletter contains information about our teaching and learning programmes as well as dates for your diary.](#)

Term 1 learning opportunities

Mathematics

Our students will begin the year with a Statistics' unit about probability. Following this, we will be focusing on addition and subtraction strategies and place value knowledge .



Literacy

Our main focus this term will be poetic writing. This will include exploring various poetic devices, reading and writing poetry and learning about literary devices.

Students will learn spelling and grammar rules, complete shared reading activities, guided reading lessons, listen to class stories and visit the school library.



P.E.

This term for P.E., we will be focusing on small ball games, such as softball, cricket and rounders.

Students will be completing a programme run by the Wellington Regional Council; Pedal Ready. This involves learning to ride school bikes safely around streets close to Discovery School. There are different levels to this programme, ensuring that all students can work at their own pace and ability. More information will be provided closer to the time.

Physical Education is an important part of our programme. If a student is unable to participate due to injury, please let your child's teacher know. Children who are sick need to stay home from school please.



Topic/Inquiry/Health

We will begin the year learning about expectations, routines and getting to know our new classes. Students will learn about being safe online. This focus will continue throughout the year. For information about cyber safety for your child, please refer to the following website www.netsafe.org.nz

We will be learning about Hauora as a concept of holistic wellbeing. This includes:

Taha hinengaro - mental and emotional wellbeing

Taha whānau - social wellbeing

Taha tinana - physical wellbeing

Taha wairua - spiritual wellbeing (sense of belonging, connectedness, having a sense of purpose in life)

Part of this unit will include tamariki learning about making sensible decisions about the use of alcohol and drugs. We will be using activities from this [resource](#).

Note that not all material will be covered. This resource is aimed at year 7-13 students and the majority of it will be learnt in Health classes at college.

Languages / Culture

Throughout the year, students will be learning International languages:

- French - with Sarah Jenner
- Japanese - with Nic Kibblewhite

- Italian - with Shaun Bishop
- NZ Sign Language – with Stacey Mew

They will spend 45 minutes per week for a term learning each language. Later in the year, we will have a 'languages lunch', where the students dress up in traditional costumes/outfits and bring along a plate of food to share.

We integrate Te Reo and Tikanga Māori into our daily routines and programmes.

Technicraft

On Wednesdays, all year 7&8 students travel by bus to Brandon Intermediate for Technicraft lessons. [Children need to meet at the school bus stop by 8:40am every Wednesday morning please.](#)



If for some reason students are running late, parents need to take them to Brandon Intermediate and deliver them to the office.

[There is an annual charge for Technicraft to cover the use of materials \(of \\$70\).](#) This is payable to the Discovery School via online banking during term 1 please. Other costs associated with Technicraft, such as the weekly buses, are covered by Discovery School and the Ministry of Education.

[Students need to wear closed covered shoes for Tech and long hair must be tied back. No Crocs.](#) They will rotate around the following classes; Hard Materials (workshop), Soft Materials (sewing), Food Technology (cooking), Electronics, Music and Visual Art. Classes finish at 12:30 and students return to Discovery School by 12:50.

Technicraft begins for the year on Wednesday, 12th February.

Merits / School Badge

Throughout their time in the seniors, many students work towards achieving their school badge. They need to receive 24 merits (made up of 5 "odd jobs" per merit) during their time as a year 7/8 to achieve this goal.

Merit points are awarded for taking initiative, such as assisting younger students, offering to help staff or completing monitor duties. They are not awarded for participating in extra-curricular activities or achieving high marks in an assessment task. It takes a lot of dedication, initiative and perseverance to achieve a school badge at Discovery School.

Please encourage your child to take up the challenge!



Gumboot Challenges

Every few weeks, senior children compete in a syndicate challenge. The challenges are run by classroom teachers and include a range of activities.

The winning class gets to keep the Golden Gumboot until the next challenge. Students (and teachers!) are very competitive about these challenges.



Stationery

It is important that we begin our programmes as soon as possible. Please ensure that your child has all of the items on the [stationery list](#) and that each of these items are named.

All books need to be covered otherwise they tend to fall apart quickly.

Children need to wear a named sunhat outside during term 1. No visors please.



Expectations

If students bring a cellphone to school, it must be switched off and kept in school bags upon entering the school grounds. It can be turned on again once they leave the school grounds. **If you need to contact your child during the school day, please call the school office rather than texting or emailing them.** Messages will be passed onto classroom teachers.

If phones are seen throughout the day, they will be held in a locked cupboard in the Principal's office. They must be collected by a parent at a time that is convenient to the office staff.

It is important that learning devices come to school ready to use, i.e. fully charged. We don't have the capacity to charge 25 devices in each room and chargers tend to get misplaced.

Communication

We communicate regularly via email with upcoming dates and information. Permission slips, Google Forms and main newsletters are uploaded to the school website www.discovery.school.nz and our new communication platform 'Hero'.

Seesaw will still be used as a reporting tool during 2025 - and we will share photos and information about your child's learning.

Please note that teachers are teaching children during the school day and emails may not be answered immediately.

Leaving the School Grounds

From time to time, students will leave the school grounds and walk to the local park to participate in sports or to further their learning outside the classroom. They will also leave the school grounds as part of their cross country training in term 2.

Parents will always be made aware when these trips are taking place. RAMs (Risk Management forms) will be completed by the team leader and signed off by the Principal.

Please complete this [Google Form](#) giving permission for your child/ren to leave the school grounds and to travel via bus each week to Technicraft. Many of you have already completed this over the holidays.

Social Media



Discovery School has a closed [Facebook](#) page. We would like you to request to join this if you haven't done so already. This is updated regularly with photos about events.

Note that we don't accept requests from past or present students to join this page.

Homework

The homework tasks can be found on the [homework slide deck](#). Set tasks will be allocated each fortnight and we expect that they will be completed by all students.

Homework will begin in week 3. [The children will bring home the tasks glued into their home learning book. Note that they are due at the end of each fortnight.](#)

Note that homework is not intended to be onerous; we understand that many of our tamariki are busy with after school activities and family time. We are aiming to set up good study habits for college and to get students used to meeting expected deadlines. We also believe that children should be reading and practising basic maths skills each day after school/evening for a short period of time.

Thank you for supporting our homework programme.

JUNIOR TOUGH GUY AND GAL CHALLENGE EXTREME OFF ROAD RUNNING EVENT

Tough Guy/ Gal Challenge (OPTIONAL) – every year, the year 7&8 teachers take a group of students to the [Junior Tough Guy/Gal Challenge](#) at Camp Wainuiomata. This is a three kilometre mud run challenge.

We are entering the event on Tuesday, 20th May - please note that there are multiple Wellington based events.

Please fill out this [form](#) if your child would like to enter this challenge (it is completely optional). Note that you need to enter and pay via the website above as well. [Registrations open on 1st February.](#)

Other Dates for your diary:

Meet the Teacher interviews: [These are being held on Monday, 3rd February.](#)

This is your opportunity to talk to your child's teacher about their learning/medical needs, interests and family situations. Teachers find these meetings very valuable!

Boostrix and Gardasil injections: If consent is given, students in year 7 are able to receive their immunisations at school. Information sessions will be provided to students by registered nurses on Thursday, 20th February.

[Please complete and return the consent forms provided to the school office regardless of whether you are choosing to immunise your child.](#) They will be given out during the first week of term.

Dates of the immunisations are as follows:

7 March: Gardasil (injection one) and Boostrix

17 September: Gardasil (injection two)

Mihi Whakatau – this is to welcome all new students, families and staff. The first one for 2025 is on Tuesday, 4th February at 9:15am in the school hall.

School photos (class, individual and sibling) will be in week 10 of term one, starting on Monday, 7th April. Closer to the time, we will advise you of the date for your child's class photo.

Year 8 and sports photos will be taken in Term 4.

If you have any questions, please ask. We trust that your child will have a happy and successful year in the senior team – and we look forward to working with them.

Ngā mihi,,

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