



Wadestown School

*Te Whakatipu me to Honohono Hei Akonga
Growing and Connecting as Learners*



Rata Team (Year 3 & 4) Newsletter Term 1, 2024

Tēnā Koutou Parents, Caregivers, and Whānau,

**Nau mai haere mai ki te Rata tīma!
Welcome to the Rata Team for 2024!**

It is great to be back with our returning students and our Year 3s who have transitioned from Weld Street to Rose Street. To our new students and whānau who have recently joined us at Wadestown School, a very special welcome! In Room 11 we have Adela, Year 4, and in Room 12 we have Maura, Year 3. Welcome also to Katy Synge who has joined the Rata team from Pohutukawa. Katy taught in Room 3 at Weld St last year so already knows the Year 3 students. It was lovely for Melissa and Katy to meet many of you at our stationery drop off day.

We are all delighted to be in a newly refurbished Rata block and are enjoying our wonderful new classrooms. If you haven't already, please do come down and see our new rooms.

The purpose of this newsletter is to give you a brief outline of what the focus for your child's learning in each area of the curriculum will be in Term 1.

Introducing the Rata Team:

Room 11 Melissa Kosmadakis melissa@wadestown.school.nz

I'm really excited to be back at Wadestown School this year as a teacher in the Rata team. Wadestown School is the place that inspired me to become a teacher during my time here as a teacher aide. My whanau is a blended one, both with family and with our cultures. I think it is important to build strong relationships with our students and to understand the diversity of knowledge and skills within our classrooms. Giving our learners the opportunity to bring aspects of their lives outside of school directly into their learning builds happy students and creates a sense of belonging.



Room 12 Katy Syngé katy@wadestown.school

I have been teaching for many years both in New Zealand and in the United Kingdom. Teaching is my passion, and I especially love watching the lightbulb moment children have when everything clicks into place and they realise they can do it! I am excited to have moved over to Rose Street with the Year 3 students, making the transition with them. I am looking forward to a great year in the Rata. team.



Y3/4 Team Leader, DP Y1-4, SENCO Robyn Grover
robyn@wadestown.school.nz

I have been at Wadestown School in the role of Deputy Principal (Y1-4) and SENCO for the past 13 years. In this role I feel privileged to watch your child's school journey begin and progress through the school, developing a connection with you and your child. I love interacting in some small way with our students each day. This year, I am also the Team Leader for Year 3/4 so will be based at Rose St every Monday morning and all day Wednesday and Thursday. Away from school, I enjoy catching up with family and friends, an occasional movie, being engrossed in a book and a bike ride or walk. Whilst our three children are living in the UK and Europe, my husband and I are enjoying travelling vicariously with them.



Wadestown School Values

Our school values are "G-R-O-W":

Gratitude (Whakawhetai),

Resilience (Manawaroa),

Others (Whānaungatanga)

Wonder (Mīharo)

At the beginning of the year we review each of the values and ask, in different situations such as the class, playground and on the sports field:

- what does this look like?
- sound like?
- feel like?

Each term there are new opportunities to express these values.

Our Literacy Programme

We have always spent an hour teaching Reading, Writing and Mathematics so the Government's new requirement that schools teach these subjects for an hour a day already fits well with our timetable.

Reading

Our reading programme is based on the components of "Reading To", "Reading With" and "Reading By" students. Reading mileage has a huge impact on progress so every student reads daily at school and we encourage them to read daily at home. Book Bingo is a great motivator for students to read widely. Students *learn to read* and then *they read to learn* so our particular focus this term will be on learning how to interpret and use the information they are reading. We will explicitly teach strategies (making connections, prior knowledge, visualisation, inferring, summarising) to help students make sense of what they are reading and use the information they gather, from what they read. These strategies will be taught in the context of instructional reading groups, based on student learning needs.



Handwriting

At Wadestown School we are continuing our journey on Structured Literacy and this year we are focusing on writing, starting with Handwriting. Research has shown that the greatest impact on student writing is handwriting: students being able to form letters correctly, and automatically. This reduces the cognitive load for a student writing and it has been shown that handwriting has a greater impact on learning and memory.* In 2024 all Y1-8 classes will have handwriting lessons four times a week. Following the principles of Structured Literacy, handwriting lessons will be explicit, systematic, cumulative and diagnostic.



In Year 3 and 4 we will be working towards students learning cursive writing, which is linked handwriting. Cursive handwriting increases the speed of writing. The steps to cursive writing are

- printing with correct letter formation
- adding ligatures (joining strokes) to letters
- linking letter ligatures

This term we will revise correct letter formation as it is a prerequisite for learning to add ligatures on to letters. (If students do not use the correct letter formation, they will not be able to add ligatures in the correct place). Pencil grip will also be assessed.

As a reminder for when they are completing homework, each student will have, at the back of their homework book, a handwriting sheet that shows correct letter formation and a picture of a 'pencil rap' that shows how to establish the correct pencil grip.

*Handwriting Better Than Typing for Learning and Memory
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l69-wKYn_Y

Writing

This year we are focused on teaching writing using the principles of Structured Literacy. Professional development for all teachers on teaching writing in this way will be reflected in our class programmes. To begin with, using a simple sentence, students will be taught how to add to it, using what, who, and when. They will see how using the conjunctions 'but',

'because', and 'so' impacts the meaning of a statement. Learning the difference between a statement, a question and an explanation will teach students about punctuation.

Teaching of 'The Code', a systematic approach for teaching spelling, will continue this year. In Term 1, students will stay in their own class, for revision and further vocabulary building and morphology activities.

Oral Language:

We are starting the term with a focus on questioning, specifically learning the difference between a closed and an open question, and when to use each type of question. Students will have many opportunities to contribute to class and group discussions

Mathematics:

Statistics: At the beginning of the year the statistics strand gives students further opportunity to find out more about each other. For the first four weeks of the term, they learn to gather, present, and interpret statistical information in a variety of ways. Students will use an enquiry cycle to make up questions, investigate then graph and discuss their findings. Statistics lends itself particularly well to real life, authentic learning. For example we may think that this summer has been Wellington's best ever so how can we collect data, and display it to confirm this statement or otherwise? How does a city council find out how busy a road is?



Basic Facts: Students each day will practise basic facts according to where their current knowledge is e.g., adding numbers to 10/20/ adding 100s, 2x , 5x, 10x tables followed by 4x, 5x, 7x 8x, 9x and the corresponding division facts.

Addition and Subtraction: From Week 5 we will focus on addition and subtraction strategies. Students will use these strategies in combination with their number knowledge to solve a range of realistic problems.

Mathletics will be a part of our classroom maths sessions. Students are welcome to use the basic facts section of Mathletics at home for additional practice if they wish.

Inquiry:

This term our school wide inquiry is about the Science of Learning: what is happening in our brain as we learn? Rata's inquiry is titled "Our Amazing Brain". Although it is a science and health based inquiry we will be integrating other areas of the curriculum: music, art and physical education to show how we learn in different ways. We will look at

- how we learn using our senses
- how repetition creates pathways in our brain
- the difference between short term and long term memory

As a part of this inquiry we have booked a trip to Te Papa to see Ngā Taniwha o Rūpapa | Dinosaurs of Patagonia at Te Papa. There the educators will focus on how the brain of these dinosaurs may have worked and what we can learn from these creatures that have informed today's world.

Waitangi Day:

We started the year by looking into Waitangi Day as part of the Aotearoa New Zealand Histories Curriculum learning. Waitangi Day marks the significance of the initial signing of Te Tiriti o Waitangi/ The Treaty of Waitangi. We learnt about what happened at Waitangi at the time of the signing and who was there.

Physical Education:

Daily fitness provides valuable brain breaks and helps to increase the children's fitness levels. This term we are beginning with co-operative games to help students develop their collaborative skills.

On Wednesday afternoons, both classes join together for a skills based Rata Sports time. This term we start by focusing on small ball skills of catching, throwing, hitting and then move into the games that use a small ball such as cricket and rounders.



The Arts

Visual Art:

Over the year, students will be provided with the opportunity to use a range of mediums to express their creativity. Visual art will have a skills component to the lessons. In Term 1 painting and colour is the focus: using a paint brush correctly, the colour wheel, using primary colours to mix secondary and complimentary colours, tones and shades.

Performing Arts:

Music is our key focus in Term 1. We will start with weekly team singing and move on to using percussion instruments, learning about rhythm and music notation, using percussion instruments to do this. We are very excited to have Room 9 to set up as a music room, where we will be able to leave all the percussion instruments out, ready for use.

Te Reo Māori me ngā Tikanga

Whaowhia te kete mātauranga: Fill the basket of knowledge.

At school, our tamariki are continuing to extend their learning of Te Reo Māori this year with the wonderful support of Matua Hemi at Thursday's Kapa Haka and Matua Alwyn, who is visiting classes to teach Te Reo Māori every second Thursday. In Term 1 we will focus on Ko Au (I, me, myself). Students will build on their existing knowledge as they introduce themselves and others. Te reo Māori me nga tikanga will also be integrated into the class programme with students learning different karakia, waiata and Māori phrases for example: Karawhuia! (Give it a go!)

Homework

Homework books are sent home on Monday and returned on Friday. Homework consists of daily reading, basic facts practice and from time to time a few questions to think about that relate to weekly learning. The focus for Mathematics homework is fluency, accuracy and consistency of basic facts. The purpose of homework is to reinforce your child's learning at school and help them to develop time management of homework tasks. Homework will begin on 12 February.

Included in your child's homework book will be the class weekly timetable.

Rata Team 2024 Classroom Activity Donation - Term 1		
Amount charged to Student Statement		\$100.00
Term 1		
Mathletics	\$20	
Trip to Te Papa: Ngā Taniwha o Rūpapa Dinosaurs of Patagonia at Te Papa Entry: \$5 Bus: \$6	\$11	
Term 1 spend total		\$31.00
Remaining balance		\$69.00

Reminders



- **To protect your child's uniform during artwork**, would you please send in an old button down shirt to bring to school to use during art time (not a t-shirt).
- **From 8.30am students are welcome in classrooms.** Before then it is valuable organisation time for teachers and they are not available for supervision.
 - **If you are collecting or delivering your child to school between 9.00am and 3.00pm**, please remember to sign them in/ out at the office.
 - **Bell time: Arrival at School.** Students are expected to arrive from 8.30am onwards. This gives them time to prepare themselves for the start of the day by unpacking what they need from their school bag and ensuring they are ready for school to begin.
 - **Morning Bell times:** 8.50am First bell, indicating time to go to the bathroom and class
8.55am Second bell, indicating the beginning of the school day. All students should be in class by this time.
 - **Absences** If your child is going to be absent from school, please ring the school office: 472 4779 and leave a message on the answer phone before 9am. If we do not hear from you, the office will phone to follow up an unexplained absence. If you need to take your child to an appointment send an email to your teacher AND the office in advance or if urgent, ring the office. **Children are to be collected from the office where they need to be signed out.** Please do not come directly to the classroom.
 - **Emails** are best used to make contact with your child's teacher with a short message or request to meet. Teachers endeavour to answer emails within 24 hours. Urgent messages e.g a change in pick up plans after school, should always go to the office.

Rata's Term 1 Calendar events

- ★ Tuesday 13 February, Meet the Team Evening 6.00-6.45pm, School Hall
- ★ Thursday 15 February, Mihi Whakatau, School Hall
- ★ Tuesday 27 February and Thursday 29 February, Whānau, Kaiako Conversations
- ★ Tuesday 5 March, Te Papa trip, leaves school at 9.45am
- ★ Thursday 28 March, Kahui Ako Teacher Only Day
- ★ Friday 29 March, Good Friday
- ★ Monday 1 April, Easter Monday
- ★ Tuesday 2 April, Easter Tuesday
- ★ Friday 12 April, End of Term 1

If we haven't already met you, we will look forward to meeting you at the school Mihi Whakatau on Thursday or team evenings, if not before. Your child's wellbeing at school is of the utmost importance so please do contact us if you have any concern whatsoever. It is always helpful to address a concern promptly, before it becomes a problem. We look forward to a great term ahead with the Rata tamariki!

Nga mihi nui

Melissa Kosmadakis, Room 11, melissa@wadestown.school.nz

Katy Synge, Room 12, katy@wadestown.school.nz

Robyn Grover, Y3/4 Team Leader, Deputy Principal /SENCO robyn@wadestown.school.nz