



# Wadestown School

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



## Rātā Team (Year 3 & 4) Newsletter Term 1, 2025

### Naāu mai, haere mai, welcome to the Rātā Team for 2025

It is great to be back at school for 2025. Our students have settled smoothly into their new area of the school, their classes and routines. For the returning Year 4s it is lovely to have them back in the Rātā Team and we have been impressed with how quickly and seamlessly our Year 3s have transitioned to Rose Street. A very special welcome to our new students and whānau in Room 6: Masha Year 3, and Tom Year 4 who have joined us at Wadestown School this term.

### Introducing the Rātā Team

The Rātā Team consists of two classes, Room 5 and Room 6. On Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday mornings, students are split into three groups for Reading, Writing and Mathematics instruction. Robyn Grover is teaching in Room 7 to assist with this.

#### Year 3/4 Team Leader

Room 5 Katy Syngé [katy@wadestown.school](mailto:katy@wadestown.school)



Kia ora koutou katoa. I have taught in New Zealand and the United Kingdom. This is my third year at Wadestown School and my second working in the Rātā Team. I am the Year 3/4 Team Leader this year and am looking forward to getting to know all of the children better through this role. 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 passionate about Literacy learning and teaching and have held numerous different roles in this area. Outside of school, I enjoy spending time with my friends and whānau. I especially enjoy getting outside in the sunshine on a warm, sunny Wellington day.

Room 6 Melissa Kosmadakis [melissa@wadestown.school.nz](mailto:melissa@wadestown.school.nz)



Kia ora koutou katoa. This is my third year teaching Years 3 and 4 in the Rātā Team and I am delighted to teach in Room 6 this year. My journey into teaching was inspired by my time as a Teacher Aide here at Wadestown School. My whānau is a blended one, both with our family of six and with our Greek and German 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.

Deputy Principal Years 1- 4 and SENCO  
Robyn Grover [robyn@wadestown.school.nz](mailto:robyn@wadestown.school.nz)



Kia ora koutou katoa. Although it is only week one of the new routine, I am enjoying teaching our Year 3 and 4 students on a weekly basis. Having known most of the students since they started school, it feels like being with 'old friends' whom I know reasonably well! Whether a student is 5 or 15 years old, I believe being happy and comfortable at school is so important as it impacts on all aspects of their school life. I like to get to know each student and what makes them 'tick'.

## Wadestown School Values

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

- Gratitude (Whakawhetai),
- Resilience (Manawaroa),
- Others (Whānaungatanga)
- Wonder (Mīharo)

Our GROW values are integrated throughout our classroom programmes and are also celebrated and discussed in our whole school Hui-a-Kuras (School Assemblies).

## Our Literacy Programme

### Reading



Our reading programme is based on the components of "reading to", "reading with" and "reading by". Reading mileage has a huge impact on a child's reading progress. Every student reads daily at school and we encourage them to do the same at home. Our Wadestown School 'Book Bingo' is a great motivator for students to read widely at home and to use the Library to assist with this. Students *learn to read* and then *they read to learn*.

So our particular focus this term will be explicitly teaching the strategies of making connections and using prior knowledge to help students make sense of what they are reading.

### Handwriting

Research has shown that the greatest impact on student writing is handwriting; and ensuring that students can form letters correctly, and automatically. This reduces the cognitive load for a student when writing as well as having a greater impact on learning and memory.\* Classes will have handwriting lessons four times a week.



In Years 3 and 4, we will be working towards students learning cursive writing, which is linked to handwriting. Cursive handwriting increases the speed of writing. This term we will revise correct letter formation as it is a prerequisite for learning to add ligatures onto letters.

Reference: \*Handwriting Better Than Typing for Learning and Memory:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l69-wKYn>

## Writing



Using a Structured Literacy approach to writing, students will first focus on writing at sentence level. They will learn how to construct quality sentences that are engaging and interesting, using a range of sentence types, beginnings, and vocabulary. Writing will be based on student interests, inquiry topics and different writing genres.

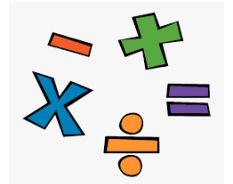
The teaching of 'The Code', a systematic approach to teaching spelling, will continue this year. Students will move between three classrooms and will be taught spelling patterns and rules according to the level they are working at.

## Oral Language

We are starting the term with a focus on 'Connections'. Making and sharing Taonga (Treasure) Troves will be a great opportunity for students to make connections with those in the class, whilst also building the ability to speak clearly and confidently in front of a group.

## Numeracy

**Place Value** - Students will learn that each digit in a number has a value, depending on which place the number is in. For example, the 5 in 350 represents 5 tens, or 50; however, the 5 in 5,006 represents 5 thousands, or 5,000.



**Basic Facts** - Classes will build speed and accuracy to instantly solve addition, subtraction, multiplication and division facts.

**Statistics** - Students will 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.

## Inquiry: Aotearoa Histories and Social Sciences

This term our school wide inquiry is about the connections we form with individuals, groups, and communities. This could be through our families, and where they have come from, and places we have been to or know about. We will learn about place names: how they came to be named and their significance.

## Physical Education and Fitness

Daily fitness provides valuable brain breaks and helps to increase the children's fitness levels.

On Wednesday afternoons, both classes will join together for Rātā Sport. This term we are beginning with co-operative games to help students develop their collaborative skills. Later in the term, we will focus on small ball skills such as catching, throwing, and hitting, before moving into playing small ball games.

## 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 will be our focus; using a paint brush correctly, the colour wheel, and using primary colours to mix secondary and complimentary colours, tones and shades.

**Performing Arts:** In Term 1 we will start with weekly Rātā singing sessions on a Friday afternoon.

## Te Reo Māori

At school, our tamariki are continuing to extend their learning of Te Reo Māori with the wonderful support of both Matua Hemi at Thursday's Kapa Haka and Matua Alwyn, who is visiting classes to teach Te Reo Māori every 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.

## Homework

The purpose of homework is to reinforce your child's learning at school and help them to develop time management of homework tasks. We are very aware that many students are busy with after school activities so for this term we are trialling a Homework Tic-Tac-Toe. This will provide students with a choice of activities to complete over the term. We will be encouraging students to read for pleasure every night and to practise basic facts. Their Mathletics subscription will give them access to Mathletics, which we would recommend limiting to 10-15 minutes a night. Reading at home also remains a high priority for students.

## Reminders

- **To protect your child's uniform during artwork,** would you please send in an old button down shirt to use during art time (not a t-shirt).
- **From 8.30 am students are welcome in classrooms.** Prior to this time teachers are busy getting ready for the day and are unavailable to supervise children.
- **Arrival at school:** Students are encouraged to arrive between 8.30 am and 8:45 am. 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 the school day.
- **Morning Bell times: 8.50 am** is the first bell. This bell indicates that it is time to go to the bathroom and class.  
**8.55 am** is the second bell. This bell signals 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: (ph: 472 4779) and leave a message on the answerphone before 9:00 am. If we do not hear from you, the office will phone you to follow up. If you need to take your child to an appointment please send an email to your teacher AND the office in advance or if urgent, ring the office.
- **If you are collecting or delivering your child to school during school hours** please remember to sign them in/out at the office using the 'vistab' sign in system.
- **Communication with teachers:** 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. Teachers are often unable to check their emails during the school day. Your child's wellbeing at school is of the utmost importance so please contact us if you have any concerns. It is always helpful to address a concern promptly before it becomes a problem.

- **Sun hats:** Named sun hats are compulsory in Term 1 for all outdoor activities.
- **Uniform:** Please ensure all pieces of uniform are named, including drink bottles for ease of finding again if misplaced.

## Rātā's Term 1 Calendar 2025

- 18 February:** 'Meet the Team' Evening 6.00-6.45 pm, School Hall
- 20 February:** Mihi Whakataua, School Hall, 9:15 am
- 21 March:** Kāhui Ako Teacher Only Day - school closed for instruction
- 11 April:** End of Term 1

Rātā Team 2025 Classroom Activity Donation - Term 1	
<b>Amount charged to Student Statement</b>	<b>\$100.00</b>
Term 1: <i>NB: no spending of the 2025 Classroom Activity Donation for this term.</i>	N/A
Classroom Activity Donation Total Spent (Term 1)	\$0.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$100.00</b>

We look forward to a great term ahead and meeting you all soon.

Ngā mihi nui,  
The Rātā Team

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Melissa Kosmadakis, Room 6, [melissa@wadestown.school.nz](mailto:melissa@wadestown.school.nz)

Robyn Grover, Room 7, Deputy Principal, Y1-4 /SEnCo [robyn@wadestown.school.nz](mailto:robyn@wadestown.school.nz)