



Wadestown School

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



Rimu Team (Year 5 & 6) Newsletter Term 1, 2025

Kia ora Whānau,

Ki ora, ni hao, bonjour, talofa, hola, hallo and welcome to the new school year for the Rimu Team. We have thoroughly enjoyed being back at school with your tamariki (children), finding out about their summer holidays and preparing for the academic year ahead in the Rimu Team.

We welcome to both the Rimu Team and Wadestown School; Eli, Reuben, Astrid, and Sienna who have all joined Room 8 and Juno, Tony, Leonardo and Tom who have joined Room 10. We hope you and your whānau (family) enjoy your time with us.

Introducing the Rimu Team

Clare Gilligan - Room 8 Classroom Teacher and Rimu Team Leader

clare@wadestown.school.nz



Kia Ora,

My name is Clare Gilligan and I am teaching Room 8 this year. This is my third year teaching at Wadestown School and in the Rimu Team.

I grew up in London but spent a lot of time in Ireland as this is where my whānau is from. I spent the most recent summer holidays in Vietnam catching up with my parents, which was a special start to the year. I moved to Wellington four years ago and love living here. I really enjoy travelling around this beautiful country and learning more about the culture.

I am excited to work alongside you and your tamariki this year. I believe that relationships are at the heart of teaching and will take time to get to know the Rimu students, including their interests outside of school. A huge aspect of that is getting to know whānau as well, so please pop in for a chat or send an email if there is anything you would like me to know. I look forward to celebrating all the students' successes; big and small throughout the year.

Liberty Cook - Room 10 Classroom Teacher

liberty@wadestown.school.nz



Tēnā koutou

My name is Liberty Cook, and I'm pleased to be teaching in Rūma 10 this year. This is my second full year at Wadestown School, though I have been part of the school community as a part-time and relieving teacher since 2022. Before becoming a teacher, I worked as a lawyer but retrained when my own children started primary school. My passions outside of learning and education include plants and gardening, art, design, and travel. In 2023, my family and I had the incredible experience of living in the South of France. I grew up on the Kāpiti Coast, but my whakapapa connects me to Te Rarawa and Te Aupōuri in the Far North. These days, I live in Karori with my husband and our two boys, aged 10 and 12. I am looking forward to getting to know you and your child as the year unfolds.

Gretchen Elliott - Room 9 Classroom Teacher and CRT teacher

gretchen@wadestown.school.nz



Kia ora, my name is Gretchen Elliott, and I am excited to be part of the Rimu Team in 2025. I have had a long association with Wadestown School, dating back to 2008, when I completed a practicum in a Year 1 class and loved it. Since then, I have worked as a relief teacher across all year levels but have been a familiar face in the Rimu Team over the past two years. My previous teaching roles have been at Samuel Marsden and Wellesley College.

I grew up on a high-country farm in the South Island but have lived in Karori for the past 20 years with my husband and our two boys, Frank and Jethro, who attend Wellington College. Outside of school, I love playing sports—tennis, golf, and skiing—travelling, cooking, and spending time in the garden.

I am looking forward to the year ahead and to being part of such a great team.

Curriculum Overview

Literacy

Our Year 5 and 6 classes follow a Structured Literacy approach, focusing on explicit, systematic instruction in key reading and writing skills.

This evidence-based method builds confidence, fluency and a strong literacy foundation for all learners.

Writing will be incorporated across all areas of the curriculum with a particular focus on sentence structure and punctuation. On a Thursday and Friday, ākonga (students) will then apply this knowledge to longer pieces of writing where they will be persuading the audience on a topic of their choice.

Spelling will take place each morning from 9:00 am to 9:20 am. The students will continue to follow 'The Code' and progress through the levels. The children have been grouped according to their needs and teachers will be explicitly teaching spelling sounds and rules.

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*.

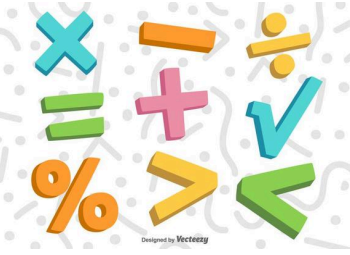
Following the principles of Structured Literacy, handwriting lessons will be explicit, systematic, cumulative and diagnostic. We will revisit 'the basics' in handwriting to ensure that each tamariki has the correct letter formation, and joining strokes (ligatures) before moving on to cursive writing.

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

Reading commences with a Guided Reading rotation. The children will be working in small groups on a range of reading skills including summarising, inference, predicting and vocabulary knowledge. These rotations will include the students reading to and with the teacher. The students will then apply these skills to a range of texts on our inquiry topic, 'Connections'. Strong links between reading and writing will be taught and students will continue to look at texts from the perspective of both the author and the audience.

Ākonga (students) are also encouraged to read for pleasure and enjoyment both at school and at home. Each class has weekly scheduled Library visits where they can issue books. Students can also listen to audiobooks as another way of enjoying books, independently. Please speak to your teacher or our Librarian, Derek Piper derek@wadestown.school.nz, if you are looking for new titles to read.

Numeracy



Following the new Structured Numeracy approach, students will be grouped by year level for their Mathematics lessons. We will be using the *Maths No Problem* resources, which are aligned with the curriculum's scope and sequence. The year will begin with a focus on place value, followed by addition and subtraction. Students will spend time exploring each topic, applying their knowledge to both familiar and unfamiliar contexts to embed their understanding. Once they have demonstrated mastery, they will move on to problem-solving activities to further enhance their skills.

In addition to this, there will be an ongoing emphasis on basic facts to support students in developing fast recall.

Social Sciences and Health Inquiry:

Our school-wide inquiry for 2025 is based around the theme, '*Connections*'. It will form the basis of cross-curricular units throughout the year. This term, we are looking at 'Connecting: digitally, socially and culturally.' The students will be examining historical events in Aotearoa and making connections between these and events happening in other parts of the world around the same time.

The students will have a weekly session in their year group focused on various aspects of connecting with others socially. We will focus on leadership, both within the team and around the school, and how we can form healthy connections with our peers.

STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics): The focus will be on technology this term, with the students learning about different ways they can use technology to research and connect with other cultures around the world.



Te Reo: Matua Alwyn will continue with Te Reo lessons in the Rimu team every week. Students will learn to share their mihi and pepeha, deepening their understanding of how these foster connections within Māori culture and learning more about their own family history.

Kapa Haka: Hemi Prime, our Kapa Haka tutor will once again be teaching all Rimu tamariki. Kapa Haka on Thursday mornings from 11:00am to 11:40am. Our performance group will also resume this year and Rimu students are welcome and encouraged to participate in this for 2025.

We look forward to continuing to work with both Mātua Hemi and Mātua Alwyn again this year.

Physical Education:

The Rimu Team will begin the year exploring a range of co-operative and team-building activities. This instils the concepts at the heart of all learning in Physical Education and sets the standard for the attitudes and values that are expected in Years 5 and 6. Rimu Team Physical Education lessons will take place on a Tuesday afternoon. We aim to have fitness sessions each day, with the majority of these sessions being as a whole team. Active participation in these sessions is encouraged and will assist with preparing our students for our upcoming Camp in Week 7 of this term.

Please ensure your child has appropriate footwear for these activities and that they have a drink bottle at school everyday.

Arts Curriculum:

In the Visual Arts, students will examine the techniques of a well-known artist and produce their self-portraits using their varying styles.

Informal drama activities and games aim to explore the elements of drama and develop confidence.

Digital Technology:

Gmail accounts: All students have an email address that is linked to their class teacher. These accounts are only to be used for school purposes and are monitored regularly. We discourage students from using these accounts outside of school hours, and most especially, without parental supervision.

The students will begin the year using Google Classroom. Year 6 students are familiar with this platform. They will be working alongside the Year 5 students to help familiarise them with Google Classroom features, firstly for in-class use and then for homework.

Education Outside the Classroom (EOTC):

A highlight of our term, and the year, is the annual Year 5 and 6 School Camp. You will have already received communication about this via email, with further details to come before our departure.

As camp approaches, we will help students prepare by engaging in collaborative games and activities, fostering teamwork, and building strong relationships with their teachers to ensure they feel confident and comfortable during the experience.

Homework:

This will be given out on Monday via Google Classroom and the students work their way through the tasks and complete them by Friday. It will consist of teacher-set Mathletics tasks and 15-20 minutes of daily reading. Spelling and Basic Facts will be covered in class. Book Bingo awards are available for children to work towards and gain valuable House points for each challenge they achieve. The homework is designed to be flexible and allows each student to manage and organise their time around after-school commitments. Homework guidelines will be sent out on Tuesday 18 February via email to all Year 5 and 6 parents. After this, weekly instructions will be communicated with the students via Google Classroom.

Movin' March is coming soon. It is a Wellington Regional Council-themed promotion to *encourage active travel to school*. The students have a 10 sticker passport held by the teachers at school and if they walk to school each day (x 10), then they earn a 'Movin' March' reward. Please encourage your child to walk to school during March, if they can do so.



Student Behaviour and Wellbeing:

In the Rimu Team, we aim to encourage an environment where mistakes are viewed as a natural part of the learning process and tamariki take the lead in solving and taking responsibility for problems. We will support students in this learning and they should come to teachers for advice in the first instance. Dealing with issues straight away ensures a resolution for all parties can be reached. However, if your child comes home and informs you of an issue please do let us know as soon as possible so we can solve it.

Communication with Teachers:

If you have anything you wish to discuss with your child's classroom teacher, please feel free to make contact via email and we can arrange to meet in person or chat on the phone. If you need to get an urgent message to your child please do this through the school office, not the classroom teacher's email, as there is very little opportunity to clear emails during the school day.



Our Wadestown School GROW Values"

This term the students will be revisiting our Wadestown School GROW Values. Now our students have a firm understanding of the School Values, we will be looking to deepen their understanding of how they can demonstrate these further.

G RATITUDE	R ESILIENCE	O THERS	W ONDER
(Whakawhetai)	(Pakari)	(Whānaungatanga)	(Mīharo)

Useful Reminders

- **Classrooms are open from 8:30 am.** Tamariki should not be at school before 8:30 am unless they are on Road Patrol. Arrival time between 8:30 am and 8:45 am, ensures they have enough time to organise their belongings and be ready for the 8:55 am bell. Students who arrive later than this bell must sign in at the office.
- Students are to bring a named **water bottle** to school **every day**. This is so they can keep hydrated in class during the day.
- **Cell phones** are the tamariki's responsibility and remain in their school bag throughout the day unless specific permission has been given by a teacher. The school is unable to take responsibility for lost or broken cell phones.
- Please make sure all items of **school uniforms are named**. Without this lost items are unlikely to be returned to the owner. The children are responsible for all their items of clothing and stationery, including the retrieval of lost pieces.
- Students bringing **scooters** to school need to **remember their helmets and their Wadestown School Scooter licence**. New licences can be obtained through the office.
- Year 6 tamariki doing **Road Patrol** are expected to arrive at school at 8:15 am to set up for their duty. If your child is unable to be there for their duty, please ensure that the school is informed ahead of time so we can arrange a replacement.

We are all looking forward to the year ahead with the wonderful tamariki from the Rimu Team. The teachers also look forward to working alongside you throughout the year.

Noho ora mai,

Clare Gilligan, Liberty Cook and Gretchen Elliott

clare@wadestown.school.nz

liberty@wadestown.school.nz

gretchen@wadestown.school.nz

(Rimu Team Teachers)

Rimu Team Classroom Activity Donation for Term 1 2025	
Amount charged to Student Statement:	\$100.00
Term 1	\$0.00
<i>No spending of the 2025 Student Donation for this term. Money carried over to Term 2.</i>	
Activity Donation Total Spent (Term 1)	\$0.00
TOTAL:	\$100.00

