

NEWSLETTER TO PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS OF

Otaika Valley School



TERM 3

Friday 10th of August 2018
Week 3 of 10



Dear Parents & Caregivers, Tena Koutou Katoa.

Welcome to Oliver Brittain who has joined us in Room 1.

Principal Conference Update...

Last week I was away at the Tai Tokerau Principal Conference, being part of the organising committee and participating delegate. This year's conference was probably the best one I've been to for a while, particularly in the way it supported many of the goals within our school strategic plan and vision.

Pio Terei (comedian, actor and singer, host of TV shows) was our MC again this year. Pio spoke about 'The Parenting Show with Pio' and the messages for parents on approaches to parenting. His ideas linked well with Kathryn Berkett's keynote on building resilience in our children and how parents, teachers and schools can support this. Her messages have affirmed some of our recent reviews of what we do at Otaika Valley School, within our learning and behaviour plans and how we teach. As a staff it is not new to us when thinking about brain development and education psychology, that a brain does not think well when angry. There are many complicated words to describe this, but Kathryn explained it as 'Red Brain/Green Brain'. Red brain is when a human brain is in fight and flight mode and cortisol (a chemical) is released. This chemical shuts down the brain's connections that allow us to think or reason. We go into survival mode to run away from danger, and only parts of our brains are used to do this. An angry child/parent/teacher/anyone does not reason in the same way as a calmer, or placid person does. At school we do not lecture, discuss behaviour or consequences when children are upset, angry or in 'Red Brain' mode. As a learning parent myself, I am constantly learning the hard way not to engage in discussions with my teenage daughters while either of us are in 'Red Brain mode'. Hmmm, have I done this in the past as a learning parent? Yes. They are not seeing reason. I am not seeing reason. We have been challenging some of our practices at school to make sure our planned actions and consequences take this type of thinking into consideration. As teachers we try to keep children happy, calm and feeling good about themselves or in 'Green Brain' mode, so that their brains are able to function, think, reason and learn. Kathryn Berkett discussed the human brain functions in exactly the same way when a lion is about to attack, as when we are feeling over-anxious about maths or learning (red brain). A child will not learn under pressure, but some anxiousness is required to learn. This is a snippet of the messages that relate to our school. I have been talking to anyone who will listen to me at school about the importance of these messages and how they can enhance what we do at this school. If you want to know more, catch me for a chat.

We also had Tony Ryan (an educational futurist) and Mark Osbourne, link their sessions into what is happening in the world and workplace now, the rate of exponential change and what future jobs may look like for these learners. They both discussed the skills that will be required to survive in the future. One of the key messages that came from them both, was children need to be problem solvers, communicators, flexible and be able to work in teams and really develop their human characteristics in a world moving towards automation. Robots and automation of manual jobs is happening now, just go to Kmart. I cannot do justice to their presentations in a few words, but I was assured that our school is valuing the right things in education and learning.

In summary, I am really excited to work with the staff, BOT and school community on the future direction of learning at Otaika Valley School.

My haircut...

Hmmm my haircut. Well, while getting my haircut the other day, by an expecting first time mum, we were discussing all her clients' generosity of baby gear and advice. So, I just could not help myself and said, "if I put on my parent hat, and teacher hat, my advice would be..."

Talk to your child from birth. The first three years of brain development is massive. During the day describe everything you are doing as you're doing it. Don't stop talking to them. They are learning the sounds that will be their language. Baby will not understand them for a start but they soon will. Read to them as much as you can. Go to the library and get out books and read to them. Ask for books for presents. If you do this they will go to school well prepared with their language. Speak to them in your first and second (maybe third?) language. If you can get on the programme 'Parents as First Teachers' jump at it.

I shared this story with you because teachers and schools often find some parents do not do this as they were never told it helps. "If only I knew."

Lambs at school

We had fourteen lambs at school the other day, and I started to get concerned about the available grass. I told the lamb owners that they wouldn't be able to play with their lambs during break times, due to the number of children trampling the grass. They can take a buddy to feed the lambs at feeding times and then visit them through the fence at break times. If we continue as we were, the grass will run out and housing them at school will be an issue. Today we had four lambs, so I hope the message is clear that we do really want them at school. Our problem is we have not got the fencing to give them more grass feed.

If you have wire netting fencing that we could borrow to extend the pen beside the old chook run then this issue may go away. Let me know if you can help. Thanks.

Bus Bay

We have three buses running at the moment. Two smaller buses arrive just before 3pm and most people are keeping this area clear during this time. Between 3:15 pm-3:30 pm, a larger bus (fare paying bus) arrives from Tauraroa Area School to pick up children, they need the space to swing into the bus bay. Parents may not have realised this, so can you please leave the bus bay free for this to happen. Thank you for your support.

Strike Day

As you are aware the school is closed **next Wednesday 15th of August** due to the nation-wide teacher strike. As principal it is not my place to get political or tell people how they should think. If you want to understand the reasons behind why this strike is happening then ask your child's teacher. Some might agree, others may not and that is ok. We are prepared to have the conversation with you. The teachers have a petition that you may or may not want to sign after talking with them. Here is petition for you to think about if you want to have this discussion.

Primary Teachers Collective Agreement Petition

All children deserve the best education we can provide.

Please support us by calling on the Government to:

1. Increasing funding to education so we can attract and retain great teachers.
2. Reduce class sizes for teacher to manageable levels.
3. Increase professional development and help reduce workloads.
4. Provide funding and training in every school to employ a Special Education Needs Coordinator (SENCO).
5. Fund schools adequately to employ and pay for additional highly skilled teacher aides.

Kind Regards,
Terry Brock

THIS WEEK'S RURU AWARDS RECIPIENTS...

JUNIOR



Joss Morgan - Rm 1

SENIOR



Photo to come

Caprice Simpkin - Rm 7

CLASS AWARDS

Rm 1: Isla Colmer, Caius Greenwood, Alexis Holmes, Ivy Smith, Isla Taylor

Rm 2: Eli Byrne, Noah MacDonald, Jaxson Maxwell, Jacob Theodore, Ellajane Tutahi

Rm 3: Daniel Herman-Le Roux, Ephraim Locke, Isaac Mawson, Eden Raynel

Rm 4: Chevi Mitchell-Hanson, Jayden Moriarty, Sadie Stevens, Gabriel Timewell

Rm 5: Ava Daisley, Owen King, Caesar Parry-Timms, Rylie Roberts-Cross

Rm 6: Kaden Ashby, Ricky Lewis, Liam Oakden

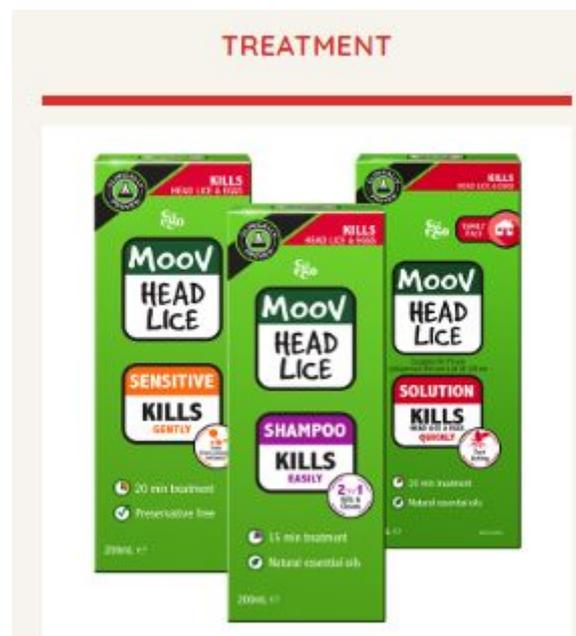
Rm 7: Finius Ashby, Eathan Bodle, Troy Ireland, Ava Parry-Timms, Zoe Roberts, Shakyla Selwyn, Caprice Simpkin

HEAD LICE

For those families that may still be struggling, a parent has recommended this product.

\$19.95 from the pharmacy and it is applied once a week for three weeks.

Please remember that if your child has long hair to keep it tied up and not to share hats, towels etc.



PTA Pizza School Lunch orders due Tuesday 14th of August!

MISSING!!

Sadly someone in Room 4 has had their PIKME POPS go missing. If anyone knows where these are or has them, could you please return them to Jen in the office? No questions asked.

Thank you



NEW ZEALAND BOOK AWARDS FOR CHILDREN & YOUNG ADULTS

Storytime Character Hunt

Sunday 12 August 10.30am
Whangārei Central Library

Search the nooks and crannies of the library for real live storybook characters.

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