



West Park School

Te Kura O Papa Hauāuru

Every student matters, every moment counts.

Broderick Road, Johnsonville, Wellington 6037, Phone (04) 478 7074, Fax (04) 478 7593

19 October 2020

Dear Parents and Caregivers

Welcome back to Term 4, I hope that you all managed to get some down time with families, as we all prepare for the last term of one of our most unusual school years.

This term looks to be a very busy one with numerous activities including Kapa Haka, Years 1 & 2 swimming programme, a school-wide dance programme, senior camp, picnics, class trips, and more.

It has been great to see how quickly and effectively rooms 3 to 6 have settled into their new teaching and learning spaces. Students and staff alike are very proud of the environments and how the kids have reacted to them, and their learning within the spaces.

Works continue on our new library, located beside room 15, just to the right of the main school entrance. Framing is almost complete and a roof and cladding should soon be visible.

Works is also being done around the school to improve accessibility and high traffic pathways. This work is likely to continue around the school for much of this term.

Please note that hygiene and cleaning practices introduced following the lockdown period will continue at least until the end of the year.

We are looking for people (a parent, grandparent, etc.) to volunteer one hour each day in Term 4 to run a reading programme called Early Words.

Early Words is a daily five-minute individual lesson where a basic sight word vocabulary is taught. Children learn to read words such as 'is', 'the', 'look' and so on. It is important that children learn to read these words quickly and by sight as these common words make up a large percentage of all reading. The quicker children learn to instantly read these words, the easier the reading process becomes for them.

If you are interested and available to help with this program or would like more information please contact Anna (annas@westpark.school.nz) or Alisha (alisham@westpark.school.nz).

A recent presentation by Dr Nina Hood, founder and researcher for the Education Hub, titled 'What Research can bring to Discussions of Educational Futures', highlighted four critical effective teaching components:

- Teacher knowledge of content and how to teach it
- Creative, supportive learning environments
- Activities and tasks to activate hard thinking



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- Management of classrooms to maximize opportunities to learn

It is by continuing to work on developing these components that we will continue to develop as a school. However, while these might seem to be obvious to you as a parent, the first bullet point is sometimes downplayed or even rejected in New Zealand populist education. There has been an increasing emphasis on the need for students to be identifying and building knowledge independently, to be following their own interests, all of which is enabled by the almost endless availability of information on the Internet. The teacher is reduced to a facilitator.

In contrast to this argument, Dr Hood quotes research from Jal Mehta and Sarah Fine to suggest that it is deep knowledge that enables teachers to create rich learning opportunities, makes them comfortable with ambiguity and not knowing all the answers, and brings out their passion - critical for engendering passion and interest in their students.

Reminders

1. All students are expected to be kept at home if they are ill. If a child becomes ill during the day, their parents will be contacted, and expected to come pick their child up.
2. The office should be notified of all student absences by 9am whenever a child is going to be away.
3. We are **desperate to hear** from any parents who during term 4 are able to volunteer 30-45 minutes for one morning a week or 20-25 minutes for one afternoon a week, to go on a roster to help with road patrol supervision. If you are able to help we would very much appreciate it. Please email Donna Curran-Green on donnacg@westpark.school.nz
4. Again during this term, we will be having the CoffeeGuy selling coffees from his van located outside the office area between 7.45 and 9.00am every Wednesday.
5. The 2021 term dates have been set as follows:
 - Term 1 Friday 5 Feb – Friday 16 April
 - Term 2 Mon 3 May – Fri 9 July
 - Term 3 Mon 26 July – Fri 1 Oct
 - Term 4 Mon 18 Oct – Fri 17 Dec

IMPORTANT Notes:

- Friday the 5th of February will be a Teacher Only Day
- Monday the 8th of February is a Waitangi Day public holiday
- **Tuesday the 9th of February is the first day for students at school**

I hope you all have a great Term 4.

Luis Echegaray
Principal