



# Newsletter

## Haere mai

**Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> July**

Parent education evening hosted by our Playgroup, “**Montessori in the home**” (see flyers for details)

**Friday 12<sup>th</sup> July**

Last day of Term 2

**Monday 29<sup>th</sup> July**

Term 3 starts

**Coming up in Term 3**

- The Pond 5/8
- Council meeting 12/8
- Parent/caregiver catch-up 15/8
- Parent survey 16/8
- Working bee (surnames I-P 25/8)
- Open day 31/8
- Fish & chip night 6/9
- Last day term 3 27/9
- Beat Girls Fundraiser - details to follow



# From Nicola

## Attendance Register:

This is my most time consuming job as often I need to chase signatures. Please sign it each week. It comes out once a week for the previous week. The Ministry of Education requires that we keep the attendance register and that parents/caregivers sign it at least once a week. If the Preschool get audited and a week is not signed we will lose our funding for that week and this would impact on everyone. A few other reminders:

## Class contact list:

People have expressed an interest in having access to a class contact list with emails/phone numbers on it so they can get in contact with other parents for play dates, pickups, social events etc. A list was put out in the foyer for families to sign up to. I will compile this list over the next week and issue it. If you are not on the list and would like to be for the next issue, let me know.

## Immunisation Record:

The Preschool is required to keep an up to date immunisation record. If your child has recently had their 4 year old immunisations please provide a copy to the Office.

## Persons who can pick up your child:

Teachers may only release children to those people listed on your child's enrolment agreement. Please remember to update this to cover play dates, changes in caregivers etc...

## Entertainment Books:

Are still available. If anyone would like one, please see me.

*Thank you, Nicola*

## From the Council

Currently we are looking for a member to help with **fundraising**. Please talk to Nicola in the office for a job description or further information. Remember, council meets once a month on a Monday evening. All parents are welcome and encouraged to attend council meetings.

The Preschool's **financial statements** for 2012 have been finalised. The statements, which show the Preschool's financial position as at 31st December 2012, are available for all parents to view. A copy is in the office and on the Charities Commission website. Please contact Angela Subritzky at [subritzky@gmail.com](mailto:subritzky@gmail.com) if you have any questions.



## Kowhai morning class

The Kowhai class has fifteen boys and nine girls. This fact does influence the way Mary and I manage the work cycle in the classroom. As a function of having to facilitate the learning styles and dynamics of “boys” I find that we have smaller group activities and mixing of curriculum presentations. So for instance, there might be Number lotto, group puzzles, one to one presentations, garden time and more group work at the end of the day. The pace is more activity based and dynamic. Tracy who observed our class last week has commented that the work cycle was very “fluid”. That is what we aim to achieve each day. I was thankful Tracy was there that day and not the next! But overall I feel that we are managing to cater for the needs of our children without too many difficulties.

We have changed our Friday group time and for the past four weeks have had children from the Kura coming to teach us waiata. It seems our children are really enjoyed this learning and seem to pick up the Maori words and rhymes very quickly. Mary is also including baking as part of our Friday “group” work.

Please keep up your good work of liaising with me for parent interviews and also in giving me feedback on how your child and family feel about our classroom routines and structure. We depend on this information to improve our teaching and service for our families. We are also looking forward to the final ERO report; which will help us to augment this facility.

*Seedeви, Mary and Pam*



# Kauri morning class



The Kauri class is a very busy one with a number of the children aged between 4 and six. Quite a few of these children are moving to Pohutakawa, the Montessori 6 – 9 class at Otari School at the end of the term or next term. These children are the leaders in our class, helping and showing the younger children, and hopefully leading by example!

The highlights of this term have been our Mother's Day celebration where we welcomed whanau into the children's house; cards made by the children, and singing to all the mothers and grandmothers.

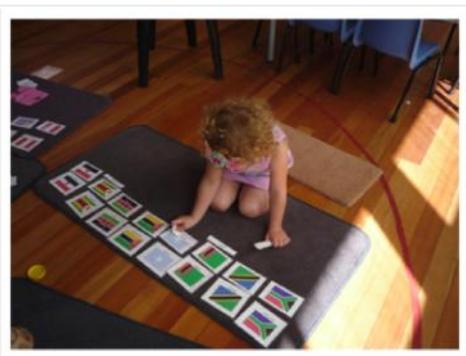
We have been fortunate this term to have weekly visits from some of the children of Otari School – Immersion Strand. The children and Whaea

Tania are sharing their fantastic knowledge of kapa haka with the preschool children who have been practicing 'Kina, kina'. You may have heard them bursting into song.

The caravan from the Life Education Trust visited Otari School last week. A spare one hour slot meant that the morning children were invited to visit the caravan to learn about our wonderful unique bodies, and how to keep them healthy.

The preschool has been visited by the Education Review Office (ERO); we look forward to the feedback we have from them. Welcome back to Julia; it is wonderful to have her back.

*Bronwyn, Florence and Nina*



# Kowhai afternoon class

reminded of a quote from Te Whāriki (NZ Early Childhood Curriculum): *“Families should be part of the assessment and evaluation of the curriculum as well as of children’s learning and development. Parents have a wealth of valuable information and understandings regarding their children...Observations and records should be part of two-way communication that strengthens the partnership between the early childhood setting and families...”* (p.30).

In class we have had a craze on doing surveys and autumn leaves. You may have seen our autumn display in the corridor, what trogons our kiddies are...and as Montessori said *“The land is where our roots are. The children must be taught to feel and live in harmony with the Earth...”*.

Keep warm and safe.  
Ka kite anō,

*Tracy and Florence*



*Kia ora tātou*

It has been a very busy term so far. Florence and I found the three-day Montessori Conference highly inspirational. We attended workshops around how best to observe the child and this links in nicely with our current Self-Review – *“How effective are we in supporting children’s learning in an uninterrupted work cycle”* We are going to be involving parents in this review and so soon you will learn more... We have had official annual photos, kapahuka with Otari Primary Immersion Strand, been practicing Earthquake Drills along with Earthquake experiments, celebrated Children’s Day and Florence and I were so thrilled that all children who were at Montessori for Mother’s Day had family representation who were able to stay most of the afternoon. We have been through another round of Goal Setting. Florence and I reflected on the value of the process because it really makes us stop and think where your child is currently at and seize the opportunity for further learning. I am



## National student numbers rolled out

During 2013, each child in early childhood education will be given a national student number. A national student number is already allocated to each child when they enroll in primary school. Allocating the number earlier will make it possible to follow the progress of each child from early childhood education right through to tertiary education.

Having national student numbers will allow the Ministry of Education to work with the information in a way that protects each child's privacy. This information will provide the Ministry with the basic data needed to assess trends, provide resourcing and develop initiatives.

## The lunch group

Welcome to the new children who have started in the lunch group. Bronwyn and Nina started off this term with the topic of simple machines; levers, slopes, wheels and pulleys. The children were very interested in this topic and we had many discoveries of levers in our environment; scissors, our arms and legs, and the wheelbarrow. We experimented with the suitcase and using a lever to move it, as well as using some sensorial equipment as a lever to raise and lower another piece of equipment, and told a story of a see-saw. We discovered that our environment was full of slopes and ramps, and went on a journey of discovery around the preschool and the school. The children discovered for themselves that hills and mountains were slopes and we talked about planes and screws. We finished off with a wonderful book about robots as machines, and a robot song that the children love and leaves everyone short of breath!

Seedeви continued on with discussions about the body, focusing especially on the five senses. This tied in really well with the visit to the Life Education Trust. Seedeви talked about skin, body safety and taking care of our bodies, with a focus on keeping warm and a lively discussion about head lice!

Julia is back and is starting a topic of winter.

## New entrants note

**Dear Whanau,** As you are no doubt aware I have been away from school for a long time due to illness. I am pleased to report that I am much better and have been thoroughly enjoying being back at school. I would like to say a huge thank you to all my dear colleagues, who have been incredibly supportive. Particularly Mary and Nina who have been ably running New Entrant's while I have been away. Thanks girls!

*Julia*

*Note:* The new entrant's update column will be back in full force next term.

## Reflecting on Community: Our Teachers response to MANZ Conference April 2013

During the 1st week end of the last holidays, most of the preschool staff attended the MANZ conference, with some colleagues from the primary school. We were lucky to have 3 excellent overseas speakers, as well as some of our own Montessori specialists from NZ! I spotted some parents from our community, for the Saturday morning session. I hope you all enjoyed and found the sessions useful. The speeches can be viewed on the MANZ website: <http://www.montessori.org.nz/discover-montessori-2013>

I personally love going to the MANZ conference, even though it is always during the holidays! It is always intense while very refreshing. It is also reassuring to see and hear that Montessori teachers in New Zealand are committed to providing quality Montessori education, despite challenges or obstacles common to all of us. Listening to the speakers and talking to other Montessori teachers help us reflect, find solutions creatively and see how we can still be authentic to the Montessori philosophy, and method while embracing our culture and our community. And building community was the topic of the conference. Building a strong community is paramount to the success of the Montessori method.

Our school represents a community of learners and teachers (adults and students equally ; the mixed age groups allow children to learn and teach from each other; teachers facilitate the learning as well as learn from and alongside the children; parents/teachers/child form a triangular relationship of support) .

We have a community of children, within the class, in the school and their community, where we foster cooperation, helpfulness, caring for each other and for our environment. One of our roles, as teachers, is to provide conditions (or what we call 'a prepared environment') conducive to the child's development; the conditions are physical (lay out of class, resources) as well as emotional and social. As a parent, I can also support my child, as s/he goes through different stages of development: need for independence (physical and emotional), freedom with clear boundaries, challenges, language development, curiosity, sense of order and need for repetition, need to play and be creative...

If we aim to develop a strong community, it is important to have a strong relationship between the school and home, in order to build trust to support the child's development, both at school and at home. There is always room for improvement, changes and flexibility. But at the end of the conference, I felt our preschool was on the right track, trying to build a vibrant, supportive and humanistic community, based on the Montessori values.

I will finish with a beautiful quote, shared by Connie Black, an American speaker, whose focus was the 3-6 year environment. That quotes perfectly illustrates the interconnectedness, the social cohesion and the universal values that Maria Montessori wrote about and observed in all children, that are necessary for a strong community:

**« I am because we are »**

# Montessori-at-Otari playgroup

Well, it has been a great start to the year for playgroup. I am very fortunate to have another few months at playgroup while Elke is taking maternity leave. We have welcomed a number of new families, as well as welcoming back some old friends who are embarking on the playgroup experience with younger siblings.

At the end of last year, we were able to purchase a piece of indoor equipment which is proving most popular and is such a great reminder of the fact that when it comes to little ones, simple is best. Who would have thought that a little platform with a ramp could provide so many hours of fun?

Our youngest children boldly crawl up the ramp and then negotiate themselves off the platform, and the next age group walk up the ramp and jump off, and the biggest children go up and down the ramp, or ladder rungs, rolling cars down and pushing the buggy up and jump as high as they can! All these actions provide the children with the opportunity to train and develop their muscles and to refine their motor skills, to gain confidence and coordination.

We have been talking about how amazing the acquisition of language is in the young child. Did you know that when children first acquire spoken language, they learn it at a rate of between 10 and 20 new words a day! It is such a good reminder for us to use good language with our children, as whatever words we give them will come right back to us!!

The morning tea preparation continues to be a significant part of our day, and is such an enjoyable process for the children who are so striving to be independent. We are constantly challenged to allow children to do things for themselves, even though this can sometimes be so frustrating for the adult.

Last term we agreed to hire a person for an hour a week to help with the clean up at the end of the morning. This would make a huge difference to the parents who are currently trying to juggle tired children and playgroup responsibilities. Would you be interested in doing that for the rest of the term? Please let me know. Enjoy the term.

*Camilla, acting playgroup supervisor*

**Montessori-at-Otari playgroup** is a not-for-profit cooperative run by parents. We offer friendly and fun playgroup environment for children aged 0-3 years. A Montessori-trained supervisor runs the sessions. We have ministry of Education certification and meet on Tuesdays and Thursday mornings in St Luke's Hall, Wadestown. We have close links with the preschool and our equipment is especially chosen for a 0-3 Montessori environment. Attending playgroup makes the transition to Preschool very easy. For further information please contact Nicola at the preschool.





## The President's report

*Guten Tag,*

This newsletter update will be a short one, as I am currently in Berlin, Germany having a bit of a holiday. It's not a holiday for all the family however; my daughter attended a "Montessori themed" school last week, and this week and the next she is attending a "pure" Montessori school. She has been enjoying it, and feels comfortable in the classroom with it's familiar setup and equipment.

I'd like to thank the council members and Bronwyn for their hard work in getting the documentation organized ready for last week's Education Review Office (ERO) visit.

I'd also like to thank the previous council members for their hard work (and their continuing support in the handover!!), and also welcome the new council members that have joined this year.

*Thanks very much, Grant*

### Council members

**President:** Grant Humm

**Vice-President:** Camilla Browne

**Secretary:** Barbara Foster

**Treasurer:** Angela Subritzky

**Staff liaison officer:** Rachel Scott

**Enrolments officer:** Vanessa McKee

**Property Officer:** Mark Haldane

**Parent liaison:** Alison Kirkpatrick

**Newsletter:** Kirsten Taylor

**Playgroup liaison:** Sarah Elliot

**General:** Jacqui Goodall

## Fundraising

### THE BEATGIRLS

#### *Fundraising Extravaganza*

We are planning an amazing fundraising event for Term 4.

We have managed to secure the infamous **BEATGIRLS** for one night, and one night only for a charity concert to raise money for our pre-school. (See this link for a sneak preview

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B3GlrBPo2dY>). Our aim is to raise **\$5000** for the pre-school but to do this....

### WE NEED YOUR HELP

- We need a group of people to join the *fundraising* team
- We will also need your help in securing *fabulous* items for our raffle and silent auction.

**Let us know now what you would like to help with!!!!**

Please respond to Ali Kirkpatrick 021 665433 or [alikirpatrick77@gmail.com](mailto:alikirpatrick77@gmail.com). This is a tremendous opportunity to raise money for our preschool and to have what promises to be an amazing night out.

# From Otari School

*Kia ora Koutou*

I recently popped through to the pre-school and heard the children sing a Māori waiata they had learnt from Whaea Tania and some of her students. I was impressed with how confidently and enthusiastically they did this. We have such a unique and important relationship with the pre-school. It is gratifying to see it result in a mutually beneficial experience, where our children can be tutors and share their culture and expertise with such receptive learners.

We know that the pre-school also value this relationship and I think we are all pleased to have such a positive, ongoing one. Much of this is dependent on goodwill from both sides. Occasionally there are instances where difficulties arise due to sharing our space. I am taking this opportunity to provide some information that will hopefully minimize these times:

- The area with the seating and tables outside Kereru is prioritized for classes, and for Otari School children to eat their lunch. That does not mean other people cannot eat their lunch in this space, and if it is free, you are welcome to do so. Please do not be offended if we do need to use it and you are asked to move.
- Please do not eat your lunch in the library. Our own students are not allowed to do this.
- It is important pre-school children are supervised. Recently a teacher found two pre-schoolers around by the senior adventure playground. (On the field). Their parents were on the junior playground.
- You are welcome to use the senior playground (outside of play-times) as long as children are supervised. It is designed for 9 – 13 year olds.
- I have noticed there are times when parking is difficult for some parents. If your circumstances mean you have to park, please use the disabled car park outside my office if there are no other parks available. We try to leave two parks free, but sometimes the school has other visitors too.
- We have appreciated it when pre-school parents have let us know if any of our students are having issues, or their behavior has been of concern.

I hope this is helpful. We want you to enjoy our space. I like seeing the pre-school children and their parents utilizing the playground.

Please remember if you have any questions at all about enrolment at Otari School to come to the office and see Jillian or email me at [principal@otari.school.nz](mailto:principal@otari.school.nz)

*Kind regards, Clifford*

# Noticeboard

## Term dates 2013

### Term 3

Monday 29 July to Friday 27  
September

### Term 4

Monday 14 October to  
Wednesday 18 December

### Morning/afternoon tea lists

Please check the lists in the foyer for this term's roster. Every family has to provide food for morning and afternoon teas once or twice a year.

New Entrants' families will be emailed the afternoon tea list

Thank you.

## Driveway duty

We have a drop-off system in place to help with the busy morning school run. From 9.55am to 9.15am two parent monitors are on duty at the bottom of the driveway. They will escort children into the Preschool. This service is parent-run and relies on volunteers.

Please do not drop your child off before 8:55am as the door into the corridor does not open until 9am. If you do drop off before the doors open, it is at your own risk.

Monitors are to be at the Preschool by 8:50am. Duties include opening the car door, assisting the child to exit the car and **escorting the child into the Preschool foyer.**

Please do not park your car in the driveway and walk in with your child. It is dangerous. Use the gate monitor system instead!

Every parent/caregiver with a child in the morning classes is required to sign up to do monitor duties for three mornings a term even if your child does not yet use the system.

## Parent interviews

Parent interviews are a time for you to come and talk to a teacher about your child's progress. We ask that you book a date in advance so your child's teacher has time to prepare.

Interviews for children in the morning classes are held at 8.40am until 9am, while interviews for the afternoon class are held 3.20pm-3.40pm.

Booking interviews are easy, just pop into the classroom and arrange a day in the diary with the teacher, or email the preschool.

It is up to you how many parent interviews you attend and this may vary according to your child's needs. Teachers would like to see you at a minimum once a year but some parents come once a term, it is up to you.

If you have an urgent matter to discuss, or you need advice, come and see us straight away.

## Working bees 2013

The dates for this year's upcoming working bees are listed below. Every family is required to take part in one working bee a year. If you are unable to attend your session, please swap with another parent. Working bees normally take place from 9am to 12 noon.

Sunday 25 August                      Surnames I-R

Sunday 17 November                Surnames S-Z

We rely on parents to help with the annual working bees to clean and repair the classrooms, equipment and outdoor areas. This helps us keep our costs down and fees affordable. Families that do not wish to take part, or do not turn up on the day, will be invoiced a \$75 non-participation fee. If you have any questions, please contact Nicola in the office on 475 9688.