

# TERM 1-2017

## NEWSLETTER



### FROM FLORENCE, CENTRE LEADER

Kia ora whanau! A warm welcome to our new tamariki and their whanau. We hope you have a great time at Otari preschool. Lots of projects and news to share for 2017, so without further delay, let's get started!

**Family Picnic:** This is our first family event of the year and fingers crossed, the weather will be nice! This year, we have opted for a sporty event and we have booked 2 coaches from Kelly Sports. They will run games for the children in the school field, from 5-5.45pm. Bring your own kai, a picnic blanket and your smile!

**Art work:** Last year, I mentioned an art work for our foyer that would be designed by Tanya, Eabha's Mum, from Kowhai. We are planning to have it done this term and have it installed in the foyer with a proper celebration before Richard (sadly) moves on! Tanya has cleverly incorporated elements that we, the staff, feel represent our Preschool. We now would like your voice and input: what does AROHA ('love') mean/look like/feel like to you and your family? At home, with your child, we would love it if you could draw what it represents for your family. The format does not matter; Tanya will re-size it to fit. When you are done, simply give me your artwork and Tanya will then incorporate it to her final piece of art. We aim to get your artwork for end of February!

**Eportfolios:** We are going to use Portfolios on line! After trialing 2 providers last term, we have decided to go with Storypark. We are aiming to have all the children enrolled by the end of Term 1. Be patient with us as it is very new to us and it might take some time to get it up and running efficiently! The children will still keep their written profile in the classroom. We will keep you posted of our progress. We are equally excited and a bit apprehensive about this new technology step!

**Upgrading our garden:** First of all, a massive thank you to the enthusiastic parents who came to tidy up the garden on the 28<sup>th</sup> of January; it looked amazing!!!

The topic of our team review is about improving our garden, and transforming it into a learning environment that mirrors our inside prepared environment, as explained in Term 4 newsletter. We have invited Mike Bedford, a specialist about designing appropriate early childhood gardens, to come and run a workshop to help us with our plan and vision. All

parents are welcome to attend that workshop and give their input. It will be on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> February, from 1-3pm. We hope to see some of you! (RSVP preferred)

We will keep selling our canvas and swim bags and all the profit will be added to the garden fund. Make sure you support that fundraiser!

**Performance:** The Junior Primary school has invited our preschoolers to attend a show in the school hall, on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> February (afternoon). It is performed by Anna Bailey who came to our family picnic last February, (The Penguin and the Sea Monster). This year, the show is called "Nan and Tuna": *Nan and Tuna have been friends for 70 years and now they both have one last important journey to make. But before they leave they need to find someone to care for their river. Marionettes, shadows and water puppets combine to tell the fascinating life story of NZ's endangered longfin eel (tuna) and the difficulties they face on their long journey back to their birth place.*

The teachers will take the children staying in the afternoon, at 1.30 till 2.15pm. The cost is \$3/child, to pay to Nicola as soon as possible. If your child is not attending the afternoon session, but you would like to watch the show, you are welcome to do so, provided you stay with your child during the show. The same \$3 cost applies, payable to Nicola.

**Holiday Programme:** Our next holiday programme falls during the first week, after Easter Monday. It will be running on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday all day. We are keeping Wednesday morning as a possibility provided there are enough children attending, as I need to plan for staff. If you know already that your child will be coming on the Wednesday morning, please let us know as soon as possible.

If you have any questions, suggestions or ideas, always feel free to talk to one of us; if it is important to you, it is important to us: happy parents = happy children = happy teachers! 😊

I look forward to another brilliant year!

Ka kite ano

Florence

## FROM RICHARD, PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Welcome back to school. It is unfortunate that this first missive of the year is a sad one. You will all be sad, perhaps devastated that it will be my last president's report. Ever. That's right, I will be turning 6 in early May and as a consequence the teachers, lead by Florence, feel that they simply can't keep me here any longer. It is time for me to become someone else's problem. The change will be shocking. I will be moving from being the big fish in a small pond to a much, much smaller fish in a much, much larger pond.

To that end, we have one month to find another president. The AGM will be in March and that is when the new president will be voted in. I can hear you all now: “But who could possibly replace you?” Fretting as you do so. Well, let me give you the answer to that: pretty much anyone. You can. You all can. Now that is not some alternative fact. That is actual fact. Though the constitution only allows us one president, you can all put your hands up at the AGM. Your hand raising will indicate your desire to be voted into office and when you get voted in you can make Montessori at Otari Preschool great again.

Or, rather, keep it great. I’ve already made it great. Or kept it great.

We’re great. Be president.

And secretary. We’re going to need one of those too.

Out.

## From the council

We thought it’d be a nice idea to introduce our council members and create greater transparency in the work we do for our tamariki, staff and community. This term we are talking to Martin.

**Who belongs to your family?** Teo (6), who has just moved on to pohutakawa, Amber (4) Kauri Class, Vinzent (9 months), Dorothee and myself

**What made you join the council?** It’s great to be involved in the education of my children and understand the context they are in. Besides I strongly believe in the importance of community and think that parent led initiatives such as ours, are a fantastic opportunity to create this.

**What do you enjoy about the council?** Believe it or not, attending the meetings is actually fun and I enjoy being informed about the issues affecting our children. It’s also a good way of getting to know other parents.

**What is your role?** Enrolment officer, I send out the enrolment documentation to new families/children, deal with some enquiries about the preschool from prospective parents and occasionally attend council meetings.

### Current Council Members and Positions:

President - Richard Chapman  
Treasurer – vacant  
Secretary - Sandra Henzschel  
Staff Liaison - Jane Ward-Marshall  
General Council Members:  
General – Rebecca Reedy

General/Website – Lara Charles  
General/Newsletter - Dorothee Vere-Jones  
Parent Liaison – Kanae Wood  
Enrolments – Martin Vere-Jones  
Fundraising - vacant  
Property – Gwyn Bareta  
Playgroup Liaison - vacant

## Introducing our Families

This term, we are introducing Oliver's (Kowhai) family:

**Who are the members of your family?** Oliver is blessed to have 3 wonderful siblings; Kyle, Blake and Lucy, mum (Tammy) and dad (Wayne) and a lovely Nanna who lives in Melbourne.

**Why did you choose Montessori @ Otari preschool?** For many years I worked with a teacher who incorporated a lot of the Montessori style teachings into her classroom, I was always fascinated that the children were drawn to these activities. After researching Maria Montessori further, I just felt it was it important to raise a child with a mind that is curious & investigative, respectful, independent etc.

**What's your favorite thing to do in Wellington with kids?** On rainy days the museum, Tepapa and Capital E are our favourite 'go to'activities. When the sun shines we love to get out to Scorching Bay or Worser Bay to build sand castles and play chase with the waves.

**Apart from yourself (of course) - who would you like to think is a role model for your child and why?** Oliver is blessed to have 3 (much) older siblings that love and adore him and spend a lot of time with him playing and exploring. They are great role models, they teach him many things, most of them I approve of 😊 there is always laughter! .... so most importantly, they teach him that life is fun!

**Where is your favorite place to go on holiday with your family or where would your dream family holiday be and why?** As a family we never really visit the same place twice, we like to adventure different places. But I think we prefer warm sunny places with long sandy beaches to run and challenging walks in lush bush settings with waterfalls and wildlife to be seen.

**What is one of your favorite books, why would you recommend it to others?** Wow, this is the trickiest question... so many to choose from. At the moment Oliver's favourites seem to be some of Julia Donaldson's books, The Gruffalo, Monkey Puzzle, Room on a Broom etc. They are fun fun stories with a little bit of a twist and lovely illustrations.

## FROM CAMILLA, PLAYGROUP SUPERVISOR

Welcome back to Montessori at Otari Playgroup. A special welcome goes out to the new families joining us this term. We want you to enjoy your time with us in a relaxed informal environment. So if you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to raise them.

The main part of the session is spent exploring the environment and working with the activities. We want your child to freely move around the room, choosing things to do that captures their interest and attention. As the adult, our role is to follow the lead of the child and to support when needed, and to also allow them the space to really engage in doing activities. So we can work with or along side the children and we can also step back and observe when they are happily engaged with a task. At times, we may want to draw children's attention to a certain activity that they may not have tried before, and I find one of the best ways to do this is to do the activity enthusiastically yourself. Enthusiasm really is contagious, and even something as simple as opening and closing a box can become fascinating for a small child.

We always encourage children to put things away when they have finished though of course this is very much a cooperative process! Actually it's all about cooperation. So tidying up is an area where we can be a great model. You might find an activity that has been left out and say, "Oh, I wonder where this goes.....shall we put it away?" But at the same time, please don't feel concerned if your child doesn't want to help. We are planting seeds of good practice, and we will reap the benefit over time.

If a child is working with an activity, it is considered their work. If another child would like use the same activity, we can show them how to ask "Can James play with you?" Or "Can Molly have a turn when you are finished?" So our job is to support their interactions with each other and gently remind the children of how to work in the environment.

On another note, and a very important one, if you are a coffee drinker please donate a bag of real coffee for the term. That will keep us all in good spirits ☺.Let's have a wonderful term together,

Camilla

## Montessori Playgroup

The Montessori-at-Otari playgroup is a not-for-profit cooperative run by parents. We offer a 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 Tuesday 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.

**To find out more, or to organise a visit, contact Nicola in the preschool office on 475 9688 or email [wcmp@xtra.co.nz](mailto:wcmp@xtra.co.nz).**

## NOTICEBOARD

### Re-opening of our Parent Library

We are so delighted to invite you to the reopening of our Parent Library **this Friday 10th** of February from **8.45-9.30 am** in Florence's office. Pop in for a cuppa, cookie and a browse.

Our preschool has a selection small in size but big on quality and relevance for the free use of all preschool families (including those on the waitlist). It includes Montessori classics such as "How to raise an amazing child the Montessori Way" through to parenting bibles like "How to talk so kids will listen & Listen so Kids will talk" or "The secret of happy children".

The Parent Library will open every first and third Friday from 8.45 am – 9.30 am or by negotiation with Nicola.

### Morning/afternoon Tea Lists

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

### Working Bees

Working Bees are held once a term and families are allocated to one per year. If you are unable to attend your session, please swap with another parent. Working bees normally take place from 9am to 12 noon. This is a fun morning where families have an opportunity to get to know each other, have some morning tea and do a few indoor and outdoor jobs at the Preschool. This years working bee dates are Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> of March (A-D), Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> of May (E-H), Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> of August (I-P) and Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> of October (Q-Z). Please put these in your diary now.

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.

### Driveway Duty

We have a drop-off system in place to help with the busy morning school run. From 8.40 am to 9.05 am 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. Monitors are to be at the Preschool by 8:35am. Duties include opening the car door, assisting the child to exit the car and escorting the child into the Preschool foyer.

Please do not drop your child off before 8:40am as the door into the corridor does not open until 8.45am. Every parent/caregiver is required to sign up to do monitor duties for three mornings a term even if your child does not yet use the system.

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

### Road Patrol

The primary school children operate a road patrol every morning guarding the pedestrian crossing on Wilton Road. Two students run a sign each supervised by a teacher to ensure safe crossing for all children. Once the road is clear one child will start with "Signs Out" followed by "Check" and "Clear". The procedure finishes with "Cross now" and only then are you allowed to cross. Please respect and follow their instructions to set a good example and encourage their good work and effort. It's a great service we and our children also benefit from.