

January 2023



## **Team Moana – Term One Newsletter**

Dear Parents and Caregivers

Glad to see you back, and to new whānau, welcome to Team Moana. We hope you had a relaxing holiday with family and friends. We look forward to working with you and your children this year. Term One is always busy, with our year sevens transitioning into the team, camp at Wainui in week three, swimming sports, cross country training, plus our usual learning programme. We enjoyed meeting with you and your child during the recent interviews, being able to set goals and learning how best we can all support the learning that will occur in 2023.

The teachers in our team are Phil Innes (Room 1, Team Leader), we extend a warm welcome to our new colleague Kerry Aitken (Room 2), and Michelle Duxfield (Room 4). Rochelle Paul and Dale West join Team Moana as support teachers.

### **Learning Programme**

We have a range of learning experiences planned for students. We have integrated learning across curriculum areas around key concepts or big ideas to ensure students make connections and link their understanding.

This term Russley School is looking at the following concepts:

“Who we are/Kō wai ra” - where we come from: ourselves, family, community, New Zealand/Aotearoa and further afield. We’ll also look at early New Zealand history, especially around Waitangi Day and migration. We are also investigating a day trip later this term where we climb the Bridle Path and then into Lyttelton, finishing at Cass Bay, based around the novel “The Ghosts on the Hill” by local author Bill Nagelkerke.

**Camp:** This is happening in week three, so we need to be organised! You will have received a gear list in the past few days. Please contact us if you are having difficulty finding some things on the gear list as we can often help. If you have yet to send back the necessary forms, please do so as soon as possible. Before we finalise the menu, we need to know of **allergies or dietary considerations** relevant to your child.



The total cost of the camp is **\$210** per student. The cost includes accommodation, transport, food, and activities. This is an approximate cost and any money left over will be credited to your account. Payment is required by **10 February 2023** via internet deposit to the school account:

**Name:** Russley School Board of Trustees    **No:** 03 0830 0307669 00 (use child’s name and class as a reference).

If it is easier to spread the cost, parents may wish to set up automatic payments of weekly or fortnightly amounts to the school account. If you choose this option, please email [accounts@russley.school.nz](mailto:accounts@russley.school.nz). If you are struggling with payment, email Greg Lewis at [principal@russley.school.nz](mailto:principal@russley.school.nz)

**A meeting for camp parent helpers is in Room 1 on Wednesday 8 February at 6.30pm.**

## Korfball

We are hoping to have four sessions learning about Korfball later in the term.

**Thrive Week:** In week seven of this term, we are having a “Thrive” programme based on a very successful Strengths and Flourish programme we ran for Year Sevens in 2021. It is designed to build student self-awareness and equip them with the tools to navigate their intermediate years. This will be made up of a specific Strengths course, an Attitude presentation and discussion around modern day influences such as social media. There will be a parent evening to introduce this. There will be a subsidised cost involved with this.

## Home Learning / Excellence Awards

The compulsory component of homework will include spelling, reading, and occasional mathematics and is to be completed weekly. The children will record their spelling words and other important information in a notebook which can also be used as a form of communication between home and school. We encourage reading for at least 20 minutes a weeknight.



We continue to use the optional school home learning programme. This programme incorporates an Excellence Award system in Years 7/8. This acknowledges and encourages students to have ownership and contribute to their own learning. The optional programme allows students to take on specific roles and responsibilities in the following areas - Community Involvement, Physical and Sport, Leadership, Academic and Creative/Cultural. They will be rewarded for their efforts by achieving points that will enable them to earn an Excellence badge in the aforementioned areas. The students can complete tasks either at home or at school.

## Technology

Year 7/8 students will attend technology classes at Hornby High School from 9.30am – 12.00pm starting Wednesday 8th February. For health and safety reasons any long hair must be tied back. We travel to and from Hornby High School by bus. A technology materials fee of \$25 per term will be charged to your child’s school activity account.

## Devices

Students are encouraged to bring Chromebooks to school however they need to take responsibility for these devices, and they are to be taken home at the end of each day.

At this age, some students bring mobile phones to school, however, they need to take responsibility for their own phone. It must be turned off when they arrive at school and is not to be accessed without teacher permission before the end of the school day. Occasionally phones may be used in classrooms for learning. Please help with this by not contacting your child via mobile phone during school hours. Instead, phone the office staff who will inform your child. Senior students are usually very respectful of these guidelines, and we appreciate that support.

## Wellbeing, Sleep and Social Media

Many of the children in Team Moana will have access to social media. Whilst they access social media outside of school hours, we are increasingly seeing the negative effects of some children not using it positively. This is impacting relationships at school, affecting schoolwork and in some cases increasing anxiety and affecting student’s wellbeing. **We strongly recommend that our parents and caregivers are vigilant and proactive in the monitoring of their children’s social media accounts - if you aren’t already.** We also ask parents to be mindful that some of our

students are aware of bypassing monitoring apps and may have accounts or groups that parents are not aware of. In the past we have had to contact some families who have been surprised and disappointed at what their child has been doing on social media without their parent’s knowledge.



Some tips:

- Regularly check the history of internet searches on **ALL** devices. If the History is empty, ask why.
- Be “friends” with your child on **ALL** their social media sites and regularly visit them. Are they old enough to be on the site? Children at this age do not have the social or emotional maturity to deal with many of the issues present on social media without parental support.
- What if they say parents are not allowed to be a ‘friend’? Easy - take away their access to social media.
- Investigate apps that allow monitoring of your child’s social media usage. Some parents in the Team do this actively already.
- Most gaming sites have a social media component.
- We recommend no devices in bedrooms at any time. How can parents monitor what is happening behind closed doors?
- **Using devices in bed can inhibit sleep patterns.** We see the effect of this in class at Russley! You may want to check this story from the BBC which looks at the effect on sleep patterns and the growing connections between social media usage and depression: <http://www.bbc.com/future/story/20180110-the-vital-time-you-really-shouldnt-be-on-social-media>
- Collect their devices and put them on the kitchen bench when it is time for bed. Buy a cheap alarm clock rather than allowing them to have their device in their room.
- Thought provoking question - how much time do we as parents/adults spend on social media? Would it be interesting to monitor how much device time is spent by ALL members in the family?
- Set time limits for device usage. Recent research has come from Otago University regarding the value of sleep, in relation to wellbeing. A suggestion from this research is limiting teenager’s use of devices before going to bed. Another point is that quality sleep is a predictor for good mental health.

#### Hats, Uniform, Food & Water

- Please ensure your child wears a wide-brimmed blue sunhat to school each day and that their **uniform is named**. Hats are compulsory in terms one and four. If students do not have a hat, they are restricted to sitting on the library deck at morning tea and lunch.
- We have high expectations that the Year 7/8 students will follow the uniform code and set a good example to younger students. This includes a ban on nail polish and jewellery (stud earrings only permitted). Family or cultural jewellery is fine, provided we have a note from home. If you are unsure of the uniform requirements, please refer to the list on our website <https://www.russley.school.nz/uniform.html>
- We ask students to bring a named drink bottle to school - only water please. The start of the year is a good time to revisit your child’s food requirements: our timetable includes regular snack breaks, plus pre-teens and teens use up a lot of energy during the day! We would rather have too much food in a lunch box than not enough - they can take the leftovers home.



Don’t hesitate to ask if you have any questions or require further information. You may contact your classroom teacher by email. We look forward to working with you and your child this year.

Yours sincerely

**Team Moana**

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