



January 2024

Te Kākano (Years 1-3) Newsletter – Term 1, 2024

Kia ora whānau

Welcome back to Te Parito Kōwhai Russley School. We hope that you were able to relax over the break and enjoy some downtime with your loved ones. We are excited for another busy year in 2024 and looking forward to getting started.

Meet Te Kākano

Te Kākano has 7 classrooms to start the year. With a brand-new team come some new faces. Some you may already know; others come from different parts of the school. Here is the team:

Tim Beckingham (Year 2/3, Room 12) - I am excited to be teaching a new year level in 2024. I like to keep a positive classroom where students can feel comfortable and confident in their learning. I am passionate about sports and enjoy playing football and the odd round of golf in my spare time. My wife and I have two children. Our daughter Harper is nine and our son Kieran, is 6. They both enjoy being part of Russley School. We have an old labrador who travelled with us from our time in South Korea, and a curious cat called Clyde who likes to eat all our neighbours' food. I am very much looking forward to a fun-filled year in the brand-new team - Te Kākano.

Andrea Robertson (Year 2/3 Room 13) - I am very excited to be teaching a Year 2/3 class again this year. I enjoy teaching early literacy skills and love seeing the progress made in reading and writing in this age group. My husband and I have an aged yet energetic border collie and two daughters. Evie is Year 3 this year in Room 4, and Isla can't wait to join her big sister at school in Term 3! We live beside Waimairi Beach so we spend most of our spare time popping over the sand dunes for a swim or body-board or adventuring around Bottle Lake. We also spend a lot of time at our bach in Hanmer, or playing taxi to the girls who are both heavily involved in gymnastics.

Amanda McDuff (Year 2/3 Room 4) - I am looking forward to teaching Year 2/3 in Room 4 this year. My husband and I have just returned from a trip around Europe. After an amazing five weeks of travelling, we are happy to be home and reunited with our gorgeous black labrador, Stella. I am passionate about the arts and I am excited to continue running Junior Choir and Jump Jam this year. I really enjoy teaching literacy, specifically writing and phonics and am looking forward to getting the Room 4 routines underway. Outside of school, I enjoy going to the gym and spend a lot of time on the cricket boundary supporting my husband.

Rosie Smith (Year 2/3 Room 3)

I am looking forward to joining the Te Kākano team this year! I have had a lovely break with whanau and spending time with my 8-month-old dog, Beau. Outside of school, I love to keep an active lifestyle whether playing Netball or being outdoors. I was fortunate to coach a year 7/8 netball team for the Technical Netball club in 2023 and I look forward to bringing my knowledge to Russley Primary this year.

Pene Cooley (Year 1 Room 2)

It is great to be back at school after a warm and relaxing summer holiday. My husband and I have two grown-up children and one delightful granddaughter. At my home I have a slightly crazy spaniel dog called Reggie. He keeps us busy and makes us smile a lot. I love to read, especially murder mysteries and spending holidays in Twizel. I look forward to working and playing with the children in Room 2.

Derryn McFetridge (Year 1/2 Room 1)

I am looking forward to getting back to school in 2024 for another exciting year. My husband and I live on a 10-acre property which keeps us busy. We have two cats, Slinky and Watson, who just love climbing trees, hills and catching rabbits, sometimes bringing them inside during the night! We also have 1 noisy rooster, 3 hens, 8 baby chicks and 8 cattle.

Currently we are training for cycling the Otago Rail Trail and Dunstan Trail in the April holidays this year.

I love travelling and exploring new places and having dinners at home with friends and whānau.

We have two grown up children, Christine and her husband Mike who live in Melbourne. Matthew and his wife Cushla live here in Christchurch. Last year was exciting as we welcomed our first grandchild, Bennett who is just delightful. He is now 5 months old, and it was fabulous spending time with him over the holidays. Luckily for us, Bennett lives in Christchurch, so we get to spend time with him often.

I am really looking forward to working with you all and getting our learning and routines underway.

Annette Ward (New Entrants, Room 19)

My introduction to Russley School started when my oldest child was five and a half. He was the first of my four boys to be Russley kids. When my youngest child was about to start school, I was offered a part-time job, which I accepted, and I am still here!

As you can imagine, Russley is very special to me, and I treasure being a part of the school community. It is so rewarding to see our youngest students' independence and joy of learning develop. And learning isn't just for the children, education never stands still and there are always exciting new ideas for me to bring to the classroom.

Out of school, I spend much of my time with Simon, my husband, and my family. This year we are lucky enough to have all our sons living back in Christchurch so we will have everyone together for all those important family celebrations. I go to a dance exercise class twice a week which I love. I enjoy most craft, always having a project or two on the go.

I am really looking forward to working with my new class, and their whanau, and getting started on the adventures ahead for Room 19, 2024.

Learning Programme

Our beginning inquiry concept is **Ko Wai Tātou? Who Are We?** We will be exploring and thinking about ourselves, our homes, our school, and our greater community.



Structured Literacy

Te Kākano students will spend the first two hours of the day engaged in literacy. We follow a 'Structured Literacy' approach to teaching reading and writing. This approach explicitly teaches systematic word identification and decoding strategies. Students will learn to read and write by following a specific scope and sequence of letter sounds, digraphs and spelling patterns. In the early stages, students will only complete writing tasks involving these same sounds so that they become automatic and fluent, often in the form of dictated sentences or words. Students who have completed the structured literacy texts, will have enough knowledge to complete larger pieces of writing with more creative license. All classes also follow 'The Code' phonics programme which further supports structured literacy and is used school wide.

Home Learning - Reading

All children are encouraged to take home books from the school library or their book box to read for enjoyment and to share their learning with you. The books may not be levelled or at their instructional level from school but a book that they can enjoy and experience success in. Sometimes they may choose a book that they need support with or may be long. With these books, we encourage you to talk about the pictures, read it to them or take turns to ensure reading time is successful and stress free.

Some students may also bring home instructional reading books. Please ensure that these are returned daily so that they can be reread at school the following day or used with other students.

We also have a free online reading resource *Sunshine Reading Online* that your child can access. *Sunshine Reading* has books that are levelled to the NZ curriculum with activities to help with understanding the text. The link can also be found on our blog and accessed with

Username: russleyschool **Password:** school3496. There are also instructions on the *Sunshine Online* website about downloading the app.



Epic! is an amazing digital library that gives kids unlimited access to over 25,000 books, audio- books, and learning videos. It's personalised for your child and their interests, from animals and comics to DIY, science, and so much more. *Epic!* is easy to access anytime, anywhere - on your smartphone, iPad or computer.

Library Days

Please encourage your child to keep their library books in a library bag and bring it to school on their class's library day (to be confirmed once school starts back).

Sharing Our Learning

Russley School will continue to use EDUCA to report and share our learning. This will also be a portal for messaging so please check for updates. Learners' EDUCA profiles will continue over from last year and new profiles will be created for students new to the school. If you are experiencing problems with this, please contact your classroom teacher.

Fitness

In Te Kākano, we have daily fitness, and it is helpful if learners wear appropriate footwear that they can take off and put on by themselves.



Te Kākano Events

Listed here are some of the events Te Kākano has on this term.

- School photos - Monday 5th February
- Waitangi Day - Tuesday 6th February
- Te Kākano Fun Day - Monday 12th February
- Whole School Swimming Sports - Tuesday 5th March
- Good Friday - Friday 29th March
- Easter Monday - Monday 1st April
- Easter Tuesday - Tuesday 2nd April



Hats, Drink Bottle and Uniform

Please ensure your child brings their wide-brimmed navy-blue sunhat to school every day, and that it is named. Hats are compulsory this term. If students do not have a hat, they are restricted to playing under the sunshade at morning tea and lunch. ***Please encourage your child to bring to class, daily, a named drink bottle containing only water.***

Headphones

In Te Kākano we use iPads for learning, so all students require their own headphones (named). Retailers such as The Warehouse have economical options. It is important these are clearly named.

School Photos

Class and individual photos will be taken on Monday 5 February. Please ensure your child is dressed in regulation uniform on this day and arrives at school on time.

Fees and Payments

Please note that the Russley office is now cashless, requiring all payments e.g. stationery, second-hand uniform, and extracurricular activities such as camp to be made by eftpos or online transfer. Team Te Kākano parents can expect very few charges this year, as Ministry of Education funding covers most activities including swimming lessons.



Keeping in Touch

Don't hesitate to ask if you require information or have anything important you would like us to know to support your child and their learning. You can contact your classroom teacher by email.

Nga mihi nui

Te Kākano Teaching Team

Tim Beckingham (Team Leader), Room12

Andrea Robertson, Room 13

Amanda McDuff, Room 4

Rosie Smith, Room 3

Pene Cooley, Room 2

Derryn McFetridge, Room 1

Annette Ward, Room 19

tim.beckingham@russley.school.nz

andrea.robertson@russley.school.nz

amanda.mcduff@russley.school.nz

rosie.smith@russley.school.nz

pene.cooley@russley.school.nz

derryn.mcfetridge@russley.school.nz

annette.ward@russley.school.nz