

February 29 2016

Welcome back to the 5th week of the term. Happy Leap day!

### Why do we have leap years?

**A leap year, where an extra day is added to the end of February every four years**, is down to the solar system's disparity with the Gregorian calendar.

A complete orbit of the earth around the sun takes exactly 365.2422 days to complete, but the Gregorian calendar uses 365 days.

So leap seconds - and leap years - are added as means of keeping our clocks (and calendars) in sync with the Earth and its seasons.

Things are moving by quickly and I would like to thank those parents who attended the interviews last week. Feedback has been very positive and we hope other families will make appointments to suit with their classroom teachers so goals can be set for your children's learning.



Here to SMILES,  
LAUGHTER, patience,  
AND joy. We HOPE you  
get a HEALTHY baby  
girl or boy.

The Board of Trustees and staff would like to pass on our congratulations and best wishes to Mrs Adams. Elyse and her husband Rob are expecting their first child in July this year. Elyse has applied for maternity leave from June 17 this year and it has been granted. We are thrilled to welcome back Mrs Sharon Crowe who will be teaching in Room 4 until Mrs Adams returns from leave in 2017.

We offer Elyse the best wishes for her pregnancy and can assure you that there will be no disruptions to your children's learning due to the fact Sharon knows the school well and there will be a transition of children's goals and class programmes.

Everything continues as normal now until week 7, term 2 when Elyse takes her leave. We will be doing our very best to ensure that if Elyse is away between now and then that Sharon will teach Room 4.

**Assembly** - Thank you to all of you who attended the first full school assembly on Friday. We battled the wind a little but had a great assembly where we welcomed new pupils and celebrated with those who were given "Caught Being Good" awards and Principals awards to start the year.

**Senior School** - As you are all aware it has been an incredibly busy time in the Senior School as both teachers and children adjust to learning in a different setting and with a variety of

teachers. Our teachers are working incredibly hard to support the learning and support the differing ages and levels that we work with.

We would like your help as parents in the classroom. Quite simply the more adult support we have on a regular basis the more effective learning will be. The prime times that we would like help are Tuesday to Thursday 9:30am - 1pm.

Please email me at [nathanburford@rakaia.school.nz](mailto:nathanburford@rakaia.school.nz) if you can help at any time during these dates/times this term.

### **Come Watch our Fantastic Year 5-8s in Action**

We would like to give all parents with children at the school the opportunity to come in and see first hand the senior school teaching in action during our literacy and numeracy rotations. The date that we have set aside for this is *Thursday March 17th*.

From 9:30am - 11am we run literacy (Rooms 5, 6 and 10)

From 12-1pm we run numeracy (Rooms 5, 6 and 10)

This may help parents understand better the collaborative teaching process that we have developed. Pop in at anytime during these rotations that suits.

*The Senior Teaching Team*

### **Reminders:**

- **Rippa Rugby starts tomorrow evening. We are in danger of having to default the Year 7-8 team because no-one has come forward to manage and referee. Please look at your Tuesday evenings for the next 5 weeks and see if you can help out.**
- **Good luck to the County Swimmers tomorrow.**
- **Junior Assembly this Friday March 4 at 2.25pm**



**Clarification required and given:**

As the school Principal I face some interesting and challenging situations at school. Recently we have been advising parents to ensure children at school no earlier than 8.30am due to supervision issues while staff are still preparing the day. We have also asked that when the playground is cleared we do not want to see children back at school until 3.30pm and they must be changed so we can be assured they have been home.

The delicate and concerning issue is those families arriving late, and on time, then remaining at school for a catch up with friends and family. This is welcomed and encouraged, because the school is a meeting place for families, but we want to be **very clear** that if you have arrived at school to collect your children then they are clearly in **your** care and they are **your responsibility**.

We have had a few incidents after school over the last few months and one resulted in an injury on the trampoline that will see new mats being made and attached. The other involved an altercation between two children while parents chatted and the incident required intervention from staff. This is a difficult situation because clearly the children are in the care of their parents but the incident happened on the school grounds and it appears it was not seen or heard by parents who were only 5-10 metres away from the incident.

Parenting is a privilege and a challenge from time to time. Children are children and they get into disagreements and require teaching and guidance on how to solve these issues without being physical with each other. We also work really hard to ensure children treat each other with respect and do not engage in bullyish behaviour.

We ask that you support this by taking responsibility of your children quickly if you arrive at school. If you are going to be late then make sure you have called the office and the staff will make arrangements to keep your children safe.

**In simple terms:**

- **Actively supervise your children at 3pm pick up! This means keep them in sight, keep them safe and intervene if there are disagreements. It is your responsibility at that time and not the staff's responsibility.**
- **While on school grounds children are expected to behave in a way that is acceptable to the normal school day. Work together, do your best and use your manners!**
- **If your child is identified as being troublesome or unsupervised after school then we will be asking for you to clear the grounds within 5 minutes of pickup so incidents do not occur or a waiting point will be identified for your children until you arrive.**

**Thank you, Mark Ellis Principal**