

Newsletter February 24th

Dear Parents and Caregivers

Happy Birthday to my Dad today. He would have been 75 years young. Now that he has gone it is important to remember the good times and the values he taught me. My Dad taught me about Loyalty, Honesty and the importance of Service. He was a Senior Policeman, an Ambulance driver, President of the squash club and larger than life (he was a big man). I suppose the purpose of mentioning Dad is to remind us all the importance of giving what you can to your children. Time, and how you make your children feel is what they will remember. Read to them, play board games, shoot a few baskets, take them swimming and just enjoy the fun and love they bring to your life.

Welcome to week 4 of term 1.

- Friday, February 28 - MahiTahi Assembly
- Please book your interviews for next week
- Thank you to the School Support group who will be funding the reading eggs programme for the junior school and supporting reading in the middle and senior end of the school. They are also supporting transport and the school teaching teams with donations. We appreciate the support. Thank you!

School Interviews and Goal setting - slots are filling up!

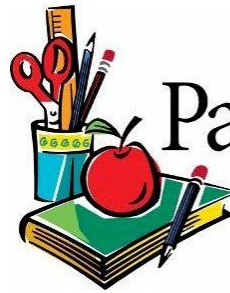
These are being held Monday, March 2 and Wednesday, March 4. Team Ako will only be Monday. We ask that you come prepared with any questions and the first part of the interview will be your opportunity to share your aims and aspirations for your child. We

will be using timers for the ten minutes so please do not be offended if the teacher stands and guides you out the door as the next interview time arrives.

Please go to the website <https://www.schoolinterviews.co.nz/>

And enter the password **h3jxc**

Choose your slot and book it in. If you have any difficulty then the office can book it for you.



Parent-Teacher Interviews

Collection and drop off of children at Rakaia School:

A reminder please to clear the playground by 3.15pm. We invite children back to play but after they have changed out of their school uniform. If you are late collecting your children or there is a change to normal plans then please advise the school as soon as possible. We are acutely aware that we want all children returning home safely and promptly, not wandering the town until 4pm. Thank you.

Helping your child develop key competencies

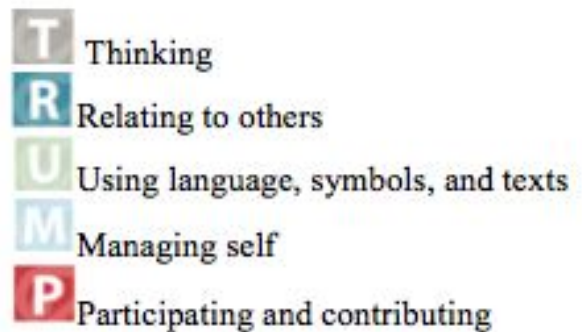
Your child is learning a range of skills and abilities (key competencies) to help them to do well in life. There are lots of things you can do to help your child develop and use these.

The world your child lives in is very different to what it was like when you were growing up and is continuing to change. It is no longer enough to just learn "facts".

No-one knows exactly what life will be like for today's children when they become adults, but we do know that they will need to develop a range of key competencies, so that they can adapt and function well in the world.

These key competencies are:

- Thinking.
- Using language, symbols, and texts.
- Managing self.
- Relating to others.
- Participating and contributing.



These key competencies are an important part of your child's learning at school. They are included in the New Zealand Curriculum and are woven into all the teaching that takes place. Key competencies are not just for school, but for life. Your child uses these key competencies in many different situations at home, at sport, at church, at cultural occasions, and eventually at work.

Notes:

- We are fixing the two trampoline mats because they had rips in them. This is standard most years due to the use they have. I am hopeful they will be back this week.
- Please ensure your children have sun-safe hats. Not caps thank you!

How can I help at home?

The key competencies are a really useful way to think about and get involved in your child's learning.

There are lots of ways to do this:

- Understand what's happening at school - ask your teacher how they are teaching your child about key competencies, why, and what you can do to help at home.
- Be enthusiastic and interested in what your child is doing at school – ask your child what they learned today, talk about the skills that they are developing, and how useful they are in life.
- Do things together that uses one or more key competencies - this shows your child that what they learn at school is connected to the things they do in everyday life, for example:
 - Planning a meal – thinking; using language, symbols and texts, managing self.
 - Taking part in a pōwhiri at your marae – relating to others; participating and contributing, using language, symbols and texts.
 - Being in a sports team – participating and contributing; relating to others, managing self.
 - Mastering the rules of an online game – thinking; using language, symbols and texts.

Thinking

Is about developing the sort of thinking skills that children need in the world today. They are using creative and critical ways of thinking to make sense of information, experiences and ideas.

Things to try at home

- Talk to your child about how thinking is important to make sense of everything they do at school and at home.
- Ask your child's teacher to explain the thinking strategies they are using at school so that you can notice and reinforce them at home. Ask the teacher what you can do to build on them at home.
- Notice and praise your child when they use different sorts of thinking, like mathematical and logical thinking, or knowing how to find flaws in thinking (such as assuming that something is true based on a few examples).
- Make it fun. Playful thinking is a great way of building the brain and your child's thinking abilities. Games of all types - make believe, imaginary friends, "what if" flights of fancy, and so on all provide opportunities for playful thinking.

Using language, symbols, and texts

Is about the different ways to communicate and understand information, experiences and ideas.

Things to try at home

- Check whether your child understands the meaning in different types of texts or languages. If they tell you that something "is" so, ask them how they know, or what makes them think that. This can help them think about other possibilities, which is what the teachers do at school as well.
- When you flick through the junk mail or watch television together, talk about the language the advertisers have used to make you want to buy their products. Encourage your child to think about how the language makes the advertising claims believable, and what information they leave out and what that also tells us.
- Comment when you see a symbol used in a new way, or the same symbol used to mean different things in different contexts. Talk about who might have "invented" each use, and why. For example, the @ sign so widely used now for e-mail addresses used to mean "and the cost is" – "three packages @ \$2 = \$6 total".

Managing self

This means being self motivated, having a can-do attitude and understanding yourself as a learner.

Things to try at home

- Notice and praise your child when they do regular chores or homework without having to be asked. This shows them that you value their independent self-management.
- Talk about the challenges of learning, not just about what has been learned, and show them that you are always learning as well.
- Support and encourage your child when the going gets tough. For example, say “the periodic table, or paragraphs for a young child, can be really hard to understand, so we’re working at it together”. Be positive, and show them that you have confidence in them, rather than letting them make excuses.

Relating to others

Is about relating well to a diverse range of people, and includes things like begin able to listen well, see different points of view, negotiate and share ideas.

Things to try at home

- Talk openly about different ways of “being” in the world. Compare the different cultures in your life, so you can talk about how things are in different contexts, and why.
- Be open to, and show respect for difference. No-one is the same. Children are then more likely to show respect too.
- Play the “devil’s advocate” from time to time. It is great for children to practice seeing things from different perspectives and to understand that respectful debate is healthy.
- Think about how well you listen to, and negotiate with your children. Your child learns how to relate to others from you.

Participating and contributing

Means being involved in things that are going on, being a good group member, contributing, including and creating opportunities for others.

Things to try at home

- Be a good role model. You might be surprised at what knowledge and skills you have that the teacher would appreciate you contributing. For example, in schools where students are learning how to grow food, adults with gardening skills can help.
- Encourage your child to take part in things they haven’t tried before. This challenges them and gets them involved in new activities and groups. Talk to them about the new skills and knowledge they gain.
- Support your child when they take on leadership roles at school or in the community. This could be something as simple as being the bin monitor for a week, caring for a class pet over the holidays, looking after younger students during breaks or at a sports day, taking care of equipment or resources or speaking during an assembly. Schools are usually really good at providing lots opportunities for students to step up and take a lead.