

Title 2019 Senior Syndicate Newsletter Term 1

Friday, 22 February 2019



Waterloo School Senior Syndicate Newsletter
Term 1 2019

Welcome to the first Senior Syndicate newsletter for 2019. We hope you have had an enjoyable Christmas, New Year and a relaxing break with your whanau. The weather has been amazing and let's hope it continues. We warmly welcome new members of staff to the Senior Syndicate this year. Firstly, Charlotte Conlon, who has just returned to New Zealand from the UK and whose previous experience includes working in Intermediate and primary schools. Secondly, Katie Everett, who has joined us from the Middle Syndicate, and finally, we are lucky to have the support of three teacher aides who are also new to the Senior Syndicate, Liz Baxter, Polina Jilina and Kim Lowe.

The Classroom

Topic/Inquiry: – Communities

The Term 1 inquiry will develop the students' understanding of the term 'community'. Being part of a community can bring security and a feeling that one belongs. It is important to learn how communities are structured so the students can see their impact on the community, recognise that communities may be structured differently, to appreciate differences and learn from others, learn how to function within their community and to learn that within effective communities problem-solving is key to developing unity.

The Term one contexts will include:

- Setting up our new classroom (getting to know each other and the things that connect us or make us unique, the school and class systems etc.)
- The Treaty of Waitangi and its importance and relevance to us as New Zealanders.
- To learn that we are part of a class, school, local, national and global community.

Literacy

Literacy learning will continue to focus on establishing balanced reading and writing programmes. During the first few weeks, we will be conferencing with students to help them set goals. Wherever it is possible, we will be linking language studies to our inquiries and provide opportunities for the children to express themselves authentically.

In writing, our focus will be on purposeful writing tasks linked directly to our topics (Treaty of Waitangi, developing our class culture, and Communities). Each classroom will work on different tasks according to the needs presented by their inquiry process. These writing tasks may take a variety of forms, for example: personal experience, poetry, letters, reports, etc. Through these tasks we will be learning about the writing process and skills such as the selection and elaboration of ideas, the structure of a text, the type of language and vocabulary needed, correct punctuation, proof-reading and editing etc. A great way for you to help at home is by reading with your child and discussing the features that make up the texts you are sharing. For example, how is the layout of a newspaper report different from that in a novel? What rich descriptive vocabulary or devices such as similes are included in a descriptive text? Notice the subheadings, captions, diagrams etc. in an explanation or report.

You could also spend time guiding your child to be observant about their everyday experiences, such as, a walk along the beach, a sport game, a game with siblings, or a cooking experience. Help your child to discuss the

events, the sights, sounds, physical sensations and emotions of their experiences and explore language through discussion. It has been said that, "Writing floats on a sea of talk". ("Dancing with the Pen")

Numeracy

We will be encouraging the students to develop personal mathematics goals as they work on their developing number knowledge and application of this to real world problems. Rich mathematical tasks, problem solving activities, and being able to talk about math, will all be foci in workshops to help our students develop the ability to apply number knowledge and mental strategies in context. Wherever it is possible, we will endeavour to integrate their math learning with our inquiry topics.

Physical Education

The weather is perfect this term to be outside for PE – as long as we have lots of water, sunscreen and sun hats with us! Our focus this term is on small ball skills – striking and fielding, and cooperative games. The students have been taking part in cricket awareness coaching sessions provided by the Hutt Districts Cricket Club.

Home Learning

In Year 5 homework will consist of skills practice in spelling, reading and basic facts and anything on top of this will be provided at the discretion of your child's teacher.

In Year 6 all students will have Home Learning opportunities (generally with digital access through student's school gmail accounts). This will look different in each class. Families are encouraged to decide with their child on the tasks and amount of time they will spend on Home Learning each week. Students will have opportunities to share their home learning work with their peers and teachers at school. However, teachers will not monitor student's Home Learning workload. If your child's teacher has particular Home Learning that they would like you to work on with your child they will make individual contact with you.

Camp (Year 6)

This year our camp will run from Tuesday 26th March to Friday 29th March at El Rancho in Waikanae.

Please keep being positive and encouraging with your child about this highly anticipated event. Please make payment as soon as possible and ensure you have completed all the required signmee notices. Contact your child's class teacher should you wish to discuss any particular questions.

Cooperative Challenges and an exploration of our local community (Te Whiti Riser) (Year 5)

In the week 25th -29th March, the Year 5 students will participate in a series of cooperative challenges to test their ability to work as part of a team/community – participating, contributing, communicating and problem-solving effectively. During this week, they will also be laying their 'community messages' along the Te Whiti Riser track. Notices will be sent to parents closer to the time of the events.

Kapa Tuakana

This will be run by Papa Murray again this year with support from Whaea Lee and Whaea Aimee. Sessions began in the second week of school and students were given the opportunity to attend for one session before making a commitment to the group.

Upcoming Events

Goal Setting Interviews: Monday the 8th of April and Tuesday the 9th of April.

Term 1 Ends: Friday 12th April at 3pm.

Parent Queries/Concerns

We believe in working together to provide the best for your child. If you have any queries/concerns - big or small please approach your child's teacher first- then the Team Leaders (Lee Austin and Glynnis Bell) or the Deputy Principal (Jen Roberts). If there is something that may be affecting your child's learning - big or small, it is always helpful to know. The partnership between home and school is crucial so please don't hesitate to talk to us and discuss any issues you may have.

Bell Times

The bell goes at 8:55am for the school day to begin. Students need to be at school at least 10 minutes before the bell so they can unpack their bags and get ready for their day.

Please remember that the students are not able to enter classrooms until 8:30am.

We look forward to a fantastic year at Waterloo with your child.

Warmest regards

The Senior Team

Glynnis Bell, Lee Austin, Charlotte Conlon, Christopher Tait, Janice Karl, Aimee Cunningham and Katie Everett.

Signature: **[Optional]**