



Worser Bay School

TAUTORU

Parent Information

Term 4, 2009

Welcome to Term 4

“What’s a Community?”

It’s here - who can believe it’s the final term of 2009! This term the whole school is building on learning from the previous three terms, connecting the dots, revisiting concepts and skills and focusing on a new big question. In fact, we got so carried away when we were planning for this term that we have Term 1 2010 basically sewn up as well. This is exciting as it demonstrates how we are trying to create greater seamlessness and not view learning in “term-like, bite-sized chunks!”

We are also aiming to strengthen the links between the different curriculum/learning areas to help the students make greater sense of their day! One way of doing this is to make the learning as purposeful and explicit as we can. Additionally, the key competencies will be woven throughout all the learning areas and not viewed as something extra or separate.

With better weather (!) there will be plenty of opportunities to get outside the constraints of the classroom walls. Our trip to the City Gallery to see [Yayoi Kusama: Mirrored Years](#) will certainly motivate as we think about how we may add something a little different to our school environment!

This term is also one for festivities - the Fair, the Christmas Carols, the Farewell to our Year 6s and an opportunity to celebrate the movie-making. It’s certainly gearing up for a busy one, full of opportunities for you to get inside what’s going on and what your child is up to!

Tautoru

The Tautoru teaching team welcome you back for Term 4. Our capacity has increased as we welcome Sophie Hamilton and Scott McGregor to the team.

We’re exploring a brand new big question together... **“What’s a Community?”** Our social sciences investigation will lead us towards identifying features that are typical of most communities. We’ll be asking ourselves what different roles exist within different communities, how have they changed over time. We’ll talk about which communities we belong to and realise that there are smaller communities that co-exist within bigger ones. Our belonging and participation within the Worser Bay School community is a good example of this.

Teachers will be prompting students to make explicit links to prior learning this year – all our big questions this year have been about making connections.



Key Competencies and Enterprising Attributes

'Participating and Contributing' as well as 'Thinking' attributes will be an integral part of our learning as the students are drawn together to contribute as group members. As they do so, they will revise the importance of balancing our roles and responsibilities with the rights of others. This will require the students to follow an enquiry path with their learning, checking all the time if changes are needed and thinking ahead about what could go wrong with an opportunity and planning ahead to limit the risk or problem.

For more information on the key competencies, please visit:

<http://www.teamup.co.nz/AllAges/Curriculum/SchoolCurriculum.aspx> or
<http://keycompetencies.tki.org.nz/>

And for information on the enterprising attributes, visit:

<http://education-for-enterprise.tki.org.nz/About-E4E/The-NZ-Curriculum-and-E4E/Enterprising-attributes>

Better still, come to the Parent Evening!

Topic and Research

Our learning activities for topic this term are designed to develop and strengthen students' deeper understanding of 'Community'. We are introducing our topic by taking a look at Medieval times and using the context of castles, kings and queens, knights, dragons and the antics of Robin Hood to learn about the different roles and responsibilities in a community. From Medieval times we'll move on to compare and contrast the structure within a traditional Maori community. We hope the comparisons will enrich students' understanding of what it means to participate and contribute as part of a community. As well as appreciating that 'belonging' is important, we'd like them to also realise that being engaged as a community member requires one to accept a role, be responsible, and balance and negotiate the rights of those with whom we work alongside.

Yet another perspective of how we perceive communities will occur when we visit City Gallery to view Yayoi Kusama's artworks. We'll be inspired to think about how the past is important to people and how places are significant to individuals and groups.

English - Reading and Writing

The Draft Literacy Learning Progressions have been revised and are available to all schools this month. To find out more about learning progressions in literacy, you may want to visit:

<http://www.literacyprogressions.org.nz/>

The literacy learning progressions provide teachers with a professional tool that shows what knowledge and skills their students need in order to engage with text and meet the reading and writing demands of the New Zealand Curriculum.

Learning intentions in reading will continue to concentrate on relationships between sounds and letters, decoding unknown words and developing reading fluency. Capable readers will work on strengthening comprehension skills.

A student writing sample for personal recount will be collected early in the term to assess progress with writing goals. The latter part of the term will be a focus on poetic writing as students think about how to use teacher and peer feedback to re-craft their work. We have observed a need for all students to add more interest words to their writing.

Maths and Statistics

Term 4 Mathematics and Statistics includes a focus on Proportion and Ratio, Addition and Subtraction, and Geometry. The emphasis on Numeracy will comprise 80% of the Years 0-2 Tautoru programme.

Remember, a good place to start finding out more about the numeracy approach is:

<http://www.nzmaths.co.nz/node/453>

PE and Health

Circle Time continues to feature as an important weekly event in Tautoru. Swimming begins on the first Friday back. At the first session, the children will be assessed and sorted into groups by the Aquatic Centre instructors. When the children are away from the instructors they will continue their learning with a focus on pool safety and water confidence with their teachers. Tennis is also scheduled for 5 weeks of the term - times to be advised (look out for dates and times in the newsletter). This is a fun skill based introduction to the game! We will take opportunities, when we can, to get out and about for Education Outside The Classroom (EOTC) activities related to our current 'Communities' topic, too!

Music

Fridays is music fun day with Nicole. She has selected several new songs to teach us this term. Later in the term, this will include Carols as we eagerly prepare for our end of year Carol Service. Our focus of Peter and the Wolf will also continue as we experiment with putting drama to music, and using music to show the mood.

Assessment

This term your child will be thinking about their learning and reflecting on how well they are meeting their goals. They will be actively looking for examples to show improvement and your expectations and aspirations for their achievement will help them feel well supported to commit to their next learning steps. Please talk with your child about their specific learning intentions or 'WALTs'. These key words will become a cue to think about the what and why of the learning task, and prompt them to share and celebrate when they have achieved the success criteria or specific goal.

We are assessing Numeracy knowledge in the first 2 weeks. For students who are achieving at Stage 4 or above in Numeracy there is also a short assessment to find out what strategies they are using to problem solve. Progress with each child's reading level will be clarified with a 'Running Record' assessment. Parents will be notified if their child is achieving below their chronological age in reading. Running Records will also be taken for students who are receiving Reading Recovery or who are part of the Parent/Tutor Reading Programme. If we have concerns about your child's achievement in reading we will contact you to discuss the concerns and develop a plan together to support your child at school and at home. A writing sample will be collected for the learning portfolios as well as other samples or forms of student selected assessment that show the extent of progress towards achieving learning goals.

Homework

Home learning provides an opportunity to consolidate and enrich classroom related learning. Ten minutes of homework is sufficient for the junior school. Check out these websites for ideas on how to make learning a rewarding and enjoyable task:

<http://www.nzmaths.co.nz/families/index.aspx>

<http://www.teamup.co.nz/AllAges/FunActivities.aspx>

http://www.tki.org.nz/r/wick_ed/index.php

Message to all Parents

We value parent help and support in the classroom. We recognise your understanding of what happens at school helps the follow up at home. So, how can you help to grow the learning partnership between home and school? If you have any ideas or ways that you can help this term, please don't hesitate to contact us. We look forward to a happy, exciting term.

We hope to see you at the Parent Information Evening.

Maria, Fleur, Rachel, Scott and Sophie

