

Room Kea Newsletter: Term 1 2023

Welcome to Year 7 & 8 in Room Kea for 2023! We have 32 year 7 & 8 students in Kea this year. I feel it is a special privilege to be able to have these two years working with your children and you, their families, to ensure they leave Buckland School well prepared for the next step of the journey as confident, connected, actively involved lifelong learners. Mrs Murphy will be the main Teacher Aide supporting students in Kea Room this year. Mrs Adams will continue running the Agility with Sound programme for some selected students (literacy support), and will also continue to support the students when they go to Pukekohe Intermediate for Technology lessons (see details below).

Technology

All year 7 & 8 students will be going to Technology at Pukekohe Intermediate fortnightly on a **Wednesday (starting on 8 Feb)**. The bus leaves Buckland School at 8.45 and brings the children back at 12.30 (so they arrive back around 12.40 and have their lunchtime then). Please ensure your child is at school before 8.40 so that they don't miss the bus. If you are late you will need to drop them at the Intermediate yourselves. Please text me and let me know that you have done this so I do not mark your child absent! Students need to wear closed in shoes. Year 7s will be doing Performing Arts and Food, Health and Nutrition; Year 8s will be doing Hard Materials and STEAM (a cross-curricular programme encompassing Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Maths including Digital Technology). If you have any queries about Technology Lessons, please contact me.

School Start Times

School starts at 8.55 a.m. and, so that we can begin promptly, a hand bell rings at 8.50 a.m., signalling that children need to go to class. From past experience, I have found that children settle into the day much better if they have a few minutes before the hand bell to catch up with their friends, put their bags away, and generally prepare for the day. If you could have your child at school a little earlier than the 8.50 hand bell, it would be very helpful for them (and the rest of the class).

Class Parent Meetings

These will be held on Thursday 9th February after school and are an opportunity to meet, discuss routines, expectations, class programmes etc. More information will be in the school newsletter.

One on One Parent Teacher Meetings

I like to meet one on one with my 'new' parents after a few weeks. This is just a chance for us to meet and discuss how we can work together to best support your child. It is also a chance for us to discuss any concerns etc. Usually this is for parents of year 7 students as I will already have met parents of year 8 students, however any parents of year 8 students who would like to schedule a meeting are more than welcome also. These meetings usually only take 10-15 mins. Further information about this will be communicated after I have had a chance to get to know the students a little.

Stationery

Students are expected to look after their own pens, pencils, rulers etc. We have not made the list excessive in terms of pencils etc so they may well 'use up' some items of their stationery, they will be expected to be responsible for this and get replacement items. Please encourage them to name ALL loose items clearly (pens, pencils, coloured pencils – everything). All students should also have a small pencil case - this is especially helpful for when they go to Technology at the Intermediate..

Library

Students are able to borrow 2 books at a time from the school library and may renew or exchange these during an allocated class time slot or during any lunchtime. Students can also access eBook and Audiobooks via our ePlatform (there is a link to this on the school website under 'Library').

If your child is not already a member of a public library with their own library card I would strongly encourage you to sign them up. Most students at this age have a device of some sort and the public libraries have an excellent range of ebooks available. Reading is one of the most important ways of supporting a child's learning.

Communication

In an effort to reduce the amount of paper wasted, as well as to ensure important messages make it home timeously, I would like to be able to communicate by email.

I am also happy to communicate by text when this is a better option than email.

My number is 027 630 7451.

Please note that I do not read my emails or texts during class time (in fact after 8.15 am or before 3.30), so if you need to get a message to me or your child during the day (e.g. to let them know to go home with a friend because you can't pick them up as planned etc), please ring the office on 09-238 9419. The only exception to this is on Tech days as I take my phone with me when I do the roll before I send the bus off so I can check on AWOL students! A text if you are running late and are taking them directly to the Intermediate or to let me know they are away is most helpful on these days.

Want to keep up with what your child is working on in class?

To continue preparing our students for the reality of learning in a digital age, they will continue using the Google Apps for Education this year including Google Classrooms. Students can log in to their Google Accounts from home and share what they have been working on with you that way. Accounts can be accessed from a PC, Laptop or Chromebook. It is also accessible from most other devices via an App. Assignments are shared with students this way and this is also where they 'hand in' digital work.

Homework

Homework in Kea Room will begin next week with just a few small tasks. A copy of our homework policy is available on the school website.

Weekly homework in Kea Room will initially consist of

Maths

Working on learning specific Basic Facts (unless the students has been signed off for knowing all their Basic Facts).

Reading

Students should get into the habit of reading/listening to an audiobook each afternoon/evening.

Other tasks

Tasks will vary from week to week (they may run over a few weeks and some weeks there will be no project work). Tasks will be linked with topics we are covering at school and will often be work around goal setting or reflections - to encourage students to take increased responsibility. Tasks will usually involve discussion/input from someone at home, and be set on Google Classroom. The first task will be to research where their family comes from for their 'Bit About Me' Presentations (more information to follow).

Social Media and Digital Citizenship

Although the minimum age to open an account with most Social Media Platforms (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat etc) is 13 (and 18 for YouTube), please be aware that many intermediate age students do have accounts (hopefully with parental permission and supervision). Obviously, the school cannot be held responsible for how students use their personal Social Media accounts at home in their own time. However, I am sure you are aware that Social Media can have a significant impact on young people's social, emotional and mental wellbeing and can affect the relationships they have with their peers at school.

If your child has a Social Media account (and please be aware that it is relatively easy for them to set up an account without your knowledge if they have unsupervised access to a device), we urge you to be actively involved:- help them set up their account with suitable privacy settings; talk to them about what is acceptable information to share and with whom; make sure they are aware of the dangers; and also make sure you monitor how they use it. Digital Citizenship is covered in class as part of our Health Curriculum.

If you have any questions or concerns around Social Media, or feel that you need support, please do not hesitate to contact either myself or Mavis - sooner rather than later. You will also find some useful information for parents at www.netsafe.org.nz.

A copy of our School Computer Usage Rules will be discussed with all students and a copy sent home by the end of the first week back for you to sign.

Apologies for the lengthy email! My door is always open – please do come and see me if you have any concerns at any stage or just want to catch up. I look forward to working with you and your child this year.

Regards

Lisa Goldsack, Year 7 & 8 Teacher