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Welcome to all parents and caregivers of Rakau children. Rakau is a Year 3 and 4 syndicate made up of five Year 3 and 4 composite classes.

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We find that one of the most effective ways to stay in touch is through email. They are great for notes between teachers and parents/caregivers. Please take the time to send an email with your child's name on it to their class teacher so that we teachers can set up our 2016 class address books. Feel free to drop in and chat with your child's teacher. Before school and after school are great times. During class time teachers are focussed on their students so won't be able to stop and discuss things. If you have any concerns please raise them with your child's class teacher as this is usually the quickest way to resolve things. If things aren't resolved satisfactorily then please bring the issue to the team leader's attention.

School starts at 9.00am. We usually start by discussing what is coming up and set ourselves up for the day. The school day finishes at 3.00pm. We often finish by reflecting on our learning and reminders for the next day. Children who miss these times often feel unsettled and miss out on opportunities. Please help your child by getting them to school on time and collecting them after the bell.

### **Interviews**

We have short 10 minute interviews in Term 1 so we can get a chance to chat about how children have settled into their new classes, any areas they may need to do some extra work at home in, and what is going well for them at school. The bookings are made online at [www.schoolinterviews.co.nz](http://www.schoolinterviews.co.nz) code XZ5UG

### **Topics for Term 1**

**Weeks 1-4 Positive Behaviour for Learning or PB4L.** Learning the KURA way and understanding the rules this entails in each area of the school are some of the important areas of this topic that will be covered in class. During this time we also do fun activities as part of getting to know each other and how we learn.

**Weeks 5-9 Science** - We are focussed on children getting a chance to get their hands on equipment and materials. It will be experiment based and the children will be encouraged to think about what is likely to happen before an experiment and then reflect if this is what they actually observed after the experiment.

**Weeks 10-11 Mini-inquiry.** Children will have the opportunity to research a topic that interests them and find information to share about it in whatever format they choose, e.g. report, poster, pamphlet, Powerpoint slide show.

## **Homework - Homework will have two parts**

**1. The basics.** This is work we expect all children to do every week.

Reading daily. On a Monday to Friday either teacher selected books or, if agreed on, self selected books are read and the details are entered into a reading log. Though of course children can read more than this - this is the minimum we expect them to be reading. We recommend 10-20 minutes of reading time every day.

Spelling. Each child will bring home a highlighted copy of the essential lists by week 5. These 290 words make up 75% of most writing. The children will be tested on these words at school and any that they don't know will be highlighted. You can work through the unknown words with your child at your own pace.

Please use the '*Race to 30 Spelling Contract*' that will be sent home at the same time.

Maths Rakau team children will also have a user name and password for the Maths-Whizz website:

<http://www.whizz.com/> In order to get the most benefit from this fantastic online learning tool, we recommend that children spend approximately twenty minutes on Maths-Whizz at least three times a week.

As part of our in class inquiries children may want to research further at home. We encourage this and may even ask them to complete small tasks at home. Any children who don't have internet access will be given access at school with teacher supervision.

**2. Optional KURA homework.** This will be an optional extra. A KURA homework booklet is available on the school website and is a list of things children can do to show the KURA values outside school. If children complete all four areas to the required standard they will receive a certificate, 20 house points and get a special morning tea with Mrs Delaney, Mr Merrick and Mrs McMahon.

## **Toys and other special belongings**

We prefer that students don't bring in precious items from home as they are often misplaced or go missing. Teachers will not take responsibility for these items unless they are part of the class programme and it has been agreed that they can be brought to school the day before.

## **Cellphones/electronic devices**

We understand that cellphones are sometimes needed for communication between parents/caregivers and their children. If that is the case they are to be handed in to teachers to be stored somewhere safely while they are at school. Any phones/electronic devices being used in the playground will be held by a teacher until the end of the day. If the same student continues to have their phone/electronic device in the playground it will be held by a teacher for an adult to come and collect.

## **Hats**

Our school follows a 'Sun Smart' policy which aims to keep students safe from harmful UV rays. It is a school requirement that children wear a hat when outside during Terms 1 and 4. We encourage children to keep their own hats at school as sharing can cause transfer of nits. Please make sure hats are named as they are very easy to put down and forget. The school policy is "No hat, no play" and children who aren't wearing them will need to sit in shaded areas during lunch and playtimes.

## **P.E.**

Children will need to have clothes and footwear that they can run in everyday at school. It is important that children are not wearing heeled shoes, jandals, sandals and gumboots for P.E. If wearing these types of footwear they will also need to bring extra footwear to run in. Up until week 6 our main PE focus will be developing stamina for the school Triathlon. The Triathlon takes place on Saturday 19th March (Postponement 2<sup>nd</sup> April). The Triathlon is the main school fundraiser for the year. We will be focusing on cooperative and team building games towards the end of the term.

## **Water & Milk**

All children are allowed (and encouraged) to have a water bottle at school. Children are allowed to drink water all day. Being well hydrated helps them to learn. We are part of the Fonterra Milk for Schools programme. They supply us with milk for every child, every day. We usually have the milk around 1.30pm straight after the lunch time break. If you would prefer your child not to be given milk please let your child's class teacher know.

We will keep you informed of upcoming events. Please read the school newsletter, website and Facebook page as they have a lot of valuable information in them.

We are looking forward to a fun year.

The Rakau team.