

Kia Ora Tatou!

One of my bigger focus points is reading: ensuring that every child at Halcombe can read, is able to gain meaning and insights, and also really enjoys the act of reading. In New Zealand, on the whole, we have been pretty good at teaching reading. This has required families reading to kids and having books in the home, making sure that students have really good material around them, and readily available. As well as the mechanics of reading, and work on understanding what we are reading, there is a growing emphasis in the new curriculum on reading for pleasure.

I have been teaching for over 30 years (oh my goodness!), and I have always promoted reading for pleasure. It draws kids in, it helps widen their vocabulary, it broadens their minds and it makes us think! Supporting your children's enjoyment of reading is relatively easy to do and has been shown to be very good for children's overall development and health.

Various studies have shown children's enjoyment of reading is related to a longer life, better mental well-being and healthier eating. Fiction reading is related to better performance at school. But reading for pleasure is also good for communities because readers tend to be good at making decisions, have more empathy and are likely to value other people and the environment more. It will also pay dividends in improved school performance, thinking ability, well-being and sense of belonging - all especially important during these uncertain and disrupted times.

Go curl up with a good book now, and have a great week,  
Alastair & the 'H' Team.

### New Room 1 Teacher Announcement

The Board of Trustees is happy to announce the appointment of Fiona vanden Brink to the Halcombe School Teaching Team. Fiona will be teaching in Room 1, from the beginning of Term 2. Fiona is an experienced and hard-working teacher, with numerous strengths that she brings to the junior programme, and the school in general. Fiona is currently teaching at Hiwinui School. Fiona will be here for a day close to the end of term, to meet with the children, with Jan Casey, and to meet the parents of Room 1 children too. Halcombe School is fortunate to have received high-calibre applications, and to appoint such a dedicated and energetic teacher.

### Three-Way Conferences

Next week, on the 6th, 7th and 8th March, we have our annual Three-Way Conferences. This is where all parents and students come along to meet with the teacher. Conferences are student-led, with teacher support. **School will finish at 12.30pm on March 6th, the Makino/Feilding bus will leave at 12.30pm and the Tokorangi bus will leave at 12.50pm.** If you're unable to pick up your child early, please contact us.

This is an important chance for information to be shared, and **parent attendance is compulsory**. Please make your bookings online now for this important time with your child's teacher. This year we will use the online booking system for you to find the best time to meet with your child's teacher.

To book go to: [www.schoolinterviews.co.nz](http://www.schoolinterviews.co.nz). Click 'Make A Booking', and enter the **event code: xxhks**

You can then enter your details and select the teachers and time. An email will be sent to you to remind you of the details. If you have any trouble, you can ring or come in and we can make the booking for you. Spaces will fill up fast, so we urge you to make your booking as soon as possible.

It is really important that you turn up on time for your conference, as they are scheduled every 15 minutes. Teachers must stick to this, and are unable to extend your conference if you're running late.

### Triathlon - TOMORROW!

Only one sleep till the Halcombe School triathlon! This will be an excellent chance to put a big tick in the 'adventure' box of our Triple A values! The first event will be the Year 7-8 students, starting at 10.30am. Here is some important information:

- Bikes and helmets go straight to the field before school. There will be senior students there directing you. Please double check the tyres are pumped up, and the seat is set at the correct height.
- No helmet = no go.
- Students will wear their togs to do the run and bike, with a t-shirt and shorts (for the girls) over the top. Footwear is recommended.
- Please name all gear, including helmets and waterbottles, as we know everything will be in a mess at the end!
- Spectators are welcome.
- If your child needs help at any time, this will be provided by staff, designated course marshals or senior students.
- Bikes will be left on the field and can be taken home at the conclusion of ALL races, or after school.
- Spectators can view the swimming from outside the pool fence.
- We'd like to remind everyone that this event is all about giving it a go and having fun, though we know that many of the students will naturally make a competition out of it.
- Each student will receive a juicy on completion of the triathlon. Thanks to our PTA for shouting this treat.
- Please don't park on the neighbour's lawn or grass verges outside the school.
- Our team for the Manawatū Interschool Triathlon will be selected based on the results of our event.

### Swimathon - FRIDAY!

We've had some really positive feedback regarding our decision to hold a fundraising event for Tinui School. We know they are incredibly grateful that we chose them, and wish us all the best for our swimathon.

- **Sponsorship forms are due back tomorrow.** A word of advice: take a photo of the form before returning it to school so you can remember who you need to collect money from.
- Don't send any money yet - this is due next Wednesday 8 March.
- Each class is rostered on to swim at a certain time, and you're welcome to come along and watch:
  - 9-10am - Room 8
  - 10-10.50am - Room 7
  - 10.50-11.30am - Room 1/2/8
  - 11.30-12pm - Room 5
  - 12-12.30pm - Room 6
  - 12.30-1.30pm - PARENTS
  - 1.30-2.15pm - Room 3/4
  - 2.15-3pm - Room 5/6
- We have crunched the numbers: 330kms (round trip to Tinui) divided by 12.5m (length of pool) = 26,400 laps! What an awesome challenge! We've got this Team Halcombe!
- Thank you so much to those who have offered to swim some laps between 12.30-1.30pm: Chris Tunnicliffe, Shaz Dagg, Jase Goodyer, Simon Wishnowsky, Gary Simpson, Bex Lintott, Fritha Linklater, Anna Rider and Liam O'Neill. It's not too late to add your name to this list.
- We need three more lap counters - please let us know if you can help. We have four lanes and need a lap counter for each. Here is our roster so far:

9-10am	Gabrielle Jamieson, Brenda Jamieson, Sue Simpson, Lucy Lintott.
10-11am	Brenda Jamieson, Michelle Simpson, Emma Brown +1
11-12pm	Fritha Linklater, Teresa Mayer, Mary Goodyer, Paula Stace.
12-1pm	Tamsyn Grant, Ana Swart, Hollie Howland +1
1-2pm	Hollie Howland, Samantha Shaw, Anna Rider, Lucy Lintott.
2-3pm	Alex Cooper, Rosie Aitken, Jess Waterhouse, Amy Bangma.

### **Senior Swimming Sports**

The Senior Swimming Sports will be held at the Makino Pool next Wednesday 8 March, starting at 12.10pm and finishing by 2.40pm.

- These sports are for children in Rooms 5 - 8 (a few Year 4 students in Room 4 will join us).
- Transport will be by bus to and from the pool, leaving school at 11.35am. There is no charge.
- All students will return to school after the swimming sports.
- Children must take their togs, two towels, sunhat, warm clothes, snacks and a drink of water.
- There is no 'grandstand' for parents to watch from. You might like to take your own chair/seat. Parents will be seated on the diving pool side, or at the concrete wall/shallow end of the pool.

### **Junior Swimming Sports**

The Junior Swimming Sports will be held at school next Friday 10 March, starting at 1.30pm and finishing by 2.50pm. These sports are for children in Rooms 1 - 4 (excluding some Year 4 students who are going to attend the senior swimming sports - you know who you are). Parents are welcome to attend.

### **Paid Union Meeting**

Teachers across the country are renegotiating their contracts with the Ministry of Education right now. The issues they are concerned for are about attracting new teachers to the profession, retaining what we have (so, making teaching look like a good option for a career), and resourcing in schools (things like keeping low class-numbers, having support staff in schools funded by the Ministry, having experts available to come and help with teaching and learning). So, to be clear, this is not all about bigger wages. Teachers across the country are attending Union Meetings this week, but our staff have also ensured that our school remains open. They have done this by scheduling teachers to go to different meetings and by combining classes. I am grateful to them for their effort and help in making sure our parents haven't been inconvenienced. These negotiations are not about Halcombe School - we are so very fortunate in the quality and commitment of our staff, and the support of all. These negotiations are all about the national picture. Not every school is as fortunate as us, and so we are trying to ensure every school has great people working in them, and the resources every child needs.

### **PTA AGM - All Welcome and Needed!**

The first PTA meeting for 2023 is scheduled for 15 March, at 7pm in the staffroom. This is a great way to kick off the year with a sharing of the plans and needs in the school that all parents and helpers can support the PTA with. The PTA has already approved funding of \$3500 for our senior end of year camps. We have a generous PTA that wants to see our kids thrive. We need YOU to come and be a part of this too. See you there.

### **Board of Trustees News:**

The first BOT meeting for the 2023 school year was held on Wednesday 22 February. The Board remains committed to great outcomes for all our students and is enthusiastic in its approach. The main points covered at this meeting were:

- The 2023 budget was approved.
- A Teacher Only Day was confirmed for Monday the 24 April.
- The calendar for reviewing school policies was set out. All policies are reviewed annually and Finance is the first to be reviewed this year. This policy covers; ensuring efficient use of funds, ensuring accountability for the allocation of finances and accuracy in reporting and presenting accounts for annual audits.
- An update was given on the progress around property matters; painting touch ups were done over the holidays and new seating along the edge of the playground between the hall and Room 1 has been installed. Roof maintenance that was supposed to be completed over the holidays is now being done in March. The archgola over Room 1's deck has been completed (finally!) - yay! Completing the hedge trimming is still a work in progress due to challenges with PowerCo.
- A replacement mower is being purchased to replace the current one that has reached its use-by date.

### **Trampolines**

A reminder that it's one person at a time on our trampolines - this includes after school. We've noticed lots of children are playing on them after school as parents watch on. Please ensure the kids stick to the rules.

### Forms - Family Contact and Digital Citizenship Agreements

These are now overdue. Please return these forms to school tomorrow. Students who have not returned their Digital Citizenship Agreements will be unable to use digital devices at school until we have received their forms.

### Rippa Rugby Tournaments

There was a wee error in the note that went home with the Y5-8 rippa rugby players yesterday. The Y5-6 tournament is on Tuesday 28 MARCH (not April).

### COMMUNITY NEWS

#### Halcombe Playcentre - Playcentre Open Week

Halcombe Playcentre invites whānau with tamariki aged 0-6 years to come along for a free visit during Playcentre Open Week, which runs from 6-10 March, we are open Monday, Wednesday and Thursdays, 9-1pm. Feel free to come along any day to experience Playcentre, no need to book. If you would like more information, contact Emma on 027 700 1409.

Check out our giant map to help keep track of our progress at the swimathon on Friday! →

#### Staff vs Students

The staff were in fine form when they faced the students in their first match of the year - flippaball. The staff had a great win, 4-3. Students, you'll need to try harder next time!

