



Thursday 1st February 2024

Dear Parents, Caregivers & Whānau,

Welcome back to the 2024 academic year! I trust you all got some time to spend with your whānau and friends, and to travel around our beautiful country while the sun was shining.

All our Teachers have been working hard over the last few weeks to prepare their classrooms and academic programmes in preparation for the students to arrive. A special welcome to all our new students and our three new teachers that are starting off the year with us. Students arrived back so enthusiastically today! They certainly seem ready for the exciting Term ahead. We have a busy few days ahead settling into classroom routines and getting ready for the start of our learning programme for 2024.

You will probably have noticed the **remedial building work** is still being carried out around the school. We appreciate your patience, and will do our very best to keep you informed as the works in progress on the middle block come to an end. We understand that car parking/drop off/pickups are a challenge but I sincerely hope that everyone will play their part in keeping our students safe around the car park. Please be “on guard” and escort your child/children to and from the back gate rather than having them walk through the carpark on their own.

It is very exciting to see the long awaited **dome canopy** go up outside the school hall. A great deal of the fundraising profits over the last few years have gone towards this project, and we are thrilled to finally see it come to fruition. To be able to erect the canopy structure the Hall stairs had to be modified. During that process they were found to be unstable, so these are now being replaced. This means that access to the Hall will be through the side entries until this can be completed. Thank you very much to James Mizen from Fabric Structures, and the Board of Trustees property team for all their hard work getting this major project underway for us.

I am pleased to advise that we will be able to use the school **swimming pool** this term. It is anticipated to be in use from next Wednesday. Please note it will not be heated, however we are confident that it will be warm enough for the students to get their swimming time in. The replacement of the heating unit will take place over the coming months. The class swimming programme will be discussed at the Parent Orientation meetings to be held in Week 3.

You will shortly be receiving an invitation from your classroom teacher to attend a **Parent Orientation meeting** in **Week 3**. This will be an opportunity for you to meet your child’s teacher, and to get an **overview of the learning programme planned for the year ahead**. Please do come along, as this is a great time to ask any general questions that you may have pertaining to the classroom environment and curriculum.

In **Week 4** we have the first stage of our **Reporting to Parents** cycle starting with **Parent Interviews and Goal Reviews** on Tuesday 20 and Thursday 22 February (not to be confused with the Parent Orientation meetings in Week 3). This is an opportunity for teachers to inform parents about what learning goals they will be focusing on and to give parents the opportunity to share their views on their child’s learning needs. This is an important step in laying a good foundation for the year of learning ahead. A notice with a booking link for these Parent Interviews and Goal Reviews will be sent out at the beginning of Week 3.

There is a **PTA Welcome Morning Tea** for new parents to the school planned for later in the month, an invitation will be sent out shortly to our new school parents. This is a great opportunity to meet other parents that have recently joined our school community, and to ask any questions that you might have about how things operate on a day to day basis. It is held at a local cafe, and is very informal.

Our planning is already underway with the **Summer Fun Run** scheduled for the end of the month. As per last year we will be allocating certain Year Groups to our bigger events, which this year will be the **Annual Auction in Term 2, and Move & Groove in Term 4**. This has worked very well, and we will continue with this format. You will receive an email when it is your child's year group that will be charged with a specific event. Each event is led by Board Representative Rebecca Lane, with the support of Kim Scott managing administration. There are great systems already in place, which ensures that each event runs smoothly. Fundraising is an important part of our school, and helps to raise the money needed for special projects that make sure our students can enjoy a truly Magic school. Keep an eye out for fliers coming home. These events aren't able to go ahead without parental assistance. Any time or expertise you are able to offer is gratefully appreciated.

We would like to remind you that we have students across the school who have **severe or life-threatening anaphylaxis (allergies)** to a variety of nuts, seeds, eggs, wheat, rye and barley. The Year groups affected will be emailed with specific details of what food we are requesting **isn't** brought to school. A physical copy was also provided to children today, so please check your child's bag. If we could request that all school families please remind your children not to share food with other students due to safety issues. Any questions kindly contact Wendy Chittenden (SENCO).

Matakids will be operating out of the Castle for the foreseeable future. If you wish to enrol your child for before or after school care please contact them directly to arrange. Enrolment forms are available at the school office.

At this stage our very popular **Garden to Table programme** is on hold whilst the last of the work is being done on the middle school block. Once the work has been completed the Arts Hub will again be free to use for this programme. We look forward to getting stuck back into this fantastic part of the curriculum. It is so lovely to see the students learning such important skills in a fun 'growing' environment.

Please read the attached information about **communication** at the school. For new parents, this covers off all the ways that we do our best to keep you up to date with what is happening around our school. The School APP is a vital part of this, and I strongly encourage you to download it as soon as possible. For parents that have been with us for a while, please have a read through to refresh your knowledge around the ways we communicate with our school community. There are also some new buttons on the App to assist you.

General reminders:

- School starts at 8.45am and finishes at 2.45pm. Kindly allow your child plenty of time in the morning to unpack their bag and settle into the classroom. If your child is late please park in the community carpark and then proceed to the office to sign your child in to school.
- Please order any uniform items on KINDO, or email uniform@matakana.school.nz. A range of second hand items are available at the school office.
- Please inform the school office if your:
 - child is sick (use the school App, email or 24 hour phone answering service)
 - contact details have changed. (There is a button on the school APP for updating information)
 - child has a new health issue or medical condition.

We all look forward to inspiring your children and our community this Term. May the challenges we face bring out the best in all of us.

Hei konā mai,

Darrel Goosen - Principal

Thank you to our Sponsors

