

Friday 11th February 2020

Dear Parents / Caregivers,



Welcome to Tui class at Otakiri School 2021. I trust your holidays were relaxing and fun. This year my goal is for your children to have a positive year of progress and learning. As the year progresses, feel welcome to come into class and have your child share their work with you.

I am excited to begin my first year at Otakiri School. I have been teaching for 13 years in New Zealand and overseas. I am married to Natasha and we have a son, Ashton aged 6. My interests are mountain biking, swimming, drumming and travelling. I believe my role as a teacher is to nurture and encourage the lifelong learning of my students. Through hands-on activities, classroom discussion, and even the use of humour, I hope to prompt students to think creatively and explore their natural curiosity.

We have a number of new students to the school: Bradley, Ameera, Ella L and Laureigh. We welcome your families to our school and are sure you will love being part of Otakiri School.

Our class has been named after our native Tui. It is significant because of their personality and they are associated with life fulfilment, confidence and harmony. In Māori culture the Tui has powerful significance. We will try to uphold these qualities in Tui class.

This year Tui students will continue to become LEADers at the school. Through the development of our PB4L, Mana and LEAD programs. They will be developing their ability to Learn with Purpose, Engage with Kindness, Act with Respect and Dare to Dream. When students are seen showing these virtues without prompting they will be awarded a token in the respective colour which goes into the fortnightly and end of term draws. It also means that they will get a click on their card which, when full, awards them a LEAD certificate which will show that they have the virtues of an Otakiri School LEADer. As the term and the year progresses children will also be encouraged to recognise these values in themselves and others.

Our beginning of the year unit is called Ko Au, Ko Takū Tūrangawaewae - Me and My Place. This unit is all about our personal growth and belonging. We will investigate topics to do with our pepeha, daily and background.

If you want to get in touch with me you are welcome to send a note with your child and organise a time for discussion; or, alternatively, pop in for a quick chat or email me at [simon@otakiri.school.nz](mailto:simon@otakiri.school.nz) .

### **Some details.....**

Your child is strongly encouraged to bring a named bottle of fresh water every day.

Children will be given homework most Mondays. This is to be completed and handed in on Friday mornings. Homework encourages good study and work skills and aims to further consolidate or

extend the learning within the classroom. Please support your child where necessary and please remember it is supposed to be an affirming experience.

Children in Year 5/6 are expected to take a lot more responsibility for their own belongings. Please help your children by ensuring that all their equipment and belongings are adequately named. You could also facilitate this independence with queries and reminders regarding notices, trips, stationery, homework, etc.

Children are assessed at the beginning of each term to establish their spelling age and relevant spelling list. Spelling activities will be given as part of homework activities and will be written/glued in separately to the homework sheet. Buddy testing will occur on Friday.

Monday to Thursday each week, some children will bring home an instructional reading book which they have had that day. Please ensure these books are read each night and brought back to school the following day. Children are encouraged to read their library book if they have no reader. Children have a variety of reading material and often work with journals, so they may bring home the same book all week.

Our library day is Thursday. Please remind children to have their books at school to exchange / renew. Students will take two books out and one will remain in class for silent reading after lunch. Please provide your child with a book bag or similar to protect our readers and library books. Students are encouraged to bring a chromebook to school fully charged daily. We also have school chromebooks for students to use if your family doesn't own one.

Kind Regards

Mr. Simon Ballantyne

# Getting To Know Your Child

Please fill this in and return to school by the end of Week 3

At Otakiri School we take a great deal of pride in the way that we get to know your children, however we also realise that you spend more time with your children than we do. Your knowledge of your child will give us a valuable insight into him or her from your own perspective. Because of this we want you to tell us about your child so we ask that you fill in the boxes below and hand back to your child's teacher as soon as you can. Feel free to write as much as you want or to even write using bullet points, you may even wish to involve your children in the compilation of your thoughts.

My child's name is \_\_\_\_\_

Describe your child's personality.	
What interests and hobbies does your child have?	
What are the academic strengths that you believe your child has?	
What learning needs do you think your child has – if any?	

Every child learns in different ways....how do you see your child as a learner? What is the best way that your child learns?	
What goals do you have for your child this year and how can you help us to achieve these?	
Other relevant personal information. Family situations, health needs, that may affect learning. situations, health needs, that may affect learning.	