

Tōtara Syndicate Newsletter

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Dear Parents and Caregivers,

Welcome back to the first of our two winter terms — let's hope the good weather some of us enjoyed during the holidays holds for a little longer! This term is a short one, with only nine weeks, but it promises to be a very busy and exciting time.

To follow is a brief summary of what we have planned over the coming months.

Topic/Inquiry:

We have a major focus on Science this term. Students will explore fair tests, scientific procedures, and experiment design. They will be asked to either conduct and report back on a science experiment of their choice or create a STEM-based solution using a variety of equipment and technology. Their work, whether a traditional fair test or a STEM project, will be showcased at our Science Fair, which will be held in the Hall on Tuesday of the first week of Term 3.

Literacy:

Our science focus will provide a meaningful context for explanation and procedural writing this term. We will also continue to reinforce structured literacy features with set activities focused on punctuation, grammar, spelling and sentence construction. Reading will centre on close reading of non-fiction texts, alongside the building of precise and topic-specific vocabulary.

Maths:

Our Maths Strand focus will be on probability and statistics this term. We will also continue to reinforce number knowledge and strategies in workshops held twice a week.

Sport/PE:

Cross-country training has started ahead of the whole-school event on Friday of Week 4. We have have a Rugby 7s tournament coming up in Week 3. Basketball and Netball is getting underway and many students have signed up for the Tough Guy and Girl Challenge, being held on the 21st of May.

GENTLE REMINDERS

SCHOOL UNIFORM

Term 2 is the first of our two winter terms. Please ensure that any extra layers of clothing confirm with the school's uniform policy - no branding and preferably black.

CHROMEBOOKS

There is limited availability of school supplied chromebooks for students. If your child has their own device for their own use, can they please bring it in fully charged every day. This will help us in the delivery of the digital components of our learning programme.

CROSS COUNTRY TRAINING

Students are training for cross-country in the first four weeks of the term. Please ensure they come to school with appropriate shoes for running.

EARLY START ON THURSDAYS

Technicraft has already started up again for the term. Please make sure your child is at school by 8.30am on Thursdays so that we can leave at 8.45am for Brandon Intermediate. Also make sure they aren't wearing Crocs or open toe shoes.

Health/Hauora:

This term we will be focusing on the skills, attributes, and behaviours that build and sustain positive friendships and collaboration. We will also be looking at aspects of building resilience.

Beyond 3pm:

Home Learning will be available for your child to access this term. Whilst participation is optional, it provides a valuable way for students to reinforce their learning at home. The majority of Tōtara's home learning can be accessed via Google Classroom and will include links to our Science/STEM Inquiry, reading activities, maths programmes and touch typing tutorials.

Colleges 2026:

Term Two is when we usually start receiving information about College Open Days and Evenings. Kapiti College has already advised us of their Open Day on the 17th of June. I will collate and share this information with you as a single notice where possible over the next few weeks.

As you can see, it is only a nine week term, but there's lots to get through

Thanks and regards on behalf of the Totara Syndicate.



Mark Hughes