

# Room 5 Term 1 Newsletter

7th February 2017

Dear Families/Caregivers,

Kia Ora and again welcome to Room 5 for 2017. This year, we have 25 superb students in our class. We are part of Team Kowhai and I will be teaching alongside Glenda Stuart (Room 13), Jo Exeter (Room 9) and Heath Hooper (Room 8). As we all have Year 3 and 4 classes, we will be planning collaboratively to best meet the learning needs of all our Kowhai Kids.

Just a little bit about me... this is my fifth year teaching at Arthur Miller School. Before teaching, I studied in Wellington and gained a Bachelor of Science at Victoria University and then left for my OE, with my husband, Ben. On Returning home I studied to become a teacher and moved to Napier to take up the position here at AMS. Ben is a builder by trade, but in 2014 joined the Fire Service full time and is based at the Hastings Station. Last year we built our own home in Parklands which was a fairly large undertaking that tested our resilience and persistence many times! We have one fur baby called Nala.

This year I am taking on the role of Lead Mentor Teacher for our three EIT candidate teachers (CTs as we call them). The CTs are at AMS on Tuesday's and Thursday's for the whole year, as part of their practice based learning. This will mean every Tuesday afternoon Mrs Nikki Palamountain will be teaching in Room 5 so I can have classroom release time to meet with the CTs and help keep them on track with the learning they need to do. Nikki P is very familiar with Room 5 and our routines.

Outlined below is some helpful information about what is planned for Room 5 this term.

## Organisation Information:

**Home Learning Books:** The Home Learning expectations have been glued into the front of your child's homework book. Please take the time to read and discuss with your child what is expected of them in regards to home learning. The compulsory components of home learning are:

- **Reading:** A reading book will be sent home each night from Monday to Thursday for most students. These books will be either a book at an instructional level or a book from their browsing books, which is at an independent level. Please listen to or read with your child. If your child is selecting their own material at home (i.e. a chapter book) please have them record this on their reading log. The reading log on your child's home learning sheet needs to be filled out each day. There will be times when your child's instructional reading book will be the same for the entire week as it may be a journal or a longer story we are focusing on for a number of days.
- **Spelling:** Your child will have ten words to learn each week. These will be based around our phonics spelling focus for the week and words they have to learn from errors from Essential List testing. These weekly lists will be tested by a buddy each Friday.
- **Mathematics:** The math home learning will be related to what your child is learning in class during the week. It may be paper homework and/or computer based.

Home Learning books must be at school on **Monday** and **Friday**. It is the responsibility of the children to get home learning organised if they were absent on Monday. I appreciate your continued support in this area.

**Book Bags:** Book Bags are useful in helping the class store their home learning and notices. It is also a great visual check for me to see who is organised at the end of the day. Please ensure that your child brings these to school every day.

**Class Blog:** Remember to regularly check the Room 5 blog <http://amsrufford.edublogs.org>. There will be access to some useful websites which may assist your child's home learning; also photographs from classroom activities will be posted. Please visit the site as a lot of time and effort is put into it!

**Team Two Assemblies:** These are every Friday from 12:00 till 12:25.

**Library:** Our class library session is Tuesday. Children are encouraged to make appropriate book choices and are allowed to issue two books. On Tuesday nights, the library books they have issued will be their reading homework. Books will be collected the following week for returning.

**Drink Bottles:** Children need to keep up their fluids during the hot weather and should have a named water bottle at their desk. Please no juice or fizz in the bottles. All water bottles are sent home on Friday to be washed.

**Seesaw App:** For the first time this year I will be using an application called Seesaw, which I know some parents will already be familiar with. Seesaw is a simple way for teachers and students to record and share what's happening in the classroom. Seesaw gives students a place to document their learning, be creative and learn how to use technology. Each student gets their own journal and will add things to it, like photos, videos, drawings, or notes. <http://web.seesaw.me/parents/> this link has a really nice explanation of the app for parents. I am still setting it all up and will send a notice home once it is all up and running.

**Bucket Filling -** Throughout the course of the school year your students will be practicing being bucket fillers! The concept of being a bucket filler comes from Carol McCloud's Book 'Have You Filled A Bucket Today?' and stems around the idea that everyone carries around an invisible bucket that throughout the day is being filled by the kind things that you do for others or that others do for you. A bucket filler is someone who is showing positive character traits (kind, considerate, caring, and respectful) and is being a responsible citizen. When our buckets are full, we feel happy and when our buckets are empty we feel sad. For the next few weeks, we will be learning about different qualities that bucket fillers and bucket dippers exhibit. We will continuously be reading and re-reading 'Have You Filled A Bucket Today?' so students are able to really grasp the concept of bucket filling. We will be practicing being a bucket filler in the classroom, and encourage students to be bucket fillers at home.

## What are we learning?

We begin the year with a focus on "Caring, Collaborative and Curious Learners". This mini unit is based on children developing positive relationships with others and exploring our school values. We will also explore the "Growth Mindset" model of learners. If you have a growth mindset, you believe that with **work, practice, and perseverance**, you can improve – whether it's your academic performance, or any other skill. (Those with the opposite, a fixed mindset, believe that our intelligence and talents are predisposed, and either you were born with it or not.) Thanks to the great work of Stanford's Carol Dweck, we know that not only is the growth mindset accurate, but those who hold these beliefs actually improve more than those with a fixed mindset, which makes it so essential for our kids! There is loads of information on the internet about how to help your child have a growth mindset, and how you can help at home.

Here is an outline of what we will be doing in some other curriculum areas:

**Mathematics:** Our math topics this term are: Subtraction and addition, division and multiplication, (including the correct use of the equals sign). At level 2 we are making sure children have strong place value knowledge and can see numbers in many parts, for example: the number 5 can be 1 and 4, or 2 and 3 or 0 and 5 etc. This understanding can then be applied to much larger numbers. We will be differentiating between the 'fast maths' (math facts we just need to know) and 'thinking maths', where a problem may take a few days or all week.

**Literacy: Reading Strand-** our reading focus will be revisiting strategies to decode unfamiliar words in order to improve comprehension skills. I will group children for reading based on running records and classroom observations in the coming weeks. These groupings are not fixed and change as the needs of the class changes.

**Writing Strand-** our focus is enriching our writing with descriptive language, familiarizing ourselves with the writing process and writing conventions (full stops, capital letters, spelling conventions etc).

**Oral Language-** Our oral language focus this term is interpersonal listening and speaking courtesies.

**Physical Education:**

We will be swimming for the first 6 weeks of term. Your child is expected to swim as it is part of the school curriculum. If your child is unable to swim, a written note/email would be appreciated. Our swimming focus is to build water confidence and water safety.

**Extracurricular Activities:** There are many sports and cultural activities available to students in team Kowhai, including tee ball, cricket, basketball, kapahaka and choir to name a few. Students are encouraged to put their name forward for these activities by teachers, but if there is something in particular you feel your child should be involved in please let me know so I can ensure they get relevant notices and make practices.

**Important Dates** (these are also all on the school calendar on the school website, which is updated regularly)

- - AMS Fun Evening 16<sup>th</sup> February
- - Taradale Library visit 22<sup>nd</sup> February
- - Invitation to chat with the teacher 1-2 March
- - Good Friday 14<sup>th</sup> April (Term 1 Ends Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> April)

Phew... I think that is all for now!

I am looking forward to working with you this year to ensure your child's time in Room 5 is a positive and happy learning experience.

If you have any queries or concerns, please don't hesitate to come and see me. It is always best to make an appointment if you think that more than a quick word is required, as I tend to get fairly busy in the mornings. You are welcome to e-mail me at school.

Kind Regards

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Class Blog: [amsrufford.edublogs.org](http://amsrufford.edublogs.org)

School Twitter: Just text follow @School\_AMS to 8987

