



“Little thoughts will get us
nowhere,
so we must pluck up the courage
to think **big** thoughts.”

Rudolf Steiner



NEWSLETTER

DIARY OF DATES

Wednesday 12 th August	5:30 pm Proprietors meeting - staff room
Wednesday 19 th August	6:15 pm BoT meeting – staff room
Saturday 5th September	Joint meeting
Tuesday 8th September	Keep NZ Beautiful-Harbour side clean-up

PLAYGROUP TIMES (353 PINE HILL ROAD)

Mondays 10 to 12 pm Mixed age children

Wednesdays 10 to 12 pm Mixed age children

For enquiries please contact Bex or Alida dunedinsteinerplaygroup@gmail.com

Kia ora koutou katoa.

As I write this at 7.00 am approaching Alert level 2, I wonder what the next few days will bring.

To be clear: As before in COVID Alert level 2, we asked school families to drop off the children at the gate. This may have continued and we welcome it as a good pedagogical practice. Last time we made concessions for class one as we saw that there may be a need for the closer goodbye cuddle.

From tomorrow I would ask that you return (if not already doing it) to the gate drop off, or the top of the Fern Rd intersection. The 1m distance for familiar people is advised; 2m for strangers.

I assume that if the COVID spread reaches us down here, there may be a call to move to Level 3, which is when we continue to be open for children of essential workers. Effectively what happened last time was that all children stayed at home.

Should we move to Level 3 again, we will ask anew what your position will be so we know your intentions around sending your child(ren) to school at level 3.

Certainly, I don't think that will happen this week, so we are just back to good hygiene and healthy social habits.

And please, continue to keep your children at home if they are unwell and if a member of the family is being tested. Thank you for your co-operation on this: we have had far fewer coughs and colds in evidence at school this winter!

On a different note, yesterday we had a visit from David Clark who is our local MP and has visited the school regularly over the years.

Although he is on the campaign trail, this was not that sort of visit. We took the opportunity to express our needs. He met with Management and we urged his engagement with our current application to increase the school's maximum roll. We also spoke to him about the Bus situation. We told him about our fundraising campaign and the achievement of the new building extension as a result of generous donations from our parents and friends whanau. He was impressed

He then met with the teachers and we basically just shared our journeys that have brought us to the school and how we enjoy our work here. As we have woken to a new position on the COVID trail, one can have low expectation of much action on our behalf but a renewed connection may be helpful in the future.

In closing, I want to thank you for all the positive comments which we submitted with our application for the Roll increase. At this stage it sits with the Ministry but we know that the next steps in the process have been taken.

And a wee note of thanks to the people who turned up for the Working Bee. It was a small but deeply committed group who all turned to the task of digging out the existing soft fill under and around the climbing frame and then filling same hole with new bark chips. It looks great and the children are loving the soft landing.

We still supervise any gymnastic type movement on the climbing bars but swinging from the bars and landing on their feet has appealed to all the lower classes.

Speaking of Gymnastics: We need to seriously address the situation of the children who habitually or occasionally use the city bus and the ones who are now joining that group. Please read my piece below on this subject.

Ngā mihi, Pene Johnstone

Behaviour en route to school and at the Bus stop

We are trying to create the walking bus to safeguard children walking down to catch a parent or a bus. To a certain extent that is working and I'm grateful to the pupils who respect it.

The issue is that once they are at the bus stop, there is a frequent pattern of misbehaviour happening down there.

I would not be surprised if the driver refused to stop when children are climbing all over the roof of the bus stop; rolling around on the grass and climbing trees; throwing things and running around on and off the road. However, it is not the driver's responsibility to censure this behaviour.

I get regular concerns and complaints from parents and neighbours who witness these behaviours.

Although we regularly remind and discipline students on these issues, it is not possible for us to extend our duty. But the children's' behaviour reflects negatively on the school.

I have worked in London and other city schools where students commute considerable distances but this sort of misbehaviour doesn't happen. The sort of antics they get up to here is not what we want to see happening. Our primary concern is the safety of the children and also appropriate behaviour in a public place.

If it continues, I think we will need to take more specific action which is not what I like to resort to.

At the moment many of you meet the children at the bottom, which we applaud as it reduces congestion at the top, but there must be a lift in the level of responsibility around behaviour.

Please talk to your children. The irony is that they like to walk down as they seem to feel it's a token of maturity....

I welcome feedback from parents who witness positive or negative behaviour on Jessie street, Manapouri street or down at the bus stop.

With many thanks, *Pene Johnstone*

What education will look like at Alert level 2 for our region from midday Wednesday until Friday midnight (and maybe beyond)

All children and young people can continue to attend their early learning and school site for on learning at Alert Level 2.

Public health advice is that schools, early learning services and tertiary institutions are safe to open onsite at Alert Level 2 to all learners. People do not need to return to bubbles at Alert Level 2 and can meet with friends and family. But people need to play it safe and continue to take sensible health and safety precautions.

At Level 2, almost all children and young people can continue to attend early learning services, schools and kura onsite. The only exceptions are children or young people who are sick and have any COVID-19 symptoms, are in isolation, or are awaiting the result of a test. with learning support needs where they are required to remain at home.

Playground, sports equipment use and sports, including contact sports, remain available at Alert Level 2. School transport services remain at normal schedules. The ongoing safety of drivers and students and the ability to contact trace will be a priority at Alert Level 2.

Residential Special Schools, Day Special Schools and satellite units are all open at Alert Level 2. Playcentres and playgroups can also continue to meet, provided the public health measures for early learning services are in place. School hostels remain open at Level 2, and OSCAR, along with other before and after school programmes, remain operating.

Public health advice, based on experience in New Zealand and overseas with COVID-19 over many months, shows that it does not infect or affect children and teens in the same way it does adults. Children and teens have low infection rates, they don't become that unwell if they do get infected, and they don't tend to pass the virus on to adults.

Two key public health principles support our education approach to Alert Level 2. These are to minimise the risk that someone gets infected in the first place, and to

ensure we can identify and contact anyone who has been in close contact, if someone in an education institution is infected.

Strong public health control measures will be in place in all education institutions, including learners and staff staying home if they are sick, contact tracing, and safe hygiene requirements. If a school or early learning service has a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19, they may be advised by health to close for 72 hours to allow contact tracing, and then potentially for a further 14 days.

Alert Level 2 is all about being safe and sensible and this is the approach that goes through our guidance to schools and services. So physical distancing will remain important in schools where possible.

We are working on further guidance on the implementation of public health control measures at Alert Level 2.

Ngā mihi

Julie Anderson | Director of Education | Otago Southland

School curriculum review

The Curriculum policies and procedures for the Primary School are currently under review. We welcome your feedback by the 19th of August. You are welcome to either look at the hard copies in the folder in the office reception, or on our website.

<https://www.dunedinsteiner.nz/policies-and-procedures.html>

SCHOOL - Class Kahikatea

Tena koutou,

Class Kahikatea has recently completed a Main Lesson on the Renaissance, a time of resurgence for art, literature, and music after the 'Dark Ages'. For this topic, we have done more art and less writing. One of the areas of artistic exploration that we have used is sculpture.

We have looked at heat and how it moves through various kinds of things. As part of that Main Lesson we made some sky-lanterns, which we tested at school tied onto strings (to mixed success!).

We have just started another science Main Lesson. This time we are looking into Magnetism, and the class is enjoying experimenting with magnets.

Of course I couldn't pass by the opportunity to show off class Kahikatea's model ships which they made last term as part of our Main Lesson topic on the Age of Discovery. Some of the boats are shown here.

Anyone is always welcome to stop by, ask questions, and get a feel for life in the senior class at our Steiner school.

Be Well, *James*







KINDERGARTEN

Dear all,

As I write this late on Tuesday evening, I have just received the news that we are once again in Level 2. We are now familiar with what this means, and our own responsibilities that accompany it. Hygiene practices at kindergarten will, of course, continue to be observed and our regular cleaning regime will be stepped up once again. It is vital that if your child is unwell that you keep them at home. Maybe now might be a good time to download the contact tracing app, and use it when you are dropping off and picking up.

Thank you to everyone who continues to send their child with a drink bottle. For those who may have forgotten, please ensure a drink bottle is in your child's bag, or even left at kindergarten for the week before going home at the weekend.

We have a new student on placement in the Rata room - Georgia Ducker. She is from the Otago Polytech, and will be with us on Wednesdays and Fridays.

Love, *the Kindy teachers.*

“The Sense of Touch Connie Helms

Connie works in private practice as an Extra Lesson teacher in Vermont with children, adolescents and adults at Balance in Childhood. She is a consultant to Waldorf schools in the U.S., mentors Waldorf remedial teachers and serves on the board of the Association for a Healing Education. Connie is the mother of three young adult children who attended Waldorf schools from nursery through grade eight. She can be reached by e-mail at conniehelms@gmavt.net

The sense of touch is already at work in utero-the growing foetus is able to sense contact with the placenta. Then, the onset of labour brings a strong impression of squeezing, pushing and meeting a boundary. If a vaginal birth follows at least several hours of labour, chances are that the new-born will have had a substantial experience of touch in the moments before birth.

If a child has experienced a fast birth (less than 3 hours labour) or a caesarean birth, then it is likely that the sense of touch was not strong enough in this threshold experience. Fortunately, firm swaddling is a time honoured tradition known by midwives and hospital nurses the world over to give the child the touch boundary she needs, whether she is being held or not.

Many cultures promote this practice for the first three months or more and for good reason-the firm pressure gives the infant a sense of safety. With NICU babies, they are wearing a little plastic diaper and maybe a onesie, so often there's no firm swaddling unless they receive kangaroo care (skin to skin). These babies especially need months of very firm swaddling and baby massage once out of NICU. Paediatrician Dr. Harvey Karp calls the first three months of life “the 4th trimester” and advocates very firm swaddling as seen in his videos.

Using the deep and also superficial layers of our skin, we learn where we end, and where something else in the world begins-a person, a blanket, a toy. We learn that we are separate from the world but through touch we also can connect to others. With loving touch, a child is comforted and feels sheltered and contained. Touch helps us to learn about boundaries and helps us to feel separate from the things we encounter.

Issues arise when the sense of touch has not received enough stimulation in infancy and the early years. Known as tactile defensiveness, a child may experience a light brush against the arm as a strong push, causing an overreaction. The adults are puzzled because they saw a light touch, yet to the child a great offence has occurred. This child may punch others as retaliation.

Hitting is a way to protect oneself, yet how often is it interpreted as aggressive or inappropriate behaviour? A child may unconsciously refuse to stand in line where the risk of getting bumped by others is likely, yet a teacher may see this as defiance instead. Likewise, a child may resist sitting with his back against the back of a chair, especially if it's hard plastic.

Some children with tactile sensitivity seek out firm touch by crashing into people or objects, stomping around, or jumping off furniture or steps. All of these help a child to get the proprioceptive feedback he needs-feeling where his body, muscles and joints are in relation to the world around him. Often these children crawl into bed with mom or dad in the night. They wake up and do not feel a boundary-"where am I? Where do I end and where does the world begin?" So snuggling next to an adult provides that missing boundary.

Another way a tactile issue may manifest is when children resist wearing layers of natural fibres, which are heavier than synthetic fibres, or they resist wearing snug clothing, preferring a loose style without anything touching at the waist, etc. Tactile defensive issues may not show up in the early years but can show up later in school.

Other indicators include not liking hugs from certain people, and a dislike of haircuts and crowds.

What can a parent do?

Children with a compromised sense of touch need firm pressure which can become part of a daily diet for several months. Children do outgrow this issue for the most part, and the best way to help them is to play games at home:

- Rough house play with siblings and parents
- Flying angels (parent on floor w/ legs raised up, child's tummy on mom or dad's feet)
- Snow angels on floor or outside
- Wrapping in blankets/quilts-cocoon or burrito, firm pressure applied
- Sandbox play
- Being buried up to the neck in sand at beach if child can tolerate it, or just legs
- Millet box "magic millet" –wonderful to scoop hands in to find hidden gems, etc.

- Bear hugs
- Being allowed to run and crash into a stack of cushions
- Hand clap games
- Rolling on the floor or grass
- Sandwich the child between pillows/cushions and lean your weight on them – just not on the head.
- Roll the child in a futon
- Firm massage – especially to the back
- For sleeping, put long pillows on either side of the child, or in a sleeping bag, and put the dog on the bed! Labs are great!
- Hold gently but firmly
- Connect the activity with firm boundaries, safety and security, and have fun!”

CRAFTGROUP

Could you be our new craft shop coordinator? Sharyn Broni is stepping down after many years of doing a wonderful job at looking after our craft shop. The craft shop almost runs itself aside from stationery orders. Please talk to Sharyn if you think you might be interested in helping us by taking on this role sharyn285@gmail.com.

COMMUNITY NOTICES

Community notices in our newsletter will normally appear for one week only and may be edited to accommodate space. If you wish to place a notice please email your notice to office@dunedinsteiner.nz. We charge \$10 for an advert and need ads in by the Monday prior to the Wednesday publication date. You can pay by direct internet banking to 03-0903-0437318-00

The effect of screen: This is a nice short clip about the effect of screen time of children. One of the contributors is Dr Sebastian Suggate, formerly of Dunedin, author of a study on the impact of a later start to reading and writing. <https://www.bbc.com/reel/video/p08k84jw/why-the-way-our-children-watch-screens-matters>

Motueka school initiative: Parents course "Our Twelve Senses" We have had numerous requests to re-run this instructive course, based on the insights of Rudolf Steiner, for all who have a loving concern for the healthy development of the child -- of any age. Parents of pre-school children will especially benefit from the professional, practical, guidance offered. We encourage

you to join these Zoom sessions, weekly from 7th September through to 23rd November. The cost is minimal (NZ\$25 for the full course) so that everyone may benefit. Look at our website for registration and more details: parentscourse.co.nz.

Taruna Colleges: The Art of Well-Being invites you to take three weeks over your coming year to find a new connection to your own well-being. This programme is gentle yet enquiring, focussing on three themes that renew our well-being. **New Art of Well-Being dates for 2020/21:** Seminar One: Wednesday 19 August - Monday 24 August 2020, Seminar Two: Wed 4 November - Monday 9 November 2020, Seminar Three: Wed 10 February - Monday 15 February 2021
www.taruna.ac.nz



If you want to compost your vegetable scraps and other kitchen compostables, but do not have the space to have a compost heap, then why not use the Green Thumbs compost scheme here in Dunedin. I have a compost heap that would happily take your scraps - if you are interested I can give you a lidded bucket which you could fill and bring to me at school. Clare 021 231 2633. Or look up the scheme to see who is in your neighbourhood.