

ŌWHANGO SCHOOL

PARENTS' INFORMATION BOOKLET



The staff of Ōwhango School have prepared this booklet to outline the school's current procedures and policies. Please take a few minutes to read it carefully to familiarise yourself with the school's routines. We hope that you find it a useful source of information. Please retain it for future reference.

OUR STRATEGIC PLAN

OUR VISION

Happy, thriving tamariki

OUR MISSION

The tamariki at Ōwhango School are engaged in our unique rural environment, are individual in their learning, and strong in experience and success.

OUR STRATEGIC GOALS

Be inclusive of Te Tiriti o Waitangi

All our tamariki will progress and achieve to their highest potential through quality teaching, learning, and positive relationships

Make the most of our local environment educating outside of the classroom

As a community hub we encourage whānau and community involvement

STAFFING 2025

PRINCIPAL

Ewan Starkey

TEACHING STAFF

Room 3: Kowhai (Juniors) Siobhan McKenna
Ewan Starkey (Fridays)

Room 1: Kahikatea (Middles) Theresa Owen
Siobhan McKenna (Fridays)

Room 2: Rimu (Seniors) Jessie Smith

ANCILLARY STAFF

Office Administrator	Karen Erni, Office Administrator (Tuesdays - Fridays)
Teachers' Aides	Maree Ashcroft & Kim Petersen
Cleaner	Kelly Whitehead
Caretaker	Paul Lacy
Technician	Clive Gifford

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Nicole Hosking (Chairperson)
Dale Erueti
Guy Hoban
Aaron Owen
Mark Bramley
Jessie Smith
Ewan Starkey

PTA

Trudie Wheeler (Chairperson)
Cara O'Donnell/Tania Bramley (Secretary)
Libby Ogle (Treasurer)

SCHOOL OPENING HOURS/ROUTINE:

School is open for instruction from 9:00am to 3:00pm.

Morning break 10:40 – 11:00

Lunch break 12:30 – 1:30

Pupils may be dropped off at school from **8:30am onwards**, (unless by prior arrangement) and are to be collected **by 3:15pm**, unless emergency arrangements have been made with the teaching staff.

2025 TERM DATES

Term One- 4th February to 11th April – Teacher only day 7th February

Term Two- 28th April to 27th June - Teacher only day 9th June

Term Three- 14th July to 19th September

Term Four- 6th October to 17th December

OFFICE HOURS

The office is usually manned from **8:30am – 1:30pm Tuesday-Friday**. If you need to telephone the school, could you please try to do so during these hours, so as not to disrupt teaching time in class. An answer phone may be in operation if we are busy.

Contact details:

Phone	07 895 4823
Website	www.owhangoschool.co.nz
Email office	office@owhango.school.nz
Email principal	principal@owhango.school.nz

A-Z References:

ABSENCES

Please notify the school office in advance if your child is to be absent. This is particularly relevant for children who walk or cycle to school. After teachers have taken the class roll office staff will phone parents to follow up on “unexplained absences”.

AFTER SCHOOL ARRANGEMENTS

Children are to be collected by 3:15pm please.

Please ensure that your children’s after school arrangements are **clearly known** to both your children and the teaching staff. We ask that the following guidelines are closely adhered to:

- It is vital that you notify the school, of any changes to your children’s normal routine arrangements.
- We request that you organise your children’s home arrangements **before they leave home in the mornings**. We do realise that emergencies do crop up from time to time and we are only too glad to try and be of assistance then. We are trying to eliminate interruptions to the classroom programmes.
- We suggest that children don’t organise after school visits to friends’ houses at the school gates; this eliminates children bringing undue pressure on their own caregivers and their friends’ parents.

ANIMALS

We welcome animals on the school grounds but expect you to remove their faeces.

ASSEMBLIES

We aim to hold occasional assemblies with each classroom taking it in turn to host.

We invite parents and the community, the exact date and times of these are advertised in the newsletter.

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR FOR LEARNING (PB4L) and PAR

Ōwhango School uses the 'Positive Behaviour for Learning' (PB4L) system. PB4L helps schools to develop a social culture that supports learning and positive behaviour. As part of this we have a 'Traffic Lights'

behaviour plan (see below). This is an approach that supports our school to create a culture where positive behaviour and learning thrive. Students are taught in very specific terms what behaviours are expected of them and there is a consistent response to behaviours across the school. Behaviour, like other areas of learning, needs to be formally taught. The emphasis is on students' positive behaviours rather than focussing on the negative ones.

At Ōwhango School we teach the students to stay on **PAR**, where they **P**articipate, **A**chieve and **R**espect. We strive to engrain PAR into all aspects of school life.

See the charts below for more detail.

BICYCLES

Bikes may be ridden to school from home. Bikes may not be ridden on the school grounds between 8:30am and 3:00pm. We have Bike Days during the year where the children can ride their bikes during school time and challenging courses are set up to extend their riding skills. They must wear a bicycle helmet when riding.

BIRTH CERTIFICATE

To fulfil the Ministry of Education requirement, you will be requested to produce your child's birth certificate at the time of enrolment.

BULLYING

If you think your child is being bullied, please contact your class teacher to discuss it. If we are unaware of it, we cannot deal with it. (See also Concerns and Complaints below.)

CELLPHONES

Children are not permitted to bring cell phones or internet connected watches to school. If they are needed before or after school, they are to be left in the school office.

CHEWING GUM & SWEETS

Chewing gum, bubble gum and sweets are not permitted at school.

CONCERNS & COMPLAINTS (For more details ask at the office to see our Complaints Policy)

If you ever have a concern, please discuss it with your child's teacher. Please make an appointment with the teacher to discuss these concerns. The best time to do this is after school, as the teaching staff are usually very busy before school preparing for the day.

Complaints about staff members (except the principal), verbal or written, must be referred directly to the principal. Anonymous complaints will not be accepted.

Complaints about the principal must be submitted in writing to the Board of Trustees and signed by the complainant.

CONTACTING STAFF MEMBERS

Occasionally emergencies crop up and you may need to contact a staff member at home. We do ask that all other matters are dealt with at school please.

DANGEROUS GOODS

Children must not bring dangerous goods to school.

TRAFFIC LIGHTS - BEHAVIOUR PLAN

All students start the day on green.

The aim is to stay here all day.

Each class has a reward to those who stay on green all day.

1st minor behaviour – child stays on green but is warned about their behaviour. Record it on chart (time and behaviour), teacher informed if at duty time, and on computer (by the end of the day).

2nd minor behaviour - child's name moves to yellow. Record it on chart (time and behaviour), teacher informed if at duty time, and on computer (by the end of the day). Discuss strategies to prevent the behaviour repeating. Try to catch them doing positive things. Record on computer by the end of the day.

3rd minor offence – or a major behaviour: child's name moves to red. Record it on chart (time and behaviour), teacher informed if at duty time, and on computer (by the end of the day).

4W form is completed together by teacher who witnessed the behaviour and the student. Parents are contacted. 30 minutes of extra work during lunchtime the following day.

Crisis – Child is removed from the class. Parents are phoned. 4w form records what happened (note it may be better to do these once things have calmed down.) A plan of action is made to prevent the problem again.

At any time, it may be beneficial to have a child go and work in another environment, to give some calming down, thinking time before joining the class. Take them to another class with some work to do. If this is not possible *then* they can go to the principal.

Major and Minor Behaviours

MINOR

Not following expectations
Repeated calling out
Repeated ignoring teachers
Inappropriate language (shu up, swearing when a toe is
stubbed etc.)
Back chatting
Bossing others
Littering

MAJOR

Threatening others
Verbally abusive (swearing at people, etc)
Serious defiance
Theft
Vandalism
Physical violence (intentional hitting, kicking etc.)
Minor fighting

CRISIS

Major fighting
Extreme physical violence
Inappropriate touching
Drugs including alcohol & tobacco products
Extreme verbal abuse
Ongoing serious defiance

DENTAL THERAPIST

The dental therapists now operate out of a mobile clinic which visits our school. Occasionally you will need extra visits outside these visits and will need to travel to the clinic.

Contact phone number 0800TALKTEETH.

FUNDRAISING

All fundraising under the school's name must have the prior approval and authorisation of the school. Please contact the principal to arrange this.

GROUP SPECIAL EDUCATION (GSE) & RESOURCE TEACHER OF LEARNING AND BEHAVIOUR (RTLb) SERVICE

We have access to Resource Teachers of Learning and Behaviour who can provide help and support with learning and behavioural difficulties. If you have any concerns, please contact the school.

HEADLICE

Check your child's head regularly for headlice. Should you discover that your child has contracted headlice please notify the school. The Public Health Nurse advised that it is often less expensive to treat by obtaining a prescription through their GP. If you are experiencing any difficulties treating the headlice contact the Public Health, phone 896 0020 ext 24195. We have occasional headlice checks done at school. If you do not wish your child to have their hair checked, please send a note along to school.

HELPING AT SCHOOL

We actively encourage parents to become involved with school life. We have an enthusiastic group of parents, grandparents and friends of the school who assist in a voluntary capacity on a regular basis with reading, numeracy, sports tuition, music tuition, making teaching resources, arts and crafts, gardening. Please contact the school if you would like to help. Another way to help is through our active PTA (Parent Teacher Association). This group regularly helps with activities and fundraising to support our school's programme. Please ask at the office about this.

HOMEWORK

Homework is optional. We believe children should be learning through play or helping around the house when not at school. We would love it if you encouraged your child to read, build, play board or card games, create, explore, and investigate while not at school; that can only enhance what we are doing with your child.

ILLNESS

Please keep your children home if they are unwell to help halt the spread of infection to others. If they have vomited, please keep them away for **24 hours**. Please notify the school office if your child is to be absent **before 9:00am**.

IMMUNISATION CERTIFICATES

To fulfil the Ministry of Education requirement, you will be requested to produce your child's immunisation certificate at the time of enrolment.

INDEPENDENCE

We encourage pupils to gain independence at an early age. Junior room pupils in particular benefit greatly from organising their own possessions, e.g., clothing, reading books and lunch boxes.

INTERNET

Year 3 – 8 students must sign the School Computer and Internet Use Agreement and have the signed permission of a parent or caregiver before using the internet at school.

JEWELLERY

The children may wear jewellery; however, it is at their own risk of loss or injury. Some sports do not allow certain items to be worn due to potential injury.

KEEP US UP TO DATE

Please notify the school of any changes of address, telephone (home and work), doctor, and emergency contacts. It is most important that you keep us up to date with any changes affecting your child's health.

LIBRARY

We have a very well-resourced school library. All classes make regular visits. The children may get two books out at a time, these need to be returned before more will be issued. Please check your bookshelves occasionally to ensure that all school books are returned. We occasionally send notes home if a book has been out for too long so that it can be located and returned.

LOST PROPERTY

Please ensure that all your children's clothing and possessions (pens, pencils etc) are clearly named. Lost property is kept in a basket outside the office. If all clothing is named, it can be quickly returned to its owner if forgotten. Lost property will be disposed of at the end of each term.

LUNCHES

As part of our Healthy Schools programme the only drink permitted at school is water. Foods high in sugar are not permitted (e.g., sweets). Bought lunches are sometimes available via the PTA in the winter term (term 3); watch out for these in the newsletter.

MEDICATIONS

Occasionally children are required to take medication. Consent forms for staff to administer the medication need to be signed by a parent first. Normally though we would expect sick children to be kept home. Please label your child's medication clearly and note any special instructions.

MEETINGS

Board of Trustees are usually held twice a term and PTA meetings on an as-needed basis. They are advertised in the school newsletters. All are most welcome to attend.

MONEY

All money that is brought to school needs to be taken to the office for the office administrator to collate.

MUSIC

Pupils are not permitted to bring music to school to play unless it is part of their class programme. Some of today's popular music contain lyrics that is unsuitable for school. Kids are welcome to sing and play instruments at school.

NEWSLETTER / PANUI

Weekly newsletters are emailed out on Wednesdays. This is our main method of keeping you up to date with what is happening at school. A paper copy is also given to the eldest child to take home. The

newsletter is emailed to community members when requested and loaded onto our school website. The most recent newsletter is displayed on a notice board in the corridor.

PARKING OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL

Please ensure that you park on the same side of the road as the school when collecting or dropping off your children. The police regularly remind us of the dangers of children running across a road at the school gate to get into cars. Please don't park over the school entranceway (marked with large yellow NP letters), as this needs to be kept clear for emergency services and courier deliveries. Please don't park over the footpath outside the school or on the school grounds.

PET DAY AND SPRING FESTIVAL

A Pet Day and Spring Festival is held in term three or four. Details are sent out around that time.

PHOTOCOPYING AND LAMINATING

The school provides a photocopying and laminating service. Please contact the office for charges.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION PARTICIPATION

All pupils will be expected to take part in P.E. activities. If your child is unable to participate due to medical reasons, please notify the school in writing.

POLICIES

If you would like a copy of any of our school policies, please ask at the office for a copy.

PRESCHOOL PREPARATION PROGRAMME

This programme is to ease the transition of children starting primary school for the first time. The programme is split into two parts. The first part takes place after school and involves one visit to the school at 3:15pm. You and your child visit the school for about 30 minutes to meet the teacher and see inside the classroom and surrounding buildings. This familiarises your child with the new and exciting environment.

The second part of the programme happens the month prior to your child's fifth birthday (or the date that you have chosen to start your child- children do not have to start primary school until they are 6). They attend school for three visits, from 8:45am to 11:00 **or** 10:30am to 1:30pm **or** 12:30 to 3:00pm (preferably one of each so they get a sense of a whole day's programme). This enables your child to socialise with the children and become familiar with class and school routines. A parent, caregiver or suitable adult must remain at the school, but prefer that you are not in the classroom during these visits, so your child gets used to classroom life. If you bring another pre-schooler they must stay with the parent and not come into the class as the additional distraction would not help.

PUBLIC HEALTH NURSE

The Public Health Nurses are based at the Taumarunui Hospital. They regularly visit the school. For information or advice ask the school or call them on 896 0020 ext. 24195.

PUNCTUALITY

Please ensure that your child is at school by **8:50am**. Classes begin at 9:00, and the children need time to organise their belongings for the day. Teaching children punctuality is beneficial for their whole life.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Religious instruction is not offered at Ōwhango School. We have consulted with the school community in deciding whether to provide religious instruction. Ōwhango School fosters an inclusive school

community, and respects staff and students' right to practice and observe their own faiths and spiritual beliefs.

REPORTING TO PARENTS

School reports are issued towards the end of terms two and four. Mid-year interviews are scheduled near the end of term two to further discuss the written school report.

ROLLER BLADES, ROLLER SKATES, RIPSTICKS, SKATEBOARDS, SCOOTERS OR ANY OTHER WHEELED TOYS THAT DO NOT HAVE GEARS (i.e., not bikes)

These are allowed at school and can be played with during the morning tea and lunch break. Children **must** wear a cycle helmet and closed-in shoes when using them. We support the use of safety pads and wrist guards as well.

SCHOLASTIC BOOKS

Students may order books from Scholastic Books. Brochures are sent out periodically. The school collects bonus points from all sales and uses these points to purchase additional books for the library.

SCHOOL FEES

Ōwhango School proudly does not charge school fees. We have also joined in the Ministry Donations Scheme. We therefore do not charge for any curricula activities. Instead, we make occasional requests for families to assist with working bees at school. We do charge for the beginning of the year stationery, uniforms, and non-curricula activities such as team sports and skiing (which is heavily subsidised by the PTA and Board.)

SMOKE and VAPE FREE

The school buildings, grounds and pool surrounds are smoke free at all times.

STATIONERY

We charge for stationery packs at the beginning of the year. Any additional stationery items are provided free of charge during the year. Students are welcome to bring their own items for example felt pens, etc.

SUNSMART

To prevent sunburn the students must wear a suitable sun hat outside during the hottest part of terms one and four. This can either be a uniform bucket hat that they receive for free when they enrol, or any hat with a brim, all the way around that is at least 6cm, or a cap if they apply sunblock to the exposed skin on their ears and necks. These can be any colour- it is simpler for each child to have their own, unique hat so that they recognise it when they are looking for it!

Please ensure that your child leaves this at school. We have a *No Hat No Play* rule to encourage the students to put their hats away after they use them. We also expect their hats to be named so that if they are found outside, we can return them to the owner. We do keep sunscreen at school for the children to use too.

SWIMMING POOL

We are grateful to our forebears who fundraised and worked hard to build our school pool. Many schools are closing their pools due to the cost of maintaining them. We see the pool as vital to teach swimming to the next generation. We will continue to seek out funding to keep our pool operating and in good order. Swimming pool keys may be purchased from the school office. A key refund is made on the return of the key at the end of the swimming season. Our swimming pool is heated.

TOYS

Toys are allowed at school, however they are brought at your own risk- we discourage children from bringing favourite or expensive toys from home as they can easily get lost or broken.

TREE CLIMBING & ROUGH PLAY

We allow the children to climb trees and participate in rough play (also known as play fighting). We teach the skills of three points of contact when climbing trees so that if one limb slips, there are three others holding you up. We also teach the difference between rough play – where everyone is happy and laughing and enjoying it, and fighting, where someone is crying or angry. If you do not want your child participating in either of these activities, then let us know and we can monitor them.

TRIPS

Please ensure that you return your child's permission slip to the school office by the due date, so that arrangements can be finalised in good time. We ask that you refrain from making late changes of arrangements, particularly on the actual morning of trips. Offers of transport for school trips are always appreciated. We expect that driver's offer of transport is for no more children than the number of regulation seat belts available in their vehicle; that they have a current driver's licence; the vehicle being driven is registered and warranted; and that they do not smoke with children in the car.

UNIFORM

Compulsory uniform was introduced at the beginning of term 2 2016 following a thorough parent consultation and vote. Ask at the office for a uniform list or if you have any queries. We ask that you make sure your child is wearing the correct uniform when they come to school. Please clearly name their clothes as they are easily lost otherwise.

USE OF SCHOOL GROUNDS

The public can make use of the school grounds outside of school hours.

VISION AND HEARING

All new entrants have their vision and hearing tested in their first year at school. Year 7 children are also tested. Parents are advised if any vision or hearing defects are detected. If you suspect that your child has a hearing problem, let us know and we will refer them for testing.

WATER BOTTLES

Children are encouraged to have a water bottle in class to drink as required.

WELFARE

Your child's welfare is our concern. Please let us know if there are any factors that might be influencing your child's behaviour. Any information is treated as confidential.

WORKING BEES

The School Board sometimes organise working bees. Offers of help are greatly appreciated.

YOU ARE MOST WELCOME!

We have an open-door policy at school where you are most welcome. Do pop in from time to time and view our wall displays, to see what the children have been doing recently. Morning tea is at 10:40am, come and join the staff for a cuppa and a chat!

