

Diary dates

Coming up . . .

- Monday 16th August **Board/Council Meeting 7pm** Tāwari class
- ~~Tuesday 17th August~~ **Te Reo Parent Education evening POSTPONED**
- Tuesday 17th August **Kawakawa parent/teacher/student conference**
- Wednesday 18th August **Kawakawa parent/teacher/student conference**
- Wednesday 18th August **school accounts 2nd instalment due**
- **Thursday 19th August** Whānau coffee morning
- **Thursday 19th August** Playgroup open morning
- Wednesday 25th August **Practice Lockdown Drill for Preschool & Primary**
- Thursday 26th August **Teacher only day SCHOOL CLOSED**
- Friday 27th August **Mid-term break SCHOOL CLOSED**

Staff only day & Mid term break – next week

NO SCHOOL
Thursday 26th August
&
Friday 27th August

A reminder that Wā Ora preschool, primary and high school will be closed on Thursday 26th August for a staff professional development day. We will also be closed on Friday 27th August for our midterm break. School will re-open as normal on Monday 30th August.

This week

Student choice

By David Starshaw—Mathematics Teacher—High School

Do we want adolescents to be independent learners? The obvious answer is yes. Even if you are not quite sure what it means to be an ‘*independent learner*’, you probably have a sense that independence is a good thing we want our students to embody. Perhaps you think adolescents should be interdependent learners? A student who doggedly insists they are independent and so refuses to ask for help when they are stuck is not going to be very successful. Clearly, we want students who are neither too dependent, nor too independent.

One way we foster this is through student choice. A common phrase you will hear in Montessori circles is “freedom within limits.” And, here too, a balance must be struck. Montessori says “to let the child do as he likes when he has not yet developed any powers of control is to betray the idea of freedom” (The Absorbent Mind). But equally, not enough freedom to make good choices denies the opportunity for adolescents to make mistakes of self-management and learn from them. As teachers, our role is to allow students to fail, but not so badly that they do not get back up and learn from it.

As I have increasingly become more interested in educational research, I have learnt that students, as a rule, do not make good choices on how to best develop their learning. Students that are novices in the topic and struggling, will tend to choose more open-ended tasks that are easier to hide that they don’t know. Students that are becoming intermediate in the topic and understanding the basic ideas, will tend to choose familiar, short, closed questions rather than extending themselves into more open-ended problems. One of the roles of the teacher is to limit the student’s freedom to choose ineffective uses of their time so that they can make good choices and be successful. But, as before, there must be a balance to allow enough freedom without allowing too much.

I was recently surprised to learn that learning styles are still being discussed. This used to be a common way in which students were allowed choice. The educational research has been clear for a long time now that learning styles are not a thing. Or, as was published in 2008, “there is no adequate evidence base to justify incorporating learning styles assessments into general educational practice. Thus, limited education resources would better be devoted to adopting other educational practices that have a strong evidence base.”¹ This is as close to a ‘burn’ as it gets in research.

Student choice is a good and necessary thing. But, like fire, too much is harmful and puts unnecessary roadblocks in the way of progression and future success.

¹ https://www.psychologicalscience.org/journals/pspi/PSPI_9_3.pdf



David teaches maths and occupations (science) in Kawakawa and maths in Tāwari. He has been with Wā Ora since 2014. David’s degree is in music and he travelled to Ohio in 2014 to train as a Montessori high school teacher. He likes that Wā Ora has guided independent learning and that the high school occupations units have real value to the school community (composting, bike maintenance, chickens, etc.). David likes gaming, ultimate frisbee, and making forts.

Te wiki o te reo Māori (Māori language week)

"Te kupu o te wiki"

This week we learn about **taonga pūoro** - traditional musical instruments

Pūtōrino – large traditional flute

Kōauau – cross-blown flute

Nguru – nose flute

Porotiti - whizzing toy

Pūrerehua - roaring disc

Calling all Māori visual artists and carvers – WE NEED YOUR HELP

Wā Ora is a committed Tiriti partner, promoting equitable learning outcomes and recognising the importance of whānau in education. Just as meaningful is providing our ākonga with a beautiful environment as it's the source for creative development in Montessori.

A team of ngā Kaiako/teachers and mātua/parents are working on a project to bring both purposes together and need the help of people who have knowledge and skills in Te Ao Māori art, as well as anyone who would be able to donate their time and artistic ability, to help us create artwork to live in our school's outdoor environment.

Our goal is to develop a wider understanding of Te Ao Māori through Māori art by providing a collaborative experience where ākonga can contribute to the design and build of Māori art that will be part of their everyday environment.

So if you, your parents, siblings, grandparents, cousin, mate or neighbour can help and would like to learn more, please contact Krista@waora.school.nz. We'll keep the call out for help for the whole term and we'd love to hear from you!

The Gaia Collection

Our Y13 Enterprise students Olivia & Eli from The Gaia Collection

have been receiving amazing recognition

recently. In the past week a number of Members of Parliament including the Prime Minister herself has received a pair of their earrings!

Please check them out and support them:
[The Gaia Collection \(mystorbie.com\)](http://TheGaiaCollection.com)



Playgroup open morning



We are holding an open morning this Thursday 19th August for new people to try out our playgroup. If you know of anyone with a toddler aged 18 months to 3 years, please share this information with them ☺ There's no need to register and we'd love to see them along at 9.30 am. We have a number of available spaces for our Thursday mornings group.

Term 3 parent morning tea



Our preschool and primary parent termly morning tea is happening this **Thursday 19th August** at 9am, after drop off at Trade School Kitchen, 17 Everest Avenue, Naenae. These morning teas are very relaxed affairs and offer a great chance for new preschool parents to meet up with existing families. Toddlers and babies are welcome. So join us for a relaxed chat and a cuppa and stay for as long or as short as you can manage ☺.

PTA Fundraiser



PIE FUNDRAISER!

Help the PTA raise funds for a sign-written gazebo by buying delicious, family-sized pies. Sweet and savoury options for \$11 each. Orders and payments due Thursday 2 September.

Collect your pies from school on Thursday 16 September - yum!

Order forms available in the office or by emailing ptawaora@gmail.com

THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

Quiz Night



The 2021 leavers are holding a quiz night with a variety of trivial games to play with your team. Build a team of 4-6 people and send it

to: waoragraduates2021@gmail.com to lock in. Only \$15 per person come along and be in to win big prizes and have a good time! Please don't hesitate to open up your team invites to the wider community! We will host in T2 of the highschool campus from 6pm-8pm on Thursday the 19th of August. Snacks and beverages will be provided.

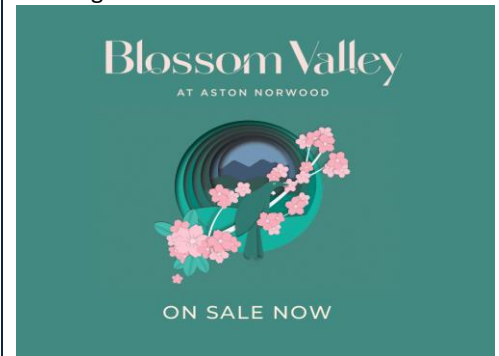
Can you help?

We are looking for companies in our community who would be willing to donate prizes for the leavers quiz night fundraiser contact waoragraduates2021@gmail.com - thank you for your generosity ☺

Blossom Valley 9 Sept – 3 Oct

🌸 Tickets on sale now! 🌸

Booking's must be made to enter!



Welcome in spring with the breathtaking blossoms at **Aston Norwood** right here in the Hutt Valley!

This family-friendly event is the next best thing to visiting Japan during the annual Hanami (flower watching) celebrations. Visit during the day or head along for a magical nighttime viewing – either way, you're in for a visual feast.

General admission ticket prices are \$10 per person and night-time experience tickets are \$20 per person.

A curated cuisine offering can be added to your ticket order. There will also be food and drink available to buy from the onsite Aston Norwood Café.

For tickets head to www.blossomvalley.nz