**Tinwald School**

**Manuka – Room 12 – 2017**

**Dear Parents and Caregivers of Manuka students,**

**Welcome to the 2017 school year!**

We hope that your family had a great Christmas break and are ready for the new school year. There are many great things to look forward to in Arrowsmith and we know your child will enjoy their time at school and will be successful. We have an awesome teaching team in Arrowsmith… Fiona Cameron and Katie Sullivan in Room 10 - Totara, Louise Gorman in Room 11 - Harakeke and Rennae Taylor in Room 12 - Manuka. Please find some basic information about Manuka – your childs class for this school year.

A little bit about me…My name is Rennae Taylor and I am excited to be returning to Tinwald School after a year abroad living in Vancouver, Canada and backpacking Central and South America. Many of you may have run into me around the school in previous years – I taught year 5/6 in Room 11 for five years and was also the school sports coordinator before leaving. In the classroom I really enjoy teaching art and using ICT (information and communication tools/technology) to enhance learning.

This year is filling up fast with a lot of exciting learning experiences for your child. I am looking forward to being back in the classroom and having a very busy year, full of lots of learning.

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| **Introductory newsletter and class information for 2017** | |
| Contact details:  School phone number:  308 4555  Email:  [rennae@tinwald.school.nz](mailto:rennae@tinwald.school.nz)  Manuka’s Blog:  [www.manuka2017.weebly.com](http://www.manuka2017.weebly.com)  School website:  [www.tinwaldschool.weebly.com](http://www.tinwaldschool.weebly.com)  Please come in and introduce yourself to me if you do not know me. If you would like to see me about a specific matter, the easiest way to contact me is by email, or ring and leave a message with the office.  Notices:  You will find copies of our school-wide notices on the school website.  Notices for Manuka students can be found on the classroom noticeboard or on our blog.  Permission slips and money:  It’s a good idea to check the notice to see where/who it needs to be returned to. In Manuka, classroom permission slips and money for trips/events can be dropped into the blue notices box. I clear this box each day. Please put money in a named envelope or cellotape it to a named piece of paper.  Arrowsmith children:  Children in year 5/6 are great to work with as they have a sense of humour, greater concentration, a huge range of skills and are beginning to show maturity and leadership. We try to have lots of fun in Arrowsmith and offer extra activities to keep this age group motivated. After a few weeks ask your child about:   * AAA Time * Handle the Jandal challenges * Blog time * Choices charts * Leadership positions | Manuka is a mixed class of 22 year 5 and 6’s. We have 14 boys and 8 girls in the class. Manuka is one of three Arrowsmith Year 5/6 classes. We will often join together for activities, events and learning time.  Totara – R10, Harakeke – R11 and Manuka – R12 make up the Arrowsmith team. |
| **Homework**  Specific, structured homework will begin in Term 2. All year 5/6 classes will have similar homework. More information will be shared with the children and parents at the beginning of Term 2. Please ask your child to share this with you.  During Term 1, the children may have some homework, mainly related to being ready for camp and as part of the Connected Learning topic. Children are also expected to read at home most nights and work on addition and subtraction basic facts in Term 1. Examples of the types of basic facts your child needs to work on will come home in their homework book once testing has been completed. (Week 5 onwards)  Homework will be shared and self assessed during class time. It is not intended to be homework for parents. Please talk to me if your child is struggling to do what has been set for them. I know that many families are busy and have after school commitments. If your child reads most nights and practices their basic facts on a regular basis, then you are helping them to succeed in basic learning areas. |
| **Online Learning**  As I mentioned above, I have an area of interest and skills in using ICT to enhance children’s learning.I have used a classroom blog for a number of years and have found that it continues to grow each year. The blog becomes and online journal of all learning in Manuka and the children are engaged in using it for communication and collaboration. We are beginning to set up our class blog for 2017. Please look it up and bookmark it for future reference.  [www.manuka2017.weebly.com](http://www.manuka2017.weebly.com)  It is updated most days and will contain photos, projects, learning samples, homework, notices and events from our class. |
| **Busy term ahead!**  This term’s major event for year 5/6 students is our Camp to Mt Hutt Retreat in week 5. Planning is well under way for a successful four days away. Please check with your child about camp notices, as there are important health and permission forms that need to be completed. Their camp book will come home regularly from week 2 with updates and information about camp.  Our major school-wide Connected Learning theme in 2017 is ‘Location, Location, Location’. We will be developing learning programmes and experiences around this theme across the school. |
| **Handle the Jandal Challenges begin this week!**  Handle the Jandal (HTJ) is a class competition played between Manuka, Harakeke and Totara – the Year 5/6 classes. This week the challenges begin and the teachers have chosen 3 teamwork challenges. Children will need to bring their swimming togs and a towel to wear for the wet t-shirt relay on Friday 3rd February. The challenge will be at the end of the day so your child may come home in their togs.  Ask your child to explain what HTJ is and why we have it. We hope you will hear a lot more about the different challenges throughout the year. |
| **Equipment**  Children in the senior school need to take responsibility for their basic equipment and belongings. We have regular equipment checks to make sure each child has the learning tools they need. We try to give parents warning when glue sticks, excersie books etc are running low. We do syndicate fitness regularly, so children need appropriate school footwear to participate. I try to remind children to take home clothing and drink bottles each day. |
| **Triathlon/Duathlon – Friday 24th February**  Year 3-6 Triathlon will be held at the end of Week 4. More information will come home soon. Your child will be introduced to this event next week and will be asked to think about competing as an individual or in a team duathlon competition. |
| **House Mufti Day – Friday 3rd February**  This Friday, the whole school will be starting our regular ‘House Time’ with a mufti day. Your child has been given a house for the year (it may have changed from last year) and they are encouraged to dress up/accessorize in their colour to celebrate on Friday. |
| **Arrowsmith Meeting about Camp and your child being in Year 5/6**  We would like to invite all Year 5/6 parents and families to a camp information/Arrowsmith meeting on Thursday 16th February at 7:00pm in Totara – Room 10. We will be sharing important information to help you make the most of your child being in Arrowsmith as well as camp information. It would be great to see each child represented at the meeting as details such as timetables, equipment, homework, leadership and classroom programmes will be introduced. |
| **Manuka is collecting ‘stuff’…**  We are collecting some bits and pieces for our classroom. If you have anything from the list below lying around the house looking for a new home we would greatly appreciate it!   * A baby photo of your child for a piece of writing (you will get it back!) * Newspaper * Magazines * Cushions (to use on our mat) * Fabric off cuts * Old shirts we can cover in paint! |
| This age group do still enjoy parents coming in to see what they have been doing – successful education really is partnership between the child, their family and their school. I hope your child has a great year in Manuka and if I can help in any way, please ask!  Kind regards,  Rennae Taylor | |