



Dates to Note...

- ✓ Principal's Awards will be presented in the staffroom, Friday 25th March at 9.00am.
- ✓ Second hand uniform sale, Friday 25th March, 8.30am-9.00am
- ✓ Board of Trustees meeting, Mon 28th March, 7.30pm.
- ✓ PTA AGM, Monday 4th April, 7.30pm.
- ✓ Christian Edctn for Syn. 1 & 2 pupils, Tuesdays 8.15am to 8.45am in the new hall.
- ✓ Electronic Fridays - see page 4.
- ✓ Voluntary Donation
Families wishing to pay the annual school donation prior to 31 March may do so at the office. We kindly request \$90 per child per year (prior to 31 March) or \$100 per child per year thereafter.
- ✓ Zumba Fitness
Thursday 7.30pm - 8.30pm, Russley Hall.
- ✓ After school indoor soccer will start next term. Visit www.chchfutsal.com

Returning to a 'New Normal' at Russley School



It's life as (relatively) normal at Russley School now that most of our pupils have returned after three weeks of closure. We are fortunate that the strong and stable state of our buildings and grounds puts us in a position to host other students whose Christchurch schools or homes are earthquake damaged. Welcome to Russley, Evan, Matthew, Alice, Tara, Christen, Thomas and Amelia.

Some events were called off while the school was closed however we are working hard to resume a normal, day-to-day programme. Adjustments are being made to accommodate the physical and emotional states of students.

To make up for the cancelled camp, Syndicate 3 has planned an exciting 'three day camp' at school this week. It won't be Living Springs obviously but the fun activities - scavenger hunts, cooking and art, games and quiz nights and a round of camp singing - sound like fun.

And despite having to cancel Term 1's Zone and Central athletics and swimming events, staff are working hard to ensure next term's winter sport programme will go ahead for our Syndicate 3 & 4 pupils.



Message from the Board of Trustees

On behalf of the Board of Trustees and the wider Russley School community, I wish to give our thanks to our Principal Erika Ross and the entire staff of Russley School for their efforts on February 22nd.

The response in keeping our children safe and then comforted and reassured was fantastic.

Many parents were unable to get to school for many hours after the earthquake to collect their children. To find the teaching staff all together supporting the pupils and supervising them as they were picked up was a major relief to us all as parents.

It is worth reflecting that staff members had their own children or families that they were eager to get to, but put our children first.

The efforts put in to get the school re-opened as soon as possible must also be acknowledged. The Board, Erika and all staff were absolutely focused on re-opening the school at the earliest opportunity.

But we also had a legal and moral duty to ensure we did this only once all necessary matters had been attended to. These issues included the dangers posed by sewerage, water, building integrity, and equally importantly the ability of children and staff to cope with further aftershocks. Additionally we had to deal with a host of regulatory bodies including Civil Defence, the Army, and the Ministry of Education.

This was a complex task, and to be blunt is one that weighed heavily on all involved as the consequences of opening prematurely and unnecessarily exposing our kids to harm doesn't bear thinking about.

I am aware that the vast majority of parents have been superb in expressing their thanks to staff directly. I thank you for that response as I know how much your kind words have been appreciated.

I know the staff was keen to get the school reopened as quickly as possible and I shared that view. However the circumstances were such that this had to be balanced with ensuring the safety of students, and on balance I think we got it right.

Colin Gray
Chairperson



Greetings from the Tumuaki

Greetings everyone. It seems like a lifetime ago that we sent out a regular newsletter and so much has happened in that time. We are heartened to know our Russley family has come through recent events so well. Our thoughts and condolences go out to all those who have lost friends or family and to those who have been affected in other ways. I am proud to be part of a community willing to support anyone who needs it.

Quake Update:

I have been so very impressed at the way students and staff have settled back into programmes. We have focused on getting students settled and secure by including a lot more creative work such as art, writing, music and physical movement and we are monitoring their activities carefully.

I am also monitoring the staff's workload and for the next few weeks I have directed them to go home earlier than usual so they can look after their own wellbeing.

I know that you will be keeping a very close eye on your children. Do let us know if you notice any changes in their behaviour that concern you. There are agencies available for support if you think this is needed such as The Quake Support and Counselling Line 0800 777 846. In addition Mrs Adams, our Learning Support teacher, is available. We will contact you, as well, if we are at all concerned about your child.

There have been a few aftershocks since the school reopened. Our caretaker does a visual check each time there is a quake and the Ministry of Education sends out inspectors after any aftershock they consider big enough to possibly cause damage. You may also find it reassuring to know that about ten years ago the Ministry surveyed and, where necessary, strengthened all school buildings.

We continue to provide emergency water supplies and appreciate that most students are bringing their drinks from home.

Our website is still the best place to get any updated information. We have put a survey online, asking parents for feedback about the events of 22nd February and our processes since. Please take a few minutes to respond as we will use this information to review our processes.

There have been a number of changes to normal programmes. Syndicate Three is running an alternative to the camp that was called off due to the earthquake. Most other off site activities have been cancelled in the short term.

I have asked teachers to ensure that class programmes have no extra costs until at least Term 3. I know families may be finding things hard at the moment so apart from activities such as ICAS exams, which are voluntary, there should be no requests from the school for extra money. We have also delayed our request for the school donation for the same reason. There is a notice in this newsletter for those who want to pay in time to get a tax refund. Otherwise the request will be sent home next term.

A few parents have asked if the school holidays will be adjusted given that schools were closed for several weeks. This is not an option as the schools were closed by Civil Defence in response to an emergency situation that put students and staff safety at risk.

And finally a big thank you to parents and caregivers for their support over the past few weeks. It is a difficult time for us all and a kind word in such circumstances makes such a difference. Please make sure you send us updated contact details (please return the slip included with today's newsletter, even if your details are correct) and remember to phone or email school whenever your child is absent.

Regards

Erika Ross
principal@russley.school.nz

Principal's Awards



The following children have earned awards this fortnight. The Russley Values focus this term is respect and honesty. Parents and grandparents are invited to attend the awards ceremony in the staff room on Friday at 9.00am.

- ▶ Room 1 Evan Elliott, Beth Godsell
- ▶ Room 2 Millie Ginty, Leo Shin
- ▶ Room 3 Daniel Preston, Cheyenne Te Haara Barr
- ▶ Room 4 Jack Larkins, Danny Chang
- ▶ Room 5 Shonny Jones, Joel Nicholls
- ▶ Room 6 Gypsy Gray, Liza Khorozova
- ▶ Room 7 Ashley Collins, Rei Miyamoto
- ▶ Room 8 Jung Eun Huh, Brendan Balloch
- ▶ Room 9 Weeam Algarni, Bradley Maple
- ▶ Room 10 Jasmine Ryan, Chang Jun Shin
- ▶ Room 11 Lucas Hueston, Ava Rassoul Khomeini
- ▶ Room 12 Emily Mullally, Riley Goad
- ▶ Room 13 Alex Connor, Kelly Hodder
- ▶ Room 14 Charlie Reynolds
- ▶ Room 15 Izak Koster, McKenzie Selinger
- ▶ Room 16 Luke Unwin, Theo Peters
- ▶ Room 17 Rocio Chavez, Tom Dierckx

The 'Pupil of the Fortnight' is *Shonny Jones (Rm 5)* whose photo will be exhibited in the office.

Russley Choices



Children rewarded for making wise choices in their work and play are:

- ▶ Ella Te Aho - Co-operation
- ▶ Weeam Algarni - Co-operation
- ▶ Monica Koster - Fairness
- ▶ Archie Roberts - Respect & Loyalty



"Electronic Day" by Caleb Stewart and Jack Barr

We were thinking of good ideas for activities at school. We thought that one thing we really enjoy doing is playing our Nintendos and PSPs. So we wrote down our idea and then discussed it with Mrs Ross. We have organised for year 5-8 students to be able to bring their electronic devices to school on Fridays for the rest of this term. TVs will not be available.

Any student wanting to come to this event will need to return a signed slip indicating that the games they are bringing are suitable for other students to play or watch. The games will be locked away during class time and be available for playing in the hall during lunchtime. There will be teacher supervision.



Caleb Stewart (Rm 7) and Jack Barr (Rm 5)

PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION

russleyschool.pta@windowslive.com

Second Hand Clothing Sale Friday 25th March, 8.30am to 9.00am, on the netball court by the office.

AGM Monday 4th April, 7.30pm in the school staffroom. All welcome to come along and join us. Drinks and nibbles afterwards.