

Awahou School

Information

Booklet

Welcome to Awahou School



Dear Parents / Caregivers,

Welcome to Awahou School! We are thrilled you are interested in being part of our learning community.

We are a small school that seeks to provide the very best learning experiences for each of our students. Our roll is usually around the mid 40’s – early 50’s mark which is an ideal number for not being too small but certainly not too big - great teacher:student ratios help allow maintain our caring and inclusive environment.

Awahou School is a special school in that it has a strong “family atmosphere” about it. We are motivated to ensure that all children feel that the school belongs to them. We seek to develop and cultivate an environment of trust and instil our core values of Respect, Honesty and Effort into all Awahou children and families. We desire all our children to feel secure, enjoy their successes and to be engaged and involved in the learning programmes that the school offers. We expect all children to be aware of their learning achievement and progress. We currently operate two classes and divide the year groups across these rooms. The focus is on each individual learner and their learning progression and individual excellence; we are very aware that all learners learn at different rates. Our smaller numbers ensure that all children are monitored closely and have the opportunity to participate in all we offer.

Awahou School is an integral part of the community and the active support and involvement of parents / family and caregivers is welcomed. We are fortunate to have a “Friends of Awahou” group working hard to provide extra resources for our students’ learning.

We warmly welcome visitors to our school and classrooms and genuinely operate an open door policy. It is well documented that schools that enjoy a high level of parental and community support produce happier children, richer in experience and secure in a supportive environment.

Your involvement with Awahou School will be I’m sure, an enjoyable one. It is hoped that you will take advantage of the opportunities that arise to enable us to work together to provide the best educational experience we can for your child(ren) in our modern, dynamic learning environment.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me.

Matt Schmidt

Principal.



**Mission Statement:**

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| **“To meet the educational needs of the Pohangina Valley community by fostering individual excellence in a dynamic and caring environment.”** |

**Vision Statement:**

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| **“Excellent learning for a global future”** |

**Core Values:**

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| **Respect -** Whakaute  **Honesty -** Matatika  **Effort -** Ngaki |

**Current Staff and Board:**

**Teaching Staff:**

* Matt Schmidt Principal, Ruapehu Teacher (afternoons) Full Time
* Cathy Wilson Deputy Principal / Team Ngauruhoe Teacher Full Time Y0-3
* Toni Barr Team Ruapehu Teacher Mornings Y4-8

**Ancillary Staff:**

* Victoria Sage Office Manager 10 hours per week

(9am-11am daily)

* Hayley Clarke Cleaner 10 hours per week
* Lynda Anderson Pool Summer as needed
* Mandy Parker Grounds 2 hours per week

**Board of Trustee Members:**

* Pip Blackley Chairperson
* Andrew Watt Parent Representative
* Lynda Gray Parent representative
* Cathy Wilson Staff Representative
* Bruce Cameron Parent Representative
* Robyn Mare Parent Representative
* Tony Greer Principal

**Absences**

If your child is away from school at any time we require communication from you explaining your child’s absence. This may be via: website, note or telephone. Legally all enrolled children must be at school unless there is a justified reason for an absence. Family holidays should be undertaken during school term breaks.

Children should not be absent from school for reasons other than sickness or exceptional family circumstances (e.g bereavement) without first consulting the Principal.

**Assemblies**

During a “normal” term the children will host two assemblies. They will be held on Friday afternoons at 2:15pm. and are held in one of our classrooms. Actual dates for each term will be published in the weekly school newsletters. This information is located on the term calendar. One assembly will be hosted by each classroom over the term. They will be an opportunity for the class to share some of their latest learning. Parents and family members are most welcome and are encouraged to attend.

**Be ready for School –**

**Information for New Entrants (Not a must do but a good guide)**

**Does your child:**

* Know his / her name, address and telephone number and know how to repeat it if necessary?
* Put away play things when not using them?
* Know how to take off and put on outer garments without help?
* Know how to tie his / her own shoe laces?
* Know how to wash and dry his / her hands and remember to flush the toilet without assistance?
* Know how to use and hold scissors?
* Know his / her basic colours?
* Know how to count from one to ten?
* Know some of the alphabet?
* Know how to sit and listen to a story?
* Know the days of the week?
* Recognise and write his / her own name?
* Look after his / her own belongings?
* Know his / her birthday and birth month?
* Pack and carry his/ her own bag?

**Board of Trustees Meetings**

The Board usually meets at school during week three and week eight of each school term. The exact date , time and venue is advertised in the school newsletter in the term calendar. A meeting summary is also provided in the next possible newsletter following a meeting. Parents are most welcome to attend these meetings. Full minutes of any meeting are also available on request.

**Brainfood**

At around 10a.m each morning all classes pause for a Brainfood break. Children are offered the opportunity to consume a 100ml serving of milk provided by the Fonterra Milk for Schools Programme. We also encourage a healthy snack (provided from home) to be consumed at this time.

**Buses**

Under Ministry of Education rules, only children who live 3.2 km from school are entitled to travel to and from school by bus. The Ministry only funds travel to your nearest school.

We have two bus routes serving Awahou School. The “North” bus and the “South” bus runs. The North run travels north of the school up Pohangina Valley East Road and the South route travels to Pohangina village via Raumai.

**Class Trips and Visits**

As part of the class programme, day visits (or in some cases, overnight camps) are undertaken by classes. These are a valuable enrichment of the class programme and involve a large amount of work and organisation but the immense value they provide is often unmeasurable!

Parent help on such trips is essential and any offers of transport and supervision at these is greatly appreciated.

Parents providing transport must provide seatbelts for all passengers in a car with a current warrant of fitness and is registration. Children under 7 must have a booster seat provided. Drivers must also hold a full licence.

**Classroom Help**

From time to time we ask parent / caregivers to help in school activities (e.g Library book maintenance, sports days, transport etc). Offers of assistance with in class programmes (such as reading, writing or art and craft) are also appreciated. If you feel that you have expertise and / or time to make a regular commitment to classroom help please contact the staff. These offers are always most appreciated.

**Classroom Organisation**

Team Ngauruhoe: Years 0-3

Team Ruapehu: Years 4-8

This may alter year to year, or during the year, depending on the numbers in each year group. Every effort is made to keep year groups together but cannot be guaranteed. School management will attempt to ensure equity of numbers across the school to continue to foster optimum learning.

**Cluster Involvement**

Awahou School is part of the Kainui group of schools. This cluster is made up of Awahou, Bunnythorpe, Colyton, Hiwinui, Mount Biggs, Newbury and Taonui Schools. We work together to *“Provide additional learning opportunities for the cluster community”.* The Cluster values are: Respect, Acceptance and Tolerance of Diversity and having a Positive attitude in all circumstances.

The Cluster undertakes two main objectives:

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| --- | --- |
| Student Focus: | Staff Focus: |
| Opportunities to be challenged and extended (Year 4-8)  Opportunity to develop skills through participation  (Year 0-3)  Opportunities to socialise and develop relationships. | Develop collegial support and professional development opportunities.  Establish and foster a shared learning community. |

Kainui Cluster Event Calendar:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Term 1 | Term 2 | Term 3 | Term 4 |
| Swimming Sports  Yr 4-8  Junior Tabloids  Yr 0-3 | Cross Country  Yr1-8 | Winter Tournament  Yr 4-8  Music & Movement  Yr 0-3 | Athletics  Yr 4-8 |

**Collecting Children from School**

If you are going to pick up your child, you will need to come into the school foyer to collect them. After school the driveway is strictly out of bounds for students. Students must walk to cars with an adult actively supervising them. Our driveway is a dangerous place! All student movements after school are tracked, so you will need to enter your child(ren)s details into the “bus” book informing staff of a change in their routine. If you would like your child to alter their “normal” after school routine concerning pick up or bus travel, a note must be sent to the staff. Telephone messages will be accepted, however please note that we do not have an answerphone.

**Common Diseases**

**Period of exclusion from school:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Measles | For at least 7 days from the appearance of rash until recovery. |
| Chicken pox | For 1 week from the appearance of rash until all scabs are gone. |
| Diptheria | For at least 2 weeks from onset. |
| Mumps | Until all swelling has subsided and child has normal health. |
| Ringworm | Nil, if under treatment. |
| Headlice | Nil, if under treatment. |
| Scabies | Nil, if under treatment. |
| School Sores | Nil, if under treatment. (No Swimming until completely healed) |

Doctor’s advice should be sought in all these matters, where information is unavailable from the school or the Public Health Nurse. (Except head lice)

**Complaints / Concerns**

Often unnecessary worry can be caused by unfounded rumour or misinterpretation. If the issue is “whole school” please see the Principal. If you ever have any classroom concerns, please contact the classroom teacher in the first instance. If the matter is not resolved satisfactorily you should then contact the Principal. If the matter is still unresolved please contact the Board Chairperson. We have a formal complaints policy which is available from the school office on request.

Please Note: We define a concern as something expressed verbally and a complaint as written.

**Computers / Internet**

We firmly believe that computer and internet use are an integral part of all learning experiences across all levels of the school. We are able to provide our students with use of digital cameras, data projectors, laptops and iPads to aid their learning experiences. We utilise online programmes to enhance our school curriculum such as Lexia for Literacy and Mathletics for Maths. We have a Internet/Cybersafety Use agreement for all parents to sign so that we ensure provide safe, positive and fair digital learning opportunities within our curriculum.

**Dental Clinic**

We do not have a dental clinic on site. Our students generally travel to the mobile clinic located at Ashhurst. Any queries regarding teeth can be directed to Mid Central Health.

**Emergencies**

Regular emergency drills are held at school to ensure that the children know what to do should a real emergency occur.

In the event of an emergency children will remain at school until they are collected by their parent or nominated caregiver. Children will not be released to any person other than their parent / caregiver unless a signed note from the parent / caregiver, requesting their release, is produced. An acceptable alternative would be the parent personally speaking to a staff member requesting their child be handed over to a nominated caregiver.

**Emergencies: Pohangina River Procedures**

At times, usually not more than once a year, the Pohangina River floods. If the river floods, school is closed to ensure that all children return to their homes and do not get trapped at school. The Office Manager maintains an Emergency contact list to be able to evacuate school as fast as possible. All parents are contacted via a phone tree to ensure they can make appropriate arrangements for their children.

Horizons Regional Council provide the data from their river monitoring site. The trigger to close school is when the river level reaches 2.8 metres at Mais Reach and is rising. This information can be found on the Horizons Regional Council website under “River Information”. Awahou School and the Principal at home receive automated phone messages if this level is being approached.

**Events**

During the school year children will participate in a variety of events; swimming, cross country, athletics, sports, cultural presentations etc. You will be informed, by newsletter or notice, when these events are to be held.

As a school we welcome all parents / caregivers, family and friends of the children to come along and join us on these occasions. We actively encourage children to get involved in sports teams either through the school or clubs all year round and have visiting specialists into the school to focus on specific sporting skills.

**Friends of Awahou**

This organisation (the traditional P.T.A.) plays a vital role in providing support for the children of our school. This association involves itself in supporting curriculum evenings, organisation of social occasions, involvement of special projects and fundraising. Meeting venues and times will be advised via the school newsletter. These are usually held in week 2 & 7 of each term. Your involvement is most welcome!

**Health Nurse**

The Health Nurse visits the school regularly to provide specialist assistance to the children. At various times during primary school, the children’s hearing and vision are checked by the specialist technicians.

**Homework**

Students are encouraged to devote a regular period of time at home to complete school work. Various families have different expectations as to what this will look like at home. At Awahou School we view homework as a Home / School partnership. To ensure this works well for all, parents select what level of homework their child will receive; from nothing, upwards.

We very strongly advise daily reading for our Junior students as this is critical in their reading acquisition skills. Please discuss your individual requirements with your classroom teacher.

**Illness at school**

Children who become ill during school time are cared for in the sick bay, which is located next to the administration office. Parents / Caregivers will be advised by phone that their child is unwell and will need picking up. Please ensure we have your current phone numbers.

Pain killing medicines such as paracetamol will not be administered to pupils unless the school has written permission to do so. Children with medication at school should hand it into the classroom teacher rather than leave it in their bags (this excludes asthma inhalers).

Please keep us fully informed if your child is on any form of medication at any time.

**Lost Property**

Please ensure all clothing items are clearly labelled as this will reduce the chance of clothing not being returned to the right owner. We hold all lost property in the blue tube outside the Lounge. Any items still left at the end of any term will be given to the clothing bank.

**Lunches**

We would encourage children to have healthy lunches and advise that sugary foods are to be left at home. We operate a zero rubbish procedure at Awahou School. This means that all packaging and rubbish bought from home must be returned to home. We would encourage the use of reusable containers to transport lunch items to school.

**New Enrolments**

Arrangements can be made for pre-school visits 4 weeks before the child’s fifth birthday if you wish. To place a child on our “Pre-enrolment” list, contact the office before the child’s fifth birthday. On their fifth birthday, the parent or caregiver must come to the school office and officially enrol the child. The child’s birth certificate must also accompany a new enrolment. If enrolled in term 1 they will be classified as a year 1, if enrolled in terms 2, 3 or 4 they will be classified year 0.

**Newsletters**

Newsletters are sent home on Wednesdays. They are designed to inform parents and caregivers of coming events, changes or developments in the school. One page will contain a calendar of the coming weeks of the term. The oldest child in each family is responsible for the delivery of the newsletter. The newsletter can also be emailed to you if you prefer - you can access this via our school website, where the newsletter is also published.

**Office Hours**

Our school office administrator (Victoria Sage) works from 9am – 11am, Monday to Friday.

**Pet Day**

A major highlight of the school year is the annual Pet and Craft day. This is usually held on the last Friday of October. Details will be provided. Children are encouraged to enter as many classes as possible. They are also encouraged to enter their lamb, calf, goat, cat, dog etc in the competitions with the judging. There is also a garden section which requires a bit of work at home and the craft section where children’s creativity comes into play!

**Policies**

The Board of Trustees has overall responsibility for setting the school policies and procedures. Policies are the guiding documents for the governance of our school (e.g: Financial Planning, Curriculum Delivery). Procedures relate to the day to day running of the school (e.g internet use, emergency evacuations, pupil assessment etc).

A copy of our policies and procedures is available from the Principal.

**Positive Behaviour**

Awahou School has very high expectations for positive student behaviour. We expect our students interact well and politely with one another. Any major inappropriate verbal or physical behaviours are dealt with seriously according to our behavioural management procedure. Our regular school meetings provide an avenue and opportunity for students to discuss, as a whole, appropriate behaviour. There should never be any hesitation to make contact with staff should your child be experiencing any type of repeated, inappropriate behaviour via another student. Please make contact with staff at the earliest indication there is a problem.

**Possessions**

Children will often bring possessions from home i.e toys, skates, games etc to play with at school. Whilst every endeavour is made by staff to ensure that the property is looked after, we will not accept any responsibility for lost , stolen or damaged property. Please assist us by ensuring that all property is named and by discouraging children from bringing valuable possessions to school.

**Progress through School**

Children progress through school according to their readiness and ability. It is unwise to compare one child’s progress with that of another. Not only do children begin school at different times but they also progress individually and at different rates. Emotional barriers can be set up against learning if comparative or unrealistic demands are made of children before they are ready. Even children in one family have differing educational needs and learning rates. Please be aware of the huge danger in making comparisons between children. Please discuss any concerns you have with staff.

**Reading**

The following are suggestions you may like to use when listening to your child’s reading:

**The Right Three:**

The Right Time

10-15 minutes when neither you or your child is tired, hungry or keen to do something else. Try to read like this four or five times per week.

The Right Place

Choose a place as quiet, comfortable and as peaceful as possible, where you can be alone and free from interruption.

The Right Book

Choose material that is interesting for the child and is not too difficult.

**What can your child do when he / she doesn’t know a word?**

* Go back to the beginning of the sentence.
* Read again.
* Say the first sound.

**What can you do when he / she doesn’t know a word?**

* Pause: give him / her a chance to try. Wait 7 seconds!
* Praise: all attempts e.g great thinking, I like the way you went back to the start.
* Prompt: after 2 attempts by the child, tell him / her the word.

**If he / she gets stuck again:**

* Go back to the beginning of the sentence
* Read again
* Say the sound, then…
* Read on to the end of the sentence.

**Now have a try:**

* Does it make sense?
* Does it look right?
* Does it sound right?

**Reporting to Parents**

Parents and caregivers are encouraged to contact the school at any time during the year if they have any concerns regarding the progress of their children.

If you would like an interview, please arrange a time, in advance, with the classroom teacher involved. All reporting will be in reference to the “National Standards”.

Formal Reporting Plan:

Term One:

Meet the Teacher Evening: Feb

End of Term Assessment Book: April

Term Two:

Parent Conferences: May/June

Term Three:

End of Term Assessment Book: September

Term Four:

End of Year Report: December

**School Donations**

Donations are a vital part of the financial functioning of the school. These are set annually by the Board of Trustees and a request is made to parents / caregivers for the amount suggested.

Parents are strongly encouraged to support the school in this financial contribution. Awahou School seeks to keep the suggested donation level at a low amount. Currently we ask for a “donation” of $20 per term per child or $80 per child per year. Payment of this “donation” is voluntary however highly valued by the school. The school office will receipt any donations for tax purposes.

**School Hours**

8:00 a.m School opens for staff

8:30 a.m First Bus Arrives (Children should not be at school before this time)

9:00 a.m School Starts: Literacy Session

10:00 a.m Brainfood Break

10:40 a.m Morning Tea

11:00 a.m Numeracy Session

12.30 p.m Lunch Time

1:25 p.m Afternoon Session

2:55 p.m School classes end

3:00 p.m Buses depart

**Sun Sense**

Our health teaching programmes make constant reference to the need for sun sense and the children are frequently reminded to wear hats, shirts and sun block creams when playing outdoors. Sun block is available in all classrooms. School hats are provided for children to wear outside during Term One and Term Four after Labour Weekend each year.

**Swimming Pool**

As part of the school’s aquatic programme children are expected to bring named togs and towel to school each day from the beginning of term one and four. If children are unable to swim for medical / health reasons, a note to the class teacher is expected. The swimming programme extends for up to the first 7 weeks of term one. Children are not permitted to swim if they have school sores. Keys for the pool are available from the office for outside hours use for a small fee.

**Term Dates: 2016**

Term One: 3 Feb - 15 April

Term Two: 2 May – 8 July

Term Three: 25 July – 23 September

Term Four: 10 Oct – 16 Dec

**Warrant of Fitness**

Education is a partnership between home and school. It would be appreciated if children were sent to school with a current “warrant of fitness” which includes;

**Plenty of sleep**: we can’t work effectively with children who have watched too much TV or played up late – 10 hours of sleep for primary children is recommended.

**To be well fed**: children can’t learn when they do not have a balanced diet with regular meal times – breakfast is essential before a 6 hour school day. Children need both mid morning and lunch time food and drinks.

**To be secure:** Awahou School students come from caring homes. However, children need reassurance and to have realistic expectations from their parents.

**To have a positive attitude:** If children expect good things to happen at school in all areas of learning they will have a keen and sparkling approach to their day. Don’t dull this with your worries, fears and niggles.

**To have the correct gear:** comfortable working clothes, stationery, lunch, library books and swimming togs.

Thank you very much for choosing Awahou School. Our doors are always open and we value your input into our community focused school. We are proud of what we achieve here and look forward to learning, working and celebrating with you and your child.

Regards,

Matt Schmidt - Principal

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