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**Matikao Team Newsletter**

**Term 1 2020**

Welcome back to everyone for Term One and a special welcome to new families joining our team. This year we welcome Jenny Bentley to our Team. Jenny is a very experienced teacher with a wealth of knowledge and new ideas and will be teaching in St Anthony. We also welcome Brenda Neville, who will be teaching one day a week in St Joachim.

Our focus this term is ***Journey.*** We will also be spending time establishing classroom routines and practices in order to create a positive learning environment for 2020.

**Enduring Understandings**

God is our companion on the journey of life.

A journey begins with a single step.

The journey can be as important as the destination.

**Essential Questions**

Why journey?

How can we prepare for journeys?

How do we overcome challenges on our journeys?

**Marian Values:**

Courage Strength Service

**Key Competencies:**

Managing self Participating and contributing

If you have any concerns, questions or need more information about anything happening in the school, please talk to your classroom teacher first. They work with your children on a daily basis and have the most information about your child, their learning and social interactions. Olwyn Hobman is Team Leader in Mokehu and is based in St John. If you would like to talk to her or email her, please feel free to do so at any time at olwyn@stellamaris.school.nz. We want the best for your children, so please let us know if you need any assistance at all. All of our emails are at the end of this letter for your information. It is a good idea to email your classroom teacher (no message required!) so that we can save your email addresses and get hold of you easily.

**Routines:**

We strongly encourage you to read the home learning diaries that come home each Monday with information for the week. Children will need their Book Bags at school every day. They will also need PE uniforms at school each day and these can be left in classes during the week. Every class has a Library session each week, so please ensure library books are returned each week. School begins at 8.45am each day so please ensure your children are at school *at least* ten minutes before the bell to allow them time to organise themselves for their learning. It can be stressful for children who arrive late and it is disruptive to the class if latecomers arrive when morning prayers have started. *Please ensure your children have a named bottle of water at school each day.*

**Independence**

This is another critical skill that we encourage. We find that children who are involved in packing their own bags feel more in control and have a better knowledge about what they have with them on any given day. You may consider the drop off and pick up zone at the beginning and/or the end of the day. It may be an easier option for parents who have younger children so you do not have to get everyone out of the car.

**Reading**

As part of our reading programme, we send home readers in book bags. It is important that these readers are read and returned the following day. Unfortunately, students will not be able to bring a new reader home until the previous book is returned. Each reader costs around $8-10 each, and are an ongoing shared resource used across the school. Thank you for your support in returning our readers!

**Uniform**

Named hats are compulsory this term. Please ensure long hair is tied back and children are not wearing extra jewellery or nail polish. More details about the uniform are on the website. Alternatively you can ask class teachers if you are not sure.

**Absences**

If your child is not coming to school, please either ring the office and leave a message with your child’s name and class, or you can email the office at: absences@stellamaris.school.nz or use the school app.

**Brainfood**

Students have a brainfood break every day around 10am. This is a small healthy snack to help them retain focus and energy. It is not an extra morning tea and we encourage students to continue working while they ‘nibble’. Some examples of suitable brainfood include: a small box of raisins, a small pot of dried fruit, sliced cheese, carrot sticks, celery, small pots of popcorn. ‘Crunchy food’ is a good guideline. Food should be healthy, so please no cake, biscuits, yoghurts, and messy or sloppy foods for this brain break. ***Please remember that our school is nut free.***

**WasteWise**

Our school is a WasteWise school and we are committed to reducing, reusing and recycling wherever possible. We encourage families to use named re-usable containers in lunchboxes, and for students to take their landfill rubbish home in their lunch boxes. We have a school compost so organic scraps will be collected. We encourage lunches that minimise, or have no landfill refuse. If you would like ideas or support in this, please talk to your classroom teacher. Unfortunately we are no longer able to recycle pouches for fruit puree and these now have to be put into landfill. Please consider this when selecting lunches. We thank you for your support in this.

**Communication**

Information about school and team events is included in the weekly newsletters that come home every Thursday. All this information is also on our website ([www.stellamaris.school.nz](http://www.stellamaris.school.nz)). You can be included in The Beacon, which is an email with information, reminders and events. Please see the office if you would like to receive these emails if you are not already on the list. In the next week or so PTFA class reps will be organised and they will also send out relevant texts to families for reminders. If you need any further information or detail, email or talk to your classroom teacher. We hope that all these options ensure you are informed of everything you need to know.

**Summer Heat**

We encourage students to apply sunscreen before coming to school in this very hot weather. There is a bottle of sunscreen for reapplication in each class as well. We also ask that students bring a named drink bottle of water each day.

**Class Needs**

We would appreciate it if each student could please bring in a box of tissues and either a pump hand soap or sanitiser. These are so necessary for running a clean and pleasant classroom! Thank you very much for these.

We are excited about this year and we look forward to getting to know you all better over the coming weeks.

Thank you and God bless

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