



Our Mission: STM school community will develop the gifts and talents of each individual for the good of all through the transforming power of God's word.

Nau mai, Haere mai. Kia ora tatou.

Welcome to our two Queensland families: The Taylors (Piper & Reuben in Paua) and the Robsons (Caitlin in Paua). Attilio Davenport has joined us from Peru; Nathan & Oscar Tutt have followed the Littles and are here from Auckland, Sophie Heijkoop has transferred from Te Akau ki Papamoa, and Miguel Basile has come over from Golden Sands. Isabella Young, Rylan Hardisty and Anna-Sofia McCurdie have turned 5 over the holidays and started school last week. Kade Ballot has joined Pipi team this week, celebrating his fifth birthday with us - great to see your smiling face. Nau mai, Haere mai nga tamariki.

It's great to be back at school for 2017. This year is going to be a fantastic year because we have all been waiting for the changes to happen to our buildings for the last eighteen months and now we have started.

All the organisational decisions set in motion last year (e.g. having one classroom with two or three teachers) have been good practise for when we actually have lovely spaces to collaborate in. The first space which will be finished soon is the Year 4 or Kina Nui space (i.e. the big Kinas). Ms Lees and Mr Barton will be planning for the setup of the new space taking into account the best teaching areas, the best quiet areas for independent learning, the areas for creative activities, the areas for science experiments and the areas which have the best acoustics for music. Once these plans have been carefully negotiated then the physical move will happen. We'll be sure to let you know when that will be, once the builders hand over the finished project.

One of the first things the Kina Nuis will be doing is holding an open evening for parents so that you can see how the classroom will operate and also so the teachers can present their daily teaching and learning plans- answering your questions at the same time.

Year 5 and 6 have settled into Paua very easily and this is partly because the Year 6 students have already been in this space for a year and also because we arranged a transition week for the incoming students at the end of last term when the seniors were at camp.

Mr Mills, Mr Webster and Mrs Thomas are a well-oiled team. They work very well together and there is a real buzz in the room which will keep everyone enthusiastic right through the year.

Mrs Pirini and Mrs Meredith are really enjoying being together in the Kina Iti space (the little Kinas). Last year they experimented with creating a big classroom without the walls holding them back. What do I mean? Well, all the children gathered in one or other classroom for

motivation and organisation time and then peeled off into various spaces to complete their projects. Now they are under the same roof without walls in between.

Mrs Te Moni (Waiora's Mum) is working in the Kina Iti space as Mrs Pirini's helper. It's great to keep that connection with Waiora (the children really miss Whaea) who is training in Hamilton this year at the Teachers Training College.

Mrs Dustin and Mrs Duncan have moved in together next door to the sandpit and the junior adventure playground.

There is so much space to spread out in and the juniors are enjoying being able to move from activity table to activity table without the restriction of space.

I've included a drawing of the final shape of our school so you can see the programme of works for the next 14 weeks.

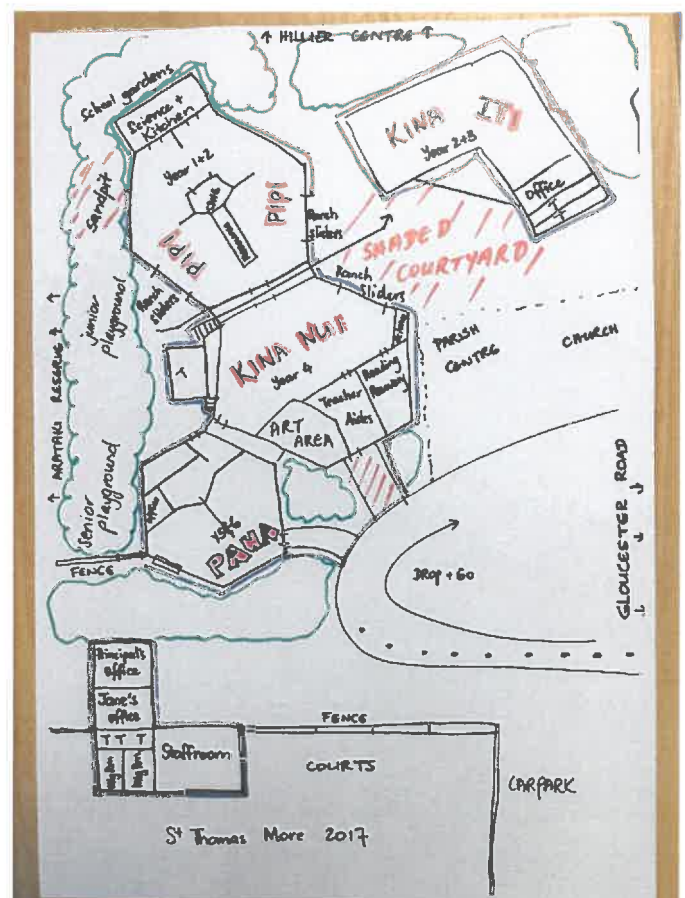
The children and teachers most likely to move are the Pipis- and I'm sorry about that. The management of the build was a strategic mine field. We needed to keep as many children in permanent spaces as we could, taking into account that the Year 4 children were always going to shift from the relocatables to the new build.

At the moment the Pipis space is near the sandpit/junior adventure playground. Before the end of the term they will need to move out of their space to let the builders in for demo and for the new build which includes a specialised science/cookery area which will be additional to the classroom space we have now. However when they move back in they will have the equivalent of four teaching spaces to spread out in as new children and teachers join us during the rest of the year.

While their space is being reshaped the Pipis will be joining Jane and I in the relocatable spaces. We have been promised that this will only be for 6 weeks at the most. The advantage for the Pipis in moving to this temporary accommodation is that they will be close to the front of the school and near the office- both handy for parents.

It's been fun choosing colour schemes for the new spaces...you'll see some raspberry walls, citrus walls, emerald green cubbies, bright blue cubbies, orange lino, green/yellow lino. Ranch sliders are going in where there were long windows- giving better access to outside spaces.

Here's an amateur's design of what we will finish up with....



Science club.

This was launched via facebook last week and caused a sensation. There is a lot of interest in after school clubs, especially with the boys. The original option was Monday afternoons however Emma has had to change the day to Tuesday because the Adults Chess club operates out of the parish lounge on Monday afternoons. Emma has had definite registrations from 24 children and she is looking to have two sessions next term as more children come on board. The first science club will be Tuesday, 14th February.

Contact details / new phone numbers

Have your contact details changed over the holidays? If so, can you please let Jane know so we can update our records. We need to be able to contact you in the event of an emergency, thank you.

Stationery

Stationery packs have been issued by the classroom teachers and if you could please arrange to pay the office before the end of February it would be very much appreciated – if you need longer to pay please let us know 😊 New Entrants \$30, Year 2 & Year 3 \$26, Years 4, 5 & 6 \$20 each. Please note year 1 students will be continuing with their stationery packs purchased last year (Mrs Duncan/Mrs Dustin will let you know if and when you need to purchase any top ups from the school office). Statements have been sent out but you are welcome to pop into the office and pay any time. THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

Have you wondered what is involved in becoming Catholic for your children here at STM?

In Term 2 the Year 4 children and many other children from Year 5 and 6 will be starting their preparation for First Holy Communion and Confirmation with First Confession or as it is known now- Reconciliation. There are children in the Year 4-6 classes who have taken an interest in these sacramental celebrations but who may not have been baptised yet.

If your child is keen to learn more about being Catholic then please contact Margaret Erskine-Shaw at the parish centre about joining in the two class lessons for baptism.

After being part of our school from the age of five I am sure that there are many children who would like to take the first step to becoming Catholic...I know I've had many enrolment interviews with parents who wanted their child to have a chance to be at a Catholic school so that they could make their own minds up about becoming Catholic....now is the time to ask the question. Has our Catholic school made a difference in the lives of your children?

Please consider giving the gift of the sacraments to your children- the future has many joy filled times and many challenging times for your children. The sacraments give us something to hold onto. They are a visible sign that God is with us. We all need gifts of grace to help us when we have challenges to meet.

The Incredible Years Parenting Programme is coming to the Hillier Centre – and it's FREE!

Highly recommended by all the teachers and many of our school families!

The Incredible Years™ is an exciting and interactive 14-week programme which many parents from St. Thomas More have found very helpful in developing positive relationships with their children. We think you will also enjoy this group.

During the group sessions you will have the opportunity to learn about, to practise and refine skills that will help you to reduce any difficult behaviours, increase the behaviours you would like to see more of and give you more opportunities to enjoy spending time with your children.

Where: The Hillier Centre (next to STM school), Gloucester Road - Arataki / Bayfair area

When: Starts Wednesday 22nd March 2017

6 pm to 8:30 pm

If you are interested, have some questions and/or want to enrol please contact us.

Marjorie Douglas – 022 313 9905 positivefamilies@xtra.co.nz

Ruth Palliser – 021 848 521 ruthpositivefamilies@xtra.co.nz

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QUINN O'CONNELL PHOTO+VIDEO

