



16 December 2022

Dear parent/caregiver

From the Principal – End of Year Letter 2022

It is hard to believe that we are already at the end of another busy and successful year. Thank you so much for your ongoing support of our school, especially with so many disruptions caused by COVID and other winter bugs that proliferated during this time. Junior prize-giving was a wonderful way to celebrate the end of year and I was delighted to have so many parents, caregivers, friends and whānau in attendance. This followed a brilliant few days of camps and activities. Many schools don't offer these anymore but the commitment from our staff, especially those involved in the year 8 and 10 camps, mean these continue to create lifelong memories for our students.

Staffing Changes

We farewelled a number of staff members this week:

- Paul Chambers, Deputy Principal, has resigned to take up a semi-retired lifestyle
- Andy Thomas, Head of Science, takes up a new position at Pompallier Catholic College in Whangarei
- Caroline Foubister, Learning Support Coordinator, is moving with her family to Auckland.
- Catherine Pilkington, Librarian, has retired

We wish them all the very best for the future and I thank them for all the work they have done over the years. Adam Blake, music teacher, has also resigned to travel overseas, but will be here for the first term as a relief teacher. Lady Alexandra Smith, our head guidance counsellor will also be leaving at the end of term 1 and we will farewell both Adam and Alexandra properly at the time.

Our reputation within our communities continues to grow and we are now expecting a record roll of 670 students next year, another big jump from the 570 students we currently have at our school. There are quite a few staffing changes for next year and while we still have a couple of appointments to make, we are excited to have a number of new teachers joining us. It is with pleasure that we welcome the following new staff members to the school in 2023, most of which are roll growth generated positions.

- Adrian Cooling joins us as our new Deputy Principal, coming from Taipa Area School.
- Whaea Jessica Whitehead joins us from Maungaturoto Primary School as our new Learning Support Coordinator
- Hollie Sweetman joins us from Takapuna Grammar as a social studies/history teacher
- Will Burnell leaves dairy farming to return to teaching, and joins us as a science/biology teacher
- Aaron Haines joins us from Whangarei Girls High School as a second-year science/physics teacher
- Whaea Katrina Fleming joins us from TKKM o Ngaringamatariki as a te reo Māori kaiako

- Abbey Barnes joins us as a first-year English teacher
- Jordan Stevenson joins us as a first-year music teacher
- Anna Alison joins us from Bream Bay College as Learning Support and Food Technology teacher
- Rebecca Bishop, currently one of our guidance counsellors, picks up some additional English classes

We also have some internal changes for 2023:

- Richard Reed moves into the newly established Property Manager position.
- Alysha Brown will be the new year 7/8 syndicate dean, Tracey Christie replaces Matua Wiremu Ngatipa as Whātua dean, and Robyn Baker returns as Maniapoto dean.
- Teresa Brown takes on the new assistant Sports Coordinator position.
- Imogen McLeod will be full time librarian
- Taira Phillips will be full time Kaiawhina

We are still seeking a new HOD science, and two new teacher aides and I expect these appointments to be made by the end of January.

Twin Coast Community of Learning/Kāhui Ako

You may be aware that Otamatea High School is part of the Twin Coast Community of Learning/Kāhui Ako, together with Maungaturoto Primary School, Paparoa Primary School, Mangawhai Beach School, Kaiwaka School, Te Kura Kaupapa Māori O Ngaringaomatariki and Tomarata School. I have recently been appointed the lead principal position for this Kāhui Ako and will be focussing on our new collective achievement challenge which is to raise literacy levels across all our schools. As part of the Kāhui Ako, Otamatea High School has four dedicated within-school positions that will focus on realising our shared literacy goal: Whaea Amy Dempsey will oversee year 7, Kylie Reynolds year 8 and Jen Westermeyer year 9. Kari Meachin will work with these three and manage schoolwide literacy assessment and data analysis (year 7 to 9).

Otamatea High School Website


We work hard to keep our website up to date. Please visit us at <https://www.otamatea.school.nz> for information on

- Start of Year Dates
- School Costs
- Stationery Lists
- Bus Routes
- Bell Times and Term Dates
- Other important information, news, and notices.

Finally, a massive thank you to Craig and Clare Fergus from 100% Fergus Appliances for all their support over the years. To everyone in our community, stay safe, and have a wonderful Christmas and New Year.

Our school office will reopen on Monday 23rd of January 2023.

Yours sincerely,



Dirk Smyth (Principal)