



# **Staff Report September 23 Board Meeting 2022**

## Harakeke:

### Inquiry: Changes



Harakeke students have been “Acting like Scientists” to explore changes in materials. They discovered that to be a scientist you have to use your senses “*to find out stuff - but you can’t always taste things ‘cos it might be bad for you*”. Students have explored what happens to a puddle of water when left in the sun/shade; how water changes from liquid to a solid and back to a liquid; how shaking cream and a marble in a jar changes into butter.

Students have learnt to think like a scientist by asking “wondering” questions based on their observations. Our floating and sinking exploration provided lots of opportunities for questions like “*I wonder why heavy things float?*” “*I wonder why the apple floated because it's big and I wonder why the marble sank because it is small?*” Using the House of Science kit students were given the challenge to make a flinker - that’s something that floats in the *middle* of the water! They had to do a lot of problem solving to make their object flink - it was a real test of perseverance!

### Maths

Numicon continues to be an exciting maths programme that helps students see connections between numbers. Through using the Numicon equipment, students have been learning to recognise the colour and shape of each Numicon number shape and investigating numbers to 10. As it is a multi sensory approach, each Numicon number is a different colour and shape. This enables students to be able to visualise and feel the pieces which supports them in being able to see how numbers fit together. As students move through the programme they have been learning number combinations to 10 and doubling numbers to 10. Alongside our Numicon programme we have been exploring fractions and what better way to start this unit of inquiry than by making toast and cutting it into halves and quarters!



Numicon shapes showing halving and doubling numbers.

### Swimming

This has most definitely been a highlight each week! For some of our students, this was their first experience in a swimming pool and having lessons. We - and they, were so proud of their achievements at now being able to put their head under water and learning how to blow bubbles. Other students were learning to float and improve swim strokes. The splash pool (when open) was a hit and when it was closed a walk to Kilbirnie library to listen to stories was an exciting outing!

### Discovery

On Friday afternoons in Harakeke, we finish the week with the very popular Discovery program which gives students an opportunity to be creative. We have a wide variety of activities available that the students can choose from, based on their interests. Some of the most popular choices are digging in the garden, playing with the dress ups, puppet theatre, building with blocks or legos and using recycled materials such as boxes to make imaginative creations! They develop many skills while playing including fine and gross motor skills and even communication/listening skills. It’s also another opportunity for us to model and talk about our school values. This term we have focused on Manaakitanga (being kind, caring, responsible and generous of spirit). While playing, students can demonstrate these attributes and have even become aware of others around them displaying them too which is exciting to see!

## Pohutukawa:

### **Inquiry: Changes**

We have been exploring changes in materials when we heat, cool or mix them. The children have learnt about different materials, states of matter, physical and chemical changes. We have been thinking like scientists- asking questions and observing. The children have enjoyed making playdough, ice, bread, oobleck, popcorn and constructing things from lego, blocks, etc. The children have written explanation texts about changes, light and different materials. A lot of our literacy has been linked to our inquiry this term. We have read lots of non-fiction and explanation texts.

### **Swimming**

We had 8 weeks of swimming lessons. The students (mostly) enjoyed these lessons although the highlight was the day we got to go on a double-decker bus! Some weeks were tricky- with the splash pool closed- meaning that we had 30 minutes of children sitting around the pool while the others swam. Some of these days we went to the library next door to read some stories- which made the time pass faster. It is great to see the children growing in independence and confidence in the water. For lots of children it is the first time swimming without their parents- so there is a lot of learning that happens in the changing rooms with children drying and dressing themselves!

### **Maths**

We have been learning about repeated addition, skip counting and arrays. For the last two weeks of this term we are exploring fractions in practical ways such as sharing out evenly, and creating fraction art.

### **Trips**

We had a trip to NZSO in week 7 of this term. The children loved learning about all the different instruments, and hearing familiar songs being played by an orchestra. The drums and the trombone were real crowd pleasers!

## Karaka:

### **Inquiry: Change**

This term our Inquiry on Change had a focus on food and farming - looking at where the food on our plates comes from. We had a Science focus to this learning and while learning about farming and animals, conducted a range of experiments. We learned about making observations and recording with experiments such as "The Rainbow Bridge" and "Dancing Raisins" and made models of the water cycle. However, for the children, the highlights of our experiments were making their own butter and ice-cream (for obvious reasons!). To make some real connections to our learning in Week 7 we took a trip out to Battle Hill Farm in Pāuatahanui. This was an awesome day for Karaka and for lots of them a completely new experience. We were able to see a range of different farm animals with the lambs and baby chicks being overwhelming favourites! We also had the chance to explore a working woolshed and learn more about the process of caring for animals. Most recently we have been making use of the great "House of Science" boxes that we are able to get into school. They have a box based on dairy farming and the children have enjoyed learning about monogastric and ruminant digestion.

## **Swimming**

Like the rest of the Junior School, Karaka was involved in 8 weeks of swimming lessons this term. This is a definite favourite activity and it was great to see their confidence and ability in the water grow throughout this time. There were also some weeks where we got to put our values into action and deal with the disappointment of the Splash Pool being closed. Our children were great examples for Matairangi Clyde Quay out in the community with the way they dealt with changes, treated others and showed appreciation to all members of the public and we were very proud teachers!

## **Maths**

We have been exploring fractions and for lots of us it means making the connection between times tables and fractions. Tricky tasks on Friday continue to be a hit and the children are really enjoying thinking critically about their maths and having to justify their thinking. We were also very lucky to use a second House of Science box based on measurement. Included were several exciting investigations into size, weight, length and volume.

## **Literacy**

Explanation writing was a focus for Karaka this term. We learned more about the purpose and structure of this writing and used it to explain our understanding of some experiments.

## **Trips**

We were fortunate to join Pohutukawa on a trip to the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra and our children also had a fantastic time dancing to the music - marching to Star Wars' "Imperial March" was popular. We also had some of our Year 4 students get an opportunity to represent CQS in the sports and arts. We had a group of students perform as a part of the ArtSplash Choir at the Michael Fowler Centre, children attend the Central Zone and Interzone swimming sports and also at the Wellington Primary Schools Table Tennis Championships.

## **Ngaio:**

### **Inquiry: Change**

This term we had a science focus, which was electricity and circuits. Activities included:

- Exploring conductors and insulators of electricity
- Electrical safety
- Creating and exploring circuits, including making switches
- Writing out scientific reports that include: question, hypothesis, resources, method, observations and drawing conclusions from what we have noticed
- Planning out fair science tests by changing one factor only (variable) and keeping all other factors the same (constant)
- Being safe with electricity

At the end of the inquiry we used our knowledge of the subject to create artefacts that used electricity to create an event, e.g. moving cars, dancing people, helicopters/drones.

## **Maths**

This term we have been focused on multiplication and division strategies. In the latter half of the term, we conducted a measurement unit helping tamariki understand the formula to solve the area and perimeter of different shapes. This culminated in a high-interest differentiated 'design your own zoo' project.

## **Literacy**

Tamariki have practised and revised their skills in summarising, identifying the main ideas and inference. The early part of the term saw akonga writing and delivering persuasive speeches which were highly successful both in written and spoken form. They have also explored Newspaper report writing around a fictional invention.

## **Weaving Well Being with St Johns'**

A highlight of the term has been Wellbeing time with St Johns. This was an 8 week programme which helped our tamariki gain skills in resilience and emotional regulation.

## **Sports**

We have had high interest in our Rippa Rugby skills sessions throughout the term. Also, half of our tamariki were selected to attend the Winter Festival earlier in the term. An event focused on the joy of movement, all tamariki had an excellent time and raved about the experience.

## **Rimu:**

### **Inquiry: Changes**

**Science** - Students have been conducting experiments and reading about matter, chemical and physical change. They explored endothermic and exothermic reactions, and what changes make up a chemical change. Students made predictions and from their observations and recordings, they determined whether what they had seen was a chemical or physical change.

### **Social Science**

Our social science focused on Social engagement, social responsibility, problem solving and how these change people's perspectives. This programme was integrated with reading where the theme of the week would be linked in both readings and inquiry lessons. After the students had the knowledge of the three focus points they then chose a historical event of their choice and answered open ended questions related to the social problems of the event.

### **Student led Inquiry**

After the science and social science inquiry, students created their own inquiry question about Change. Students followed the inquiry model, researched and created a way of sharing their new information. Topics ranged from creating crystals, changing dirty water to clean, how transport and fashion has changed over time and the change in culture/history due to certain impacts. Students presented this information in posters, slideshows and a board game.

## **Maths**

This term we have explored proportions and ratios. Students have attended workshops and then applied their learning to a hands-on task. Students found a simple recipe and then had to change the ingredient ratio so they could only make 6 biscuits. For some students this was easy as their original recipe had 30 biscuits, others had to work a little harder when they had to change the ratio from 30 to 6. Once this was done, the students had to create 6 mini biscuits. They chose to change their ingredients by  $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  $\frac{1}{5}$ ,  $\frac{1}{6}$  or  $\frac{1}{8}$ . This required lots of division and converting tablespoons and cups down to grams. Once each group of students - they worked in pairs - had their recipe, they brought the ingredients from home and made their mixture then cooked them up in the staffroom oven. For the egg, we had to use a syringe to get the required amount of milk needed for our recipes. A few groups found out the importance of changing all the ingredients, especially the salt.

## **Sport**

On Thursdays, we have been improving our skills in badminton. For some students, this has been a long journey - even students who were great at table tennis had to learn the different skills required. This has culminated in a badminton tournament, with two divisions - competitive and non-competitive. The students have really bought into the tournament with most giving up their lunchtimes to either play or watch.

## **Literacy**

Over the term, students have written persuasive texts and narratives. The students also wrote an instructional piece based on their mini-cookies. Each one had a hook to grab their readers attention, the ingredients and how to cook their mini-recipe. A mini cookbook will be created from the recipes. Reading has been focussed around identifying main points, note taking and summarising in their own words.

Students have continued to attend tech, where they have taken classes in cooking, robotics, woodwork, electronics and design, design and cooking. They have also been continuing with French and Mandarin lessons.

## **Support Staff:**

### **Teacher Aides**

We are very sad to lose Claire (and she is very sad to be lost!) - at the end of this term: "It has been a wonderfully rewarding and enriching sixteen years, working alongside an amazing group of students, teachers and support staff. I will miss you all deeply!" Claire is taking up a full time position with Te Puni Kōkiri.

Training for TAs in the BSLA (Better Start Literacy Approach) will be provided on Teacher only day by RTLB Kath Sutcliffe. Kath has developed, and provides ongoing support to, a number of literacy programmes that are delivered by Teacher Aides to a small number of students.

Tanya has been working with a small group of Karaka students using Numicon resources. A new group of students will start the programme next term.

### **Reading Recovery**

All four of my students are working so hard, making great progress and to top it off, they love their reading recovery sessions. This term I have discontinued one student and another student is on track to be discontinued by the end of this term! Hooray!

### **Office/Administration**

I have been here 5 weeks now. It's been a very steep and exhausting learning curve. As at the time of writing I have lost my voice (not that my family minds, but makes it hard to call parents of the students who haven't arrived at school today ☹).

I am, however, enjoying the challenge and hopefully one day everything sinks in.

Helen is coming to sit with me for one more day on the teacher only day next Friday September 30, in which I have a very long list of questions to ask her. After that I'll be flying solo!

## **Library**

Another wonderful term in our library.

It's great to now have an official *National School Libraries Week* to celebrate, and it was good fun to see staff and students getting into costume for Book Character Day, and enjoying a school-wide 'read a round'.

Lunchtimes are a-buzz with tamariki enjoying their allocated day and enthusiastic student librarians helping with new displays and growing their 'librarian' skills.

This term I requested some 'dyslexia friendly' books as part of our National Library loans, and was able to attend an evening held by The Children's Bookshop showcasing their range for dyslexic readers. I have purchased a small collection from them that I think will be widely enjoyed. Once catalogued these will be easily searchable.

September has been a busy month for our bilingual books with both Te Wiki O Te Reo Māori and Chinese Language Week. It was also exciting to receive the new Tūhono publication earlier in the term with so many CQS poems included - just in time for Poetry Day.

Continuing with library re-organising, this term the non-fiction signage has been refreshed and updated to make commonly searched subjects easier to find, and the picture book boxes extended and re-grouped for easier access.

Along with daily tasks, class visits, and a thoroughly delightful novel study group once a week, the time flies!

## **DP**

This term I have been working more closely with the Board to streamline some processes and begin to look towards 2023. At the last BOT meeting, we presented our results in the "Thinking with Evidence" science assessment completed at the start of the year. Our children continue to perform well in this assessment which we started in 2018 when Science was a school wide focus. I have also been completing the "Just in Time" maths programme which provides some insight into what maths teaching might look like under the refreshed maths curriculum.