



Hutt Valley High School News

Te Kura Tuarua O Te Awakairangi

Dear Parents and Caregivers

If you ever talk to principals about their jobs they often comment on the unpredictability of a given day, and the fact that no two days are the same. It's certainly been that way this week.

We began with the need to deal with the downstream events of the earthquake. At such a time, we are very conscious of the need to supply information to the school community, and we do so via the website, the school app and email, along with a Facebook back-up. If you have not downloaded the school app, please do so. It's free and provides a means of almost instant communication. Alternatively, we will always post updates on the website.

Early on Monday it was clear we were dealing with a major civil event, with regional damage, emergency services' advice to stay off the roads, and a large site that needed to be checked to ensure staff and student safety. We consult with the Ministry of Education property advisor in any such circumstance and his advice – and our own view - was that we had no choice but to close until safety was assured. Subsequent checking revealed that the school had coped well. There were a few spills of pot plants and such, and the evidence of severe shaking in spilled books, but all chemicals were secure – well done the Science Department for their systems – and work done in recent years to strengthen our multi-storey blocks proved its worth. While I sometimes begrudge the fact that about a decade's worth of maintenance money went into the bracing of our major buildings and the result is a deficit in paint and papering that will take a while to catch up on, the core reality is that we have a safe site.

The consequence of closure meant that about 380 students of Level 1 Science and Level 2 Classics did not get their chance to sit their examinations. My own view is that NZQA might have made different decisions on a day when New Zealand students across the country had been up half the night with tsunami alerts and many had school closures. However, NZQA has decided to use the pre-existing derived grade process to provide an assessed level for students who were unable to sit the examination or whose performance was impaired by the circumstances. We say each year to students that the derived grade exams must be taken seriously as for some students they become the real thing, where accident or illness prevents students sitting examinations. However, teenagers are teenagers, and with the best will in the world they don't always focus as they might. For some students, a Not Achieved grade

will be the outcome, whereas if they had had the opportunity to sit an examination they could have shown the benefit of their experience and done much better than school exams indicated. There is a harsh lesson here for some.

For our part, we will ensure that students whose general progress suggest they are capable of dealing with the next level of their courses in 2017 are allowed to do so. That is, a Not Achieved grade coming out of the derived grade process will not automatically have consequences in terms of 2017 courses. We will act in students' best interests, as ever.

That was quite a lot for one day, then to be visited with flooding on Tuesday was compounding a less than wonderful start to the week. We had many parents coming in to fetch their children, as is their right. A few were critical of us remaining open, but the balance of factors meant we had no reason to close. High tide was late morning and the rain forecast showed the deluge reducing from about the same time, so the afternoon was an ebbing tide and gradually improving weather. Meantime, the school was safe and warm, all sanitation services were functioning as they should and students were better in class than heading off into a downpour. We will always act in the interests of students' safety and they were safe at school. In fact, our site handled the volume of water better than it has in the past. We had surface flooding of course, and by the end of the day we were pleased to see students heading to the buses, but the total event for us was a really, really rainy and somewhat testing day.

In the midst of this, we have had the continuing saga of the Year 9 camps which were and are due to be held in the Marlborough Sounds. We have staff down there who are saying "It's all good. Where are the students?" The hold-up is damage to the loading ramps at the Picton terminal and the fact the ferries are not yet taking foot passengers from Picton. We cannot send students down without a guarantee they can return! Once that comes through the camps will be on. We've checked with Picton's police and other services and they say there is no reason we should not come. The weather forecast is for improving weather from tomorrow (and after this afternoon's forecast downpour and high winds) and we are definitely looking forward to being able to return to a level of Nature somewhat kinder than has been the case in recent days.

PTO



We're well aware of the stress in our community from this week. It's been a demanding time, and while we have had some pressures, we might also take the time to be grateful for our safety and to do what we can to support those further down the country whose lives have been uprooted by major property damage. They clearly need our help.

Ross Sinclair
Principal

Year 10 Examination Timetable

Normal lessons will take place when students are not in exams.

DATE	SPELL	SUBJECT
Thursday 24 Nov	1 and 2	English
Thursday 24 Nov	5	Physical Education
Friday 25 Nov	1 and 2	Mathematics
Friday 25 Nov	3 and 4	Option Line 81
Monday 28 Nov	1 and 2	Social Sciences
Monday 28 Nov	3 and 4	Option Line 82
Tuesday 29 Nov	A, form time, 1 and 2	Science

UPDATE on Year 9 Marlborough Sounds Camp and the Wellington Based Challenge Days

Thank you so much for your patience and cooperation during this complicated and challenging time.

A comprehensive outline of the plan for camps and Wellington Activity Based was emailed out to families on Wednesday. Further emails will be sent with updates regarding the remainder of camps.

If you have questions about the Marlborough Camp please email me – denise.johnson@hvhs.school.nz.

If you have questions about the Wellington Based Activity Days, please email Ria Edmonds – ria.edmonds@hvhs.school.nz

Term dates - 2017

- Term 1** Monday 30 January - Thursday 13 April
- Term 2** Monday 1 May - Friday 7 July
- Term 3** Monday 24 July - Friday 29 September
- Term 4** Monday 16 October - Tuesday 12 December

Looking Ahead

November

- 24 NZ/Germany Exchange Information Evening
- 24-29 Year 10 Exams**
- 28, 30 Year 9 Water Safety Days
- 30 Year 10 Plunket Babysitting Course**
- 30 Board of Trustees Meeting, 5.30 pm

December

- 1 Year 9 Water Safety Day**
- 2 Year 10 Plunket Babysitting Course
- 5 Year 13 Prizegiving**
- 6-7 Year 12 Student Leaders Camp
- 6 Year 10 Sports Tournament**
- 6 LSU End of Year Show
- 7-8 Year 11 Leadership Course**
- 7-9 Year 10 Production
- 8-13 Contributing school music tour**
- 14 Year 10 Prizegiving, 9.00 am
- 14 Year 9 Prizegiving, 10.30 am**
- 14 Last day of the year

Resource Centre Hours

Normal hours till Friday 25 November

Mon/Wed/Thurs 8.00 am - 1.00 pm
Tues/Thurs 10.30 am - 4.00 pm

Monday 28 November - Tuesday 13 December 2016

Monday to Friday 8.00 am - 4.00 pm

Resource Centre closes at midday on Wednesday 14 December for holidays

2017

Tuesday 24 January - Wednesday 1 February
10.00 am - 4.00 pm

Thursday 2 February - Friday 10 February
8.00 am - 4.00 pm

Monday 13 February - back to normal hours

Netball Manager Position

We are seeking expressions of interest for the position of Manager of our Premier 1 Netball team for 2017. This is a position which will not be confirmed until after team selection which takes place in Term 1 2017.

Please follow this link for more information on our website: [Netball Manager](#)

Contact Jacinta Keenan - sport@hvhs.school.nz