
Welcome to School

Room 5

Sarah Brown - Year 1/ New Entrant Teacher



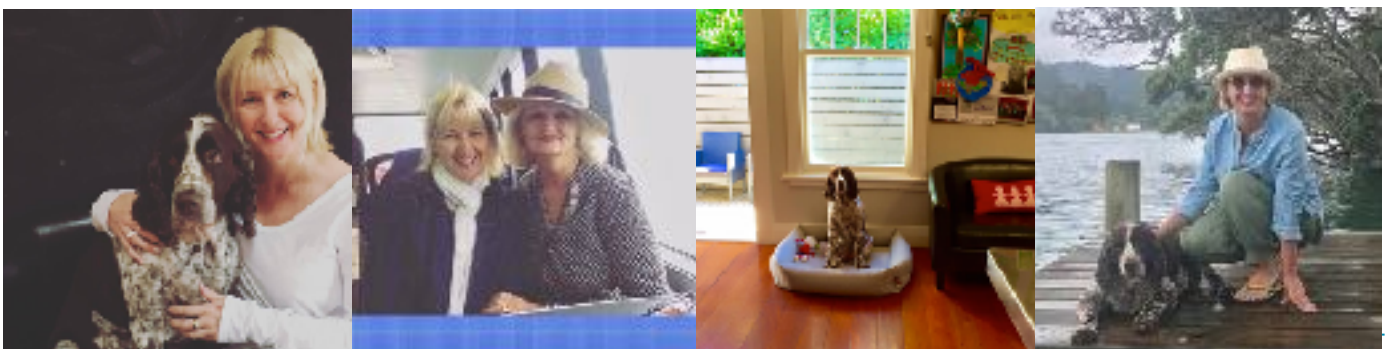
A little about me

About Work... I started teaching at Kohia Terrace School 4 years ago after teaching in the junior school at Bayfield in Herne Bay for several years.

Prior to teaching, I had various corporate writing roles and was a stay-at-home Mum for 8 years. I feel privileged to be a teacher in such a wonderful community and family orientated school. I am passionate about teaching new entrant children and making sure their first experiences of school are positive and happy.

I am part of the Ministry of Education Community of Schools team for central Auckland - my focus is on transitioning children to school. I am the teacher representative that facilitates best practise ideas while encouraging relationships and meetings between our early childhood providers and central schools. Ensuring our children have the best possible start to their education is our focus.

About Me... I still write lots, I am an aspiring photographer and I love children's books. I adore art, cooking and reading on my kindle. I devour home decor magazines, love interior design, and enjoy a creative project or two. I am Mum to school girls Georgia & Olivia. Olivia is in year 7 at Kohia Terrace School and Georgia is in year 11 at Epsom Girls Grammar. My family rules my world and that includes our much loved dog Milo.



Classroom Routines



As the children start school, the focus is on settling them into new routines, making new friends and helping them feel happy and comfortable in the classroom and around the school. One of the first things we do is try and get the children to become as independent as possible.

Day Structure

The school day is structured so that the children know what to expect on a daily basis. We teach writing in the morning, followed by phonics and reading after morning tea. We will then finish the day with maths. Art, topic, music, sport and science are also subjects we enjoy during the week.

Phonics

Phonic skills are needed to be able to read and write so our daily phonics programme is a huge focus when your child starts school. Children first learn the letter names and sounds and then progress to learning about letter blends and word families.

Writing

Our writing programme initially aims to develop children's ability to draw a picture, think of a sentence and record some of the sounds they can hear in words. Once they are able to do this independently, we begin to develop specific elements of their writing depending on their needs. I am passionate about writing every day, I believe mileage is crucial at this age. We also have a daily handwriting programme as it is such an advantage when children learn correct letter formation early on and start with good habits.

Reading

We read every day, developing reading and comprehension strategies. Your child will bring home a reading book in their book bag to share with you after school. On Friday a poetry book will also come home with a poem we have learnt that week.

Maths

Our maths programme begins with a whole class number warm up, such as counting forwards and backwards. Then I work with small groups of similar ability children, whilst the other children work on independent group activities that support their maths learning.



Timing

The classroom is open from 8.30 am. Class starts at 8.50 am.

Morning Tea is from 10.30am – 11 am. During this time we encourage your child to eat a healthy snack, (1 or 2 things from their lunchbox), and have a drink.

Lunch is from 12.40pm – 1.30pm. Duty teachers check that children have eaten all their lunch so please try not to over fill their lunch box. Please also let me know if your child is not eating their lunch or coming home with a full drink bottle. I will make special arrangements to ensure that all children are eating and drinking properly throughout the day.

The school day finishes at 3pm. Before this time the children will work together to tidy the classroom, collect their belongings and say goodbye to each other. Please wait in the junior courtyard so that your child can see you when it's time to leave. I will not let a child go until I have made eye contact with the parent or caregiver and if you are running late, please ring the school office so that a message can be relayed to me.

2 o'clockers



For the first two weeks when your child starts school they will be a '2 o'clocker'; this means they finish school at 2pm. Children are exhausted when they first start. School is very different from kindergarten and daycares. We do understand your child may have been staying for longer hours at your preschool provider. Children have to follow lots of instructions at school and we want your child to be set up for success. We really appreciate your support with this.



Parent Help and Room 5's Parent Liaison

Room 5's parent liaison contact works closely with myself and the school. They aim to organise a family social event once a term - these can be coffee mornings, afternoon tea gatherings after school, family picnics or evening drinks. They also attend meetings at the school with the other parent liaison contacts throughout the year supporting the community with various fundraisers. We are a community orientated school and this role is one we value highly. We have two Room 5 parent liaisons this year - Nina (Nadia's Mum) and Mel (Jake's Mum).



Communication

I send out regular emails keeping you informed about what is happening in Room 5. Please also check our school website regularly - school's are very busy places so we put events coming up on our website calendar. Weekly school newsletters are emailed home on a Tuesday afternoon with lots of great information about what is happening also.

This year there will be a Room 5 blog...

<http://sarahbrownette.blogtown.co.nz/>

...teaching is a partnership so we want to open the doors to Room 5 so you can share our adventures and learning.

Behaviour

We work on praising positive behaviour and good choices on a daily basis. If any behaviours are causing concern or affecting a child's learning, I will contact you to arrange a time to meet. Please let me know if you are concerned or worried about any change in behaviour.

We have three super star chairs in Room 5 and the children take turns sitting on these special seats, they also get other privileges for the day such as being the line leader and going to morning tea and lunch first. The children also have sticker charts in the classroom. We have two classroom soft toys, (they are Paddington Bear teddies), that go home with every child in the class for a weekend with a book to take photos.

...and so it begins...

I really do appreciate what a big thing it is when your child starts school. I am always working on projects looking at different ways we can support new families to our schooling system. We understand your child starting school can be a big learning curve for not only your child but for families too.

I hope this is a helpful insight into what happens at school. If you have any questions or information about your child that you feel would be valuable, or you would like to help out in the classroom, please don't hesitate to contact me. I look forward to working in partnership with you, so please always feel welcome to talk to me.

For more information on starting school, please take a look at our school website which has lots of ideas and tips to support you.

<http://www.kts.school.nz/enrolments/new-entrant-parent-information/>

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