



MOUNT ROSKILL GRAMMAR SCHOOL

DECEMBER 2015



NEWSLETTER

FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S DESK

Nga mihi nui ki a koutou

Our junior prize giving completed a fantastic year with a celebration of achievement and learning purpose. Thank you to families and friends who joined with us in recognising the success of so many students. Especial congratulations to Kate Bonnici and Ayla Hawthorne who were first overall students in year 9 and 10 respectively, and to Sarah McKenzie and Tessa Brown who were second overall in year 9 and 10. We also recognised the broad range of achievement of our junior students over the year.



- 17 students were finalists at the NIWA Science and Technology fair where they gained 5 highly commended awards and three prizes for first place.
- 9 students gained elite awards in the language perfect world championships with year 10 student Tessa Brown placing in the top 60 students in the world.
- Year 9 and 10 students Sarah and Caroline Yan were joint winners of the Auckland Girls Chess Championship and year 10 student Thea Dickson gained third place in the under 16 competition.
- Our junior academy hockey boys and girls teams were both runners-up in their grades.
- Our under 14 rugby boys team made their grade semi-finals and the under 15 boys won their grade.
- Junior girls made up a good portion of the girls senior 10 a side rugby team who went unbeaten until the Auckland final. A number of these players represented Auckland.
- Both under 15 rugby teams competed at the National Sevens competition last week making the quarter finals, the girls coming an outstanding 5th and the boys 7th.
- The year 13 football academy played in the top grade in Auckland for their age. Several of these students played for the first XI who won promotion to the Auckland secondary schools premier senior competition for 2016.
- The junior A boys cricket team won their grade with only 3 losses in 12 games.
- The under 15 boys basketball team won their grade with 9 wins and 1 loss.
- Many girls took up Lacrosse and several year 10 students have been selected for the Auckland Development team.
- Our gymnastics and trampolining squads continue to produce great results at regional at national level.

We are proud of our year 9 and 10 students who are lifting the bar!

Congratulations also to year 13 student Toru Arakua who has been selected for the senior New Zealand women's league team - the Black Ferns to play Australia during the NRL nines in February. This is an outstanding achievement.

Best wishes for a restful and enjoyable Christmas season.
Ki nga taumata

Greg Watson

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A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES CHAIR

This last newsletter of 2015 allows us to reflect on the year's achievements. The MRGS Vision is that *all students will be successful, powerful learners who are active and responsible citizens* and that our professional and highly motivated staff will challenge thinking and grow knowledge through inquiry and quality learning programmes.



While students look at their own individual achievement, the Board of Trustees role is to look at achievement across the school; we look at the big picture. One of those big picture views is the Education Review Office's monitoring by the Ministry of Education and we have worked to ensure that we gain the highest achievement possible - a 4-5 year review. This year ERO visited the school and the result is that their next visit will be in 4-5 years. Achieving this for a second time is a reflection of the quality of teaching at MRGS.

The MOE has set targets for the achievement of students by the year 2017. The goal is that 85% of school leavers will achieve NCEA level 2 or above. 85% must also be achieved for Maori and Pasifika students. MRGS is 10% above the national average at 85.2% . We are also higher than the national average for Maori and Pasifika students. There are still gains to be made but it is tracking in the right direction.

Another measure of success of student learning is how many students stay at school until they are 17 years old. At MRGS the retention rate is 91% compared to a national average of 83%.

We could also look at the measure of how many of our students attend a tertiary institution. It is 52% at MRGS compared to 35% nationally. MRGS has lifted the achievement of all students. The students and the community value education and have confidence in their ability to achieve and, as shown by the results, do achieve.

One of the BoT strategic goals is to Strengthen Partnerships within our Community and as part of this the Ministry of Education in Auckland is supporting our proposal for a community of 5 schools including Three Kings Primary School and Dominion Road Primary School - together with the three Roskill Campus schools we will extend the sharing and consistency of learning. Our Mentoring program also strengthens community partnerships and has grown in strength and attendance rates.

The strategic goal of Developing Facilities to Promote Quality Educational Experiences has resulted in a new football turf this year and the hockey turf will be upgraded over summer into a water based turf. The new electronic signage at the gate allows communication with the community about events and achievements.

Schools aren't just about academic learning. Many students will have participated in events, coached teams, been a mentor or leader, participated in extra curricular activities and contributed to the wider life of school. Thank you to all of the staff who make these events possible for students.

The BoT would like to thank all of the staff who work at this school for their commitment to the education of students. Thank you also to those families, businesses and staff who provide financial, coaching, mentoring and tuition support to the school.

We wish you all a safe holiday and look forward to seeing the students and staff back at school next year, well rested.

Ngā mihi o te Kirihiomete me te Tau Hou

Marjet Pot
Chairperson MRGS Board of Trustees



JUNIOR PRIZE GIVING

The year for junior students closed with the annual prizegiving—our opportunity to celebrate the achievement of our younger learners and to share our pride in powerful learning with parents and the community. The highlight of the event was the announcement of our top prizewinners in year 9 and 10.

The student who achieved first place in year 9 was Kate Bonnici and with that position she was also awarded the Principal's Academic Award for her age group. In year 10 Ayla Hawthorne took first place and again the Principal's Academic Award. These two young women have shown excellence and resilient high achievement throughout the year across all their areas of learning.



Kate Bonnici receives her awards



Ayla and Kate with Mr Watson

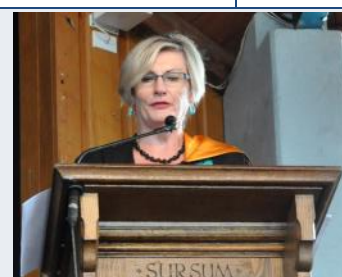


Ayla Hawthorne receives her awards

The event opened with speeches by BoT member Mrs Mulrennan and Mr. Watson before proceeding on to the House Merit and Distinction awards—acknowledging students' community commitment. Class prizes were then presented followed by sports and special awards before the announcement of the top scholars of years 9 and 10. In addition to entertaining musical performances there was also the regular gifting of donations to the local Salvation Army branch—once again a marvelous example of the generous spirit of Roskill as officers from the army acknowledged the extent of our donations of food and toys. The whole event was a fitting end to a productive and successful year for the junior school.

MRGS Junior Prizegiving Top Awards

1st in Year 10 and the Principal's Academic Award	Ayla Hawthorne	1st in year 9 and the Principal's Academic Award	Kate Bonnici
2nd in Year 10	Tessa Brown	2nd in Year 9	Sarah Mckenzie
Junior Sportswoman of the Year	Terangi Taio	Junior Sportsman of the Year	Harjot Johal
Lions Community Spirit Award	Ala Vailala	YWCA Future Leaders Personal Achievement Award	Hana Galea





JUNIOR PRIZE GIVING





JUNIOR WIDER EDUCATION

Once again the junior school took part enthusiastically in 3 days of wider education. Students had the choice of a range of activities. Some were involved an extended camp at Motu Moana where they climbed, rode mountain bikes, were introduced to archery and enjoyed other new experiences. One group of students enjoyed 'horsing around' and were introduced to equestrian skills. Another group experienced the isolated flora and fauna of "Wildlife Into The Night" on Tiritiri Matangi Island sanctuary. Closer to home students took part in art appreciation courses . A small group went bush and enjoyed a Kaimai forest camp. The keynote of the majority of the opportunities available was 'Give it a go!' A popular group 'Waihi Gold' journeyed west for a range of outdoor pursuits. All of these events extended our juniors' life-experience and gave them an entertaining few days at the close of their final school term of the year.





HOCKEY TURF RE-DEVELOPMENT

After a number of years of negotiations, meetings and the raft of fundraising; including quiz nights, mufti days, sausage sizzles, and even the memorable 'helicopter drop', the work began this term on the hockey turf development. The first two stages —(pictured below)has involved clearing the existing facility— initially the bollards and side barriers and taking off the old playing surface and to start clearance of the site so that the full re- constitution and groundworks can be carried out. It will be fascinating to see the various stages of the transformation of the site as we work towards the new water-based turf that will be such an asset to the school and its community.



CHEMISTRY OLYMPIAD CONTINUING TRADITION

The senior chemistry students of MRGS have a proud tradition in the Chemistry Olympiad competition. Over the years we have consistently seen numbers of students reach the training group/camp stages of the process and individuals have then gone further to be part of the New Zealand Olympiad team— competing successfully internationally and gaining medals for their expert knowledge. It is satisfying to see this tradition continuing into next year. Eight of our students have been selected for the 2016 training group :

Deeksha Vijayakumar	Disha Gomathinayagam
Anirudh Bhatnagar	Josette Xu
Felix Yang	Het Patel
Sai Krupa Narayana	Lily Li



They will work on modules of exercises early next year and then take part in a selection examination from which the 30 top students will be identified to progress to the training camp and possible consideration for the final team of 4 to represent New Zealand.



ROSKILL STUDENT JOINS FLAG DEBATE

Earlier this term Parneet Kohli one of our Deputy Head Prefects was invited to take part in a television discussion of the New Zealand Flag referendum. The TV One current affairs programme, Q & A chose Parneet to represent a teenage voice from our diverse community of Roskill. He joined a panel including a design expert, politicians, celebrities and a member of the flag reconsideration project. It was a great opportunity for Parneet to have a first hand experience of the media in action to complement his own Media Studies work this year. He represented the school and his age group with an informed and articulate contribution to the discussions.



MRGS MEDIATION SERVICE HIGHLIGHTED

The latest edition of the Peace Foundation's publication 'Mediation Works' features the work of our extensive student led mediation service.

The article written by school counsellor Mrs Hourigan-Johnston gives focus to the dedicated and long running service at our school. In her

piece she points out that involvement in mediation 'increases confidence and resiliency in students, helping them to achieve better at school.' A year 12 mediator acknowledges this and its support of key Roskill values in the statement, "It has strengthened my sense of belonging to the school and I am now more committed to everything I undertake. It has motivated me to strive for excellence and have a positive attitude".



Mt Roskill Grammar's Mediation Service

by Donna Hourigan-Johnston

MT ROSKILL GRAMMAR SCHOOL (MRGS) began its Mediation programme in 1994. It was created by the visionary Yvonne Duncan, pioneered at MRGS by the late Margaret Stanners, followed by the dedicated Jill Gardener. I was lucky enough to be given the opportunity to be the Peer Mediation Coordinator at MRGS 13 years ago.

I have the privilege of working with hundreds of students, witnessing the positive change they have made within themselves, their relationships and their school community. The students have taught me so much about collaboration,

stop bullying, challenge prejudices and organise activities like 'International Peace Week', so that peace and diversity can be celebrated and protected.

"I love Peace week because students get an insight on what a happy, healthy environment is like, and they learn from it, and get experience and use these skills in real life situations." (Year 11 Mediator through anonymous survey).

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Donna Hourigan-Johnston
Peer Mediation
Coordinator at Mt Roskill
Grammar

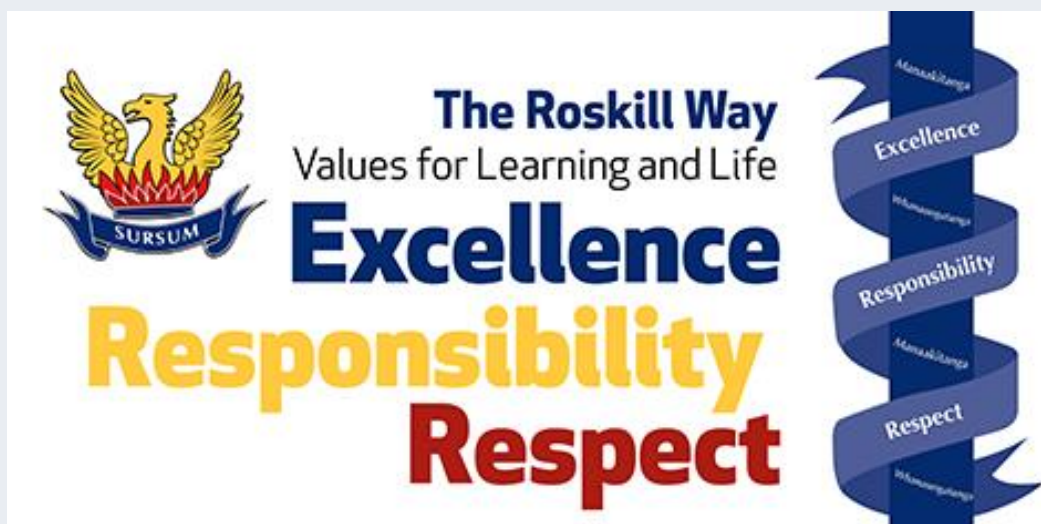


CHANGES TO THE SCHOOL DAY FOR 2016

Over the past two years the school has been reviewing its provision of learning in the junior school and has pursued its vision to make learning in years 9 and 10 as interesting as possible and the best possible base for senior learning. This has resulted in changes to subject choices in the junior school with a deepening of learning opportunities in certain subjects and the introduction of academies in a range of areas. As part of this continuing process of strengthening learning provision we are making changes to the way the week at Roskill will look in 2016. The changes will make the times of the day simple and straightforward.

For 2016 the school will have a new timetable in which:

- **There are 25 periods per week** (rather than the previous 27 periods) - so **no lessons will be rotated off.**
- **Every lesson will be 55 minutes long**
- **LCT— Learning Capability Time will be three times a week for 30 minutes each time** (It will be more like a lesson and focusing on learning.) Everyone in the form class will be there.
- **Assemblies will only be on Monday.** On the first week of a two week cycle -there will be a school assembly. On the second week there will be house assemblies - strengthening the idea of the house being a 'school within a school'.
- **School will still finish at 3.10 pm**
- **School will start a little later at 9.00 am.** The expectation is that with a 9.00am start everyone has plenty of time to get ready and be on time for learning. It also means that there will be some time before school when teams or student groups might choose to meet.
- Otherwise the school day will be the same. **There will be 5 lessons, lunch will be after period 4 followed by assembly or LCT.**





2016 START OF YEAR DETAILS:

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION OFFICE

The School Administration Office opens on Thursday 21st January

RETURNING STUDENTS: COURSE CHANGES

Returning Students – 2016 course changes only

Year 13 – Wednesday 27th January 9.00am (in school hall)

Year 12 – Wednesday 27th January 11.00am (in school hall)

Year 11 – Wednesday 27th January 1.00pm (in school hall)

FIRST SCHOOL DAY:

Thursday 4th February 2016 Y9, Y13 and all other new students

Y9 and new students 9.40am on school main field (for Powhiri and assemblies)

Y13 9.00am in school hall for Powhiri preparation

Friday 5th February = All students

9.00 am (students to form classes)

School closed Anniversary Day – Monday 1st February

School closed Waitangi Day – Monday 8th February

ENROLMENTS – All new enrolments must be completed by Tuesday 26th January for students wishing to start on 4th February.

UNIFORM AND STATIONERY SHOP

on Campus (access Frost Road entrance 4)

Opening hours – Jan 26th - 29th, 8.00am to 6.00pm **closed Monday February 1st** ;

Feb 2nd – 5th, 8.00am to 6.00pm; **closed Monday February 8th**

February 9th 8.00am to 12.00 midday; Feb 10th – 12th 8.00 to 9.00am and 3.00pm to 5.00pm.

Then the shop will return to normal term time hours

Mondays – 8.00-9.00am and 3.00 to 4.00pm; Thursdays - 8.00-9.00am and 3.00 to 4.00pm

TERM DATES 2016

Term	First Day of term	Last Day of term
Term 1	For Y9 and new students Thursday 4th February. For all other students Friday 5th February	Friday 15th April
Term 2	Monday 2nd May	Friday 8th July
Term 3	Monday 25th July	Friday 23rd September
Term 4	Monday 10th October	Friday 9th December



SCHOOL SPONSORSHIP

Mount Roskill Grammar School would like to thank the following businesses for their ongoing generous financial sponsorship and support ;

Libelle, Barfoot & Thompson – Mt Roskill, Mc Donalds ,Three Kings Dental and Fletcher Living and Fuji Xerox.

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SPONSORSHIP OF GIRLS 1ST XI FOOTBALL TEAM

Mount Roskill Grammar School also would like to thank Pak' n Save Royal Oak for their sponsorship of the Girls 1st XI Football Team this year



Any business or organisation wishing to offer sponsorship to the school—please contact Mr Ben Horne—Director of Sports Ben Horne Ben.Horne@mrgs.school.nz