

Education Review Office (ERO) Visit

Every four years, the Education Review Office (ERO) visits all schools and early childhood centres throughout New Zealand to assess their operations, staffing, student climate and effectiveness against set criteria. Our Saint Kentigern schools are always proud to receive positive feedback from the ERO reports confirming that the programmes we run, the rapport between staff and students and the overall morale and sense of well-being at each of our campuses is of the highest order.

During Term 3, it was the Preschool's turn to receive a visit from ERO. After a comprehensive look at all aspects of our operation, followed by meeting with ERO staff, the Preschool has received their confirmed report - and are thrilled to say that the Preschool is deemed 'very well placed.'

We were delighted to show the review team our Preschool in action and hear their feedback - and we look forward to their visit again in 4 years.

Some comments from the report...

'Relationships between families and teachers are responsive and reciprocal'

'Parents value the care...shown by teachers'

'Children are settled, focused, highly engaged and positive in their learning'

'The learning environment challenges and extends children's play'

'...seamless learning pathway ...with Transition for moving to school'

'Teachers are highly collaborative...'

'The Director is collaborative and her inclusive leadership supports teachers to work as a team and empowers them to use and grow their strengths.'

Sue Nash,
Preschool Director



When City Meets Country

The arrival of two (largish) piglets from a farm in Kaukapakapa during Term 3 saw our preschool children quickly become experts on all things 'porcine!'

The wooden playhouse in the corner of the garden was fully converted with gates and fencing to ensure that the piglets were safe and comfortable in their own space. The children spent hours each day hand feeding them, walking the 'girl' pig, cleaning out the pig pen, sitting talking to them and simply observing how a pig goes about its own daily routines.

The enjoyment that our 'city' children were getting from the pigs was certainly worth the effort! After ten days, the 'boy' pig, Patches was returned to the farm as he was getting a bit big and boisterous, driving the 'girl' pig, Porky crazy with his antics! We worried that Porky might be unhappy on her own but far from it! She became a very happy pig and was most content in her 'posh' pig palace. There was no shortage of willing helpers to hand feed her biscuits and an assortment of fruit and vegetables. She loved bananas! It was quite a sight to see her going for regular walks in her Saint Kentigern uniform with her harness and lead!

The Girls' School classes have also been over to show the girls 'real pigs' in line with their 'Living things' Inquiry and lots of boys from Boys' School have also been up for visits. Such was the celebrity status that the pigs featured on the front cover of the local newspaper, the Eastern Bays Courier.

With each passing day, Porky would trot around free in the playground with the children, finding a warm spot in the sun to settle down and snooze – so gentle, well-loved and so intelligent was our pet pig that it was sad to see her go back to the farm, after 6 weeks with us, to become the pet of the farmer's daughter. But - the arrival of new 3 week old baby piglets has made the parting manageable!



Huhu Grub Hotel

The arrival of a big wooden chopping block from Sue's father's shed, filled with over 20 huhu grubs caused great excitement for the children – and a mixed response from the teachers! The scientific discoveries made as the children opened the log and grubs of varying sizes crawled and writhed around was fantastic hands-on learning. We soon discovered that the children weren't in the least bit squeamish. Negative responses to insects are definitely an acquired grown up trait!

The children researched about the life cycle and how to care for them, finding out that the grub can live for 3 years but the beetle for only one day! Holding them gently in their hands, before returning them to their nice wet log to eat some more wood, led to great learning opportunities for our preschoolers.



In the Jungle The Mighty Jungle!

In conjunction with our visit to Auckland Zoo and the trip to watch our Boys' School production of The Lion King, the children became very interested in 'all things jungle,' especially wild animals.

The Lion King show was an absolute hit and our children still talk about the actors and have thoroughly enjoyed re-watching the school DVD of the show – singing along to the songs.

Artwork produced by the children was outstanding and the learning they gained was brilliant. The topic culminated with a hugely enjoyable Jungle family disco.

The disco evening saw almost an 100% turnout of families – parents, grandparents and siblings – with every child dressed in some form of animal costume. Staff and even some parents got into full jungle themed clothing and boogied the night away in the Zoo area! An array of songs saw the dance floor full and by 7.30pm there were lots of very tired children ready to head home for a good night sleep. This was an awesome family social evening for all to enjoy.



How tough are you Daddy?

An inflatable boxing ring with oversized gloves and jousting poles greeted our Dads, Grandads – and other significant males to Preschool for the annual Father's Day. A huge turnout saw the men spending time with their children, inside and out, before having turns to be pummelled by their children in the boxing ring!

'Watch out Dad – here I come to bash you!' we are hopeful it is the only time these words are heard – and with the giggles from the children and the gasps from the men I am sure they are pleased they are only 3 and 4 years old!

Morning tea was well consumed by the hungry men before they headed back to work, some Dads delaying departure as long as possible. A gift of a screwdriver, measuring tape or Stanley knife – with a personalised footprint of their child alongside a 'footprint' poem was well received.



Pamper my Mum

Mother's Day saw the arrival of Mums, Grandmas, Aunties, godmothers and all special ladies in our children's lives come for a morning at Preschool. Some of them may have wondered what they signed up for with a promise to be 'pampered.' A vast range of make-up and nail polish – of every colour possible – saw our lady friends transformed into absolute visions of beauty – in the eyes of the preschoolers! Despite some of them ending up looking like a circus act, they all entered into the fun with great enthusiasm!

The children gifted their special people with a terrarium in a glass – a succulent grown in our Preschool garden specially planted. An individual thumb print stuck on a by each child made into a heart with a poem saying... "I've made you a heart with my cute little thumb, So you will have this memory for all the years to come." Quality time, great company and a lovely morning tea was appreciated by everyone.



Flora MacDonald would be proud!

Dressed in tartan accessories and sashes, our Preschool girls had the opportunity to celebrate Flora MacDonald Day with the Girls' School, marching proudly behind the Pipes and Drums following the 'big girls.' Our Preschool boys cheered the girls on as they smiled and waved! The girls marched around the school before heading into the Hall for the ceremony and to sing Scottish songs! Our Transition girls spent the morning with the activities at the Girls' School – making porridge and a spider were a highlight. What great marching from our girls - Flora MacDonald from Scotland would have been proud!



Snowflakes and Snowballs

In the past, the arrival of 6 tonnes of snow has happened early in the morning before the children arrived but this year, the children watched as the truck full of snow unloaded. The squeals from them all as the snow poured into the sandpit turning the Preschool into a winter wonderland were priceless!

Each child had an individual photo in uniform to remember the day it 'snowed at Preschool' before changing into suitable snow clothes for a fantastic morning of crisp, cold play.

For the majority of children it was their first encounter with snow! Our favourite quote of the day was from a three year old who asked, 'Why is the snow so cold? Can you please warm it up so I don't get cold fingers?'

Snow angels, snow balls flying through the air and lots of fun made for a great day with their friends in the snow.



Preschool gives Service too

The importance of giving service to others is a focus that starts at Preschool. Annual events are held throughout the year where the Preschool children show their commitment to helping others less fortunate than themselves. From donating pyjamas to Kidz First to Red Nose dress up day for Cure Kids, mufti day to raise funds for Lifepod and the Nepal earthquake, the children immerse themselves and get a young person's understanding of the cause at hand.

The response from Preschool families in donating thousands of dollars of goods for Nawaka Village Preschool for the Fiji Service trip attended by Director of Preschool Sue Nash with the Year 8 Boys' and Girls' Schools was amazing. The donation of a ready-to-assemble swing frame, donated and made by a Preschool father, was so well received by the village children that the basket swing given by Preschool, has been so well used that more will be sent over!



Run, Run as fast as you can!

A beautiful sunny morning greeted us as we boarded the bus for our annual Cross Country event at Saint Kentigern Boys' School. There was a great deal of excitement as 50 of our preschool children prepared themselves for a long fun-run! Our three year old girls started the racing, followed by the three year old boys. A longer course was laid out ready for our four year olds. There was plenty of cheering and clapping as every child completed their race and very proudly showed their place number to their friends. It was so pleasing to see the way our children showed such great support towards their friends.

The highlight in 'Outstanding Sportsmanship' was our 2nd place getter in the four year old boys - putting his arm around his friend who came 1st, saying, 'I'm so proud of you for winning, well done you did great!'



3-Year-Old Girls

1st	MacKenzie Porteous
2nd	Charlotte Wakelin
3rd	Alyssa Wray

3-Year-Old Boys

1st	Oscar Hunter
2nd	Sidart Naiker
3rd	Ethan Godden

4-Year-Old Girls

1st	Ninsi Finn
2nd	Elsa Taylor
3rd	Maggie Griffiths / Willow Carnegie

4-Year-Old Boys

1st	Kieran Vaseegaran-Hey
2nd	Maddox Bedford
3rd	Mark Bai