



20 March 2018

Te Ao Māori Learning at St Mary's School

Dear Parents/Caregivers,

We are excited to inform you that we have employed a Te Ao Māori specialist who will now be a part of our St Mary's staff whānau. Jerome Edwards will be at our school every Wednesday, starting tomorrow to teach Te Ao Māori to all of our students, alongside our classroom teachers.

Te Ao Māori is the worldview of Māori. Culture and language will be taught together, including concepts such as tradition, te reo, customs, waiata, karakia etc. As a result, our students will be immersed into all areas of Te Ao Māori.

The New Zealand Curriculum emphasises the importance of te reo Māori and the benefits of learning it. The New Zealand Curriculum and Ka Hikitia affirm the value of te reo Māori as the indigenous language of New Zealand. Increasingly, New Zealanders understand that Te Ao Māori are essential components of this country's heritage. While they define Māori identity in particular, they are integral to the identity of all New Zealanders. This vibrant culture supports the development and celebration of our national identity, enhances the mana whenua of our indigenous people and contributes to a creative and successful economy.

Mātua Edwards will also be leading a Kapa Haka group at school. All Year 5 students will be included, as well as all of our students who identify themselves as Māori from the whole of St Mary's School.

We are very excited to have Mātua Edwards join us at school and are excited about all of the brilliant learning that is to come.

If you have any queries, please let me know,

Yours Sincerely,

Claire Hart
Deputy Principal
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