

Principals Speech End of Year 2021

Kia Ora Katou

I sat down to write my speech and all I could think of was wow what a year. This year has seen us all from home to school embark on a serious roller coaster ride. And yet through the highs and the lows we are still here together today.

My high of this year has to be our kids. Their amazing resilience through an ever changing landscape has made us all in awe of them. Their ability to smile, to negotiate, to laugh, to be angry, to cry, to be friends and to show caring and love has kept us all grounded, you are who we are here for. While we have shone in the few interschool events we have participated in this year, our students have put just as much effort into our school events. It is with so much pride that I can stand and acknowledge not just our achievers today, but every student sitting here, remember you are special and cared about at our kura.

Another highlight for me has been our staff. We work together as a team for the benefit of our students. Hiraina, José, Kirsten, Toni, Margaret, Jackie, Vanessa, Anne, Jenny and Eric, you have stood together and faced this year beside me, in front of me and behind me, though the laughter and the tears, and of course the chocolate, I can't thank you enough for this.

Unfortunately, not all has gone to plan this year, we lost a valuable asset when Ms C had to leave for health reasons but thankfully Mrs Selfe has stepped ably into this position, first as a reliever and then deciding our kids were just amazing, has joined us permanently. Our major blow of course came when Mrs McGovern could no longer be at the school due to government mandates. This has been a very hard decision for José, and unfortunately she won't be coming back next year. I would like to take this chance to thank José for the three years she has worked at Norsewood & Districts School. Your welcoming smile, your sense of humour and your generous heart will be sorely missed by both staff and students. I know your somewhere on our zoom and I hope you take from us how much we care and wish you well for the future. Hopefully some flowers arrived today for you.

I don't put lockdown as a lowlight of the year, as while it was inconvenient, it certainly taught me how capable our families are. It also made me aware of what we need to do as a school in case this happens again, this was my first lockdown as a principal so it was a great learning experience. Not to forget how much of this beautiful countryside I got to see while delivering devices.

But from this, it was brought to light how lacking our ICT is in the school. Thankfully we have an amazing School Support Group and with their financial help we were able to buy enough Chromebooks to get our Senior Room up to date. We can now move into the other rooms with an ICT plan. Our school support parents work tirelessly to help us as a whole school give our students resources and experience that otherwise would be unaffordable and I would like to thank them all for this.

Of course behind every school is a Board of Trustees. I would like to thank our Board who works quietly behind the scenes making sure our school is a safe and happy place for all the tamariki that go here. But just a reminder we have a working bee on the 15th January, mark the date.

Our school is a special and unique place and no matter what decisions you, your whanau and your students make for the future, they will always have a piece of Norsewood & Districts with them. Roll on 2022, where we will learn to live with new rules and regulations. All I ask is that if you think we can do something better, please tell us (politely, remember we are people too) if you see problems

arising, come to us with a realistic solution. Only by working together can we build on the inclusive, positive and forward moving kura that we are. Norsewood & Districts School is an amazing place for our kids to be, let's not forget that.

Ngā mihi maioha te whanau o Te Kura O nga hau e wha o nga Mokopuna o Rakautātahi kia tau te rangimarie I ngā wā katoa.

I would like to wish you all a happy holiday and merry Christmas. Look after each other and we'll see you back next year.

Angela McQuarrie
Principal
Norsewood & Districts School
2021