



Principal's Welcome to 2019

Dear All, Kia Ora Tatōu,

I hope you have had a restful break during what has been a beautiful Kiwi summer. Christa, the girls and I were lucky enough to have some time back in Australia with family. The return home to visit our families was well-spent, however, we loved coming back to our place in Days Bay - we are so lucky to live in a beautiful location!

Following a good break, I am excited about the year ahead and the opportunity to continue building on the Vision, Mission and Values of Wellesley guided by the [Strategic Plan](#) in ensuring each boy who attends this special school, in its unrivalled setting between the bush and the sea, is empowered to discover his best.

Our focus is to embrace fresh thinking and innovation to provide cutting edge education and prepare Wellesley boys for the future, while honouring Wellesley's past and protecting its unique environment and distinctive character.

This year we are introducing new Student Management System, [Edge](#), which will be progressively implemented through the year to provide parents access to key information via an app.

Edge also includes an online fee payment system via a link or through the app, thus streamlining the process in increasingly busy lives. This new payment feature will take effect from February and further information will be sent to you in coming weeks. The system is easy to use and very efficient. Introducing this new system aligns with our Strategic Plan and is a continuation of Wellesley's commitment to transparency and interactivity in the classroom and to facilitating the important partnership between parents, staff and the boys.

Bringing out the best in every boy

[Personalised learning](#) remains a key part of our teaching methodology at Wellesley. We centre our decisions around the boys. This includes teacher judgement, current research and collaboration on key issues. At the heart of our teaching is the belief that every boy is unique, that we learn about his passions and contextualise learning based on these passions, conversations with parents, developmental needs, gap analysis in assessment and teacher judgement.

We see this as a partnership with you and so invite you to continue sharing with myself or your son's teacher any new interests he may be developing so we can help nurture that as part of his overall learning plan.

Enhancing our curriculum

Enhancing technology is a key focus for 2019 and as part of our ongoing focus on creating the optimum digital environment for teaching boys, we will be introducing and streamlining new

learning programmes for Years 0-4 and 5-8. These will best prepare Wellesley boys for the future while maintaining our excellent foundation programmes in literacy and numeracy and continuation of strong delivery of Wellesley's specialist subjects in the Arts, Physical Education and STEM. We never lose sight of the creativity and exploration of learning that boys love to do. Engaging them and developing a curious mind is as important as enhancing the foundation skills.

Digital safety will remain paramount with a zero tolerance of inappropriate use of digital devices and we will continue to use [FamilyZone](#) to keep our boys safe.

The school values of Empathy & Respect, Risk Taking in Learning and Perseverance for Personal Best remain at the centre of all we do at Wellesley and we will continue to use our unique environment between the bush and the sea to inspire and trigger learning opportunities.

Our Wellesley Insights programme will explain more about our technology and digital enhancements with the first Insight's presentation to take place later this term. More on that soon.

Wellbeing and Service

In this age of disruption and uncertainty, helping the boys develop skills for mental and physical well-being are essential. At Wellesley, we take our role of building resilience in our boys very seriously using a variety of strategies. Firstly, we encourage risk taking and celebrate this value when demonstrated. Secondly, we encourage boys to have a go when out of their comfort zone, such as at camps and activities outside the classroom. Finally, we dedicate specific programs for boys across the school to develop these skills - such as mindfulness and service.

We believe it is important to teach our boys to maintain a balanced view and good perspective no matter what goes on around them. We continue to modify the 'My Life Rulz' empathy and resilience programme for our younger boys from Years 0-4 and maintain the 'Pause, Breathe, Smile' mindfulness training in Years 5-6. The Service programme in Years 7-8 has been a huge success providing much opportunity for our older boys to engage with communities around them.

Creating a learning environment where boys feel safe and respected enables them to positively challenge themselves and take risks in every area of learning. We have seen encouraging results since rolling out [KiVa](#) in 2018, and we will continue to focus our efforts on this successful anti-bullying and behaviour management programme, developed in Finland , and led by Steve Girvan our Deputy Principal-Pastoral.

Preparing for the future

As well as the above, there are many exciting developments this year that continue to enhance our unique learning environment and prepare Wellesley for the future.

- We will continue to look at offering French in Years 0-4
- The introduction of the use of Te Reo Maori across the school will progress
- The Master Plan (an architectural and landscaping plan for the school) continues to progress and an update will be available later this term
- Introduction of the new student management system and payment system
- New programmes to enhance digital skills
- The new Wellesley website will be launched
- Our 'Wellesley Insights' series will continue inviting parents to hear from a guest speaker on hot topics relevant to school age children, such as online safety, child psychology and wellbeing and education for boys
- Similarly the 'Step Inside Wellesley' afternoons will continue inviting parents to classes, as we did with STEM last year, to join in, assist or just come and watch!

Dates for the diary

Upcoming opportunities for us to get together as the Wellesley community are:

- Monday 4th February – first day back at school
- Tuesday 12th February 6:30 -7pm – New Parents' Drinks prior to event below
- Tuesday 12th February 7pm – Parent Information Evening and Meet the Teacher for all new and current parents
- Sunday 17th March- Wellesley Family picnic (time to be confirmed)
- Thursday 28th March – Wellesley Insights: Further information to follow

Other updates

I would also like to congratulate Nicole Cooper on the birth of her son Hunter. She will be on maternity leave this year. We welcome back Sarah Bleier from maternity leave in Term 3.

We also welcome Debe Howard, a new staff member in the office, who will be replacing Anne Irwin. We would like to thank Anne for her wonderful service and also for assisting in the transition of Debe early in the term.

You will be aware from [my email](#) at the end of last year that we have some wonderful new teaching staff joining us and Veronica, Steve and I have been working closely with them over January to ensure a successful transition to our Wellesley family.

I look forward to seeing all the boys back on Monday 4th February, catching up with you all at the Parent Information Evening in the second week of Term and to an exciting 2019 ahead.

As always, should you have any questions or feedback, please do not hesitate to contact me.