

# Newsletter



**PUKEKOHE HIGH SCHOOL**

**Issue Two, 07 February 2023**

## From the Principal

Kia ora koutou

This morning we welcomed our Year 9 students and other students new to PHS with a pōwhiri. This is the first cohort to be welcomed in a ceremony beside the 5 Pou that were installed at the end of last year, one for each of the school's Houses – Pūriri (Red), Mataī (Black), Tītoki (Green), Māhoe (Blue) and Mānuka (Yellow).

I hope that all our new students enjoyed their first full day including working with their Year 13 peer support leaders and Kaiāwhina (form teachers).



### **PPTA industrial action**

I have been advised that members of the Post Primary Teachers Association (PPTA) are undertaking industrial action this term in order to achieve their pay settlement with the government. This is a nationwide action being undertaken by secondary teachers across the country. The industrial action involves not relieving or covering for other teachers who are absent.

As far as possible, the school will provide relief for a teacher who is absent by using external relieving teachers and teachers who are not members of the PPTA. The school is taking active steps to minimise the need for teachers to be absent from their classes. For example, teachers will not be able to attend courses or conferences or take students on trips during this term, until a settlement is agreed.

If we are not able to cover the number of teachers who are away because of staff sickness, we will, regrettably, have to consider rostering home different year levels. If this does become necessary I will of course give as much written notice as possible.

There will also be a one day strike during Term 1. I will advise parents and whānau as soon as I am made aware of the date of the strike.

### **Student cellphone ban in classrooms**

We have been encouraged by the support that we have received from parents to ensure that student cellphones are switched off and left in their bags during every lesson.

If a student does take their cellphone out during classtime, they will be warned and told to place it in their bag. If the same student takes their cellphone out a second time in the lesson, the phone will be confiscated and the student will be able to collect it at the end of the school day.

The reason for this decision is to improve learning by removing the distraction that cellphones cause, and to improve relationships between students and between students and teachers.

As students will not be able to use their cellphones in class, it is crucial that they bring a laptop or chromebook to school that is fully charged.

Parents can help further by not calling or texting students during class time. Students will still have access to their phones during interval and lunchtime to check any messages, although we will keep this under review too.

### **Sports Department**

I am delighted to announce two appointments to the Sports Department. We have created the new role of Sports Director and Gordon Paulsen will take up this position from 27 February. Sheyva, a past head student of the school, has also been appointed to the role of Sports Coordinator, and he is already hard at work in the sports office.

I hope that all students will participate in the many sporting opportunities that exist at PHS and enjoy the chance to make new friendships and to represent their school with pride.

### **School App**

Support for our SchoolApp is growing rapidly and reports from parents who have downloaded the App tell us that they are enjoying receiving notifications directly to their phone when there is a school notice, newsletter or a sport alert for their student. Reporting a student absence is also easily done through the App, as is using Contacts to locate a staff member and the Portal link for checking student information. Download the App here <https://pukekohehigh.apps.school.nz/share/>



Ngā mihi,

Richard Barnett  
Principal