# Newsletter 16
## 20 October 2026

Welcome back to our last term of the academic year. I would like to warmly welcome our new whānau to our kura. We've had 36 new tamariki join us this term, across a range of year levels. We have opened a second 'roll growth' classroom which Anne Hoare is taking. Anne is an experienced, semi-retired kaiako who knows our children well. The new classroom is Akomanga 19 and they are based out of Meeting Room Three. At this stage of the year, we are very tight for space as our roll is always at its highest.

Late last term we were delighted to appoint Rawiri Blundell to a permanent teaching position and Jen Freeman to a one year fixed term teaching position. Jen will be covering for Nicole Antoniadis who will be on study leave for most of 2027.

We were also delighted to appoint both Lyndal Roche and Katrina Bankier to a shared Learning Support Coordinator position next year. This Learning Support Coordinator position is Ministry funded and is designed to support tamariki (children) with additional needs, kaiako (teachers) and our Learning Assistants. The learning Support Coordinator role will start in 2027.

The Appointments Committee is currently going through the process of appointing a Deputy Principal to replace Barb Cowie who is retiring at the end of this year.

We've had a really good start to Term 4. The children are continuing with their awesome learning and we're all enjoying the warmer weather. Long may that continue.

## Focus on attendance

**Attendance Matters – Please Notify the School of Absences**

We are only in the second week of the term and have already had a high number of unexplained student absences.

Regular attendance is essential for our tamariki to make the most of their learning and stay connected with their kura. If your child is going to be absent for any reason, **please ensure you notify the school and provide the reason for their absence.**

**Absence Notifications**

If your child is to be away from school please notify the school office before 9:00am each day by using one of the following options, stating your child's name, room number and reason for their absence:

- Send a message via our free App (go to page 15 for instructions to download the App). This is our preferred method of communication or…
- Text **027 352 2089** or…
- Phone **856 5393** to leave a message

For your child's safety we endeavour to contact parents/caregivers if your child's absence is unexplained, however this is not always possible. It is vital that contact phone numbers are kept up to date.

*All children arriving late **must** go to the 'Smiley Window' ☺ to have their attendance registered and to get a late slip, before going to class.*

**Indian Dance Group**

Our Knighton Indian dance group practiced hard last term for a community performance that was held on Saturday October 10th. The children performed in front of a packed audience including the Mayor and other esteemed guests.

"The Indian Dance Show was so much fun, exciting, amazing and scary! It was fun when my family watched me. I liked it when Whaea Angie came to watch and support us. I felt so special wearing the makeup and beautiful costumes."
Winnie - Akomanga 8

Shai, one of our Learning Assistants is their dance teacher and she said "I am very proud of each one of them for showing dedication, confidence and resilience to perform a dance very different from their language and culture. This unique cross cultural engagement and participation makes our community a better place. Thank you to all teachers, students and whanau for supporting us."

*Walk or Wheels week is here! Let's get as many as possible walking, scooting or biking to school this week. Tomorrow, on **Wednesday 21 October**, keep an eye out for one of our student helpers and fill in an entry slip to go in the draw for some awesome prizes from the Hamilton City Council School Travel team. Walking or Wheeling to school is great for our bodies and our minds and makes it safer at our school gate. Karawhiua!*

## Our Surprise Visitors - The Black Ferns

You wouldn't believe it, we had three Black Ferns (Grace, Plum and Honor) come to Knighton Normal School, as well as lots of Mitey people. Te Hihiri did a whakatau for our visitors, the Black Ferns gifted us a signed rugby jersey, which will be hung up in the office.

They came to see Mitey (mental health education) in action in Akomanga 8. All the adults introduced themselves, there were a lot! First, Whaea Amie played a game with us, Mr Campbell even joined in. This game showed us that everyone is different and that's ok because we are unique, have different personalities and are special.

Whaea Angie read us all a story called Mophead. Mophead's hair was really big and wild, people were making fun of her and we know that that is not ok. This story tells us that it is okay to be different and to celebrate what makes us special. We created a mophead piece of artwork, we put kupu (words) and phrases on our artwork which describe ourselves.

We were so surprised initially as we didn't know the Black Ferns were coming. We loved having them in class, what a memorable experience! Thanks Black Ferns for coming to Akomanga 8.

Co-written by Oliver, Aania, Junior and Whaea Chrissy.

**KNIGHTON SCHOOL HATS**

During term 4 Knighton hats must be worn when students are outdoors. This is part of our Sun Safe policy. They can be purchased via MyKindo https://kindo.co.nz/ or at the office for $12.00.

**Note your calendar**

23 October - Teacher Only Day - SCHOOL CLOSED

26 Oct - Labour Day - SCHOOL CLOSED

28 October - A3,A4 &A21 Maungatautari trip

29 October - A1 & A2 Maungatautari trip

29 October - Senior Athletics Day

29 October - Whānau hui

30 October - A&P Show - selected students

2 November - 6:00pm - Board of trustees hui

**Ngā mihi nui**

***Andrew Campbell***

**Principal**

**Ikura - Free period products**

Knighton Normal School is part of the Ministry of Education's nationwide Ikura initiative, providing free period products for students. Each period pack is designed to support a full menstrual cycle,and girls are encouraged to take as much as they need, for each cycle.

What is Ikura?
Ikura is a Government-funded programme that supplies free period products to schools and kura.This programme makes sure that no young person misses out on learning, sports, cultural activities, or feels uncomfortable at school because they don't have access to the products they need. An estimated 98% of menstruating female students in participating schools now have access to free products through this programme

Why it matters:
•Period products shouldn't be a barrier to participation.
•Providing free products helps uphold students' dignity, supports equity, and keeps them engaged in learning.
What free products are available?
•A range of regular and super pads are supplied.
•Products meet the needs of students of different ages, preferences, and cultural backgrounds.
•Each period pack is designed to support a full menstrual cycle.
•Students are encouraged to take as much as they need for each cycle, including for school holidays.

How students can access products
•They can be discreetly collected from the office.
•Students may also speak with a staff member if they need help accessing products.
More information is available on the Ministry of Education website: education.govt.nz

Te Whatu Ora
Health New Zealand

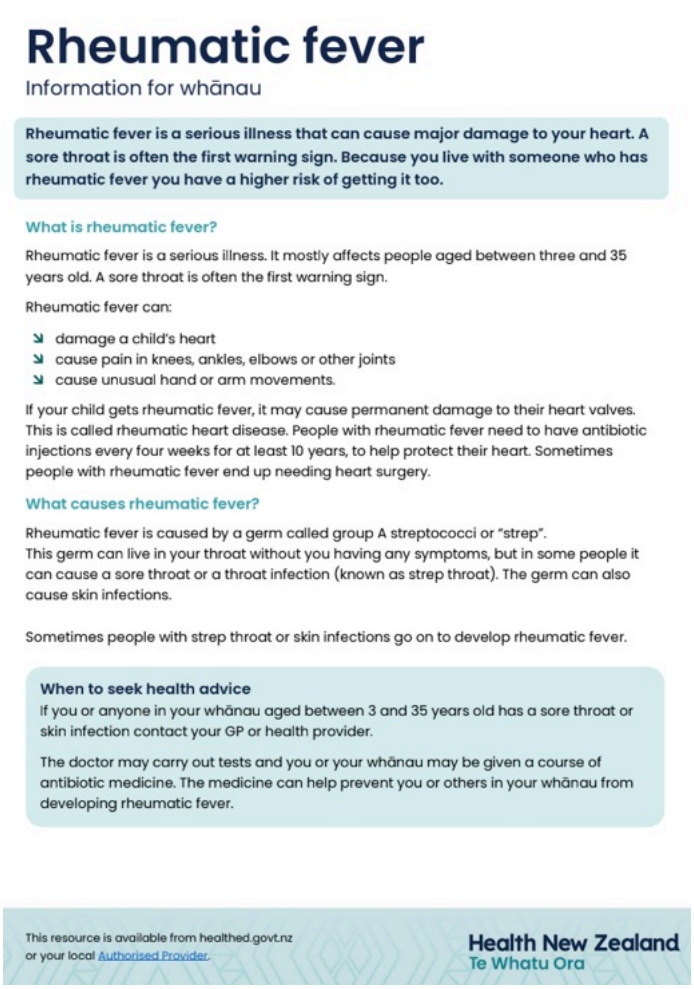
**FREE THROAT SWABBING IN THE WAIKATO FOR RHEUMATIC FEVER**

The following services have qualified staff who can swab sore throats to check for strep throat and provide antibiotics if needed.

If strep throat is left untreated it can lead to the development of rheumatic fever, which can damage joints and the heart.

**Pharmacies Accredited to Provide the RF Prevention Service:**

Anglesea Pharmacy, 9 Thackaray Street, Hamilton
Unichem Hamilton Pharmacy, 1/173 Anglesea Street
Unichem Dinsdale Pharmacy, 27 Whatawhata Road
West Hamilton Pharmacy, Cnr Grandview Road & Hyde Avenue



# Rheumatic fever

Information for whānau

**Rheumatic fever is a serious illness that can cause major damage to your heart. A sore throat is often the first warning sign. Because you live with someone who has rheumatic fever you have a higher risk of getting it too.**

## What is rheumatic fever?

Rheumatic fever is a serious illness. It mostly affects people aged between three and 35 years old. A sore throat is often the first warning sign.

Rheumatic fever can:

- damage a child's heart
- cause pain in knees, ankles, elbows or other joints
- cause unusual hand or arm movements.

If your child gets rheumatic fever, it may cause permanent damage to their heart valves. This is called rheumatic heart disease. People with rheumatic fever need to have antibiotic injections every four weeks for at least 10 years, to help protect their heart. Sometimes people with rheumatic fever end up needing heart surgery.

## What causes rheumatic fever?

Rheumatic fever is caused by a germ called group A streptococci or "strep".
This germ can live in your throat without you having any symptoms, but in some people it can cause a sore throat or a throat infection (known as strep throat). The germ can also cause skin infections.

Sometimes people with strep throat or skin infections go on to develop rheumatic fever.

**When to seek health advice**

If you or anyone in your whānau aged between 3 and 35 years old has a sore throat or skin infection contact your GP or health provider.

The doctor may carry out tests and you or your whānau may be given a course of antibiotic medicine. The medicine can help prevent you or others in your whānau from developing rheumatic fever.

This resource is available from healthed.govt.nz or your local Authorised Provider.

Health New Zealand
Te Whatu Ora