

Dear Whānau,

This year Ngutunui School is participating in professional learning in Structured Literacy and as a result, our teaching practices will transition over time to align with this teaching approach in spelling, reading and writing.

Structured Literacy is an evidence-based approach that is grounded in the Science of Reading. As a school, we will be accessing the iDeal platform to ensure our teachers are well supported with this transition and that the approach becomes embedded and is sustainable across our school.

The findings from the Science of Reading have taught us some very important lessons that we cannot ignore. This body of research findings has been a welcome addition to the education sector and we are proud to share with you that we are certainly taking heed of these.

Key takeaways from the Science of Reading include the following:

- Reading is not a natural process. We previously believed that learning to read was like learning to speak.
- We now know the skills that good readers implement and the associated parts of the brain that are involved in the reading process.
- Likewise, we know what aspects we should assess and teach to students who are not progressing in reading and spelling.
- We now know that all brains learn to read in the same way and that these areas of the brain can be taught and developed.
- A Structured Literacy approach to learning to read and spell is necessary for all and crucial for some.
- A Structured Literacy approach is the most efficient teaching and learning approach for dyslexic children and those with reading difficulties.
- The teaching of spelling in a systematic and explicit way enables students to become capable readers and writers.

In time, as we are resourced, we will use decodable texts for reading in junior classrooms and older catch-up readers with older students.

As a parent, you may wish to learn more about this new approach and the Science of Reading. If you have questions, please feel free to find further information at:

- [Lifting Literacy Aotearoa](#)
- [Learning MATTERS](#)
- [iDeal Approach](#)
- [APM Reports](#) – At a Loss for Words.

It is important to remember that your child's teacher and our school are on a learning journey. This transition will take dedicated time and specific resourcing.



- We will be implementing a very explicit approach to the teaching of spelling. You will notice a much more systematic sequence to the practising of spelling words. Here is an example of a whānau tip that teachers may, in time, send home to help you understand and support the learning of the spelling concept that your child is practising.
- The spelling concept may also align with the reading focus for your child and in time, they may bring home what is known as a 'decodable reader'. In these books, the letter representations relate to the sounds and letters that your child is learning through a set teaching order.
- When your child brings home a reading book, if they are a beginning reader it may be one for you as the adult to read and for the child to enjoy.
- Or they might bring home a word list to learn, a passage to read or a book for them to read to you. Help your child read each word on the page, rather than guessing or using the pictures as clues. The prompts below will help to guide you.


Whānau tips
silent e plus a suffix


This week your child is learning that when we add a suffix to a silent e base word, and the suffix starts with a vowel, we must hide the e.
If the suffix starts with a **consonant**, we keep the e.
E.g. make making, use useful
Read through the list with your child first. When spelling, encourage your child to identify the base word, and the suffix.


spelling words


waving
shining
racing
iced
faded
used


The 'iDeal' Reading Prompts
Remember, we read from left to right



1  **Point to the Word**

2  **Single Syllable Words:**
Out loud, pull the word apart by reading all of the sounds.
(point out any irregular sounds to the reader, e.g. in the word **what** the 'a' has a short /ə/ sound.)

3  **Out loud, blend all of the sounds back together to say the word.**

4  **MultiSyllabic Words:**
Look for the pattern by marking out the **vowels** and **consonants**. Blend the sounds in the first syllable: d-i-g = 'dig'. Blend the sounds in the next syllable g-i-n-g = 'ging'. Blend the syllables back together to say the word.

As the year progresses, we will continue to update you via our school newsletters and parent information sessions where relevant.

Ngā mihi kia koutou,
(Your school name)