

May 2023: Term 2, Week 4



## From the Principal

Kia ora koutou

The Level 3 Drama production of 'Puffs' by Matt Cox was a joyous and complicated show with over 60 characters, dozens of costumes created in our Theatre Technology classes and hundreds of lighting and sound effects. The play is a parody of the Harry Potter book and movies series from the perspective of the 'Puffs'. Congratulations to everyone who contributed to a show filled with energy and humour. Thank you to Ms Gillies and her team for courageously and successfully taking on such a mammoth production.

I wanted to touch on a message that was shared with our students this week through our assemblies. It feels that every day we are seeing more stories of young people throughout the country acting irresponsibly or antisocially. While we understand that often this is a response to pressures being felt within communities, which we see manifested in how young people approach the world, we do not need to accept this in our school.

In assemblies we talk about the support that is available to our students if they are struggling for any reason. This week we talked about how we all have choices as to how we respond, and that violence does not fix problems but instead just leads to more anger and grievance. For this reason, we reinforced that we do not tolerate such behaviours in our school. I reminded our students that they have many people who care about them and can help them work through issues, including teachers, counsellors, deans, student mediators and their own family members.

My final message was that each one of us – staff and students alike – play a part in producing a comfortable, purposeful school where great learning is our thing.

This message was underlined by some wonderful role models who took to the stage this week – our concert band, and two of our prefects who spoke about our Peer Sexuality Support Programme and introduced new student leaders.

Ngā manaakitanga



Greg Watson  
Tumuaki | Principal

# School Board

Kia ora koutou

There are several information evenings and fono this term, supporting our whānau to better understand the teaching, learning and assessment landscape at Mt Roskill Grammar School. We look forward to seeing you at these events so that we can answer any questions you have.

With the winter sports and co-curricular season underway, it is exciting to see the wide range of activities our taura can compete in and I thank them for representing Mt Roskill Grammar with pride.

While our staff, senior leaders and Board strive to ensure that we are doing the very best for our taura, whānau and community, there will always be issues that arise that need to be talked through or resolved more formally. Please don't hesitate to contact the school if you have questions, concerns or feedback at any time.

Ngā mihi mahana



Marjet Pot  
Presiding Member  
**School Board**

# Calendar

25 May	Rolling Strike - no Year 11s at school
25 May	Year 9 Pasifika fono - 6:00pm, MRGS Learning Hub
29 May – 2 June	Samoan Language Week
30 May	Rolling Strike - no Year 13s at school
1 June	NCEA Information evening- 6:00pm, MRGS Learning hub
1 June	Rolling Strike - no Year 12s at school
5 June	King's Birthday - School Closed
6 June	Rolling Strike - no Year 10s at school
8 June	Rolling Strike - no Year 9s at school
12 – 16 June	Pride Week
21 June	Mentoring 2
22 – 23 June	Rūpeke Dance Showcase
24 June	School Ball
27 June	Course Information Evening
<b>30 June</b>	<b>End of Term 2</b>

## Uniform

As we move into the winter terms of the year, please see below the winter uniforms reminders:

Reminders about uniform

- Hoodies cannot be worn to school, including under school jackets or jumpers
- Beanies are not part of the uniform
- Scarves can be plain black, plain navy blue or the school scarf
- Students can wear a layer under their school shirts, but it must not be visible
- Plain black socks only
- Sandals are not part of our uniform

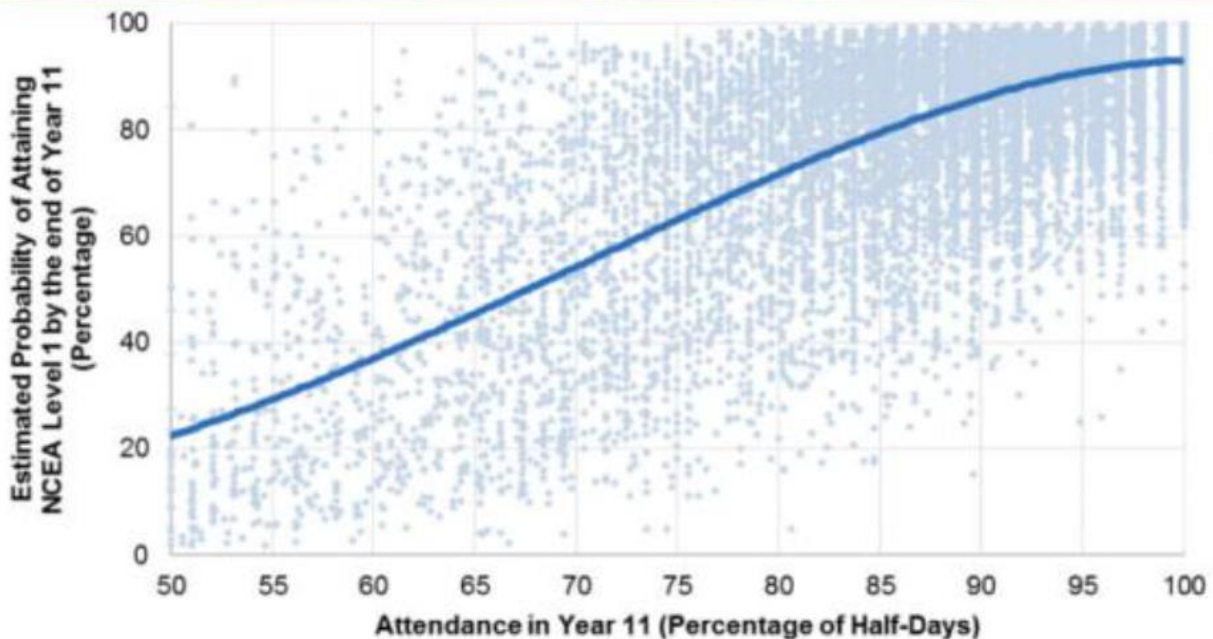
Uniform shop hours: Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday 8am - 9am. Term time only

## Attendance

This graph is showing us the direct correlation between high attendance, and likelihood of achieving Level 1 by the end of year 11. The more students are here, at school, in their lessons and engaged in their learning the more likely they are to make progress and achieve. You can see from the graph, that in order to gain the current Level 1 requirement of at least 80 credits to achieve Level 1 NCEA, students need to be at school 90% or more of the time.

Please support us, and ensure your child is at school every day.

Figure 1: Probability of Year 11 students in 2016 attaining NCEA level 1, by attendance in Term 2



## Phone Use in Lessons

At the start of this year, we reminded students about our expectations of phone use in lessons. Our school policy states that phones are not to be used or seen during lessons, unless directed by the teacher for learning purposes. We have had a positive response from the majority of students in regard to keeping their phones in their bags during lessons so far.

## NCEA Information evening

Parents and Caregivers are warmly invited to the NCEA Information Evening held in the Learning Hub (where the library used to be). There will be a brief overview of NCEA, University Entrance, and the 2024 NCEA changes including the numeracy and literacy requirements. You will have the opportunity to meet key staff and ask questions. Tea and coffee will be served. Please be seated by 6.00 pm



## Chromebooks

MRGS is an established BYOD school, meaning that your child is recommended to have a device to support their learning in the classroom. The ideal device for learning is lightweight with a keyboard. MRGS teachers use the Google Classroom platform for all their classes as a way of distributing information, assigning classwork and homework tasks, and giving feedback on assessments.

Through our ICT partners New Era, we give our community access to a purchasing portal called Acquire <https://newera-byod.acquire.co.nz/>. New Era seeks to provide our community with the most competitive pricing for any new device purchases, but if you are struggling to provide a device for learning and you have a community services card, we do have a limited number of Chromebooks available for loan for the 2023 academic year. To access these devices, a \$50 deposit will need to be paid; you or your child will need to present a community services card at the time that you or they make the deposit.

## School Ball 2023

Our annual school ball is rapidly approaching. This year it is to be held at the Ellerslie Event Centre on Saturday the 24<sup>th</sup> of June. The cost is \$125.

It is school policy that students need to pay off any outstanding school fees before they can purchase a ticket to the school ball. This includes camp. If you are unsure about any outstanding fees you can get a printout of these from the accounts department.

We will be accepting an initial deposit of \$50 but the full amount needs to be paid by the end of school on Friday the 16<sup>th</sup> of June as this is when final numbers are sent to the venue and caterers.

If you wish to take an outside partner you will need to collect a form from accounts and get it filled out and then approved by Mr Skiff before you can purchase the tickets.



# Meditation Training

Tuesday and Wednesday saw close to 100 of our senior students training to be Peer Mediators within our school. The Peace Foundation came in with two very experienced mediators to work with the first group on Tuesday to run their Learning through Peer Mediation Programme. This was an experiential day with our rangitahi learning through experiencing mediation both as the mediators and the disputant. These are valuable skills for the students to help them resolve conflict within our school, and are also life skills which the students can use with their peers and their wider community.

Wednesday saw four Peace Foundation teachers as well as three lawyers/mediators come and work with our students who had already trained as mediators last year to learn advanced mediating skills.

This was a truly awesome day where each group of students got a lot of intensive, devoted training from an experienced mediator. The development of the conflict resolution skills of these students over the day was remarkable.

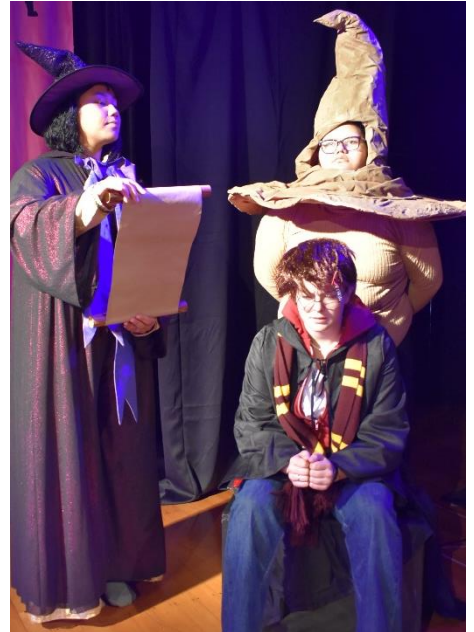
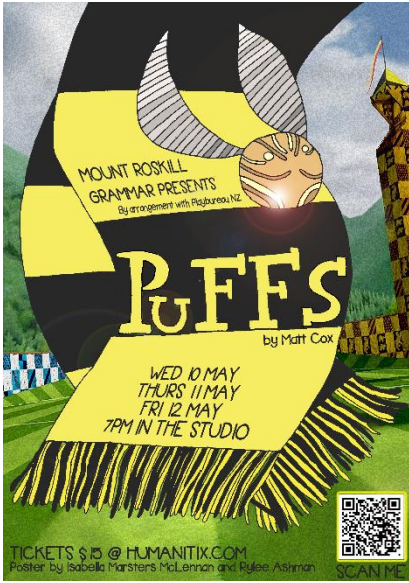
Thank you to all of these students who were very focussed and involved fully all day. And thank you so very much to The Peace Foundation who continue to support our school to develop skilled wise young citizens.

- Tara English





# Level 3 Drama Production- Puffs by Matt Cox





## Debating

Last term, we had a great round of debates during the Auckland Schools Debating Seasonals! We were given the opportunity to showcase Mt Roskill Grammar's amazing debating talents from this competition and good results came with it. MRGS 2 (consisting of Aanya Shukla, Jennifer Li, Martia Adato and Stella Boyd) from the novice division came first overall. Also in the novice division, Pratyush Khatiwada from MRGS 1 placed 2nd best overall speaker and both Jennifer Li and Stella Boyd from MRGS 2 placed 3rd equal overall best speaker.

- Martia Adato



(Seasonal Championship winners) From Left to right, Stella Boyd, Martia Adato, Aanya Shukla and Jennifer Li



2<sup>nd</sup> Best Speaker - Pratyush Khatiwada



Joint best 3<sup>rd</sup> speaker- Jennifer Li (Left) and Stella Boyd

## Witi's Wahine

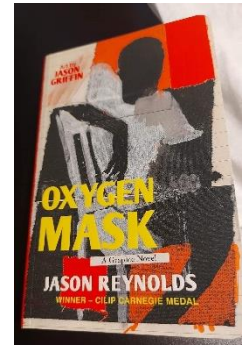
On Thursday 18th May our Drama and Theatre Technology classes went to see the new work from Auckland Theatre Company and Hapai Productions, 'Witi's Wahine'. The show is based on wahine from Witi Ihimaera's work and weaves stories and whakapapa together beautifully, compiled by the late Nancy Brunning. The show left an impression on all students and staff - the mix of humour, whanaungatanga and drama in the play, (performed expertly by the actresses) create a meaningful and important story for Aotearoa and reminded us of the wahine in our whanau and community.

Our Drama students are looking forward to discussing the show in their exams and our Theatre Technology students loved seeing the lighting, costume and set, for some it was the first show they have ever seen - what a great show to start with!



# Auckland Writers' Festival

80 students attended key note speakers and Q & A sessions at the Auckland Writers' Festival. They saw Jason Reynolds (of *Into the Spider-Verse* fame), Chloe Gong, Chris Tse, Claudia Jardine, Amber Esau and Monty Soutar and enjoyed being able to listen to each author's journey and process, ask questions of the authors, and in some case get books signed!



## Library Website

Now we've got the new Library space open, this term the focus is on developing and getting everyone using the new Library Website. It is now available and hopefully students have been enjoying exploring it and finding it useful.

Using the library website students can manage their library account – checking which books they have out and when they are due back and renewing or reserving books. They can also check to see what new arrivals have come in.

The Library website is also an excellent resource for research and helping write assessments – there are hints and tips for researching and writing bibliographies as well as lots of links to reliable databases and online resources. There are separate webpages (called Dashboards) set up for topics studied in a number of different subjects (Social Sciences, English, Science) with specific resources around that topic to help students with their study.

Students can log in using their Student ID number and usual password to manage their account or the website can be accessed by anyone under the 'Guest' option, so friends and whānau can also explore the site and use the resources available.

Because we want the library to be student led there is also the opportunity to make suggestions on what books or graphic novels students would like to see in our collection.

Check out the link and explore the website too: <https://library.mrgs.school.nz/MTR01/#!dashboard>

library.mrgs.school.nz/MTR01/#!dashboard

Mt Roskill Grammar School

Guest

Home Search Visual Search Quick Lists Reserves My List Print Dashboards

Search

Just Arrived!!

Your Learning Hub

Manage your library account

Researching using the Library Catalogue

Borrow an Audiobook or an eBook...

Video: How to Use the Catalogue

Helpful Databases

Suggest a book

Your dream library



## Winter Sports - Coaches, Managers and Referees Needed

With winter sports already started, we are still on the hunt for a number of coaches and managers to support our students in their sport and need parents to get involved please. We need the following:

- Junior Boys Football Manager
- Netball Managers
- 2nd XI Girls Hockey Manager and Coach
- Boys and Girls Football Referees
- Rugby Boys and Girls Referees

If you are able to help by coaching or managing a team this year, please get in touch with the Director of Sport - [cameron.bitchener@mrgs.school.nz](mailto:cameron.bitchener@mrgs.school.nz)

## Winter Sports Draw:

You can find draw information for all Mount Roskill Grammar Sports teams on the link below. Please double check this the day before in case of any last minute changes to the draw.

[2023 MRGS SPORT TERM 2 - WEEKLY SPORT DRAWS & RESULTS](#)

## Winter Sports Results:

Week 3 saw several cancellations and postponements, however, here are some of the highlights from the past 2 weeks:

**1st XI Boys Hockey:** Continue their great form with wins over Pakuranga College and ACG Strathallan - they now have 3 wins from 3 games this season.

**Curling:** The experienced "Sursum" team kicked off their season with a convincing 8-2 win over Massey High School and a second game draw 4-4 against MAGS. Our new team, "Phoenix", had a solid 6-2 win against Lynfield.

**Senior Basketball:** Both the Boys and Girls Senior A teams had solid wins last week against local rivals Avondale College playing at Avondale College.

**Football:** 14A Boys Football team put in a complete performance last Saturday notching their first win of the season, 4-2 against Mt Albert Hearts.

**Premier Netball:** The Senior girls Netball team finished their grading games this week with a win against Rutherford College and a narrow loss to Mt Albert Grammar.

## Lunchtime Sport and Recreation Activities:

We will have a variety of activities taking place across all three gyms and the Fitness Centre during lunchtimes each day throughout Term 2. Please check our Sports Instagram page ([mrgs.sport](#)) for what is happening each day or come along to the Sports/PE departments and the gyms to find out and get involved!

## Football and Hockey Socks:

All students who participate in Hockey or Football for the school are required to wear the MRGS Sports socks. These can be purchased from the school uniform shop for \$15 which is open on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 8am-9am.

## Tennis

Congratulations to Year 9 student Yashwitha Thummala for competing in the World Junior Under 14 Tennis Tournament in Malaysia.

Yashwitha competed against players from Singapore, Sri Lanka and Kazakhstan in a very tough competition, winning a couple of singles and doubles matches throughout the tournament.

Yashwitha has been selected to represent New Zealand in Austria at a tournament in June and another tournament in Europe in July.

We wish Yashwitha all the best for these upcoming tournaments coming up and look forward to continuing to celebrate her achievements.



## Football Referees

Over the past week, six of our MRGS students refereed at MRIS in the Intermediate Football Tournament. Thank you to Isaiah Otene Morgan, Aaron Matthias, Muhammad Berakdar, Jeremiah Williams, Elise Bolland and Suhail Mohammad. MRIS staff were highly impressed with these student's knowledge, professionalism and enthusiasm. Thank you to our students for showing our MRGS Values



## Mountain Biking Event 2: Hunua Ranges

Sunday 7th May saw three Year 9 boys competing in a Cross Country Mountain Bike event as part of the Auckland Secondary Schools Mountain Bike series. Results from the tough muddy race are below:

Taylor Bower - 30th in Under 14 age group

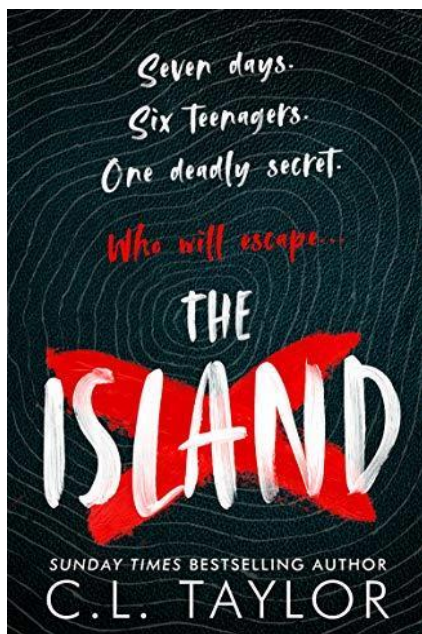
Tristan Duncan-Sutherland - 25th in Under 15 age group

Finlay Dodd - 27th in Under 15 age group (and his first event)





## Learning Hub Book Review



### THE ISLAND by C.L. TAYLOR

Six teenage friends head off for a weeklong camping trip on an uninhabited, remote tropical island in Thailand, just them and one survival guide. But even before they head off, there are arguments plaguing the group. They all have secrets they are keeping and trauma they are trying to hide. When their guide suddenly dies after their first night on the Island, and someone has destroyed the engine of their boat, the only way off the Island, things go from bad to ... deadly.

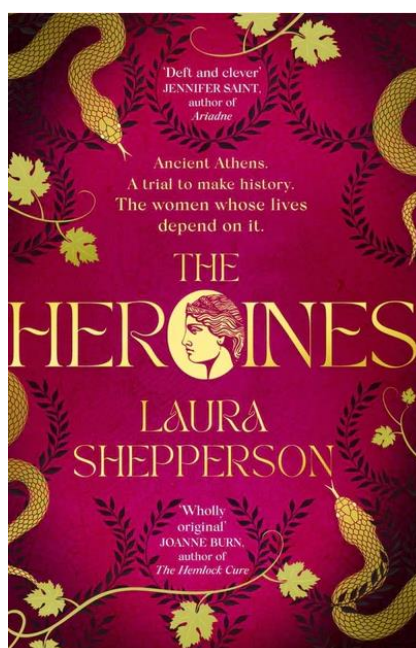
It seems like someone on the Island was listening when they all sat around their campfire that first night revealing their worst fears – and suddenly all those nightmares are coming true. Is someone else on the Island with them...or is it the Island itself?

This is a suspenseful, fast paced book that really leaves you guessing what on earth might be going on. There is a lot of misdirection, and all the characters feel suspicious, like they are hiding things (which they all are!), and this really adds to the tension, suspense and feeling of panic.

This is a very clever book that keeps you guessing right to the end – if you like a good twist ending this book is for you!

Don't forget books are also available for free from Auckland Public libraries – all you need to do is register for a (free) library card and you can access a huge collection. If your local branch doesn't have a copy, they will order one for you into the branch. And don't forget they have a huge online catalogue, including newspapers, magazines, ebooks and audiobooks that you can access on your phone. You just need your library card number. [Auckland Libraries](#)

## Alumni



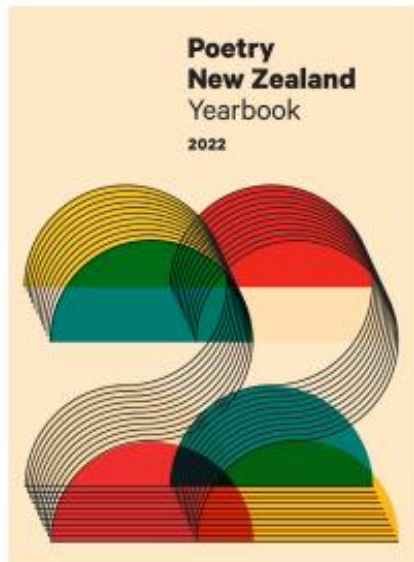
### Laura Shepperson (1997)

Author Laura's love of Greek history started as a student studying Classical Studies with Ms Heath at Mt Roskill Grammar School. This is her first book and when it was published it went straight onto the Sunday Times Bestseller list in Britain.

Her book is a new retelling of an old story. A story of celebrity scandal and gossip, court room drama, and betrayal set in mythological Athens.

Our Learning Hub Manager, Catherine Ross, has said "it is a well-known myth, set in mythological times, but Laura makes it relatable and modern feeling, and looking at this story from the female point of view for the first time in thousands of years, feels important".

We are delighted that Laura has donated a signed copy of the book to our school library so we can all enjoy it.



## CALLING ALL YOUNG POETS!

Entries are now open for the *Poetry Aotearoa Yearbook* student poetry competition, the award that has sent so many young poets on their way.

Entries will be judged by *Yearbook* editor Tracey Slaughter and the winning poems from each year group will be published in the 2024 edition of the *Yearbook*. Plus this year there is a monetary prize for the first, second and third prize winners of each year group, thanks to the University of Waikato: \$500 (first place), \$300 (second place) and \$100 (third place). Each winning poet and their school will also receive a copy of the book.

**To enter:** Please send us up to three previously unpublished original poems. Entries close 24 July 2023. The winners will be announced on Phantom Billstickers National Poetry Day, 25 August 2023.

- Poems should be supplied in either Word or PDF format and can be of any length, any style and about any subject
- When you enter please indicate whether you are a Year 11, Year 12, or Year 13 student at a New Zealand school and please name your school
- Four prizes in each age-group category will be given: first, second, third and highly commended
- Successful entrants must agree to their names and schools appearing in media and publicity for the award, and for their poems to appear online.

Please send your entries to [editorial@masseypress.ac.nz](mailto:editorial@masseypress.ac.nz)

