

# Let The Adventure Begin....

The day had finally arrived and we were ready for our latest trip to Puketāpapa (Mt Roskill), this is our local mountain and is a place that we now visit regularly, usually once a term. This natural environment provides the opportunity for the thrill and excitement of exploring and participating in a shared adventure and excitement was high as we boarded the bus with our friends and family members. Yes, indeed we were ready for this adventure to begin!



We arrive at Puketāpapa and gathered together; Kim shared last minute instructions with us and with our backpacks on our backs we were prepared for our hike around the mountain. We climbed through the fence and up the hill, through the long wavy grass and began to make our way along the track. Kim, Ali and Kaylee led the way and as we made our way around the mountain we made many discoveries. When we got to the dark dark wood there was a sighting of a gruffalo; did you see the gruffalo? Or maybe you heard the little mouse?



This was the perfect opportunity to have a rest and listen to the gruffalo story. This is one of our favourite stories and nestled in amongst the trees was a fabulous setting to develop new ideas, to think in a creative and imaginative way and to enjoy the magic of storytelling.



With no new spottings of the gruffalo our adventure continued, we proceeded through the long wavy grass and walked and walked until we reached the base of the very big hill! And just like Sir Edmund Hillary, a famous New Zealand explorer, we embraced this challenge with enthusiasm and a can do attitude. We climbed up and up and up and up and up and up, oh the satisfaction upon reaching the top!



After conquering this great climb we enjoyed a picnic morning tea and then the roly poly fun began. And what fun we had, Darcey-Rose's grandma and Ashlee's dad showed us you are never too old to participate and many of us raced down the hill, rolling at great speed to the bottom.



All too soon our time at the mountain came to an end and we trekked down the other side to the bus stop. Gathered under a tree we listen to the story, 'Battle of the Mountains', a perfect ending to a fabulous day. Your photo page has photos of your adventures at the mountain; enjoy sharing and re-telling your stories with your friends and family.

## Teaching Team Reflection

Exploring the outside world beyond our kindergarten gate provides the opportunity for children to participate in a shared experience. It is experiences such as our adventure today that fosters confidence, independence, curiosity, resilience and a love of learning. For some children this was their first visit to our mountain and for others it was the opportunity to re-visit a familiar experience and build on prior learning. We need to be very mindful of how much screen time (television, iPads and tablets) our children are being exposed to, and to think wisely about the experiences we provide for children. We believe it is important for the adults (parents and teachers) in a child's life, to foster an interest in experiences that promote their physical well-being and skills. Research suggests if children develop an interest in the early years then physical activity will be a habit of mind, a natural part of their everyday world and this is a good thing. The simple joy of roly poly stimulates children's vestibular system (is situated in the inner ear) and assists in the development of their balance and spatial awareness. Children of all ages need daily stimulation of the vestibular system and that is why exploration in the outdoors is so vital for young children.

A love of nature will also ensure children will continue to look after and take care of natural environments, such as our mountain. Maori call this kaitiakitanga, which means guardianship and protection and is based on how Maori view the world.

It was lovely to have such wonderful family participation and your involvement ensured a successful experience for all. Thank you for joining us on our adventure. We hope you had fun, we did!

