

Star Board

term 1, week 6



Principal's Message

Kia Ora Koutou

Why go to school? Ultimately, going to school prepares students for adulthood by equipping them with both the academic and personal tools needed to succeed in society. I worry that academic rigor has declined in some areas of New Zealand education over recent years. Several factors contribute to this trend, and while it does not apply universally across all schools, certain patterns have emerged that highlight this concern. While these trends suggest a decline in academic rigor, it is important to note that New Zealand's education system is still recognised for its high quality and inclusivity. However, the challenge remains to maintain high standards of academic rigor while adapting to the evolving needs of students in a changing educational landscape. We have to a balance between flexibility, support, and maintaining academic excellence to ensure students are adequately prepared for future academic and professional challenges.

I wonder that the fear of not meeting high standards or facing the challenge of competing against others contributes to student decision to shy away from academically challenging endeavours. Our role and goal is to have students embrace academic challenge, such as pursuing a Scholarship at Level 3, as an essential part of personal growth and intellectual development.

Taking on difficult tasks allows students to develop resilience, critical thinking skills, and a deeper understanding of the subjects they are passionate about. It offers the opportunity to push beyond perceived limitations, fostering a growth mindset where effort and perseverance lead to improvement. Challenging oneself academically also enhances future opportunities, as it demonstrates a student's ability to take initiative, manage complex tasks, and achieve success under pressure. By taking on these challenges, students not only improve their academic skills but also build the confidence necessary to succeed in future educational and career pursuits. Ultimately, academic rigor can help shape well-rounded, capable individuals who are equipped to thrive in an increasingly competitive and rapidly changing world.

Expecting academic rigor from a student with higher learning needs is sensible, but it requires a tailored, supportive approach that meets the student where they are, while gradually pushing them to reach higher academic standards. Academic rigor does not have to mean applying the same level of difficulty or expectations as for advanced students. Instead, it can involve appropriately challenging tasks that encourage growth, build skills, and foster a sense of achievement. While academic rigor for students with higher needs may look different than for students who are performing at grade level or above, it is entirely possible to foster a challenging and enriching learning environment for them. Our key is to provide the right level of support, gradual challenges, and encouragement to build both their academic abilities and confidence. With the right approach, all students can engage in rigorous learning that helps them grow and succeed.

Attending school regularly

If we have seemed more overbearing about attendance – that is part of the JD we have for working in schools. There is a clear connection between going to school regularly and doing well in the classroom. Higher levels of educational achievement can mean better health, higher incomes, better job stability, and more participation in communities. This all makes society stronger and more connected.

Students aged 6 to 16 years old (and enrolled 5-year-olds) are legally required to attend school every day. It is a shared responsibility of us all to make sure children attend and engage in learning from when they first start school.

It is important for schools and kura, parents and whānau, iwi, hapū, communities, and government agencies to work together to support and make sure students are attending school regularly. Regular attendance means the student is present for more than 90% of the term.

To increase regular attendance rates, the Government has set a target: by 2030, 80% of students are present for more than 90% of the term.

In week three this formed part of my newsletter message to you “One of the things that the government is continuing to focus on in 2025 is student attendance”.

If a student misses one day of school every two weeks, they miss more than a whole year of school by 16 years of age. As a school we see the benefits of nurturing strong habits of regular school attendance.

Please continue to let the school know if your learner is going to be absent or intends to be absent for a portion of the school term for whatever reason, like a tangi or medical procedure. Family holidays or taking time off for extracurricular activities (not organised by school) are not acceptable reasons for being absent.

Knowing if your child is well enough to go to school can be tricky. Health guidance to support you to decide is available [Refreshed health guidance for parents and schools – Education Gazette](#). If you are still unsure, get in touch with us and let’s work together to support your learner. If you are struggling at home with getting your learner to school, talk to us so we can work together. Our school is committed to supporting you.

Our school continues to build a culture that fosters attendance every day by having:

- Strong relationships with students and family.
- A school culture that recognises your child and your family for who you are, where you come from and what you value.
- A school whānau that takes all practical steps to make sure your child is at school and progressing in their learning.
- A school that is safe and welcoming for everyone in our school community.

As part of an action plan for attendance is an evolving set of initiatives that work together and support existing efforts to help support those with school attendance concerns.

Recent initiatives include: an attendance response to guide school actions for each level of absence, strengthening accountability of school boards, enabling information-sharing to support multi-agency attendance support, sharing with schools and parents refreshed health guidance (above) to support good decisions about school, and an expectation that attendance forms part of every school’s strategic plan.

Reporting Review

Just a heads up this is imminent so more detail about how that will look is ahead

Safety

There is increasing concern that our students are making silly decisions about crossing Pownall Street. Two things here: please collect students from the school side and speak to them about how to cross a road safely. There is actually a third and that there is a pedestrian crossing up the road from the school so safe passage across Pownall street can occur.

Posting on Social Media

Forgive me for the sober reminder but sometimes young people forget to be discerning about what they share on social media. There are some key terms in the Harmful Digital Communications Act that it is important to understand. First what is Digital communication? Digital communication is any form of electronic communication including for example: Emails, Text messages (SMS), Voice mail messages, social media content (e.g. blogs, posts, comments, images and videos).

Content on messaging and communication apps (e.g. WhatsApp, Messenger), Content on image and video-sharing apps (e.g. Snapchat, YouTube), Posts on community online forums (or chatrooms) That means that telephone calls that are not recorded, letters sent by post, and verbal interactions that are not recorded, are not within the scope of the HDCA.

The HDCA provides some guiderails to appropriate online behaviour which are set out in the Communication Principles. These principles provide that a digital communication should not:

1. Disclose sensitive personal facts about an individual.
2. Be threatening, intimidating, or menacing.
3. Be grossly offensive to a reasonable person in the position of the affected individual.
4. Be indecent or obscene.
5. Be used to harass an individual.
6. Make a false allegation.
7. Contain a matter that is published in breach of confidence.
8. Incite or encourage anyone to send a message to an individual for the purpose of causing harm to the individual.
9. Incite or encourage an individual to commit suicide.

Denigrate an individual by reason of colour, race, ethnic or national origins, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability.

Sometimes it is forgotten but here is a reminder that the Harmful Digital Communications Act also contains criminal penalties. It is for the Police, rather than Netsafe, to consider whether criminal penalties ought to be pursued. It is a criminal offence under the HDCA to post a digital communication: with the intention that it cause harm to a victim; or that is an intimate visual recording of a victim—knowing that the victim has not consented to the posting; or being reckless as to whether the victim has consented to the posting.

I am mindful that there is a great deal here. You are now ready for your amazing weekend.

Be safe and be your best selves.

Ngā Mihi



Around School

Boarding Note

A huge thank you to our first group of Year 13 Boarding Leaders (Meg, Jorja, Issie, Maggie, Dani and Sal) who have been based in the Main House Leaders Apartment for the last six weeks.

The main reason for the Leaders Apartment is to connect our Year 13 boarders with junior boarders so it was lovely to see this group of Year 10 boarders chatting with Maggie and Issy earlier this week.



Left to right: Katelyn, Maggie (Year 13), Grace, Aleisha, Izzy (Year 13) and Addi.

A reminder that next weekend is the second and final exeat for Term 1.

Both houses will close on Friday 21st March at 5pm and will reopen at on Sunday 23rd March at 7pm.

Thank you.

Jo

Shrove Tuesday – Pancake Races

On Shrove Tuesday our students participated in the ancient tradition of pancake races. Historically, people would use up the perishable food items in their homes on Shrove Tuesday in preparation for Lent – where they would fast. One form this took was pancakes. The house race was fiercely battled, with some stunning pancakes, pancake flips and house spirit. The victors on the day were Wake house! Yay, go Wake!



Ash Wednesday Service

On Ash Wednesday we donned our purple clothes and accessories and joined together for a beautiful service, led by Rev. Wendy and other Masterton Clergy: Rev. Emily Bartlett from Te Heparā Pai Maori Pastorate, Rev. Merv Jones from St Matthew's Anglican Parish and Rev. Ben Arcus, Chaplain at Rathkeale College. Members of the Senior Chapel Team and Prefect Team also supported the day with readings and serving during communion. Cleghorn has never seen so much purple! Thank you to all who participated and contributed to such a lovely time together.



Term one Friends of School Raffle

Congratulations!

to the Term 1 Friends Raffle Winners:
Scarlet Handley-Craig
&
Ada Wilkie

WINTER UNIFORM message

The St Matthew's second-hand uniform shop is currently well stocked with winter uniform. If just a couple of items are needed, please come to the shop during opening hours: 3pm-4pm Tuesdays & Thursdays (during term time). **New students** who need to try on and purchase everything - please make a 20 minute appointment outside of the shop hours (this avoids having to wait in a queue). Email Juliet: smcsuniforms@trinityschools.nz to arrange a time.

Uniform information on our website: <https://www.stmatts.school.nz/parents/uniform/>



Open Day

Friday 21st March
8.30am-12.30pm

Register Now

rathkeale.school.nz

Key Dates

- **Friday 14 March** - Swimming Sports day
- **Saturday 22 March** - Exeat Weekend
- **Sunday 23 March** - Exeat Weekend
- **Monday 2 June** - King's Birthday stat day
- **Tuesday 3 June** - Teacher Only day
- **Friday 20 June** - Matariki stat day

2025 Term Dates

Term One - Monday 27th January to Friday 11 April

Term Two - Monday 28th April to Friday 27th June

Term Three - Monday 14th July to Friday 19th September

Term Four - Monday 6th October to Saturday 6 December

Medical Information

Does your daughter carry an Epi Pen?

Does your daughter carry/require medication?

Does your daughter's medical information need updating?

Please get in touch if you think you may need to advise of any new medical details we hold on file to ensure we have the most up to date information.



SELLING YOUR UNIFORM SECOND HAND

The St Matthew's Uniform Shop sells second hand uniform, on your behalf.

When an item of clothing sells, the shop retains a 30% commission, the amount owing to you is then credited to your daughter's school account. For uniform that is sold after your daughter leaves, a bank account number, name of the account and email address will be required.

Clothing will get the best price when it is CLEAN; the Blazer, Tunic Dress and Senior Skirt should be dry cleaned. Please attend to discoloured underarms and collars before soaking white blouses in a stain removing laundry soaker (don't use bleach as this will fade the crest).

Uniform can be brought into the shop on Tuesdays and Thursdays 3pm – 4pm during term time. Uniform may alternatively be left at the school office, marked "For Sale, attention UNIFORM SHOP". Please make sure that it is securely boxed up, with your daughter's name included.

Ties & caps are sold second hand, but any money generated will be a donation to the shop.

ITEMS NOT SOLD SECOND HAND IN THE UNIFORM SHOP:

- Hoodies
- Togs
- Hockey/Football socks
- Shoes & Sandals
- Black ankle Socks
- Old style PE tops & shorts

School App

If you are new to St Matthew's Collegiate, or have yet to download, please follow the link to install our school app [https://schoolappsnz.co.nz/install](https://schoolapps.nz.co.nz/install)

For current families, please update your subscription groups by clicking on the cog in the top right hand of the screen. It will take you to the groups for you to change.



Stay 'Connected'
With our School App!

Simply Download 'SchoolappsNZ' from the Google Play or App Store & search your school once installed.

Community News and Events

TINA
MOVIE NIGHT
 12 MARCH 5:45 PM

The Screening Room
 \$ 30 Per Person
 Includes One drink on arrival

TICKETS FOR SALE @ ST MATTHEWS SCHOOL OFFICE

TRUST HOUSE Children's Day 2025

Kid's play free!
 Mini Golf | Train | Pools

Pre-School Rappa Rugby Exhibition
 Waka Takaroa Play Trailer
 Scavenger Hunt
 Entertainment on the Mizori Warden Stage

Sunday 9 March
QE2 Park, Masterton
 10AM - 3PM

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Quiz - Sip - Repeat

READY TO PLAY?
 11 APRIL - 7PM

COBBLESTONES MUSEUM
CHARITY QUIZ NIGHT & AUCTION

Register - cobblestonesmuseumgreytown@gmail.com
 or by phone - 0211606088

VENUE - GREYTOWN RUGBY CLUBROOMS
 TEAMS OF 6 - \$120 A TABLE

Tickle Your Brain

Get a team together for a fabulous night of brain teasers, fun and bloopers. There's a cash bar, nibbles are provided and the laughs will keep coming as you nut out the answers.

Experienced or novice doesn't matter. Fun is the name of the game.

Mystery envelopes, Raffle and Auction for added spice.
 Support Cobblestones to preserve our heritage buildings.

reallygreatsite.com

Wairarapa Community FREE Immunisation Drop-in Clinic



Whānau
manaaki
Child friendly
service

Hāpū māmā and pēpi free immunisations

for 0-18 years + maternal

Masterton Intermediate School Dental Clinic

Thursdays 3pm-6pm

Free phone 0800 66 66 23 to find out more

Providing free immunisations for children
0-18 years as well as maternal

For more information about vaccinations, talk to your
Doctor, nurse or health care provider, call Healthline
on 0800 611 116, or visit info.health.nz/immunisations

Health New Zealand
Te Whatu Ora

Ngā ratonga ki te manawa o te whenua
Heartland Services

39 Jellicoe Street, Martinborough
06 657 0172
heartlandservices@reapwairarapa.nz

REAP
WAIKARARA

Parenting WORKSHOP SERIES

ANXIETY & MY CHILD

Join Megan Evans for an informative session about children's anxiety and mental wellbeing. This beginners' workshop is designed for parents, caregivers, and whānau who want to better understand and support their children.

About the Facilitator: Megan brings 14 years of experience working with children and families. She holds a Bachelor of Teaching, certificates in Mental Health and Addiction Support, and is currently studying Applied Psychology at the University of Auckland.

Topics covered

- What is it?
- What effects does it have on the brain?
- What can it look like?
- What can it feel like?
- What can I do to help?
- What support is out there?

When: Sunday 9th March 9.30am - 12pm

Where: Heartland Services - 39 Jellicoe Street,

Martinborough

Cost: \$10

Cost: \$10

Register your interest
today!

Email: heartlandservices@reapwairarapa.nz







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[https://stmatthews.school.kiwi/
notices/date/2025-02-28](https://stmatthews.school.kiwi/notices/date/2025-02-28)