

Star Board

Term 1, Week 1

31 January 2025

Principal's Message



Kia Ora Koutou and again welcome to the 2025 school year

I hope you all had a restful and joyous break and that you are refreshed for the new year. I am also very mindful that the holiday season may not have been as some had hoped so, please know as a school we are here to support as we can.

For my break we had a staycation having tripped to Melbourne in term four. Yes, it was school related but who does not sightsee when an occasion like that presents itself- I know right?

I am super excited for the year ahead. Am I expecting perfection from everyone? Not at all. But I do expect best efforts. I am already impressed by the efforts of our new leadership team. Each year the new leaders have big shoes to fill – I can see this team trying on their predecessors footwear but perhaps even buying new ones to leave their legacies firmly on our shoe shelves.



My maxim for the start of this year from Pooh Bear 'Do things for people not because of who they are, or what they do in return but because of who you are'. Our daily job is to be our best selves. We also need to know that the easiest things we can do every day require no talent: being on time, being honest, having a positive attitude, being committed, being passionate, believing in yourself and being prepared.

Start of the year and being new

It would be foolish for me not to acknowledge that when our flowers do not bloom sometimes it makes sense to fix the environment in which they grow, not the flower. This is true on so many different levels. Some of our flowers are still settling, and in a recent assembly they agreed they have been feeling overwhelmed by the abundance of information. We know how to assimilate the students at the start of the year, and we know take-up-time is individual. With confidence I write that they will bloom and what a garden we will have.

Daughter says, "But what if I fall?"; Parent responds, "But darling what if you fly?"

I remember when I made the decision to return to paid work full-time (I had been an unpaid full-time parent). That decision was easy, and it was also hard. The decision was not because I was over Sesame Street and Playschool, but because it was the right time for my growth. What became agonizing for me was that it also meant I had to put my son in creche.

The guilt I felt was intense and my heart pounded with sadness at just the thought of what was to happen. Thoughts overwhelmed me- what if he cries all the time? What if he misses me too much? What if he falls over and no one notices? What if someone is mean to him? The first day I gathered strength and made sure he did not see I was sad- he needed to see my strength so that he could also be strong.

Day one passed and then each day that handover of my son into someone else's care got easier. Before long he was an old hand at the process, and he literally flew out of the car which in itself gave me the liberation to take my own flight. He had not stopped needing me, he had started gathering his growth Airpoints.

Long story short, for some of our new arrivals (students and parents alike) the drop off and pick up has been emotional. We get that this is a big step. There may be some unexpected events along the way, but please know that we will scoop them up. We understand that you will wonder *What if she stumbles along the way. But dear ones, what if she soars to new heights?* The heights are the potential for growth, change, and wonderful possibilities. With every challenge comes an opportunity for strength and success. Trust us.

Leave them at the gate and get on with your day (PS gathering at the gate is a traffic hazard- just saying) and they will be just fine. If we need to call you- that is what we will do.

Driving

Last year for the first time we gave permission for year 13 to drive from St Matthew's to Senior College at the start of the day and then back at the end of the day. Unfortunately, this privilege was not utilized well so this privilege no longer exists. Year 13 will be bussed as per previous years between the sites.

Now Parking on Kummer Crescent

I have Apped this as well but as a courtesy to our community could our student drivers, please park on one side only if using Kummer Crescent for parking. I guess the easiest way to do this is whoever parks there first, park on one side and then others park behind. The reason is, having been visited by Kummer residents, the street becomes narrow if parking occurs on both sides of the street. This makes the street almost impassable for trailers, rubbish trucks etc. who are struggling to get past your cars. It also makes it difficult for cars to see when coming out of driveways. To avoid damage to your cars and to be helpful to our neighbours please park only on one side.

PE at St Matts

You have recently received an email from our Head of PE Mrs Borland and PE teacher Mrs Veale. Borrowing their words they are looking forward to seeing students next week. In the PE programme they are starting the year with Athletics and Swimming so PE gear, sports shoes, togs, and swim cap are vital PE lessons.

In terms of PE gear, we are phasing in the new PE gear which is available at NZ uniforms. Students need to be in full new gear or full old gear, not mix and match. If you are having issues with sizing please get in contact with Mrs Borland. Tracksuits are compulsory uniform and are to be worn to and from sport, on PE trips, and can be worn in PE lessons. Hoodies are optional and do not replace a tracksuit jacket. Year 10 and 11 can wear plain black leggings in PE lessons but must have shorts for sport. Year 7-9 must wear PE shorts or trackpants. Please bring sports shoes for all PE lessons. By 2026 all new students must be in the new PE gear. Current students and students who have inherited the gear of older siblings can continue to wear the old PE gear until you finish at St Matts if you wish.

Uniform

Students are expected to be dressed correctly and immaculately every day. We understand that some of you may have faced issues or delays with uniform purchases and we have been in contact with NZ Uniforms to rectify this for you. Please let the school know if you are still concerned and we will assist where possible.

Policies up for Review Term one

In term one we are reviewing topics in the **Health, Safety, and Welfare Policy** section. To access the school's policy cache please go to our school website for details to assist you with this.

The policies up for Board Review are Health, Safety, and Welfare Policy; Safety Management System Policy; Risk Management Policy; and Healthcare Policy. Also, up for Review are Worker Engagement, Participation, and Representation Policy, Recording and Reporting Accidents, Injuries, and Illness Policy, and Abuse, harassment, or serious neglect of boarders policy and procedures (this has been sent already to families).

Some of the achievements of some of our people just before and over the "summer" hols

Olivia Fenwick was selected for the U16 Thunder hockey squad to compete at the Super Challenge series held at St Pauls Collegiate, Hamilton. There are only four teams selected throughout NZ so only about 60 youth and she was the only girl from our region. Olivia was also named as Wairarapa's best U15 hockey player last year at the Wairarapa Hockey Awards. **Clara Andrew** over the break competed in two athletics meets. 14th at NZ Secondary School Athletics Championships (Timaru, 6th December). She achieved this result while sustaining an injury. She also competed at the lower North Island club night hosted in Masterton getting back on track after her injury with seasons bests for High jump & also Personal Bests in both long jump and 200m. **Olivia Church** participated in the 10-day Spirit of Adventure sailing. She had an amazing time and would recommend it to any girl thinking about having their own adventure. **Bonnie Noble** participated in the National Schools Shakespeare Production for a week during the October holiday 2024. In our regional Shakespeare competition Bonnie won Direct Entry to this event – quite an honour; and more so because she was then in Year 11. Most of those selected are in Y 13, or maybe 12. Only one person from each region wins direct entry – the rest are selected at the National Final. **Scarlett Wadham** had some great results in the pool the weekend of prize giving. It was the Wellington Regional Long Course Champs where she received seven medals in the 14-year-old age group over three days. Her results: 2nd in the 1500 free, 2nd in the 200 free, 3rd in the 50 back, 3rd in the 200 back, 3rd in the 400 free, 3rd in the 800 back, and 3rd in the 100 back. **Sally Booth, Dina Morrison, Fran Wells, (Non-Travelling Reserve- Ava Register)** were part of the Under 17 Central Districts Cricket Team which played in Palmerston North at National Tournament and came third. **Olivia McCreary's** summer achievement were that she did 85 hours of volunteering as a nipper coach at Riversdale beach and also over 30 hours of lifeguard volunteering. She loved her experience and was recognised as a great team member.

STAND No Bullying Programme

Yesterday I introduced the antibullying programme to our year 9s. In a few days I will take other new students through the programme. Our Anti- Bullying programme STAND also combines Restorative practices. The first objective is for this type of behaviour to be called out- basically for students for students to TELL so it can be addressed. It is not to punish, it is to Call Out abusive behaviour, stop it and repair harm. Consultation has occurred with staff, students, and our community. It will be repeated as part of new people induction.

However, there will be some who fail to learn because of a moment of silly choices and if necessary it will be handled through the disciplinary consequences.

We need to take care of each other and take care of ourselves by pausing before we act and using our values as prompts for good decision-making.

Special Leave requests

The **core business of every school** is teaching and learning, and both are exemplary in our school. But (don't you detest that coordinating conjunction, because what follows this word is often a sobering note), for both these things to be successful we need the students in class.

Interruptions are the bane of any school's existence. I am mindful of those we create, and we consider the impact of such interruptions when planning.

We are also aware that some absence is created by illness etc and these are understood. As parents, caregivers, and whanau please help us by not taking your children out of class. The Ministry has Attendance criteria with which we must comply:

- *Explained absence: An absence for which the explanation is accepted by the school as the reason for the absence. The decision on whether an explained absence is 'justified' or 'unjustified' will be largely determined by the school's attendance policy. (See note below)*
- *Justified absence: An explained absence within the school's policy as an acceptable reason for the student to be away from school.*

Unjustified absence: An absence that is either unexplained or, explained but the explanation is not within the school's policy as an acceptable reason for the student to be away from school.

These are the stipulations we provide for our school processes, and these you will read on the second page of the pink Special Leave form, which students must complete if they are taking a whole day or days out.

The impact of absence on achievement and assessments is fairly evident. Success increases exponentially by being present. But like all schools, we have systems and policies in place to protect those for whom absence from class is unavoidable. By the same token we expect everyone to adhere to those processes.

If I approve a Leave request as Justified, especially that of a Senior, I am also accepting of her reasons based on the prescribed criteria. This is vital in the Assessment process and such approvals are considered for NZQA data.

If I mark the request as explained, one cannot expect leeway with assessments. The conditions for assessment must be fair to all.

Change is inevitable

As sad as I am to let you know this, I must also celebrate a new opportunity for Tracey Watt, Principal's PA of 11 years. Tracey is off to different pastures in a senior admin role in Opaki school, where I know she will develop new skills and add value to this new setting. Of course, this will create an opportunity for another soul to become Principal's PA at St Matthew's.

There will be handover for the successful candidate. Applications close Monday - I hear the principal is amazing.

We have got this

In beginning this new school year, we carry forward the positive routines, strong values, and expectations that will guide us to success. We all know that starting fresh can bring a mix of excitement and nerves, but we need to remember, we are in this together. This is the perfect time to establish and reestablish relationships, showing kindness, respect, and support for one another. By being steadfast in our shared values we can nurture a community where every girl feels seen, heard, and empowered. Let us stay focused, embrace new challenges with confidence, and make this year one we can be proud of, knowing we are building the foundation for even greater things ahead.

Have a great and safe weekend

Ngā Mihi

Kiri

Around School

Commissioning Service

It was with absolute delight that we commissioned our 2025 prefects on Monday afternoon. Gathering together at St Matthew's Anglican Church, we guided our fresh leaders through their vows finishing with them signing their names to seal the deal. From my perspective, as I sang our National Anthem and then gazed upon our 2025 community, I felt a surge of tremendous pride followed by a strong sense of positive anticipation and hope.

Here's to 2025!



Boarding Note

Kia Ora Koutou.

A very warm welcome to all new and returning boarders. We have had a fabulous week in boarding which has been action packed and filled with lots of fun, laughter, and understandably a few tears along the way.

Many thanks to our boarding families for trusting us to take care of your girls. They really have been amazing, and it has been lovely to get to know them better as the week has gone by.

With Waitangi Day next Thursday, it is our first exeat for the year so both Boarding Houses will close next Wednesday at 5pm and will reopen on Sunday at 7pm.

Part time boarders, please remember your nights must be locked in by the end of next week so please email if there is any change from your original chosen nights.

Unfortunately, the Orah network has been having issues this week which has impacted our system. If you are experiences difficulties with Orah, please contact your daughter's boarding house directly to inform them of any arrangements-

- **Main House (Years 7-11): 027 598 4404/ mainhouse@trinityschools.nz**
- **Hampton (Years 12 and 13): 027 426 7866/ hampton@trinityschools.nz**

If you have any general questions or concerns about boarding, or you would simply like to learn more about boarding at St Matthew's, feel free to contact me directly on **0277661360** or **jo.booth@trinityschools.nz**

I hope you all have a happy and relaxing weekend after such a busy Week 1.



Sophie, Liv, Madison, Charlotte, Georgie, Isla, Tilly and Molly



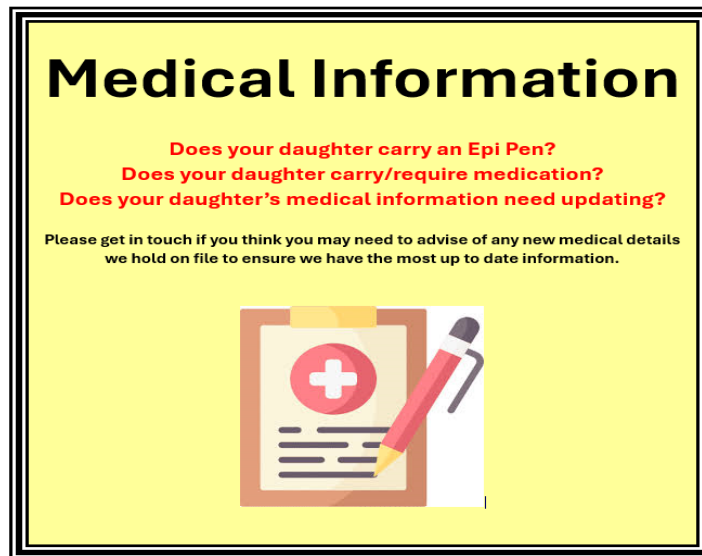
Annabelle and Emilia



Lilah, Louisa and Bella



Newly renovated bedroom in Year 7&8 Raukura Dorm



Key Dates

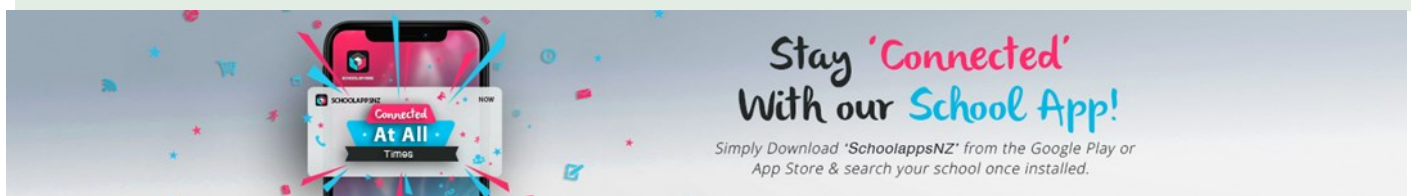
- **Thursday 6 February** - Waitangi Day stat day
- Friday 6 February - Waitangi extended weekend (school closed)
- Friday 21 February - Athletics Sports day
- Friday 14 March - Swimming Sports day
- Saturday 22 March - Exeat Weekend
- Sunday 23 March - Exeat Weekend
- Monday 2 June - King's Birthday 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

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://schoolappsNZ.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.



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