

# St John's School Newsletter

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## Issue 4: 24<sup>th</sup> April 2026



## Principal's Chat

Nau mai, hoki mai - Welcome back!

It was great to see all the smiling faces arriving back in school this week and hear about the children's holidays.

This term is sure to be a busy one with sport during the week and at the weekends. We are mindful of the fuel crisis and will try and limit our trips out of the area this term, as we are aware of the amount of travel our families will be doing.

This year the Ministry of Education has brought in some new initiatives for schools that are compulsory. I want to outline some of those in the newsletter this week, so that you have an understanding of what those changes are.

### **Reports**

Our reporting format has changed this year to meet the Ministry's requirements for reporting to parents.

There is new language that will be used in the reports to convey where your child is working at. There will be information put out with the reports so that you can understand what the new language means. Students will now be put on a scale of either 'Emerging', 'Developing', 'Consolidating', 'Proficient', or 'Exceeding' for each different subject area.

The reports will still come home twice a year in June and December.

## **Parent Interviews**

Parent interviews are changing slightly this year.

As a team, we have decided to move Parent Interviews to earlier in the term. We will be holding them in Week 4 on May the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>.

This will be before the reports come out - they will come out near the end of the term as normal. The reason for this is so that you hear how your child is going in their learning earlier in the year, and have a chance to help out at home, and there will be no surprises when the reports come out.

Not all testing will have been done by this time, but we are hoping to have completed the Ministry's testing of Reading, Writing and Maths in Years 3-8 by then and can feed back how your child went.

More information will come out in the next week about how to book for the interviews.

## **Absences**

We are writing to share an update regarding how we track and communicate student attendance, following new requirements from the Ministry of Education.

To ensure every student has the best opportunity to succeed, the Ministry now requires schools to reach out to parents once certain absence milestones are reached. Because we track attendance daily via our school management system, these alerts are triggered automatically.

### **How the Process Works**

Our goal is to keep you informed early and often. Here is what you can expect:

- **At 5 Days Absent:** You will receive an initial "check-in" via text, chat, or phone call.
  - Note: Sometimes our Learning Support Coordinator, Lisa Nevill, will make this contact when she is on-site.
- **At 10+ Days Absent:** You will receive a formal letter from the school.

### **Important Details**

- **All Absences Count:** We are required to contact you regardless of whether the absence is justified (e.g., medical/sickness) or unjustified (e.g., a family holiday).
- **No Action Needed:** For the initial 5-day message, there is no need to reply or take action; it is simply a notification to keep you in the loop.

## **Pink Shirt Day**

We are holding a Mufti Day for 'Pink Shirt Day' on Friday, 15<sup>th</sup> May.

This is a campaign to stop bullying run by the Mental Health Foundation.

Your child can come to school in bright clothing that day and bring a gold coin donation to go towards this cause.

## **School Day**

A reminder that the school doors open at 8:30 am. Please do not drop your children off before this time, as there is no supervision for the children before this time. With the days getting colder, I don't like to see them waiting out in the cold.

## **Uniform**

Please ensure all uniforms are named and that the children are wearing the correct uniform to school. In our School Information booklet, it states **Jewellery:** One pair of stud earrings or sleepers only. No other jewellery permitted. Only clear nail polish is permitted. Please ensure your children wear the appropriate jewellery as it is a health and safety issue. Thanks.

## **Bus Vests**

Bus vests have come home this week for students who travel to and from school on buses, by bike, or walking. These are now to be worn each day. This is a safety precaution in the Winter, to ensure that the students are seen on the darker days. Please look after these vests and keep them clean.

## **Farewell**

Last term, we said a fond and bittersweet farewell to Dolina Manson, our dedicated cleaner of 18 years. As a long-time staff member and a former school parent, Dolina has been a cornerstone of the St. John's community. We are incredibly grateful for the care she took in keeping our school looking its best for nearly two decades. While we will miss her presence, we wish her nothing but the very best as she embarks on her next chapter.

## **Welcome**

We would like to warmly welcome Maureen Vuki to the St John's team as our new cleaner. We look forward to working with you Maureen!

## **PTA AGM**

The PTA are holding their AGM on Monday, the 18<sup>th</sup> of May at 3 pm in the Middle Room. PTA stands for Parent Teacher Association. All parents are warmly invited to attend. This is a great way that we can work together to provide extra resources and opportunities for the children in our school through fundraising.

Sharon Scott has indicated that she will be stepping down as President at this meeting, so we are looking for a person who would be interested in helping to guide this group. With Geraldine Dowling as Secretary and Alex Cai as Treasurer, you would be well supported. There will be no pressure to take on this position, so please still come and share ideas on how we could improve the environment and resources at St John's School.

**Thank you, Sharon Scott** - I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you very much to Sharon Scott, who has been President of the PTA for the past 3 ½ years. We appreciate your dedication and the time that you have put into our school.

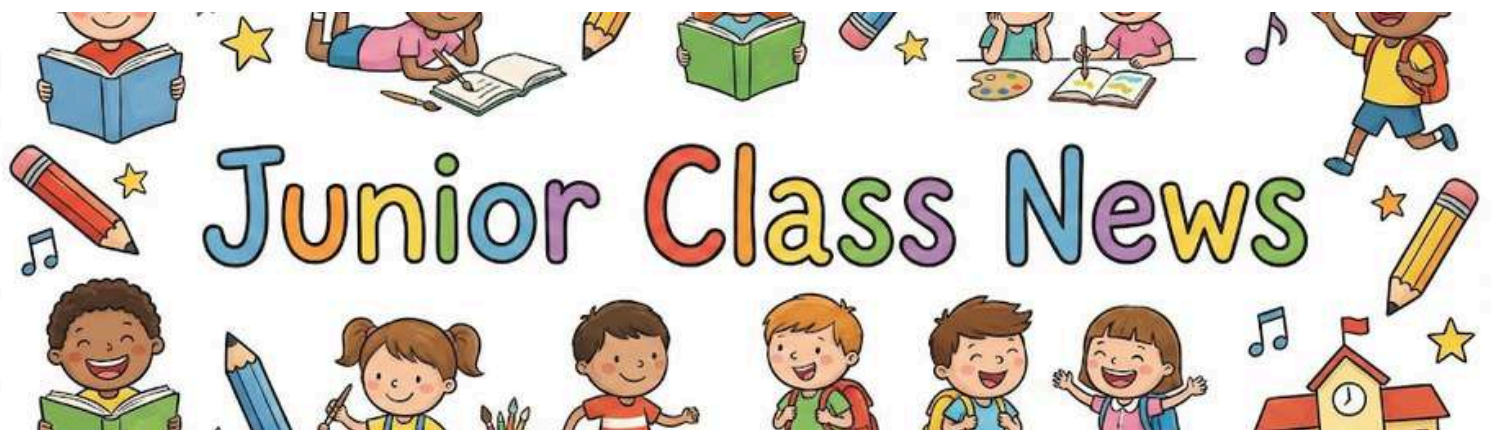
## **The Night at the Races**

A massive thank you to the organising committee (Geraldine Dowling, Logan Dowling, Ange Francis, Maddy Hazlett and Hannah Huddleston), Ewan Mason, Alex Cai and all the parents who helped with the Night at the Races. It was a huge undertaking for the committee to set up and run. It was a fantastic night and a hugely successful fundraiser. We appreciate all of you who helped to make this night happen.

## **ANZAC Observance Day**

As ANZAC Day falls on Saturday, it will be observed on Monday. Therefore, there will be **no school this coming Monday, 27th April.**

We look forward to seeing everyone back on Tuesday.



# Junior Class News

Welcome back for Term 2. This term we welcome a number of four year olds coming for school visits who will start school during this term.

In Maths, the Junior Class will be working on multiplication and division. In Phase One, Years 0 - 3, multiplication and division are introduced through practical, hands on grouping and sharing of objects. Children learn to skip count, beginning with 2s, then 5s and 10s, and recognising arrays. Multiplication is talked about as "groups of", eg,  $3 \times 2$  is 3 groups of 2, while division is "sharing equally." Children also learn about doubles and halving numbers to 20.

For Topic this term we are going to be talking and learning about the Science topic of Space and the Solar System.

In Religious Education our strand topic is "Te Atua - God". We will be learning about:

- God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
- how God's love is present in our world and in us on our spiritual journey.
- that God chose us to care for, and enjoy, the world.
- that prayer is talking with, and listening to God.

We are looking forward to our trip to Alexandra next Friday 1<sup>st</sup> May, for the movie "The Magic Faraway Tree" and a swim. You should have received a notice about this on Wednesday. This notice included the transport list. If you didn't receive this, please contact either Heather or myself.

Thank you to those parents who have volunteered to help out with supervision and transport on this day.

Ngā Mihi,  
Susan Mulholland



It has been lovely to see all the children back at school and ready to begin what is shaping up to be a busy term. Our class newsletter has been sent out with information about what will be happening over the coming weeks. We have already settled straight back into our learning — sometimes there simply aren't enough hours in the day!

We have been reading some beautiful books about Anzac Day and have created a class wreath together. I value the opportunity to talk with the children about this important day, as it is one that should be remembered and honoured.

The Dawn Service in Ranfurly will begin at 6:30am on Saturday, if anyone would like to take their child along.

A reminder please to ensure your child comes to school each day with their school jersey and jacket, as the weather is becoming cooler.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to get in touch with either of us.





# Senior Class News



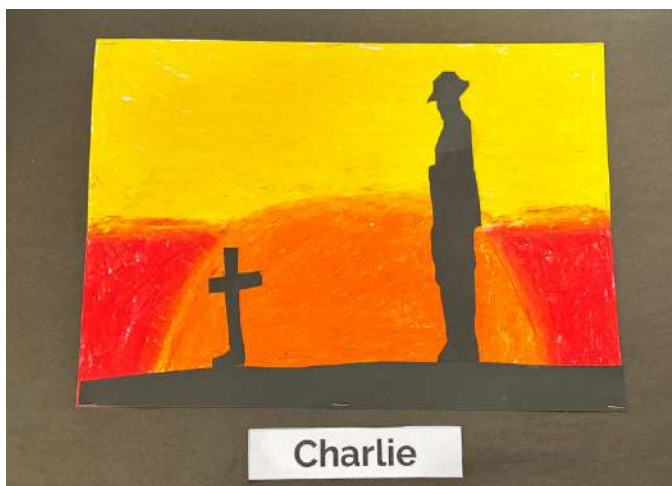
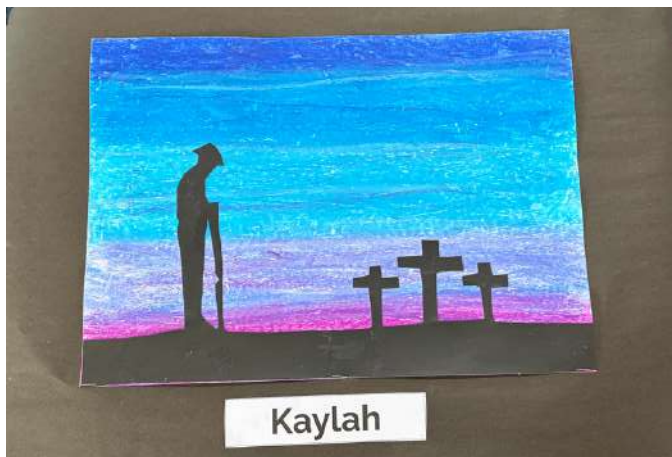
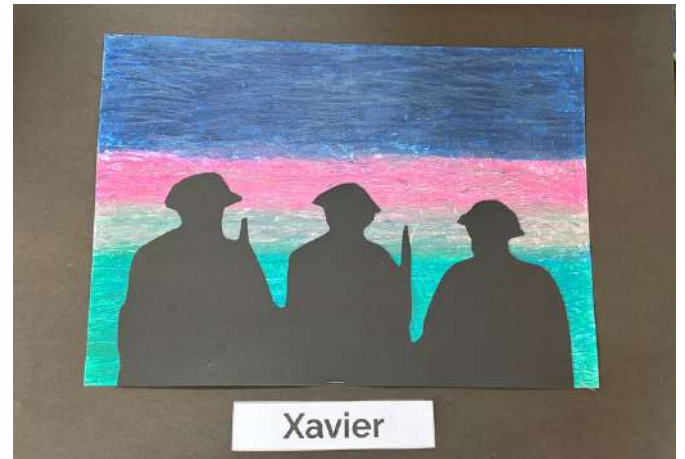
Welcome back to Term 2!

We have started the term by focusing on ANZAC Day and its significance to Aotearoa New Zealand. Students have been learning about why we remember and the meaning behind the dawn service and its symbols. We've had some thoughtful discussions about courage, sacrifice, and remembrance, and the values these represent.

In writing, we wrote haiku poems capturing the quiet emotion of ANZAC morning, as well as diary entries from different perspectives to help build empathy and deepen our understanding.

We also created striking ANZAC dawn silhouette artwork, which beautifully reflects the respectful tone of our learning.

The Senior Room have truly immersed themselves in this topic and shown maturity and thoughtfulness throughout.





### Stations of the Cross

On Thursday, 2<sup>nd</sup> April, we ended the term with a "Stations of the Cross" liturgy in our school hall. We followed the story of Jesus' death by following the pictures/stations of this on the walls of our hall. At each station was something for the children to take home that symbolised that moment, eg, a stone for when Jesus was placed in the tomb, a band aid for each time Jesus fell, and a piece of rope to symbolise Jesus being arrested. This liturgy also tied in with Caritas and a powerpoint showing Caritas work around the world helping people in difficult situations.

After our liturgy students enjoyed our annual "Easter Egg Hunt" in the school playground.



### Religious Education - Term 2

This term each class will be working on the Te Atua - God strand.

Each class has an overarching question for this strand:

Junior Class - Who is God?

Middle Class - What has God got to do with me?

Senior Class - Who can show me how to be?

### **Farewell to Father Jaewoo and Welcome to Father Pete**

We farewelled Father Jaewoo on Monday 30<sup>th</sup> March at a school ceremony, followed by cake! We wish Father Jaewoo all the best in his new parish of Oamaru.

We warmly welcome Father Pete Roe to our school and parish community.

We look forward to meeting Father and to his involvement in our school.



We were lucky to have James McKirdy (George's Dad) come and talk to the whole school last term about Gold. James is a geologist at Macrae's mine. The children had lots of great questions to ask James, and we found it fascinating to hear about the process of finding and excavating the gold. It certainly was a great way to end our topic. Thanks so much James!



At the end of last term, you would have received your jars of honey from our school beehives. We are very grateful to Anna McSkimming, who guides us through our Beekeeping and teaches us all about the process of beekeeping and how the bees make the honey. Anna and Rob came and extracted the honey from the hives, and included the children in spinning the frames to get the honey out.



We were very appreciative of Becky for putting all the honey into jars for us and boxing up the honeycomb. We have ended up with around 60 jars of honey and 31 boxes of honeycomb. A notice went home on Thursday about purchasing these.

**Board of Trustees:** The next meeting will be on Wednesday, 20<sup>th</sup> May at 7 pm in the staffroom.

**Notices and Dates:**

|               |   |   |
|---------------|---|---|
| <b>Week 1</b> | Sunday 26 <sup>th</sup> April                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sunday Mass at 4pm</li> <li>• Altar Servers: Theo Dowling &amp; Flynn McSkimming</li> </ul>          |
| <b>Week 2</b> | Friday 1 <sup>st</sup> May                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Junior &amp; Middle Class trip to movies in Alexandra</li> </ul>                                     |
|               | Sunday 3 <sup>rd</sup> May                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sunday Mass at 4pm</li> <li>• Altar Servers: Jack &amp; Jimmy Jeffries</li> </ul>                    |
| <b>Week 3</b> | Sunday 10 <sup>th</sup> May                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sunday Mass at 4pm</li> <li>• Altar Servers: Xavier &amp; Greta Love</li> </ul>                      |
| <b>Week 4</b> | Tuesday 12 <sup>th</sup> & Wednesday 13 <sup>th</sup> May | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent/Teacher Interviews</li> </ul>   |
|               | Friday 15 <sup>th</sup> May                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pink Shirt Day</li> </ul>  |
|               | Sunday 17 <sup>th</sup> May                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sunday Mass at 4pm</li> <li>• Altar Servers: Bryleigh, Eli &amp; Joshua Barroga</li> </ul>           |
| <b>Week 5</b> | Tuesday 19 <sup>th</sup> May                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report out</li> </ul>  |
|               | Sunday 24 <sup>th</sup> May                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sunday Mass at 4pm</li> <li>• Altar Servers: James Badillo, Jade Aquino &amp; Neale Plena</li> </ul> |
| <b>Week 6</b> | Sunday 31 <sup>st</sup> May                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sunday Mass at 4pm</li> <li>• Altar Servers: Ben &amp; Olivia Scott</li> </ul>                       |