



Waihi News

24 February 2021

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Dear Parents

Each Wednesday morning our teaching staff meet for their own weekly 'learning' session, hence our late start that day. One of the things that staff will be doing is sharing professional reading and research with each other. This is a real passion of mine and I have already lined up a number of readings for staff to reflect upon over the coming months.

I was considering what I might share with parents too and my thoughts drifted back to a Keynote presentation I heard a few years ago when I was fortunate enough to be both a participant and presenter at the International Conference on Thinking, which was held in Wellington. One of the Keynote presentations that piqued my interest was entitled: *Enlisting Parents as Allies – Working Together to Develop Powerful Thinkers and Learners*. The presenter was Dr. Ron Ritchhart – Senior Research Associate at Harvard's Project Zero.

As part of his presentation Ron shared his '10 Apps for Parents' – ideas to help our children 'make their thinking visible'. I will be reflecting with staff how these ideas are being applied at Waihi. I thought that you might be interested too. There is no 'handbook' to parenthood, but occasionally we all hear some sage advice that is just worth taking note of. I hope you may take the time to sit down for five minutes and see what he recommends, you may just find something in here for you too.

I look forward to seeing you all on Friday. In this shortened newsletter you will find the arrangements and timings for the day together with an overview of the two weeks ahead.

I wish you an enjoyable long weekend with you children.

Kind regards.

Allan Short
Headmaster

Christ's College Open Day Tuesday 16 March



This is an opportunity for boys and families to experience the great culture and opportunities on offer at College. Meet staff and take a tour with our students. You'll see academic classes in progress and may like to join in with some science experiments, sports, or hear the choir sing.

Executive Principal Garth Wynne and other members of staff will be speaking at 2pm and 4pm. Depending on your arrival time, your guide will ensure you will attend one of these talks.

Register your interest to attend here – <https://christcollege.com/forms/open-day/>

Meet the Teacher and Swimming Sports – Friday 26th February

The day will start with morning tea and a brief meeting in the School Hall for all parents, followed by an opportunity for everyone to meet with their child's teacher in their classrooms. This is not a chance to discuss individual students, however parents may make interviews at any time to discuss their child's progress. We hope that every student will have at least one parent at this event.

Lunchtime will be held as class picnics on the Quad, with parents bringing a picnic lunch to share with their child. If any parent is not able to attend with their picnic, don't worry your child will be fed! This is then followed by our swimming sports.

Note – there is a traditional 'parent and child races' at the end of the swimming programme!

There will be no bus service on Friday afternoon unless requested.

Day student parents – please advise Wendy via email no later than Thursday lunchtime if your child needs a ride home on the bus after swimming sports on Friday afternoon. If we don't hear then we will presume that you will be taking your child home at the conclusion of the swimming sports. Bus services will only be operating if we know there are students needing this.

Diagnostic Reports

At the 'Meet the Teacher' event all parents will receive a short report. There will be a brief pastoral comment from your son's class teacher indicating how he has settled into Waihi life; an *Attitudes and Habits* report and a short diagnostic listing the results of your child's initial PAT assessments.

I look forward to seeing our Waihi parents and supporters at the swimming sports on Friday, it is sure to be a great afternoon.

School Photos

Individual and sibling photos will be included in the envelope with the diagnostic reports. Summer sports team photos were not taken at the same time as teams had not been finalised. Team photos will be taken by our school photographer in March and students will be advised of the date and what sports kit they are required to have at school on the day.

Buses

The **Ashburton, Geraldine** and **Timaru** buses are almost at capacity each day with day students going to and from school. It is important if your child is a boarder and requires use of the bus on a Friday or Monday morning, that you advise Wendy by 12noon on the Tuesday prior. The Geraldine bus only has two available seats and as of next week, Timaru has two and Ashburton three. Please don't presume that we know that your child is getting the bus. If your child requests to have a friend accompany them home on the bus for the night, please don't be offended if we have to say 'no' if the bus is full.

Sports fixture – Tuesday 2 March – Cathedral Grammar

For students who have been selected to participate in the annual sports fixture at Cathedral Grammar on Tuesday, please note that they will need to be at Waihi no later than 7am. Further details of arrangements for this fixture have been sent home separately.

Haircuts

A couple of parents have asked recently about whether we have a school policy on haircuts. We have never seen the need to go to great lengths describing what is expected regarding boys' hair other than to say it needs to be short, neat and sensible. Girls' hair should be tied back neatly off the face.

Obviously as fashions change some students may wish to 'experiment' a little and the description above is open to interpretation.

For those who seek more guidance, perhaps we could say that the style of the hair should not be extreme, including, but not limited to mohawk, mullet, shaved styles and/or patterns, hair tied up or braided. The colour must be the student's own natural colour.



Making Thinking Visible: 10 Apps for Parents

1. Name and Notice Thinking. Use the language of thinking to name and notice the thinking your child is using and thus make it more visible. This is especially important when praising and giving feedback: That's an interesting theory. I like how you have used what you already know to make connections. That's a perspective I hadn't thought about.

2. Develop a Growth Mindset. A belief that intelligence and ability grow and develop overtime--as opposed to something that is fixed and set, encourages greater risk taking, collaboration, enjoyment of challenge, long-term development, and continuous achievement in all types of learning endeavors (Dweck, 2006). Develop a growth mindset in your child by focusing your praise on process, learning, and effort (You really worked hard on this and have learned a lot. You did a great job of developing a plan and following it through. You've really developed as a musician.), as opposed to ability (You're so clever. Look how smart you are; you did that so fast. You're good at maths. You've got a lot of talent.)

3. Challenge but Don't Rescue. We learn a lot from making mistakes, pushing ourselves out of our comfort zone, and taking risks to try new things. Regularly encountering challenges, mistakes, and failure builds a growth mindset and develops intellectual resilience. When your child encounters difficulties, don't jump in to solve the problem and rescue him/her. Instead, ask questions that will help him/her to think through the problem, identify, and choose a course of action for moving forward.

4. What Questions Did You Ask Today? Our questions drive us as learners. When Isidor I. Rabi won the Nobel Prize in physics, he was asked, "why did you become a scientist, rather than a doctor or lawyer or businessman, like the other immigrant kids in your neighborhood?" He replied, "My mother made me a scientist without ever intending it. Every other Jewish mother in Brooklyn would ask her child after school: 'So? Did you learn anything today?' But not my mother. She always asked me a different question. 'Izzy,' she would say, 'did you ask a good question today?' That difference - asking good questions made me become a scientist!!"

5. Focus on the Learning Over the Work. It's easy for parents to focus on the work their child has to do and to monitor the completion of that work. However, the completion of work is never the goal of an assignment. Learning is the goal. Take a moment to ask your child what the purpose of each assignment is, what do they think the teacher wants them to learn and get better at as a result. Then monitor the learning, not the work.

6 Encourage Connections. Students encounter new information constantly. To learn and make sense of this information they must connect it to previous knowledge and integrate it with their experience. Ask questions of connection and encourage the creation of metaphors, similes, comparisons and contrasts when talking about the topics your child is studying or exploring independently.

7. Support Your Child in Arguing Effectively and Persuasively. A study in the journal *Child Development* (J. Allen, 2012) showed that teenagers who argued constructively with their parents by building a case and providing evidence for their position were more able to resist peer pressure to use drugs than were students from more authoritarian households. Researchers found such arguments were training grounds for teens that enabled them to learn to speak up, voice an opinion, and use evidence.

8. Provide Time to Pursue Passions. In the movie *Race to Nowhere* (2010), producer/director Vicki Abeles documents how the pressure to succeed on tests is too often robbing children of rich learning experiences, causing stress-related problems, disengaging students, disrupting home life, and leading to wide-scale cheating. One argument the film makes is that teens need the time and space to pursue their passions and interests. Parents must make sure these passions, which may turn into life callings, are not squeezed out of their child's life. Pay attention to your child's learning and passions outside of school and make time for them.

9. Make Your Own Thinking Visible. The Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky said, "Children grow into the intellectual life around them." You are a model for your child of what it means to be a thinker and a learner. Model your own interests, passions, curiosity, reflection, learning, and thinking for your child. Make your own thinking visible to them as a model.

10. What Makes You Say That? This simple question is the "killer app" for parents and teachers. By simply asking, "What makes you say that?", in a curious and nonjudgmental tone after someone has given a response, we are able to get a window into the thinking behind that person's initial response. Teachers in Sweden referred to this as the magic question, because of how much it was able to reveal about students' thinking. The reasoning behind the response often tells us much more than the response itself.

(Ron Ritchhart actually started his education career teaching Year 2 students in Christchurch many moons ago). If you are interested in Harvard's Project Zero you can find further information here www.pz.harvard.edu

Two Weeks Ahead ...

Friday 26 February

Meet the Teacher / Swimming Sports

10.00am *Tea/coffee and morning tea available for parents*
10.30am *Headmaster's address and introduction*
11.00am *Classroom information meetings*
Collect diagnostic reports
11.45am *Class picnics on the Quad*
12.15pm *Friends Committee AGM in Hall – all welcome*
1.00pm *Swimming Sports races start*
Followed by prizegiving

Saturday-Monday 27 Feb – 1 March

Exeat weekend – all boarders go home for the weekend

Monday 1 March

Boarders roll call 5.00pm
Boarders/family barbeque

Tuesday 2 March

Cathedral Grammar sports fixture (away) cricket and tennis

Saturday 6 March

Waihi tent at the Winchester A&P Show

Monday 8 March – 11 March

Year 8 camp

Thursday 11 March

Exeat weekend (4.00pm) - all boarders go home for the weekend

Note: *there is no school Friday 12 March*

Sunday 14 March

Boarders return 5pm

Parent/Teacher meetings (Boarders)

Pump Track Coaching

Last year we were fortunate enough to see the opening of our Pump Track and many of the children had induction sessions with two top NZ riders Loic and Kyle.

They will be returning periodically to help assess and maintain the track for Waihi but have also offered to give specific coaching to students if they wish. They will cover how to best use the track and get the most out of the experience. Discuss balance and flow and teach the students tips and tricks for developing their bike handling skills.

Cost for these coaching sessions would be \$30 + GST. If you are interested in your child doing this coaching can you please let Wendy know (executive@waihi.school.nz) and if we have enough numbers we can organise a date.



School Choices 2022

We are getting to that time of year when many of you are preparing applications for your son's preferred senior schools. Each of the schools concerned will have their own particular enrolment procedures and requirements. Many schools specifically ask Waihi for references, sometimes in the form of a questionnaire regarding your son.

The staff and I have started to receive requests from families for references to accompany their son's application. To ensure consistency and to avoid doubling up on the workload it is easiest if you inform Wendy of the application(s) that you are making and we will, in most cases, send references directly to the schools concerned in whatever format they request.

With all the Year 8 boys to prepare references for I am sure you will appreciate the large workload this entails for staff. The staff teaching your son will all have the opportunity to provide input to a final reference. It is appreciated if you can provide details of any such requests as early as possible, particularly for references that need to accompany application deadlines.

Once you have made your decisions, please can you email Wendy on executive@waihi.school.nz with details of the schools that you are making applications to. We will then ensure that references are provided in a timely manner.