



Waihi News

28 January 2021

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From the Headmaster

Dear Parents

Happy New Year!

I hope that you are enjoying a wonderful summer with your families and that the children will be relaxed and refreshed ready for the start of school next week. After having the school office closed for a couple of weeks over Christmas and New Year, Waihi has been full of life recently. In fact, as I am sitting writing this welcome on a glorious Saturday afternoon the school grounds are packed with visitors from across the Central South Island as we play host, on behalf of South Canterbury Cricket, to six cricket teams playing three matches in their summer inter-regional competition.

Many staff have been back at work preparing for the term ahead and Mr Sharp is supervising various projects around the school sprucing up our buildings inside and out. One particularly exciting project this summer is the conversion of 14 Harrison Road into our initial girls' boarding house. 2021 is an historic year for Waihi as we move to co-education and alongside our new boys, we extend a warm welcome to our five foundation girls, and all of the new families.

We are looking forward to welcoming everyone back next week and have arranged two parent get togethers at the start of term. On Sunday 31st January at 'Mes Amis', the café just north of school at Orari at 4.00pm we hope that new boarding parents will join us having dropped their children off. The following morning after drop-off, families of new day students are also invited to a similar gathering at approx. 8.45am. We wish to extend the invitation to parents of any old boarders or day students who wish to join us too. Kendra and I will be there together with a number of current parents.

I hope all of our new families feel the warmth of the Waihi welcome at the start of the school year and we would be delighted if you can join us on one of these occasions.

Best wishes

Allan Short
Headmaster

Headmaster's Thought for the Week

He aroha whakatō, he aroha ka puta mai.

If kindness is sown, then kindness is what you shall receive.

Maori whakatauki

Calendar

With this newsletter you should receive an initial 2021 full year calendar. Please note that whilst we will endeavour to ensure that the printed calendar is as complete as possible the online calendar on our website homepage www.waihi.school.nz will be constantly updated by Wendy.

First Exeat - Meet the Teacher and Swimming Sports

It is sometimes easy to forget that for new families some commonly used terminology can be a real confusion. One such boarding school word is exeat. It means temporary leave and is used to describe the one or two 'long weekends' each term in which the boarding house closes for all, thus allowing those families who live far away to take their children home for the weekend (and for the boarding house staff to have a weekend to catch their breath!)

The first of these weekends is at the end of Week 4 and as often is the case we combine the leave weekend with a major school event. Please note that this first exeat is on Friday 26th February. It 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. We hope that every student will have a least one parent at this event.

Lunchtime will be held as class picnics followed by Swimming Sports. This is always a great day and we look forward to seeing you all there.



Diagnostic Reports

At the 'Meet the Teacher' event all parents will receive a short report. There will be a brief pastoral comment from your child's class teacher indicating how they have settled into Waihi life; an *Attitudes and Habits* report and a short diagnostic listing the results of your child's initial PAT assessments. Whilst the majority of the first few weeks are about getting the environment in and out of the classroom right, and making the students feel happy and secure in their new surroundings, there will also be a few small diagnostic tests.

Our rationale for the initial testing is threefold:

1. To give a baseline from which to report progress (students will have matching assessments later in the year)
2. To help in the initial grouping, setting and differentiating of students' learning objectives and tasks
3. Assisting in the identification of learning support and extension needs

Gratitude and Kindness

We have worked with Nicky Perry, founder of Awesome Inc, a New Zealand company. Their mission is focused on using scientific research to produce tools and techniques to improve health and well-being. Much of their work is based on positive psychology, and one of the tools they use are journals, for adults as well as children. These journals are designed to encourage gratitude, kindness to yourself and others, and to help build resilience. Last year Nicky produced a bespoke Waihi journal for us and this year we have extended the diary and added in several other sections, using it to record calendared events for the children and giving them a space to use it as a 'Prep Diary' too. We hope to have them delivered in the first couple of weeks of term.

Last year I received a letter from another New Zealand teacher. At the top he had a whakatauki (Māori proverb) from his school. It said:

He aroha whakatō, he aroha ka puta mai.

If kindness is sown, then kindness is what you shall receive.

That sentiment, 'reaping what you sow' is well known, from the New Testament to popular song lyrics. The message for our children is that *the more kindness you show towards others the more kindness others will show to you.*

It is also important for our young people to be kind to themselves. That means keeping their promise of giving everything 100% and being happy with the outcome. Making their expectations realistic; accepting that sometimes failure is an outcome...and that's ok too. We want them to learn from it, draw strength from it, and move on. Look in the mirror and 'be proud' of the person they see."

I would like to encourage all parents to take time to look through the new journals the students will be receiving, and to discuss with their child the importance of what lies within.

Outdoor Education

Outdoor Education (OE) has been one of the most popular additions to the Waihi curriculum since its arrival in 2017. The learning that students enjoy through OE has become an integral part of the 'Waihi Experience' and the board are committed to further developing this area over the coming years.

As I announced at Prize Giving, in 2021 each Waihi class will receive a weekly OE experience. We have partnered with the Peel Forest Outdoor Centre and will be using both the local Waihi environment and the wide range of accessible rivers, gorges, coastland, hills and bush. There will be both land-based and water-based activity programmes and your child's class teacher will share with you the upcoming activities. In Term 1 there will be water-based activities so if your child does own a wetsuit, they are welcome to bring it to school.



Rash Shirts

Please could all families provide their child with a named rash shirt in Term 1. New students will, weather depending, be spending some time at the beach on the first day of term, and there will be other water-based activities during the term either at the river or as a part of Outdoor Education.

We are all obviously aware of the potential for sunburn, particularly across the summer term, and we will be insisting students wear a rash shirt in the water when outside.

School Sport

Sport commences the first weekend of school (Saturday 6th February). Cricket are hoping to have the first Round of competition games that day, if not we will hold internal practice games. Tennis Inter-Club does not commence until the end of Week 2 (Saturday 13th Feb) however, all tennis players are required at Waihi on the morning of Saturday 6th February when we will be holding practice matches for all.

With little or no time to trial and select teams, particularly with 20+ new students at school, please demonstrate patience with sports staff and coaches as we organise teams and squads over the first few weeks or two.

Mr Morland and I will be working with the local associations to try and make spaces for the required number of teams, not an easy thing to do in the middle of a summer sport season.

Following our first weekend the sports draw will be sent home as usual to all parents each Wednesday informing you of where and when your child is playing.



Term One Exeat Weekends (All boarders to go home)

There will be a full Exeat weekend, as mentioned elsewhere in this newsletter, following Swimming Sports on **Friday 26th February**, with the boarders required to be back in Pyne House by 5.00pm on Monday 1st March and school recommencing for all on Tuesday 2nd March.

We will also run a second exeat following our Year 8 and Junior camps in Week 6. Students will return home from/following camp on the Thursday afternoon (11th March) with school to recommencing on Monday 15th March (Boarders back in on the evening of Sunday 14th March). This will allow both the students and staff members time to adequately recover from what I am sure will be an exhausting camp week! There will be no sport either exeat weekend.

Waitangi Day.

School will not be open for day students on Monday 8th February, the set public holiday for Waitangi Day. Boarders have activities planned for this day.



Staffing

We are saying 'hello' to three new class teachers at the start of this term. Annabel Morris (Year 7 form teacher), Jessica Sharp (Year 7 form teacher) and Tegan Ristow (Year 5/6 form teacher). There are also details below of the appointment of a new Head of Outdoor Education, Chris James, who will be joining us later this year. Also arriving at Waihi are **Anita Johnston**, who was introduced in our last newsletter of 2021 and our two new Gap Tutors, I am sure that you will all join me in welcoming them to our school family.

I am also delighted to inform you that **Helen Cunningham** has moved from her class teaching role to take over the STEM teaching responsibility. As a Science graduate Helen was very keen to lead this area of the school curriculum and she is looking forward to working with all of the students in this exciting area of our curriculum.

Annabel Morris – Annabel grew up on a farm in North Canterbury and went to boarding school in Christchurch for 5 years. She then completed a Bachelor of Teaching and Learning at Canterbury University with her first teaching position was at St Andrew's College for 4 years, teaching Years 4 and 7 during this time. Annabel is a passionate and enthusiastic teacher who strives to be a positive and influential role model in a child's life. Through her teaching experiences Annabel has developed a deep interest in pastoral care for the overall well-being of her students and is dedicated to helping children grow with strong self-value and morals and, to create happy and lifelong learners. Her farming up-bringing and her own boarding school experience means Annabel is very well suited to Waihi life.

Jessica Sharp – In 2018, Jess graduated from Otago University College of Education in 2018 in both Primary and Technology Education qualifications. Jess has taught for the last two years at Outram School in Otago and is excited to move back home to Pleasant Point where she grew up on a farm with a wide range of animals including pigs, horses, alpacas, sheep etc. Jess has a strong sporting background, with interests in hockey, swimming, equestrian and cricket and is looking forward to teaching at Waihi School, getting to know all the students, being involved with the school and community and playing a role in boarding life.

Tegan Ristow – Tegan lives onsite with her fiancé Josh and much-loved dog, Stevie. Having been a boarder herself during her high school days she promotes making all boarders feel as though they have found a home away from home. Tegan has been teaching for the past two years at Whītau School in Christchurch and has Bachelor of Fine Arts. She is particularly passionate about teaching Visual Arts, Design, E-learning and Literacy and has a love of performing arts (great for school productions!), netball, rugby, gymnastics and snowboarding.

Chris James - Chris and Rebecca will be moving from the UK to Waihi later this year with their two young children Isla and Reuben.

Chris is currently employed as a Royal Marines Commando Physical Training instructor and Exercise Rehabilitation Specialist. He has a passion for adventurous training, fitness and wellness and strongly believes in the positive benefits of the outdoors on physical and mental wellbeing.

As a sportsman, he has represented the Royal Marines in Rugby Union, Badminton and Cross-Country Mountain Biking. Chris is looking forward to developing Waihi's outdoor education programme and using his coaching and leadership experience to play an active role within Waihi's sports teams.

We also welcome two new tutors to join Waihi in 2021, Kristie Goodsir and Owen Short.

Kristie Goodsir – Kristie attended to Timaru Girls' High School where she was Head Girl in 2020. Kristie loves music, and plays the piano and violin. She has enjoyed being a part of many school musicals and is excited to be helping with the school production year and she also loves playing team sports. Kristie collects Captain America pop vinyls and is a fan of Formula One. She is looking forward to getting to know the grounds, lifestyle and people at Waihi this year!

Owen Short – Owen is looking forward to being part of the Waihi team this year. He attended Waihi from 2012-2015, before going on to Flower's House at Christ's College, where he graduated last year. Owen really enjoys playing and watching sports, especially football, rugby (however he does not expect much backup from the boys in hi love for the Chiefs!), cricket and cycling. His siblings include a younger brother who attended Waihi as well, and two younger sisters who very much wish that they could have got the opportunity three or four years ago! Owen says that Waihi did a lot for him' and he can't wait to give something back, be it in the boarding programme, on the side-line of the sports field, in the classroom or with the arts.

Staff photos of new members of our team will be uploaded on the website soon.



Wednesday Morning Late Starts, Friday afternoon early finish

A reminder that Wednesday mornings we have a late start to allow for our Weekly Staff Professional Learning time. One of the challenges of running a busy boarding school is that there are always staff on duty and consequently trying to organise meetings between staff can prove difficult. Groups of staff do meet early in the morning, late at night and many times in between, but we value a regular weekly 'professional learning time' where we can gather all of our teaching staff team to discuss important educational issues and engage in professional development opportunities, without 'missing' anyone because they are on duty with the students somewhere. There are huge benefits for us to enable teaching staff to work together this way each week.

The solution we arrived at is for staff to meet from 8.00-9.00am each Wednesday morning, meaning a late start this day for the students – classes start at 9.00am. For boarders it means an extra half an hour 'sleep in' and a slightly later breakfast this day – the extra rest once a week being no bad thing with many having busy weekday evenings of sport at various points throughout the year. For day students it will mean having a later (half to three-quarters of an hour) bus pick up time or drop off at school time on a Wednesday morning.

The first day for this late start is in Week 2, Wednesday 10th February.

Friday afternoons the school day will finish at 3.00pm. For the last couple of years, we have had this early finish (3.00pm rather than 4.00pm) in the Winter terms to help accommodate hockey games on a Friday evening. Tennis have indicated that they may play some inter-club Tennis on Friday evening too therefore we have simplified things by making this early finish permanent across the year.

The first day for this early finish is in Week 1, Friday 5th February.

Start of Term One 2021

All parents should have received the 2021 term dates. The arrangements for the start of the 2021 school year are as follows:

Sun 31st

All **New Boarders** to arrive 3.00-4.00pm – **Boarders to wear No.1s please**

Friends function for all New Parents at Mes Amis Café Orari, 4.00pm onwards

Note: Boarding girls – we are aware that your skorts are here at school waiting for you so please wear your school tracksuit and white polo shirt to school (in lieu of No.1s)

Mon 1st

All **New Day Students** to arrive at Pyne House 8.30am

Parents are asked to drop off their children today – **no buses running**

New Day Students to wear - school tracksuit, sport short/skort/sport (house) shirt

Sports kit, Togs, Towel, Rash Shirt and Hat/Cap all required today

Coffee and morning tea for parents with the Headmaster at Mes Amis Café Orari from 8.45am onwards

New Day student Parents to **collect their child at 4.00pm**

Existing boarders return 4.00-5.00pm. Please do not arrive earlier as staff will be out with our new students for the afternoon.

BBQ tea will be available for students and their families at 5.30pm

Tues 2nd

School starts for all – Buses running as normal

All students meet in the hall at 8.30am for welcome then to classes

Saturday 6th – Sunday 7th **In Weekend** for all boarders

Please note that for existing Waihi students term begins on Tuesday 2nd February (boarders returning on the evening of Monday 1st).



Buses

Proposed bus routes for Timaru, Geraldine, Pleasant Point and Ashburton were sent out to families earlier in the week and we hope to have these finalised by Friday.

Where at all possible we have tried to accommodate requests but there may be instances where the bus will pick up a student from a different stop than requested. This is due to the increased number of students requiring bus services and to ensure that we get everyone to school by 8.20am ready for school starting at 8.30am.

It is important that if you have put your child down to get the bus and for some reason they won't be getting on in the morning or afternoon that you let Wendy (executive@waihi.school.nz) know so that she can advise the driver.

Also, if your child does not normally get the bus and you would like a 'one-off' ride home, please also advise Wendy – we can't always guarantee that there will be seats available, especially on the Geraldine, Ashburton and Timaru buses but she will do her best!

Uniform

If your son or daughter still requires some uniform pieces, please contact either Penny (admin@waihi.school.nz) or Wendy (executive@waihi.school.nz) as they will be only too happy to help.

New students who don't yet have their house polos can pop into the office on Monday to collect.

