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Dear Parents, Caregivers, and Friends of Waihi,

With just three days left, the familiar mix of excitement and end-of-year fatigue is well and truly here. The calendar has been full, and yet the children have continued to give their best in classrooms, on the sports field, on the stage and in the day-to-day moments that really shape Waihi. I am incredibly proud of the way they have carried themselves to the finish line.

Last week, our Year 8's brought the house down with their production of Frozen Jr. After months of rehearsing and refining, they delivered a performance full of heart, humour, and commitment. Productions stretch students in every direction, but they also reveal something special about them. On stage, backstage, or supporting from the wings, our Yr 8s showed excellence, finishing their time at Waihi in style. This success would not have been possible without the dedication of all our staff, who contributed tirelessly, making props, painting scenes, altering costumes, helping with hair and makeup, and providing support wherever it was needed. Special thanks go to Al and Sheryl Bradley, whose direction and guidance brought the show to life.

We are delighted to share the excellent progress our students have made this year, reflected in our 2025 Progressive Achievement Test (PAT) results in mathematics, reading comprehension, and science. These standardised assessments clearly show significant, whole-school academic growth, with a strong shift of students moving into the highest achievement bands.

In mathematics, the percentage of students scoring in the top band has doubled, and reading comprehension shows similarly impressive gains, with the number of our highest achievers nearly doubling. Science achievement is also exceptionally strong, with 88 percent of students performing at or above the national average, demonstrating widespread proficiency across the school. Together, these results affirm the strength of our teaching staff, the effectiveness of our literacy and curriculum programmes.

At the Leavers' Service last week, I spoke to our Year 8s about a moment that all of us face in life, the moment when the familiar road ends and another begins. Drawing on Robert Frost's famous poem, I reminded them that change asks something of us. It asks us to step forward with courage, even when the path ahead feels uncertain.

More importantly, I reminded them that they already have what they need. Their time at Waihi has given them resilience, curiosity and a strong moral compass. As I shared with them:

*"You cannot walk both roads at once, but you can walk forward with confidence, knowing that the choices you make, and the courage behind those choices, will shape the journey ahead."*

As a school, we send our Year 8s out with great pride. They have served, led, grown and contributed. They leave with friendships, memories and the Waihi values that we hope will continue to guide them long after they step outside our gates.

Looking ahead to 2026, we are developing a more focused and learner-centred timetable that strengthens core learning while making the most of our staffing and growing roll. Literacy and numeracy will be prioritised each morning with dedicated time for reading, writing and mathematics, and increased flexibility, including cross-grouping in maths, will allow us to better meet individual student needs. Afternoons will offer a balanced rotation of specialist subjects such as STEM, Outdoor Education, Music, Agri Studies, Communication, Coding/IT, Financial Literacy, Te Reo, and a reintroduction of timetabled Woodwork and Art, drawing on teacher strengths and our unique environment. While still in draft form, the direction is clear: a timetable that is stronger, more balanced and aligned with the needs of today's learners.

To all our families, thank you. Thank you for your support, trust, encouragement and partnership across this year. As I complete my first year as Headmaster, I am deeply grateful for the warm welcome I have received from the Waihi community. It has been a privilege to lead this school, and I look forward to continuing to build on the strong foundations that make Waihi such a special place.

Have a wonderful Christmas and a safe, happy summer. I look forward to welcoming our returning families back in the new year.

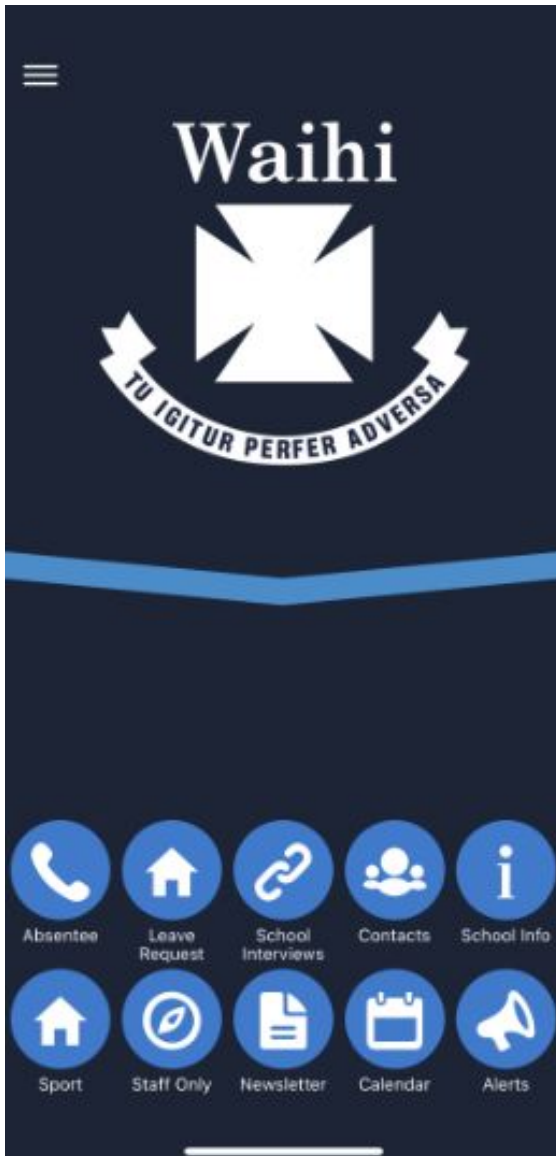
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Warm regards

**Gareth Wood**  
Headmaster

# WAIHI NOTICES

Upcoming Events | Information | Updates



## Waihi School App

In 2026 we will be introducing a School App that will be accessible for parents via their mobiles.

It will have quick links to Absences, School Calendar, Upcoming Events, School Interviews, Team sheets, fixture details and more.

Our social media pages will be streamlined and will be used to promote the school's fantastic successes.

We are still finalising some bits and bobs with the app designers, so if there is something you think would be a worthwhile addition, please let us know.



**Order Back to School stationery now and **beat the rush!****



Class lists are ready to view at  
**myschool.co.nz**

<https://www.myschool.co.nz/WaihiSchool>



# WAIHI NOTICES

Upcoming Events | Information | Updates

## Spirit of Christmas

The Waihi Christmas tree is once again up in the School Administration Office area, awaiting donations for those in need at Christmas.

For the last few years, Waihi families have donated a range of Christmas gifts and food to be distributed within the South Canterbury region via Arowhenua Whanau Services.

Please label wrapped gifts with the age and gender (if applicable) they are intended for.

Thank you in advance for your generous support again this year.



# WAIHI NOTICES

Upcoming Events | Information | Updates

## School Office / Uniform Shop hours

The Waihi School office will close on FRIDAY 19 DECEMBER 2025, and reopen on MONDAY 12 JANUARY 2026.

The Waihi School Uniform Shop will be closing at 2.30pm on FRIDAY 12 DECEMBER 2025, reopening 12 JANUARY 2026.

Have a great Christmas, and a very happy and safe New Year everyone!



## CELEBRATING OUR WAIHIANS

Photographs shared by parents / caregivers

### Ashburton NZEF Show

Darcy Sinton, Neve Johnson, Claudia Studholme





# SONNET POEMS

Learning | Class 6 PG | Sharing

This term, 6PG has been learning about poetry. We have looked at haiku, limericks, cinquain, and sonnets. While creating their own versions of these poem types, students had to plan, draft, edit, and publish their writing in their books. They also needed to use descriptive language, such as adjectives and adverbs, and include at least one language feature such as a simile, personification, or a metaphor.

Here are some examples of our sonnet poems. A sonnet is a fourteen-line poem with four stanzas, each with its own rhyming sequence: ABAB, CDCD, EFEF, GG. The topic was their favourite place.

## Super Sunshine Coast

Ice cream drips down my hand  
in the hot sun.  
My Birkenstocks melts in the hot sand.  
Once I have done lots of swimming  
I'm done.  
I put my togs on and look very grand.

Talented surfers riding wild waves.  
Greasy chicken chippies in my wet hand.  
Fast fierce waves cover me like a huge cave.  
Assured to be back on amazing land.

Waking up early to see the sunrise.  
Salty togs dry out on the wood porch.

The competitive swimmers won a prize.  
Night skies are so dark you need a torch.

Feeling disappointed we must leave.  
We leave on the morning Christmas Eve.

By Hazel I.

by Hazel P.

## The lake

The sun shining on my face feels like home.  
The sounds of water crashing on the side of the boat.  
Food makes me feel like a king on his throne.  
Freezing water makes me put on a coat.

The slimy weed grabbing onto my feet.  
Sizzling sounds of meaty sausages.  
Listening to the cute furry ducklings tweet.  
By the barbaque sipping beverages.

The noisy boat engine roaring to life.  
Biscuiting makes me feel like sid the sloth.  
We cut up the venison with a knife.  
Fires are made to swim around like maths.

When arriving to the lake I feel glad.  
When we leave the lake I feel very sad.

by Nathan R.

## Manuka Point

Exploring and hunting is loads of fun  
In the cosy cabin during the night  
And the satisfaction of a job done  
Making the dancing hwh glow with the light

The delicious smell of venison smoke

The adreniline of aiming a gun

By the fire enjoying a fizzy coke

If you miss sometimes you may have to run

Spiky madagari scratching my legs

Those annoying budy birds stick to me

When our clothes get damp we will need some pee

It is pretty useful when you need to pee

It is loads of fun to gut and skin it

Once you've done that chuck the rest in the pit

by Andy W.

# WAIHI PROJECTS

Upcoming Events | Information | Updates



## Pyne House Expansion Announced

On Sunday, we were delighted to host members of our community for the announcement of the Pyne House Expansion. Thank you to those who were able to join us. For anyone who couldn't attend, we are pleased to share a short overview below, along with a link to further information on [our website](#).

Waihi is entering an exciting new chapter as we prepare for the expansion of Pyne House in response to continued growth in boarding. This project builds on the foresight of the 2007 Board, who designed the original building with a future second phase in mind. The new development mirrors and complements the existing architecture, ensuring a seamless extension of the Boarding House.

The expansion includes a fully enclosed Atrium increasing the common room footprint by one-third, two new dormitories, a dedicated day girls' locker room, a new girls' locker room for boarders, and a new ablutions block. Naming opportunities for various spaces within Pyne House are available, and we look forward to engaging with our community around these.

As part of our engagement for this project, we will be hosting a series of community events around the South Island in the New Year. We warmly invite you to join us at any of the following gatherings to learn more and reconnect with fellow Waihi families and alumni:

## South Island Community Events

- ❑ **Tekapo:** 3 February
- ❑ **Ashburton:** 10 February
- ❑ **Christchurch:** 12 February
- ❑ **Waimate:** 17 February
- ❑ **Wanaka:** 26 February
- ❑ **Fairlie:** 3 March
- ❑ **Geraldine:** 5 March
- ❑ **Timaru:** 10 March

Over the coming weeks, an email will be sent with details on how to register for these events.

The project is expected to be completed by **Term 1, 2027**, and will be a wonderful enhancement to life at Pyne House.

To learn more, please visit our website or contact

**Claire Sparks, Fundraising Lead**

[csparks@waihi.school.nz](mailto:csparks@waihi.school.nz) | 021 30 66 01



# WAIHI PARENTS

Upcoming Events | Information | Updates

## Waihi Parents and Friends Cocktail Party Friday 5 December 2025 @ 3.30pm - 5.00pm

The time of year is upon us again for the WAIHI PARENTS AND FRIENDS COCKTAIL PARTY!

This event takes the form of a relaxed get together under the trees near the front tennis courts.

Here is what we all need you to do to help with its success:

- ✓ Bring a plate of something delicious to add to the atmosphere, label your plates and take them to the kitchen chiller please
- ✓ Bring a bottle (or two) of wine to put into the wine raffle collection, pop these into the boxes in the kitchen chiller
- ✓ Bring spare change to buy raffle tickets for the above wine raffle
- ✓ The wine goes into groups of three and then at the end we hold a draw for the prizes so, there are usually a few winners!

Please feel free to ask **Mandy Westgarth** or **Bec Dwyer** if you have any questions.

See you all there!!  
Many thanks,

*Parents and  
Friends Committee*





# PYNE HOUSE

## BOARDERS DINNER CELEBRATIONS





# TERM ONE 2026

	January	February	March	April
Sat				
Sun		1 Boarders Activities	1	
Mon		2 Boarders Activities	2 <u>Week 5</u> <u>Year 7 Camp</u>	
Tue		3 <u>Week 1</u> 8.30am School Begins for all. Buses Running	3 <u>Year 7 Camp</u>	
Wed		4	4 <u>Year 7 Camp</u>	1
Thu	1	5	5 <u>Year 7 Camp</u>	2 <u>House Singing Comp</u> End of Term One
Fri	2	6 <u>WAITANGI DAY</u> <i>Boarders Activities</i>	6 <u>Year 7 Camp</u>	3 <b>GOOD FRIDAY</b>
Sat	3	7	7	4
Sun	4	8	8	5 <b>EASTER SUNDAY</b>
Mon	5	9 <u>Week 2</u>	9 <u>Week 6</u> <u>Junior Camp</u>	6 <b>EASTER MONDAY</b> <b>Mackenzie A&amp;P Show</b>
Tue	6	10	10 <u>Junior Camp</u>	7
Wed	7	11	11 <u>Junior Camp</u> <u>PSC ISSA Swimming</u>	8
Thu	8	12	12 <b>Southern Lakes Comm.</b> <b>Visit 6pm-8pm</b>	9
Fri	9	13	13 <b>Wanaka A&amp;P Show</b>	10
Sat	10	14	14 <b>Wanaka A&amp;P Show</b>	11
Sun	11	15	15	12
Mon	12	16 <u>Week 3</u>	16 <u>Week 7</u>	13
Tue	13	17	17 <u>NI Cultural Tour</u>	14
Wed	14	18	18 <u>NI Cultural Tour</u>	15
Thu	15	19 <u>Meet the Teacher PM</u>	19 <u>NI Cultural Tour</u>	16
Fri	16	20 EXEAT	20 <u>NI Cultural Tour</u>	17
Sat	17	21 EXEAT	21 EXEAT	18
Sun	18	22 EXEAT <u>Weet-Bix TRYathlon</u>	22 EXEAT	19
Mon	19	23 <u>Waihi Swimming Sports</u>	23 EXEAT <u>Parent Teacher Meetings</u>	20 <u>Teacher Only Day - no</u> <u>school today</u>
Tue	20	24 <u>Week 4</u>	24 <u>Week 8</u> <u>Food for Thought (Juniors)</u>	21 <u>Week 1 Term 2 starts</u>
Wed	21	25	25 <u>Food for Thought (Juniors)</u>	22
Thu	22	26 <u>Cathedral Grammar</u> <u>Fixture (Sports TRC)</u>	26	23
Fri	23	27 <u>Diagnostic Reports Home</u>	27	24
Sat	24	28	28	25 <b>ANZAC DAY</b>
Sun	25		29	26
Mon	26		30 <u>Week 9</u>	27 <u>ANZAC Observed Date</u>
Tue	27		31	28 <u>Week 2</u> <u>Waihi ANZAC Day Service</u>
Wed	28			29
Thu	29 <u>Teacher Only Day</u>			30
Fri	30 <u>Teacher Only Day</u>			
Sat	31 <u>Leadership Day</u> <u>New Boarders 2-3pm</u> <u>Returning Boarders 4-5pm</u>			