



St John's School Newsletter

6 Stuart Road
Ranfurly
03 4449514
office@sjr.school.nz

Issue 14: 21st November 2025

Principal's Page:

Nau mai haere mai

Maniototo Athletics Day and Otago Athletic Sports

Congratulations to all the children who took part in the Maniototo Athletics Day on Friday, 31st October, and then those who went on to the Otago Athletics in Dunedin on Tuesday, 11 November.

Congratulations to the following children who placed in the Maniototo Athletics Day:

13+ years boys 1st = Ethan Chisholm and McKinley Francis

U13 years boys 1st Xavier Love

3rd Arthur Elworthy

U13 years girls 2nd Kaylah McAuley

The McSkimming Cup was won by Xavier Love, who scored 36/42 points. Well done, Xavier.

Special congratulations to the following children who placed in their events in Dunedin at the Otago Athletics:

13+ boys hurdles 3rd Axel McAuley

13+ boys shotput 4th Harry Dowling

U13 boys long jump 3rd Xavier Love

U13 boys high jump 3rd Xavier Love

U13 boys hurdles 3rd Xavier Love

Yr 7 & 8 boys 800m 2nd McKinley Francis

Yr 5 & 6 girls 800m 2nd Juliette Dowling

13+ boys relay team 4th Ethan Chisholm, Axel McAuley, Xavier Love, McKinley Francis

U11 boys relay team 1st Eli Barroga and Theo Dowling

Well done to all these students.

Beekeeping Sessions

We have two beekeeping sessions before the end of the year: **Friday, 28th November and Friday, 5th December.**

Children must bring gumboots to wear for these two sessions, please.

End of Year Concert/Prizegiving

This is being held on **Thursday, 4th December, in the Ranfurly Town Hall at 7 p.m.**

Children do not need to be at the hall until **6.45 p.m.** They need to come to the side entrance door of the hall. Doors to the main hall will not open until 6.50 p.m.

Seats will be reserved at the front for Year 8 parents and families. We discourage preschoolers from attending the concert/prizegiving night as it is a long time to sit. The concert takes approximately 35 - 40 minutes with speeches and prizegiving to follow.

We have a dress rehearsal on **Wednesday, 26th November at 9.30 a.m.**

Maniototo Area School and some of the hospital residents will be coming along to this.

Any parents or grandparents who are unable to come to the evening concert on Thursday, 4th December, are also welcome to come to the dress rehearsal.

Mrs Duncan's Farewell

We are having a farewell celebration for Mrs Geraldine Duncan on **Monday, 1st December, at 1.20 p.m.** Please see the invitation below.

Everyone welcome.

**You are invited to an afternoon of celebration
to farewell our long serving teacher -**

Mrs Geraldine Duncan

**Please come along to St John's
School Hall at
1.20 p.m. on
Monday 1st December**

Afternoon tea provided by the PTA will follow.

**All welcome.
See you there.**

End of Year Mass

A school Mass to celebrate the end of the year and our Year 8s leaving will be held on **Monday, 8th December, at 9 a.m.** in our Church.

Everyone is welcome to join us for this celebration.

Year 8 Graduation

This is taking place on **Wednesday, 10 December, at 1 p.m.** in the school hall.

Last Day 2025

Our last day of school for 2025 is **Friday, 12th December.**

School is open until 2.50 p.m. as usual, and buses will run at the normal times.

First Day 2026

The first day of school for 2026 is **Thursday, 29th January.**

Swim Week 2026

Next year our swim week is in Week 2 from **Monday, 2nd February - Thursday, 5th February**. Friday, 6th February is Waitangi Day.

Children will be put into the same groups as last year, with any new children put into a group the teacher thinks they may fit into. Jo, the swimming instructor, will sort out any changes to the groups on day one of Swim Week.

Merry Christmas

As this will be the last newsletter for 2025, and my last as Principal, I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very happy and blessed Christmas and best wishes for 2026.

Meri Kirihimete.

Susan Mulholland

Special Character:

The first Sunday of Advent, Sunday 20th November, is the start of the Christmas season, symbolising hope. It is a time to learn about waiting for Jesus' birth.

Advent wreaths are often found not only in people's homes but also in the church. This circular evergreen wreath usually contains 5 candles, each representing one of the Sundays of Advent.

At school, we have an Advent wreath with 5 candles on it - 3 purple, 1 pink and 1 white.

The first candle, purple, represents hope, the second candle, purple, represents love, and third, pink, represents joy, the fourth, purple, represents peace, and the white candle in the middle represents the birth of Jesus.

Junior Class News:



We welcome new five year old, Lucy Gladstone, and her family to St John's School. Lucy started school on 3rd November.

We are busy getting ready for our Christmas concert, "I'm Going To Shine". Most mornings we walk to the Town Hall, ready to start practice at 9.20 a.m., and we return in time for morning tea.

If your child hasn't brought along their costume, they need this on Monday, please:

Boys - black, white or grey shorts

Girls - plain coloured t-shirt and shorts

Middle Class News:



Kia ora koutou,

Wow, the year is certainly flying by! It's hard to believe we only have 3 weeks left! A huge congratulations to all the children for their fantastic efforts on Sports Day a couple of weeks ago. It was wonderful to see everyone giving it their best shot throughout the day. A special shoutout to Juliette for qualifying for the Otago Sports in the 800m and placing 2nd in the event! Great work, Juliette!

Triathlon - On the 6th of November, I had the pleasure of taking 13, Year 5-8 students to Cromwell to compete in the Dunstan Zone Triathlon. This is quite a challenging event, and all the students performed exceptionally well. Ka pai to everyone involved!

Results:

Teams events

2nd - Harry Dowling, Axel McAuley and Harry Jeffries

1st – Joshua Barroga, Isla Jeffries and Kaylah McAuley

Individual event

2nd – Millie Smith



Millie Smith

Theo Dowling,
Charlie Dowling &

Caleb Cai, Ben Scott
& Jack Jeffries



Harry Dowling, Axel McAuley
(Absent: Harry Jeffries)



Joshua Barroga, Isla Jeffries
(Absent: Kaylah McAuley)

Thank you!

I just want to say a massive thank you to all the Middle Room parents. You've been amazing this year, supporting your children with homework, joining us on school trips, and being so friendly and approachable. Your support has made a real difference!

Also, a big thank you to Becky, our Teacher Aide. Becky does a lot of work 'behind the scenes' and helps the students with their work every day. She is a huge part of our daily life and we are so appreciative of all the support she provides in the classroom.

End of an era

I would like to take this opportunity to express my heartfelt thanks to Mrs. Susan Mulholland for her many years of dedicated service as Principal at St John's School. Her leadership has truly marked the end of an era, and she leaves behind 'big shoes to fill.' Mrs. Mulholland has done a wonderful job guiding our school, and I feel incredibly lucky and privileged to follow in her footsteps, taking over a school that is in such a fantastic place. Her legacy will continue to inspire us all.

I feel very fortunate that Mrs. Mulholland will be staying on as the Junior Class teacher and will be on hand to support me in my new role.

I would also like to extend my best wishes to Mrs. Geraldine Duncan for her future endeavours. Over the past 14 years, she has been a huge part of our school, introducing many entrepreneurial initiatives with the school farm and her outdoor education programme. We are committed to continuing these programmes, ensuring they remain an integral part of our school curriculum. Mrs. Duncan will be greatly missed by both staff and students, and she has certainly made a big impact during her time at St John's School. Good luck, Geraldine!

The Middle Room 2026

There will be a change to the teaching schedule in the Middle Room next year, as I'll be dedicating some time to my role as Principal in the office. I'm very fortunate to have Mrs. Erin Elworthy joining us to teach in the Middle Room on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays. I will continue teaching on Thursdays and Fridays.



I hope you all have a safe and happy holiday and I look forward to seeing you all back in 2026!
Merry Christmas!

Ngā mihi nui,

Heather Dowling

Senior Class News:

'The beautiful thing about learning is that no one can take it away from you' B.B.King

Senior Room Newsletter Week 7 Term 4

Hello families,

We're settling into a great rhythm here in the classroom. We wanted to share how pleased we are with everyone's effort and attitude. It's clear that the children are trying hard in their learning, and just as importantly, they are doing an excellent job of being supportive classmates.

We have been doing a lot of practice for the school concert, and they are doing a great job. You will really enjoy seeing it.

Maniototo Athletics Day

The Maniototo Athletics was a great day. The weather was great, the competition was intense, and all of the children competed to the best of their ability. Once all the house averages were added up, we are excited to announce that O'Neill House won the athletics competition.

In the overall age group winners, we achieved the following impressive results...

U13 years - Kaylah 2nd, Xavier 1st, Arthur 3rd.

13+ years - McKinley and Ethan 1st equal, and Axel 3rd.



We pass on our congratulations to Xavier Love, who won the McSkimming Cup. An amazing achievement where he has followed in the steps of previous St John's children, this cup dates back to 1937. St John's children have won this cup every year since Covid!

Congratulations, Xavier, on achieving 36/42 points. That's a really great result.

From this event, we had some children selected to represent Maniototo at the Otago Champs. Eli and Theo have written a short piece below about this day. Thank you to all parents who helped get children to the event, helped to ensure they got to their event locations on time, looked after relay teams and to Geraldine Dowling for managing the uniforms. A great team effort.

Otago Athletics Championship event

Juliette Dowling placed 2nd in the 800m



The 13+ relay team, which was made up of all St John's boys.



On Tuesday, the 12th of November, 10 athletes went to compete at the Otago Athletic Champs in Dunedin. Maniototo did very well there in all of the events. They had lots of placings and everyone did a great job. The kids were McKinley, Neale, Harry D, Juliette, Eli, Theo, Ethan, Axel, Xavier and Finn. The relays were one of our best events, with the U10 boys and U11 boys getting first and the U12 girls getting second. Our top 5 placings were
High Jump: Xavier 3rd U13.
Hurdles: Axel got 3rd, McKinley got 4th in 13+, Xavier got 3rd in U13.
Long Jump: Xavier 3rd= in U13.
Shotput: Harry got 4th= in 13+
Long Distance: 800m Juliette got second in the year 5 and 6 girls, and McKinley got 2nd in the year 7 and 8 boys.
U11 Relay: Eli and Theo 1st.
13+ Relay: Ethan, Axel, Xavier and McKinley 4th.
The day was great, and it was another successful day in Dunedin. We thought it was a fun day, and it was exciting to be there. It was definitely worth doing the training and travelling.

By Theo and Eli



Vegetable Garden

The year 6's did a great job of planting out our vegetable garden with Mrs Hazlett. They chose a selection of vegetables as well as bee-friendly plants that will provide energy for their honey making.

We are looking forward to seeing these plants flourish.



Lawn Bowls at the Ranfurly Bowling Club

Deep in thought here, I'm not totally sure what about! And how lovely to have George back with us for this session.

Last week, the Senior Room students went to the Ranfurly Bowling Club to learn how to play lawn bowls. Some members from the club taught us the basics of rolling a lawn bowl and the importance of the weight on each side. One side of the lawn bowl is heavier than the other, which curves the bowl in the direction where you aim it. Once we got the hang of it, we played a few games with the club members. We also made a rule that whoever rolled the bowl on the wrong side and it went onto the other rink, then they had to bring a bag of lollies to share with the whole class.

Everyone improved and was very keen to learn lawn bowling, and our class really enjoyed it. We would like to thank the Ranfurly Bowling Club, and we would love to come back again another time.

By Cyrus and Keisha.

Dairy Farm trip

On Monday, the 3rd of November, the Senior Room went to Maniototo Dairy to learn about how dairy farms work. The day started off with a sausage and brown milk that our intelligent teacher told us comes from a brown cow. We then got to meet a Fonterra truck driver named Jerry. He showed us how he collects the milk, tests the milk, and he also talked to us about his job, which he really enjoyed. Next, we milked 6 cows, and Mr Jeffries (also known as Harry J and Isla's Dad) told us about how everything works. Some kids even got to help milk the cows and got to put the cups on! We finished the trip off with feeding calves and asking questions. The day was super duper fun. We learnt so much. Thanks for having us, Mrs and Mr Jeffries.

By Kaylah and Isla.



A massive thank you to Maniototo Dairy for their generous contribution of five calves and milk powder!

The calves arrived safely on Monday and are now happily settled in at Holy Paddocks. We are so proud of the children, who have once again been exceptional. They are showing great practical capability by enthusiastically taking on the tasks of mixing the milk, feeding, and cleaning up afterwards.

Science Roadshow

On Thursday, the 13th of November, the Senior and Middle classes attended the Science Roadshow at the Stadium! The session started with a demonstration about the 'Carbon Cycle' and supplemented the learning we have done in term 2. The visual representation and interactive displays engaged the students (and Teachers) and left them all a little inspired.



The sandpit has been a very popular spot recently. I took this photo on duty, as it was just a delight to see all the children happily playing together and getting messy!

Young Vinnies

Our Young Vinnies group is hosting a special **Caritas "Move It" challenge on Wednesday, November 26th.**

The children are asked to

- **bring a gold coin donation**
- **wear mufti**
- **bring a vessel to carry water in - this could be a cup, ice cream container, bucket, or bowl.**

The challenge involves moving water over a distance, which gives students a practical example of a daily task faced by children in some impoverished communities.

They will bring a sheet home on Tuesday with ideas for home challenge activities, allowing your child to experience this task in a home environment. The last time we did a water-carrying activity, it was a lot of fun!

All money donated to us will be donated to Caritas.

Kind regards,

Geraldine and Rachel.

Upcoming Term 4 Dates

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Week 8 24 - 28th Nov | Mon - Walk up Little Mt Ida (wear mufti) Tues - Orientation at MAS for 2026 Year 9 students (1-3 pm) Wed - Caritas Water Carrying Challenge activity (wear mufti) |
| Week 9 1st - 5th Dec | Mon - Golf at the Maniototo Golf Club (helpers: Erin, Gabby, Sharon, Geraldine, Alex and Alina) Tues- Rubbish Run (wear mufti and bring gardening gloves) Thursday - School Concert 7 pm |
| Week 10 8th - 12th Dec | Monday - YV baking and delivery (if anyone else can help, please get in touch) Tuesday - Kiwi Water Park in Cromwell (need a wetsuit) Wednesday - Y8 Graduation is 1 pm in the hall Friday - Final day of school for 2025! |

Board of Trustees:

Our last meeting for the year is on **Thursday, 11 December**.

Notices and Dates:

| | | |
|--------|-------------------------------------|---|
| Week 7 | Sunday 23 rd November | Sunday Mass at 5pm Altar Servers: McKinley Francis, Sophia & Henry Crutchley |
| Week 8 | Monday 24 th November | Senior Class – Walk up Little Mt ida |
| | Tuesday 25 th November | Orientation at MAS for 2026 Year 9 students (1-3pm) |
| | Wednesday 26 th November | Caritas Water Carrying Challenge activity |
| | | Concert Dress Rehearsal at Hall at 9.30am |
| | Friday 28 th November | Beekeeping sessions – Children must bring gumboots |
| | Sunday 30 th November | Sunday Mass at 5pm Altar Servers: Isla, Jimmy & Oscar Jeffries |
| Week 9 | Monday 1 st December | Farewell Afternoon for Geraldine Duncan from 1.20pm |

| | | |
|--------------------------|--|---|
| | Thursday 4 th December | School Concert & Prizegiving at 7pm in Ranfurly Town Hall |
| | Friday 5 th December | Reports & Portfolios will be sent home |
| | | Beekeeping sessions – Children must bring gumboots |
| | Sunday 7 th December | Sunday Mass at 5pm Altar Servers: Ethan Chisholm & Evie Steele |
| Week 10 | Monday 8 th December | End of Year Mass in the Church at 9am |
| | Wednesday 10 th December | Year 8's Graduation Ceremony at 1pm in the school hall |
| | Thursday 11 th December | Board of Trustees meeting |
| | Friday 12 th December | Last day for 2025 |
| | Sunday 14 th December | Sunday Mass at 5pm Altar Servers: Bryleigh, Eli & Joshua Barroga |
| School Holidays | Sunday 21 st December | Sunday Mass at 5pm Altar Servers: Xavier & Greta Love, Arthur Elworthy |
| | Sunday 28 th December | Sunday Mass at 5pm Altar Servers: Jessie Greer & Izzy Eketone |
| | Sunday 4 th January | Sunday Mass at 5pm Altar Servers: Florence & Juliette Dowling |
| | Sunday 11 th January | Sunday Mass at 5pm Altar Servers: Charlie Dowling & Mack Mayo |
| | Sunday 18 th January | Sunday Mass at 5pm Altar Servers: Zach Tomalon |
| | Sunday 25 th January | Sunday Mass at 5pm Altar Servers: Theo Dowling & Maggie O'Neill |
| 2026 Term 1 Week 1 | Thursday 29 th January | First day of school for 2026 |
| | Sunday 1 st February | Sunday Mass at 5pm Altar Servers: Jack & Jimmy Jeffries |
| Week 2 | Monday 2 nd – Thursday 5 th February | Swim Week |
| | Friday 6 th February | Waitangi Day |
| | Sunday 8 th February | Sunday mass at 5pm Altar Servers: James Badillo & Neale Plena |

Billy Laing Swimming Lessons

27th Dec - 31st Dec 2025

Ranfurly Swimming Pool

For those that are new to these lessons Billy has been providing swimming lessons in the Maniototo for 25+ years.

Your child will be put into groups depending on their ability to swim.

Stronger more capable swimmers will have one lesson per day (usually early morning for an hour) and for those starting out with strokes / learning to float or new to swimming/water these children will have two shorter lessons per day. Lessons go for 5 days.

For more information or to enrol your child/children please text Geraldine Dowling

0274859693 Or Facebook messenger



Let's Light The Tree!

You are invited to the lighting of
the new Maniototo Community
Christmas Tree



7.10pm Friday 5 December
Ranfurly Railway Station

Choosing a Good Toothpaste

Look for a toothpaste with
at least 1000 ppm fluoride



- ✓ Check the box/tube states it has fluoride (stannous fluoride, sodium monofluorophosphate, or sodium fluoride are ingredients)
- ✓ Not everyone loves that minty taste. Try one of the fluoridated non-mint flavours available (grape, vanilla, watermelon, berry...)
- ✓ A soft paste, a solid paste or a tablet?
The choice is yours!



Health New Zealand
Te Whatu Ora

Community Oral
Health Service



Talkteeth Southern

JINGO NIGHT

SATURDAY 22 NOVEMBER
What could be more fun than musical bingo?!

From 6:30pm; Jingo starts at 7pm sharp!
\$25 per person - includes supper and 4 games of Jingo
Cash bar available.

NZ Junior Curling Fundraiser
Help us get to Finland!

MANIOTOTO ADVENTURE
PARK, NASEBY

GREAT PRIZES

BRING YOUR CASH FOR RAFFLES

CONTACT: JANET STEELE 0275393355 OR LISA NEVILL
0277332775 TO ENTER!