

Aumāngā / Resilience

Whakāute / Respect

Takohanga / Responsibility

14 February 2025

Principal's Message

Tēnā Koutou Katoa

Welcome to all our returning families and those who have joined us for the first time. 2025 is our 70th year since St Thomas's School opened to serve our community and we will celebrate this in various ways as the year progresses. Incredible changes have taken place in our local community and school over those 70 years. Indeed, changes in our school programmes will continue this year when new maths resources arrive to support our maths delivery and our structured literacy approach will move up into years 4, 5 and 6. As resources arrive and more clarity is received from the Ministry regarding the refreshed curriculum, we will keep our parent community informed regarding teaching and learning approaches and what the new curriculum standards mean in regards to their children achievement.

Attendance

A reminder that school attendance is a family responsibility and a government priority. The main reason students at St Thomas's School miss school is because they are sick. Another key reason why they miss school is because they are on holiday. The government is concerned about attendance across the school sector and is clamping down on parents removing their child for holidays. If you intend to remove your child for a holiday please ensure you consult with the school first.

New Arrival

Congratulations to one of our junior teachers Jonathon Drucker and his wife, Sarah, who welcomed a new arrival into their family two weeks ago with the birth of their second child Jack. We look forward to Jonathon's return next week and meeting little Jack.

Ngā mihi nui

Michael Maher
Principal



Congratulations to all our wonderful students on a fantastic start to the year!

Upcoming Dates

February

- 21 PTA Picnic 4.30pm – 7.30pm
- 25 Board of Trustees Meeting (6.30pm staffroom)

March

- 04 Eastern Zone Softball
- 05-07 Yr 6 Camp – Carey Park
- 20 Yr 5-8 Swimming Sports
- 18 Bay Suburbs Softball
- 24-28 Yr 8 Camp – Camp Bentzon
- 25 Board of Trustees Meeting (6.30pm staffroom)
- 29 School Garden Working Bee (8.45am to midday)
- 31 Eastern Zone Orienteering

April


- 03 Yr 7 & 8 immunisations
- 07 Yr & Youthtown (Group 1)
- 10 Yr & Youthtown (Group 2)
- 10 Student Led Learning Conferences
- 11 Last Day of Term 1
- 28 First Day of Term 2




PTA School Picnic

Coming up on Friday 21 February is our annual school picnic. This is a wonderful opportunity for families to meet other parents and an opportunity for your children to socialise with their classmates. I encourage you to attend this event and acknowledge the effort of the PTA who organise it.

There will be inflatables, and food trucks.
Come along and join in the fun!

 Friday, 21st February

 Starts at 4:30 PM

Save The Date - St Thomas's School Garden Working Bee

Saturday 29 March from 8.45am – midday

Calling all volunteers!

We are improving our school vege garden with the addition of more planter boxes and a shade house and we need your help so we can achieve this.

If you have any available time between 8.45am to midday on Saturday 29 March then please join us with your spade and gloves on the school field. Children are welcome and we will finish the morning with a light lunch for our volunteers.



Reporting Student Absences

We would like to remind all parents/caregivers that reporting absences is important for the safety and wellbeing of students.

We aim to deal with all unexplained absences as quickly as possible each morning.

To minimise the number of unexplained absences, it is helpful if parents/caregivers take a few moments to advise the school of an absence **by 9.00am** through our Hero App. ***It is not necessary to email the class teacher.***

Absences must be reported each day unless the office has been advised in advance of the duration of an absence. You must state the reason for absence i.e. sick, doctor's appointment, holiday or bereavement.

Our gate is locked at 8.55am and we do have a lot of students arriving 5 minutes late. Please note, the school roll is taken at 8.55am ready to start the learning programme at 9.00am. While we may try several alternative phone numbers to contact a parent, if calls are not answered, where possible we will leave a voice message. If your phone numbers change, can you please advise the office.

Any students arriving late to school must report to the office and sign in, so that their safe arrival can be recorded. All late arrivals are recorded, should your child be late on a regular basis follow up action will be taken.

Should you wish to collect your child early from school, please come to the office and sign your child out. We do not let your children go home with someone that is not on the child's record card. Students cannot be signed out during morning break or lunchtime so if they have an appointment, please pick them up before morning break (10.30am – 10.50am) and lunch (12.30pm – 1.30pm).

If your child is unwell during the school day, they should go to sick bay. They must **not** phone or text their parents/caregivers themselves.

Allum Street Traffic

A big thanks to parents who are following the road rules and our repeated requests for caution on the roads during drop-off and pick-up times. We have noticed that mornings are a lot better with very few parents now making dangerous driving decisions and putting our students at risk.

The afternoon pick-up window is still a cause of concern for us however, with the main dangers being:

- Parents double-parking alongside the big tree to allow children out of, or into, their car – this blocks the flow of traffic down Allum Street and creates blind spots for other vehicles.
- Parents double-parking alongside other cars parked within the parking bays to allow children into their car – this blocks the flow of traffic down Allum Street and creates blind spots for other vehicles. It also puts students at risk of being hit by other moving vehicles.



- Parents parking on the yellow lines outside the staff carpark to wait for their children and/or allow children out of, or into, their car – this causes chaos in a number of ways and we will be having random visits from parking wardens to ticket this activity going forward. Yellow lines = no parking, it is very simple.



- Parents performing u-turns outside the school after picking up or picking up their children blocks the road, disrupts traffic flow in both directions, creates blind spots, puts our students and other motorists vehicles in danger and is generally inconsiderate to others and our repeated requests to help keep traffic flowing as freely as possible. Instead of u-turning, please proceed further down Allum Street and exit via another road or turn around where it is safe to do so.



- Parents running, or sending/calling, their children across the road instead of using the crossings. There is a Kea Crossing less than 50m down Allum Street and Traffic Light Crossing less than 50m up Allum Street from this point. Please use the crossings.



BYOD Programme

ALL students in Years 5-8 will need to bring their own device to school each day. Students in Year 4 are encouraged to bring their own device if they have one, but it is not compulsory at this year level.

More About our St Thomas's BYOD Programme

Our programme is flexible. Any internet capable device, be it a laptop or a Chromebook will be a huge advantage for your child. iPads/tablets can also be used, but we find these are difficult for writing and lack some of the features that make them suitable for all school related tasks.

The use of BYOD devices in class gradually increases from Year 4 to Year 8. By Year 7&8 our students are predominantly learning using devices so that they are well prepared for their college transition. A reminder that ALL students in Years 5-8 will need a device to participate in our BYOD programme.

When selecting a device to provide your child, there are several things to take into consideration:

- Any device will be great - an old family laptop, a Chromebook, or even a high-end convertible laptop like a Microsoft Surface Pro or similar. Let your budget dictate which option will work best for you. Keep in mind that technology changes at such a rapid rate that most devices are now becoming outdated after 3-4 years.
- Look into the device recommended by the college you intend to send your child to. If your child is in Years 6, 7 or 8 we suggest you make sure their device meets the needs of school they will next attend.
- St Thomas's School is dual platform. This means that we utilise both Office 365 and Google Suite. A Chromebook will only enable your child to use the web versions of both software types. This won't limit your child in any way, but it will mean that they can't work 'offline' for later syncing. A full laptop will give them the desktop functionality of Office 365 which means they can work offline and they can access more features that aren't contained in the web versions.
- Our Microsoft for Education licencing agreement means that all students have access to a free Office 365 account during their time at St Thomas's School. They can download Microsoft 365 onto their own device and use desktop versions of all the office software. This can save you quite a bit of money on purchasing software. Please note that 365 cannot be downloaded onto Chromebooks. Also note, that the 365 licence is for STS Students, using STS student email addresses only.
- The staff at retail stores are fantastic at recommending devices that will suit your budget and the purpose of BYOD. Take your time and use their knowledge to guide you in a direction that you are comfortable with.

School Donation

St Thomas's School donation in 2025 is \$495 per student.

Please note that a donation tax credit can be obtained from IRD for your donation.

Donations can be paid via our [online shop](#).

The St Thomas's School community has high aspirations for the school and its students. The St Thomas's School Board recognises this and commits to providing significantly more than the basics which the government funds. The Board's main source of local funding is the school donation. Your donation is critically important to the school and will make a significant difference to your child's education at St Thomas's School.

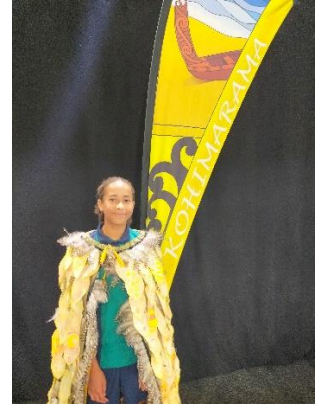
We sincerely appreciate your support.

2025 House Captains

Kia ora! The 2025 House Captains welcome you back to a new year of learning and fun! We are all very excited to have this opportunity to make our school an extra positive and fun place! It is our goal to make you eager to come to school every day with a smile on your face. We are going to do this by introducing you to more upcoming events and workshops throughout the year.

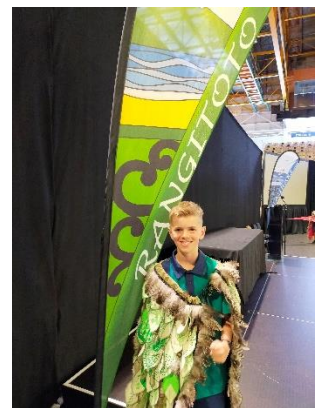
Makayla Sillik- Kohimarama House Captain

Kia ora everyone, My name is Makayla and I am thrilled to be the Kohimarama House Captain for this year! I've been at this school since year four. Whether you started in Year 0 or this is your first year at STS, I want you to be able to get the most out of the St Thomas experience. I know that I love it here and I'm grateful for all of the opportunities I've had and I'm looking forward to seeing what each and every one of you do with your time here. So if you see me around campus pull me aside and talk to me about what would make your St Thomas experience better. I'm eager to see all of the new and old faces around the school and I hope to see everyone participating in all of the sports and activities the school will be hosting. So, together let's make this year the best that it can be!



Tom Richardson - Rangitoto House Captain

Kia ora, my name is Tom and I am proud to be the 2025 Rangitoto House Captain. I have been at this wonderful school since Year 1 and I remember always looking up to the House Captains and seeing them doing positive things for their houses and school. I really want to encourage people to have pride in their respective houses. So I really hope I can do that this year. I have learnt a lot at St Thomas's and I hope you can too.



Laith Al-Jubbawey - Pohutukawa House Captain

Kia Ora, I'm Laith. I am excited to help out and give back to this wonderful school. My parents came here from Iraq and I started at this school in Year 1. I always looked up to the Year 8 students as awesome role models, who left a positive energy around the school as they moved into a new exciting chapter of their lives. Now, I get to show younger students that whatever they put their mind to, they can do. I am looking forward to giving back to the school and helping younger students turning their weaknesses into strengths. Most of the time I will be playing football either on the astroturf or on the field so if you see me feel free to say hi! And remember... Pohutukawa is the best!



Phoebe Taylor - Hauraki House Captain

Kia Ora, I'm Phoebe and I am very excited to be the Hauraki House Captain for 2025. I have loved my time at St Thomas's, and I am looking forward to organising fun events for the school and helping create a positive learning environment for all students. If you see me around the school please say hi, I look forward to meeting you all this year. It is an exciting opportunity and I am looking forward to all 2025 has in store for us.

Ngā mihi



Gate Times

During the term break we had electricians working on our pedestrian entrance gate, installing automatic openers. If you are on the school grounds after school hours it is really important that you leave before 3.30pm on school days and in the weekends by 7.30pm daylight saving time and by 5.30pm standard time. These gates will close automatically. If you are locked in then phone the matrix Security on 09 5791567 to unlock the gates. This will take time and you will be unable to leave until they respond.

Please ensure that your children do not climb on the gates, as if they are on the gates and the gates open or close automatically, they will fall off.

Thank you to all our parents for helping to build resilience in our young students by saying goodbye to them outside the gate and letting them walk into school on their own.

For a large school, we have only a very small road frontage area available for drop-offs and pick-ups. To ensure the health and safety of all our students, we rely on the support of our community to adhere to the following:

- Our school gates open at 8.15am. Students should not arrive at school before this time. Gates are locked again at 8.55am. Any student arriving after this time must sign in as late at the office before heading to their classroom.
- Our school gates open at 2.55pm and parents may come on site to collect their children from school if they wish. Gates are locked again at 3.30pm to allow our teachers uninterrupted time to meet and prepare for the following day's teaching and learning. Please note: outside of school hours, staff are not available to supervise students on the playground or provide first aid. For this reason, we request that all parents and students leave the site by 3.30pm when the gates close.
- Students should be collected promptly from school after 3pm. We have a large number of students who wait, unsupervised, for parents to collect them from outside our school office. This is a health and safety risk and we request that parents minimise this waiting time as much as possible.

Passing of Formal Staff Member

In January of this year, staff bid farewell to one of our past staff members, Caroline Glover, who served our school for over 10 years. Caroline was a valued friend to many of our staff and we will miss her positive attitude which was an inspiration to many.



Cycling

If there are any Yr 7&8 cyclists who may be interested in forming a team to do the Team Time Trial race series and other road events, please see [this link](#) for information about the Points Race event. There is more information on the College Sport website. There are other events that Cycling New Zealand Schools run. Please see [this link](#).

Public Notices

Please see our website for details about:

Clubs and activities:

<https://www.stthomas.school.nz/clubs-and-activities/>



PTA News

Issue #37 2025

ST THOMAS'S SCHOOL FAMILY PICNIC

Come and join us on the school field for an afternoon of fun and frivolity!
You can BYO food & drinks or buy from the following stalls:

Eftpos available for:

- Mr. Whippy
- Akemi Goyza (vegan options available)
- Karaage Boy (vegan options available)

Cash sales only for:

- Sausage Sizzle (Gluten free without bread)
- Whole Pizzas (gluten free cheese available)
- Chips, lollies & drinks



There are also cash sales for loads of great rides; Bouncy Inflatables, Laughing Clowns and Sammy the Trackless Train and a host of games and activities for the kids to enjoy.

We are always after parent helpers, so if you can spare some time to help at our cash stalls, contact the PTA stthomasschoolpta@gmail.com
We look forward to seeing you there!

WATCH OUT FOR UPCOMING EVENTS IN TERM 1

School Picnic – Friday 21st February on the school field, 4.30pm-7pm

Ice block Sales – Every Friday under the tree by the office. 2.50pm-3.15pm

REMINDERS

Second Hand Uniforms - Donate your preloved uniform for us to on-sell.
Please drop off at the school office during school hours.



Why not consider joining the PTA in 2025? It's fun, rewarding and most of all, benefits the school and our Tamariki.
Contact us on the email below or come along to our next monthly meeting to find out what we do. Next PTA (AGM) meeting **Wednesday 19th March, in the school Staffroom.**

We encourage you to contact us with your thoughts & suggestions any time at stthomasschoolpta@gmail.com and don't forget to Like us on Facebook!



Facebook/StThomasSchoolPTA



Contact: Ian Palmquist
Phone: 021 0803 3666
Email: stthomas@kellyclub.co.nz
Website: kellyclub.co.nz/st-thomas



KELLY CLUB ST THOMAS'S UPDATE

What's been happening...

It has been a great first week back at Kelly Club. We have already done so much, including rippa rugby, clay diyas and paper sheep. The best part of the week was all of our students sharing about their holidays and new classes.



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 Rated 4.44 stars out of 5 by our parents in our 2023 national survey.
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What's happening next week!

		THEME: Staff Choice				Weekly Activities Plan Kelly Club St. Thomas's	
		Term 1 Week 3, 17th February 2025					
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday		
	Free Point & Structured Free Time	Lego Comp & Structured Free Time	Forts & Structured Free Time	Word games & Structured Free Time	Cupcakes & Structured Free Time		
	Game: Flinch	Game: Red Light, Green Light	Game: Word Island	Game: Black Magic	Game: Kid's Choice		
	Sign In & Free Time	Sign In & Free Time	Sign In & Free Time	Sign In & Free Time	Sign In & Free Time		
	Intro & Afternoon Tea Fairy Bread & Fruit	Intro & Afternoon Tea Sammies & Fruit	Intro & Afternoon Tea Pizza & Fruit	Intro & Afternoon Tea Sammies & Fruit	Intro & Afternoon Tea Cupcakes & Fruit		
	Game: Heads down, Thumbs up	Game: Captain's coming	Game: Silent ball	Game: Flinch	Game: Simon Says		
	GAME Infinity Tag	DISCOVERY Slime	SPORT Football	COOKING Fruit Cups	CRAFT Clay Animals		
SENIORS 3:45 - 4:30 pm							
	SPORT Football	CRAFT Clay Animals	GAME Infinity Tag	COOKING Fruit Cups	DISCOVERY Slime		
JUNIORS 3:45 - 4:30 pm							
	Tidy Up	Tidy Up	Tidy Up	Tidy Up	Tidy Up		
	Playground	Playground	Playground	Playground	Playground		
	Snack Time Oreos	Snack Time Muesli Bars	Snack Time Popcorn	Snack Time Cooking	Snack Time Crackers		
	Homework & Quiet Time	Homework & Quiet Time	Homework & Quiet Time	Homework & Quiet Time	Homework & Quiet Time		
	5:45 - 6:00 pm	5:45 - 6:00 pm	5:45 - 6:00 pm	5:45 - 6:00 pm	5:45 - 6:00 pm		

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BOOK ONLINE NOW AT www.kellyclub.co.nz