

St Joseph's Catholic School



“Excellent Education befitting our Catholic Character”

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Welcome back to our 2024 school year!

1 February 2024

To our St Joseph's School Whānau,

Welcome back to St Joseph's Catholic School and our new school year.

Our first day of school began with a Powhiri for new students and their whānau. It was lovely to see everyone back at school and ready to learn!

This year is a new start for us. After 100 years we are beginning again as a primary Year 0 - 6 school. Last year, we farewelled our last Year 7 & 8 students and this year our Year 6 students will have the chance to shine as the eldest tamariki in our kura. How exciting is that! St Joseph's School is a school of excellence and that is not going to change.

Our school's Vision Statement promotes that we be in right relationship with self - ahau, with God - Te Atua, with others - te tangata and with creation - te whenua. Each new day we want our tamariki to be happy, and to be hopeful, to seize new opportunities, to take new chances, to enjoy new experiences, and to build new dreams. Each new day we want our children to see and be given opportunities to grow as individuals; as a teacher and learner, as a friend, as a community member, and as a follower of Jesus.

We are excited about the prospect of growing our students into the young adults they will become and guiding our youngest in their education within our nurturing Catholic school environment. Things may be a little different as we reset but we are open to the possibilities and challenges ahead. St Joseph's offers so many opportunities that I hope our new families will embrace them and become committed and involved for the good of our school community and environment.

Our School Values. Aroha - to Love, Ako -to Learn, Arahi - to Lead are forefront in our minds as we plan all learning opportunities and interact with each other. It is our aim that all St Joseph's School tamariki can fulfil their call to let their light shine as living witnesses to the Gospel values. From this, our school vision can become real.

It is lovely to see our school whanau back together again. I am excited to continue to support your child's learning journey and celebrate the achievements that lie ahead. Each of our tamariki is unique, made in the image and likeness of God. Their unique talents, perspectives, and experiences will undoubtedly contribute to the vibrant tapestry of our school.

To our adults, parents, guardians, teachers and friends, thank you for your contribution and dedication to our school community. Working together we will create a supportive and enriching environment that will enable our tamariki to thrive. We look forward to seeing you become involved in our school community.

A school is only as good as the people in it and I want to acknowledge our staff, teachers, teacher aides and support staff. Each of you is essential to the success of our school and I thank you for your passion and dedication to the education and success of our youngsters. Our staff has prepared well for the beginning of our school year. We had a lot of changes of classrooms spreading us out over the school campus and so our staff have been busy setting up their new spaces to be welcoming and attractive for our tamariki today. They also

participated in a professional development day earlier this week and I thank them for their commitment to our school.

This year our school newsletters will come out in Weeks 3, 6 and 9 each term but there may be supplementary notices (like this one) from time to time. Please download the Skool Loop app so you get notifications promptly. Next week you will receive the term newsletters from your child's roopu which should give you most of the information you will need to know for now. The term's key dates will also be sent to you. We do try to keep our website up to date but we are working through some changes on it at the moment.

Next Monday 5th February, school is open for learning but closed on Tuesday 6th February for Waitangi Day. Every year we need to be open for the required number of days set by the MOE. This affects which days we stay open. In Term 1 we have eleven school weeks but four of them are shortened by observed holidays. This year, Easter being during the term has made a real difference. The upside is that the April holidays will be two full weeks without Easter. The downside is the school year will finish closer to Christmas.

I wish to encourage you to drop your children off at school by 8:30 am. **Our school day begins at 8:45 am** and the children must be already in class to begin their day with their roopu in prayer; this is an essential part of our life as a Catholic school. **The school day finishes at 2:45 pm** and children must be collected by 3:00 pm.

This year our 2024 Cultural Focus is Kaitiātanga / Stewardship and this term our learning inquiry focus is Hospitality / Manaakitanga. "*When I was a stranger, you welcomed me.*" (Mt.25:35) Jesus Christ teaches that whenever we welcome one of the least of our sisters and brothers, we welcome Christ himself. So to our students returning to school. Nau mai hoki mai. Welcome back. And to our new students, a special and heartfelt welcome to our school family! We are excited to get to know every one of you and know you will feel valued here. Nau mai ki te kainga. Welcome home!

We look forward to a wonderful school year filled with learning, laughter, and unforgettable memories.

Nga manaakitanga ki a koe me to whanau.
Blessings to you and your family.

Ursula Hall
Tumuaki / Principal