

St John's School Newsletter

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Principal's Page:

Otago Anniversary Day

School is closed on **Monday 20th March** for Otago Anniversary Day.

Otago Swimming Sports

Congratulations to the following children who qualified with their swimming times, for the Otago Swimming Sports, being held in Dunedin on **Saturday 25th March**. These children are racing at this meet: Maia Macdonald, Maggie Dowling, Jock Duncan for freestyle. Hannah Cormack and Briar Duncan for freestyle and backstroke, and Briar for breaststroke. Good luck children.

Footsteps Dance Tutor

Last year we had a week of lessons with a Footsteps dance tutor. We all loved it. Once again we have a tutor coming back for the week of **3 – 7 April**, to work with groups for a session every afternoon of that week. The PTA and BOT have agreed to fund most of the cost of this, but we would like each child to contribute \$10 towards the cost. If you have 3 or 4 children, the cost remains \$20 per family. This money needs to be brought to school by **Thursday 30th March**.

Thank you.

Caritas Visitor

On **Monday 3rd April**, we have a visitor from Caritas (Catholic Aid Organisation) coming to talk to us about their work around the world, but particularly with our Pacific neighbours. In Focus Time we have been learning about how climate change and rising sea levels are affecting some Pacific Islands, particularly Kiribati, where the Ulisala family come from.

Life Education Trust Mobile Classroom Visit

This will be visiting our school on **Monday 10th April**. This year our lessons will be focussing on:

- Junior What is a friend?/Being a great friend
- Middle What does it take to be part of a team?/What does it take to be a good leader?
- Senior How do we make decisions?/What are the impact of decisions we make?

Kapahaka Festival

In our Maori sessions with Whaea Mary-Anne, and our Friday afternoon singing sessions we are all practising 2 items for the biannual Central Otago Kapahaka Festival, which is to be held in Alexandra on **Sunday afternoon 9th April**. There will also be 4 massed items, with all schools participating in these.

This year we would like as many children as possible from our school there, as this helps with confidence and volume. So, if possible, please keep this afternoon free. Nearer the time we will be asking for confirmation of children able to come and parents to help with transport. Thank you.

Parent Information Evening on Reading and Writing (Literacy)

On **Wednesday 12 April at 7p.m**, we are going to hold a Parent Information Evening on reading and writing (Literacy). Staff will talk about reading, writing and spelling programmes in our school and ways parents can support your children at home in these curriculum areas.

End of Term

Believe it or not the end of the term is coming up!

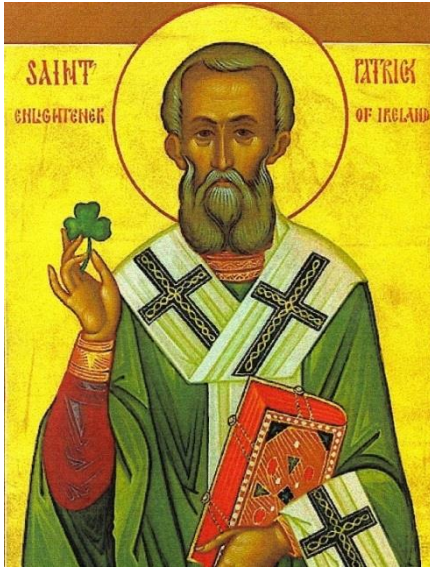
School finishes for Term 1 on **Thursday 13th April (start of Easter)** and **Term 2 starts on Monday 1st May**.

Trail Ride photos

At the recent trailride event, Rina Sjardin-Thompson took many great photos. Rina is selling these photos via Facebook, and she has kindly offered to donate all proceeds from the photos sold to the PTA to help with their fundraising. This is really generous, and we appreciate this support from her.

Special Character Clipboard:

St Patrick's Feast Day– March 17



St. Patrick of [Ireland](#) is one of the world's most popular saints. Patrick was born around 385 in Scotland, probably Kilpatrick. As a boy of fourteen or so, he was captured during a raiding party and taken to [Ireland](#) as a slave to herd and tend sheep. [Ireland](#) at this [time](#) was a land of Druids and pagans. During his captivity, he turned to [God](#) in prayer.

Patrick's captivity lasted until he was twenty, when he escaped after having a dream from [God](#) in which he was told to leave [Ireland](#) by going to the coast. There he found some sailors who took him back to Britain, where he reunited with his family. He had another dream in which the people of [Ireland](#) were calling out to him. He began his studies for the priesthood. Later, Patrick was ordained a bishop, and was sent to take the Gospel to Ireland. He arrived in [Ireland](#) March 25, 433, and began preaching the Gospel throughout Ireland, converting many. He and his disciples preached and converted thousands and began building churches all over the country.

Why a shamrock? Patrick used the shamrock to explain the Trinity, and has been associated with him and the Irish since that time.

Junior Class News:

We recently wrote some stories about some very important people – Our Mums!

Here are some:

My Mum is a worker at the hospital. She likes to bake pancakes. They are delicious. I love her.

By Katelyn Hughes

My Mum is a teacher. She is good at teaching. I love her. She loves me. Mum takes me in the car to school.

By Mac Dowling

My Mum is a worker at Kindy. I like her. She always sings me a song at bedtime. Mum makes cakes and muffins and biscuits.

By Marley Weir

My Mum teaches at school and this year we are learning about bees. In Mum's spare time Mum tries to get some computer work done.

By Sam Elworthy

My Mum cleans houses. She watches T.V. I love Mum.

By Niko Ullisala

Middle Class News:

We have been busy over the past couple of weeks doing Progress Achievement Testing in Punctuation and Grammar, and Listening. These standardised tests are used to track student achievement over time, as well as inform us of the kinds of teaching materials, methods and programmes that are most suitable for our students.



The children have been very positive in their attitude and effort during this time of testing, and they will be bringing their results home next week, to share with their parents.



Our **Bees! Bees! Bees!** research questions will also be coming home soon, so that parents and families can help the students extend their understanding of these fascinating creatures. Each child has decided on an area of interest that they would like to investigate and the students will be using a range of research skills and then their own choice of presentation style to show their learning to their peers.

Senior Class News:



Right now is a good time to make a choice!

The **Central Otago triathlon** is being held next Thursday and the competing children are excited. I wish them all the best of luck. They have committed to try their best, and to have a positive attitude. This is a great experience for the kids, and although they will be nervous – their sense of achievement at the end will be satisfying.

A few guidelines for the day are...

1. Take plenty of food and water.
2. Wear and take clothing appropriate for cold weather, and hot weather (school sports top and fleece top, your own shorts / bikeshorts, trackpants, togs / towel for swimmers, bike and helmet for cyclists, sneakers for runners).
3. Be there in good time.
4. Parents of those children getting a ride with someone else, please phone the driver to find out where and what time you are to meet them.

Most children are in a good routine with **homework** – thank you parents for making this happen. Earlier this week I spoke with a group of children about what they would like in terms of help at home with reading. Some of their comments are below...

- Help me sound out new words, and help me find out what they mean
- Ask me questions about what I am reading
- Listen carefully to me, and encourage and praise me
- Read to me sometimes, we could take turns.

There has been some dishonesty around homework with children saying they had read something, and they haven't. Please support your child to be honest, and to honestly complete their homework. This is not for my benefit or yours, it's to support their learning and to grow their skills.

In relation to a reading activity that a group did last week, we have been investigating how much sleep we have been getting. On the whole the children are doing ok, but sleep is so important to allow for bright, alert and positive children – ready to face my daily school challenges! The recommended amount of sleep for a child in this class is 9-11 hours, and out of interest 7-9 hours for adults.

Statistics NZ is running a **Census at Schools** activity this year, which we will complete next term. They send me little emails of information, and the latest one caught my interest. It was based around how much screen time children have outside of school hours (TV, Computer, phone, laptop). It made me think about our habits at my own home!

Students were asked if, on a school day, there was a limit on the amount of screen time they had at home. Just 16% of high-school students and 37% of primary school students reported a limit. For those with limits, primary schoolers were allowed a median of an hour (the median is the middle amount in the range reported) and secondary students two hours.

Students were asked how often their screen time was supervised - with supervised meaning a parent or caregiver was watching or was in the same room as the child. Four in 10 primary schoolers said "a little," and two in 10 "usually." More than half of high school students said they were never supervised, with a further three in 10 saying they were supervised "a little."

These are the Ministry of Education guidelines for children and young people (5–18 years)

Children and young people should:

- Throughout each day, do 60 minutes or more of moderate to vigorous physical activity
- Be active in as many ways as possible, for example, through play, cultural activities, dance, sport, recreation, jobs and going from place to place
- Be active with friends and whānau, at home, school and in their communities
- Spend less than 2 hours a day (out of school hours) in front of the television, computers, and game consoles.

Interesting information!

Our 'Girls Smash' cricketers have finished their games in Alex, and they loved it. Thank you again to my travelling parents, you have made this happen for the girls as you got them there every week – I know they entertained you with their giggles, cartwheels and general high spirits 😊. We now have Suzie Bates coming to visit next Tuesday, as part of an Olympic ambassador programme – lucky us! The children might like to bring a bat/teeshirt or such like along to be signed by her.

Thank you

Mrs Duncan 😊

Writing is fun, and Ashleigh has been practicing her writing at home. She brought it to school, and Mrs Dowling typed it up and they worked on making some words pop out more. Here is the finished product – well done Ashleigh.

Born Wild

I was born in the High Country, wild and free.

I had no boundaries at all. I was as happy as a frisky calf.

One day my herd and I sensed something was not right. Then a loud noisy black object flew over the hill. We raced off. I was trying to lead my herd away from the noise, but it was no good. It was right behind us and forced us over another hill. Then ahead of me, I could see other horses and foals but it was too late.

We were behind the fence too. There were other horses and foals coming after us. Then the loud noise stopped. I looked around me. Horses were biting each other in panic. Then I was separated from my herd.

I was angry.

We were put into a loud, noisy box on wheels and then I left the only home I had ever known, without my herd.

Finally the noise stopped. We got off, but we were in behind a fence again.

Then I tried to escape, but it was no good.

Then a girl approached me. I let her touch me, and then she got on my back. It felt weird but I let her ride me.

Four months went by. I was jumping and in Shows. I became famous because I was once a wild Stallion running free and now I am the World's Best Jumper.

I liked my new life.



By Ashleigh

Board of Trustees

*At our recent Board of Trustees meeting a curriculum report on Oral Language was presented to the Board.

*Board member, Joe Ferdinands, was congratulated on recently being appointed as the new Principal of Maniototo Area School.

* This month the Board are looking at, and reviewing, the policy "Recognition of Cultural Diversity".

If you are interested in reading and reviewing this, you can

1. Log onto www.schooldocs.co.nz
2. Click Search for your school.
3. Start typing the school name and then select it from the dropdown list.
4. Enter the community username and password:
sjr sjr
5. Put the name of the policy in the search section and it should come up for you to read.
6. Select your role (board member, staff member or parent/caregiver) from the drop-down list.
7. Enter you name (optional)
8. Submit your ratings and comments.

Notices and Dates:

Week 8	Monday 20 th March	Otago Anniversary Day
	Tuesday 21 st March	PTA Meeting, 7.30pm at school
	Saturday 25 th March	Otago Swimming Champs
Week 10	Mon 3 rd -Fri 7 th April	Footsteps Dance Week
	Monday 3 rd April	Caritas Visitor
	Sunday 9 th April	Kapahaka Festival
Week 11	Monday 10 th April	Life Education Visit
	Wednesday 12 th April	Parent Information Evening
	Thursday 13 th April	Last day of Term 1

