



6 August 2021

School Enrolment 2022

As noted in our February newsletter, St Thomas's School had a roll of over 800 students in 2018 with the roll forecast to grow to approximately 900 in the coming years. This roll growth was expected to come from new green field development; especially the site next to Selwyn College which had a proposed 150 house development, a development on St Johns Road and another at Donnelly St which had an 80 house development. However, Ryman Healthcare are building on the Selwyn land, Summerset are building a retirement home on St John's Road and the Ministry of Education have decided that as the Donnelly St development has access towards Stonefields School, students from those houses will be dual zoned for Stonefields School and St Thomas's School.

Staffing allocation and funding from the Ministry of Education to operate a school is based on the school roll. We believe that the 'sweet spot' for St Thomas's School roll would be around 750. This number provides the school with adequate staffing and funding which allows us to have small classes and provide extras such as reading support teachers, English language support teachers and specialists such as sports coordinators, occupational therapists, and a school counsellor. It also provides funding to allow us to have adequate teacher aide numbers, library, and ancillary staffing.

In 2020, we accepted a small group of Out of Zone students and will continue to do so going forward with the aim of maintaining our roll over 700. Over the coming term we will advertise for out of zone enrolments in our local paper and install signage around the school to notify the community of our enrolment intentions. If you have out of zone friends who wish to have their child attend St Thomas's School, then please have them contact the front office staff and we will include their names on our ballot system.

If you have friends or neighbours who are in zone with young children due to start school soon, please have them contact the front office for an in-zone enrolment pack asap. This will be helpful for planning our staffing.



Congratulations to Amalya Ponna-Handi for her success at the NZ National Karate Tournament.

Upcoming Events

August

- 11-12 Student Led Learning Conferences (from 3.15pm)
- 13 Junior Assembly – M2 & M3 Host (9.45am – 10.30am)
- Senior Assembly – M4 Host (11.45am – 12.30pm)
- 16 School Cross Country (1.30pm) Y3-8
- 17 Board of Trustees Meeting (6.30pm in Staffroom)
- 18 School Cross Country (Rain Date)
- 19 Y2 Trip to Mangere Mountain
- 20 Y2 Trip to Mangere Mountain
- 23 Bay Suburbs & Eastern Zone Cross Country
- 26 Y5&6 Speech Competition (11.00am)
- House Mufti Day
- Y7&8 Mathex (6.30pm)
- 27 Formal Assembly (9.45am – 10.30am)
- Kids Lit Quiz
- 30 Eastern Zone Girls Basketball

September

- 1 PTA Meeting (7.00pm in the Staffroom)
- Y7&8 Speech Finals (11.00am)
- 3 Eastern Zone Boys Basketball
- Junior Assembly – J7 Host (9.45am – 10.30am)
- Senior Assembly – S5/S6 Host (11.45am – 12.30pm)
- 7 Y5 Kepa Bush Trip
- 9 M3 Trip to Corbans Estate Art Centre
- 10 M2 Trip to Corbans Estate Art Centre
- 16 Bay Suburbs Boys Basketball
- 17 Bay Suburbs Girls Basketball
- PTA Disco (5.00pm start)
- 18 PTA Quiz Night
- 20-24 Year 8 Camp

Safety On the Way To and From School.

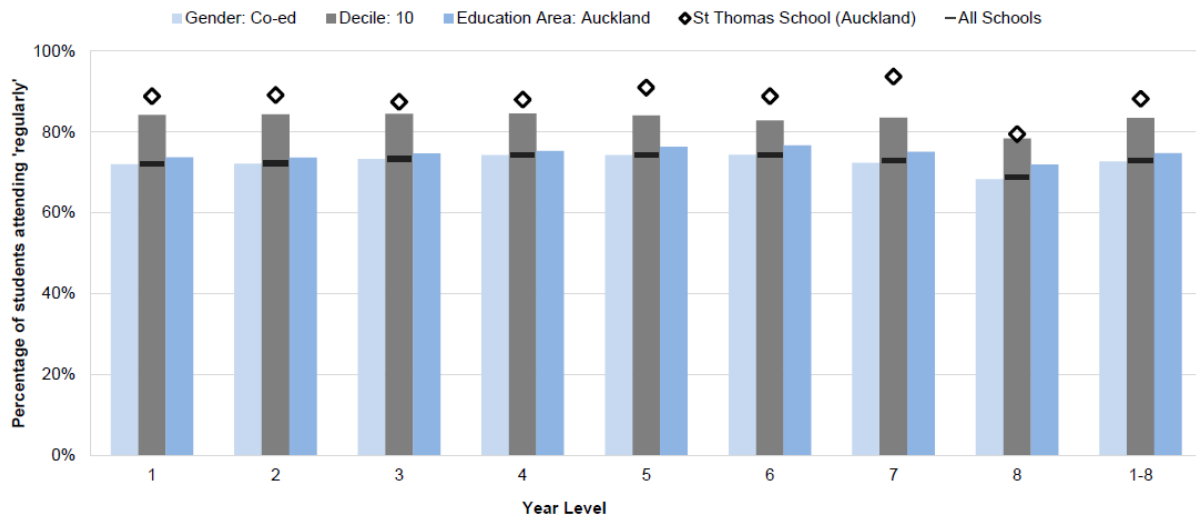
Quite a few of our students are riding bicycles or scooters to school. It is a legal requirement for cyclists to wear a helmet while riding a bicycle and we enforce this as a school to ensure our students stay safe. Students riding scooters are not legally required to wear helmets but are vulnerable to skull fractures, concussion and traumatic brain injury if they fall off and hit their head. We ask parents to discuss this with their child and ensure they wear helmets while scootering to and from school to prevent injury.

Attendance at School

Attached is a graph of attendance which shows the level of attendance of St Thomas's students for Term 1 and compares us to other similar schools. It is reassuring to see that our attendance levels are well above other similar type schools in Auckland. Attendance research shows that high student attendance in a school indicates a parent community who are committed to education, that students feel safe with their peers, do not feel bullied, have strong relationships with their teachers and feel valued. As would be expected, high attendance levels are also closely linked with achievement and students who attend regularly in primary school stay in the education system longer. So well done to our parents, students and teachers for creating a welcoming safe learning environment where students are happy to attend.

'Regular' attendance, by Year level (Term 1, 2021)

Comparing the proportion of students with 'regular' attendance at your school with national and like-school benchmarks.



The percentage of Year 7 students (your highest-attending group) attending regularly was greater in your school than in all comparison groups.

* Note: Comparison by school type is not provided in this chart because school types are typically related to Year levels of students attending.

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 in one the following ways:

- Through our Hero App (preferred)
- By telephone and leave a message 09 5283938 select option 1
- Text message to 0277580542

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.

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

Please note that while we may try several alternative phone numbers to contact a parent/caregiver, if calls are not answered, where possible we will leave a voice message. If your phone numbers change, whether it is a work, home or mobile number, can you please advise the office.

Should you wish to collect your child early from school, please come to the office and sign your child out. Please note: 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.

Eastern Zone Netball Tournament

On the 5th of August the Year 7 and 8 boys and girls went to the Auckland Netball Centre. The Year 8 girls A team started off by playing Panmure, they had a brilliant game winning 16-2. In our second game we played Bailey Rd and displayed a great comeback after the half time score being 3-5 and the full-time score being 8-4. After only losing 1 out of 4 games we were put into the semi-finals against Baradene. Baradene was a tough opponent who we unfortunately lost to. The next game we were playing off for 3rd and 4th against Glendowie, we ended up coming 4th. The Year eight girls B team came 5th, the Year 8 boys came 5th, the Year 7 girls came 4th. Overall, we all had a great day.

By Zara and Ellen



Cross-Country Costume Carnival 2021

We were lucky enough to miss the rain clouds for what turned out to be a colourful and creative Costume Carnival to kick off cross-country training for 2021. From portable showers, Ben & Jerry ice-cream and pizza trucks to giant giraffes, rainbows, rubric cubes, Years 3-8 ventured out of school to complete one lap of our cross-country course. In support of our Olympians, Year 6s Amalya, Amelie and Melody created giant cardboard Olympic rings and managed to make it around the entire course continuously linked, despite a few technical difficulties. "The rings kept falling backwards so we worked together and held them upright to the end." Champions!

But the action didn't stop there, while the older students were manoeuvring around the course, our lovely and equally creative Years 0-2 completed their own mini fun run around the junior area. Much fun was had by the children (and teachers) alike!

Here's what some of the children had to say about our 2021 Costume Carnival:

"I enjoyed seeing the variety of everyone's costumes; my favourite was the pizza truck, she even had real pizza inside her costume!" *Zak Suppiah, Year 6*

"All I could hear was 'shower!' and 'Can I have a shower!' I got stuck in 4 trees but it was the best cross country ever." *Ben Pitcaithly, Year 5 (the shower)*

"I enjoyed going around the course with my friends and seeing the cool costumes." *Amber Kelly, Year 6*

"It was really fun, like a mufti day with a reason to dress up. The course was really challenging." *Thea Barlow, Year 5*

"It was fun running with your friends and dressing up." *Amelia Clayton, Year 5*

"I liked seeing people's funny costumes." *Leura Harris, Year 5*

"There were obstacles on the course and we even got a certificate if the Year 8's on course liked your costume." *Ruby Johnson, Year 6*



"Changing Learning for a Changing World"



New Zealand National Karate Tournament

On Sunday the 11th of July, I participated in the New Zealand National Karate Tournament (NZ Cup 2021). It was a really exciting and interesting experience for me. I competed in 2 events: Kumite and Kata. Kumite is fighting and Kata is choreographed patterns of movements using karate moves. I won the silver medal for **Kumite - Female -10/11 years**. I never expected to do so well since it was my very first national tournament. When I was on my final fight, I was really close to winning because I only needed one more point to win. For Kata I did not get any medals, but I got 5th place out of the other girls in the event.

I am very grateful to my trainer Sensei Dhammika, the main instructor of Auckland Wadokai club and other Sensei's. Over 50 people from our club competed in many events and won 47 medals. Next year I hope to get medals in both Kata and Kumite by working really hard.

Amalya Ponna-Handi - Year 6



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ANNUAL QUIZ & AUCTION NIGHT!! 6.30pm SATURDAY 18TH SEPTEMBER

Are you our next Quiz champion?
Come & join us for a night of fun &
frivolity + we have some great
auction prizes up for grabs!

Dress theme is St Thomas's on Tour



Contact us now to secure a table, just \$500 for a table of 10.
Email stthomasschoolpta@gmail.com

Food is included in your ticket, and Beverages will be
available for purchase on the night.

We would also love to hear from you if you have a service
or a product donation that could go toward the Auction
prizes on the night.

Please email us at stthomasschoolpta@gmail.com if you
can help in any way. It is only through the generosity of our
school community that we can make this event happen and
raise precious funds for our school.

Our next PTA meeting is **Weds 1st September** from 7pm,
upstairs in the School Staffroom. All welcome! We'd love
to have more members – many hands make light work!



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

After-School Art Classes in St Thomas's School!

Monday: 3-5pm, ages 8-12

Wednesday: 3-5pm, ages 6-10

Thursday: 3-5pm, ages 8-12

This term, our focus is on building and expanding our drawing skills! We will be working on challenging and exciting subjects such as the human face and animals in different poses. The second half of the term will be devoted to painting a beautiful and creative underwater world, where your imagination can run wild creating exciting sea creatures.

For more information or to enrol, please contact Yulia on 021308207, or email artyulianz@outlook.com

Have a look at our work on our website: <https://www.aquarelartclasses.com>