



Message from the Principal

Welcome back to St Thomas's School for the 2023 year! An especially warm welcome goes out to all our new students and their whānau. It has been great to see everyone settling in and making new connections within our community.

On behalf of all our staff I would like to thank you for your patience and understanding with the messy start to Term 1 following on from the Auckland flood response last week. We are very grateful that our school property, our local area and our community families have been minimally affected by the floods.

We have a lot to look forward to over the coming term with plenty of fun learning activities, sports and field trips for our students to participate in.

Our PTA will be hosting our annual School Picnic in Week 4 which is a great opportunity for our families to meet up and socialise together. Assemblies are also re-starting this year with shared morning teas and lunches following for classes who have hosted. We are excited to see these events back up and running after several years of interruption.

We encourage everyone in our community to join in and re-establish the strong social bonds we have always had as a community.

Looking forward to meeting you all throughout this term!

Claire Fromow
Acting Principal



Student Medications

If students require any medications to be administered during school time these medications must be held in the sickbay and administered by a first aid trained member of staff. Students should not have any medications in their school bags, apart from asthma inhalers if they are confident in using them.

All medications require parents to complete an Administering Medication in School form which can be picked up from the office. This is then sent to the sickbay along with the medication.



Upcoming Events

February

- 21 Board of Trustees meeting (6.30 p.m. staffroom)
- 22 Y7&8 Mountain to Sea trip
- 23 PTA School Picnic 4.00 p.m.
- 28 Y7 & Y8 immunisations
- 28 Y7 & Y8 Eastern Zones softball

March

- 02 Y5 & Y6 Bay Suburbs softball *
- 02 St Thomas swimming sports (Y5-Y8)
- 08 PTA AGM 7.00 p.m.
- 16 Y7&8 Mountain to Sea trip
- 16 Y7&Y8 Eastern Zones swimming
- 17 Bay Suburbs swimming
- 21 Board of Trustees meeting (6.30 p.m. staffroom)
- 23 Y7 & Y8 immunisations
- 23 PTA AGM (7pm in Staffroom)
- 31 Y7&Y8 Eastern Zones orienteering *

April

- 6 Last Day of Term 1**
- 24 Teacher Only Day

* date to be confirmed

2023 House Captains

Kia ora! The 2023 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. In the meantime, here's a bit of information about us. If you ever see us around please feel free to say hello! We hope you have a great time at our school!

Amalya Ponna Handi - Hauraki House Captain

Kia ora! I'm Amalya, the House Captain of Hauraki. I have been at St Thomas's since Year 0 and I am very ecstatic to be Hauraki's House Captain this year. I'm thrilled to help the school be a more fun and engaging environment which we will do by organising more events throughout the school year! You might have even seen me during the first week at the gates greeting everyone in the morning.



Asher Goh - Kohimarama House Captain

Kia ora, I'm Asher. I am the Kohimarama House Captain and proud to be a face of the school to guide and help out. I love seeing our school community at the front gate. I also like seeing kids solve problems and get around issues by themselves. During my time at school, I have had lots of fun going on school trips, extracurricular activities, and sports time with my class and friends! See you around the school!



Emma Stevens - Pohutukawa House Captain

Kia ora, I am Emma, your Pohutukawa House Captain for 2023! When I started St Thomas's in Year 0, I would always look up to the House Captains and see their positive footprint that helped the school to be what it is today. A fun and positive environment to learn, grow and thrive. I am excited to follow in the footsteps of the House Captains before me so I can help you all have a fun and rewarding school experience this year! I am looking forward to all the thrilling things us House Captains are planning for this year. I will be standing at the school gate once a week in the morning, so make sure to say hi to me!



Micah Chen - Rangitoto House Captain

Kia ora, my name is Micah and I am proud to be a St Thomas's School House Captain for Rangitoto, you might see me at the school gate in the morning. I started school in Year 1 and have been at this amazing school for 7 years. I've had lots of fun and learnt a lot and I am sure you guys will do as well! I am looking forward to helping you guys out and seeing your happy faces.



Online Learning Portals

Our Online Learning Portals for all students in Years 4-8 are live and ready for use. These portals will be useful to students and parents in several ways:

- **VISIBILITY** - termly learning and expectations are visible to all – students have a place to access their learning activities and parents can easily see what their children are working on.
- **CONTINGENCY** - should any student, class or year level experience disrupted learning for any length of time, transition to distance/remote learning will be seamless and learning can continue relatively uninterrupted.
- **AGENCY** – using the online learning portals, students can develop their agentic learning skills, taking more responsibility for their own learning and task completion.
- **EXTENSION** – online learning portals will enable teachers to provide more opportunities for learning extension to those students who need it.

The learning portals are used at each year level (4-8) in conjunction with Google Classroom – an interactive digital workspace where students can receive, complete and submit learning tasks as well as receiving instructions, information and feedback from their teachers. We encourage parents to ask their children to show them through their Google Classroom as the term progresses so that there is a shared understanding of how it works and so that parents can see their child's progress in learning.

Access to Portals

All portals can be accessed via our school website under the "Learning" tab on the main menu bar. The below links can also be used and bookmarked for easy future access. Please note that a google account will be required to view some of the activity links within the portals.

[Year 4 Online Learning Portal](#)

[Year 5 Online Learning Portal](#)

[Year 6 Online Learning Portal](#)

[Year 7&8 Online Learning Portal](#)



St Thomas's School Valentine's Day Fundraiser

Tuesday 14th February is Valentine's Day! Share the love by surprising your child with a Chocolate Heart and/or Valentine's Day sticker delivered to their classroom.

To take part in the action, place your order via the Online Shop ASAP. Chocolate Heart and Valentine's Day Sticker stocks are limited and orders will close off once they are sold out.

\$2 Anonymous Delivery Options Available:

- Foil wrapped chocolate heart delivered to your child in their classroom.
- Valentine's Day sticker delivered to your child in their classroom.
- Foil wrapped chocolate heart for your child's teacher.

\$3.50 Personalised Message Delivery Options Available:

- Foil wrapped chocolate heart delivered to your child in their classroom with a personalised message.
- Valentine's Day sticker delivered to your child in their classroom with a personalised message.
- Foil wrapped chocolate heart for your child's teacher with a personalised message.

All funds raised will go towards our planned new Basketball Court.



School Traffic

The start of the school year certainly brought chaos to the roads. We had a record number of students arriving late on the first day of school with frustrated parents complaining of nearly hour-long trips to school.

While Tamaki Drive flood remediation work takes place, we expect to see this level of traffic continue. 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.
- The area painted with bright yellow cross-hatching and 'No Parking' outside our staff carpark entrance should not be used for parking or drop-offs at any time. If no spaces are available in the pull-in bays, please continue down Allum Street to find the nearest safe (and legal) park.
- Between 8.30am and 9.00am our school bus bay must be kept clear. This is the pull-in parking bay on Allum Street directly outside our school hall. If parents have used this bay for parking and/or drop offs, we do not have a safe place for students to alight the bus.
- Our school gates open at 2.50pm 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.
- Please do not u-turn or pull into driveways to turn around in the immediate vicinity of the school. Instead, continue down Allum street and exit the area via another, safer, road option.
- Do not cross Allum Street with your children, or instruct your children to cross Allum Street at any point other than one of our two supervised pedestrian crossings.

St Thomas's School Uniform Policy

St Thomas's School has a compulsory school uniform. All students are required to wear the complete St Thomas's uniform. All compulsory uniform items have the St Thomas's logo and as such these items must be purchased through the online Uniform Shop. Details about this can be obtained from the office.

Uniform Guidelines

The Board of Trustees has the responsibility for setting the uniform code and making changes as required.

- All students are required to follow the school's uniform dress code.
- The Principal has the authority to sanction, in individual cases, variations from the code for genuine reasons such as medical issues or religious beliefs.
- In cases of hardship, families may pay off their uniforms over time. Such an arrangement will be made at the Principal's discretion.
- Students who do not comply with the code, at the Principal's discretion, become subject to the school's disciplinary procedures. Before doing so, the Principal shall consult with the parent or caregiver of non-complying students to establish whether there is a valid reason for non-compliance.
- In setting the uniform code, or making any changes to it, the Board of Trustees has regard for:
 - Equity, practicality, affordability, health and safety, quality, availability.
 - Consulting with the school community over any proposed changes to the code.
- The Principal is responsible for:
 - Approving individual departures from the code in exceptional circumstances
 - Ensuring compliance with the uniform code by students
 - Making recommendations to the Board of Trustees of where changes to the code may be required.

Uniform Dress Code

Year	Summer	Winter	All Students
0-4	Short Sleeve T-Shirt School Hat (compulsory for Terms 1 & 4)	Long Sleeve T-Shirt Polycotton Sweat or Polar Fleece	Culottes or Shorts Track Pants (optional)
5-6	Short Sleeve T-Shirt PE Uniform School Hat (compulsory for Terms 1 & 4)	Long Sleeve T-Shirt Polycotton Sweat or Polar Fleece PE Uniform	Culottes or Shorts Track Pants (optional)
7-8	Senior Shirt PE Uniform School Hat (compulsory for Terms 1 & 4)	Undershirt (optional) Polycotton Sweat or Polar Fleece PE Uniform	Culottes or Shorts Track Pants (optional)

Footwear: Plain school shoes (black, brown or navy) or sports trainers may be worn. **No jandals, crocs, or fashion shoes are allowed** for health and safety reasons.

Socks and Tights: Plain white, navy or black ankle or knee-high socks. Navy or black tights. **No patterns or bright colours.**

Headgear: St Thomas's School Bucket Hat. **No caps, scarves and bandannas.** The Principal must approve headwear worn for religious/cultural reasons (dark navy where possible).

Jewellery: Necklaces of cultural or religious significance are permitted but must be worn under the school t-shirt. Watches, plain stud earrings and small hoop earrings may be worn. **No other jewellery is permitted.**

Anything that is worn under the uniform that is seen is to be navy only.



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** in one the following ways:

- Through our Hero App (preferred)
- By telephone 09 5283938

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. All late arrivals are recorded, should your child be late on a regular basis follow up action will be taken.

Please note: 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. 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.

School Donations Payment Reminder

We are very grateful to the majority of our community who are able to pay their school donations. Every single donation counts to help minimise how much of the school's financial reserves are used to ensure we continue to offer your children all the extras we provide at St Thomas's and to keep the class sizes at the levels they are.

Your school donations go towards paying for things such as sporting equipment, extra learning support and resources, our courts and equipment in the grounds, plus importantly they allow us to provide staff for the STEAM Centre, a school counsellor, special education teacher, an occupational therapist, ESOL, Gifted and Talented Education, literacy support and teacher aides for all year levels across the school.

To pay your school donation for 2023, please log in to our Online Shop (accessible via our school website or your Hero app). You can pay this in full with a discount if it is paid prior to the 31st of March, 2023. To claim the early payment discount, you will need to manually override the payment amount within the online shop. If you would like to spread the cost of the donation over the year, you can make partial payments at a schedule that suits you. Please contact our school office if you have any difficulties with this (09) 528-3938.

Year 4-8 BYOD Programme

At St Thomas's School, we have a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) programme for all students in Years 4 - 8. Our BYOD programme is flexible. Any internet capable device, be it a laptop or a Chromebook will be a huge advantage for your child in Years 4 - 8. 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. We do have some school owned devices, so BYOD is not compulsory or essential, but it does mean that your child won't have to wait for a device to become available to complete their learning tasks. We highly recommend bringing your own device if you can.

Detailed information about suitable device types was given out at our Meet the Teacher Day. Your child's classroom teacher will have a copy of this if you would like it.

Shine Speech & Drama

A fantastic opportunity for your child!

Shine Speech & Drama classes inspire confidence and imagination, helping students communicate effectively and build self-belief that helps them succeed in life.

Here's what people are saying about Shine's lessons ...

"He got up and spoke in front of the school. He would never have done that before"

— James' Mum

"Thank you so much for calmly and reassuringly, through zoom after zoom, guiding the boys' through their tasks. Thank you for all the extra energy and organisation that has gone into all of this. You've been simply fantastic!" – Catherine

"...the best speech and drama teacher working in New Zealand today." NZ Herald

SHINE SPEECH & DRAMA covers:

- public speaking
- acting skills
- voice (projection and articulation)
- reading aloud skills
- positive body language
- storytelling
- relationship skills

Register [here](#) for term 1 lessons, beginning Thursday 9th February 2023. Lunchtime and after school classes available. Term fees are \$250 with 8 lessons guaranteed per term. Sibling discount of 10% for any siblings enrolling. Lessons are every Thursday during term time and begin Thursday 9 February 2023. Lunchtime 12.35 - 1.20pm and after school 3.05-3.50pm. Takahe room in the Pohutukawa Centre for Term 1 2023 (lunch time and after school). For term 2 2023 Takahe room in the Pohutukawa Centre after school and the hall at lunchtime.

If your child has paid to attend, please remind them before school on a Thursday to attend.

Any questions please don't hesitate to call Nina on 021-160 9197.

Your Children have the Opportunity to Learn a Musical Instrument here at School

For busy parents, the convenience of having instrumental lessons available at school can be really helpful. Children love the fun and creativity of making music, and at the same time can benefit from specialist music tuition in a number of ways.

Our school partners with the Music Education Centre, Auckland's largest specialist music lesson provider. They offer lessons across a wide variety of instruments at nearly 40 schools as well as after-school at their centres. This gives students and parents a wide variety of convenient options to meet their children's needs.

Vacancies for in-schools lessons are filled on a first come, first served basis with enrolments closing on Friday 17 February 2023.

To make sure your child does not miss out, complete the google form

<https://forms.gle/7qYTy3w4MU5Mo5sh8>

If you have any questions about the music lessons, please contact the Music Education Centre directly on 0800 89 39 39.

Table Tennis

Table Tennis coaching is available free to St Thomas's. The sessions are open for year 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 students Monday lunchtimes, starting on Monday 20th March 2023, in our school hall. Those wishing to attend club night can also do so on Mondays from 7.30 – 9.30pm. For more information contact: Auckland Table Tennis Association Contact: Ebi Kleiser Ph. (09) 520 2291/ 021 083 09994 or tabletennisnr@gmail.com.

Chess Club

Our chess club is now full and we already have a large waiting list. Unfortunately, we can not take any further enquiries regarding chess club.

Soccer Skills with Billy Harris

Billy is an ex All White and has been coaching children all over Auckland for 18 years. His fun classes for boys and girls of all ages and abilities are designed to improve confidence, coordination and ball skills. Billy coaches at St Thomas's on Thursday lunchtimes. For a free trial class or to enrol for the term, call or text Billy on [027 2799042](tel:0272799042) or visit www.billyharris.co.nz.

Immunisations Schedule

Date	Tuesday 28/02/2023	Thursday 23/03/2023	Thursday 14/09/2023	Thursday 21/09/2023
Approx. time	8.30 am	TBA	11.30 am	TBA
Vaccination	HPV 1 Yr 8 Girls & Boys	HPV 1 Yr 8 Catch-up	HPV 2 Yr8 Girls & Boys	HPV 2 Yr 8 Catch-up
	Boostrix Yr 7		Boostrix Yr7 Catch-up	Boostrix Yr7 Catch-up