

09 May 2025

Principal's Message

Tēnā Koutou Katoa

Welcome back to term two and a wet start to the term. Changes in New Zealand's education system are happening at pace; some are haphazard and often schools hear about the changes in the media before we actually hear about them from the Ministry of Education. It can be a scramble for schools and parent communities to keep up to date with the pace of change and it will take time for the changes to be implemented and more importantly for evidence to emerge that they are lifting academic achievement. Here at St Thomas's School, we take a measured and strategic approach to ensure we are implementing these changes while not overwhelming staff and students with too much at once. This week the Minister of Education announced a parent portal to assist parents better understand some of the changes that are taking place, and you will find information about this on the next page.

The Ministry also released the following statement:

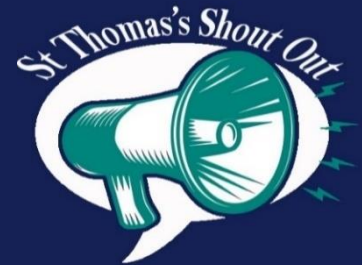
As part of our focus on lifting achievement we have introduced a new curriculum this year for Maths in Years 0-8 and English in Years 0-6. This means we are currently changing from the old to the new curriculum. We want to acknowledge that schools will only have been using the new curricula from the start of 2025, which includes new teaching and assessment methods and content. Because of this you could see a change in your child's progress or achievement compared to previous years which may be the result of changes in the curriculum expectation for your child's year level. Ministry of Education (abridged).

Bush area needs your help

We are working to enhance our native bush and outdoor learning space. On Saturday 7 June from 9:00am to 1:00pm we would love if parents could join us and help plant some new native plants in this area. Any spare time and help would be really appreciated and the planting will go towards creating a long lasting bush area for many years to come.

Ngā mihi nui

Michael Maher
Principal



To our road patrol and kia crossing teams for continuing to do a great job as the winter weather hits

Upcoming Dates

May

- 12 Junior Assembly (J11 & J12 hosting)
10am (school hall)
Senior Assembly (M4 hosting)
11.45am (school hall)
- 12-13 Photolife School Photos
- 13 Eastern Zone Yr 7 Boys Football
- 15 Eastern Zone Yr 8 Boys Football
- 20 Bay Suburbs Football
- 20 Board of Trustees Meeting
(6.30pm staffroom)
- 22 Eastern Zone Girls Football
- 26 Junior Formal Assembly
9.15am – 9.45am (school hall)
Senior Formal Assembly
10.00am – 10.30pm (school hall)
- 30 Teacher Only Day
(School closed to students)

June

- 03 King's Birthday Holiday
- 06 Handball Tournament
- 07 Working Bee (Native Garden area)
9.00am to 1.00pm
- 09 Junior Assembly (J5 & J6 hosting)
10am (school hall)
Senior Assembly (S7 & S8 hosting)
11.45am (school hall)

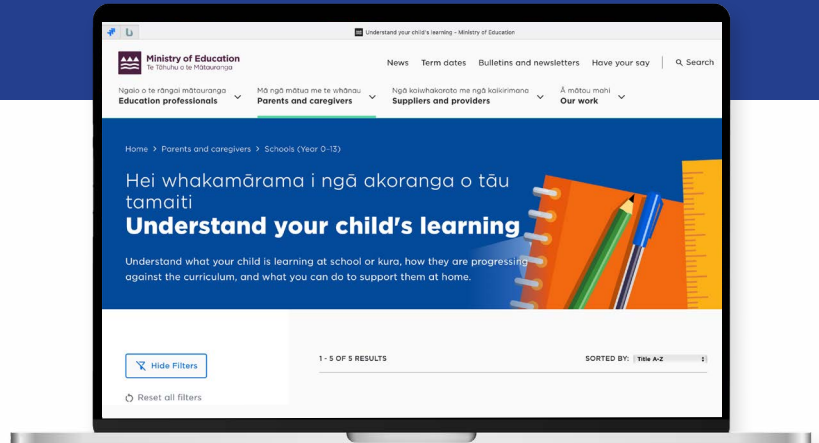
Understand your child's learning

Information and resources for parents, caregivers and whānau

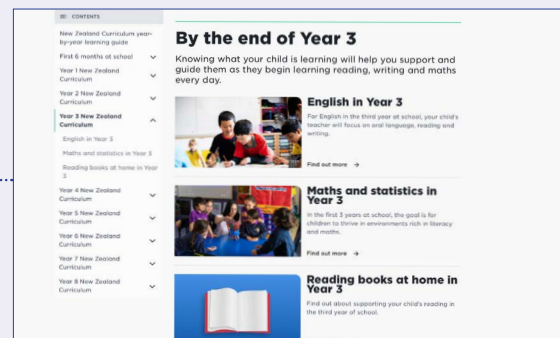
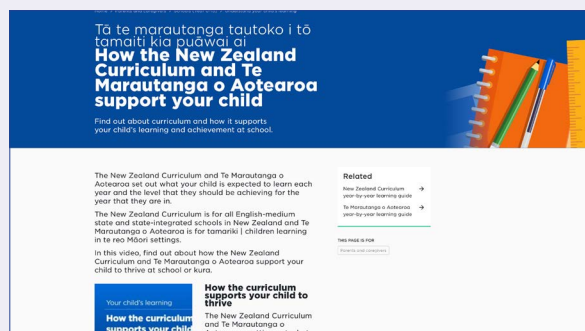
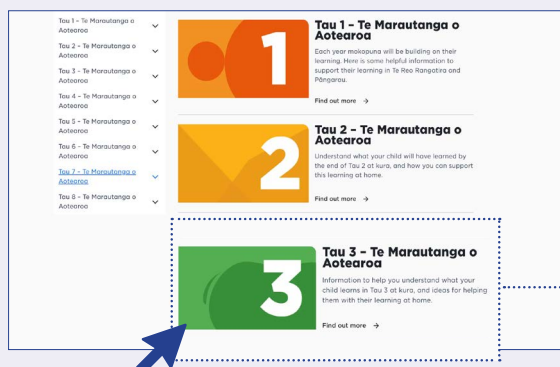
A new webspace on [education.govt.nz](https://www.education.govt.nz) houses practical videos, activities and resources for supporting learning that are easy to understand, empowering you to take an active role in your child's education.

An introductory video that walks you through the content is available [here](#).

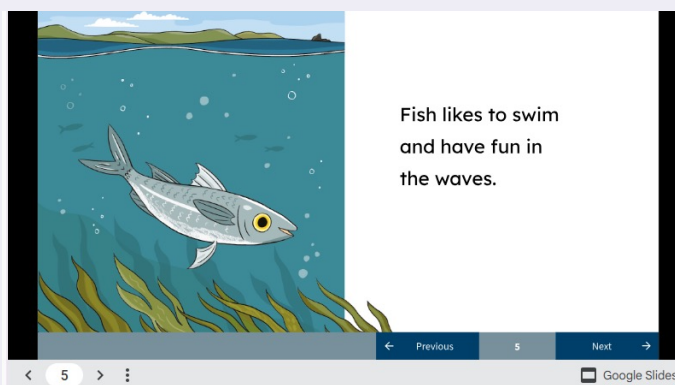
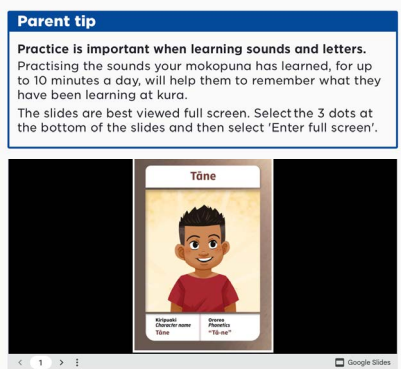
With the launch of the 'parent-friendly' versions of both our national curricula, you will know exactly what your child is learning, why it's important, and when they'll be learning it, so that you can actively support and complement your child's learning at home and have meaningful conversations with your child's teacher or kaiako.



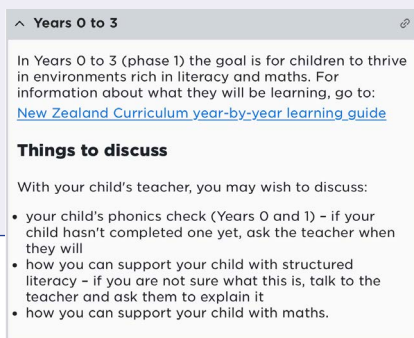
To navigate the website, you can choose which curriculum you want to learn more about and then go to your child's year level.



There are practice activities for each year level that you can do with your child, and 'tips and tricks' to support learning at home. Phonics cards come with parent guidance with audio files to model the correct sounds.



There is also a guide on how to prepare for the first day of school, and tips for parent-teacher interviews.



The webspace also houses important information about how children will be assessed in the early years of schooling through the new Phonics Checks and Hihira Weteoro. It describes how parents and whānau can access additional support that their child or tamaiti might need.



As the national curriculum continues to be updated and implemented in all schools and kura over the next few years, more resources and supports will become available for parents, caregivers and whānau. We encourage you to visit the new webspace and check out the current resources, guides and videos available. If you have any feedback or suggestions, please email us at tepoutahu.engagement@education.govt.nz

House of Science

Over the first two weeks of this term, we have had House of Science in the school providing another learning experience for all our students across Years 2 – 8 on the topic of Space. The feedback that House of Science provided regarding our students' knowledge was very complementary and we are delighted to share some of it with you. Well done St Thomas's!

It's been a pleasure delivering 18 Space VR sessions to the lovely ākonga at St Thomas's School. We have been impressed with the knowledge the students had about space. Here's some of the facts they shared:

- *galaxies can be spiral, elliptical, or irregular shaped*
- *the imaginary line between Earth's atmosphere and outer space is called the Karman line (100km from Earth's surface)*
- *the supermassive black hole in the centre of the Milky Way is called Sagittarius A**
- *Jupiter has 95 moons and Saturn has 146.*



The students really appreciated the 'out of this world' learning experience and I hope it's provided inspiration for further learning.

School Uniform – Important Reminder

Now that the weather is getting cooler students are wearing their sweatshirts/fleeces. As the day warms up these sweatshirts/fleeces are being taken off and left all over the school. Can you please speak to your child about being responsible for their clothing and putting it in their bag or cubby hole when they take it off. We try to reunite lost items as quickly as possible, but this can only happen if their name is in it. We have had a large number of items with no name, or if it is second hand it has the previous owner's name. It is very important that your child's name is very clearly marked so that it can be returned to them asap.

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.

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, whether it is a work, home or mobile number, can you please advise the office.

Board of Trustees Member – Annika Lim



I have been a member of the St Thomas's parent community for over 5 years and a Board member since 2022.

My background is in law and corporate governance. I am also a Trustee for Bowel Cancer NZ.

I want to see all students at St Thomas's have every opportunity to achieve their full potential, push new horizons and contribute meaningfully to our wider community. It is a privilege to support the strong mahi of the STS team in delivering a learning environment for our students that is well-rounded, connected, positive and fun!

Teacher Profile – Enchanté Chang



I am a first-generation New Zealand born Chinese and my home language is Cantonese. As I've grown older, I understand how much culture plays a part in who I am and I encourage every family to keep speaking their mother tongue at home as much as possible.

At school, each child in my class will have equal opportunities to learn and grow. I believe that all children are capable of learning given the right environment and level of expectation. They are all unique with their individual needs, learning styles and personalities. My classroom is a safe place where learning is encouraged and praised, where children are loved, feel cherished and are valued. A place where we foster a love of learning. Learning isn't just for the children; it is for me as well. The more I learn, the more the children will be able to learn. Kotahitanga, I am because we are.

Teacher Profile – Yunny Luk



My goal, as a teacher, is to create a classroom environment that is engaging, supportive, and full of opportunities to explore and grow together.

This is my fourth year of teaching, and I especially enjoy incorporating hands-on activities to make learning both meaningful and enjoyable. Outside the classroom, I like playing badminton, travelling, and making clay pottery.

Just Scootering

Wednesday lunchtimes at St Thomas's School.

Casual Session: \$30

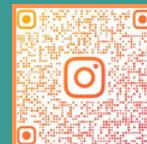
Full Term: \$25 per session

BYO scooter

For more information call Anna on 027 457 7918

St Thomas's School PTA NEWS

Connect
WITH US



Instagram



Facebook

UPCOMING EVENTS

EVERY
FRIDAY

ICE BLOCKS

From 3pm, under the tree outside the office.
(weather allowing)

ON
NOW

YUMMY STICKERS

Start collecting now!

MAY
14

PTA MEETING

7pm in the school staff lounge

MAY
26

SPACE-A-THON

Register & collect donations: now till 30 May
Testing date: 26 May

JUNE
13

PTA DISCO

Save the date!

AUG
9

QUIZ NIGHT

Collecting donations for the auction now!

SPACE-A-THON

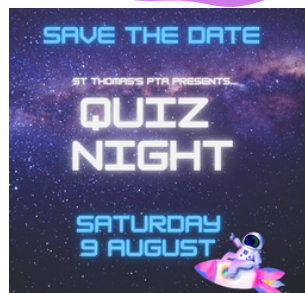
To set up a fundraising profile for your child(ren), and details on the awesome spot prizes up for grabs, head to <https://stthomasspaceathon.raisait.co.nz>
Every dollar raised will directly contribute to important equipment and resource upgrades to our STEAM programme.



QUIZ NIGHT PRIZE DONATIONS NEEDED!

Can you help?

We need your help obtaining prize donations to make our event even more special and raise funds for the STEAM program.
If you can contribute or know of businesses that might be interested, please get in touch with the PTA.



SECOND HAND UNIFORMS

Help keep uniforms out of landfills by donating and purchasing school uniforms from the PTA. Give them a second (and third and fourth) life via our uniform sales!

Please drop them off to the school office.



ICE BLOCK FRIDAYS

From 3pm every Friday
(weather permitting)

\$2 each or 3 for \$5

Under the tree outside the office



YUMMY STICKERS

Collecting is easy!

- buy your Yummy apples
- peel off stickers / cut-out labels from bags
- stick them on a sticker/cut-out label chart
- once your sheet is ready, bring it into class or put on your classroom sheet

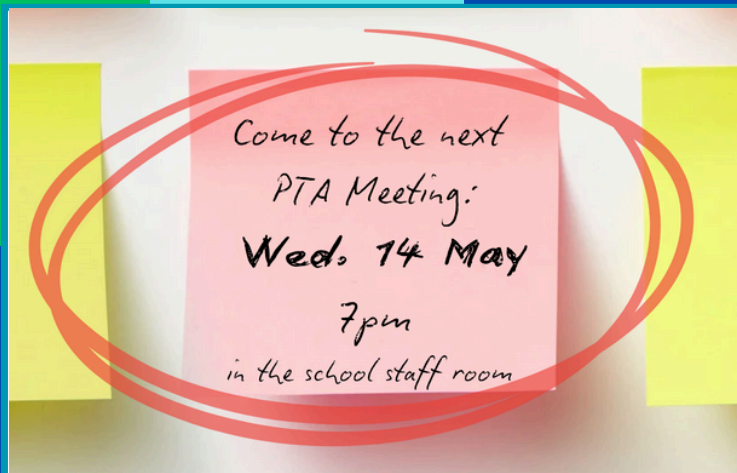
Start collecting your
Yummy apple stickers
and cut-out labels!



Sticker Sheet



Cut-out Sheet



HELP THE PTA!

We'd love for you to join us!

Whether it's helping at events or sharing ideas, every bit helps. No big commitment - help as much as you're able.

Our fundraising efforts for 2025 will go towards enhancing the STEAM programme with new equipment & resources.

If you're interested in getting involved or learning more, come along to the next PTA meeting or get in touch.



Email us at: stthomasschoolpta@gmail.com

KELLY CLUB ST THOMAS'S UPDATE

What's been happening...

Helpful Healers was filled with lots of learning and creativity. We made nurse bags, played pin the plaster and we finished the week off on Friday by making Red Cross cookies. Thanks for another great week!











DO YOU QUALIFY FOR CHILDCARE SUBSIDIES?

More families now qualify for childcare subsidies and the rates have increased for those already qualified!

BOOK NOW www.kellyclub.co.nz

What's happening next week!

 THEME: Family Fiesta Term 2 Week 3, 12th May 2025					
Weekly Activities Plan Kelly Club St Thomas					
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
7:00 - 8:15 am	Paper Plane Comp & Structured Free Time	Family Collage & Structured Free Time	Fort Building & Structured Free Time	Cup Towers & Structured Free Time	Homemade Brownie & Structured Free Time
8:15 - 8:30 am	Game: Simon Says	Game: Noodle Tag	Game: Rob the Nest	Game: Knock it Out	Game: Wacky Relays
3:00 - 3:10 pm	Sign In & Free Time	Sign In & Free Time	Sign In & Free Time	Sign In & Free Time	Sign In & Free Time
3:10 - 3:30 pm	Intro & Afternoon Tea Mac & Cheese & Fruit	Intro & Afternoon Tea Sammies & Fruit	Intro & Afternoon Tea Sausage Rolls & Fruit	Intro & Afternoon Tea Sammies & Fruit	Intro & Afternoon Tea Homemade Brownie & Fruit
3:30 - 3:45 pm	Game: Blindfolded Explorers	Game: All on One Side	Game: Midnight	Game: 4 Corner Dodgeball	Game: Turkey Tag
SENIORS 3:45 - 4:30 pm	SPORT House Hurry 	COOKING Pizza 	CRAFT Family Tree Mobile 	GAME Addams Family 	DISCOVERY 3D Hands 
	DISCOVERY 3D Hands 	COOKING Pizza 	SPORT House Hurry 	CRAFT Family Crest 	GAME 3-Legged Race 
4:30 - 4:40 pm	Tidy Up	Tidy Up	Tidy Up	Tidy Up	Tidy Up
4:40 - 5:30 pm	Playground	Playground	Playground	Playground	Playground
5:30 - 5:45 pm	Homework & Quiet Time	Homework & Quiet Time	Homework & Quiet Time	Homework & Quiet Time	Homework & Quiet Time
5:45 - 6:00 pm	Snack Time Popcorn	Snack Time Baking	Snack Time Biscuits	Snack Time Crackers	Snack Time Vege Chips

E: stthomas@kellyclub.co.nz

kellyclub.co.nz/stthomas

P: 021 080 33666

Public Notices

PILATES

Mondays 6.05pm at St Thomas's



STRENGTHEN MOVE, HEAL

021 918 487
Saul@Pilates2be.co.nz
www.Pilates2be.co.nz

Please see our website for details about:

Clubs and activities:

Lunchtime Table Tennis - Term 2 sessions have moved to Fridays.

For all other clubs and activities, please see:

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

Community notices:

<https://www.stthomas.school.nz/community-notices/>

School holiday programmes:

<https://www.stthomas.school.nz/school-holiday-programmes/>