

*Please note Key Dates are now at the end of the newsletter (before Community Notices).*

## **Final Hui and Farewell - Wednesday 17 December 1.45pm**

Please note that the weather forecast for tomorrow is for rain.

Unfortunately rain will limit our capacity to host lots of parents so we kindly ask that only whanau of leavers (year 6 and others) attend if it is raining. If it is raining, we will host the hui with limited space in Room 24.

Thank you for your understanding to help manage this event.

Tēnā koutou Families

I am still reflecting on an incredible poroaki last Friday. I am very, very grateful for the efforts put into this very special occasion. I really felt for tamariki sitting so beautifully when it was so cold! The singing was amazing as always and so moving that they were singing for me. I felt the love and am so proud of every one of them. Thank you to everyone who attended, and for the special messages from some of you who couldn't. I have shared my speech [here](#).

The gift of a flight voucher is so perfect and I am incredibly grateful for the generosity of families and staff. Every time I fly to see my grandchildren (most likely use!) I will think of Ngaio School and feel grateful for my time here. Thank you also to everyone who baked for the morning tea.

Last night's graduation celebration was another annual highlight and of course another 'last' for me. As I mentioned in my speech, they were the 31st group of years 6 ākonga I have farewelled in my principal role! What an outstanding group of young people, all very much ready for the next step in their educational journey - they're ready to 'Soar to New Heights'.

I wish you all the very best for the holiday season and thank you all for your support over my time as tumuaki of Ngaio School. I look forward to seeing some of you tomorrow at our Kai & Korero gathering for Year 6 families leaving Ngaio School, and/or the final hui at 1.45pm.

Meri Kirihimete me ngā mihi o te tau hou ki a koutou katoa  
*Christmas and New Year greetings.*

Raewyn Watson  
Te Tumuaki



You are invited to pop into school on Wednesday 28 January between 10.30am and 12pm for our open morning/optional stationery drop-off.

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## ON BOARD

### Ngaio School Board Update

#### Board meeting week 9

In week 9 the Board got together for its final meeting of 2025. This meeting focused on student achievement and discussing the legislative changes to the 2020 Education and Training Act. We were joined by Phil McIntosh, Ngaio School's incoming principal, Hayden Trass (kaiako) and Sarah Simpson (Deputy Principal).

#### Board of Trustees End of year Achievement Summary 2025

Twice a year, the Board is presented with data about student performance. This is our opportunity to dig into the outcomes and ask questions to ensure the right support is in place. With the end of year results, we also think about what goals we want to set as part of the annual plan for the next year.

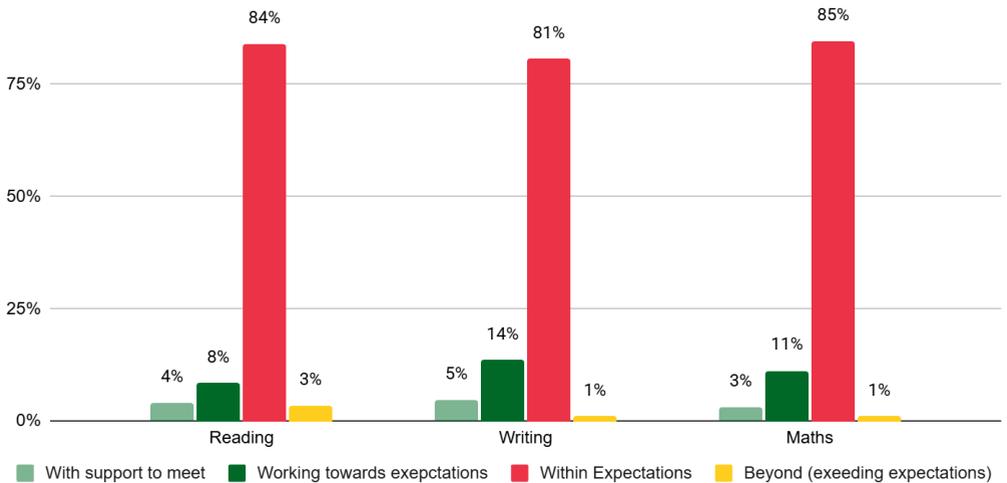
The board is looking to see as many of our children meeting the end of year expectations as possible as well as making good progress year on year. Where a child is not yet meeting the end of year expectation, we want to see that they are making progress and have the right support in place.

At our meeting in week nine, DP Sarah Simpson presented the whole school end of year achievement data for 2025.

#### *2025 end of year results*

The majority of Ngaio students are meeting expectations at the end of 2025.

**87%** are at or above end year expectation in **Reading**, **81%** are at or above end year expectation in **Writing** and **85%** at or above end year expectation in **Mathematics**



These results are excellent and the Board was particularly impressed with Sarah's and our teaching staff's deep knowledge of children's learning across the school and the work and moderation that goes into getting this assessment right.

This year, there are fewer students exceeding end of year expectations than in previous years, as well as slightly more students achieving below end of year expectations. This is consistent with similar schools in our area, with many also noticing changes in achievement levels.

Given the lower level of achievement for writing compared to other curriculum areas, the board has asked the school to put a particular focus on writing next year to support teachers' ability to balance previous good practice with the new curriculum. Through this focus, we hope to see our whole school's writing end of year results lift in 2026.

### *What is impacting results*

The new curriculum has established higher expectations for student achievement at the end of each year than the previous curriculum - this means that it is harder for students to meet or achieve the required level in a year.

In addition, teachers have needed to adjust the way they teach to meet the new curriculum, including balancing writing practice against new expectations for spelling and structure; how new recommended resources fit into existing practice; and how to best use existing assessment tools to assess and direct learning.

We are also seeing more students with additional learning needs who require extra support to achieve curriculum standards. There will always be children who learn at a different pace and who have additional learning challenges. The board receives targeted reporting on the achievement and progress of these students and are confident that Ngaio School is committed to, and continues to provide, the right tailored support for each child's learning journey wherever they are or whatever their needs.

Overall, the Board knows and is confident in the excellent teaching staff of Ngaio School. With the responses we received from Sarah during the meeting and the focus areas that will be introduced next year for embedding the new curriculum, we are confident that Ngaio School will continue to adapt and pursue the best outcomes for our children.

### Education and Training Act Changes

The Board spent time considering the updates to the Education and Training Act, and the implications this has for schools. In particular, we discussed at length the removal of the requirement for Board's to uphold Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Prior to this meeting, we had a number of parents and whānau provide us with their thoughts on this, as well as from our kaiako/teachers. Thank you to those who took the time to share their views.

In our meeting, the Board unanimously supported continuing to honour and uphold Te Tiriti o Waitangi in our strategic planning, practices, school culture and in our teaching.

Following the Board meeting, we shared with our school community our ongoing commitment to upholding Te Tiriti o Waitangi and had overwhelming support for this decision from our community. As a board, we were also extremely proud of our kaiako and akōnga as they showcased their knowledge, talents and commitment to kawa, te reo Māori and tikanga Māori to honour Raewyn at her poroporoaki last Friday. It was a beautiful and moving occasion and reaffirmed that our decision is the right one.

### Dogs on School Grounds - Policy update

The Board has been working to strengthen the school's policy about Dogs on School Grounds and while the policy largely remains the same, we have established guidance for prior agreement and the expectations if a dog is agreed to be brought onto the school grounds during school hours.

To reiterate our policy, during school hours (8.30am – 3.30pm) and at school events, dogs may only be brought onto school grounds by prior agreement with the Tumuaki and Board. Details on what the Tumuaki and Board will consider and the expectations can be found [here](#) (username: Ngaio password: abbott).

While our default position is no dogs in school, disability assist dogs are always welcome at Ngaio School and support/therapy dogs may also be welcome at Ngaio School under the appropriate circumstances. This policy will take effect from January 2026.

### Acknowledgements

The Board would like to acknowledge the work of the PTA and the role they play in the life of the school. As the driving force behind the school's fundraising efforts, we'd like to recognise the longstanding outgoing members, especially **Jen Thornburrow**, who is leaving her role as Chair of the PTA. Having worked closely with Jen over the past few years we know she is leaving the PTA in good hands. We'd also like to thank **Kim Verry**, who has been leading on the grant funding for the playground matting replacement. Thanks to Kim's efforts we have secured \$35k in grant funding so far! Thank you also to **Kelsey O'Brien** who led our Colour Run fundraiser which brought in over \$16k for our playground upgrade. We look forward to continuing our close working relationship with the PTA in 2026.

We'd also like to say a huge ngā mihi nui to our **whānau rōpu** and everyone who helped at our hāngī and school picnic evening. It was a wonderful evening and lovely way to bring our community together.

And lastly, we'd like to recognise the passion, wisdom and mahi **Raewyn** has poured into her role as Tumuaki of Ngaio School over the past 8 years. Thank you Raewyn for your tireless commitment to Ngaio School and for all you have done to make this place so special to so many. So many kind words and fond memories were shared at your poroporoaki - we are going to miss you and Ngaio School is not going to be the same without you.

🎄 From all the Board, we wish you a very Merry Christmas and festive season, enjoy the time with friends and whānau and we look forward to seeing you all in 2026!!

Ngā mihi nui

Emma, Joe, Raewyn, Mike, Kirsty, Kirsten, Sarah and Dan



**Thank you so much for your generous book donations. We sent them 2 'massive' boxes of books which they were extremely grateful for.**

Kiwi Christmas Books gifts brand new books to families whose children would otherwise go without at Christmas time.

They believe that good books help to build good people, so each year, they put thousands of quality Kiwi books into the hands of tamariki and rangatahi whose families can't afford to buy their own, or who struggle to access quality literature in general.

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## PTA NEWS

### AND THE AWARD GOES TO...

#### **Pizza for the Playground**

A huge thanks to everyone who took a night off cooking and got pizza from Khandallah Domino's last Wednesday. We made a total of \$300 which will help towards the replacement of our playground matting. Thanks Heaps Dominos!

#### **Speaking of the Playground Matting...**

Last week, school board and PTA members dropped pamphlets off around Ngaio seeking donations to help with the playground matting project. Thanks Kirsty D, KatieB, Adam S, Julia R, Craig B, Mikey O, and your whānau for this excellent effort, and big thanks to those in our lovely community who've already stepped up with donations; it's greatly appreciated.

Please, please, please share this **givealittle** link on your socials, <https://givealittle.co.nz/cause/support-ngaio-schools-fundraising> and consider donating if you're able to using this QR code:



givealittle  
powered by psychal guardian

#### **Colour Run Prizes**

All colour run prizes have been taken home so hopefully tamariki are having fun after their amazing 'fun'draising (!)

Our thanks to Kelsey O, Mikey O, Katie B, Craig B, Julia R, Kelly E, Diane F,

Kornelia M, Mel D, Andrea O, Adam S, Bridget B, and Chris for overseeing distribution.

#### **Blessed are the Bakers**

Thank you so much to everyone who baked for Raewyn's poroporoaki. It was a great event and a fitting tribute in part made possible by all of our generous bakers.

#### **WHAT'S NEW?**

Whittaker's Chocolate Bar Fundraiser

Term 1 2026. A great opportunity to sell some of NZ's best confectionery to all the chocolate lovers in your family, friends and co-workers...and help our school.

**Join Us for 2026!**



The Ngaio School Parent Teacher Association builds links between kāinga and kura. One way you can play a meaningful part in helping our school thrive is by joining us. Get in touch for a chat here: [pta@ngaio.school.nz](mailto:pta@ngaio.school.nz)

We're nice, honest!

Or...

If you want to be able to help out with events and fundraisers but aren't able to commit to the PTA Join the Friends of Ngaio School WhatsApp group

here [→](#)



Thanks to everyone who worked with the PTA this year, you made a positive and important difference to our community. Enjoy the Summer break!

Ngā mihi nui

PTA

## KEY DATES

LINK: [School Community Calendar](#)

|                   |   |                |
|-------------------|---|----------------|
| Wednesday 17 Dec  | Kōrero & Kai (Leaving Families)           | 8am            |
| Wednesday 17 Dec  | Final Hui                                 | 1.45pm-2.30pm  |
| <b>2026</b>       |   |                |
| Wednesday 28 Jan  | Open morning/optional stationery drop-off | 10.30am - 12pm |
| Tuesday 3 Feb     | First day of school                       | 9am            |
| Friday 6 Feb      | Waitangi Day                              | School closed  |
| Monday 9 Feb      | Whakatau to welcome Phil and new ākonga   | 9.15am         |
| Thursday 12 Feb   | Meet the Teachers                         | 5-7pm          |
| Thursday 19 March | ROCKET Carnival                           | 5-7pm          |
| Tuesday 24 March  | Open Afternoon                            | 2.15pm         |

## COMMUNITY NOTICES

The Y Holiday Programme will be running from 18–23 December. They will then be closed until 5 January 2026, reopening from 5 January to 2 February 2026.



## Summer Reading | Pānui Challenge for Years 0 to 8

The Summer Reading | Pānui Challenge: Read with Me, developed in collaboration with Duffy Books in Homes, encourages ākongā | students going into Years 0 to 8 and their whānau to track the days they've read together over the summer holidays.

Those students who complete and return the tracker form to their school or kura by **20 February 2026** will receive a badge and certificate. Simply email [summerreadingchallenge@education.govt.nz](mailto:summerreadingchallenge@education.govt.nz) by **6 March 2026**, stating how many badges and certificates are needed.

Find out more on Tāhūrangi:

[Summer Reading | Pānui Challenge: Read with Me – Tāhūrangi](#)