

St. Joseph's School

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Kia ora e te whānau,

As we enter this sacred time of Puanga, we pause to reflect on the year that's been and prepare for the journey ahead. It is a season of renewal — a time to remember, give thanks, and look forward with hope.

At school, our tamariki have been learning that Te Atua (God) is always with us — in the world around us, in our relationships, and within our wairua (spirit). As Pilgrims of Hope, they are discovering how faith, whakapapa, and love guide us on our path.

This week, however, our hearts are heavy as we mourn the tragic loss of lives in the boating accident at Pātea Beach. Our thoughts, prayers, and deepest aroha go out to the whānau affected, to Pātea Area School, and to the wider hapori who are grieving.

In this time of loss, may the peace of Te Atua rest upon you all, and may the rising of Puanga bring light, healing, and renewed strength.

Let us continue to move forward together — anchored in faith, led by compassion, and united by our shared journey.

"Ko Te Atua tō tātou kāinga – Our home is in God."

"I te aranga mai o Puanga, ka tau mai anō te rangimārie me te aroha o Te Atua."
(With the rising of Puanga, the peace and love of God return anew.)

Ngā manaakitanga,

Angela Muncaster
Principal



St Joseph's Convent School was opened in 1904,
by 5 Sister's of the Order of St Joseph with a roll of

Josephite Colloquium – A Journey of Connection and Faith

At the end of last month, Jess and I had the privilege of attending the Josephite Colloquium in Auckland — a three-day residential gathering that brought together leaders from Josephite schools across Aotearoa to reflect on the legacy of Saint Mary MacKillop and the Sisters of St Joseph.

Throughout the hui, we deepened our understanding of the Josephite charism and explored how it continues to shape the heart of our kura today. It was a powerful reminder that St Joseph's Pātea is part of a wider whānau, connected by a shared mission of service, compassion, and faith.

We gained valuable insights into how the Josephite values influence daily practices, prayer life, and our school's sense of

community. It was inspiring to see how the values we live out each day — courage, justice, and love for those most in need — are rooted in the lives of Mary MacKillop and Fr Julian Tenison Woods. We've returned with renewed purpose and a stronger connection to the Josephite network, excited to integrate these values more intentionally into our curriculum, liturgies, and the everyday life of our school.

We look forward to sharing what we've learned with our staff and tamariki, and to continuing this journey together as a faith-filled learning community.

The spirit of Mary MacKillop lives on in our acts of kindness, our commitment to equity, and in every moment we choose to put others first.

To Tātou Whakapono – Te Atua

Theme: "God is present in the world and in us on our spiritual journey."

This term, our tamariki are deepening their understanding of Te Atua (God) and learning how He is present with us always — within our wairua (spirit), throughout te taiao (the natural world), and along the path of our lives.

Framed through both Māori and Catholic worldviews, this learning helps students recognise the divine presence not only through Scripture and prayer, but also through their whakapapa — the sacred connections to our ancestors, to one another, and to all of creation.

As the stars of Puanga rise and mark the beginning of the new year in the Maramataka (Māori lunar calendar), we are entering a season of reflection. Tamariki are learning that this is a time to remember those who have passed, give thanks for what has been, and prepare for what lies ahead. We are using a range of practices — karakia (prayer), pūrākau (traditional stories), Biblical narratives, and quiet reflection — to support our learners in recognising God's aroha (love) in the everyday. Whether in the stillness of nature or the warmth of a kind gesture, they are discovering that God's presence is not confined to a building — it surrounds us and lives within us.

Through this integrated learning, our tamariki are being invited to walk in faith with open hearts, growing in their Māori identity and in their Catholic spirituality.

He Ara Mahi mā te Whānau – Ways to Support at Home:

- Kōrero with your tamaiti about where they feel the presence of Te Atua — perhaps in the night sky, the rising of Puanga, or in the quiet of nature.
- Share your own stories of spiritual connection, whakapono (faith), or tikanga that honour the sacredness of life and creation.
- Say karakia together, giving thanks for the whenua, whānau, and all that God provides.
- Encourage acts of manaakitanga and aroha, reminding your child that when we show love, respect, and forgiveness, we reflect the heart of Jesus.

Let us walk this haerenga wairua (spiritual journey) together

— guided by Te Atua, grounded in our whakapapa, and inspired by the rising of Puanga.

Matariki – School Closed Friday 20th June

A reminder that school will be closed this Friday, 20th June for Matariki.

We hope you enjoy this special time with your whānau to rest, reflect, and celebrate the Māori New Year. School will reopen on Monday, 23rd June. Have a safe and happy long weekend!

School Donations Scheme – 2025

Apologies for the delay in sharing this information — St Joseph's School Pātea has opted into the Ministry of Education's School Donations Scheme for 2025.

This means the school receives additional funding from the government, and whānau will not be asked to pay donations for curriculum-related activities, including trips and learning resources. We appreciate your patience and understanding, and we're pleased to continue supporting our tamariki's learning without adding financial pressure on families.

If you have any pātai, please don't hesitate to contact the school office.

Upcoming ERO Visit

We would like to let you know that the Education Review Office (ERO) will be visiting St Joseph's School Pātea next week on Thursday and Friday as part of their regular school review process. ERO works with schools to support continuous improvement and ensure the best outcomes for learners. During their visit, they will spend time in the classroom, meet with staff and the school board, and may also talk with some students and whānau.

We welcome this opportunity to share the great mahi happening at our kura and look forward to working in partnership with ERO to continue strengthening learning for our tamariki.

Attendance Dues – We're Here to Help

If you're finding it hard to pay your Attendance Dues, please don't hesitate to come and see me. We're here to support you and find a solution together. There's no need to feel whakamā — your wellbeing and your whānau matter to us.

Puanga / Matariki Celebration with Whenuakura School – Tuesday 24th June

We are excited to be celebrating Puanga / Matariki alongside Whenuakura School. It will be a day filled with connection, learning, and joy as we mark the Māori New Year together.

This year's celebration is guided by the theme: Te Hongia o Puanga - Embracing the Spirit of the Season

"Hongia" refers to the hongi — the traditional greeting where we share breath, life force, and connection. In the context of Puanga, *Te Hongia o Puanga* invites us to greet the new season with open hearts, to embrace its arrival, and to connect with the life-giving essence it brings.

The word hongia also means "to smell" or "to inhale," which adds deeper meaning. Just as Turi, the ancestor of the Aotea waka, knew this was the right place to settle when he smelled the goodness of the land, we too are invited to "smell the goodness" of Puanga — the freshness of the season, the promise of growth, the abundance of kai, and the strength of community bonds.

As we gather, Te Hongia o Puanga reminds us to honour our local history, appreciate the gifts of the land, and move forward into the new season with hope, unity, and aroha.

We're looking forward to a meaningful and memorable celebration with our whānau and friends.

School Uniform Update

We are pleased to let you know that we have secured a new school uniform supplier. A full uniform list and price guide will be sent out at the beginning of Term 3 for whānau who need to place an order for items.

Thank you for your patience and support as we worked to get this sorted.



Community Kindness – Snug as a Bug!

A big thank you to Maureen Meyer, a local member of our Pātea community, for generously knitting and gifting these beautiful hats, vests, and slippers for our tamariki. Your kindness and aroha are truly appreciated, especially as we head into the colder months. It's moments like this that remind us of the strength of our school–community connections. We are so grateful for the ongoing support that wraps our tamariki — quite literally — in love and care!

Attendance Matters

Regular attendance is a key factor in your child's success at school. The Ministry of Education recommends that all students attend at least 90% of the time — that means no more than 5 days absent per term.

At St Joseph's School Pātea, we're working together to help our tamariki meet this goal. We know that consistent attendance builds strong learning habits, friendships, and a sense of belonging. We also understand that life happens. If your child is unwell, please keep them home to rest and recover — just remember to let us know the reason for their absence. Open communication helps us support your child and keep accurate records.

💡 Attendance Tips for Whānau:

- Try to schedule appointments (like the dentist or doctor) outside of school hours when possible.
- Keep consistent routines at home — bedtimes, morning habits, and packing bags the night before all help!
- Reach out to us early if there are any challenges with getting to school — we're here to help.
- Celebrate milestones: when your child has a strong attendance streak, acknowledge their effort!

📊 Tracking Our Progress – Waka Chart

Each week, we'll be tracking our kura's attendance and sharing updates in our newsletters. To make it fun and engaging, we're introducing a Waka Progress Chart! Concept: "Paddling Together Towards 90% Attendance!"

- A waka (canoe) divided into 10 segments, each representing 10% of our overall goal.
- Each week, we'll colour in a paddle/segment based on our school-wide attendance.
- If we reach our 90% target by the end of Term 3, we'll celebrate together as a kura!

Together, we can make every day count for our tamariki!

Let's paddle as one whānau toward success. 🚣❤️

"Learning, Laughing, and Growing Together"

Play Trailer Fun!

Our tamariki have been loving the Play Trailer — spending time outdoors creating, building, imagining, and exploring! The trailer is filled with loose parts that encourage hands-on, open-ended play, helping to develop creativity, problem-solving, and social skills in a fun and engaging way.

The Play Trailer rotates between Whenuakura School, Kakaramea School, and our kura — and we're lucky to have it for two weeks at a time.

It's been wonderful to see our students working together and letting their imaginations run wild!



Senior Students Stepping Up with StepsWeb

Our senior students have been working alongside Whaea Ange to complete their StepsWeb tasks for the day. StepsWeb is a fantastic online literacy programme that supports reading, spelling, and language development. It caters to each learner's individual level and pace, helping to build confidence, fluency, and comprehension skills in a fun, structured way.

It's great to see our tamariki engaging positively with their learning and making steady progress!

Junior Students Practising Handwriting

Our junior students have been busy learning handwriting skills and the importance of correct letter formation. This foundational learning helps build fine motor skills, supports early reading and writing development, and sets tamariki up for success as confident communicators. It's great to see their focus and pride as they practise forming each letter correctly!



Oral Health Education – Bright Smiles!

Today we welcomed Nicole from Taranaki DHB, who visited our kura to talk with the tamariki about the importance of brushing their teeth twice a day and looking after their oral health.

Each student received a Colgate Bright Smiles, Bright Futures pack to take home — a great reminder to keep those smiles shining bright!

