

St. Joseph's School

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School Vision

"May our waka always point to God as we enhance the wairua of our taonga (students)."

Each day we will love the Lord our God with all our heart, mind and soul by:

Taking Responsibility - Achieving Excellence - Having Respect - In it Together

Kia ora St Joseph's whānau,

Ko Taranaki te māunga
Ko Patea te awa
Nō Hāwera ahau (Nā Whakaahurangi au, kei Hāwera ahau e noho ana)
Ko Duncan toku whānau
Ko Grant toku tane
Ko Anton, Chloe, Kayleigh me Alex aku tamariki
Ko Karee tōku ingoa
No reira, tena koutou, tena koutou tena tatou katoa

My name is Karee Duncan, and I'm really excited to be introducing myself to you all. I've been part of the wonderful team at St Joseph's, Hāwera for the past eight years as Deputy Principal and teacher, and it's such a privilege to come and work alongside your amazing staff, students, and whānau.

A little bit about me — I'm married and have four adult children who have all flown the nest. Family is a huge part of my life, and I love spending time with them whenever I can. When I'm not at school, you'll usually find me at the gym, catching up with friends, or getting stuck into a good book.

I feel really lucky to be part of such a caring, supportive school community where faith, learning, and kindness will be at the heart of everything we do. I'm looking forward to the term ahead and to getting to know more of you as we continue to grow and learn together.

Ngā mihi nui,

Karee Duncan
Acting Principal

✚ Catholic Special Character Corner

"Whatever troubles may be before you, accept them bravely, remembering Whom you are trying to follow.





Do not be afraid. Love one another, bear with one another, and let charity guide you all your life." – Saint Mary MacKillop

Encourages courage, love, and kindness in our daily lives, following the example of Christ in all we do.

This term our class is exploring a beautiful new integrated unit called "All Things Bright and Beautiful." Together we'll be learning about God's wonderful creation and how we can appreciate, celebrate, and care for it.

Over five weeks, we'll be linking Religious Education, Reading, Writing, and Visual Art as we explore stories from the Bible, sing hymns, write poems and prayers, and create colourful artworks inspired by God's world.

Some highlights include:

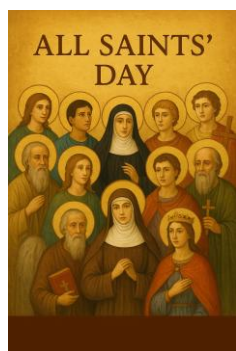
-  Learning about God's Creation Story and how everything He made is good.
-  Discovering St. Francis of Assisi and how we can care for animals and the environment.
-  Celebrating the colours and beauty in the world around us.
-  Exploring kaitiakitanga – being good guardians of God's creation.

We look forward to seeing the children grow in gratitude, creativity, and love for God's world. Thank you for supporting their learning at home – perhaps take a moment together to notice something “bright and beautiful” in God's creation this weekend. As part of this we have Claire from Taranaki Regional Council coming to visit on Monday to explore one of their environmental kits with us. On Wednesday we are visiting the Patea Community Garden with Jason from Sport Taranaki.

Praying the Rosary – October 2025

October is a special month in the Catholic Church dedicated to the Rosary, a beautiful way to reflect on the life of Jesus through the eyes of Mary. While the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary is celebrated on 7 October, we continue to honour this devotion throughout the month.

This week, our school community will focus on the Rosary in our classrooms and prayers, encouraging our tamariki to spend a few moments each day reflecting, praying, and growing closer to Mary and Jesus. You might like to join your child at home in saying a decade of the Rosary together – it's a wonderful way to share faith as a whānau.



All Saints' Day – Friday 31 October 2025

This Friday, 31 October, we will celebrate All Saints' Day, a special day in the Catholic Church when we remember and honour all saints, both well-known and unknown, who have lived lives of faith, love, and service.

As part of our reflection, we will also celebrate St Mary MacKillop, our school's patron, whose dedication to education and care for children continues to inspire us today. Students will learn about the lives of different saints and think about how they can follow their example in everyday life.

We encourage families to talk with children at home about people who inspire them through acts of kindness, courage, and service.

Attendance Matters

"Education is one of the best investments a country can make to alleviate poverty..."

To ignite a passion in the earliest years means opening windows to the world." - Saint Mary MacKillop

Highlights the importance of nurturing a love of learning from the earliest years, shaping bright futures for our students.

Regular attendance at school is important to your child's success and there is a clear connection between going to school regularly and doing well in the classroom. Making sure students attend and engage in learning is a shared responsibility. As a parent, you are responsible for making sure your child attends school every day. If your child is going to be absent for any reason it is essential that you let us know as soon as possible. It is important that you contact the school office via phone, email or a message to confirm the absence and provide us with the reason. You should contact your child's teacher in advance if you have a planned absence during school time.

A new initiative from the Ministry of Education this year is the Stepped Attendance Response process – STAR. The STAR sets expectations for school, student, parent/guardian, Ministry of Education and broader system responses to student absence. It provides a series of activities that should be considered when students meet absence thresholds. In summary:

- ✓ Less than 5 days absence in a school term = Good
- ✓ Up to 10 days absence in a school term = Worrying, contact parents to discuss reasons for absence
- ✓ Up to 15 days absence in a school term = Concerning, send escalated formal notification to parents and hold a meeting
- ✓ 15 days or more absence in a school term = Serious Concern, send warning notice, arrange meeting with parents and escalate to multi agency response

We acknowledge that there are genuine reasons students may occasionally be absent. However, without regular attendance your child will struggle to make progress. If your child's attendance falls below 85% this term, we will be in touch to check in and see if there is any support that the school could provide. If the attendance continues to fall, there will be an escalation in the response.

School News

"God will provide for the future." – Saint Mary MacKillop

Encourages trust in God's guidance as we plan for the future of our school, knowing our work is part of a bigger plan.

Health Alert – Measles in Taranaki

There is currently a confirmed measles case in Taranaki. To keep our tamariki safe, please check that your child's immunisations are up to date. If your child hasn't had the MMR vaccine, please contact your GP or local clinic as soon as possible.

If your child is feeling unwell or has symptoms such as fever, cough, runny nose, or a rash, please keep them at home until they are fully better. This helps protect all our students and staff.

🌱 Māra Update! 🌱

Our little gardeners have been busy! Last week they planted the pumpkin plants and added lots of goodness to the soil — pony poo, sheep pellets, and compost. They also planted two kōwhai trees, tucked straw around the strawberries, and started putting up a trellis for the beans we planted last week - we just need a few more ties to finish the job! We also saw one of our other seeds we planted last week starting to grow!

Everything got a good watering, and the team worked super hard. They can be very proud of their mahi! 🍌🌱💚

