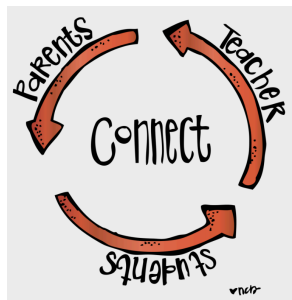




26th February 2025

Dear Parents / Caregivers,

Parent Interviews:



Thank you for the support and attendance of our recent parent interviews this week. The staff genuinely appreciate the feedback and opportunity to discuss your child(ren)'s aspirations for school and gleaning an understanding of how your child(ren) are feeling about their role in their learning. We would also like to thank you for your patience and understanding, with interviews running longer than the allocated time due to the level of engagement and open conversation. We had a 100% turnout.

Part of the preparations for the beginning of the year is in the reviewing and reporting of the School Board of Trustees Strategic Plan. One of the School's goals falls under the Maori concept of Wellbeing, Te Whare Tapa Rima. This goal aims to nurture hauora for staff, students and whanau to help our children to build healthy learning relationships. Parent Interviews are a great example of this with the focus solely on your child(ren)'s progress and achievement, while checking in on their feelings towards school. The elements that make up this model are:



Taha Whānau (Family & Social Wellbeing)

When parents, teachers, and tamariki come together to celebrate learning, it builds trust and a real sense of belonging.

Taha Hinengaro (Mental & Emotional Wellbeing)

Positive conversations help tamariki feel valued and allows our children to see that we care and are interested in them as individuals. This helps build self-belief and motivation.

Taha Wairua (Mindset)

The triangulation between parents, students and teachers shows respect to the learning that is happening and to the shared understanding of the school's values.

Taha Tinana (Physical Wellbeing)

Wellbeing isn't just about feeling good—it is about working at the environment we want for our local, small school. Parent interviews offer an opportunity to talk about routines, our duty of care and the environment we want our child(ren) to learn in.

Taha Whenua (Connection to Place & Environment)

Parent interviews allowed us to talk openly about the learning happening at Lake Tekapo school. This reinforced the importance of our local curriculum and the goals and aspirations we are wanting as a collective for our tamariki. Being a small rural school allows us the opportunity to connect with our community. This can only be achieved through the investment and ownership of our parent group.

Thank you for showing up, supporting our kura, and celebrating the mahi happening here. Your involvement helps keep our school healthy, safe and happy and a place where our tamariki can thrive.

Board Blurb: Report from the Lake Tekapo School BOT

We had our first meeting of the year last week where we pulled together plans and decisions for 2025. Part of this was reviewing and confirming our portfolio roles for each Board of Trustees member.

- Simon Tocker: Presiding Member / Finance
- Casey Jeffries: Property
- Amanda Simpson: Personnel
- Judith Speck: Communication
- Angela Marshall: Compliance / Curriculum / Staff Rep
- Simon Waymouth: Compliance / Curriculum/Principal
- Amy Richardson: Secretary (with speaking rights)

As a discussion point, an informative report from NZEI was presented on the “Principalship in a Rural School”. This national report was presented to give the Board and Staff an insight into the complexities of “small schools” and to help us generate the conversation on the strengths and weaknesses of where we see ourselves placed. This has obvious implications for the understanding and success of our school programmes and how we as a Board of Trustees are dealing with new legislation and possible programme changes. There is no denying that the importance must sit with our students being both literate and numerate, however there was a deep conversation around the qualities we want when considering the “whole child” and ensuring that we are putting our child(ren) at the centre of their learning.

A significant part of our meeting was focussed on BOT and Staff succession with the triennial BOT elections this year and the future proofing of staffing. As a Board of Trustees we are hugely conscious of this. The Board of Trustees will keep you well informed and if there are any questions, please feel free to approach your parent representatives on the Board.

Attendance:

One of the things we are continuing to focus on in 2025 is student attendance. You will hear us talking about this with you and our students regularly, as it remains a priority for the government.

If a student misses one day of school every two weeks, they miss more than a whole year of school by 16 years of age. As a parent or caregiver, you, alongside our school, play a key role in building strong habits of regular school attendance.

All students are legally required to attend school every day and it is a shared responsibility to make sure students attend and engage in learning from when they first start school.

You must let the school know if your child is going to be absent or intends to be absent for a portion of the school term for whatever reason, like a tangi or medical procedure. Family holidays or taking time off for extracurricular activities (not organised by school) are not considered acceptable reasons for being absent.

Our school continues to build a culture that fosters attendance every day by having:

- School staff who have strong relationships with students and family.
- A school culture that recognises your child and your family for who you are, where you come from and what you value.
- A school whānau that takes all practical steps to make sure your child is at school and progressing in their learning.
- A school that is safe and welcoming for everyone in our school community.

Understanding the Attendance Codes:

This year the government has changed the codes that we use to report attendance at school. Each day we mark the attendance as ½ days (am and pm) using our school management system, MUSAC Edge.

This data is now automatically reported to the MoE at the end of the school day.

Reminder:

- Please let us know by text, email or phone by 9.15am each day that your child will be absent from school
- Also include the reason for the absence e.g. sick, doctor's appointment, tangi etc. We are no longer able to accept a lack of reason for the absence and are required to follow-up.
- Unless the absence is for a set period of time that you have notified us of (e.g. funeral for 3 days) please let us know each day that your child will be absent. This is for safety reasons, so we know where your child is and not missing on the way to school. Just a text, email or phone call to say, "Still sick" is fine.

Here are the codes we now use and an explanation of each.

Present for ½ day calculations

P Present

Student is present in class. This includes supervised dual tuition with Te Kura.

L Late to class

Student is late to class. Schools set the threshold for lateness (e.g. 10 minutes) in their school policy.

A Alternative provision

Student is present in a Ministry-approved alternative provision, such as a teen parent unit, alternative education, secondary-tertiary program, health school or activity centre.

V Unsupervised exam study **S**

Student is present in an examination or unsupervised study where the student is on-site.

N Present but out of class

Student is present but out of class due to an on-site school activity (cultural or sporting event), internal appointment, temporary removal from class, or time in the sickbay.

Q Board approved offsite learning

Student is present in Board-approved off-site learning, including courses, school-organised activities, and work experience.

D Approved external appointment

Student is present but has a medical appointment which is unable to be scheduled outside of school hours (e.g. doctor or dentist and includes travel time) or is participating in court proceedings.

Justified absence

J Explained and approved

Student is absent due to explained and approved reasons (e.g. family emergencies, bereavement, representing in national / cultural events, approved exemptions, or accompanying parents on overseas diplomatic / military postings).

M Illness / Medical absence

Student is absent due to illness or medical reasons, including mental health-related absences (e.g. anxiety).

X Exam leave **S**

Student is absent studying offsite preparing for exams. NOTE: Time allocated to this code is not included in Ministry attendance calculations.

U Stood down or suspended

Student is absent due to formal stand down or suspension. This code applies to the period of the stand-down or suspension, excluding the day it was imposed.

Unjustified absence

T Truant

Student is absent without explanation or permission from a parent / caregiver (e.g. skipping class)

E Explained but not approved

Student is absent and the reason provided does not meet the school's policy for a justifiable absence (e.g. a parent states their child didn't want to attend sports day).

G Holiday during term time

Student is absent due to a holiday taken.

? Unknown (temporary)

Temporary code used when the reason for a student's absence is initially unknown. This will be updated once the reason is confirmed.

An Evening with Ruud, Geoff and Simone



Thank you so much to the parents and community members for the success of our Sharing evening focussed on our Bee Investigation. The night was both informative and enjoyable and this was made possible through your involvement.

Abuzz over bee project

CONNOR.HALEY
@timarucourier.co.nz

Lake Tekapo Primary School pupils are buzzing as they take part in a project to protect a rare species of bumblebee.

Under the guidance of New Zealand resident "Bugman" Ruud Kleinpaste, the project aims to help the rural pupils become more nature literate.

The pupils have primarily been learning about the short-haired bumblebee which was one of the four species of bees imported into New Zealand from the United Kingdom in the 1800s.

The bee is now considered extinct in its native homeland but is very much alive and well in the Mackenzie Country.

Lake Tekapo School principal Simon Waymouth said Mr Kleinpaste had contacted the school with the idea of protecting the bumblebee.

"It was 100% a surprise to have him reach out. He has done stuff in other schools and from a school's point of view,

you try hard . . . to meet learning needs.

"We've been trying to establish some sense of kaitiaki [guardianship] sustainability, so the fact they approached us has allowed us a platform to do so.

"It allows us to broaden our curriculum and have some pretty high calibre people delivering the science component to our teaching."

The programme was also locally funded. A local man, Dennis Viehland, had been putting money into having more science in schools, which allowed Lake Tekapo Primary to get access to the Bugman.

Mr Waymouth said three sessions had been held at the school so far.

"The first thing Ruud did was have the kids spend a day with bugs.

"He brought a variety of New Zealand bugs and that was actually acclimatising the kids to get used to bugs. Even his staff were like 'we don't want that on us'.



Busy bees . . . The "Bugman" Ruud Kleinpaste and Lake Tekapo Primary School pupils inspect a Perspex beehive. PHOTO: SUPPLIED

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Buzzing over bee project

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"It was really, really good in the sense that it was non-threatening and because he's the man that he is, by the end of the day every kid had touched the bugs. He's like a living encyclopedia. It's incredible."

The subsequent sessions included the pupils learning about wildflowers, sowing seeds and setting up a Zonda beehive (a home gardener hive) in an effort to lure the species to the school and give them a home.

The pupils also went to Aoraki/Mt Cook to visit the native area and do a biodiversity scan using the iNaturalist app so they could identify what they discovered.

The children had been very receptive of the project, Mr Waymouth said.

"They're outdoor rural kids, they are bug kids. It's right up their alley.

"The parents have welcomed it as well because it sits within that unique nature of where we are. It's been bloody good.

"It's quite nice to look at nature in terms of nature in a protection mode, not nature in a 'we need to get rid of it' mode."

On Tuesday, Mr Kleinpaste, along with Geoff Brunnsden, from the Bumblebee Conservation Trust, and Simone Smits, from the Te Manahuna Aoraki Project, gave a free, all-welcome, community talk centring on biodiversity in the Mackenzie Country.

Mr Waymouth said the plan was to have the bumblebee project running for the foreseeable future.

"We're not looking at it as a five-minute wonder.

"You don't want to be caught saying it, but often you start something, it's there, and then it falls away. What we're hoping is that through the funding and through the access to specialist knowledge, we can keep it top of the pile.

"We're starting with the bee, but I can sort of see there's going to be opportunities for other elements to creep in as well."



Humming . . . Much of the Lake Tekapo Primary School's project has been centred around the short-haired bumblebee. PHOTO: PEKKA MALINEN

Swimming Sports - Tuesday 18th March



The Mackenzie Cluster swimming sports have been scheduled for **Tuesday 18th March** at the Fairlie Pool. We will be requiring transport on the day and if you are able to assist that would be great. Information will come out as the date draws closer. Unfortunately we had to close the pool last week, but we are back with all guns

blazing and there will be a strong push on instructional swimming in our afternoon programme.

School Triathlon: Wednesday 26th March

The Staff would like to run the annual school triathlon on **Wednesday 26th March**. As we progress with plans we will let you know, We are currently selecting a small group of Year 5/6 students to compete in the South Canterbury Triathlon to be held in Timaru on Thursday 6th March. Unfortunately our desire to have this motivated group all enter has been limited due to the number of participants we are allowed.

Aorangi Crescent - A Very Busy Road.



The staff has been noticing recently more and more children biking and walking to school. This is a great part of small community living, but as we are a busy tourist town it seems only right to remind parents that safety is our number one priority.

Aorangi Crescent is like pre-covid days with the number of people using the road, both pedestrians and cars on the increase. Can we please encourage you to talk with your child(ren) about crossing at the pedestrian crossing and the main road.

The School's Policy is:

Getting to and from School Safely

Road safety is a shared responsibility and Lake Tekapo School is committed to providing a safe environment so far as is reasonably practicable. We work with relevant authorities and organisations (e.g. our local council, Waka Kotahi, and the police) to provide a road safe environment at and around the school. We also promote road safe practices for members of the school community travelling to and from school.

Road safety at and around school

The board is responsible for traffic management at Lake Tekapo School, taking into consideration school and community needs, accessibility, hazard identification, and risk management. Lake Tekapo School appreciates cooperation from our school community in ensuring a road safe environment at and around the school. Staff and visitors to the school travelling by vehicle, including parents/caregivers and whānau, are expected to follow road rules and school guidelines about driving and parking at or near the school. We communicate our expectations about road safety (including pick-up/drop-off and parking) to the school community at the start of each school year and throughout the year as required.

Travelling to and from school

Lake Tekapo School encourages students to be responsible and road safe when travelling to and from school. We consult with parents/caregivers and whānau and share any school expectations about safe travel to and from school at the beginning of the year and throughout the year as appropriate.

Dates and Planning for Term One:

- Thursday 6th March SCPSSA Triathlon
- Monday 17 March - Life Education Bus
- Tuesday 18th March - Mackenzie Swimming Sports
- Wednesday 26 March - LTS Triathlon



Swimming Transport

Family Name: _____

Dear Parents/Caregivers,

We would like to organise the parent help and transport for the Cluster Swimming Sports on Tuesday 18th March at the Fairlie Pool. If you are able to help could you please indicate this on the form below.

I am able to take a car to and from the Fairlie Pool on Tuesday 18th March for the Mackenzie Cluster Swimming Sports:

Yes ☐ No ☐

I am able to transport _____ (including own children) to and from the Fairlie Pool on Tuesday 18th March

Parent Sign: _____