



Teenaa koutou ki te whaanau o Te Kura Tuarua O Te Oko Horoi,

Dear parents and caregivers of Cambridge High School,

A very warm welcome back to everyone, I hope that you had a great break despite the on again off again nature of the weather. On an upside, it has made the transition back into work mode easier this week. We have one more long weekend before we get started and we are looking forward to filling the school with students and getting '26 underway.

There are a few start of year things to bring to your attention today:

- Start of year details
- Academic summary
- Uniform update
- 'Walled garden' and access to our network

### **Getting 2026 underway**

Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> – Teacher Only Day.

Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> – 9-12:30, Subject changes for students needing to make a change.

Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> – 9am, all Year 12 and 13 onsite for start of year assemblies and course confirmation.

Friday 30<sup>th</sup> – Poowhiri for all new staff and students. Gather in your House at 8:50am at the front of the school. If you are unsure of your House, we can help you find that on the morning.

Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> February – 8:40 – 9:40 Year 9, assembly in the new gym. Form time for all other students.

### **Academic results**

We will provide a full analysis of our academic results and the progress we made towards our strategic priorities in the coming weeks. Until then, I want to share a few headline results from our student's academic performance in 2025.

We would like to congratulate all of our students for their academic performance last year, both in the overall results and in the individual progress they made. The assessment data often masks some real student progress during their time here and an example of this is the 30% of students who made more than one year's progress in



learning each year to pass their numeracy assessment. This is also reflected in the increase in our literacy and numeracy pass rate, up 4.5% on last year to 86.1%. The high level of achievement is also seen in students achieving their NCEA qualifications at Level 1 (78.6%), Level 2 (80.2%) and Level 3 (82.4%). We are proud of the increasing trend in Merit endorsements (over five years - especially in Level 2 where we have increased by 12%) and in our Excellence endorsement rates, especially in recent years. These fantastic results highlight a learning environment that supports students to make significant progress while also providing opportunities for extension and realising more of their potential. In areas of strategic emphasis, we have made excellent progress with the lift in Literacy/Numeracy achievement, a growth in male achievement rates, especially in Level 1, and a significant lift across all year levels in the academic performance of our Maaori students. Our analysis shows that we do a great job for the youth of Cambridge, helping them to grow during their time with us and leave CHS well-prepared academically for life beyond school. Congratulations to all our students and I look forward to building on this success with you all in 2026.

### **Uniform update**

Our supplier (SAS) is working overtime to overcome freight delays, including air freighting in stock and processing regular deliveries over the long weekend to get the orders ready for families. I have been in touch directly with Year 9, 12 and 13 families and will keep liaising with them if the delay will impact the start of the year.

It is a chance to remind our community about the plan for the uniform changeover. We have an FAQ section on the school website, and the timeline is as follows:

2026 - Years 9, 12 and 13

2027 - Years 9, 10, 12 and 13 (Year 11 will be optional)

2028 - Full school in new uniform

During this changeover period we expect students to continue to wear their uniform correctly (either the new or the old version). The biggest change is in the top half as we are allowing the old version of trousers, skirts and shorts to still be worn.

Key areas to make sure we get right, especially with the summer uniform are:

- Sandal wearing. These must have backstraps that are worn up. Remember also that you will need to change into footwear for lessons in the lab or workshops for Health and Safety reasons.





- Socks and shoes. Socks are now uniform for males and females. The socks must be CHS socks (the new version of these is a huge improvement based on student feedback and comes in a pack of three). Shoes must be a plain black lace-up that is leather or leather like in appearance.
- Jackets. The new jackets are warm and waterproof, a huge improvement on the old version. This means that only school jackets may be worn and no other jackets will be necessary this year.

For full details on the uniform expectations, please visit our website. Please note that we are updating the guides early this year with students in the new uniform.

Remember that generous financial support is available to get into the new uniform, so please get in touch via the [website](#) if you require financial assistance to get into the new uniform items.

#### **‘Walled garden’ and access to our network**

There have been several news items in recent weeks about cybersafety, including a major data breach impacting the Manage My Health portal, and the introduction of a ban on Social Media accounts for under 16s in Australia. We take the safety of our network and those using it extremely seriously.

This is why, as part of our ongoing commitment to providing a safe, focused, and supportive digital learning environment for all students, our school will be introducing the **Linewize Walled Garden** from the start of the 2026 school year. This is an important step in strengthening our cyber safety systems and ensuring every student's device is “learning-ready” when used on the school network.

#### **What is the Walled Garden?**

The **Walled Garden** is a feature of Linewize's school safety ecosystem that checks whether a student's device has the **Linewize Connect** software installed and running when it attempts to access our school network.

- If the software is not installed, the device is **redirected to a download page** so students can install Linewize Connect before accessing the internet.
- This ensures that all BYOD devices meet the school's requirements for online safety and visibility during learning.



### Why are we introducing this?

#### **1. To support better learning in class**

Linewize provides teachers with tools that help maintain focused, distraction-free learning environments. Teachers can:

- Guide students toward the correct online resources
- Monitor screens during lessons
- Reduce off-task browsing

These capabilities help ensure technology enhances learning rather than detracting from it.

#### **2. To strengthen student online safety**

Linewize Connect is part of a nationally used cyber-safety platform designed to protect students from harmful or inappropriate content. It:

- Filters internet activity
- Detects risky behaviour
- Provides real-time alerts where needed

This ensures students remain safe on the school network and supports our duty of care.

#### **3. To ensure consistent digital expectations for all BYOD devices**

By requiring the Connect software, we ensure:

- Every BYOD device is compliant with our school's safety settings
- Students cannot bypass filtering, even on hotspots
- All learning devices operate consistently during school hours

#### **4. To protect student privacy**

It's important to reassure families that:

- Monitoring and filtering **occur only on the school network**
- Once off-site or outside school hours, the software does **not** monitor or filter activity. These settings align with common practice in NZ schools using Linewize.





- More information is available here:
  - About Linewize by Qoria: <https://linewize.co.nz/>
  - About Qoria: <https://qoria.com/>
  - Privacy Policy: <https://qoria.com/privacy>

### **What does this mean for students?**

When students connect their BYOD device to the school network for the first time after the change:

- If Linewize Connect is already installed and running, nothing will change - they will connect normally.
- If it is not installed, the device will automatically redirect to the installer page and require installation before continuing.

### **Benefits for Parents & Whaanau**

- Greater assurance that students are accessing safe and appropriate content while learning
- Improved learning focus and reduced distractions in class
- A system widely used across NZ schools, designed to safeguard thousands of tamariki every day.

### **Next Steps**

The Linewize Connect software rollout will form part of the Year 9 BYOD induction session on Friday 30 January – students should have their devices with them on this day.

For those using Windows or Chromebook devices, you are encouraged to use this link to download the software ahead of arriving at school:

<https://linewize.co.nz/connect-for-laptops> Our IT team will be available to assist students who need support.

If you have any questions about the Walled Garden or digital safety at our school, please get in touch – we're happy to help.

Kind regards

Nga mihi nui

**Greg Thornton**