

Dear Parents / Caregivers
Kia ora e te whaanau

We have arrived at the end of Term 3. Spring is in the air, senior students are back on site and Spirit week is going really well. I hope that our senior students have received valuable feedback after their exams and are well-positioned to finish their portfolio and practical work. They now have a good opportunity to work on that feedback and prepare for a strong finish to the year in Term 4. I hope that you can also manage some downtime as a family over the next couple of weeks and come back refreshed.

Here is what we will cover today as we wrap up the term and prepare for the upcoming prizegivings:

- Whare211
- International student experience and homestay opportunities
- Paimarire and ceremony at Te Koo Utu
- Prizegiving season
- Property – S block update
- Maintenance over the break
- Summer uniform reminder

Whare211

Rotary Cambridge is hosting an event for the youth of Cambridge. They have worked with our student leaders to put on a great night of music at the Hautapu Junior Rugby Club. It is from 7-10pm on Saturday 23rd September. Tickets are limited, so visit [here](#) to purchase your ticket today. This is the first of a series of events planned for the Rotary Teen club, so keep an eye out for more positive, youth-friendly events.

International student experience and homestay opportunities

I have had a bit to do with our international students this year, through coaching football and international school fairs. It is fantastic to hear from them about how valuable it is to live in Cambridge and receiving a high-quality New Zealand education. For so many of them living with a family and studying in Cambridge formative and a significant experience. We are very fortunate to have families who make this experience special for the students. I want to thank them for all they do for these students over their stay with us, making the students feel welcome and a part of our NZ life. We are always looking for more families and encourage you to get in touch with the [school](#) if you are interested. We can talk you through more of what is involved and even introduce you to some of the wonderful students who join us each year from a wide range of different countries.

Paimarire and ceremony at Te Koo Utu

On 14th October our mana whenua, Ngaati Korokii Kahukura, hosted a ceremony on the shores of Lake Te Koo Utu. This was timed to coincide with te wiki o te reo Maaori. It was wonderful to be a part of a ceremony which has happened on that site for more than 140 years. Ngaati Korokii Kahukura iwi representative and spokesperson Karaitiana Tamatea spoke of the time when Kiingi Taawhiao (the second Maaori King from 1860 to 1894) would gather beside the lake and start the day with the same prayer that his ancestors were using on this morning. It was a time of pain and sorrow for Kiingi Taawhiao due to the land wars and land confiscations. As a result, Kiingi Taawhiao turned to the karakia of the Paimarire religion, gifted to him by Te Ua Haumeene of Taranaki, for strength. He would also use the healing properties of the water (Te Koo Utu is to scoop the water) and referred to the area as Te Oko Horoi (the washbowl of sorrow). Karaitiana shared that what was once a washbowl of sorrow has now become a washbowl of celebration with the work that is being done in the schools in our community. There is now much to celebrate in our future together, sharing the stories of the past so that together we can strengthen the opportunities for our future – the youth in Cambridge. It is from this connection with mana whenua that we get our house stories, sharing in the deep roots in this place and using the concept of the washbowl of celebration to explore ways that the youth can work together in the shaping of the future of Cambridge. For more information on these stories please visit the [school website](#).

Prizegiving update

This is a reminder that we come back into the prizegiving season in Term 4. The Arts, Sports and Ngaa Poutiaki evenings are in week 2. We will have our final school assembly on 30 October and the full senior prizegiving on Tuesday 31st October at 7pm. This is a different format in the new location of the new gym. It will be a wonderful showcase of our very talented students with performances and awards. I encourage you to put it in your diaries even if you are not a prize recipient – it will be a great celebration of our students' successes.

Property – S block update

This building really is taking shape nicely and is on track to be completed and blessed before Christmas ready for use at the start of 2024. I have attached some photos from the exterior of the S block construction. So that you are aware, we will have Music, Whare Tautoko and our Careers and Gateways programmes on the lower level. On the top floor we will house Art, Digitech and some general teaching spaces. There are some wonderful new features to look forward to such as an internal courtyard, where music students can easily perform, and a café style part to the Gateway area for students to study retail courses and prepare to sell coffee and food for our community events. I will share more photos of the inside of the rooms once we have them in a more presentable state.

Maintenance over the break

On the topic of property, we have some maintenance to complete over the break. This will involve a power outage, driveway maintenance, and KAMAR and Wi-Fi upgrades. This should only impact parts of the first week and we apologise in advance if this causes any disruption for you.

Summer uniform reminder

The wearing of our uniform has been excellent this term and it makes a real difference around the place, so thank you for your support with this. With the weather improving it prompts me to remind you all that it we change to summer uniform next term. Please visit the [school website](#) for full details on the uniform. It is important to highlight a couple of things. Sandals need to have a back strap and be plain black or brown either in canvass or leather (or leather look). Alongside this, we need to stress the importance of wearing shoes in a Science lab and Technology workshop. This is a Health and Safety concern and students must bring a change of footwear to take part in lessons in these rooms, for their own safety. Also, remember that we have a range of school hats for students to wear and protect themselves against the summer sun.

Thank you to everyone for a very successful term. Thank you for the many ways in which our staff, coaches, managers, parents and students have approached all that CHS has to offer and made the most of the outstanding holistic learning environment we provide here. I look forward to seeing you again next term, when the Warriors are NRL champions, the All Blacks are in the quarter finals and a decent summer is upon us – not like that wet nonsense we endured last season.

Kind regards
Ngaa mihi nui

Greg Thornton
Principal