Newsletter

Maniototo Area School

November 2026

Kia ora e te whānau

We're closing in on the last few weeks of school and there's no sign of slowing up! There are a range of exciting events and activities that will keep the energy up through to the end of the year.

There's much to be proud of and as you'll see in this newsletter. Maniototo students continue to achieve at a high level across a wide range of areas.

We had a very nice Leavers Assembly last week. We recognised our Year 13 students as they complete their school education. It was lovely to read testimonials from staff about the talents, achievements and personal qualities of our students. It was a great sight as our leavers walked the path to the bell, getting high fives and cheers along the way. The ringing of the bell and the subsequent haka was a poignant and fitting end to the day. Congratulations to everyone for making it a special day.

The Primary school enjoyed a very successful Athletic Sports last week. Everybody gave it their best shot and had a fun day. Thank you to all staff and parent helpers who made the day a success. Congratulations and best of luck to the students who will travel to Mosgiel next week for the Otago Championships.

Speaking of excitement... Pet Day was a resounding success with a fantastic array of animals on show. Thank you to all parents and caregivers for supporting the children to take part. A unique and enjoyable day!

It's exam time for Year 11-13 students. Following on from some excellent internal assessment results I wish everyone the best as they get through their exams. Stick to your study plan, get plenty of sleep and do your best!

I'm looking forward to a busy and fun next four weeks, with camps, end of year trips and prizegivings coming up. Let's keep our standards high and finish the year in great shape!

Ngā mihi mahana

Andy Hunter



Maniototo Area School

Leavers Assembly











Our Year 13's have had their final day. We had a special Leavers assembly in which they were each presented with a pounamu toki.

We wish them all the best for exams and their future plans. Thank you for all you have contributed to MAS.

Writing Success

We are incredibly proud to congratulate Nadia Tan and Florence Dowling on their remarkable achievements in the recent Queenstown Writers Festival Writing Competition.

Nadia was awarded First Place in the Rangitahi Category (Years 9-13) for her compelling story, Chrysalis. This outstanding achievement reflects Nadia's creativity, dedication, and talent as a writer. Her winning story has been published on the Queenstown Writers Festival website and can be read here: https://qtwritersfestival.nz/2026-winner-chrysalis/

Florence was also recognised for her writing, receiving a Highly Commended award in the Tamariki Category (Years 1-8) for her wonderfully titled story, The Mysterious Snot Smear. *(published on the following page)*

These results are a testament to the imagination, hard work, and storytelling ability of both students. We are thrilled to see their talents acknowledged on such a prestigious platform and look forward to reading more of their creative work in the future.

Maniototo Area School

The Mysterious Snot Smear *By Florence Dowling*

The spring breeze nipped gently at Violet's arms, carrying the crisp scent of fresh rain, as she climbed up the crooked path. At 13 years old, Violet still had the fat cheeks of a little girl and a halo of tangled curls that she refused to brush. But her sudden growth spurts had stretched out her limbs, enabling her to match her mothers height.

She was glad to be outside at last. A heavy downpour had kept her barricaded inside her parents' small house for hours. In that agonizingly long time, she had been confined in her bedroom, her eyes glued to the glowing screen of her phone and trapped in an endless cycle of doom-scrolling. Violet hadn't even noticed when the deafening drumbeat of rain finally eased, fading from fierce lashes against the window to a soft drip falling from the eaves of the house. Once her eyes ached and everything blurred, she tossed the device and tumbled off the bed. Violet pushed open the squeaky gate and swerved onto her favourite track.

She climbed higher and higher up the unkempt path. The wet earth squelched beneath her feet and the leaves overhead rustled, dropping stray raindrops that glistened on the earth.

Violet suddenly blinked, realising that she had wandered off the trail and come to a point where the trees had parted at a peculiar angle. Curious, she peeked through the trees. Nestled in a hollow of interwoven branches and moss, sat a nest twice the size of a wagon wheel. Resting right in the centre was a colossal egg, its shell the colour of pearls and shimmering with streaks of silver that made the egg look otherworldly. Violet froze, her breath catching. She stared in fascination at the egg, wondering what could possibly be inside something that huge.

She stroked its smooth surface with a gentle finger, and a sharp tink echoed all around her. Violet quickly pulled her finger away as a fine, dark line zig-zagged into a web of jagged cracks. The gap widened, allowing a tiny leg to shoot through the gap, followed by a trail of glowing dust. With a crunch, the foot pulled away, exploding the shell into a shimmering bomb of silver light. Curled within the remaining pieces, was a serpentine creature, looking as if it was made from starlight and constellations. Instead of scales, its body was covered in a soft, midnight blue fuzz. The hatchling uncoiled slowly, pressing its tiny, multi-toed feet against the edge of the nest, and opening its mouth to form a yawn. Its glossy black eyes darted to Violet, before it rolled onto its back, curling its chubby legs and revealing an amethyst purple belly.

It then let out a low purr, before trotting up to Violet and nudging her ankle with a wet snout, leaving a glittery trail of snot on her socks. Violet felt a rush of excitement. Her heart pounded in her chest and a rush of heat hit her. The forest tilted and every noise was replaced by a high-pitch ringing, as she collapsed.

Eventually, Violet's consciousness drifted back and the heavy brain-fog cleared. She looked around bewildered and dazed. Any trace of the hatchling had vanished. Had it flown away? Or had it been a day-dream? The logical answer was a day-dream, but as Violet pushed herself off the damp forest floor, she saw a glimpse of glitter. Smeared across her sock was sparkling snot that shone brightly. There was no mistaking that that was the snot of the hatchling, proving that the creature wasn't her imagination. It will be my secret, Violet thought, although nobody would ever believe me anyway.

Maniototo Area School

Our Level 1 and Level 2 NZQA Art students completed their folio boards, marking the culmination of months of creativity, dedication, and hard work.
We are incredibly proud of the commitment, resilience, and artistic skill our students have demonstrated throughout the year.
Congratulations to all of our students on reaching this significant milestone. We wish them every success as their portfolios are submitted for assessment.

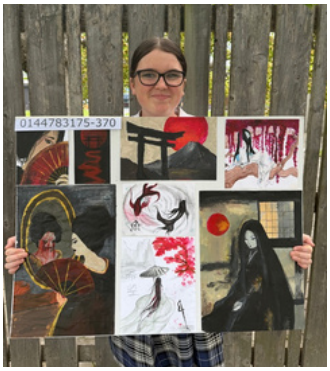




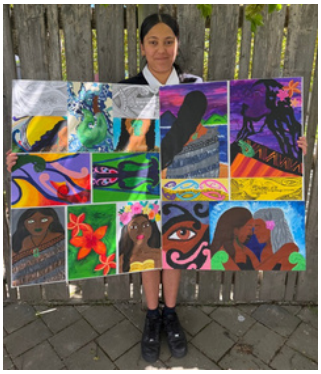


















Maniototo Area School

2026 Maniototo Primary School Sports Results

Last Friday, our community came together for a fantastic day of sportsmanship and spirit as five local schools - MAS alongside St John's (St J), Strath Taieri (ST), Macraes (M), and Poolburn (P) - brought around 250 children together for the 99th Maniototo Junior Athletics Day.

Under 8
Girls: 1st Willow Eketone (St J), 2nd Ruby Dodds (St J), 3rd= Makaela Nicholl (P) & Imogen Weir (MAS)
Boys: 1st Fergus Smith (St J), 2nd Cyrus Clarkson (M). 3rd= Wade Watson (MAS) & Bran Pyle (P)

Under 9
Girls: 1st Greta Wilson (ST), 2nd Stella Dykes (ST), 3rd Belle Stevenson (ST)
Boys: 1st Blake Andrews (MAS), 2nd Ben Rutherford (P), 3rd George Love (St J)

Under 10
Grils: 1st Frankie Pyle (P), 2nd Izzy Eketone (StJ), 3rd Hazel Peddie (M)
Boys: 1st Arthur Wilson (ST), 2nd Jimmy Jeffries (StJ), 3rd Oscar Jeffries (St J)

Under 11
Girls: 1st Abigale Graham (MAS), 2nd Isla Rutherford (P), 3rd Autumn Forbes (MAS)
Boys: 1st Max Stevenson (ST), 2nd Chrysler Houpapa (MAS), 3rd Riley Stevenson (ST)

Under 12
Girls: 1st Olivia Ross (P), 2nd= Juliette Dowling (St J) & Mackenzie Davis (MAS)
Boys: 1st Jazreel Bani (M), 2nd Toby McFadyen-Beck (MAS), 3rd George Dykes (ST)

Under 13
Girls: 1st Thalia Hepi (MAS), 2nd= OSharne Huriwai-Kirk & Olivia (Poppy) Ross (P)
Boys: 1st Edward Wilson (ST), 2nd Sam Hore (MAS), 3rd Chalrie Norman (MAS)

13 & Over
Girls: 1st Aubree Mulholland (MAS), 2nd Kaylah McAuley (St J), 3rd Nikita Wilson (MAS)
Boys: 1st Xavier Love (St J), 2nd Joshua Barroga (St J), 3rd JR Buragay (MAS)

Matchett Cup
1st Max Stevenson (ST) 34 pts, 2nd Arthur Wilson (ST) 33 pts, 3rd Blake Andrews (MAS) 32 pts

McSkimming Cup
1st= Thalia Hepi (MAS) 40 pts & Xavier Love (St J) 40 pts, 3rd= Olivia Ross (P) 30 pts & Edward Wilson (ST) 30 pts

House Shield
1st Strath Taieri (Green), 2nd MAS (Garibaldi), 3rd St John's (O'Neill)

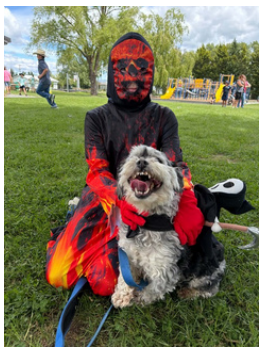
Congratulations to these MAS students that have been selected to represent the Maniototo at the Otago Champs: Sam Hore, Briella Graham, Kahu Houpapa, Abbie Graham, Autumn Forbes, Chrysler Houpapa, Toby McFadyen-Beck, Thalia Hepi, OSharne Huriwai-Kirk, Aubree Mulholland, Nikita Wilson, Rose-May Poihakena-Jackson, Skylah Baddock, Mackenzie Davis, Richard Wade, Blake Andrews, Charlie Norman & Kora-Lee Martin

Thank you to everyone who helped organise and run this special community tradition - we are looking forward to making history at our landmark 100th event in 2027.

Maniototo Area School

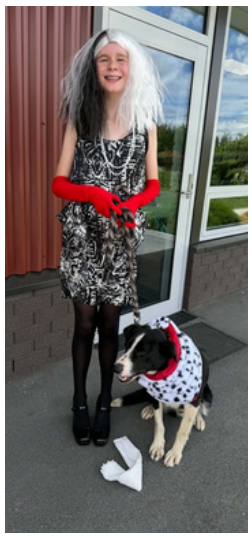
Pet Day





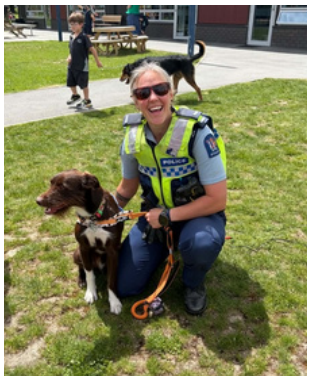













Maniototo Area School

2027 Term Dates

Term 1
Monday 1st February - Friday 9 April 2027
Public holidays: Waitangi Day observed - Monday 8 February
Otago Anniversary Day - Monday 22 March
Easter: Good Friday – 26 March, Easter Monday – 29 March, Easter Tuesday – 30 March

Term 2
Tuesday 27 April - Friday 2 July 2027
Public holidays: King's Birthday – Monday 7 June
Matariki – Friday 25 June

Term 3
Monday 19 July - Friday 24 September 2027

Term 4
Monday 11 October - Tuesday 14 December 2027
Public holiday: Labour Day – Monday 25 October



Maniototo Area School

Billy Laing Swimming Lessons

27th Dec - 31st Dec 2026
Ranfurly Swimming Pool

For those that are new to these lessons Billy has been providing swimming lessons in the Maniototo for 25+ years.
Your child will be put into groups depending on their ability to swim.

Stronger more capable swimmers will have one lesson per day (usually early morning for an hour) and for those starting out with strokes / learning to float or new to swimming/water these children will have two shorter lessons per day.
Lessons go for 5 days.

For more information or to enrol your child/children please text Geraldine Dowling 0274859693 Or Facebook messenger



Cricket

Junior cricket skills for year 0-2 starting Thursday 19th November after school at MAS turf.

Please contact Sara O'Neill on 027 823 3418 to register your interest.

Important Dates

13 November - Teacher Only Day **(School is Closed)**
16 November - Have a Go Day (Yr 9 & 10)
17 November - Otago Primary Athletics (Mosgiel)
18 November - Year 8 Orientation Day & BOT Meeting
19 November - Cavalcade Fundraising Meeting 3.15pm
20 November - Have a Go Day (Yr 9 & 10)
26 & 27 November - Year 9 & 10 Exams
30 November - Leavers Dinner
1-4 December Year 9 Camp
2 December - BOT Meeting
2-4 December Year 10 Rail Trail
3 December - Primary School Trip to Dunedin
4 December - Year 8 Graduation
7 December - Year 9 & 10 Golf
9 December - Secondary School Prizegiving (7pm)
10 December - Primary Prizegiving (12 noon)

New Zealand Education Excellence Awards | Ngā Tohu Kairangi Mātauranga o Aotearoa
Winner 2026

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MANIOTOTO AREA SCHOOL
COMMUNITY EVENT
SOCIAL TOUCH
Get Active
Have Fun
Be Part of It
A COMMUNITY ACTIVITY HOSTED BY
MANIOTOTO AREA SCHOOL
LOCATION
MAS Fields
DATES
Wednesday 18th, 25th November,
2nd, 9th, 16th December
GAME START
from 6pm onwards
TOUCH
ENTRY FEE
$120
(helpful if you could provide
your own ref)
Contact Geraldine Duncan
at jnrsports@maniototo.school.nz
for an entry form or text on 0273272408
All welcome – players, friends, whānau!
SUPPORT OUR SCHOOL | BUILDING A STRONGER COMMUNITY

NEW ZEALAND'S ONLY HUMAN VERSUS HORSE RACE



ONLY FOOLS AND HORSES

A race between two legs and four.

6 MARCH 2027

Wedderburn, Maniototo · Central Otago

40KM	24KM	16KM
Horse vs human race	Fun run / ride	Walk

Run, ride or walk across private high country. Fundraising for Maniototo Area School.

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