
Newsletter

Maniototo Area School

MAY 2026

Dear parents and caregivers,

It has been an eventful few weeks at Maniototo Area School.

Two weeks ago, we were advised that we had been nominated for an Excellence in Education Award and named among the top ten schools in New Zealand. These new awards celebrate schools making an exceptional difference for learners. We were nominated and shortlisted in the Attendance and Engagement category.

This recognition reflects the deep commitment of our staff, Board of Trustees, and wider school community to improving attendance and engagement for our students. In particular, our secondary school initiatives were acknowledged, including the development of the Year 10 STRIVE programme, breakfast initiatives, support for corequisites, and the positive shift in school culture. Together, these have made a significant difference for our learners.

Last week, we were delighted to learn that we have now been named among the top three schools nationally. We have been invited to attend the inaugural awards ceremony in Wellington on 24 June. We are incredibly honoured to be recognised in such a prestigious event – not bad for a little school in Ranfurly!

This week, we also welcome the Education Review Office to the school. We look forward to working alongside our Evaluation Partner, Michelle Irving, as we reflect on the school's progress, performance, and future next steps.

In addition, this week is our Open Night – an important opportunity to showcase the wonderful range of opportunities available to students at Maniototo Area School.

In the midst of all of this, I have also announced my decision to resign as Principal at the end of Term 2. This has been an incredibly difficult decision to make, but I leave knowing the school is in excellent heart and will be a real gift for the next Principal. I will begin a new role as Leadership Advisor with the Ministry of Education at the start of Term 3.

There will be time for farewells in the final weeks of term, but I do want to acknowledge the incredible support our school has received from the community throughout this term. It has meant a great deal to both staff and students.

Ngā mihi,
Melissa Bell - Principal

Maniototo Area School



Year 9 Music

Year 9 Music has started on a high note in 2026. After learning about the evolution of musical genres throughout the 20th century – culminating in an end-of-term class performance where each group presented a medley of two songs from a chosen genre – students are now further developing their practical skills.

This term began with a study of the elements of music, including dynamics, rhythm, melody, harmony, and timbre. Students are now applying this knowledge through learning and performing on a chosen instrument.

The Technology Block has come alive with the sound of music, with drum beats, keyboards, ukuleles, guitars, and xylophones all jamming together. The musical synergy within the class has been remarkable, with students playing rhythmically and accurately, complementing one another and working as a team. If ever there was an opportunity for a whole-class band, this would be it.

It has been a fantastic start to our secondary music option at Maniototo Area School.

Maniototo Area School

Maniototo Voices

Last week saw the launch of our latest musical opportunity – Maniototo Voices. Following on from the success of “Music Club” last year, Maniototo Voices is an a cappella group where students learn how to harmonise and use their voices to create impactful musical performances.

A cappella singing offers many benefits. The voice is a simple instrument that can be taken anywhere, and singing without instrumental accompaniment encourages students to truly listen to one another and perform as a cohesive group. It provides opportunities to develop precision in pitch, harmony, and rhythm, while also building understanding of musical concepts such as keys and scales.

Most importantly, singing a cappella is a lot of fun and a wonderful opportunity to use our voices creatively.

Maniototo Voices is open to students from Year 6 and above who are enthusiastic singers, willing to commit to weekly Tuesday lunchtime practices, and keen to work towards public performances.

Singing Lessons: Find Your Voice

Once again in 2026, Mrs Sillibourne is offering vocal coaching for students wishing to further develop their solo singing skills. A limited number of places are available for committed singers who would like to build the confidence and ability to perform publicly.

Students are also encouraged to enter the Alexandra Performing Arts Competitions later this year.

These lessons are provided free of charge for secondary students at Maniototo Area School and are subject to Mrs Sillibourne’s availability.

There are currently two places available, with lessons running at 4.00pm on Thursdays or Fridays. Please contact Mrs Sillibourne if you would like more information or to be added to the waiting list.

Junior school students interested in singing are encouraged to begin by joining Maniototo Voices, our a cappella group.

Maniototo Area School

Pink Shirt Day

On Friday, May 15th, our school turned into a sea of pink! More than just a dress-up day, Pink Shirt Day was a powerful stand against bullying and a commitment to spreading kindness across our community.

Highlights of the day included:

- Strike-a-pose moments in the photo booth.
- A high-energy game of musical statues at lunch.
- Our t-shirt design competition, which featured so many fabulous entries it was nearly impossible to judge!

A massive shout-out to everyone who participated, and a special thank you to our Subcommittee (Jacob, Bonnie, Cyrus, Bede, Sam, Aubree, Reuben, and Archie) for organizing such fun activities and helping create a positive and inclusive event.

T-Shirt Design Winners: Myles Crutchley, Kaylee Graham, Blake Andrews, Briella Graham, Hudson Crutchley, Lucas Knox, Abbie Graham, JR Buragay, Lexi McFadyen-Beck, Mahalia Tapatu



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Year 7 & 8 ANZAC Day Writing



Duty calls

Glancing at my fob, the metallic hands read
nine.
Make-shift bandages with blood seeping
through.
Animal sounding yelps as victims can no longer
withstand the pain,
Pale faces stare at me under the flickering
lights.
Some as white as snow.

By evening 557 casualties, some dead, some
barely holding on.
Bones exposed, open wounds and unstoppable
bleeding.
More keep coming,
I feel so inadequate.
The soldiers are as tough as barbed wire, never
letting on how bad the pain is.

There is never a shortage of miserable sights,
Everywhere you look, rows of injured soldiers.
In the hospital ship, it is crammed, cold and
catastrophic.
Boom! Bang! Hearing continuous gun fire.
I feel crisp, dried up blood as I cut the heavy
tunic amidst the chaos,
Anything to tide us over when the bandages run
short.
Smelling the musky, damp wood lining the ship.

We use the last bandage.
I slash a section from my skirt and stuff it,
Attempting to bog the hole in a soldier's arm
2am finally, finishing my never-ending shift.
After a long day with no stopping I've earned a
break,
A watery cup of tea and a hard biscuit.
I am Aubree Mulholland, a nurse on the hospital
ship and this is my Gallipoli.

The Silent Sniper

In the battlefields, silent and still
Camouflaged in the bushes,
He waits for the kill.
Hidden low where bushes sway
Billy Sing would watch and stay.
Silent through the darkest night,
Waiting for the morning light.
On the hills with careful aim,
the sniper builds his fearful aim.

Work from 1am to the darkest night,
pushing on till the morning light.
Never shot after the sun is down,
waiting through the silence without a sound.
They never fire at stretcher bearers,
Angels moving in chaos,
a quiet pause within the night.

Crack! Went the rifle rings out in the night,
a sniper hidden out of sight.
Silent sniper stayed so still,
Hidden high upon the hill.
Calm and cold his careful aim,
No need for glory neither for fame.
The wind whispered through the bushes deep,
while hidden low he would not sleep.
Billy Sing waited calm and still,
hidden deep upon the hill.

Fifty seven years on, a single shot still brings shame,
While memories of war still burned like flames.
Silent sniper in the night, hidden far from soldier sight.
Bushes bending in the breeze,
Moving softly in the trees.
The sharp smell of smoke filled the air,
Cold and muddy trenches everywhere.
His eyes locked hard across the land,
Rifle steady in his hand.
Dust and ash blew through the sky,
As wounded soldiers crawled nearby.

My name is Billy Sing.
This is my Gallipoli.



Maniototo Area School

Area School Tournament

Last week students from MAS competed in another year of the South of the South Area Schools tournament. This year's tourney took place in Roxburgh who welcomed us in with an impressive Pōwhiri before it was time to get stuck into the first round of the competition. The students showed some serious grit on each field and we saw particular success in the girl's basketball who placed a close second to Twizel and MAS were the quiz winners.

Everyone was naturally tucked out after a big day so back to accomodation to get some kai and rest before an even bigger day tomorrow. A day which proved to be even busier and more successful than the last with both the girl's and boy's volleyball placing second after a tight race to the final coming down to point difference as well as the girl's netball team reaching another final with Twizel.

Thursday wasn't quite done yet however as the annual social took place giving students a chance to catch up with fellow students from the surrounding Area Schools. Highlight has to go to Bonnie who was awarded 'player of the social' for hitting the worm across the dance room floor.

Friday saw the last round of sports and the farewell from Roxburgh as gifts were exchanged and thanks were given as we travelled back to MAS tired and proud of what students had achieved over the week. Big congratulations to our MAS Fair Play Award winners – Mahalia Tapatu and Jacob Mayo. Outstanding effort and sportsmanship from both.

We are all looking forward to next year when MAS hosts the Southern tournament and welcomes the surrounding Area Schools.

A huge congratulations to our 11 students selected to take part in National Area Schools' Tournament in Whangarei at the end of June.

This is the biggest team we have had named in the last 10 years!

Charlie Owens - Basketball, Netball
Yuan Macapondag - Volleyball
Mahalia Tapatu - Rugby and Ki o Rahi
Trisha Buragay - Volleyball
Jonty Russell - Rugby, Ki o Rahi, Football
Indi Hepi - Football, Ki o Rahi
Vlad Badillo - Volleyball
Nick Inder - Football
Jake McMillan - Basketball
Jack Kiri Kiri - Rugby and Basketball
Peyton Baddock - Rugby and Basketball

Maniototo Area School

Tertiary Open Day for Otago University and Otago Polytechnic

Students in Year 12 and 13 travelled to Dunedin to attend the University of Otago and Otago Polytechnic Open Days on 3–4 May. They planned and attended lectures that aligned with their interests, explored a wide range of programme and activity booths, and enjoyed the many free activities and food on offer. Students also toured several Halls of Residence, gaining insight into the diverse living and learning environments available.

The group shared dinner at Etrusco's, where everyone reflected on the highlights of their day. The meal was outstanding—plentiful, delicious, and for some, the standout moment of the trip.

It was wonderful to hear students talk about new areas of study they hadn't previously considered and to see their excitement about future possibilities.

A special highlight was reconnecting with ex-students and seeing how successfully they are progressing in their chosen fields. These young people give us every confidence that their future is bright as they continue their journeys.

Thank you to all the students for their enthusiasm and openness, and to the staff who supported and attended the trip.

Maniototo Rippa Tournament

The games were played in great spirit and were highly competitive, with just one point separating the scores in two of the finals, and only two points in the other.

A huge thank you to St John's School for hosting the event and Heather Dowling and Trina Steele for organising it. Thank you to the parents who marked the grounds, the coaches, and the Maniototo Rugby Club for providing the referees.

Results: Yr 3–4: MAS Yr 5–6: MAS Yr 7–8: St John's



Maniototo Area School

WESTGOLD BUTTER FUNDRAISER FOR MAS SENIOR BASKETBALL



MAS Senior Basketball are selling Westgold butter to raise funds for their new uniforms and tournament costs later in Term 3. We would love it if you could please purchase a few 250g blocks at \$5.15 each, or a carton of 40 blocks costs \$206.00, as we receive \$1.00 for every block sold.

Our goal is for each player to sell a minimum of 200 blocks each, anything extra will be the icing on the cake....or is it the butter on the scone!

We also have flyers if you would like to place one in the smoko room or the window of your business.

Please contact Donna Owens owensd@maniototo.school.nz or 021 831 583 to place an order if you've not been approached by one of our players already.

Thank you in advance for any support you can provide to our teams.

WELCOME TO OUR NEW PTA COMMITTEE

Allanah Scott - President
Kim Hope - Vice President
Amanda Davis - Treasurer
Jenny McDonald - continues as Secretary

A big thank you to everyone who came to support the PTA AGM last week and once again a huge thank you to our out going President Jenna Huddleston for all she has achieved on behalf of the PTA and for our students.

Remember to support the PTA's biggest fundraiser "The Otago Goldfields Cavalcade" next year too.

Donations agreed upon at the last meeting include: a new BBQ, \$300/student going to NZAST, \$200/term for Breakfast Club, \$200/week for Co-reg assessments, \$75 for chocolates for the Rippa tournament.

**THANK
YOU!**

Maniototo Area School

Important Dates

26 May - Secondary School Open Night, please be seated by 5.30pm

1 June - Kings Birthday (School is Closed)

3 June - BOT Meeting

7 & 8 June - Secondary Schools Otago Netball Champs

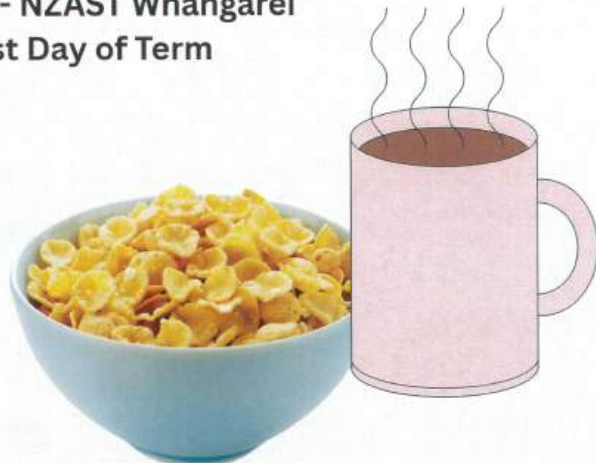
11 June - Central Otago Rippa Tournament

25 June - Primary School Production

26 June - Road Race

29 June - 2 July - NZAST Whangarei

3 July - Last Day of Term



KickStart Breakfast Programme

Breakfast Club runs each morning from 8.20am to 8.40am in the Food Tech Room, and it's open to any student who arrives without breakfast or who's simply feeling a bit hungry when they get to school.

Many students travel a long way each day, and others just don't feel like eating before they leave home – totally understandable. Starting the day with breakfast can make a real difference: it lifts energy, improves focus, and helps set students up for learning from the moment the day begins.

Breakfast Club is designed to be a warm, welcoming space where students can grab something to eat, chat with friends, and ease into the morning in a relaxed, friendly environment.

A big thank-you to everyone who has helped make our school's Breakfast Programme possible, our students are loving it!

PEOPLE CONNECTING PEOPLE
INTERNET / MOBILE / HOME PHONE - RURAL OR URBAN

Across the Otago Region, including the Maniototo.
Call our local team to find out more.

Unifone

unifone.nz 0800 894 114

2026



MANIOTOTO AREA SCHOOL OPEN NIGHT

TUESDAY 26TH MAY

Please be seated by 5.30pm
ALL WELCOME



RSVP: office@maniototo.school.nz

Concerns and Complaints Process

This information should be read alongside our **Concerns and Complaints Policy** and related policies on SchoolDocs.

OVERVIEW



You can raise concerns and complaints with our school verbally or in writing.



The school will assess and respond according to the nature of the concern or complaint.



The school will tell you how we plan to manage your concern or complaint, and let you know when the matter is closed.



HOW TO RAISE A CONCERN OR MAKE A COMPLAINT

Contact the following people at the school (verbally or in writing).

A staff member involved
(e.g. classroom teacher, head of learning area)

The principal
for serious matters

The board chair
for concerns or complaints about the principal

Another board member
for concerns or complaints about the board chair

- Concerns or complaints may be referred to a more appropriate person (e.g. senior staff, principal, board member).
- The school may ask you to put your concern or complaint in writing to help address the matter.
- You are welcome to have a support person (e.g. whānau member, friend, lawyer, union representative).
- Everyone involved is expected to respect privacy and confidentiality.



HOW THE SCHOOL MANAGES CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS

We manage concerns and complaints in a timely manner and seek to protect people's mana and dignity. We ensure:

- people are treated fairly
- those involved have the opportunity to be heard
- decision-making is unbiased.

The school assesses the concern or complaint and responds according to its nature and seriousness, and who is involved (e.g. student, staff member, principal, board member).



NOTIFICATION AND CLOSURE

We will tell you about how we plan to manage your concern or complaint, and let you know when the matter is closed.

After responding to your concern or complaint, **the school considers the matter closed.**

If you feel your concern or complaint has not been resolved after receiving a response, you may escalate the concern or complaint to the principal or board.

After the board has dealt with a matter, there is no further avenue for consideration by the school.

If you need help to understand the concerns and complaints process, please contact the school.