Aidanfield Christian School

Growing in Wisdom and Stature | Stand and be Confident

House Points

Pōtonga
133182

Tūāraki
123896

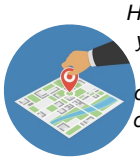
Mārangai
122037

Hauāuru
121296

School App

*** Stay Up To Date ***
*** Notify Absences ***
*** Link to our Website ***
*** School Calendar ***
Download at
www.aidanfield.apps.school.nz/

We have a committed group of parents that are available to support you in prayer. Contact Jo Dowle in confidence by emailing prayerrequest@aidanfield.school.nz



Has anything changed for you and your family this term? Moved house / changed email / contact details? Please do let us know.
office@aidanfield.school.nz

Kia ora Aidanfield Whānau

It has been a while since I last wrote a newsletter. As I have mentioned earlier – it is great to back! I need to offer a huge thank you to our team at ACS and especially Mrs Kaye Lawn, Mrs Janice Phillips and Mrs Teresa Thomson who picked up extra roles while I was on sabbatical. We are blessed to have an outstanding team of people at ACS and I never take this for granted.

AI in the school environment

The focus of my sabbatical was around how we as a school will interact with the wave of AI that is becoming so prevalent. After spending some time on this I am left with more questions than answers, but I have clarity on what some of the key questions are that need to guide our response to the inclusion of artificial intelligence into school life.

As a Christian school committed to working out our understanding of who God is and how he has called us to relate to him in community, we understand a key aspect of our task is the formation of young people – your young person. We are called to do this in partnership with our parents who hold the main responsibility for this. Therefore, a question that arises is, can young people be formed (shaped or nurtured) towards Godly relationship, character and understanding using AI tools or is this a deeply human and relational experience? We know that young people are already turning to AI tools to answer very personal questions as though AI were a person. It is not. Any AI is a machine that works on a predictive model and is shaped by those who design the parameters that each AI tool works within. The machine model is deeply infused with the values and beliefs of its designer. To what extent will this have positive and negative influence on our young people?

A deeper question relates to what it means to be human and made in the image of God. The Bible tells us we are fundamentally relational beings. We are made for relationship, and this is partly why the family unit is such a strong and valuable building block of communities. How do we protect and nurture human relationship in the face of a relentless drive to include AI tools which are essentially, deeply and always not human – no matter how human they attempt to be? I have a running coach that is fully AI and yet it 'talks' to me as though it were a person impressed with what I do or unimpressed with my meagre effort – a machine influencing my mood, my acknowledgement of effort, my progress. As an adult I see this and manage it. Children perhaps do not have the same life experience to know the difference between a machine relationship and a real one. We are called to real and deep relationships – with our God and with others. We are not called to relationships with machines. So, how do we protect the essence of being made in Gods image and the understanding of relationship?

Another aspect we need to consider is the varied age groups within our school. What might be right for adults to engage with as professionals who need efficient ways of working is not necessarily right for 12-year-olds who are still learning to learning to engage with. And what 12-year-olds use as AI tools might not be good for 5 year olds to use. Our AI conversation needs to be reflective of the varied age groups and maturity levels within the school and not just a blanket approach that applies to everyone regardless of age. This is important because our reason for being at ACS is teaching and learning. We are tasked with educating young minds. As adults we have already learned many concepts and ideas and these help structure the way we understand the world, they help shape our worldview and form the basis of how we interact with new ideas. Children do not have this depth of knowledge, wisdom and understanding and neither do they understand themselves as adults generally do. This leads to a question about what makes good learning happen.

The process of learning is well understood and has been for years. We know that good and deep learning often happens in the struggle when our minds have to tussle with a concept or idea, or when repetition and practice is needed - when we need to exercise the muscle of our mind in order for it to grow and expand. Depth of learning happens when we connect already known ideas or knowledge in our brain to new ideas and knowledge and in this, we make sense of new partly based on the old. AI often allows us to remove the struggle of the discovery journey. If we remove this struggle- how does deep learning occur? Easy is not always a gift rather a short cut with limited long-term benefit. This leaves the question - what AI tools will actually help make a difference to teaching and long term learning?

As a Christian school we are committed to truth. Truth can be a slippery concept in today's world. AI allows notions of truth to be challenged. Sometimes this is good but when an AI internet search rests on limited and untested sources of information gathered from the world wide web, the result may not be truthful or correct at all. Rather it can end up being a collation of information that lacks integrity in the first place – a misrepresentation of misrepresentations. For young people who do not yet know enough to spot things that do not make sense or do not ring true, the learning that may come from the use of AI tools becomes questionable. Our challenge is to teach in such a way as to build strong foundations. Our use of AI needs to be deeply thoughtful and well managed if we are to ensure our young ones grow in wisdom.

The questions above begins to consider some of the philosophical issues we need to work through. There are very practical ones as well. The privacy laws in New Zealand require us to think carefully about how information about our people is used and stored. My current understanding (which may change) suggests AI use involving any information related to a person, family, data or similar automatically causes us to break 4 of the principals of the Privacy Act. The Copyright Act also becomes a challenge to schools in their use of AI as well. There is also a budget implication in that we could be needing to find an extra $13 000 or more to secure a site based closed AI system to protect some of the privacy issues.

Overall, the issues are complex and require a thoughtful and considered approach to how we adopt and use AI technologies and this is the path we are on. We will not be avoiding AI in the school environment but we do need to develop policy and practice that ensures it is done safely and in a way that will help us to meet our responsibilities as a school very well. So, although this is just a quick reflection the issues we need to consider to do AI well are large. At this point I am asking our Board to work through a policy on how we will manage AI in our context. At some stage I would be interested in your thoughts on this as we frame up the ACS stance. Watch this space as more will come.

Special Character Review
We have recently enjoyed an audit process with our proprietors (CST) who did a deep dive into how we maintain and express our Christian character as a school. Their verbal feedback has been very encouraging based on what they found throughout the school. We look forward to receiving the written report in due course.

Fiji
One of our goals for the coming three years involves developing a service mindset in our young people. This is aimed at local, national and international contexts in age-appropriate ways. We have already had significant involvement with World Vision, which is a local and international focus and many of our families become involved with this expression of service. We have sent a year 5 and 6 team to Dunedin last year to work with Liberton Christian School and we are shortly to receive a team from Liberton at ACS. We also welcomed our Fiji service team back during the holidays just gone. Their trip was full of highlights and the feedback has been very positive. Enjoy the photos and commentary from this team in the newsletter and later in the school magazine. We are now considering when to repeat this journey for the next group of students who may be interested.

Finally
We are looking forward to presenting our school production in four weeks time. At the time of writing this there were 3 seats left of the 900 available over the performances. Thank you for your support! Our team and the cast have been working with amazing dedication and focus and the result will be a very enjoyable evening – we look forward to seeing you there.

Grace and peace.

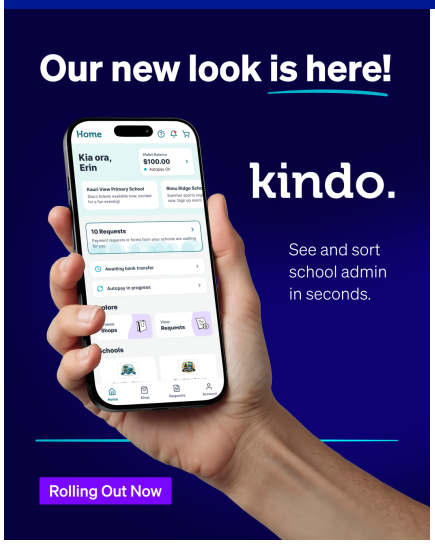
Mark Richardson
Principal – back from sabbatical!

KEY DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

21 August	**Primary PJ Breakfast**
25 August	**SWZ Winter Tournament**
26 August	**Hearing Vision Testing Y1-8**
31 August -4 September	**Book Week**
1 September	**Book Week Parade**
7 - 11 September	**Co-requisites**
9 September	**Year 9-10 Get2Go**
14 September	**ACS BOT meeting**
15 September	**Musical Festival - Y5-8 choir practice**
16-17 September	**Centrals Winter Tournament**
22-24 September	**School Production**
25 September	**Last day Term 3**
12 October	**Start of Term 4**
14 December	**Last day of school 2026**
1 February	**1st day of school 2027**



The new KINDO
Watch what's new (2 mins) 👉 https://bit.ly/4fWYaMc



ABSENCES

If your child is away for any reason, please use the School App to email absences@aidanfield.school.nz OR ring the school (03 338 8153 -option 1 preferred).
Thank you in advance

REMINDER: MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Requirements regarding Vomiting and Diarrhoea

Children with vomiting and diarrhoea must stay away from school until there has been no vomiting or diarrhoea for 48 hours.

ATTENDANCE DUES 2027

The Christian Schools Trust has confirmed attendance dues for 2027. You can view this information by heading to https://www.cst.org.nz/aidanfield-christian-school/ . If you have any questions please get in touch with Rhonda - email attdues@org.nz or ph 03 741 1123.

PRAYING PARENTS

Our faithful group of parents who pray for our school community would welcome more parents to become involved or prayer partners. Please contact Jo Dowle by emailing prayerrequests@aidanfield.school.nz

IMAGINATION STATION BANNER

News letter Banner - Support for us for the work we do with the community, was to include our banner advert in your school newsletter, we'd love your support in doing so. Please find the PDF version of our Imagination Station newsletter banner.

RELIEF TEACHERS NEEDED

ACS is keen to add to their pool of valued Relief Teachers. These would be for day relief, often at short notice within the school. If you are a registered teacher, are looking to get back into teaching, wish to have ACS as one of the schools you relieve at AND can uphold the Christian character of the school, please don't be shy - get in touch with Kaye Lawn who will be very grateful to chat with you about the possibilities. This could be for Primary or Middle School (or both). Please email kaye.lawn@aidanfield.school.nz or call in at the office to speak with her. Please also ask those friends and whānau who may be interested in this. Thank you!

WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN 2027?

A simple request. If you are changing schools next year and have not already told us officially - please do so ASAP in writing (email is fine).

We are working through our offers of place for new students in 2027, and it is very helpful to know where a space may be available through the school.

We have over 200 applications to date. Very few of our families do leave before year 10 and this looks to be the same this year. If you are making a school change please let me know: mark.richardson@aidanfield.school.nz

The Inaugural Aidanfield Fiji Middle School Service Trip 2026



So, how does one sum up what was a character growing, faith building, life changing trip? Following are excerpts from parent and student reflections from the 2026 Fiji Service trip.

"The Fiji service trip was a fantastic opportunity for students to step outside of their usual environment and experience a different culture and way of life. It encouraged them to be more independent,, adaptable and open minded while working together as a team. I think experiences like this are extremely valuable for students because they provide learning opportunities that cannot be gained in a classroom. The trip also allowed them to build friendships, confidence and life skills while creating memories and experiences that they will carry with them well beyond their school years." (Parent)

"Experiencing Fiji has deeply shaped my faith and taught me to trust God more. At first, it was difficult to adjust to the conditions, like not being able to drink tap water and not having super warm showers. Through this experience, I have become much more confident in socialising with others and trying new things. I am truly grateful to have had the opportunity to go on this service trip." (Student)

"During our trip to Fiji, one thing that really stood out to me was how grateful the people in the villages we visited were. Even though they had so much less compared to what many of us have back home, they were incredibly grateful for everything they did have. They were happy and content, and I noticed that they seemed to appreciate even the smallest things.



Seeing this made me think about my own life and how often I take things for granted. There are so many things that are just normal for me, like having food, clean water, a safe home, my family, friends and an education. I don't normally stop and think about how lucky I am to have these things because I'm so used to them being there.

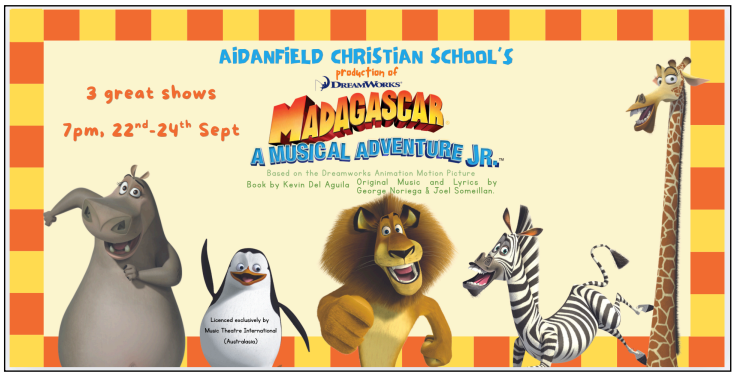
Seeing the gratitude of the people we met encouraged me to be more thankful to God for the things I have, including the small things that I might normally overlook. It also made me think more about how I pray. I've always known that I can pray to God when something big happens, but I realised that I can also turn to Him when I'm dealing with the smaller struggles and hiccups in everyday life.

Growing up, I've often heard people talk about thanking God when He performs a miracle in their lives. When I thought about miracles before, I would normally think of something really big, like someone being healed or something that seems impossible happening. But during this trip, I started to think about miracles differently. I realised that something doesn't have to be huge for it to be important or for God to be part of it. Sometimes the smaller things can still have a really meaningful place in our story. " (student)



Finally, thank you to all those who supported the trip whether you; prayed, bought pizza, came to the quiz night, sponsored a student or anything else you did to support one of our 15 young people be able to access this experience we thank you. Know that your contribution was appreciated and had an impact that may even be eternal.





Production is now only 5 weeks away, and the excitement is building.

A huge thank you for your support - we are nearly completely sold out for all three shows! The students and staff are working incredibly hard to bring this amazing show to life, and we know that you will be in for a remarkable treat.

Your child will have brought information home recently about any costume or make-up requirements. Please check in with their whānau teachers if you have any questions about this.

Some snapshots of students working hard behind the scenes









Primary news



Term 3 has started well and the Primary classes are working hard. The excitement is building for the Production and rehearsals for each Learning Community's item are well underway. We are all very excited about the PJ Breakfast.

The Junior school has been learning about animals – how to classify them into groups and what they need in terms of a habitat to survive. The **Matai 5&6** children enjoyed using the blocks, glass beads and pop sticks to make a habitat for their chosen animal.







Matai 1, 2 and 3 have been learning about instructional writing and have had lots of fun making yummy things, including jam sandwiches and jelly. We then used these experiences to write our own instructions.

In PE, we have been practicing our gymnastics skills, learning how to balance, roll and move our bodies in different ways. In Art, we have been developing our construction skills by creating different things out of paper. Check out the amazing bowls we made!

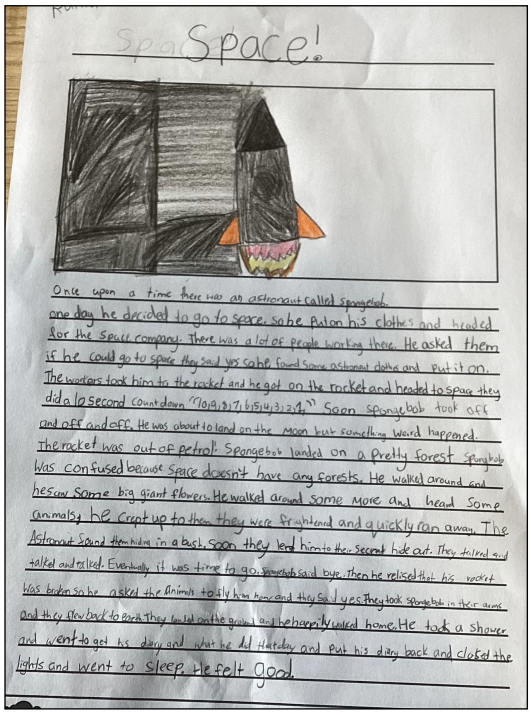


In Year 3&4 the children have been producing some very creative animal visual art work show casing their drawing skills. It's well worth looking in the Horoeka shared space to see their amazing creations. The Year 3&4's have also been writing some great narratives. We hope you enjoying reading them.








Space!

Once upon a time there was an astronaut called Spongebob.
one day he decided to go to space. So he put on his clothes and headed for the Space company. There was a lot of people working there. He asked them if he could go to space they said yes so he found some astronaut clothes and put it on. The workers took him to the rocket and he got on the rocket and headed to space they did a 10 second countdown "10,9,8,7,6,5,4,3,2,1." Soon spongebob took off and off and off. He was about to land on the moon but something weird happened. The rocket was out of petrol! Spongebob landed on a pretty forest Spongebob was confused because space doesn't have any forests. He walked around and he saw some big giant flowers. He walked around some more and heard some animals, he crept up to them they were frightened and quickly ran away. The Astronaut found them hiding in a bush. Soon they led him to their secret hide out. They talked and talked and talked. Eventually it was time to go. Spongebob said bye. Then he relised that his rocket was broken so he asked the animals to help him and they said yes they took spongebob in their arms and they flew back to earth. They landed on the ground and he happily walked home. He took a shower and went to get his diary and what he did that day and put his diary back and closed the lights and went to sleep. He felt good.

Narrative writing from Horoeka.

The young astronaut was stuck on planet Bob. His spaceship didn't have any gas. He was stuck on there. He thought of a plan to burn the flowers he found to make gas. He couldn't burn the flowers without matches. He remembered that he had matches. He found the matches easily and burnt all of the flowers. He had enough flowers to fill the gas tank for the rocket ship. He felt excited to come back home.

By Edwin Lappage.

The Move to the Land of Flowers

There once was a dog named Rocky. He lived on Earth until the humans took over all the dogs. Eventually, Rocky found a white and blue spaceship. One of the other dogs told him that he had to find a new land for the dogs to live on. So, Rocky climbed in cautiously and then he was off into the universe. Finally, Rocky saw a planet covered in beautiful flowers. He imagined all the dogs living there. Rocky went to investigate the beautiful planet. Suddenly, Rocky saw two beautiful fairies flying toward a magnificent palace. Curious, Rocky followed them. Just at that moment, one of the fairies turned and spotted Rocky. Rocky ran back to his spaceship and reported back to the other dogs on Earth. A few hours later, all the other dogs had lived in the new land. After Rocky and the other dogs explored a bit, they heard sweet voices behind them. Rocky imagined who it was. Suddenly, he remembered the fairies. Sure enough, when Rocky turned around, they were facing two beautiful fairies. "Hello, my name is Flora and this is my sister Fahrah" said one of the fairies. "We are the princesses of this land". "Where are we?" Rocky asked. "We are in the land of flowers" replied Fahrah. "Thank you for showing me this land" said Rocky. The fairies then brought the dogs to the palace and showed them a room where they would make the dogs comfortable. The dogs were happy and lived with the fairies.

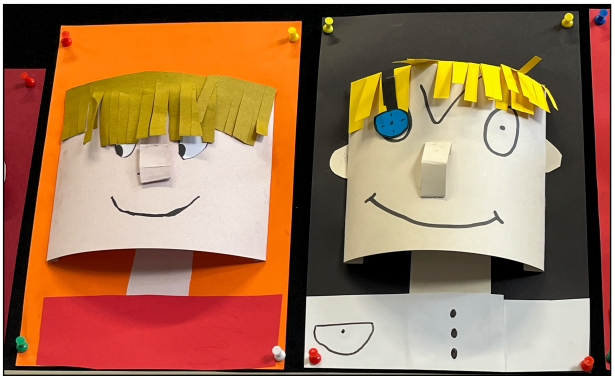
By Katie Reeves Y3 Ho4

In the Year 5&6 Learning Community they have been exploring mixed media using paper and card. They have made some very clever creations.









Sports news

Thanks to the generous support of PAACS, our Year 5-6 and Year 7-8 netball teams have received an exciting sports kit upgrade. The girls have been loving their new netball dresses and have been proudly showing them off on the courts at Ngā Puna Wai this term.





Y5-6 and Y7-8 table tennis team has captured some photos to share of the table tennis team in action through the winter sports this year! :). Loving the smiles with a great team spirit and sportsmanship.









DISCO NIGHT LAST FRIDAY

Thanks to all those who showed support at the disco last Friday. The hall was really pumping, particularly with the Junior Disco, but even the Senior one was creating a lot of heat 🙂

Lyndon McIntosh was an outstanding DJ (again) - huge thanks to his energy and expertise with the technology.

Thanks again, PAACS could not have done it without the support of teachers turning up in their tutus to dance the night away with the students - fantastic.

Maria and the sparkliest family ever - McKessars with Noah, complete with his cute wee bowtie



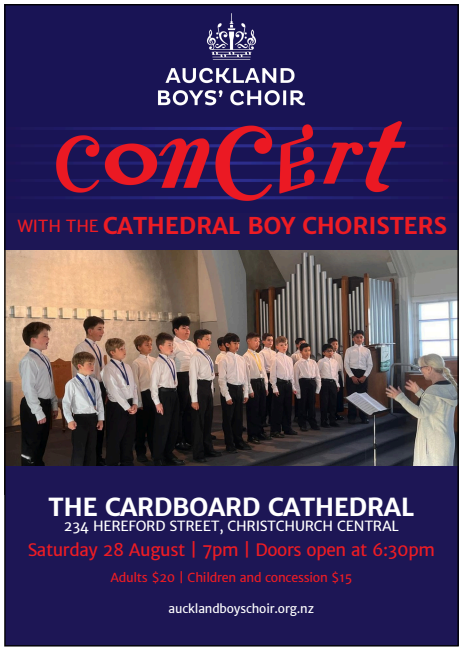


IMPORTANT REMINDER:

PLEASE DRIVE SLOWLY AS YOU EXIT THE SCHOOL

Our mission is to do something positive for the children of today not only to enhance their lives but to provide calm and peace that is absent for so many by the way of music.

This school is for all children no matter rich or poor there will be no distinction made. Parents will be able to consult privately as to their ability to pay. This will not manifest itself in their children's lives.







HARMONY SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Qualified Teachers of Modern Music:

Classes in: Keyboard Guitar Singing

Low Income Families: Gold coin donation

Group classes of 4: $10.00

Private classes: $20 per 20 minutes

MUSIC FOR THE SOUL SAVES LIVES

Please help make music accessible to every child by donating any unused guitars or keyboards.

Contact: Music School Director

Trish Vivian : 021 0691896

Email; wecaresecurity@gmail.com





Welcoming Week - Te Wiki o Manaaki is taking place across Ōtautahi Christchurch from 4-13 September 2026.

Guided by this year's theme, 'Together We Belong', 30 events will bring newcomers and established residents together to connect, learn and celebrate our city's many cultures.

Explore the full programme at ccc.govt.nz/welcomingweek or scan the poster"

The full programme and latest event information are available on the What's On Christchurch page: https://ccc.govt.nz/news-and-events/whats-on/programme/155





