

Principal Report - November 2025

Please see our school facebook page for the latest updates and photos.

Welcome

We would like to warmly welcome Katie Fouhy to our St Joseph's family. Katie will be working in the Parish, as well as within the school for an additional 5 hours per week for Term 4.

The Sacrament of Eucharist

Katie is working with the students to prepare them for this Sacrament.

Catholic Special Character External Evaluation

We have been informed that we have our Special Character External Evaluation in Term 1, 2026. Tony Shaw, the Catholic Special Character Adviser from the Catholic Diocese of Christchurch will be carrying out this review on Wednesday 25th February and Thursday 26th February. We will have a timetable for his visit nearer the time, as he is likely to meet with some proprietors, reps and parents.

Spiritus 2025 - Kelly and Bridget will attend

Spiritus NZ 2025 Dates

Spiritus will be offered on the following dates and timeframes:

Sun 23 Nov: 10.00am - 8.30pm

Mon 24 Nov: 9am - 8.30pm

Tue 25 Nov: 9am - 12.30pm

A *Porta Fidei* retreat experience will be offered throughout the Program.

Catholic Teacher Certification

Spiritus contributes to 12 credits for teachers in NZ Catholic schools (6 - Catholic Character; 6 - Spirituality).

SPIRITUS OVERVIEW

The Spiritus Programme is designed for Catholic school leaders, religious education classroom teachers, and other tagged teachers. It is also intended for parish priests, parish workers, youth ministers and others who work in Church organisations in collaboration with Catholic schools.

The Programme provides faith formation and leadership development in evangelisation, the skills and understanding to be able to apply this practically in Catholic schools and Church ministry contexts.

The Spiritus Programme has been developed by the Australian Catholic University (ACU) La Salle Academy.

School Mass

We continue to celebrate school mass regularly with Fr. Tien. Our next Mass dates are as follows: Friday 5th December and Sunday 7th December





Mary Mackillop Day

We celebrated Mary Mackillop Day on Friday 8th August. We travelled to St Joseph's School, Temuka, to celebrate Mary Mackillop Day with other catholic schools in South Canterbury. We celebrated this Catholic Feast Day together with students and staff, visited the Mary Mackillop Centre and joined in fun activities with other students.





Jubilate South Canterbury

The Hillary class had the pleasure of meeting Ken Joblin (Sacred Music Advisor for the Christchurch Diocese). He joined us at school for a rehearsal, along with his guide dog, Tait and Rory. It was a real privilege to have Ken share his time and talent with us. Tait was a crowd favourite; we couldn't believe how calm and well-behaved he was.

The following week, on 5th August, the Hillary students performed in a concert as part of the Jubilate South Canterbury, at the Sacred Heart Basilica in Timaru.

This was a fun-filled day as we connected with students from other South Canterbury Schools, visited C-Play and enjoyed Dominoes pizzas for dinner.



Bishop Michael Principals Meeting

Kelly and Bridget attended a meeting which was held in Christchurch, via zoom on 30th July. We felt inspired to listen to Bishop Michael's passion for educating young people and supporting them on their Catholic journey. He is very keen to visit students in all Catholic Schools in our Diocese.

Community Christmas Lunch

Our students are busy rehearsing Christmas Songs, ukulele and the drums. They will be performing at the Community Christmas Lunch on Tuesday 2nd December.

St Joseph's Fairlie Primary School is hiring

Want a fabulous lifestyle in the legendary Mackenzie, teaching awesome tamariki? We have the job for you! 🧡

We're looking for a passionate, enthusiastic teacher to join us in Term 1, 2026. With small class sizes and a caring team, you'll be well supported. We're after someone motivated, collaborative, and great at building relationships—with a good sense of humour too!

This role is for a multi-year level class (level negotiated with the successful applicant)



Check out our Facebook page and website to learn more about our awesome school and tamariki 🌞👧👦.

We look forward to receiving your application!

Mackenzie Athletics Day

We had an amazing Athletics Day at the Mackenzie College grounds, joined by our wonderful surrounding schools. Every student gave their best and showed fantastic effort and sportsmanship. Ka pai, St Joseph's! 🏃🏆🎉

Congratulations to Niamh and Harry who both qualified for the South Canterbury Athletics, which will be held on Tuesday 25th November.

Drumming Lessons

The Mackillop and Hillary students have started Ukulele lessons with Jasmine Shaw at school on Mondays.

Ukulele Lessons

The Hillary students have started Ukulele lessons with Yvonne Shaw at school on Fridays.

Pet Day

Wow, what an amazing turnout for our Pet Day! A huge thank you to everyone in our community who came along - our visitors, judges, talented cake makers, the pipe band, supportive parents, and of course, our wonderful students. You made us so proud with the way you cared for your pets and showed such creativity in your crafts.

A special shout out to Jess Whittaker, our number one event planner, for all her hard work in bringing the day together. A massive thank you to Vicky Simpson for capturing our day with her incredible photography!

Our students are authors 📖

Over the last term, our children have been busy writing their very own fairy tales with Mrs McKenzie. They learnt about the elements of a fairy tale, how to write a strong introduction, develop characters, and craft stories suited to their audience's age and interests.

Working with a buddy, they wrote, illustrated, and published their stories. All of the groups met our publishing deadline, and Mrs McKenzie was so proud to send a copy of their fairy tales home on Friday, perfectly timed for her last day before starting maternity leave.

What an amazing accomplishment! 🌟

We also have a copy of the fairy tales in our school library if you'd like to have a read.

Sensory Garden

Our sensory garden is coming together 🌱

We now have the seeding planted, plants in, pavers laid, water pipes installed, a brand new sandpit and mud kitchen, as well as a bug hotel and a beautiful bench kindly commissioned for us by Louise Wynn. There's just a little planting and staining left to go for this stage of the project.

We can't thank our parents and students enough for the incredible effort, hard work, and hours they've put into creating this special space. ❤️

Enviroschools Grant Application

Courtney McKenzie and the students have been working on devising a plan for a sensory garden with Debbie Eddington from Environment Canterbury. Together, they submitted an application for \$5000 from the Enviro School Action Fund to go towards our sensory garden. We were successful, with the money needing to be spent by the end of this year. A shopping trip to Timaru is planned for this Friday to purchase supplies. A special thank you to Courtney Mackenzie for her time and commitment to developing this project with our students. With Courtney going on Maternity leave, we will be looking for a (Project Manager) to take over and continue to develop this area.

Science Roadshow

A few weeks ago our seniors headed to Timaru for the Science Roadshow 🧪

They had a great time exploring all the hands-on exhibits and watching some awesome live experiments. Highlights included a few of our students getting up to take part in the

challenges and the exciting balloon demonstration, definitely a crowd favourite! Thanks to the Science Roadshow team for an awesome day!

Power Off Day

As part of the recent Power Off Day, St Joseph's students enjoyed a delicious hot chocolate at the Fairlie Bakehouse ☕ before heading to the playground for some fun and laughter in the sunshine! It was a wonderful way to spend our morning tea time, connecting, playing, and making memories together with no screens in sight! Thank you Fairlie Bakehouse 🙏

Fairlie Early Learners Visit

Some of our junior students visited Fairlie Early Learners last Friday 🌟 Our students who have recently transitioned to St Joseph's School thoroughly enjoyed reconnecting with their friends and teachers, sharing stories about their time at school, and proudly showed their new uniforms and the St Joseph's School logo 💙 They loved exploring the familiar equipment and activities from their time at Fairlie Early Learners, a lovely reminder of where their learning journey began.

Fairlie Area Kindergarten Visit

Some of our junior students recently enjoyed a visit to Fairlie Area Kindergarten! It was a great chance for our tamariki to reconnect with familiar faces and meet new friends who may be starting school soon. We loved seeing our students share, play, and build connections through new experiences. 💛🌱

Arts Camp

Te Manahuna Kahui Ako Arts Camp to be held at Lindisfarne on Monday 1st December to Wednesday 3rd December.

The main purpose of this camp will be:

- To help to strengthen the friendships and teamwork as a formal transition opportunity for Year 6 students moving on to Mackenzie College.
- To help staff across the Mackenzie Kura to revitalise the Arts and to remind us that the integration of other learning across the NZC remains important, not just Literacy and Numeracy.
- To build connections between schools, teachers, and students, creating a sense of belonging across the wider Te Manahuna Kahui Ako.

The activities will include:

Monday 1st December: Sport Canterbury with Trust and Leadership Skills.

Southern Ballet (Balance and Agility Techniques, Making Meaning)

Tuesday 2nd December: Oral Histories with Ruth Lowe
Aidan Theatre and Drama Techniques
Art with Kaz Lanchester

Wednesday 3rd December: Ki o Rahi and Cultural Mentoring with Hami Goldsmith

School Transition Visits

We continue to have regular transition visits for the children that will join us at school in Term 1 - 2026.

It is wonderful to see new prospective students and their families visiting our School. We look forward to a number of new students joining us in Term 1 2026 and beyond.



All welcome!



St Joseph's School Fairlie

*Term 4
Open Mornings*

Tue 4th Nov
10am-12pm

Thur 20th Nov
10am-12pm

Other dates & times available by appointment

-  Kelly Eason or Bridget Story
-  027 685 8659
-  office@stjofairlie.school.nz
-  3 Gall Street, Fairlie



Burkes Pass Trip - Enviroschools

On Wednesday 15th October, we enjoyed a wonderful day at the Upper Ōpihi River Restoration in Burkes Pass.

Jane was so welcoming and gave us a fantastic tour of the incredible planting projects that she, her husband, and the local community have contributed to over the years. We

were amazed to see native plants that were planted 40 years ago, as well as new seedlings that we were able to plant ourselves.

It was inspiring to gather ideas for our own sensory garden and to learn how we can create a native pathway for bees, birds, and our five senses to enjoy. We also enjoyed designing our own plant covers and meeting Lucky the sheep who knows 30 commands.

A big thank you to Debbie from Enviroschools and to Jane for organising such a great day 🌱

Senior School Camp to Dunedin

Day 2: Our day started with a drive around the Otago Peninsula to the NZ Marine Studies Centre. The students enjoyed this hands-on experience while learning about the creatures that live in our ocean. After exploring the tanks inside, they couldn't wait to walk down to the Rocky Shore to discover some creatures for themselves. Working in teams, they used a metre quadrat to make observations and record their findings like real scientists.

The Otago Museum Planetarium was a great spot to listen to our educator and watch our galaxy, stars, celestial bodies and planets moving all around us. He taught us a great deal, including how to locate significant stars in our night sky and how the star signs were named.

After this busy day, we refuelled with nachos at the holiday park. Next, it was time for Ten Pin Bowling at Bowl Line in Kaikorai Valley. There were a few gutter balls to start, but the students soon got the hang of it and had heaps of fun!

Day 3: We set off for the Royal Albatross Centre at Taiaroa Head. It was a long, windy drive, but we enjoyed spotting new things along the way. We could see across to Port Chalmers and watch the cargo ship coming into the harbour.

Once we arrived, we met our educator, Libby, and she turned Maddie into an Albatross! The students learnt about the Life Cycle of an Albatross and some species that are at risk. We walked up a massive hill to the Richdale Observatory to view the Albatross and Shag through the glass windows.

Afterwards, we went on a Fort Tour to discover the Armstrong Disappearing Gun, which was installed in 1889. We wandered through underground tunnels until we got to the gun. This was built a very long time ago, in case they were ever invaded. Luckily, the gun never had to be used!

Junior Education Outside The Classroom (EOTC)

Day 1 - Mackillop enjoyed a creative day of arts and crafts inspired by Jack and the Beanstalk. They even got a special visit from Miss Courtney's gorgeous puppies!

Day 2 - This morning we kicked off the day with obstacle courses and plenty of fun on our wheels around school. Our next stop was Orari Nursery, where we carefully selected plants for our sensory garden. A big thank you to Stacey for opening up for us! From there, we headed to the Temuka Domain and the Temuka produce shop to pick up some berry bushes. We wrapped up the day back at school with a late lunch and even more wheels fun. Our skatepark adventure is saved for tomorrow and we can't wait!

Day 3 - Wow, what a day! We planted more seedlings, did some baking, and had a blast at the skatepark with our "wheels". When we got back to school, Team Whittaker had been hard at work. Our whole planter box area had been levelled, covered with weed mat, and filled with topsoil! We got stuck in adding compost and started planting. It was a hot afternoon, but everyone gave it their all. Such an awesome team effort from everyone involved!

Day 4 - Today we visited The Shearer's Quarters in Timaru, where we had a fantastic time playing mini golf and feeding the animals. It was such an amazing place to explore and a real hit with the children! Afterwards, we headed to CPlay for lunch and some fun at the playground. On the way home, we made a quick stop in Pleasant Point for an ice cream treat, well deserved after an awesome week! We're so proud of the wonderful listening, teamwork, and respect our juniors have shown over the past four days.

School Speeches

We are so proud of all of our students who presented their speeches to our school community on 1st September. Our juniors chose topics that they are passionate about, from Barbies to Bunnies and Soccer! Our senior students chose from the topics they were given from the Timaru Suburban Lions Club.

Well done to Harry and Frank who represented us at the Mackenzie District Speech Competition held at Albury School. Harry impressed the judges with his witty and well-acted speech "Teachers Have Secret Lives (and I Think I've Cracked the Code)." His clever delivery and confident stage presence earned him 2nd place overall, which means he will now go on to compete at the South Canterbury Lions Speech Competition.

Lions Speech Competition - Timaru District

A massive congratulations to Harry who represented St Joseph's School at the Timaru District Lions Speech Competition on 4th September. This was a brand-new challenge, speaking in front of such a large audience, but Harry had the crowd in stitches with his delivery. He was awarded runner-up out of 13 students from South Canterbury. Well done Harry on your outstanding achievement!

Frank also delivered a fantastic performance with his entertaining speech “Why Siblings Were Invented to Test Our Patience.” He was recognised with a Highly Commended award for his effort and delivery.

Mt Dobson Skiing

We have enjoyed skiing up Mt Dobson when the weather has allowed. Our students are showing so much resilience, and it’s amazing to see their confidence growing. We are hoping to get skiing again before the season ends. A big thanks to the parents and Mt Dobson shuttle team for helping us with transport!

Roundhill Ski Race

This was a great chance for our local ski talent to have a day of ski racing on 20th August. Congratulations to Niamh and Harry for placing first and second in their age groups.

Eco Leaders Hui

A group of our senior students had the chance to take part in Enviroschools Leaders Day in Timaru on 3rd September, with 11 other primary schools from South Canterbury. They rotated through three activities:

-  Learning how to identify which predators had been chewing on “chew cards”.
 -  Sorting through rubbish to learn what really belongs in our bins.
 -  Exploring the outdoors with the iNaturalist app to help discover insects and plants
- A great day of hands-on learning and thanks to FPS for sharing a van with us.

Daffodil Day

We loved showing our support for Daffodil Day on 29th August. It was wonderful to see our tamariki getting involved, and we’re so grateful to our families for your generous donations towards such a great cause. 

Kindy Fish and Chip Night

On 28th August Kelly and Bridget attended the Kindy Fish and Chip Night at Fairlie Area Kindergarten. This is a wonderful evening for the 4 year old children who are transitioning to school during the next year. It was a great opportunity to connect with some prospective families and invite them to come for a look around our school.

Otago Medical Students

On 25th August we had the privilege of meeting a group of third year medical students who visited our school as part of their Community Contact Week. They were keen to

learn about how our school contributes to the health and wellbeing of individuals in our community. We would like to thank the 5 young gentlemen, training to be doctors that showed an interest in a rural school setting and spent time playing games with our students.

Trip to Tekapo – Skates, Stars and Stories

First, we went ice skating. At the start, lots of us were slipping and sliding, but soon we got the hang of it.

“I liked it when everyone got used to it and didn’t fall down,” said Benni.

“Everyone tried their best to skate and did a good job,” said Lottie.

“I finally stood up on my own and skated fast!” said Maddie.

There was also a super cosy café at the springs. That was Leo’s favourite part.

After skating, we went to the Dark Sky Project. We had lunch, while seagulls and ducks tried to steal our food – Emily R liked that part!, and then we watched a cool video about the stars, planets, Matariki, kiwis and legends.

“I liked the movie theatre – we felt like we were moving!” said Shalom.

“My favourite part was the movie about space,” said Yenul.

Then we went into the star room. We got to touch giant stars that vibrated under our fingers.

“I liked the big stars – I touched them and they vibrated!” said Tevita.

Next, the floor turned into the night sky. Water and eels appeared, trees grew, and we heard birds and animals.

“I liked touching the eels and trying to catch them,” said Maddy.

“I think everyone touched millions of eels,” added Benni.

We learned how the universe began and how legends tell the stories of Aotearoa. Then we went to see the giant telescope. It moved and the roof opened – it was really loud!

“I liked seeing the telescope,” said Kenzie.

“My favourite part was the Dark Sky Project and the different movies,” said Andria.

Some of us had different highlights:

“My favourite part was ice skating,” said Jamarie.

“I liked the whole day – it was fun!” said Harry.

It was such a fun trip, and we learned heaps!

NZ Playhouse Performance

We were invited to see the performance of The Boy Who Cried Wolf on 21st July. There was a talented bunch of actors from the Christchurch Drama School. The students were thoroughly entertained by the show and learnt...

Community Library

We continue to visit the community library every fortnight. A big thank you to the librarians for helping us discover new books and for reading to us.