



**Newsletter**  
**Welcome**  
**Term 1 2026**  
**Leading Our Learning - Whai Akoranga**



Friday 30 January 2026

Kia Ora Parents, Caregivers, and Ward School Whānau,

Welcome to 2026! I hope you all had fantastic and relaxing holidays. Teachers have been busy getting classrooms prepared for an exciting new year and new term. We welcome Teacher Lisa McFarlane, who will be working with our students in the Rock Pool this year. This is our first newsletter for the year, and just an opportunity to give you some key dates for the Term ahead. Please see the table at the end of this notice. Teachers will be sending out a welcome email with a few more details on what is happening in their classrooms.

**Welcome/ Meet the teacher evening**

On Wednesday 11th of February, we will hold a welcome celebration/ sausage sizzle at school. We are looking to hold this event from 5:00 pm until 7:00 pm. This will be a chance to catch up with classroom teachers, other parents and reconnect with the school after the summer break. Teachers will hold brief meetings in their classrooms to share expectations, programmes and answer any questions you might have. Note, this is not a one-on-one about your child; this will happen at the end of this term, it is a general chat to get an overview of the upcoming term/ year.

5:00 pm Welcome

5:15 pm - 5:35 pm - Rockpool

5:40 pm - 6:00 pm - WavePool

6:05 pm - 6:30 pm. - Reef

7:00 pm Finish

**Roles & Responsibilities**

With Mrs Bamford leaving, her role as Deputy Principal has also finished. I am pleased to announce that Whaea Robyn will take the role of Senior Teacher & Cultural Leader, which will see her in charge, if or when the Principal is away. Robyn will also lead our cultural events and school tikanga. Miss Benseman will lead Sport and Education Outside the Classroom - This will see Maddi organising school sports, sporting events and taking the lead role in overseeing the organisation for camps and school trips. Miss Bensman will also be the school Bus Controller so you may direct any inquiries about the bus through her.

**Communication**

The Skool Loop app is our preferred method of getting out our important information to you. If you haven't downloaded it already, I strongly encourage you to do so. When you sign up, you can choose the groups you wish to belong to, like classrooms, sports, etc., to make sure you are getting the information that is relevant to you. <https://skoolloop.com/en-nz/parents/>

There will be a fortnightly school community Newsletter. This will be posted on the Wednesday or Thursday of even weeks throughout the term. (Next week is week 1). This Newsletter will highlight student successes and key events coming up. It will be sent via Edge and posted on Skool Loop, so please don't respond to it directly. If you have any questions, please email the principal or classroom teacher directly

Teachers will also use our student management system (Edge) or email to send a weekly bulletin outlining key information for the week ahead. This will be a short email that might include a highlight for the week and reminders/notifications for what is coming up. If you need to contact teachers, an email is our preferred method

of contact. (note emails sent from Edge are “do not reply”; if you wish to respond, please use the email address below.

Rock Pool - [lisam@ward.school.nz](mailto:lisam@ward.school.nz)

Wave Pool - [mbenseman@ward.school.nz](mailto:mbenseman@ward.school.nz)

Reef - [robyn@ward.school.nz](mailto:robyn@ward.school.nz)

Principal - [principal@ward.school.nz](mailto:principal@ward.school.nz)

Staff are generally available to answer emails between the hours of 8:00 am and 5:00 pm. Note: teachers can not respond to emails during class times. If you are emailing outside of these times, we do endeavour to respond as soon as possible, but it may be the next day. If matters are urgent during the school day, then please phone the office (03) 57 56837, and we will get the message to the teachers. Due to privacy reasons, we will not be able to give out personal details and cell phone numbers unless the staff member chooses to do so. You are more than welcome to pop in and see us for quick questions and queries, but if you wish to discuss any issues in more detail, please make an appointment at an appropriate time to do so.

## **Attendance**

In accordance with directives from the Ministry of Education, we will continue to be focused on increasing our attendance statistics. The goal is to have **80%** or above of our students meeting the regular attendance threshold. Regular attendance is when a student is present for 90% of the time that school is open for instruction, which equates to missing 5 or fewer days per term. For term 4 last year, we only had **38%** of students meeting this threshold. I know we can do a lot better than this. Please consider carefully when booking holidays and events that will take the children out of school. We are looking to add incentives for children with the highest attendance rates through termly certificates/ rewards and a trophy at the end-of-year prizegiving.

In addition to this, staff have noticed more and more children being picked up earlier and earlier in the afternoons. We have a solid block of learning available to us, and this can be quite disruptive to afternoon learning programmes. We understand that it can be difficult to make after-school appointments in town. Our North Bus Children are released from class at 2:35, and the school day officially ends at 2:50. If an early pick up is needed, it would be ideal to do so in this time period. If you need to leave earlier than this, then it would be great for teachers to have notification the day before. Candi's office hours are Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday mornings until 12:40. Messages phoned in after these times will not always make it to classroom teachers.

Please remember we are here to provide the very best learning opportunities for all of our students, and we need them to be here to make the most of it!

## **School Hours**

8:50 - 10:30 - **Block 1**

10:30 - 10:55 - Morning tea (whistle will go at 10:50 for children to pack away gear, go to bathroom and get a drink)

10:55 - 12:40 - **Block 2**

12:40 - 1:25 - Lunch (Children are expected to stay seated for eating from 12:40 until 12:50, Pack up whistle will be at 1:20)

1:25 - 2:35 - **Block 3**

2:35 - North Bus children released - remaining children stay for end of day routine and pack up

2:50 - School Ends

## **Pool**

Just a reminder that the pool is open for the majority of term 1. Classroom teachers will let you know when they intend to go swimming. We are very fortunate to have Sue Murray coming in again this year to take some targeted swimming lessons. There are also still keys available if families wish to use the pool outside of school hours. Just pop in and see Candi at the office.

## **Uniform -**

Just a reminder that it is important that children come to school with the correct school uniform. Purchases can be made from the [Uniform Shop](#). We do have some second-hand hats for \$5 and sports tops for \$10 for sale

(limited numbers and sizes). We will be having a big push on hats for this term. Students must have a red wide-brimmed or bucket hat to play outside in terms 1 and 4. Part of our sun smart policy is “no hat, no play” Students without hats will be asked to sit under the big tree outside Reef in the shade. We will not have spare hats available at school. In the past, they have been treated poorly and left in a number of random places, but more importantly, the sharing of hats is not a healthy practice and can spread bugs, especially headlice. So we ask that each student provide their own named hat.



**Just for Laughs! (aka Mr Sangsters Dad Joke of the week!)**

When does a joke become a dad joke?

When it becomes apparent!

Ngā mihi nui,  
Aaron Sangster - Principal/Tumuaki

**Together**



**Respectful**



**Adaptable**



**Creative**



**Kind**



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**Important Term 1 Dates**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>
Feb 2	School Starts
Feb 6	Waitangi Day
Feb 11	Meet the Teacher Start at 5:00 pm
Feb 13	Netball Taster Day
Feb 16-20	Fundamentals Skills
Feb 16	Yr 7/8 Technology Day 1
Feb 19	Ward/Seddon Swim Sports at Seddon
Feb 20	Golf Fundraiser
Feb 26	Reef Assembly
Feb 27	Rural School Swimming Sports in Blenheim
Mar 3 & 10	Mako Rugby Taster

Mar 12	Wave Pool Assembly
Mar 22	Flaxbourne Show (100 Year anniversary)
Mar 26	Rock Pool Assembly
Mar 27	Marlborough District Swimming
Mar 28	Reef Assembly
Apr 9/10	Parent Interviews
Apr 1	Reef Assembly End of Term 1 for Students
Apr 2	Teacher Only Day - Maths - PD