

# RICHMOND SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

17<sup>th</sup> February 2026



From the Tumuaki desk this week ...

## MIHI WHĀKATAU

Last Tuesday, we held a mihi whakatau to welcome new staff members, children and families/whānau. As usual it was a wonderful occasion and a very special way to welcome new people into the Richmond School whānau. One of the reasons for holding the mihi whakatau is to foster a sense of kotahitanga (unity) and belonging for the entire school.

Each year we have 70-90 new 5-year-olds enrol at the school. There are usually 40-50 other new enrolments during the year and a number of new staff members as well. So, there are certainly a lot of newbies each year. It is fantastic way to acknowledge the arrival of new pupils, staff and whānau and their inclusion at Richmond School.



Cherie Llewellyn  
with Flynn



Ana Burne, with Craig,  
Raphael & Sabine



Amy Barnett



Jenna Maher



Craig Burne

# RICHMOND SCHOOL'S ATTENDANCE PLAN

Regular school attendance is essential for student success. In New Zealand, the percentage of students attending regularly is low compared to many other countries. Lifting attendance is a shared responsibility. School staff, boards and parents all play vital roles in supporting students to be at school and learning.

In August 2023, the New Zealand Government announced a nationwide attendance initiative to address declining school attendance. As part of this initiative, all schools were required to implement a Stepped Attendance Response (STAR) system by Term 1, 2026.

The STAR step system ensures that schools respond to absenteeism in a timely, consistent, and proportionate way—so that no student is left behind. The government sees attendance as the gateway to better educational outcomes, health, and future opportunities.

The government's future target being 80% of students attending school regularly, which means a student being present for at least 90% of the term (i.e. in a typical 10 week term a child has to be at school 90 out of the 100 days).

This target is part of a broader Attendance Action Plan aimed at reversing declining attendance trends.

The government's plan includes:

- Weekly attendance data releases to track progress.
- Locally delivered but nationally coordinated campaigns to promote school attendance.
- A traffic light system to identify and respond to attendance issues.
- Clear public health guidance to help parents decide when kids should stay home or go to school.

80% 'regular' attendance is a bold target, especially considering that nationally for many years, the average percentage is much lower than 80%. For example, nationally, students were attending 'regularly'. Term 1 2025 – 66%, Term 2 2025 58%, Term 3 50% and Term 4

Traditionally, Richmond School percentages have been higher than the regional and national averages.

Parents need to be aware that it is a legal obligation to make sure their children attend school every day (unless there are significant health issues). Of course, if a child has the flu or other medical issues (such as the measles) are permitted. We can not approve nor condone reasons such as staying at home on their birthday, going on holiday nor going on an overseas trip a week before the end of the term because flights are cheaper then, etc.

Richmond School responses to absenteeism/attendance based on the number of days missed per standard 10 week term as follows:

- **Regular attendance - Up to 4 days (90%+ attendance):** No action required if absences are explained. Staff remain aware and supportive.
- **Irregular absence - 5–9 days (80-90% attendance):** Teacher checks in with student and contacts caregiver to discuss attendance.
- **Moderate absence - 10–14.5 days (70 - 80% attendance):** The leadership team makes contact with whānau to understand barriers, offer support and encourage a significant improvement in attendance.
- **Chronic absence - 15+ days or concerning patterns:** A formal letter sent home. If deemed necessary, appropriate or potentially useful, then a referral is sent to Attendance Service and/or external support agencies.

Actions are documented and reviewed regularly to ensure consistency and effectiveness.

The government's STAR steps may be followed but our approach can differ depending on the circumstances of each individual situation.



## Individual Student Attendance activities

### Individualised student responses to absence thresholds

Less than 5 days absence in a school term	Up to 10 days absence in a school term	Up to 15 days absence in a school term	15 days or more of absence in a school term
<p><b>Parents/Guardians</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure student attends every day they are able</li> <li>Reinforce good attendance habits</li> <li>Support other parents to reinforce good attendance habits</li> <li>Open communication with school</li> <li>Follow school attendance management plan and associated policies and processes</li> </ul> <p><b>Schools</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicate with parents about every absence</li> <li>Maintain contact details of parents</li> <li>Provide student with regular updates on their own attendance</li> <li>Report regularly to parents on attendance of their child</li> <li>Support student:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>attending school</li> <li>to continue learning if unable to attend school every day, including using Ministry approved well-being or transitional plans, or health schools where appropriate</li> <li>to access other education pathways where appropriate</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Parents/Guardians</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Return student to regular attendance</li> <li>Contact school to discuss reasons for absence and impact on learning</li> <li>Support student to catch up on missed learning</li> <li>Engage in supports offered</li> </ul> <p><b>Schools</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contact parents to discuss reasons for absence and impact on learning</li> <li>Support student to catch up missed learning where required</li> <li>Use in-school resources as appropriate to remove barriers e.g. counsellor, alternative timetables, PB4L</li> </ul>	<p><b>Parents/Guardians</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Return student to regular attendance</li> <li>Participate in meeting with school to analyse reasons for absence and to collaborate on a support plan</li> <li>Implement strategies at home</li> </ul> <p><b>Schools</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contact parents to escalate concerns</li> <li>Hold meeting to analyse reasons for absence and to collaborate on a support plan</li> <li>Develop and implement a support plan tailored to the reasons and circumstances around the child's absence</li> <li>Use in-school resources as appropriate to remove barriers and request support from Attendance Service or other agencies as needed</li> </ul>	<p><b>Parents/Guardians</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Return student to regular attendance</li> <li>Engage in support plan</li> <li>Participate in regular meetings</li> </ul> <p><b>Schools</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contact parents to inform of escalated response</li> <li>Request support from Attendance Service or other agencies as needed</li> <li>Participate in multi-agency response</li> <li>Maintain implementation and monitoring of support plan</li> <li>Undertake school-led prosecution, or request Ministry-led prosecution, when considered appropriate if supports are offered and not taken up</li> <li>Unenroll if student will not be returning to school</li> </ul>
<p><b>Ministry of Education</b></p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 48%;"> <p><b>Attendance Service</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with chronically absent and non-enrolled students and their families to identify and address barriers to attendance. This includes:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>agreeing changes to be made,</li> <li>addressing some unmet basic needs impacting on attendance, and</li> <li>referring students to other services as necessary</li> </ul> </li> <li>Collaborate with schools so that               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>they remain engaged as plans are developed and implemented, and</li> <li>they can continue to provide support as the student increases their attendance at school, and the additional Attendance Service support is withdrawn</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </div> <div style="width: 48%;"> <p><b>Regional and National teams</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitate involvement of other agencies</li> <li>Support schools to access other education pathways for a student where appropriate</li> <li>Consider system-wide initiatives for high-risk attendance</li> <li>Reprioritise regional support resources to where most needed/effective</li> <li>Undertake Ministry-led prosecution when considered appropriate if supports are offered and not taken up, when requested by schools</li> </ul> </div> </div>			

Stepped Attendance Response - STAR: Responding to all absence

Version 2: July 2025

## ★ The 4 STAR Absenteeism Categories

Category	Days Absent (per term)	Response Focus
<b>Initial Concern</b>	<b>5–10 days</b>	Early intervention: notify whānau, offer support, monitor attendance
<b>Escalated Concern</b>	<b>11–15 days</b>	Formal meeting with whānau, co-create attendance plan, involve support services
<b>Serious Concern</b>	<b>16–20 days</b>	Multi-agency response, deeper investigation into barriers, possible legal steps
<b>Critical Concern</b>	<b>21+ days</b>	Intensive intervention, Ministry involvement, potential prosecution if support refused

# Attendance

## **RATIONALE:**

Regular attendance at school and participation in appropriate programmes are both desirable and a legal requirement.

## **PURPOSES:**

1. To provide guidelines for parents and staff to ensure all children attend school and take part in programmes.
2. To ensure the Board meets its requirements under Part III of the Education Act.

## **GUIDELINES:**

1. All children enrolled at this school must attend whenever it is open. (Section 25 (1)).
2. The Principal may exempt a student from attendance for a period of no more than 5 school days if satisfied that the student's absence was or will be justified. (Section 27).
3. The Board shall take all reasonable steps to ensure children attend. (Section 25 (2)).
4. Class teachers are to keep an electronic register of attendance in line with the instructions issued. Parents are expected to advise class teachers/office of reasons for absences or lateness. These can be in the form of an email, text, phone message or parents calling into the office. Messages to the office are to be noted in the message register.
5. Class teachers/office are to record absences or lateness on the electronic register.
6. At the end of each term the principal will undertake a review of each child's attendance and at the end of the year (or more frequently if considered desirable) a full review of school-wide attendance trends.
7. Teachers, management and Office Staff will refer to and follow the school's Attendance procedures document (developed June 2025).
8. The services of the Ministry of Education's Tāpīotmata Attendance Service and other professional and other government services will be requested where appropriate.
9. Where the Principal is not satisfied that (after a prolonged period of absenteeism), an absence was justified, or an explanation is not provided on request in writing, the Principal will report the matter to the Board. The Board (usually the Principal) will inform the parents of their legal obligations in terms of section 25 of the Education Act.
10. If unsatisfactory attendance continues the Board may instruct the Principal to initiate legal proceedings in consultation with the Ministry of Education.
11. Any child attending STEMS school, will be marked absent from Richmond School on that day. The parents have chosen to take their children to this organisation. We haven't recommended they do so. Nor do we condone it. Richmond School can not be responsible for their health and safety on these days nor for the quality of their education on those days.
12. Teachers/Office staff will record on eTap, attendance codes in accordance with the recent Ministry of Education guidelines (sent out to schools early 2025).

## **CONCLUSION:**

Co-operation between parents and staff should overcome most difficulties with attendance and avoid the need for the Board to carry out its more formal role.

## PTC MEETING

Our next meeting is MONDAY 23<sup>rd</sup>  
FEBRUARY

7pm, In our school staffroom

ALL WELCOME



**LUCKY BOOK CLUB  
DUE 19<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY**

# BEFORE-SCHOOL AND AFTER-SCHOOL REMINDERS

- A reminder to parents, that the school rule is children (and parents) should not be in classrooms, nor playing on the hardcourts/grounds and on Adventure Playgrounds prior to the 8:30am bell. Teachers are busy preparing for the day's lessons and so aren't on duty. There are red lines by Room 3 and Room 11 the children must wait behind and also for the Junior children they must wait by the big tree outside 21.
- After school, we prefer children (and parents) to be away from school by 3:15pm. Teachers are not on duty after school (other than at road crossings) and are busy marking school work, preparing for the next day and attending meetings. Recently, teachers have been sorting out issues after school, when some children have been having disagreements with other children (and occasionally this has been when their parents have been there). Sports balls are not allowed outside after school because they often get left outside and the caretaker and principal have to pick them up. Please do not send along (from home) sports balls to school.
- The time from 2:50 – 3:00pm is a busy 'packing-up' time in a school day. A few teachers have mentioned that a few parents have been entering classrooms and interacting with their children. This is disruptive to the class and teacher. Please wait until the class has been dismissed for the day.
- We discourage children from riding bikes and scooters in our grounds before school and for 15 minutes after school (for safety reasons). Please could parents reinforce this with their children, younger siblings and we have noticed, even some adults.
- My apologies for bringing these to everyone's attention – I know most people comply and we thank you. It all helps with a smooth running of the school. THANK YOU ALL.

**REMEMBER the 2-minute parking rule outside the school office between 8.30am – 9.30am and 2.30pm – 3.30pm.**



## KEEP A TRACK OF YOUR CHILD'S BELONGINGS!

Washable Lunch Box and Bottle Labels From Just \$6.99

Laundry Safe Iron On Clothing Labels From Just \$6.99

Specials On School & Daycare Packs

Use The Current Fundraisers Link Below

<https://www.preciouslabels.co.nz/current-fundraisers/>

Search For School Or Daycare Using Ctrl F on Windows OR Command F on Apple PC

Then Click On Your School/Daycare/Scouts Group

Make Purchases As Usual

Earn Fundraiser Commissions!

NO CODE REQUIRED! JUST FOLLOW STEPS ABOVE



**IN NELSON ON SUNDAY 8<sup>th</sup> MARCH**

**HELP US BE THE SCHOOL WITH THE MOST PARTICIPANTS & REGISTER UNDER THE RICHMOND SCHOOL (NELSON) NAME.**

**[www.tryathlon.co.nz/locations/nelson](http://www.tryathlon.co.nz/locations/nelson)**

**DISCLAIMER** These are notices we include on request of organisations and individuals.

# COMMUNITY NOTICES



**OPEN DAY**  
FEB 22  
10M SOUTH OF WAKEFIELD

## WILLOW BANK HERITAGE VILLAGE

WAKEFIELD N.Z.

ENTRY FEE:  
\$7 PER ADULT (AGES 18+)  
\$3 PER CHILD

WILLOW BANK HERITAGE VILLAGE IS A FUN AND INTERACTIVE LIVING MUSEUM 10M SOUTH OF WAKEFIELD, NELSON. WE HAVE 20+ SHOP DISPLAYS FOR YOU TO EXPLORE, FOOD AND DRINK AND LOTS MORE.

**SUNDAY 10AM-3PM**  
FEBRUARY 22

1970'S MILK BAR / VICTORIAN STYLE CAFE / SECRET GARDEN  
1950S BURGER BAR / LAUNDRY / DRESS SHOP / PUPPET THEATRE  
CHILDREN'S SUITCASE MARKET / WORKING BAKELITE PHONES  
PLAYHOUSE / LIBRARY / DOLL MUSEUM / SCHOOL HOUSE  
GROCERY STORE / CINEMA / PRINTING PRESS + MORE

Info: [willowbankwakefield.co.nz](http://willowbankwakefield.co.nz) @willowbankheritagevillage  
AVAILABLE FOR GROUP BOOKINGS  
[WILLOWBANKWAKEFIELD.CO.NZ](http://WILLOWBANKWAKEFIELD.CO.NZ)  
79 WAKEFIELD-KOHATU HIGHWAY, WAKEFIELD



Playcentre  
**Messy Play Week**  
2-6 March '26

### Say yes to mess

Messy play is essential for early childhood development. Join us as we delve into an array of messy play activities, from paint and playdough, to sand and clay, to slime and gloop.

We welcome you to come and explore messy play activities that spark creativity and unlock learning. Get involved and have fun with your child without the mess at home.

Centre name Richmond Playcentre  
Address 46 Waverley Street, Richmond  
Email [richmond@playcentre.org.nz](mailto:richmond@playcentre.org.nz)  
Open day Monday, Wednesday and Friday 9-12.

## THE DANCE CLUB IS READY FOR 2026!!

The Dance Club is a fun, friendly space where young dancers can move, learn, and build confidence. We welcome children aged 3 to 13 of all abilities. Classes take place in Richmond every Thursday from 3:30 to 4:20, offering an energetic and supportive environment to explore dance, make friends, and have fun.

Enroll now via Facebook messenger: The Dance Club or email: [dancers.at.the.dance.club@gmail.com](mailto:dancers.at.the.dance.club@gmail.com)

## GIRLS SMASH & YEAH GIRLS 🌸🌟

Do you have a daughter who's interested in giving cricket a go? Term 1 cricket is the place to be! This week marks the start of both our Yeah Girls and Girls Smash programmes, and there's still a chance to get amongst.

We have all the equipment and guidance provided for fun and inclusive cricket sessions... just for girls. And best of all? IT'S COMPLETELY FREEEEEE!

- ◆ Years 1-3: Mondays 4:00pm - 4:45pm
- ◆ Years 4-6: Mondays 4:45pm - 5:30pm
- ◆ Years 6-8: Wednesdays 3:45pm - 4:30pm
- ◆ Years 9-13: Wednesdays 4:30pm - 5:15pm

Location: Aerial Field, Saxton.

All sessions will be run by current Nelson Nyxons Player Caitlin Whiting.

Register your child for free online:

<https://www.playhq.com/.../nelson.../4c09abcd/register>

For more information, please contact Dustin at [dustin@nelsoncricket/org.nz](mailto:dustin@nelsoncricket/org.nz)



**SHARLAND CYCLES** **5K FUN RUN & WALK FROM CLUB WAIMEA**  
Great spot prizes every week and the chance to win a pair of running shoes at the end of the series

Sharland Cycles 5km Fun Run & Walk from Club Waimea  
Wednesdays in November, December, February and March

Series starts on 5 November 2025 @ Club Waimea

Registration 5:30pm  
Event start 6pm  
Everyone welcome  
\$3 entry  
Free entry for children & students  
More info at [www.waimeshorionz.nz](http://www.waimeshorionz.nz)

CONNING'S, active good, FrontRunner, NBS, etc.



**CLUB WAIMEA SQUASH**

## JUNIORS SQUASH HIT

STARTS 15TH FEB

AGES: 5-18  
COST: GOLD COIN DONATION  
Open to all juniors to come down and have a go at squash.  
Balls, rackets & glasses available

**SUNDAYS 1-2PM**  
SCHOOL TERM ONLY

CLUB WAIMEA SQUASH  
345 LOWER QUEEN STREET, RICHMOND



**The Ark PRESCHOOL**

Quality Early Childhood Education for children 2-5 years old.  
7.30am-4.30pm Monday - Friday



Phone:  
Office 03 544 2951  
Manager 027 299 2433  
Email: [office@thearkpreschool.co.nz](mailto:office@thearkpreschool.co.nz)  
Address:  
123 Salisbury Road,  
Richmond 7020

