



NEWSLETTER

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Welcome to 2026: New Spaces, Big Goals, and Braving the Elements!

Welcome back to what has already been a high-energy, purposeful start to the school year. Walking through the classrooms, there's a distinct buzz in the air. We've "hit the ground running," and it's been fantastic to see our students settle so quickly into our new classroom layout, embrace their new classroom names, and connect with teachers in their new year levels.

Change can be a big deal, but our tamariki have handled it with the kind of grace and excitement that sets the tone for a brilliant year ahead.

Building "Good Humans" Through Resilience, this year, our mission goes beyond the four walls of the classroom. We are committed to helping our children develop as good humans who contribute meaningfully to our community. A core pillar of this journey is resilience. To kick things off, we are drawing inspiration from Bear Grylls. His insights on resilience perfectly mirror our goals for 2026: teaching our students to care for our environment, look out for one another, and keep going when the going gets tough. Explore resilience: [**Click here to watch Bear Grylls' thoughts on overcoming challenges — a great conversation starter for the dinner table!**](#)

Community Spirit in Action: The Hay Pick-Up

A massive "Thank You" to the incredible families who spent/spend their time picking up hay to raise funds for the FOS (Friends of the School). This is community spirit in its purest form. Seeing our families roll up their sleeves to support the school doesn't just help our budget; it provides a powerful example to our students of what it means to show up for others. We are so grateful for your sweat and hard work!

[**Click here to listen to a thank you message left by one of the grateful farmers**](#)



Making a Splash: Water safety 2026

We are now in our second year of focusing on an intensive water safety experiences, and the results are showing!

- Lake Day: Last week, we saw a marked increase in confidence across all age groups.
- Himatangi Surf Lifesaving: This week's sessions have been a masterclass in bravery and skill-building.

To our parent volunteers: None of this would be possible without you. Whether you were providing extra supervision on the sand or actually getting into the water with the students, your support allowed us to provide a truly interactive and safe experience. You are legends!



From the Principal's Desk: The "Longest Day"

As this newsletter lands in your inbox, I'll be preparing to stand at the start line of the Kathmandu Coast2Coast Longest Day. I'm not doing this because I expect to win—let's be honest, that would be a miracle! I'm doing it to model exactly what we want for our tamariki. I want them to see that with consistency, discipline, and determination, you can tackle challenges that once felt "too big." That you don't have to follow the crowd and instead, do what makes you happy. In 2026, there will be moments when things feel hard. Whether it's:

- Solving that one "impossible" maths equation.
- Pushing through another page of a challenging book.
- Correcting a tricky spelling word.
- Or finding the energy for one more discus throw or high jump.

My message to the students is this: Keep turning up. You don't have to be the best in the room to have a "win." The win is in the process. The win is in not saying "it's too hard" and walking away. Let's make 2026 a year of "one more try."

Greg Allan, Principal

SCHOOL BOARD

Kia ora koutou,

The first meeting of the Board for 2026 will be on Thursday 5th March.

In the meantime, feel free to read and feedback on the following policies:

- **Complaints Policy**

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1TWmtdKVOjw3KgwxHdjZ45QIBLALfsNLq/edit
?usp=sharing&ouid=115721093161789416624&rtpof=true&sd=true](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1TWmtdKVOjw3KgwxHdjZ45QIBLALfsNLq/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=115721093161789416624&rtpof=true&sd=true)

- **Culture and Identity**

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1pC1s7ltUWNQLO26-
obefCAq2UwTxCy4D/edit?
usp=sharing&ouid=115721093161789416624&rtpof=true&sd=true](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1pC1s7ltUWNQLO26-obefCAq2UwTxCy4D/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=115721093161789416624&rtpof=true&sd=true)

- **Cybersafety Policy**

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1uHsEYSfQL4OtFDMVmX7uLPajVPdXil_/edit?
usp=sharing&ouid=115721093161789416624&rtpof=true&sd=true](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1uHsEYSfQL4OtFDMVmX7uLPajVPdXil_/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=115721093161789416624&rtpof=true&sd=true)

Ngā mihi,

Libby Rayner, Presiding Member

FRIENDS OF SCHOOL

YEEHAAA... welcome back to FOS 2026!

Well, I don't know about you lot, but I am properly beat and very much looking forward to a bit rain so we can all have a wee break from chasing bales around the countryside. That said – there is SO much to be proud of. Our bale count has officially tipped over 15,000 bales ...HUGE!

A massive thank you to everyone who has helped so far – whether you've been throwing bales, driving, feeding the troops, or holding down the fort at home while your other half disappears into the night for another hay run. A special shout-out to our core crew who turn up night after night whenever the SOS goes out. That is some serious hard yakka, and it doesn't go unnoticed

If you haven't dipped a toe into a hay night yet, this is your friendly nudge. We would absolutely love to see more people involved. At the end of the day, it's all our kids who benefit from every dollar raised, and many hands really do make light work.

Also a big thank you to everyone who helped sell corn (and the students who helped pick it) – with a special mention to Megan Illston, Pioneer Farms, Arable Solutions and MTN Agriculture who, together, produced an awesome crop. An extra thank you to Megan, Chloe and Frankie Illston for selling it around town to local businesses. Top effort, Illstons – thank you!

► FOS Meeting Reminder- Tuesday 10th March, 6:00pm – school staffroom

This is where we make decisions about how FOS runs and how the hard-earned funds are spent, so if you've got ideas or opinions, this is the meeting to be at. New faces always welcome!

Any questions, flick me an email at fos@southmak.school.nz

Cheers,

Nina Martin

Lake Day

What an incredible day we had at the lake last week. It was awesome to see so many kids have grown in confidence in the water and were happy to float on their back in the life jackets and help get their friends safely back into the boat or paddle board. We were blessed by mother nature to have some amazing weather which meant the day could really be enjoyed by all.



Beach Trips

All our classes have enjoyed trips out to Himatangi Beach this week to learn all about how to be safe at the beach. The Himatangi Surf Life Saving Club have been amazing in setting up and delivering a fun, interesting and informative day for students. All our students showed great interest in what they learnt and loved getting out in the sand and water.



OUR SCHOOL

UNIFORM REQUIREMENTS

A reminder that our school uniform is black or navy shorts, skirts, pants etc and the school polo tee-shirt and fleece jersey as well as their school hats in term 1 and 4. School hats are part of the uniform over summer and must be worn by students. A large number of children do not have hats, please check to see if your child/children have theirs

Please encourage your student to wear their uniform with pride. There are free uniform items inside the office door and the Rangitīkei Uniform Exchange (on Facebook) has free South Mak uniform items. New items can be purchased from the school office.



Our Tui room of yr 2 & 3 students have already been busy making art work to hang in their class.

 **Spicy Connections Group** 

Spicy chats, bites to share, meet, connect, and care
For parents/grandparents/careers or guardians of diagnosed and suspected neurodivergent tamariki

 Fortnightly on Thursday's
Starting from **12th February 2026**

 1:00pm-2:30pm

 @ Central Baptist
285 Wicksteed Street
Whanganui
Wharenui Room off the main entrance

Get in touch
Beth L. Savage- 021 384 255  office@wovenwhanau.org.nz  rosie@whatever.org.nz

Rosie McMenamin- 027 381 9509  rosie@whatever.org.nz

 

 **RANGITĪKEI**
DO A DUATHLON
SERIES 

Tūtaenui Reserve, Marton
From 3.30pm
Four Wednesdays,
starting 11 February
Start location is accessed from 169 Galpin's Road

Age group start times:
3.30PM - On the day
registration and sign-in
4PM - 5-6yo
4:30PM - 7-8yo
5PM - 9-10yo
5:30PM 11-12yo
6PM - Open - rangatahi & adults

Complete 3 or 4 events and get a medal on the last day!

Bikes available to borrow, thanks to NZ Lotteries Commission



Brought to you by:   

School Calendar

- Friday 20th February Learning Celebration
- Tuesday 24th February Parent Teacher Interviews
- Friday 6th March Learning Celebration Tui & Kereru museum visit
- Monday 9th March Piwakawaka & Kereru to River
- Tuesday 10th March Weka to River FOS meeting
- Wednesday 11th March Tui & Kotare to River
- Thursday 12th March Kea to River
- Friday 13th March Kakapo to River
- Friday 20th March Learning Celebration
- Friday 27th March School athletics day
- Tuesday 31st March Hunterville inter-school athletics back up day is Thursday 2nd April
- Thursday 2nd April Last day of term 1