



# St Francis Catholic School

We are a vibrant & empowering Catholic school, creating **pathways of excellence** for our tamariki.



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## Ash Wednesday

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the season of Lent. It is a time when we prepare ourselves for Easter by observing a period of fasting, repentance, sacrifice and self-discipline. For many, this means either giving up something or taking on something.

Today we all attended our first whole school Mass of the year in celebration of Ash Wednesday. This provided our students with an opportunity to reflect on the meaning of Lent, participate in the traditions of our faith and begin this season of preparation as a united community.



## Baptism

Congratulations to Harry Skeates (Room 8) and Emma Skeates (Room 5) who were baptised by Father John over the weekend. Well done, we are very proud of you.



## Dedication Mass

Last night, Tuesday 17th February, the St Francis staff got all dressed up for our yearly Dedication Mass, alongside other schools in the Diocese. This year's theme, "New Maps of Hope," guided our reflections as we celebrated our shared faith and renewed our commitment to supporting the spiritual growth of our students.



**Parish News** - the Women's Refuge are moving out at the end of this month: The Parish property located at 32 Point Chevalier Road will be available for rent for \$1,500 per week from the beginning of March. The property has 7 single



bedrooms and 2 full bathrooms and an additional toilet at the back of the house, one of which is an accessible bathroom; a kitchen and dining area in the middle of the house and 4 large bedrooms with a full bathroom at the front of the house. There is a double carport and space for at least 5 off-street carparking on the property. Any enquiries can be directed to Stuart King on 027 818 2403.

**Sacramental Programme** - **Registrations cut off today!** Hardcopy forms are available at the back of the Church or from the school office.

Criteria required - Your child must:

- Be baptised Catholic - please attach a copy of their baptism certificate on registering.
- 9 years or older by the end of 2026.
- Attend weekly Mass
- At least 1 parent must attend the adult sessions with Father John.
- There will be no make-up classes so please ensure your child can make all the classes.

1st Reconciliation: Lessons - 22/02, 01/03, 08/03. Service - 10/03 @ 6.00pm.

1st Holy Communion: Lessons - 03/05, 10/05, 17/05. Mass - 24/05.

Confirmation: Lessons - 02/08, 09/08, 16/08. Mass - 23/08.

**Training for Altar Servers** - If you are interested in becoming an Altar Server, or would like a refresher, Father John is holding a training session on Saturday 28/02 @ 3.30pm in the Church.

## Tax season

Tax season is fast approaching – please get your Church tax deductible donations in before 31 March – maybe even get a brick. What a fantastic **Gift idea** for a loved one(s) – Personalised Church brick to be permanently remembered.



## Back to school reminder series – Pick up and Drop Off

In our ‘back to school’ series, we’re now up to what will make a smooth pick up and drop off for our St Francis students:

- Students may arrive at school from 8.00am, however 8.30am is when direct supervision begins.
- School finishes at 3.00pm. Please ensure children are collected promptly. We understand that occasionally unforeseen delays occur; however, children must be collected within **15 minutes of the finishing bell**. After this time, students will be taken to the school office and families will be contacted. Regular late collection places pressure on staff supervision and is not fair on children. If you anticipate being late, please contact the office as soon as possible so we can support your child appropriately. (09)8464696 or [office@stfrancis.school.nz](mailto:office@stfrancis.school.nz)
- Junior students will only be released to authorised adults. If someone different is collecting your child, please notify the office or inform your child’s classroom teacher in advance.
- All students are to be collected from a designated waiting area e.g. the top court. Please do not wait directly outside the classroom as this can distract the learning taking place. Students being collected during school hours must be signed out at the school office.
- Year 5 and 6 students are encouraged to walk or bike home on their own, helping them build confidence and responsibility in preparation for college. All students should understand and follow road safety expectations, and helmets are required for bikes and scooters. Younger students should continue to be collected by an adult unless prior arrangements have been made with the school.



## Absences

We understand that absences happen and appreciate you letting us know when your child will be away. Thank you to everyone who provides a clear reason—this really helps our teachers and office staff keep track of students safely. Great examples we’ve received include:

*"Sorry XX has a headache and will be absent all day."*

*"Sorry still not over the sniffles"*

*"We are on a family holiday"*

*"Sorry Ms Wishart, XX will be late today as they have a dental appointment"*

*"XX and our family are taking a family day to celebrate our new baby."*

Reporting



Absences

*"Due to an out of Auckland wedding we will be travelling this Friday and so XX will be absent from classes all day"*

General statements such as "Family reasons" are not descriptive enough to meet Ministry of Education expectations. If no explanation for an absence is received we are obliged to mark the child truant, a very unfortunate thing. Thank you to the vast majority of you busy parents who let the office know by a call, or through the school app.

### **Marae Visit**

We have our class visits to Māngere Mountain Education Centre fast approaching on the following dates:

Tuesday 24th February (Room 8) Leaving school 8.45am - Returning 2.30pm

Wednesday 25th February (Room 2 & 6) Leaving school 8.45am - Returning 2.30pm

Monday 2nd March (Room 3) Leaving school 8.45am - Returning 12.30pm

Tuesday 3rd March (Room 5 & 7) Leaving school 8.45am - Returning 12.30pm

Tuesday 10th March (Room 1 & 9 & 10) Leaving school 8.45am - Returning 12.30pm

Wednesday 11th March (Room 11 & 12) Leaving school 8.45am - Returning 12.30pm

### **Parent Helpers needed**

If you are interested in being a parent helper on the day your child is attending, please complete the permission form on the school app. Be sure to include:

- Your name
- The date your child will be at the education centre
- Your phone number

Please note: simply signing the permission form does not automatically register you as a parent helper.

We encourage as many parents as possible to join, "the more, the merrier"! The education centre has asked for extra hands, especially to help with activities for our littlies. We look forward to some exciting trips coming up.

### **Life Education**

As some of you may have noticed we have the Life Ed caravan with us till the end of this week! Life Education's Harold the giraffe and Grace the Educator will be bringing their mobile classroom to St Francis from Friday 13th February to Friday 20th February, 2026.

Life Education Trust is a charity that works to educate and inspire children to embrace positive choices for a healthy mind and body. You can find out more here:

<http://www.lifeeducation.org.nz/>.

The focus for each year level:

- Y1/2 students will be learning about how oxygen and food give us energy.
- Y3/4 students will be learning about how some of our body systems and our brains work.

- Y5/6 students will be learning about why it's important to eat throughout the day and to eat a variety of different foods.

Each child will bring home an activity book to share with you, and you may also like to continue the learning at home by visiting [www.healthyharold.org.nz](http://www.healthyharold.org.nz).

If you have any questions, feel free to contact Grace from Life Education: [waitakere@lifeed.org.nz](mailto:waitakere@lifeed.org.nz).

**Life Education Writing by Harley and Zoe Room 9**



- On Friday I went
- see Harold and Grace
- I liked all of the light
- especially the nite lights
- I liked patting Harold.



- Oh Friday We went
- see Harold and
- Grace I LIKED the TV whi



### Room 5 visits Point Chev Library

My class and I went to Point Chev Library. The moment I stepped in the joy of books blasted my brains. Our student teacher read a book to us then we read to ourselves. As we left I hoped we could come back. *By Jacob Pope*

My class went to the Pt Chev Library. We read some books in the library and we had so much fun at the library. Some of us brought our library cards so we could take some books out.

*By Aidan Chia*

On Wednesday we went to Pt Chev Library. My first step in the library was filled with a whole heap of joy! Our student teacher Miss Greta read us books and then we had our own free time. I read a few books (I think it was about 3 books) then it was time to go back to school. *By Riley McGregor*



### Mountain Biking Success

Micah Fullerton (Room 8) had great success over the weekend. He competed in his first Mountain Biking enduro race.

He was entered through College Sport, and it was run by the mountain biking academy he attends on Wednesday night (Jafa).

He came second in the under-13 race, which I am sure we can all agree is super impressive.

Well done Micah!



**Borrowing wetsuits for Beach Education** – The Year 6 students will soon be heading on their annual Beach Education trip. On Wednesday 11th of March we plan to learn lots about water safety at Muriwai Beach. For this students are expected to wear a wetsuit to prepare them for the ever-changing conditions on the west coast.

If any parents or anyone in the wider community are willing to lend any wetsuits that they won't be using during the week of the trip could you please contact Olivia Neary if you think you can help out with this. [olivian@stfrancis.school.nz](mailto:olivian@stfrancis.school.nz) Your help with this is greatly appreciated!



### **St Francis Mums!!**

With over 25 new families at St Francis, we thought it might be a nice time for the mums to connect. We are going to be starting this Friday, 20th February, with a casual coffee/cuppa at Ambler. We look forward to catching up with some of you on Friday!

Thank you Chrissy Miskimmons for organising this.

### **FINAL DAY TO ORDER TODAY- Foodie Friday –20 Feb 2026 – ICEBLOCKS**

Our first Foodie Friday for 2026 is happening this Friday, with refreshing lemonade ice blocks for the children to enjoy at morning tea.

Foodie Friday is a regular school fundraiser helping us pay off the remaining balance of the loan for our fantastic school canopy. We'd love everyone's support again this year to help make it a success. Ice blocks are \$2.50 each, and there is also an option to donate an ice block for a child who may not be in a position to purchase one. Our goal is to have enough orders and donations so every child can enjoy an ice block next Friday. All orders MUST be placed via Kindo (app or website) before orders close tonight at 8pm.



**Please ensure all children are linked to their 2026 classroom in Kindo so orders are delivered to the correct class.**

### **Touch Rugby Update**

Touch rugby started yesterday at Cox's Bay with four St Francis squads proudly representing our school. Our Junior teams displayed impressive speed and strategy, developing and honing their touch skills. Our Middle School teams demonstrated excellent coordination and defensive play, taking on some tough opponents with determination. A huge thank you to our coaches, supporters, and families for cheering and supporting our players on each week!"



## **Extra Curricular Activities -**

- Skills of Soccer with Billy Harris – Lunchtime Soccer lessons with former All White, Billy Harris – Text him on 0272799042 for info and prices.
- Term 1 After School Art Classes – We're excited to kick off Term 1 from the 2nd Week of Term with our new theme: Abstracted. Inspired by abstract art, children will explore how artists use shape, colour, form and expressive mark-making to communicate ideas and feelings – without needing to create a "perfect" picture. It's all about experimentation, confidence, and creative freedom. Our after school sessions are screen-free, hands-on, and designed to nurture creativity, problem-solving, and self-expression – while building confidence week by week. New to Creative Matters? We offer a single FREE trial class for new after-school students. Love it? Sign up for the term. To book a free trial: [admin@creativematters.co.nz](mailto:admin@creativematters.co.nz) <https://www.creativematters.co.nz/after-school-art-classes>
- Music lessons right at school – Personalised lessons designed to support your child's confidence, focus, and learning – with no extra travel for families. Enrol here: <https://musiceducation.co.nz/pages/mis-enrolment>



## **New Goal posts**

Once again we are fortunate to be the recipients of Mr King's hard mahi! He has secured a grant through the Trillion Trust which has resulted in the purchase of 2 new goals posts down at the field. Thanks Stuart, and his helper Leonardo, for braving the blustery conditions and getting these set up for us on Friday!



## **St. Francis Dads' Support Group aka Darts Night** – last Thursday of

the month to recommence in February 2026. The next and FIRST stupendous darts session for 2026 is on Thursday, 26 February, from 8pm, at the Pt. Chev. Bowling Club. The more the merrier – all Dads are very Welcome – no darts experience is necessary given the majority of us are woeful. Contact Stuart on 027 818 2403 to join the Dad's WhatsApp group.

## **Yet another Dad's session** – Golf this time! The St. Francis Dads will have a well deserved golf

session (accompanied by drinks). The shambolic affair will be held at 2pm on 20 February at Chamberlain public Golf course. It's a while away, but best to put it in the diary now so the fun won't be trumped by work or family. It's got "working from home" that afternoon written all over it. We already have over 20 lads signed-up. The plan is to play 9 holes Ambrose, which for those not in the know, means it will be a golf team format where all players on a team tee-off, and the best shot is selected for the team to play their next shot from. In short, it means muppets can play and no golf experience is required. Green fees for 9-holes is \$35 per person. Please RSVP to Stuart on 027 818 2403 so we can track numbers and in order for him to give the Golf Course a heads-up. The more the merrier.

**Community message** – Save Pt Chev's Sport Clubs – Community Meeting Sunday 22 February, 2:00pm–3:30pm Point Chevalier Bowling Club, 25 Dignan Street. For almost 100 years, Pt Chev's bowling, tennis, and croquet clubs, together forming the Hallyburton Johnstone Sports Club have been a central part of life in Point Chevalier. That long history is now under threat, with the Anglican Trust for Women and Children seeking to take over the land the clubs occupy. This meeting will explain what's happening, outline the legal process, and talk through how you can help protect our community assets. Your support is important, and we encourage you to come along and be part of the conversation.

**Dates for 2026:** (a couple of Teacher Only Days sometime in Term 3 and 4)

- Term 1 – Tuesday 3 February – Thursday 2 April. Public Holidays – Good Friday: Friday 3 April.
- Term 2 – Monday 20 April – Friday 3 July. Public Holiday – ANZAC Day: Monday 27 April, King's Birthday: Monday 1 June.
- Term 3 – Monday 20 July – Friday 25 September.
- Term 4 – Monday 12 October – Wednesday 16 December. Public Holiday – Labour Day: Monday 26 October.

**Coming up this term -**

Thursday 19 February – Room 2 visiting the Pt Chev library

Tuesday 24 February – R8 Marae trip, Board of Trustees meeting 6.30pm

Wednesday 25 February – R2/6 Marae trip

Friday 27 February – Welcome Assembly 2.15pm

Sunday 1 March – Welcome Mass for new families 9.00am

Monday 2 March – R3 Marae trip

Tuesday 3 March – R7/5 Marae trip

Wednesday 4 March – Room 8 visiting the Pt Chev library

Thursday 5 March – Cricket Innercity Competition

Tuesday 10 March – R1/9/10 Marae trip

Wednesday 11 March – R11/12 Marae trip, Year 6 Beach Education trip

Friday 13 March – Assembly 2.15pm

Wednesday 18 March – Room 3 visiting the Pt Chev library

Wednesday 25 March – Room 3 visiting the Pt Chev library

Friday 27 March – Assembly 2.15pm

Sunday 29 March – Palm Sunday

Monday 30 March – Thursday 2 April – Holy Week Celebrations

Thursday 2 April – Holy Thursday, Last day of Term 1

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