



South Otago High School

Newsletter 4th December 2020

Nga mihi mahana ki a koutou katoa
Warm greetings to you all

Dear Parents/Caregivers

Kia Ora Tatou

The end of term has arrived! What a year it has been and certainly one that none of us will forget in a hurry! Despite the challenges that we have worked through it has been a positive year. During the last few weeks I have received a number of e-mails and phone calls and talked to parents who have thanked me for the work done to support students. As I have said, it is down to the fantastic staff that we have here who have gone above and beyond what we would have expected. The achievements of the students is not down to the effort of one individual but the collective efforts of everyone in our community.

I would like to share some interesting highlights from some of the data that is starting to come into my office.

- The Year 10 students for 2020 have been awarded 41 Merit badges and 18 Excellence badges. This same cohort received 19 Merit and 10 Excellence badges as Y9 students. This shows a significant gain in achievement from 2019 to 2020
- During the whole year we have reduced the stand downs and suspensions to just 12 incidents. Compared with only a few years ago when we had over 70 incidents and suspension hearings almost weekly this is a dramatic shift. The feedback from staff, students and parents suggests that the school is a happy, settled and structured environment where students can learn.
- Anecdotal feedback from surveys completed by across school teachers on our students learning suggests that students understanding where they are at with their achievement, know their next steps, can talk about their goals and what they need to do to ensure that they are successful. I am looking forward to a detailed report being provided with analysis so that we can further refine what we are doing in 2021.

Junior prize giving

As this event draws close we are endeavouring to ensure that we have time to acknowledge all of the achievements of our students! As a result, some awards are going to be presented in the final junior assembly earlier in the morning. This will include the presentation of graduate certificates for Y9 and Y10 students who have met all of the criteria to be awarded a Graduation Certificate.

Junior activities

With most of the Year 9 and 10 students out it has been a quiet week but it was good to see what students have been doing during the week. Pictures are included in this newsletter. Thanks to all of the staff who made these trips possible by giving up their time and doing all of the preparation.

Looking forward to 2021

As the year draws to a close, a principal's anxiety about making sure that we have teachers for all of our classes the following year increases! We are looking forward to a lot of new students starting in 2021, we have teachers leaving from promotion, change of school or temporarily to engage in further study. Fortunately we have had an excellent range of applicants to the positions that we have advertised and we will start 2021 fully staffed with quality teachers.

Finally

With the long summer break ahead it has been good to finish the year with so many positives. Thank you to all of the staff who have made the year such a success. To all parents, students and staff, I wish you a Merry Christmas and I hope that you have the time to take a break, relax and catch up with friends and family. For those of you with families overseas, I hope they too are all safe and well. I look forward to a settled year in 2021 and hopefully a return to a more normal life. In the meantime, I am so grateful for what we have here and the freedoms we have in New Zealand. Keep safe and I look forward to seeing you in 2021.

Ka kite ano
Mike Wright
Principal

Year 9 student, Ryan Williams, learning to use the new spectrophotometer to test nitrates in water samples for his silver crest award. The spectrophotometer was presented by Cook brothers to the science department.

Shobhana Bir
Science



Year 12 Leadership.

On Monday we welcomed back our Year 12 students for the first part of their leadership training for next year. The group learned a range of activities they can use when working with our Year 9 students. Mr King, Mr Ensor, Mrs Hannah and Margaret Cardno from Malcam Trust all helped me with the groups. Year 13 students are positive role models for our juniors and they can help staff to maintain a safe and welcoming environment at school. Next year-Friday 29 January the Year 13 students will meet Year 9 as they arrive and accompany them to the hall before continuing their training and leading a session in the afternoon. Students are asked to wear uniform and bring a plate for morning tea.

Cath Bloxham
TIC Peer Support



Looking for Second Hand Uniform???

Mrs Wright will be available from 2.30pm - 4.00pm on Wednesday 9 December and Thursday 10 December.
(Plenty of Jerseys, Vests and Shorts on hand)

Year 9 and 10 Outdoor Activities







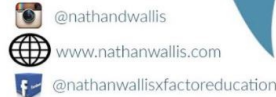


The Developing Brain

Owaka Community Centre - South Otago

Mon 25 Jan 2021 - 7:30pm - 9:00pm

Tickets at [eventfinda.co.nz](https://www.eventfinda.co.nz)



Kia ora koutou

Nathan Wallis, New Zealand's favourite Neuroscience Educator (and host of the documentary "All in the Mind", and co-host of the TV Series "The Secret life of Girls") is coming to Owaka for another of his sell-out talks about brain development from childhood to adulthood. He will be presenting at the Owaka Community Centre – Monday 25th January 2021 - 7.30-9.00pm.

Nathan's talks are very popular with parents, teachers, coaches, leaders and anyone else who is interested in learning about the workings of the brain. Nathan has a profound reputation as a lively and engaging speaker. He uses humour and plain language to condense 25 years of neuroscience research into his unique 'tell you how it is' style. You'll be absolutely captivated and walk away jam-packed with more than a few "ah-ha" moments.

Any school that advertises this upcoming event on their school network or social media sites will receive 2 complimentary tickets (valued at 70.00) to attend. To redeem these tickets, please email me at this address (with details of where you advertised) and the tickets will be sent via email.

Please find attached details of Nathan's upcoming presentation. More information can be found by following this link

<https://www.eventfinda.co.nz/2021/the-developing-brain-catlins/south-otago>

Upcoming Events Term1 2021

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| • Wednesday 27th and Thursday 28th January..... | Course Confirmation for Years 11, 12 and 13 |
| • Friday 29th January | Year 9 and Year 13 Students start School (8.30am) |
| • Monday 1st February..... | Full School starts |
| • Monday 8th February..... | Waitangi Day School Closed for Instruction |
| • Wednesday 10th - Thursday 11th February..... | Year 9 Greenpark |
| • Tuesday 23rd February..... | School Photos |
| • Wednesday 25th February..... | Athletics Day |
| • Wednesday 3rd March..... | Conference Evening |
| • Thursday 4th March..... | Conference Day |
| • Monday 8th - Friday 12th March..... | Year 10 Tautuku Camp |
| • Monday 22nd March..... | Anniversary Day School Closed for Instruction |
| • Tuesday 30th March..... | Taieri Interchange |
| • Friday 2nd - Tuesday 6th April..... | Easter - School Closed for Instruction |
| • Friday 16th April..... | Last Day Term 1 |