



# SPECIAL NEWSLETTER

February 2023

Tēnā kotou katoa

Welcome to Whanganui High School for 2023. A special welcome to all families new to the school, and welcome back to all our returning families.

The School runs a House system with four houses - Awa, Maunga, Moana or Whenua – and each House has an Associate Principal/ Deputy Principal and two Deans. The form class structure is **vertical** which means that each form class has students from Year 9 to 13 in it.

The Principal, Mr McAllen has sent families a list of our House staff.

Please do not hesitate to contact the appropriate Deputy Principal or Dean at the earliest possible stage if you have any concerns regarding your son or daughter. The relevant Deputy Principal or Dean will then ensure that your concern is resolved as quickly as possible.

At Whanganui High School, we place considerable sustained emphasis on developing an effective three-way relationship between the Form Teacher, the student and the parents/caregivers. We believe that the strength of this relationship is a crucial factor in establishing student success at School. Many staff contact parents regularly by telephone or email and we welcome your contact the same way. To help us maintain this relationship please ensure that we always have your most up-to-date contact details. Phone the Student Centre (349 0177) if your contact details have changed.

One or two Newsletters will be sent by email each term. The Newsletters will also be available on the school's website ([www.whanganuihigh.school.nz](http://www.whanganuihigh.school.nz)), with paper copies available at the Main Office and the Student Centre.

There is also a newsletter in the 'River City Press' on the last Thursday of each month. If you do not receive the 'River City Press', copies are available from the Main Office, or a copy can be posted to you. Please phone the school (phone number 06 349 0178) to arrange this.

## IMPORTANT TERM 1 DATES

<b>Friday 17 February</b>	<b>Whanganui High School Swimming Champs</b> <i>Starting at 12.30pm at the Splash Centre.</i>
<b>Tuesday 21 February</b>	<b>Year 9 Parents evening</b> <b>6.30pm to 8.00pm in the School Hall</b> <i>We are providing an opportunity for our new parents to come and learn about the school systems and ask questions. We recommend that you prioritise this date and time. An invitation will be sent with more details.</i>
<b>Thursday 23 February</b>	<b>Class Photographs</b>
<b>Tuesday 28 February</b>	<b>Whanganui High School Athletics Day</b> <i>Cooks Gardens. This is a whole school house event with all students expected to attend. Further information will be sent to parents closer to this event.</i>
<b>Thursday 2 March</b>	<b>NCEA Parents evening - 5.30pm in the School Hall</b> <i>This is an excellent opportunity for parents and caregivers to learn about NCEA (the National Certificate of Educational Achievement). Any questions you have will be answered.</i>

<b>Friday 3 March</b>	<b>Whanganui Secondary School Swimming Sports / Lifesaving</b> <i>Splash Centre</i>
<b>Tuesday 14 March</b>	<b>Whanganui Secondary School Athletics Champs</b> <i>Cooks Gardens</i>
<b>Monday 27 March</b>	<b>Summer tournament week begins</b>
<b>Friday 24 March</b>	<b>Interim Reports will be issued for all students</b> <i>These reports will be emailed and posted to those without email.</i>
<b>Tuesday 4 and Wednesday 5 April</b>	<b>Student Achievement Conferences</b> <i>(Parent Teacher Interviews)</i> <i>Details will be advised in the interim report</i>
<b>Thursday 6 April</b>	<b>Term 1 ends</b>
<b>Wednesday 26 April</b>	<b>Term 2 begins</b>

Please note that the Easter break is Friday 7 April to Monday 10 April inclusive and this year is at the start of the Term 1 holidays. As Anzac day falls on the first Tuesday into Term 2, note that our **Term 2 start date is Wednesday 26 April.**

We would like to remind parents that they are not to use the staff car parks as pick up and drop off areas. These areas are for deliveries and staff access and also access for our parents who have children with special educational needs and/or special mobility requirements. To reduce traffic congestion on Purnell Street we recommend that students are dropped off and picked up near the walkway and car-park area on London Street.

## WHS Junior Timetable

Last year we introduced a new timetable for our Junior school with the goal to enhance student learning. During Year 9 and 10, students will experience a wide range of topics in the Arts, Technologies, Languages along with the more traditional subjects such as Mathematics, English, Science, Social Studies and Physical/Health Education. All of the junior school subjects will have an element of semesters or trimesters over the two years of junior school. A semester is a block of either six or seven weeks, while a trimester is a thirteen week block. At any one time all students are studying six subjects.

**Year 9 students** will have a full year of English, Physical/Health Education and Science. They will also have two thirteen week trimesters of Social Studies and Mathematics, one thirteen week trimester of Digital Technologies along with six week semesters of the Arts, Technologies and Languages.

Similarly, in **Year 10**, students will have a full year of Mathematics and Social Studies. They will have two thirteen week trimesters of English, Physical/Health Education and Science along with a number of thirteen week trimesters in Digital Technologies, Arts, Technologies and Languages.

Over a two year period the hours of study for Mathematics, English, Science, Social Studies and Physical Education is more than in previous timetable structures in which students studied all five 'core' subjects for the whole year.

## Bring Your Own Device school

We would like to take this opportunity to thank parents and students for being so prompt with WHS **Bring Your Own Device** requirements. We feel that getting our students off to a good start with using a device to support their learning is vital. We are also aware that lots of our Whanau have felt the same way, so thank you. We can see a real benefit in ensuring students are able to keep up with modern day learning, ultimately preparing our students for device use in the future. What many of our students have found is that having their own device, right from day one, enables them to transition into our modern learning environment easily. If you do have any questions relating to BYOD requirements, please do not hesitate to contact the school or visit one of the local retailers, where places like Noel Leeming and Warehouse Stationery are fully equipped to supply and are aware of our schools' requirements.

## Attendance Procedures

Research shows clearly that regular attendance (over 90% attendance), engagement and success at school are very closely linked. The more often a student is in class learning productively, the better that student's academic success.

Truancy patterns often start with being late to school, then missing the odd Form time and Assembly, then the odd class, then more frequent absences. It is very important that we work in partnership with families to ensure this does not happen.

You can help us by having high expectations around attendance, rigorously monitoring your son/daughter's absences, and informing the school when your child will be absent.

We will let you know by text message when your daughter/son is absent from Form time or Period 1, and any other absence by email at the end of each week. This email will tell you about any unexplained absences during the week. Details can be viewed on the KAMAR portal, and you will be advised to contact either the Student Centre or relevant House Dean.

At school, the House Deaning team will follow up unexplained absences, which may result in your daughter/son having to complete a school service as a consequence for unexplained absences.

We know that student educational outcomes are best when students are at school and learning.

If you have any concerns or questions about any matter regarding your daughter or son's education, please feel very welcome to make contact with us at your earliest possible convenience.

We also remind you about the Representative Policy which requires the unjustified attendance to be less than 5% in order for the student to represent the school or attend functions such as the School Ball.

Ngā mihi nui

*Martin McAllen*  
**PRINCIPAL**

*Elizabeth Spooner*  
**ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL**