



## Ōtāhuhu College Newsletter

Friday 28<sup>th</sup> November 2025

### *Important Dates*

Saturday 29 <sup>th</sup> November	Year 13 Graduation and Prizegiving 10am
Monday 1 <sup>st</sup> December	Year 11 – 13 Reports emailed
Thursday 4 <sup>th</sup> December	Year 9 and 10 Reports emailed
Friday 05 <sup>th</sup> December	Junior prizegiving and Last day of term 4



## *From Our Principal*

*2025 has been an excellent year for Otago College students. This week, we celebrate their successes, acknowledging the determination and commitment they've shown to overcome challenges. A special congratulations to those who are the first in their families to graduate—your achievements are an inspiration. To our families, thank you for your unwavering support throughout your children's 13 years of schooling.*

*Academically, our students have excelled, achieving the highest pass rates for internal assessments. We are confident this will translate to our best-ever university entrance rates. Looking ahead, we must prepare for the new curriculum and exams, which will require a collective effort from our community to maintain high achievement levels in future cohorts.*

*This year has also brought significant upgrades to our school facilities, with the opening of Ta Tahuhu being a highlight.*

*Attendance has been an ongoing focus, and it has been great to see the improvement across all our students, and we look forward to building this success next year.*

*At Otago College, we are privileged to have dedicated staff who work tirelessly to provide the best education for our students. Together, with our families and community, we continue to build a brighter future.*

## *Our Commitments*

The focus for next week is being on time. Students are expected to be at school by 8:30am, and then seated in the correct space in assembly. With the weather due to change to more wintry conditions, your child should have a plan to get to school on wet days on time. With Auckland traffic this often means leaving 10-15 minutes earlier.

## *Attendance*

School starts promptly at 8:35 a.m., and being on time is essential for students to start their day on the right foot. Arriving late disrupts learning, both for the student and their classmates. At Otago College, we emphasize the importance of punctuality as a key life skill that prepares students for success in both academics and future employment.

Families can help by ensuring students leave home with enough time to arrive before 8:35 a.m. If lateness becomes a habit, we recommend reaching out to whānau teachers or attendance staff for advice and support. Let's work together to make every morning count.



‘Oku mahu’inga ke kamata e akó ‘i he taimí. Kamata ‘i he 8:35 pongipongi.  
E amata le aoga i le 8:35 i le taeao. Ia iai i le a'oga a'o le'i amataina lesona.

## Study News

### **Avoiding the “Summer Slide”: Simple Ways to Keep Learning Alive Over the Break**

Over the long summer break, many students naturally lose a bit of the learning momentum they’ve built during the year. This is sometimes called the **“summer slide.”** The good news is that research shows even small, everyday learning activities at home can make a big difference, and they don’t have to feel like schoolwork!

For whānau in our community, the most powerful things you can do are **free, simple, and can be woven into normal life**, whether at home, at the park or beach, at work, or spending time with wider whānau. Here are some fun and practical ways to help children build their confidence and stay connected to their learning in **reading, writing, and numeracy** over the holidays.

### **Reading**

#### **Everyday ways whānau can support reading**

- Talk to your child about what you read, whether it’s recipes, news, sports updates, or social media. Seeing you as a reader matters.
- Read in the language that feels most natural to your family.
- Visit the local library together and let your child choose anything that interests them: magazines, graphic novels, game guides, travel books.
- Ask simple questions after they read: Who was your favorite character? What surprised you? What might happen next?
- Watch a movie together, then read the book version and compare it.
- Listen to audiobooks (you can get them from the library app called LIBBY) while travelling or relaxing; great for sparking discussion.
- Look up topics your child is curious about online and talk about how they know the information is reliable.

#### **Things students can do on their own**

- Read for just **30 minutes a day**, before bed works well.
- Mix it up: news articles, blogs, reviews, recipes, or short stories.
- Borrow what friends are reading or try an audiobook.
- Research a favourite celebrity or interest, then check if the sources are trustworthy.
- Try free reading resources such as: <https://pathwaysawarua.com/pathways/literacy>

## Writing

### Easy ways whānau can build writing into daily life

- Let your child see you writing (emails, lists, messages) and involve them where possible.
- Do crosswords or word finds together.
- Give them real reasons to write: the holiday shopping list, captions for whānau photos, a shared family blog, or a message to relatives.
- Sell unused items online on Trade Me or Marketplace and let your child write the description.
- Ask them to show you writing they're proud of from school.
- Choose a "family word of the day" and see who can use it the most.

### Things students can do on their own

- Keep a journal, diary, or simple to-do list.
- Writing song lyrics, poems, comics or whatever feels like fun.
- Write a persuasive letter explaining a request (and follow up with a "contract" if parents agree!).
- Write to a teacher, principal, or MP about an issue they care about.
- Use random word challenges to build creativity.
- Try online puzzles and word games: <https://www.stuff.co.nz/puzzles> | <https://pathwaysawarua.com>

## Numeracy

### Ways whānau can build math into real life

- Compare prices while grocery shopping and talk about the best value for money.
- Look at labels and discuss sugar, fat, or protein content.
- Talk about sales and discounts and make quick estimates together.
- Ask your child to teach you a math method they've learned at school.
- Look at graphs, tables, or statistics in the news and ask simple questions.
- Notice patterns in weaving, carving, buildings, or the natural world.
- Talk about technology use and calculating hours spent online.
- Be positive about math and show how you use it every day.

### Things students can do on their own

- Play online strategy games or number puzzles.
- Play card or board games that use math.
- Create symmetrical art or designs.
- Make a simple budget for holiday earnings.
- Calculate their own tech usage and compare it to recommended hours.
- Bake or do DIY crafts to sell and work out costs and how much a 25% profit would be.
- Try free online numeracy tools:
- <https://pathwaysawarua.com/pathways/numeracy>



Keeping learning alive over the summer holidays doesn't need to be formal or stressful. **Small, fun activities done regularly help students return to school confidently, settled, and ready for a strong start to the new year.** Thank you for everything you do to support your children's learning; your involvement truly makes a difference.

**Ngā mihi nui ki a koutou katoa**, thank you for your support this year. Wishing you **a happy and safe holiday season, including precious time with whānau.** I look forward to seeing all our students return refreshed and ready for an exciting new year of learning!

Melinda Christensen

Director of Academic Performance

Otahuhu College Email: [mchristensen@otahuhucollege.school.nz](mailto:mchristensen@otahuhucollege.school.nz)



## Health and Wellness Centre

