

NEWSLETTER

St John's Girls' School 20 November 2026



Greetings from the Principal

Mālō e lelei, Kia Ora, Talofa

As we head into the busy final few weeks of term, you can really feel the wonderful effort and energy pouring into the school. Our girls and staff are working hard, setting up some fantastic events and activities to celebrate the year.

This busy time brings to mind the whakataukī I have shared in our newsletter this week: **Mā te huruhuru ka rere te manu.**

Great success needs great preparation and hard work. Like a bird carefully growing its feathers before taking flight, our girls are currently putting in the practice, planning, and teamwork they need to achieve their goals.

We see this especially with our Year 8 girls, who are showing incredible leadership and effort as they organise their special end-of-year events for the whole school. The success of these events will not just happen by chance. It will be the direct result of their countless hours of planning, collaboration, and determination.

This whakataukī is a reminder for all of us at home and school. Every bit of effort counts! When we support our girls with their learning, encourage their practice, and cheer on their ability to work with each other, we are helping to grow their 'feathers' so they can truly soar.

Whakatauki - Māori Proverb

Mā te huruhuru ka rere te manu.

It is the feathers that enable the bird to fly.

Cultural Day

Mahi pai to our Year 7 & 8 Kaiarahi who organised a morning of learning for our whole kura at our annual Cultural Day.

We were impressed to see the initiative they took in involving other students in both their planning and the engaging activities throughout the morning. The entire school thoroughly enjoyed the experience, taking away valuable new knowledge about the diverse cultures represented within our kura.

Greats and Grands

Our time-honoured tradition of Greats and Grands was held yesterday, and it was a wonderful morning of sharing and togetherness. We saw around 100 grandparents, great-grandparents and grandfriends join their girls for a morning of sharing, classroom time and entertainment. Thank you to the many guests who joined us; I am sure you were as proud of your girls as we were. Ka pai to our senior girls for their help too!



Southland Adventure Race

Tino pai to our Year 7 & 8 girls who took part in the Southland Junior Adventure Race yesterday. It was a typical Southland spring day, and the course was incredibly challenging. The teamwork, determination and resilience were evident in all our teams. Every girl crossed the finish line with a smile and a sense of pride. Well done girls!

Mind Mingle Quiz

Good luck to our eight Year 5 and 6 representatives heading to the Mind Mingle Quiz at Waihopai School next week. This is an annual school community quiz, especially for Year 5 and 6 students. The girls have been training with Ms Coatsworth and are excited to put their best foot forward.



Values Cup Recipient



Bethany Mehrtens
Room 7

William Pike Challenge

We are so proud of our 17 Year 7 & 8 girls who have participated in the William Pike Challenge this year. The final outdoor activity was a night of camping and a very long and gruelling walk at Dolamore Park last weekend. This event culminates a year of outdoor activities, community service and passion projects. We have been impressed by how the girls have challenged themselves throughout the year; trying new skills and making a difference in their communities. They should be proud of their achievements. The William Pike Challenge will be back next year for a new cohort of girls to join.

2027 Camps

Forms will be sent home in the coming weeks with important camp information, including the process for police vetting for parent volunteers. We do need to get the police vetting process underway this year, so please keep an eye out for these forms from next week.

Familiarisation Morning

Next week, we will welcome our new Year 2-8 girls and their families to our kura for our annual familiarisation morning. Many of our current girls will be buddies with the very important job of ensuring our new girls feel settled and excited about starting with us next year. Thank you to the Parents' Association for their support of this morning by providing morning tea for our new parents.

Christmas Service and Prizegiving

Our Christmas Service is taking place on Monday 14 December at 6pm at First Church. All of our girls are expected to attend, as our church services are an integral part of our Special Character.

Our school prizegiving is being held on Tuesday 15 December at 1:30pm at First Church, followed by the Year 8 Leavers' Ceremony back at St John's. We are excited to have you join us to celebrate the achievements of all of our girls.

Invoices

There are still a large number of outstanding invoices to be paid. Please ensure these are settled as soon as possible.

Have a restful weekend with your whānau.

Mā te wa!

HBradshaw

Holly Bradshaw
Tumuaki | Principal



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

NOVEMBER

- ***24*** Familiarisation Morning [Yrs 2-8 for 2027]
- ***25*** Mind Mingle [Yr 5/6] at Waihopai School - 2 teams of 4 to attend
- ***26*** Disco [5:30pm - 7:00pm]
- ***27*** Sizzle and Chill



DECEMBER

- ***1*** School Board Meeting [5.30pm]
- ***3*** Pack the Bus
- ***4*** Tabloids [1-3pm]
- ***7*** Tabloids [postponement day]
  Principal's Big Day In [Yr 8]
- ***9*** Junior Syndicate Christmas Rotation [am]
  Father / Daughter Netball [2pm]
- ***14*** Christmas Service & Prizegiving Practice
  Christmas Service [First Church 6pm]
- ***15*** **Last day for students**
  Prizegiving [First Church 1.30pm]
  Leavers' Farewell [3.15pm School Hall]

FEBRUARY

- ***1*** Staff Only Day
  Open Classrooms [2:30pm - 3:30pm]
- ***2*** First day for students
- ***8*** Waitangi Day Holiday **[School Closed]**
- ***9*** Meet the Teacher Evening [6pm]
  Parents' Association Meeting [7pm]
- ***22-24*** Year 5 & 6 Camp [Camp Columba]
- ***23-26*** Year 7 Camp [Rakiura/Stewart Island]

MARCH

- ***1*** Staff Only Day
  Open Classrooms [2:30pm - 3:30pm]
- ***2*** First day for students
- ***8*** Waitangi Day Holiday **[School Closed]**
- ***9*** Meet the Teacher Evening [6pm]
  Parents' Association Meeting [7pm]
- ***22-24*** Year 5 & 6 Camp [Camp Columba]
- ***23-26*** Year 7 Camp [Rakiura/Stewart Island]

WEEKLY AWARDS

CONGRATULATIONS

ROOM 1	Adeline Gerken, Delilah McKenzie, Olive Johnstone, Mackenna North
ROOM 2	Abby Moore, Aggie McKenzie, Lily Vaughan, Lara Valli
ROOM 3	Mia Mojica, Georgia Cochrane, Isla Dackers, McKenzie Kyle
ROOM 5	Lilly Stalker, Sophia Risk, Charlotte Farley, Tilly King
ROOM 6	Portia Smith, Phoebe Hodson, Georgia Mead
ROOM 7	Isabella Johns, Danielle King, Rosie Laughton, Elise Davison
ROOM 8	Aliviah Giles, Willow Murray, Maya Preininger

PRINCIPAL'S AWARD	Rm 1	Freya Burns, Lola Devlin
	Rm 2	Addison Findlater, Olive Reilly, Isabelle Miskimmin, Gypsee Stephens
	Rm 3	Navy Sloane
VALUES CUP	Rm 7	Bethany Mehrtens



Come and work at our amazing school!

Be part of a supportive, friendly community where you can make a real difference every day.

School Caretaker wanted!

We are looking for a reliable, practical and enthusiastic person to join our team from **January 2027.**

15 hours per week

7.30am – 10.30am

Term time only

You'll be helping to keep our school safe, welcoming and running smoothly.

Tasks include:

- Opening and securing buildings
- Minor repairs and general maintenance
- Health and safety checks
- Setting up rooms and equipment for school activities
- Looking after school grounds and facilities
- Managing rubbish and recycling
- Liaising with contractors when required
- Identifying and reporting maintenance issues

No lawn mowing required!

A variety of tasks, a brighter day for our school!



If you enjoy being part of a school community and take pride in keeping things in great shape, we'd love to hear from you!

All enquiries to:

Holly Bradshaw, Principal

principal@stjohnsgirls.school.nz

218 7759

Together we make a brighter tomorrow

SAINT JOHN'S GIRLS' SCHOOL | DOMINUS ILLUMINATIO MEA

St John's Girls' School
Parents' Association

RAFFLE 2026

Congratulations to our winners!

10 winners • $350 voucher of their choice each

Zhivana Michaels
Rusty Reynders
Kelvin Lawson
Jim Pine
Krista Farley
Bruce Dickens
Britt Johnstone
Tracey McDonald
Murray Cochrane
Kelly White

All winners have been notified.

Thank you to our families and supporters!

Funds raised will help purchase new desks and chairs for Room 3.



2026 80s Disco

This year's Disco theme is the 80s!

Tickets for this year's Disco will be sold on Monday the 16th to Thursday the 26th of November. The tickets will be priced at $7.00 and will be sold at lunch in the library each day.

The profits will go towards food, entertainment and decoration for the disco. The extra funds will go towards a Charity.

We will be giving the girls dress-up ideas each Thursday assemblies leading up to the disco.

We look forward to seeing all your creative dress-up ideas! Thank you for your support, we can't wait to see you guys at the disco!

RM 5 newsletter

NOVEL STUDY - "THERE USED TO BE AN EMPTY CHAIR AT THE BACK OF MY CLASSROOM... AND IT ALL BEGAN WITH THAT CHAIR."



This term Room 5 have been captivated by our class novel, The Boy at the Back of the Class by Onjali Q Raúf. This story follows a group of friends who hatch a plan to help a new classmate who is a refugee. This has sparked some truly thoughtful and mature discussions in Room 5. We are using the book as a springboard for learning across the curriculum such as exploring different perspectives, building empathy, and analyzing how authors show kindness and courage. We have also brought the story to life through creative art projects inspired by the book's themes of friendship and belonging. [Check out our pomegranate art].

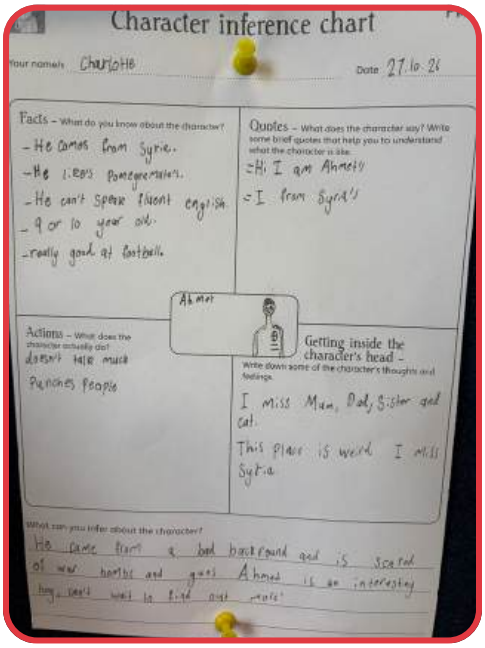
It has been wonderful to see the class connect so deeply with the characters and read about characters who show empathy and kindness.

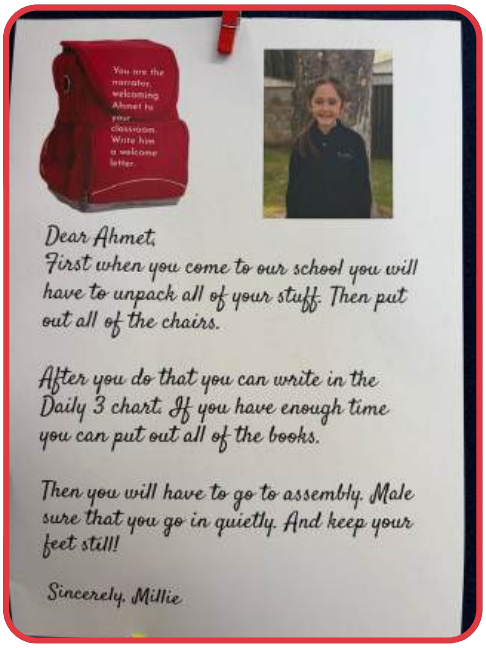













"Thank You"


Ahmeds Yelling!


"Home" said Ahmet


Lucy



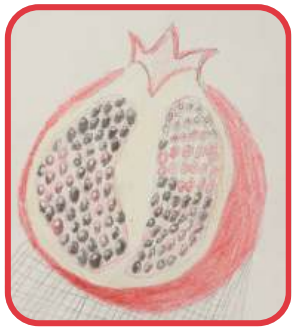




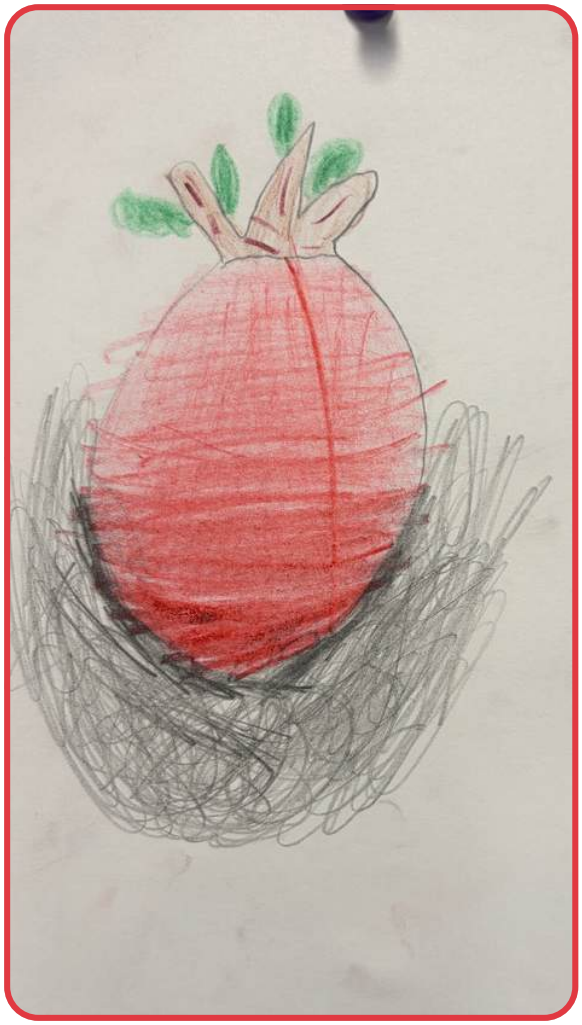




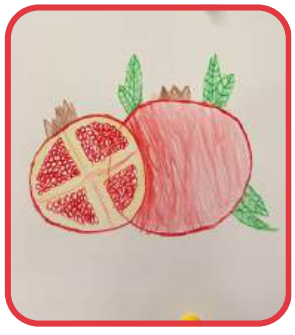




















RM 6 Newsletter

THE ROOM 6 RUNDOWN!

CREATIVITY AND CURIOSITY HAVE BEEN RUNNING HIGH IN RM 6! HERE IS A PEEK AT WHAT THE GIRLS HAVE BEEN UP TO.





HANDS-ON TECHNOLOGY

Our Technology Rotations have the girls building serious practical skills. They've been testing their hand-eye coordination with hammers and nails in woodwork and fine-tuning their focus with needles in sewing. Up next is edible chemistry, where they'll explore rising agents by making fresh bread and hokey pokey.





THE SHAKE OUT SIMULATOR

Learning got very real this week when the earthquake simulator visited school. After exploring how natural disasters happen, the girls stepped inside the simulator to experience the sensation of an earthquake firsthand —an exciting and valuable lesson in preparedness.





BUBBLES, GLAD WRAP & WHALES

In art, we've been getting inventive with watercolours! Using dish bubbles and Glad Wrap, the girls have been creating incredible underwater textures. Their whale pieces are looking fantastic, and we are excited to display them for you soon.



GETTING CREATIVE WITH GEOMETRY IN MATHS

In maths, we have just wrapped up our unit on transformations, and the girls had a blast bringing geometry to life! Rather than sticking to textbooks, we took our learning outdoors with sidewalk chalk, put our spatial thinking to the test with a "Create the Reflection" challenge, and applied our knowledge of symmetry and rotation to design our very own custom tiles.





PUPPY CUDDLES FOR A GOOD CAUSE

Finally, who doesn't love cuddles with a puppy—or six?! A few weeks ago, Room 6 had the very important job of helping to socialise a litter of puppies. Taking time out of our busy schedule for puppy cuddles was easily a highlight of the term, and the girls did a wonderful job giving the pups gentle, positive attention.





RM 7 Newsletter

IN AN EARTHQUAKE - DROP, COVER, HOLD! LONG OR STRONG - GET GONE!!

What does it actually feel like to be in an earthquake? Our visit from Emergency Management Southland gave us the opportunity to find out!

While practising Drop, Cover and Hold in the classroom is important, experiencing the earthquake simulator gave us a much better understanding of just how difficult it can be to move, think and find shelter when the ground is shaking beneath you. It certainly made us appreciate why being prepared is so important!

We also learnt that New Zealand experiences approximately 400–500 earthquakes each year. Most are so small that we don't even notice them, but sensitive instruments deep within the Earth detect them.
Following our visit, our curiosity didn't stop there! We explored the GeoNet website, discovering the earthquakes happening around New Zealand and finding out more about what is going on beneath our feet, much of which we cannot see or feel.

A big thank you to Emergency Management Southland for such an engaging and eye-opening learning experience!





TECHNOLOGY

We have been having lots of fun in Technology this term! We have just finished our third rotation, and there has been plenty of creating, experimenting and learning along the way.

In Cooking, we designed and made our own pizzas while learning some important knife skills. In Science, we got our hands messy making bread from scratch and discovering what goes into the breadmaking process. In Woodwork, we have been busy measuring, building and creating our own wooden masterpieces.

Next week, we are swapping our tools and ingredients for needles and thread as we head into our sewing rotation.





ART

We have been exploring the work of New Zealand artist Carly Wood, who now lives in Australia. We loved learning about her approach to art and her reminder that there is no single 'right' way to create. Carly encourages everyone to embrace their own style, experiment and, most importantly, enjoy the process of making art.

Inspired by her use of layers, colour and mark making, we created our own abstract paintings. Along the way, we practised our fine brushwork, experimented with colour mixing and discovered just how different our artworks could be when we each put our own creative spin on things!

We have also been welcoming a little spring into our artwork, taking inspiration from colourful tulip fields. Using oil pastels, we created our own fields of tulips, experimenting with colour and texture to bring our spring landscapes to life.



















HOSPICE CHRISTMAS CARDS

The Senior Syndicate had the privilege of creating Christmas cards for Hospice South, which will be gifted to their wonderful volunteers at Christmas. It was lovely to know that our artwork would be helping to spread a little Christmas cheer to those who give so generously to others.

Here are Room 7's creations, each one made with love and a little bit of Christmas magic!















RM 8 Newsletter

DISCO PLANNING

The 2026 Disco started off rocky. It took a few days to decide on our theme, and after a vote, "Decades" emerged as the winner. But which decade should we do? With one more vote, the 80s became the official theme for the disco.

Each team has its own job to do in preparation for the big night:

- **The Marketing team** is working on making posters and designing tickets. They also sell the tickets and tally up the total.
- **The Decorations team** is planning what they'll need to turn the hall into a time machine.
- **The Food & Budgeting team** is planning the menu (which looks delicious, by the way) and working out how much money we need to raise to cover the Decorations team's costs.
- **The Music & Entertainment team** is pretty straightforward—they organize the music, games, and activities for the night.

As we get closer to the disco, we are all pitching in to help transform the hall into a magical portal that will take you Back to the 80s!

ICE CREAMS

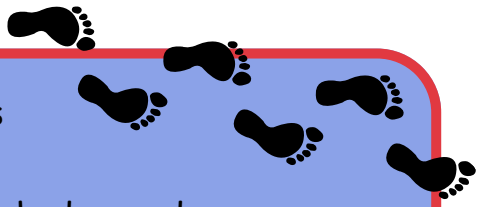


Room 8 made paper mache ice cream cones with Mrs Dawkins in Terms 3 & 4. We used paper cups as the cone, with some clay inside to make it more sturdy, and rolled-up balls of newspaper as the ice cream scoops. We taped the balls to the cup with masking tape to make them stay. The next thing we did was use strips of newspaper and glued them to the balls with wallpaper paste. After that, we went in with blank newsprint and also put that on top. When the paper was dry, we chose what flavours we wanted and painted them on. We made little toppings like Oreos, wafers, cherries, and flakes out of clay and let them dry before we hot-glued them on and painted them. We also used hot glue to create a sauce drizzle effect. Now, the ice creams are on display at He Waka Tuia Museum on Kelvin Street.

POETRY - EIGHT YEARS OF FOOTPRINTS

As we come to the end of our time at St John's we have been starting to reflect on our school days. From our small little selves to the young ladies off to high school in 2027.

We have written a reflective poem to commemorate our last eight years at primary school, here are a few of our poems.



Eight Years Of Footprints

I walked through the gate with my backpack draped over my shoulders,
buckles buckled and my heart racing.
At five years old the senior end was like a daunting maze
and the year 8s seemed scary.

Eight years have flown by, the old hand rung bell,
now hearing the bell by the click of a button.
Trading food under the verandah and in the playgrounds.
Always keeping a tight eye for when school is out for the school holidays.

We went from colouring outside of the lines,
to now learn what personification, metaphors and similes are.
We've survived steep camps, cross country squelch and
the loud panic of forgetting P.E gear, hastily trying to find some spares.

Now, the playgrounds aren't that exciting anymore
and our uniform is more snug than last year.
Next year is new classes and a lot more people
Backpacks on the back of our chairs instead of tote trays.

We are leaving behind our names on the tick charts
And our millions of footprints left indented on the back field.
We take with us our Inside jokes and nicknames,
And the nervousness of having to start again.

Evie Erskine

Eight Years Of Footprints

Tiny feet usher through the gates,
Mini hands grasping parents and oversized uniforms swaying with the pitter patter of feet.
Tiny bodies are swallowed whole by rainbow backpacks,
Tears falling when your mother left.

Time pasted and classes changed - yet bells and desks stayed a constant,
From learning ABCs to algebra, and mat to chairs.
Trading snacks in the blinding sun and daisy chains as long as cars.

Time pasted, friendships grew and changed,
Learning more and more about yourself along the way.
From fingerpainting to wishing we could fingerpaint.
Dragging through crosscountry, and skipping in puddles.

Eight years passing in the blink of an eye,
Yet the room one chairs are too small and the thought of high school no longer feels like a fairytale in a faraway land.
Year nine bringing less books and more crowds, a daunting change.

Uniforms lost along the way, hats left in the abyss below the bed.
Names only kept in the memories of younger students and teachers, soon to be left in the past.
Taking the memories and inside jokes, leaving only footprints,
Soon the thought of year eight will be a distant memory that you will laugh about with friends you still know.

Willow Murray

Eight Years Of Footprints

I walked in through the big steel gates with my oversized backpack,
Carrying only my blue lunchbox and pink drink bottle.
The senior block was a daunting maze, a puzzle of confusion.
The seniors looked like big giants ruling the school.

Eight years have gone by between assemblies and messy ponytails,
Swapping snacks and slices, making deals with fruit roll-ups.
We used to worry about turns on the slide,
Now stressing about when homework assignments are due.

Now the playground feels a little smaller, and the uniform fits a little tighter.
We used to worry about the music in the car,
Now we have to make sure we get on the right bus.

We used to be in a class with everyone we knew,
Now we stress about not having any friends in our homeroom class.
We used to only learn in one class,
Now we have to navigate the school to find different classes.

We leave behind our everlasting memories, and our secret hiding spots no one will ever find.
Taking with us the knowledge, the jokes and laughs
And the courage to start again.

Greer Pine

TECHNOLOGY ROTATIONS

Science

We loved Science. We learned about yeast and what makes it rise, and we even got to make our own bread! In our first lesson, we learned about what yeast actually was. Who knew that it was a type of fungus? We used plastic bags to put all of our ingredients in, and we mixed it by zipping it shut and squishing it until it was mixed. Once that was done, we spread the dough out on a well-floured surface and started kneading it. It took the whole team to take turns and knead, but after we managed to get a smooth dough, we were finally able to put it in the oven. This was our most exciting part, because every time we got to check the progress, everyone wanted to see. After our loaves of bread were finished, everyone got a bite. What we might change next time is leaving the bread in the oven for longer, since all of them still had some raw dough in them.

In our next lesson, we were making some experiments using yeast. Using large plastic bottles, we used yeast, baking soda, vinegar, and other ingredients to see if we could make balloons inflate. By putting balloons on the open tops, we were waiting for the reaction. Most of the balloons rose a little, but the one that rose the most was the bottle with baking soda and vinegar. If we were going to do the experiment again, we would try to put the balloons on the mouth of the bottles as soon as we put the ingredients in. Maybe then we could see a change in the results. Our favourite part of the lesson was definitely when we got the opportunity to make honeycomb, or hokey pokey.

Foods

We love food! As our second tech course, Room Eight was with Ms Coatsworth to learn how to cook! Our first week was an introduction to cooking, cutting, and kneading. We learned how to handle a knife the correct way, so that when making our pizzas we wouldn't injure anyone. We practiced our new skills by carefully chopping and dicing fresh vegetables for our toppings, and mastered kneading by making bubble dough. We used our booklets to plan the pizzas we were going to make, and learned what foods tasted good together! Finally, we put everything together, baked our creations, and enjoyed our delicious pizzas!

Fabrics

We love sewing. On a Friday afternoon we headed down to room 7 with Mrs Stewart for an afternoon of sewing. At the moment we are making small pillows and using a sewing technique called tivaevae a Samoan style which uses a lot of layering and pretty stitching. The first week was all about designing, cutting and starting the first few stitches. Mrs Stewart taught us how to do a range of stitches including the running stitch, the back stitch and a blanket stitch. We are looking forward to putting all our pieces together this week.













Deck The Pod
COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS PARTY !
Saturday 5 December 2026
262 Ness Street, Appleby
4pm till 7pm
Bring your own picnic or enjoy some food stalls,
get ready for some jolly fun with great entertainment,
kids area, games & Christmas craft stalls.
Free Selfies with Santa!
SOUTH alive
HE TOKA ORA
THE POD cafe