



Newsletter

Term 3, Week 8, 2025

4 September 2025

Manukau Christian School

Dear MCS Friends and Families,

As we come to the end of Term 3, it is encouraging to pause and reflect on God's goodness to us as a school community. The days are getting longer, spring is in the air, and the end of the year is in sight. For many of our students, this is also a time of focus and preparation: our Year 10–13 students are looking ahead to Cambridge external exams, and our Year 6 students are preparing for their first set of external assessments. Please keep these students in your prayers as they work diligently toward these important milestones.

The final term is almost upon us and is always a full one, filled with learning, events, and celebrations of what God has done in and through our students. In this newsletter you'll find updates on some exciting developments—such as our Year 7s moving into the high school from 2026, the outstanding results of our parent survey, and the recent recognition of our graduates achieving the top university entrance success rate in New Zealand.

We remain thankful for the partnership of parents, staff, and students in our mission to provide a Christ-centred, academically rigorous education that equips young people to serve Christ in all of life.



Year 7 Moving into High School

From 2026, our Year 7 students will officially become part of the high school. This is an exciting step forward for Manukau Christian School as we strengthen our vision of a junior high (Years 7–9) and senior high (Years 10–13).



For students, this means learning from specialist teachers, setting up pastoral support in the pre-teen years, developing leadership skills over a longer period, and



stepping into a culture that encourages independence, maturity, and responsibility. The junior high years provide a supportive bridge, giving students time to adjust to new routines before the challenges of IGCSE and A-levels.

As part of this change, the formal re-application point into the high school will move from Year 9 to Year 10. (Current Year 9 MCS students will not need to apply for Year 10 next year, nor Year 9, 2026 students. This will take effect in 2027.) This makes Year 10 the natural gateway into senior high and the IGCSE years, where students face a greater level of academic rigour and responsibility. Along the way, students will also face clear academic checkpoints. At the end of Years 7, 8, and 9, their progress will be assessed through Achievement Certificates, which are based on mid-year and end-of-year exams. Students must meet the required standards in order to progress to the next level.

Practically, Year 7 students will join mixed homerooms across Years 7–9, follow the high school timetable and calendar, and participate in high school assemblies, modules, and activities. They will no longer be part of primary school events but will have opportunities to integrate fully with older students, helping them grow in confidence and belonging.

We are excited about the opportunities this transition will bring for our students and look forward to supporting families through this next stage.

Leadership Update

As a school community we want to acknowledge and thank Mrs Nadine Thomas, who has faithfully served as our Head of Primary. Nadine has been a tremendous blessing to our staff and students, bringing strength, cohesion, and warmth to the primary team. Her leadership has had a profound impact, and as she and her family move to Australia, we know she will be greatly missed.

Looking ahead, we are delighted to share two leadership appointments that will strengthen our school as we continue to grow.



Mrs Janina Harris will become **Head of Primary (Years 1 to 6)**. Many of you will know Janina's long connection with MCS—her family was involved in the founding of the school, she herself attended as a student, and she has previously taught here before returning this year. Janina brings with her a deep love for the Lord, a joyful spirit in the classroom, and a strong commitment to both high academic standards and Christian discipleship. We are excited to see her lead the primary team in the years ahead.



Mrs Jessica Schellingerhout will take on the new role of **Assistant to the Head of High School** from 2026, as Year 7 formally joins the high school. Jessica will work alongside our Head of High School Mr Ethan Aloiai, focusing particularly on supporting our junior high (Years 7–9). With 19 years of teaching experience and five years at MCS, Jessica is a gifted teacher whose clarity, warmth, and commitment to our mission will be a great asset in strengthening the high school team.

These leadership appointments are part of preparing the school for the next stage of growth—particularly the exciting move of Year 7 into the high school in 2026. Please pray for Janina and Jessica as they step into these new responsibilities, and join us in thanking God for providing faithful leaders to guide our school community into the future.

Parent Survey Feedback

Thank you to the many families who took part in our Parent Perception Survey in Term 2. Your feedback is an important part of how we reflect, grow, and stay faithful to our mission as a school. We were very encouraged by the results and want to share some of the key findings with you.

The results confirmed what we have long believed: families choose Manukau Christian School for our combination of high academic expectations (86%) and our strong Christian worldview (73%). These are the two defining features that set us apart and give clarity to our mission.

Parents overwhelmingly affirmed their support for MCS:

- 98% said their children feel safe at school.
- 96% agreed their children are proud to belong at MCS.
- 97% believe the school is delivering on its mission of a Christ-centred, academically rigorous education.
- 95% recognised the balance between high academic expectations and strong support for students.
- 99% affirmed the school's high standards of discipline and behaviour



The most common words parents used to describe MCS were *academic*, *Christ-honouring*, *high standards*, *structured*, and *respectful*. Families also highlighted that the school is *safe* and *caring*. A small minority of parents indicated that at times the school's structured approach can feel overwhelming or rigid. While this was not the

experience of the vast majority, we are reflecting on how we can continue to maintain high standards while also fostering joy, flexibility, and wellbeing.

94% of families said they were satisfied or very satisfied with their experience at MCS, and 97% said they would recommend our school to others. This is a wonderful affirmation and a testimony to the partnership we share between home and school.

While the survey was overwhelmingly positive, we are committed to ongoing growth. Our next steps include:

- Safeguarding our core focus on academic excellence and Christian worldview formation.
- Continuing to strengthen worldview teaching in the primary years.
- Balancing high standards with flexibility and joy for students at different stages.

We are deeply grateful for this feedback and for the strong support of our parent community. It is encouraging to see that the mission of MCS is not only understood but embraced by the families we serve.

100% University Entrance in 2024

We are delighted to share that Manukau Christian School once again achieved a **100% university entrance (UE) rate** for our graduating class of 2024. This means that every one of our school leavers gained university entrance — the highest percentage of any school in New Zealand in 2024.

	Top 10 by UE %	2024
1	Manukau Christian School	100
2	Diocesan School For Girls	97.2
3	St Cuthbert's College (Epsom)	96.4
4	Rangi Ruru Girls' School	94.2
5	Iona College	93.8
6	Pinehurst School	93.5
7	Kristin School	93.4
8	Craighead Diocesan School	92.4
9	Baradene College	92.1
10	ACG Parnell College	91.8

While not every student is called to pursue university study, UE is one measure that reflects whether young people are leaving school equipped with the literacy, numeracy, and sustained academic achievement needed for a wide range of pathways in life. Achieving 100% three times in recent years suggests that we are on the right track in preparing students well for both further study and adult

responsibilities.

What makes this especially interesting is that of the top ten schools for UE in 2024, seven had a Christian foundation or ethos. This points to something significant: when education is shaped by a worldview that sees the world as God has made it, learning becomes clearer, more purposeful, and more fruitful. At MCS, this biblical foundation, combined with the dedication of teachers and the strong support of families, provides a framework where students can thrive.

By comparison, many schools—both local and national—see far lower rates of university entrance. For example, nearby state schools such as Manurewa High (28.3%), Alfriston College (20.1%), and James Cook High (15.1%) reflect challenges in ensuring their graduates are well prepared. Even some higher-priced independent schools fall well short of the outcomes we are seeing here at MCS.

These results are not an end in themselves, but they do affirm that God is at work among us, and that the partnership of home and school is bearing fruit. We thank Him for His goodness, and we press on diligently and prayerfully as we prepare the next cohort of leaders for the future.

June Series IGCSE Results

In Year 11 students begin their progression toward A Level examinations by completing their IGCSEs. Given the wide range of subjects at this stage, we help to reduce the pressure of sitting six external Cambridge examinations at the end of the year by scheduling Math and English in the mid-year (June Series) examinations.



Results were excellent, with **16 out of 20** students earning either an A* (90% or higher) or an A (80% or higher) in English. The remaining students were not far behind, showing strong overall performance. In Mathematics **60% of students** attained an A or A* grade. Well done students. Year 11 students complete their end-of-year IGCSE exams in November, and will then be in a position to select their preferred subjects for further study in Year 12.

Kind Regards,

Scott Kennedy *BA/BSc, Dip.Tch*

Principal

CALENDAR

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1 SEP Yr 11-13 Prelims	2	3	4	5 1:30pm Father's Day Event Yr 1-7
8	9	10	11	12 Yr 11-13 Prelims end Swimming Yrs 5&6 1:00pm and 1:30pm
15	16	17	18	19 Last Day of Term Primary Assembly 8:50am High School Assembly 9:20am School closes 12:30pm Senior Quiz Night Fundraiser – Saturday 6:00-9:00pm
SCHOOL HOLIDAYS				
6 OCT Term 4 Starts Yr 11-13 Study Leave Primary Assembly 8:40am	7	8	9	10 Yr 11-13 Reports go home
13 Yr 3-5 Museum Visit at school Checkpoint English Paper 1, 11:00am	14 Checkpoint Math Paper 1, 11:00am Checkpoint English Paper 2, 1:30pm	15 Checkpoint Math Paper 2, 11:00am	16	17
20	21	22 Yr 3-6 Stardome Trip	23	24 Katherine Young Visit Yr 7 Kiwi Kapers 11:30am

GENERAL NOTICES

Late or Absent Students

- Please ensure that your child has signed in at the office if they are late. We will follow up and ring you, assuming your child is not here if they have missed the morning roll.
- If your child has had vomiting or diarrhoea, they need to stay home for 24 hours before returning to school to prevent spreading illness.
- If your child is going to be away and you have let their teacher know, please also let the office know. Thank you.

GENERAL NOTICES

Thank You

- For your attendance at the Pathways Evening earlier this term.
- For your support of the recent Run4Bibles event, and Auckland Christian Schools Cross Country, supporting your child in getting sponsors and encouraging your child with their run on the day. Please return any sponsorship money to school and/or make your donation online.
- For supporting our high school's sausage sizzle fundraiser for their end of year graduation celebration.
- For your offers of help with various activities, including swimming—without which we could not take part.
- For spreading the word about our school.



Your encouragement and support make a real difference, and we are truly grateful for the way you partner with us.

Health and Safety

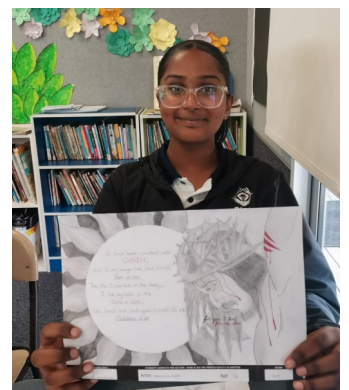


- We are serious about Health and Safety at school. Thank you parents who consistently ensure the safety of their children by parking your car in the correct place, and walking your child to the central courtyard area from the upper carpark. Parents, **please** be respectful of others by **parking** your car, not blocking the driveway.
- Please observe the direction of the arrows in the upper carpark.
- Please update your contact details—address, phone number and email if this changes. Often this only comes to light when a child is unwell.
- Any new medications that your child may be taking e.g. asthma inhaler, must be accompanied by a *Medications Advice* form, available from the office.
- Please report any hazards to the office.

Calendar Art

A masterpiece worthy of a gallery wall. Amaira has prepared her drawing for next term's calendar art.

Our primary students are also hard at work on their own masterpieces, and these will be available for parents to order at the beginning of next term.



HAPPENINGS

Run4Bibles



Running our cross country in August does create it's own challenges weather-wise! We are thankful that both the Year 1 to 4 and Year 5 to 8 events were able to take place on their scheduled days. Students and marshals knew exactly what to do and where to go—and go the students did! The many laps students ran during training sessions paid off as they got fitter and fitter, enabling them to run with ease. If any parents are interested in continuing on this fitness, there are great parkrun programmes on Saturday morning that families can attend.

Students have worked hard to get sponsors to raise funds for those that are Bible-less in South Africa. Please ensure that your child has returned their form and money now. We will update you with totals as soon as we can.

Results per Year Level

	1 st boy	2 nd boy	3 rd boy	1 st girl	2 nd girl	3 rd girl
Year 1	Luke Taylor	Lucas Chen	Micah Tagore	Sarah Huang	Elizabeth O'Neill	Sophia Vermaak
Year 2	Liam Van Rhyn	Wesley Li	Ryder Edmonds	Athena Ong	Mila Nieuwenhuizen	Rheia Daniel
Year 3	Clyde Panganiban	Jayden Song	Lucian Yap	Amelia Posthuma	Emily du Plessis	Beatrix O'Neill
Year 4	Euan Alarcon	Japjot Boparai	Adilpreet Randhawa	Chunyu Sun	Cassie Ye	Bonnie Li
Year 5	Jonty Faletanoai	Eben Schellingerhout	Jared Posthuma	Teegan Posthuma	Jessica Smilde	Zarya Zhang
Year 6	Basti Alarcon	Torres Young	Hunter Edmonds	Kayla Posthuma	Ivy Li	Iris Yim
Year 7	Harry Smilde	Jean Schellingerhout	Matthew Slabber	Jovel Ong	Anje Schellingerhout	Emily Willis
Year 8	Joshua Wang	Joshua Zhu	Evan Johnson Nebu	Bella Xia	Abigail Anbunathan	Eugenia Chu

Overall Winners

First Boy	Harry Smilde	16:44	Approx 4 km
First Girl	Bella Xia	18:28	Approx 4 km



Congratulations on a race run well!

HAPPENINGS



I loved Run for Bibles because I wanted to raise lots of Bibles for South African children. It was so much fun that I didn't even want to come first, second or third.

Mila Nieuwenhuizen Yr 2

I really liked that day because I raised A LOT of money for children in my own country and I came first in the race too!

Liam van Rhyn Yr 2

It was VERY tiring. But I still enjoyed it.

Gurnaaz Maan Yr 4

Run4Bibles is great exercise. The ice blocks were delicious.

Ryan Xia Yr 4

HAPPENINGS

Auckland Christian Schools Cross Country



Last week, a group of our top runners proudly represented MCS at the ACS Cross Country, competing against 10 other Christian schools at the Pukekohe Showgrounds. What a stellar effort from our students. Out of the fifteen who took part, nearly half came back with certificates as place-getters – a wonderful achievement.

A special congratulations goes to Jonty Faletanoai, who placed first in his age group. Other outstanding place-getters were: Harry Smilde (2nd), Ivy Li (3rd), Kayla Posthuma (2nd), Alaric Maney (3rd), Jovel Ong (2nd), and Bella Xia (3rd).

Well done to each of our runners – you showed determination, perseverance, and great school spirit! And thank you to our parent helpers.



International Chemistry Quiz

Recently, a number of our high school students took part in the **International Chemistry Quiz**, run by the Royal Australian Chemistry Institute. Open to Years 7–13, the quiz challenges students to apply their chemistry knowledge and logical thinking to real-world scenarios, inspiring further study and interest in the subject.

A total of 34 MCS students took part, and we are delighted to share some exceptional achievements. Congratulations to **Rohan Prasad** and **Ezra Liu** (Year 13), who both earned **High Distinction**.

We also celebrate the following students who achieved Distinctions: Mahavir Mandalia, Makayla Morris, Harmony Maireroa, Aaryaveer Jakku, Joshua Chand, Saranya Seth, and Veer Bhatia. Well done to all our participants – we are proud of your hard work and dedication.



INTERNATIONAL
CHEMISTRY QUIZ



HAPPENINGS

PISA Testing

PISA is the OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment, with approximately 90 countries taking part in 2025. PISA measures 15-year-olds' ability to use their reading, mathematics and science knowledge and skills to meet real-life challenges. Students from MCS took part in this study recently which was held on site and administered online. Results will be available in 2026.



Year 1 Geologists

Our Year 1 students turned into enthusiastic geologists as they explored the rock cycle and fossils. Armed with curiosity, questions, and plenty of hands-on activities, they discovered how rocks are formed and the fascinating stories fossils tell about life long ago.



Touching a fossil was soo exciting!

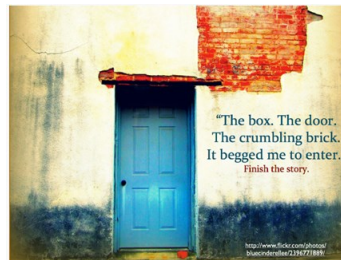
Continuing their study of planet Earth, students are searching for organic matter, sediment, pumice pebbles, and little critters.



HAPPENINGS

Year 7 English

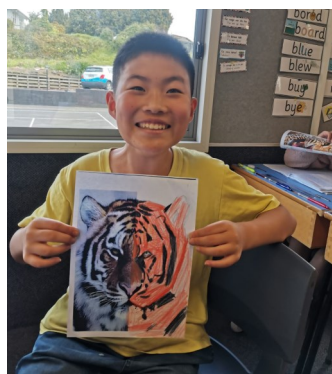
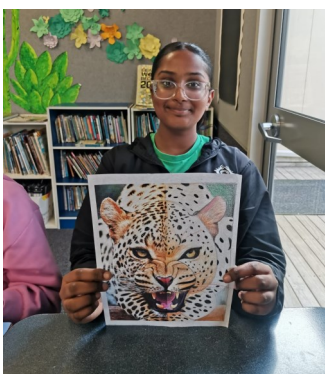
At the start of every English lesson, students complete a short *Do Now* activity to practice a specific skill. For this specific activity we focussed on strong adjectives. The text written by Amaira Ram in Year 7 was prompted by the following picture:



The box. The door. The crumbling brick. It begged me to enter. I gulped, rethinking my decisions. Hesitantly, I placed my hand on the rusty doorknob and twisted it. Bright rays of yellow sunshine poured out of the door, making a mesmerising dramatic entrance. As I opened my eyes after the sun calmed down, I was shocked as to what I saw. Crystal clear lakes and small mushroom huts, wrapped around in sage-green vines, surrounded the mysterious place. The foliage of the fantasy forest was something like never before as cherry blossom trees and trees with leaves so mystical and magical made everything stand out. Curiouser and curiouser, I stepped inside, ready to explore.

Amaira Ram

Year 7 Art



Symmetry art with animals involves creating symmetrical designs where the left and right sides of an animal image are mirror images of each other. Year 7 students explored how lines of symmetry can create balance and beauty in design. The results were some striking artworks that showed both artistic flair and a keen eye for detail.



HAPPENINGS

Year 7 Science

Students in Year 7 learnt about forces, gravity and air resistance in their science lesson. As part of their group activity, they were transported to the imaginary town of Volvom, where a hungry monster demanded raw eggs—unbroken! Using everyday supplies, students worked in groups to design contraptions that would allow an egg to be dropped safely from a height from the New Block into the “monster’s lair.” The challenge sparked lots of creativity, problem-solving, and teamwork. Group 6 impressed everyone with their clever design, keeping their egg completely safe on its journey down.



Student Achievement

We are proud to celebrate the success of one of our Year 3 students, **Clyde Panganiban**, who recently won **1st place – Foundation Level 1** in the SIP Abacus National Math Competition, held at the Westlake Girls High School Events Centre. Students from all over New Zealand competed, making this a remarkable achievement.

Clyde has now qualified to represent New Zealand at the **International Competition in India this November** – an incredible opportunity and honour.

In sharing this news, Clyde’s parents expressed their gratitude to MCS teachers for instilling in him the values of discipline and hard work that helped him achieve this success. Congratulations, Clyde – we are so proud of you! To God be all the glory.



HAPPENINGS

High School– Famous Duos

High school students had some fun stepping into the shoes of *famous duos*. From cartoon characters and superheroes to classic comedy pairs, the creativity on display brought plenty of colour and laughter to the day. We're not sure who had more fun, students or teachers.

Can you deduce who these famous duos are? Some are easier to guess than others!



DYNAMIC DUOS

HAPPENINGS

Merit Award Recipients—Assembly 29 August



COMMUNITY NOTICES

Girl Guiding New Zealand

We believe every girl deserves the chance to develop confidence, resilience, and leadership skills in a fun and supportive space filled with fun. With over 300 activities and cool badges to earn, there is something for everyone.

When your child joins **our Clover Park Brownies** they will:

✿ Build confidence and life skills 🌐 Learn to make a difference in their community 🤝 Form lifelong friendships in a safe, girl-led environment
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GIRLGUIDING
COMMUNITY**

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Clover Park Brownies

Monday's 6 - 7:30pm at Taha Wahi
Woodside, 66R Everglade Drive
Goodwood Heights



Love Tennis?

Open Day: 7 Sep

10.00-12.00pm



Jellicoe Park Tennis Club

Marr Road, Manurewa
All Welcome

Lots of activities and giveaways

Junior coaching starts Friday 12 Sep 2025

All queries please phone Peggy
021 201 8824 or email

jellicoeparktennis@hotmail.com



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MATTERS FOR PRAYER

Praise and Thanks:

- We give thanks for Nadine's faithful service as Head of Primary, and pray for her and her family as they move to Australia.
- We thank God for the encouraging feedback from the recent parent survey, affirming that we are fulfilling our mission well, while also reminding us to continue striving for constant improvement.
- We are thankful for the partnership of staff and parents in building a school culture that is Christ-centred, disciplined, and academically rigorous.

Pray for:

- A smooth transition as our Year 7 class moves into the high school in 2026, and for God's provision of the right staffing to support this change.
- Janina and Jessica as they prepare to step into new leadership roles in 2026.
- Our students as they study diligently for their upcoming external examinations.
- Our 2024 leavers, that they will be equipped by God to be cultural change agents for the gospel and the kingdom as they step into university and the workplace.

Scripture

"Evil men do not understand justice, but those who seek the LORD understand it completely."

Proverbs 28:5

TERM DATES

Term 4 6 Oct to 12 Dec 2025 (Years 1 to 7)
 1 Oct to 9 Dec 2025 (Years 8 to 10)
 1 Oct to 21 Nov 2025 (Year 11)

School finishes as 12:30pm on the last day of each term.

2026

Term 1: 29 January to 2 April 2026

Term 2: 20 April to 3 July 2026

Term 3: 20 July to 25 September 2026

Term 4: 12 October to 9 December 2026

