

LEESTON LEARNERS - Legends in the Making

*Ko nga akonga o He Puna Karumata
He rangatira mo apopo*

Thursday 29th January 2026



Nau mai, haere mai ki a koutou



Nau mai, haere mai ki a koutou! A very warm welcome to you all and a special welcome to new families joining us for the first time, and to our new entrant children pictured above!

A special welcome back to Caitlin Kippenberger – Caitlin will be teaching one day a week in Room 10 and Room 1.

At Leeston School, we are guided by the Pillars of Care—caring for ourselves, caring for each other, and caring for our environment. These values shape everything we do; from the way we support each other in the classroom and the playground to how we take responsibility for our school. As I walk into classrooms, and around the playground, I see these values in action numerous times, and they are what makes this place a special place to be!

Next week is a short week as we celebrate our unique and shared identity and the importance of tikanga Māori on Waitangi Day on Friday 6th of February – I hope you enjoy this special day and the long weekend that follows!

Ngā mihi nui
Lynda Taylor

WELCOME TO OUR SCHOOL

Willow Bevan-Rolton, Charlotte Burt, Vinnie Donald, Hazel Freer, Henry Freer, Sydney Freer, Jackson Gainsford, Charlotte Gorton, Koda-Ray Kara, Spencer Kewish, Manawa Ora Low, Lilli Macdonald, Nithaniel Mandri, Mieka McKenzie, Kahu O'Connor, Pearl Palliser, Flynn Poole, Madeleine Rodgers, Archer Stewart, Iona Stewart, Oscar Stewart, Ella Versfeld, Lucian Versfeld, Maisey Walsh-Cassells and Asha Wilson

ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL

We are required to submit attendance data to the Ministry each day. To assist us in ensuring our data is as accurate as possible, it is **most important that you notify us of the reason for your child's absence or lateness** before 9.00 am **every day** they are absent. This can be done via the EDGE app, or by ringing the school and leaving a message on the answer machine. If you do not do this, we are required to contact you to find out why your child is absent without explanation, and this can be very time consuming.

The Ministry has clear expectations around student attendance, as regular attendance is key to success at school. It is a requirement that all students attend school every day, unless they are sick, or have a justified reason for being absent (eg illness or medical appointments that cannot be scheduled outside school hours, bereavement or tangihana, family emergencies or unforeseen serious circumstances, or exceptional circumstances approved by the school).

Unjustified absences include staying home for a birthday or special event, taking extended holidays during term time, missing school due to tiredness or sleeping in, staying home to look after siblings or family members (unless in an emergency) and non-urgent appointments that could be scheduled outside school hours. Frequent unjustified absences will require further follow-up.

A reminder that school begins at 9.00am each day, so it is important that your child is here at school, ready to begin the day **before** 9.00am. Thank you for your support in keeping attendance a priority, as this ensures the best learning outcomes for all students.

LEARNING CONFERENCES

This year we are combining our 'Meet the Teacher' evening with Learning Conferences in Week 5 – an opportunity for you to meet your child's teacher one on one, and for you to share with us the goals and aspirations for your child for 2026. These will be held on the 24th and 25th of February and we will send through the booking link closer to the time.

SCHOOL HATS / SUNBLOCK

All children are required to wear sun hats which give cover to the face, ears and neck. These hats are to be either blue or red with no logo labels on them. NO HAT / NO PLAY will be enforced. Please remember to name your child's hat. Sunblock stations are located outside Mrs Taylor's office and the Waitatari Junior block. Please encourage your children to reapply during the day.

SAFETY VESTS

Please ensure that your child / children are wearing their **named** safety vest to and from school every day, especially if they are bus children. New vests are available at the school office- \$10.

RELEASE FROM SCHOOL

If you intend to collect your child from class for a regular period i.e. swimming lessons, music lessons, please complete a [Release from Tuition](#) form for approval from the school office. A new form is required to be completed for each current year.

DROP OFF AND PICK UPS

If you are dropping your child off in the morning, we encourage you to use our kiss and go zone on Selwyn Street. If you are the first car into the zone, please drive right to the end, to enable the following car to park behind you. Please **do not leave** your car unattended.

For safety reasons, we ask that cars do not come down Gallipoli Street and do a U-turn into the Kiss and Go Zone.

Regarding pickups and drop offs, please adhere to the yellow no parking lines, and refrain from double parking. The staff car-park is reserved for staff and visitor cars only, this is not a drop off point.

LUNCH ORDERS NEW WEBSITE

Ellesmere Kitchen will continue to be our lunch provider however ordering a school lunch is now done via their new website - <http://www.ellesmerekitchen.co.nz>

BUSES

Please advise the school office via email, if your child has any changes to their bus schedule, for example, designated days they do not travel home on the school bus. We only need a record of afternoon travel. This information will help us prepare accurate bus rolls for 2026.

Ellesmere College buses will be running a full service on Monday 2 February.

Please note that on this date, buses will operate at a normal pick-up time, not the usual late start for college buses on Mondays. The Monday late-start bus pick-up will begin from Monday 9 February.

We also ask that you remind your child/ren to sign off the bus if they are not taking it home on their usual scheduled day. If you feel your child may forget to do this, please email or phone the school office before 2.30pm. This helps us avoid delays while we try to locate students and make phone calls home. We really appreciate your assistance with this. For more information about our bus service, including routes, maps, and pick-up times, please visit our website.

KEEP US UP TO DATE

Please remember to advise the office of any changes to your contact details throughout the year.

LEESTON SCHOOL PTA

The PTA organises events to raise funds to support the school with extras for the children and pastoral care to support families. We have a great team and hope to build on that again this year. So please consider joining us.

Ways you can help - joining the committee, helping at fundraisers and teacher support. Our first meeting and AGM of the year is **Tuesday 3rd February at 7pm** in the staff room - we would love to have you on board!

If you are interested, please get in contact by emailing us on pta@leeston.school.nz and please follow us on our Facebook page – Leeston Consolidated School PTA.

VISITOR AND STUDENT VISTAB

Any parent helpers on site at school are to sign in at the school office prior to visiting and on departure to sign out. If you are bringing students in late or taking them early from class, please also sign them in or out.

EDGE MOBILE APP - Free

Our cloud based student management system (EDGE) allows caregiver access to the caregivers portal on an App using the current email address the school holds for you. The portal gives you quick and easy

access to information for students in your household including Attendance, Student Reports and School Payments. Click [here](#) for login instructions and further information regarding the Apps functions.

SCHOOL DOCS FOR PARENTS AND WHĀNAU

Leeston Consolidated School uses SchoolDocs to maintain a comprehensive, up-to-date set of policies and procedures. These policies and procedures follow guidelines and legislation and best practice and have been tailored for our school. There is a link under policies on our school website (www.leeston.school.nz). You may find the **Parents and Whānau** section a useful starting point. You can use the quick links to find information, or use 'Search' to find information on the site.

MEDICINES

Please return current medications that were taken home at the end of 2025 to the office. If the prescription and dose haven't changed, we will use last year's form, however any changes will require new forms to be completed.

EARLY ARRIVALS

A gentle reminder that children are **not permitted** on the school grounds before **8.30am**. Children may wait inside the school gate area, by the bike stands before the 8.30am bell rings.

LEESTON SCHOOL BATTERY RECYCLING

If you have any old used batteries and are about to chuck them in the rubbish bin, **STOP!** Send them with your child to the office at school where there is a battery collection box, so we can recycle them and help our environment.

Teacher Aide Position Leeston Consolidated School

A fixed-term vacancy exists starting 23 February 2026 to 11 December 2026, five days a week, 9.30 – 2.00 term time only. Empathy, good communication skills and ability to work both independently and as part of a team essential. Skills in supporting children with structured literacy and numeracy an advantage.

Applicants to send their CV and details of three referees to principal@leeston.school.nz Further information available by ringing the [Principal](tel:033243493) (03) 3243493
Applications close 4pm
Monday 16th February

Lynda Taylor
PRINCIPAL

SPORTS UPDATE

Welcome back to school! We have a few events in the first few weeks of the term.

Canterbury Triathlon - Tuesday 17 February

Entries need to be in by Wednesday 11 February, so let Ms Davison know if you are interested in entering this race. Parents need to take their own children and look after them for the event. It is out near West Eyreton on private property.

100m swim (in a freshwater lake)

7km bike

2km run

Children will need to be fit and probably had some experience of doing a triathlon before...e.g. Lake Crichton.

School Duathlon - Wednesday 11 February

This is held at Leeston School.

This is an event for year 5 and 6 children only.

It is on **Wednesday 11 February**. There will be two categories: the competitive and the non-competitive.

The non-competitive is much shorter and allows children to have a go if they are unsure of their ability.

The competitive is similar to the Canterbury event - 2km run, 6km cycle and 1km run to end the race. If your child is doing the competitive event, they need to be fit and understand the road rules (we cycle on the road and run on the footpath). They also need a roadworthy bike and helmet. We will need a number of adults to help out with this event.

School Swimming Sports for Year 3 - Year 6

This will be held on **Wednesday 18 February** at the school pool. Again we need a number of volunteers to help run this event. In the morning, we have the competitive races (lengths). We aim to get the children to go in two events and some of the children may still need a board to support them - which is fine. In the afternoon we then have children doing widths and other swimming skills. Parents are welcome to watch these events.

Ellesmere Zone Swimming: Thursday 26 February (Year 4 to Year 6)

Canterbury Swimming event: Wednesday 25 March (week 9)

Junior Swimming Demonstration: Date to be confirmed

DATES TO REMEMBER

Refer to our website for further term updates

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|----------------------------|---|
| 28 Jan | Term 1 Commences |
| 30 Jan | Newsletter Swimming Instructors - Juniors Road patrol training |
| 31 Jan | Swimming Instructors - Juniors |
| 2 Feb | BOT Meeting 6pm |
| 3 Feb | PTA Meeting and AGM - 7pm |
| 2 - 16 Feb | Swimming Instructors - whole school |
| 6 Feb | Waitangi Day - Public Holiday |
| 11 Feb | School Duathlon |
| 12 Feb | Newsletter Waikekewai Trip to stream |
| 13 Feb | Whole School Assembly |
| 17 Feb | Canty Triathlon |
| 18 Feb | School Swimming Sports |
| 19 Feb | pp School Swimming Sports |
| 24 Feb | Learning Conferences 2pm finish |
| 25 Feb | Learning Conferences 2pm finish |
| 26 Feb | Zone Swimming Newsletter |
| 27 Feb | Whole School Assembly Waiwhio Trip to Fishermans Point |
| 2 - 5 March | WOW Week (Walk or Wheel Week) |
| 5 March | Waitatari Stream Trip Newsletter |
| 6 March | pp Waiwhio Trip to Fishermans Point |
| 9 March | Cohort Entry pp Zone swimming |
| 11 March - 13 March | Yr 5 & 6 camp at Hanmer Springs |
| 12 March | pp Waitatari Stream Trip |

COMMUNITY NOTICES



Now is the perfect time to secure the Before and/or After School care that you need for your child/ren in Term 1!

We have been planning another exciting and fun-filled programme for your children to enjoy in Term 1, which is open for bookings at the following link:

<https://enrolmy.com/busy-bumbles#/name/%25term%201%25>

Mt Hutt Open Day is a relaxed summer open day designed for families to enjoy the mountain together, with something for all ages... whether that's sightseeing, exploring on foot, or mountain biking.

We're due for a great, sunny day making it a great chance for families to get out and enjoy the outdoors after all the rain we have had recently!

What families can look forward to:

 Scenic chairlift rides to the Summit 6 at 2,086 m, offering incredible views across the Southern Alps, Canterbury Plains, and beyond

 Mountain biking & walking options, with the choice to bike or walk back down from the summit

 A fun day out for the whole family, with a laid-back atmosphere and food available on the mountain

 When: Discover Mt Hutt – Sunday, 10am–4pm

 Tickets: Available online in advance by visiting <https://shop.mthutt.co.nz/shop/product/468>

This event is perfect for families looking for an easy outdoor adventure, a chance to experience Mt Hutt in summer, or a fun day out during the holidays.