



Subject: Welcome Back to Term 1 – Important Start of Year Information

Dear Parents, Caregivers, and Whānau,

Welcome to the 2026 school year at Rai Valley Area School. We hope you have had a restful summer break and are ready for an exciting year ahead. As we prepare to welcome our students back, we have several important updates regarding staffing, logistics, and Ministry regulations to share with you.

Start of Term Logistics

School begins this coming **Monday at 8:50 am**.

- **Timetables:** During the first lesson, students in **Years 6–13** will receive their confirmed timetables.

Staffing Updates

We are delighted to welcome two new key members to our staff whānau this year:

- **Henare Peta** : We are thrilled to introduce Henare as our new PE teacher. He will be taking charge of Senior (NCEA) PE and delivering the PE/Health curriculum to our Secondary students.
- **Trish Morgan** : We also welcome Trish, who joins us as our new School Guidance Counsellor to support student wellbeing. She brings a wealth of experience to this role, she will be at Rai on Wednesdays.

Form teachers for 2026

- ★ **NE-Yr2 Haley Kiddey** - haley.kiddey@rai.school.nz
- ★ **Yr 3-6 Jess Massey**- jess.massey@rai.school.nz
- ★ **Yr 6-8 Amy Waldie**- amy.waldie@rai.school.nz
- ★ **Yr 9-10 Steph Stuart** - steph@rai.school.nz
- ★ **Yr 11 Henare Peta**- henare.peta@rai.school.nz
- ★ **Yr12-13 David Macdonald**- david.macdonald@rai.school.nz

Uniform Requirements

A reminder that the correct school uniform must be worn by all students in **Years 7–13**.

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- **Purchasing:** The school holds a limited supply of new uniforms available for purchase.
- **Support:** We understand that the start of the year can be financially demanding. If you require support regarding uniform purchasing, please do not hesitate to contact the school office confidentially. We are here to help.

"Phones Away for the Day"

<https://evidence.ero.govt.nz/media/2itf0zds/insights-for-parents-and-wh%C4%81nau-cell-phone-rules-and-how-you-can-help.pdf>

In line with the Government and Ministry of Education mandate, mobile phones are **not allowed to be out or used during school hours**, this includes interval and lunch times.

To comply with these regulations, the following procedures apply:

- **Up to Year 10:** If a student needs to bring a phone to school, it must be handed into the office upon arrival in the morning. It will be kept secure until the end of the day.
- **Years 11–13:** Senior students are permitted to keep their phones in their school bags, but they **must be switched off** at all times (including interval and lunchtime)
- **Communication:** All contact between home and students during the school day must be directed through the **Main Office**.
- **Please do not text or call your child's mobile during school hours.** This is in line with commonly held health and safety and child protection practices.
- If there is an urgent need to get in contact with your child then the office will be able to facilitate this if and when required - this can include providing a private space, pastoral support and where appropriate transportation (if required)
- **Enforcement:** Students are required to hand in phones immediately if requested by a staff member. Any phones seen during the school day will be taken to the office where they can be collected at the end of the day.
- **Should there be repeated instances of phone being out during school hours then we will require you or a parent/guardian to come into school to collect the phone.**

Updated Contracts and Devices

Please note that Bus Contracts and Digital Device Contracts will be updated where necessary this term.

- **Senior Devices (Years 11–13):** Students in Years 11–13 will be assigned a specific digital device for their learning.
 - The student is personally responsible for this device.
 - These devices are to **remain at school** at the end of the day.
 - Exceptions regarding taking devices home will only be made with express permission from Senior Management.

We look forward to seeing everyone on Monday morning and getting the year off to a positive start.

Ngā mihi nui,

Maree Furness (Principal),

Dan Waldie (Deputy Principal- Secondary)

Jess Massey (Assistant Principal- Primary)