



Dunns Road, Otatara
No 9 RD
Invercargill
Phone/Fax 03 213 1009
Email admin@otatara.school.nz

Tēnā koutou katoa

WELCOME TO OTATARA SCHOOL

The Board and staff welcome you and your child/ren to Otatara School. We are proud of our kura with its community spirit, wonderful rich environment and focus on learning.

We work hard to realise our vision of '**connected, self-managing learners, striving for excellence**' and provide many sporting and cultural opportunities coupled with an expectation of personal excellence.

Our kura values of

Ako (we all learn from one another – learners as teachers, teachers as learners)

Manaakitanga (kindness, caring, trust, integrity, respect)

Whanaungatanga (relationships, connections, partnerships)

Kaitiakitanga (care and guardianship of resources and the environment)

are embedded into our programmes and practices across the school.

We value the partnership between home and school, encouraging close connection and communication.

Please know that you are welcome to make contact any time, staff email addresses are available on the school website – www.otatara.school.nz and teachers are available to meet with parents before or after school.

We hope you have a happy association with our kura and we look forward to learning alongside you and your child/ren.

Nāku noa nā

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Sharon Livingston'.

Principal / Tumuaki



A to Z Parent Information

School Telephone: (03) 213 1009

Email: admin@otatara.school.nz

School Address: 146 Dunns Rd, Otatara, R.D.9, Invercargill 9879

Absences

Otatara School operates a safety check each day to ensure all children are accounted for. If your child is going to be absent, **prior to 9.00am either:**

- * phone 213 1009
- * email the school office admin@otatara.school.nz
- * complete the absence form on Skool Loop or the school website

If your child is late to school they must call in at the office first.

Parents of students who cannot be accounted for will be phoned to confirm they are safe. Your co-operation is important as many students commute to and from school independently.

It is important that parents contact the school office **each morning** of absence unless the absence length is initially stated.

The Ministry of Education requires us to code absences in relation to the reason so please provide this information when you contact us.

Accidents

Any child who is injured or feeling unwell is attended to immediately. All head injuries are reported to parents and all accidents, beyond minor discomfort and abrasion, are recorded in the school's medical register.

If a child is to be sent home or requires medical treatment:

- * Parents/Caregivers are contacted by telephone and arrangements are made regarding further action
- * If the parents are unable to be contacted, the school will contact the family emergency number
- * In the case of a serious accident or incident, the school will ring for an ambulance

Allergies

Some classes may be nut or dairy free etc due to students with severe allergies.

Teachers will notify if this is the case in your child's class.

Assemblies - Learning Celebrations

These are held on Friday afternoons whole school starting at 2.00pm and junior assemblies at 2.10pm. Whole school assemblies are fortnightly and the junior team has assemblies on the intervening week. Assemblies are organised by the students and involve celebrations of classroom learning. Special assemblies are also held as required. We begin and end the school year with our Hoe Roa (Long Paddle) Assembly.

Parents are most welcome to join us for any of these celebrations.

Behaviour

We have one expectation in relation to behaviour:

We respect ourselves, others, property and our environment

Positive reinforcement plays a major role in our classroom management and teachers promote and recognise behaviours consistent with our school values of whanaungatanga, manaakitanga, ako and kaitiakitanga.

We operate a restorative practices system for those students who fail to make strong choices. The focus of this is the repairing and restoring of relationships through restorative conversations.

Bell Times / School Hours

8.20am	Students permitted at school	
8.50am	Start of school	
11.00-11.30am	Morning tea break	
12.30pm	Lunchtime	break
1.15-1.30pm	Lunch eating in classes	
2.50pm	School finishes	

Board

The Board is a group of parents elected by the school community to govern the school. The board meets twice a term on a Monday at 7.00pm at school. Parents and staff are welcome to attend Board meetings. Notice of all meetings will be advertised in the school newsletter. Copies of meeting minutes are available on the school website www.otatara.school.nz. The Board welcomes feedback.

Brain Break

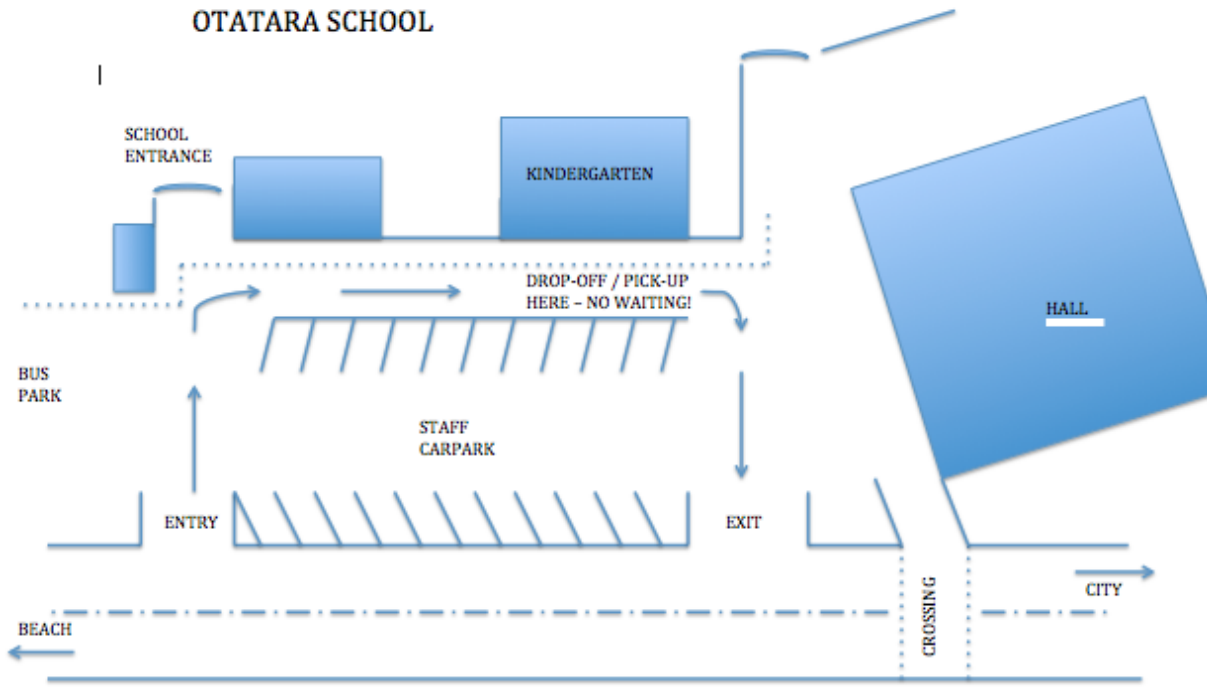
Classes may break in the morning for a 2-3 minute brain break snack. Brain food needs to be **unprocessed** foods such as fruit, raw nuts or vegetables. Please note some classes are nut free due to students with severe allergies, teachers will notify you if this is the case with your child's class.

Car

We recognise that car parking is an issue around our school area and we ask for your co-operation and consideration.

Please be patient and respectful of designated areas and follow the signage. See the following diagram:

Park



Cell Phones

Students are not permitted to have cell phones at school. If cell phones are brought to school, they must be handed into the office during the day and can be picked up by the student at 2.50pm.

If parents need to get a message to their child, this can be passed on through the office.

Community Centre

The school has a joint agreement with the Community Centre Trust and the Ministry of Education and has access to this facility during the school day.

Communication

We primarily use email or the Skool Loop app for day to day communication and/or important/urgent notices.

Download Our School App

- **Events • Cancellations • Notices**
- **Absentees • Parent Teacher Interviews**
- **Instant Messages • Permission Slips • Newsletters**

Simple free download:
In Google play & App Store search '**Skool Loop**' & choose our school once installed.




The Skool Loop app is used for notices, notifying absences, permissions as well as accessing the newsletter.

Classes use Class Dojo to share learning.

Newsletters are emailed to each family. A copy of the newsletter is posted on the school website www.otatara.school.nz and accessible via the Skool Loop app.

Email is the easiest way to contact teachers – all email addresses are on the school website www.otatara.school.nz

Concerns / Wonderings

If something happens at school that you are concerned about or wonder about, please don't hesitate to contact us. The following method is most helpful:

1. Contact the class teacher, email is easiest or ring the office and leave a message to arrange an appointment with the teacher.
2. If you are still not satisfied, arrange a meeting with the Team Leader, DP and/or the Principal after your meeting.
3. If you feel the matter is still not resolved, write to the Board of Trustees.

An outline of our complaints procedure is available on the school website www.otatara.school.nz and in the school office foyer. If you have any queries or issues, please contact the school before it becomes a concern. We will do all we can to try and help as we are all here for the same reason - children's well-being and learning.

Counselling

Our school has a counselling service through ChatBus South run by the Chatbus South Trust and funded through grants, donations and fundraising events. Miles Guenther-Dotten is our counsellor and he is at school one day a week. Parental consent is required for children to use this service and this is included on our enrolment form. Children may be referred to ChatBus by staff, parents or they may choose to self refer. Whilst the counselling is confidential, if the counsellor has any concerns you will be contacted.

You are welcome to make contact with the counsellor at any time, his email address is miles.chatbus@gmail.com

Curriculum

Literacy, numeracy, the arts and hauora are priority-learning areas in our school. Health and physical education and inquiring, which comprises science, technology and social studies form the basis of our wider curriculum programme.

Our programme is strongly place based, connected to the natural world and our local community.

Cycling

Unless accompanied by a parent, students are requested not to cycle independently to school until Year 5. All cyclists must wear approved helmets. Bikes are kept in the bike sheds or rack by the school gates, and students are strongly recommended to secure them with a lock. Cyclists are to use the cycle track on Dunns Road when travelling to and from school. Bikes are to be walked to the exit by Room 13 and across the crossing at school. No riding is permitted in the school grounds. Safety vests are provided free by the school and we ask parents to enforce the wearing of these.

Dental Therapist

The school dental service is based at Fernworth School Dental Clinic in Pomona Street. You will be sent an appointment time that will include all members of your family at the school and preschoolers. You are able to change appointment times such as to the holiday periods, after school, or at a time to fit in with your schedule. Should you have any concerns over your child's teeth please contact the clinic on 216 9706.

Donations

Unfortunately funding obtained from the Ministry of Education does not meet all the costs involved in running our school and we are not eligible for the Government donation scheme. The Board therefore asks for a donation of \$170 per child, per year. Families with 3 or more children pay less for the third or subsequent child. This is termed a donation to make it a tax-deductible item with a receipt issued.

From the school donation system, the school pays for:

- Visiting performers, entertainers, outside educators
- Purchase of extra equipment and resourcing that the school budget does not cover
- Incidental costs such as buses for trips, entry fees to activities

We appreciate your support with this donation which may be paid in instalments.

Our school bank account is Westpac, account number 03-0855-0560871-00.

Emergencies

The school has an emergency plan to guide staff and students in the event of an emergency. The assembly area is on the playing field on the north side of the school.

Fire

and

Earthquake

Drills:

A fire drill is usually held once a term. Things to note about a drill:

The signal is a continuous ring followed by voice prompts to evacuate the building

*Evacuate immediately

*Close all doors where possible

Parents on site are expected to report to the assembly area on the playing field on the north side of the school

The school conducts earthquake drills each year.

End of the Day

We ask parents to please respect learning time and wait outside classrooms to allow teachers to conclude the day as this is an important time for discussion and reflection.

End of Year Events

End of Year Event:

At the end of the school year students are given an opportunity to be part of a learning celebration. This happens either in classes, teams or as a whole school.

Year

6

Leavers:

The final assembly in December is dedicated to recognizing and farewelling our graduating Year 6 students.

Gifted and Talented Education

Students identified as gifted and/or talented may be referred to the Invercargill One Day Gifted School Enrich (generally Year 4 and above) as well as provisions developed within the classroom programme.

Hair/Headlice

For safety reasons and to reduce the likelihood of catching or spreading head lice, we recommend that shoulder length hair or longer be tied back. Head lice are an ongoing social issue for schools. If you become aware that your child has lice, please inform the school.

Hazards

A 'hazard' is defined as any activity, arrangement, circumstance, event, occurrence, phenomenon, situation or substance *'that is an actual or potential cause or source of harm'*.

We take all practicable steps to ensure the safety of students, employees and visitors by providing and maintaining a safe environment. We work to systematically identify existing and new hazards and regularly assess them, taking all practicable steps to eliminate, isolate or minimise and monitor exposure to hazards.

Our hazard management includes regular physical inspections of the school, equipment, and work practices. Any identified hazards are to be immediately reported to our school caretaker or the office. There is a book for the caretaker at reception in the office, the caretaker prioritises repairs, with urgent repairs carried out immediately.

Health Nurse

Lyn Sanderson is the Public Health Nurse for our school.

Internet Safety & Use

We ask parents to sign a responsible use agreement in order for students to use the devices and internet while at Otatara School. Access to devices is generally from Year 3 upwards.

Learning Support Programmes

Additional teacher and teacher aide hours are used to assist children with special learning requirements. Parents are contacted if their child is receiving additional support. Some specialist services are also available for children with educational or behavioural needs. Please discuss any learning or behaviour concerns you have with the classroom teacher, or member of the leadership team.

Library

We have a well-stocked, computerised library. All classes visit the library each week, and the library is open to the students during the lunch hour Monday to Thursday. Students can borrow three books for up to two weeks. Parents can access the Library Catalogue through our library web page. Login details for the library webpage will be sent home via email when your child starts school. Reminders will be sent home for any overdue books, and an account for any damaged books or books held for more than six weeks.

Lost Property

Please name all clothing and belongings to assist with identification. Lost property is stored on a rack near the toilet area in the junior school adjacent to Room 2. At the end of each term any unclaimed lost property is donated to St Johns.

Lunches

We encourage you to use small reusable containers in place of prepackaged foods and cling wrap in order to minimise rubbish and look after our neighbouring native reserve.

Subway may be ordered on a Friday (or earlier) online. Head to www.subwayexpress.co.nz, select Otatara School, your child's room number and follow the prompts. Lunch order must be ordered by 8.55am.

The school also heats lunches, provided items are wrapped in foil and named.

Students are not permitted to leave the school grounds to purchase food at local shops.

Eating

Students eat their lunches with the teacher at 1.15pm.

Arrangements:

Water

We are a water only school. Students can drink from their water bottles in class. It is recommended that all students have their own bottle of fresh water.

Bottles:

Lollies:

Students are not permitted to have lollies or gum at school at any time.

Medication

If a child is to be given medication during school time, parents must complete a consent form. The medication is kept by the office administrator and is distributed by a staff member, at the appropriate time of the day.

Messages

Messages may be left with the Office Administrator or via the school website 'Message Us'.

Please keep messages to urgent only and refrain from messaging teachers during the learning day as they will be busy teaching.

Parent Involvement / Parent Support Group

Parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their children's learning. We invite parent helpers in classrooms, on trips, for sport and our outdoor education programmes. Otatara School has a supportive parent group that enhances the link between school, home and the Board. This group meets twice a term and is open to all members of the community and welcomes your involvement.

The Parent Group has introduced Kindo as their official payment platform for all their fundraisers. Download the Kindo app and following the instructions.

Payments

Please note the school does NOT have EFTPOS facilities.

For internet banking our account number is 03-0855-0560871-00 - Otatara School Board of Trustees

When sending any payments to the school, please place in a sealed envelope with the student's name and room number written on it.

Personal Possessions

Students are discouraged from bringing valuable possessions to school. The school supplies games, activities and sports equipment for the students to play with. We find that when students bring along toys or their own sports equipment, issues may emerge with sharing and on occasions possessions disappear as they are tempting to others. **Students are not to have weapons of any kind at school, including toys.**

Playground Supervision

We have at least two teachers rostered on at a time for playground supervision and a teacher who coordinates lunchtime games and activities. **Students are not to play contact games including "play fighting".**

Restricted areas:

- * Beyond the fence lines - the golf course, reserve, kindergarten, car park areas or behind the swimming pool.
- * Caretaker's shed and resource spaces.

After school staff supervise the buses, drop off zone and the pedestrian crossing.

Reporting to Parents

Parents of new entrants have a six week chat with the teacher regarding transition. Mid year reporting to parents involves a student led conference and short written report. At the end of the year a written report is sent home.

Road Patrol

Dunns Road crossing is controlled by a pair of Year 5 or 6 wardens each day and a staff member or parent. All students are expected to respect the instructions of patrol wardens. At the end of each year we approach parents to volunteer to run the road crossing. Please consider volunteering for this very important task.

Safety Vests

We ask that students wear their vest when on the road whether cycling, walking, or catching the bus, and on school excursions. Students return their vest when they leave the school and if lost parents are expected to pay for a replacement vest.

School Events The following school and Southland sports events are part of our school programme.

Term One

Year 6 Camp
Junior Swimming
Outdoor Education Year 4/5
Athletics

Term Two

Student-led Conferences
Cross Country

Term Three

Polyfest
Choir Festival
Senior Swimming

Term

Triathlon – Senior School
Junior Swimming
Pets n Passion Day (biennial even year)
End of Year Celebration/Sharing

Four

School Buses

Go Bus runs a user-pays ticket system. Bus tickets (\$15 for ten trips) are available from the bus driver. If you have no ticket the cost per trip is \$2-00. Please note there are no set pick up and drop off points - just stand on the side of the road and wave the driver down. The bus departs from 36 Marama Avenue North at 7.55am. See the map or website for details http://www.otatara.school.nz/parents_files/20120820112237495.pdf

Smoking & Vaping

Our school buildings, grounds, swimming pool and community centre are smoke free and vape free.

Sports

We are an active school and encourage students to be involved in school sports. Sports typically offered are - water polo, flippa ball, touch rugby, miniball, hockey, netball, cricket and table tennis. Rugby and T-Ball are organised by local sports clubs in Invercargill. An overview of the sports offered is on our website

<http://www.otatara.school.nz> - Parent Information - Sports offered at School

A staff member takes responsibility to oversee the organisation of the sport but parents are required to coach and manage the teams to meet the demand. If you would like to be involved please contact Carla Werder or Deidre Murphy sport@otatara.school.nz

Stationery

New Entrants have a stationery pack with all of their requirements available at the school office. Year 1-6 stationery is sourced outside of school, with details provided at the end of the year for the next year.

Supporting Learning at Home

Students in the junior school will be provided with reading material to take home each night. We hope you enjoy the opportunity to share and discuss these stories/poems etc. Generally students from Year 3 onwards are expected to select their own take-home material and engage in some reading activity each night. Home learning should not exceed more than 30 minutes in the senior school and 15-20 minutes in the junior school – teachers will provide guidance around this.

Swimming Pool

We are fortunate to have our own covered and heated swimming pool. Swimming is an integral part of our Physical Education and Health programme, and junior classes swim during Terms 1 and 4 in our school pool and seniors at Splash Palace in Term 3. Students not participating in swimming are expected to have a note or have had a parent contact the school.

During the opening season of the pool parents can purchase a fob to access the pool, after school, at weekends and holidays. Please see the office administrator for more information.

Teachers' Meetings

Teachers' professional learning meetings and team meetings are held weekly on a Tuesday from 3.15pm to approximately 5.30pm. If you need to meet with teachers please try to make it outside of this time.

Term Dates 2026

Term 1 3 February – 2 April

Term 3 20 July – 25 September

Term 2 20 April – 3 July

Term 4 12 October – 15 December

Uniform

The school has a compulsory uniform, including a school sunhat. Items for boys are **navy blue** shorts, trousers or track-pants and jade green polo shirts with a navy polar fleece jacket or a navy merino. Girls may wear skirts, skorts or dresses in the school tartan fabric or **navy** skirts, shorts or track pants with a white blouse or jade polo shirt and navy jersey or cardigan, merino or polar fleece.

Please note black shorts, black track-pants and any type of hoodie are not part of the uniform.

Uniform items are available from the Warehouse and Uniform NZ with the merino available for order from the school office.

Articles of school uniform should be named as this makes it easier for everyone when something is lost or found.

During Terms 1 and 4 all children wear sunhats for outdoor activities and at intervals and lunchtimes. Students who do not have their sunhats at school are required to remain in a shaded area during these outdoor times.

A change of clothing is expected for children involved in wet field activities and footwear should match conditions and activities. Dirty footwear is left outside classrooms.

A student representing the school wears their Otatara School polo shirt or an issued jacket. St Johns stocks second hand uniform items for our school and the Parent Group hold twice a year preloved sales.

Values

Our school values are:

Ako (we all learn from one another – learners as teachers, teachers as learners)

Manaakitanga (kindness, caring, trust, integrity)

Whanaungatanga (relationships, connections, partnerships)

Kaitiakitanga (care and guardianship of resources and the environment)

Visitors

All visitors to the school are required to report to reception to sign the visitor's register on arrival and return to sign out on departure. On arrival they are informed of any hazards.