PRINCIPAL
PĀNUI

Kia ora e te whānau

18th September 2026

With just one week of term to go, we're looking forward to having all our students back in class to finish strongly. It's an important week for seniors, who will get feedback, advice and revision for the holidays, as many will invest their time and energy in preparing for their NCEA exams in just six weeks. For those who do art or technology, they may be working extra hard to finish their project pieces or portfolios. This is a busy time of year for both staff and students, and I want to thank all the staff for their hard work with preparing and marking exams and assessments. I also want to acknowledge the students for taking this opportunity seriously and putting in the effort to do their best, whether in exams or in our practical sessions. We're lucky to have so many students who work hard, try their best, and are kind and thoughtful.

In the junior school, students will be working right to the end of the week, with some starting new work and others finishing assessments and demonstrating their understanding of what they've worked on this term. For all our students, we know that being in class is important, and we love having them here. As always, if you need to pick your student out early, please come to the office or call the school to confirm arrangements for them to leave.

We'd also like to remind everyone that mobile phones are not permitted for use during school hours. We've noticed an increase in students receiving calls or texts during class time from their whānau. We know that you may need to get in touch with your rangatahi during the day, so please call the office and we will pass on a message or get your young person to call you. If your rangatahi has an urgent need for their phone, like a medical issue or a family emergency, then please get in touch so we can provide them with a pass to be able to use their phone for that specific need.

As we look ahead to next term, our staff are planning for one of the most important events in the junior school. In the last week of Term Four, we're planning a Year 10 Camp and also Junior Electives. Camp will run for three days, and electives for two, and we have a huge variety of activities on offer. These range from a chance to try fly fishing, a two-day shopping road trip, and baking and crafts at school, through to surfing in Tauranga and a trip to Auckland to see the huge Picasso exhibition at the Art Gallery. We hope every student finds something they're enthusiastic about! We'll be sending home information about the options early next term, including costs and numbers.

Ngā mihi

Gwyneth

Feel free to contact me at
principal@rotorualakes.school.nz

THIS IS LAKES

Celebrating the moments, achievements, and spirit of our students.

FRIDAY 18TH SEPTEMBER 2026

AQUABOTS OFF TO NATIONALS

Project 941 Qualifies for Blenheim

Project 941 is heading to Nationals after an outstanding result at the AquaBots Regional Competition. Ethan Hucker and Ryan Stevens represented Lakes on competition day, presenting their bot to judges and explaining the design and engineering behind their creation. Teammate Flynn Hurihanganui couldn't attend, but played an important part in the three-person effort, putting in plenty of mahi alongside Ethan and Ryan throughout the build. Project 941 finished third overall, earning qualification for the AquaBots Nationals in Blenheim this November. Their success is a fantastic example of creativity, problem solving and teamwork. Ngā mihi to Mrs Tolentino for supporting the team throughout their project.

NATIONAL ART STAGE

Milly Selected for Te Ringa Toi

Year 11 student Milly Prestidge has had her artwork selected for the prestigious Te Ringa Toi National Exhibition in Wellington. With 59 schools represented at the gallery opening, Milly had the opportunity to see her own mahi exhibited alongside work from talented rangatahi across Aotearoa. While she missed out on a distinction award, the experience gave her the chance to connect with other young artists and celebrate creativity from around the motu. Milly's whānau travelled to Wellington to share the special moment with her. Ngā mihi to Ms Malcolm, Head of Arts, for encouraging and supporting Milly to develop her artistic abilities. We are excited to keep following Milly's artistic journey .

CUPCAKES FOR A CAUSE

Project Day Raises $325 for SPCA

9 Kōwhai put manaakitanga into action during Project Day, baking more than 300 cupcakes to raise money for the SPCA. After taking pre-orders and selling their baking to staff and students, the class raised an impressive $325. The project gave students the chance to work together while making a genuine contribution to a cause they care about. Ngā mihi to the whānau, staff and students who supported the fundraiser, and to Maree and the Project Day teachers who helped on the day. A special mihi to Whaea Christina for driving the initiative and giving 9 Kōwhai the opportunity to make a difference.

COOKING OUTDOORS

9 Rimu Master the Camp Oven

9 Rimu have begun an Outdoor Cooking unit, putting their camp oven skills to the test with their first challenge: cinnamon scrolls. Results ranged from a little undercooked to a little overcooked, with some coming out just right. Along the way, students discovered how much heat, timing and technique matter when baking outdoors. More importantly, they got stuck in, learnt by doing and hopefully enjoyed a cinnamon scroll or two along the way. It's another chance for the class to build practical skills and confidence through hands-on learning. Ngā mihi to Whaea Sophie for continuing to create experiences like this and sharing her outdoor skills and knowledge with our students.

We're authentic. We're real. We're pono. Mauria te pono.