

Developing our
children's **MINDS**,
guiding our children's
HEARTS...



2021 St Benedict's Intermediate Syndicate

St Benedict's is a Year 1-8 Catholic school with a strong sense of community. One of the advantages of being a small, three class intermediate syndicate is that all the students become well-known throughout the school among students and teachers alike. They are valued for the help and leadership they provide to the younger children. Students are able to develop a sense of belonging and responsibility that is so important as they enter adolescence.



We have a high-quality teaching programme and a proud record of academic success. Nationwide standardised testing shows that St Benedict's consistently achieves results above the national average, and also above the average for other high-decile schools in our region. Students from our school have won academic scholarships to St Patrick's, St Mary's, Queen Margaret, Scots College and Samuel Marsden Collegiate. We recognise and appreciate that there will be a range of abilities in any classroom, as such, students are provided with the support they need to make progress in their learning.

We provide a fun and motivating classroom programme targeted specifically towards Intermediate students. Highlights include the School Production, Mt Cook Technology, Year 8 Camp and Year 7 EOTC Week.

Catholic Character

As a Catholic school, a vital part of the curriculum and culture of St Benedict's is based around our Catholic traditions and values. In Year 7 & 8, the Religious Education programme covers a wide range of ideas related to Church beliefs, and is integrated into science and social studies inquiry topics. This provides many opportunities for students to think deeply about the world around them, engage in thoughtful discussions and take action to promote social justice. Through our regular programmes, students learn to value the Catholic community they are a part of.



Teaching and Learning

Curriculum

St Benedict's provides a strong, balanced curriculum. There is an emphasis on English and Mathematics, as the foundation blocks for other learning, but all curriculum areas are covered thoroughly. These include Science, Social Sciences, Health & Physical Activity, The Arts, Digital Technology, Religious Education and Languages. Learning languages includes Te reo Māori, and an additional one or two languages per year, for example Spanish, German, Japanese or French.



Independence & Time Management – Task System

It is critically important to encourage independence and time-management skills in students as they prepare for moving on to college. One way we do this is through our 'task system'. This involves teachers meeting with the students every Monday and giving them a timetable for the week ahead and a set of learning tasks that need to be completed.



These tasks all relate directly to the subjects currently being studied that week. We ensure there are a mix of individual and group activities, and a range of practical, written and computer-based tasks. When the students are not involved in whole-class or group lessons, they are able to choose what activities they would like to work on. They need to learn to manage their time so that all the tasks are completed by Friday.

Homework is incorporated into this system, so students can choose what tasks they do at home and at school. The task sheet is posted on our blog (stbensfab@blogspot.com) every Monday so parents can easily view what we are working on each week.

Digital Technology Curriculum

The Year 7 & 8 students have ready access to a range of digital equipment and are encouraged to use it in a variety of ways to support their learning. Each intermediate classroom has a cart of laptops and iPads which can be readily accessed by students to help support their learning. There is a projector or large-screen television in each class which is often used by students to share their work.

The weekly task sheets include digital activities using a range of equipment and programmes. As our task system means that not all of our students are working on the same subject at the same time, students are generally able to get access to computer equipment whenever they need it.



Physical Education

We provide a high-quality PE programme that utilises external resources and professional instructors where they are beneficial.

In Term 2, students participate in a swimming programme at Keith Spry Pool once a week. Students' swimming abilities are assessed by the instructors, and those that have advanced beyond the Learn to Swim programme are able to have lessons in Water Safety, Diving, Kayaking or Snorkelling.



In Term 3, the students go once a week to the Nairnville Recreation Centre where they are taught by two qualified P.E. instructors. A range of physical skills and sports are taught, including gymnastics, soccer, basketball, hockey and athletics. We are fortunate to have access to the excellent equipment and facilities that are available at Nairnville.

In Terms 1&4 we have a professional instructors come in to the school to teach the students weekly lessons. All equipment is provided.

In addition, students with a strong interest in sport are able to opt in to the Sports Elective during Terms 2 & 3, which means they can access an extra weekly sports session at Nairnville Rec. Centre.

We recognise the importance of physical activity and endeavour to do some form of physical education or sport four days a week. The Intermediate classes traditionally have a very fierce rivalry in dodgeball which, as well as being good for developing physical skills, is great for class spirit.



There are also a wide variety of sports to compete in against local, nearby and other intermediate schools in the Wellington region in the disciplines of athletics, swimming and cross-country.

Mt Cook Technology Lessons

Every Monday afternoon throughout the year, the Year 7 & 8 students travel by bus to Mt Cook School for Technology. There they are split into five small classes: Cooking, Woodwork, Sewing, Robotics and Design. The students are able to access all of these subjects in a year – on average, they have about eight sessions in each class.

The Year 8 programme is slightly more advanced and allows the students to build on the skills they learned in the previous year. Mt Cook School offers an excellent programme that is in high demand from schools around Wellington. Going to Tech is one of the highlights of the week for the students.



Leadership and Motivation

Leadership Opportunities

As Year 7 & 8 students in a relatively small primary school, all of the students are provided opportunities to be leaders in a range of areas. They are all asked to take on extra responsibilities and are encouraged to be good role models for the younger students. For example, they lead the Mission Fair and the St Benedict's Day activities. These leadership opportunities help the students develop self-confidence, responsibility and initiative. Students with particular talents, e.g. music, art or sport are encouraged to share their gifts and take leadership roles where possible.



There are several formal leadership opportunities available, examples include:

House Captains (Yr 8) – These students run house meetings, motivate the students in their houses, and organise events such as the Mission Fair, St Benedict's Day and the Carol competition.

Catholic Character Team (Yr 8) – This group works with our Principal to oversee once-a-term student-led assemblies, and the Director of Religious Studies to organise Masses and Liturgies, e.g. choosing songs, running slideshows, and doing readings at Mass.

Principal Support Team (Yr 7 & 8) – These students are supportive in helping the Principal with a variety of tasks that ensure inclusion, safety and value-added in a number of school-wide areas.

Student Librarians (Yr 7 & 8) – These students are rostered on for a morning tea or lunch, and are responsible for issuing and returning books and assisting younger students with using the library.

Road Patrol Leaders (Yr 6 – 8) – Students receive training from a police officer and then run the Road Patrol crossings before and after school.

Sports Monitors (Yr 7 & 8) – Students volunteer to run the PE shed at morning tea and lunch – giving out sports equipment to other students and keeping the PE gear organised.

Tech Support Team (Yr 7 & 8) – These students are responsible for ensuring that our laptops are taken care of and charged regularly. They also support other students with technical issues.

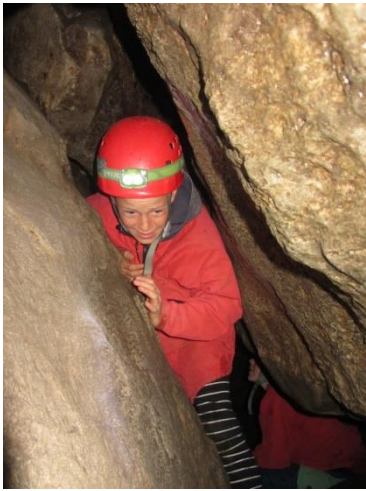
Intermediate Award Badges



We have an award badge system for the intermediate students, where students can work towards earning Credit, Merit and Excellence badges over their two years in the Kauri (Intermediate) Syndicate. The purpose is to acknowledge the fantastic efforts that our students put in across a range of areas, and to keep students motivated to keep contributing to the school and working hard. Badges are awarded once or twice a term, and take into account effort and achievement in the areas of Catholic Character, Academic Achievement, Service to the School, Culture and Sport, as well as overall effort and behaviour. The badges are highly prized by the students, who appreciate being recognised for their hard work.

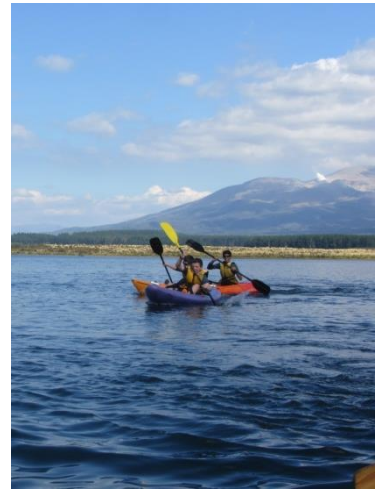
Special Programmes

Year 8 Camp



In Term 1 every year, the Year 8 students spend a week at the Hillary Outdoors Centre in Tongariro, near Mt Ruapehu. This is the premiere camp venue in the North Island, if not New Zealand, and is frequently used by colleges for their PE programmes.

Students develop their independence, self-confidence and teamwork skills while undertaking a range of challenging activities in authentic outdoor settings. Some of the activities may include caving,



tubing, kayaking, a high ropes course, bridge-jumping, raft-building and camping out overnight in tents. The Year 8 camp is an amazing experience that is a definite highlight of the year.

Year 7 EOTC Week



While the Year 8's are away at The Hillary Outdoors Centre, the Year 7 students experience a full week of Education Outside the Classroom activities in and around Wellington.

In previous years, they have participated in activities such as rock-climbing, tramping, roller-skating, Capital E TV filming and visits to Te Papa and the Royal NZ Police College.



School Production

Every second year, the whole school participates in a school production that incorporates drama, dance and music and is performed over two nights in a professional theatre at Victoria University.

The intermediate students take the main acting roles in the production, as well as important backstage roles.

We ensure that every single Year 7 & 8 student is involved in the school production in a meaningful way. This is a very special experience for the students, and one they will remember.



Transition to College

Towards the end of the students' final year, there are a series of events and activities to help them celebrate their time at primary school and prepare them to move on to college.

The school organises a Leavers' Mass and a Prizegiving ceremony. Parents have traditionally created a Yearbook and organised a Leavers' Dinner. Additionally, the Year 8's have a Retreat away from school where they are given the opportunity to reflect on their time at St Benedict's and talk about any worries or questions they might have about moving on to college. We work hard to ensure that all the Year 8 students feel that their time at St Benedict's has been valued and their contribution has been individually acknowledged.



With kind regards,

Ms Rebecca Blackwood – Room 13 Teacher (Kauri Syndicate Leader & Digital Technology Co-ordinator)

Mr Paul Cunningham – Room 12 Teacher (Head of PE & Sport)

Mr Richard Smith – Room 11 Teacher

Mr Michael Hinds – Principal