



OTAGO GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL

DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS **NEWSLETTER** October 2026

Message from our Principal, Mrs Bridget Davidson

Kia ora koutou

Warm global greetings to you all as we emerge into Spring from the Winter. We enjoyed mild sunny weather up until August when the full snows and frosts arrived resulting in one snow closure day.

Open Night is always the highlight of Term Three and the newly renovated school sparkled with large numbers of enrolments received already for 2027! Our academic results and performance are impressive across all of our students. Last year, across all 27 schools in Otago, we were third in NCEA Level 2 results, fourth in results for University Entrance and second in achievement of Scholarship for girls - across both girls and co-ed schools. For the past four years our school has gained the most Entrance Scholarships from the University of Otago of any school in New Zealand. Our Literacy and Numeracy pass rates in 2025 both sit at 99%. Our teachers are regional and national curriculum and assessment leaders, making us front-runners in the curriculum change roll-out.



Alongside this, our school spirit, extensive co-curricular programme, service and leadership activities, and 'sister-hood' in the school are flourishing. School sporting success extends to national level and we are building a flourishing Arts Community with our brother school, Otago Boys' High School.

Our global and international connections continue and we loved our annual Cultural Day, with music and dance performances from students and international food stands. What we all bring creates a beautiful richness and diversity of people in our school. In learning about others we know more

about ourselves. Language weeks, our annual visit by students from Yasuda Girls' High School from Hiroshima, Japan in August and our thriving international student community all add to the rich inter-weaving of cultures at our school.

Congratulations to Sumika Moriya and Ada Hu for being our first International Ambassadors for the school - a new leadership role for International Students introduced this year. Ada and Sumika have been very active in leading our own international students, including welcoming and farewelling students at assembly - as well as organising activities for all of the Dunedin International Students across schools, with outings to the beach, rugby and other get-togethers. Ada and Sumika have been role-models for getting involved in school activities - such as Film Club and Rugby - and making the most of their time and opportunities in New Zealand.

We have completed our many-million dollar building redevelopment. This government-funded project included new lifts and learning support modifications for disabled access, science labs and prep areas, offices, bathrooms, climbing wall, historic re-roofing and upgraded fire protection.

Come and visit the school any time if you are in Dunedin. We welcome visitors and have guides who can show you around. You can also meet our international team and discuss academic and other opportunities for international students. We look forward to meeting you.

Ngā mihi nui
Bridget Davidson
Tumuaki ~ Principal





Message from our Director of International Students, Mrs Rose Gilani

Kia ora from New Zealand to our students, parents and education advisors in all four corners of the world! It has been a very busy Term 2 and Term 3. We have had some wonderful students join us and I have had the pleasure of meeting many of their parents. At the beginning of Term 3, I met Ella Zhao's mum and Flora Janke's mum as well as Sunny Wu's parents. It is always a pleasure to meet parents and show them around our beautiful school campus. I can safely say the parents were incredibly impressed by our school, the kindness of the staff, and the facilities on offer to our students. We also had several visits from education advisors from China, Thailand, and Japan. It is always wonderful to meet new people who are interested in sending students to our school.

At the beginning of Term 2, we farewelled our three lovely Thai students from Chitralada School in Bangkok, Thailand. We received such wonderful feedback from our homestay families who welcomed them. We are very much looking forward to hosting more students from Chitralada School next year.

We were so pleased to welcome students from Yasuda High School, our sister school from Japan, at the beginning Term 3. The team at school really took such good care of the visiting students and the activities ranged from a very special high tea to local cultural activities, cooking, kapa haka, and more. You can see all the photos on page 54.

In other great news recently, our long-term student Sumika Moriya's younger sister Yurika decided to join us to have a taste of the Otago Girls' High





School experience. In Term 1, we had another one of Sumika's sisters, Erika Moriya, join us. The youngest of all the Moriya sisters, Moeka Moriya, was also keen to join, but alas, she is still too young! You can see the news on the Moriya sisters on page 53.

A milestone for Term 3 was welcoming two sisters from Dubai, Shanzay and Hanya Khan. I also had the pleasure of welcoming and meeting their lovely mum Mehwish and their youngest sister Aaima. We are so happy to have this family join us all the way from Dubai and we wish them all the very best and much success for their new life in Dunedin. Read all about it on page 60.

Library Day is always a huge hit with local students and international students alike. Check out the cool costumes from page 45. Another highlight of the year is Cultural Day which involves an exchange of cultures from all over the world. It's a great opportunity for our Kiwi students to learn from students of all international backgrounds and sample food from all over the world, which is always a hit with students and teachers alike!

We were very happy to welcome back our alumna German student Antonia Barten who studied with us in 2024 and 2025. It was heartwarming to see Antonia again and she has such a positive outlook for our school and studying in New Zealand. She will be coming back again to Dunedin for university next year. She is definitely a Kiwi at heart.

I would like to thank our Department of International Students team: our Principal, Mrs Bridget Davidson, who is always there to listen and support us and our students, and Mrs Katherine Boomer, our Dean of International Students, who is always full of energy and helping students, whether it be with their academic questions or showing them around our beautiful city. A huge thank you to Ms Emily Gray, our Homestay Assistant & Student Support,



who has been an integral part of our team and big help with all things homestay-related. And a ginormous thanks to all our lovely homestay families who give such memorable experiences to all of our international students.

I would also like to thank all the teachers who teach and keep an eye on our students; all of the students really love the classes, so thank you

for making classes so fun and enjoyable for our students. The administrative staff, who always work behind the scenes to ensure everything goes well for our international students, are also so much appreciated.

I hope you enjoy our newsletter and all the news. I look forward to catching up with you next time!







International Team

Mrs Rose Gilani (Director of International Students)

Mrs Bridget Davidson (Principal)

Mrs Katherine Boomer (Dean of International Students)

Ms Emily Gray (Homestay Assistant and Student Support)



Term 2 International Students

YEAR 9	YEAR 11	YEAR 12	YEAR 13
Hanna Magomedova	Oceania Ren	Yiling Zhang	Christine Cai
Meznah Alhebaishi	Ivy Shao	Josefin Breit	Ada Hu
Khaopuun Charoonpong	Eris Chen	Hayley Tsang	Sumika Moriya
Yoyo Duan	Moana Li	Felicita Seraphim	Zifeng Chen
	Amber Lin	Kuch Soth	Isabel Lasmartres Bianchi
	Rubie Schuster	Lily Liang	Gaeun Park
	Mina Ohta	Anneke Hoffmann	
	Nays Bantadtn	Lucia Shen	
	Grace Thanasothon		

Term 3 International Students

YEAR 9	YEAR 10	YEAR 11	YEAR 12	YEAR 13
Meznah Alhebaishi	Annabell Ropers	Fiona Zheng	Yiling Zhang	Christine Cai
Yoyo Duan	Reina Ohashi	Oceania Ren	Hayley Tsang	Ada Hu
	Nao Suzuki	Ivy Shao	Kuch Soth	Sumika Moriya
	Ella Zhao	Eris Chen	Lily Liang	Zifeng Chen
	Sunny Wu	Moana Li	Lucia Shen	Gaeun Park
		Amber Lin	Shanzay Khan	Antonia Barten
		Luzia von Schoenebeck		
		Ziva Beck		
		Clara Giner		
		Lena Henke		
		Flora Janke		
		Yurika Moriya		
		Hanya Khan		



Reflections from our Dean of International Students, Mrs Katherine Boomer



The day of writing this, the weather is telling us that spring is on its way. That does not mean winter will not rear its head again but it definitely feels like a change of seasons, and it is the perfect day for the year 11 outdoor education class to be on a full-day hike.

We have welcomed and farewelled several students since our last newsletter, and I absolutely love how some students quickly get involved and absorbed into the school community and life. They take up all opportunities presented to them and are making the most of their time at our school. We recently had Antonia from Germany return to spend more time at OGHS and in Dunedin with her friends. She finished her year of study in July 2025 and has come back for her summer holiday.

For our annual Open Night, we were very proud of the international students who either performed, were guides, or helped in the subject specific classrooms. This evening is a fantastic opportunity to showcase what OGHS offers. Seeing the newly-arrived German students learning poi in the Maori classroom at the end of the evening was wonderful.

Along with the wide array of subjects on offer at all levels, there are so many sporting, cultural, musical, academic, and volunteering opportunities available. There is a club or group to meet the interests of all students should they choose. We want all of our students to have one winter and one summer activity that they are a part of so they can make connections and enjoy their life outside of the classroom.

Cultural Day was alive with colour and voices and food! Students could wear traditional dress to school, sell and buy food, and/or perform to the other enthusiastic participants. The hall was abuzz with excitement and the aroma of food from around the world. Our sister school from Hiroshima, Japan, Yasuda Girls' High School, spent two weeks with us and were able to participate in this special day.

Another international BBQ brought some connection in the middle of the term, and the delicious food shared with the families, students, and school was a wonderful treat. Catching up with the caring host



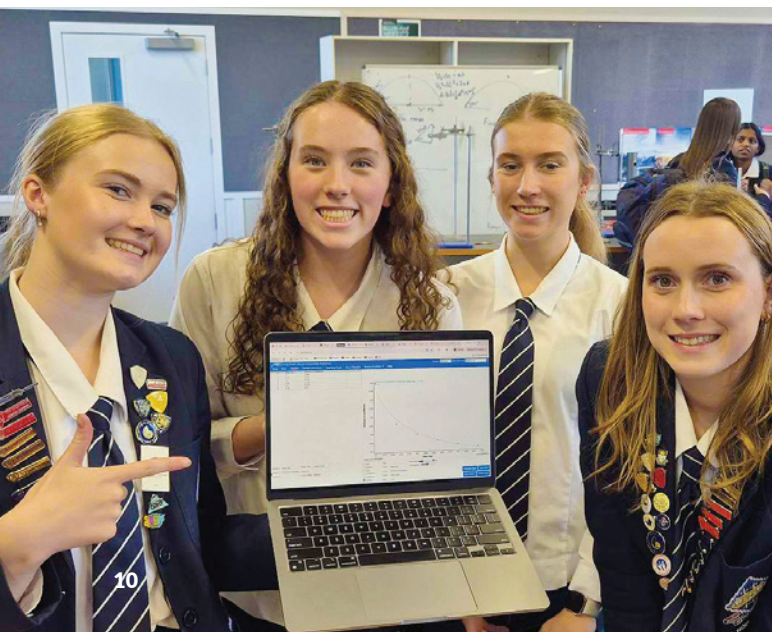


families and sharing stories and food is special to the international department.

The third term of the year is always jam-packed full of events and about ten of our international students joined the annual OGHS ski trip to Queenstown. This is often a highlight as they get to have lessons each morning, followed by time to ski or snowboard with their friends while enjoying the magnificent scenery and fresh air. Our new climbing wall on the school gym is beautiful and we have different groups to join for climbing. You can do climbing and/or bouldering with the school with one of our dedicated teachers.

Parallel NCEA exams for the senior students is valuable preparation for the external exams in November. The seniors who are not sitting exams had a special program with outings and activities around the Otago region. They had an invigorating wind greeting them at Tunnel Beach but that did not take away from the beauty of the place. The swells, wind, and rain provided some excitement and squeals the next day on the Monarch Wildlife Cruise in the Otago Harbour. Luckily, the Waitaki tour gave us two days of glorious weather to enjoy beautiful beaches and see about 300 little blue penguins come ashore in Oamaru.

At the same time as the parallels, was the highly-anticipated Polyfest where the Maori Kapa Haka and the Pasifika groups performed on stage to a large and cheering audience. These groups welcome international students and this year we had some internationals in the groups.





The final day of the term was full of comfort and fun as we had our annual Pyjama Day, where students could wear their pyjamas to school in exchange for bringing a donation of food or toiletries for the Women's Refuge and Presbyterian Support. Live music by the students entertained the students at lunch time.

Seeing the positive attitudes and the students settling into their school work and lives here is very splendid to see and we hope all students can make the most of their time with us.



FAREWELL TO OUR CHITRALADA SCHOOL STUDENTS



7 May 2026

Farewell to our students from Chitralada School, Bangkok, Thailand. It was wonderful to have you in our school and our beautiful city.

Safe travels back to Thailand—we wish you all the best with your future studies!



Wow,,



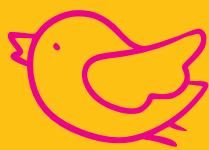
Grace Thanasothorn



Nays Bantadtan



Khaopuun Charoonpong



1/2

FAREWELL TO OUR LEAVING LEADERS TERM 2

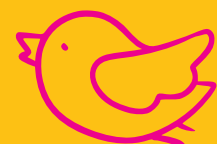
Wow,,



2 July 2026

Bitter-sweet moments as we end Term 2 and say goodbye to some of our wonderful international students heading home. Thank you for sharing your journey with us, making lifetime memories, and becoming part of our school whānau. We are going to miss you all!

Safe travels on your journey home, and don't forget to keep in touch!



Wow,,



Anneke Hoffmann



Felicitas Seraphim



Isabel Lasmartres



Josefín Breit



Mina Ohta



Rubie Schuster



Mina Ohta

Nationality: Japanese



1. How long did you study at OGHS?
I studied at OGHS for about 6 months.

2. What did you love about studying at OGHS?
I love to study with nice teachers at OGHS. Every teacher is nice to me.

3. What is one OGHS memory that you will never forget?
Most memorable is that I could meet friends from different countries.

4. Describe your homestay family. Did you enjoy the homestay experience?
I enjoyed the homestay experience. I have a little host sister. She is 2 years old and so cute. I enjoyed playing with her. Also I loved the dinner my host mother made for me. It was really nice.

5. How has your experience at OGHS transformed you?
It was really hard to take every class in English when I first came here, but now I feel like a little bit more confident about my English skills.





6. Would you encourage other international students to study at OGHS and why?

Yes I would because this experience has become very important for my life. Also people are nice to international students.

7. What advice would you give to other students who are thinking about studying abroad?

Good luck!



I enjoyed the homestay experience. I have a little host sister. She is 2 years old and so cute. I enjoyed playing with her. Also I loved the dinner my host mother made for me. It was really nice.

Isabel Lasmartres Bianchi

Nationality: Argentine



1. How long did you study at OGHS?

I studied at OGHS for one term only, although I wish I stayed longer.

2. What did you love about studying at OGHS?

I loved having the opportunity to choose which classes I wanted to take instead of being forced to study something I didn't like. I also loved the school's classrooms and all of the different activities organised by the school.

3. What is one OGHS memory that you will never forget?

Making Kiwi friends and hanging out with them during the weekends, also being part of Fuel Up Fridays and getting to cook with my friends.

4. Describe your homestay family. Did you enjoy the homestay experience?

I felt very comfortable and happy with my homestay family. They are one of the nicest and kindest people I've had the pleasure of meeting. They took me to visit different places and we are all very outspoken about everything.



Be that version of yourself that you refuse to be back home; maybe you feel embarrassed about your personality or interests but I promise there's a lot of people who are willing to connect with you if you are being yourself. Also, loosen up. Everyone is willing to be friends with you if you ask them.

5. How has your experience at OGHS transformed you?

Loosening up at the time of making friends and also getting to know a lot of different cultures that are very different from my own.

6. Would you encourage other international students to study at OGHS and why?

I would definitely encourage other students to study at OGHS. My time here has been the best and everyone I've met is exceptionally kind and willing to help. There's also a huge variety of classes, clubs, sports to choose from.

7. What advice would you give to other students who are thinking about studying abroad?

Be that version of yourself that you refuse to be back home; maybe you feel embarrassed about your personality or interests but I promise there's a lot of people who are willing to connect with you if you are being yourself. Also, loosen up. Everyone is willing to be friends with you if you ask them.

I felt very comfortable and happy with my homestay family. They are one of the nicest and kindest people I've had the pleasure of meeting. They took me to visit different places and we are all very outspoken about everything.



Anneke Hoffmann

Nationality: German



1. How long did you study at OGHS?

2 Terms

2. What did you love about studying at OGHS?

OGHS offers many fun subjects that were new to me.

3. What is one OGHS memory that you will never forget?

The trip to Borland was an amazing and unique experience. I got to see a lot of New Zealand's nature and I did fun activities there.



4. Describe your homestay family. Did you enjoy the homestay experience?

My host family was welcoming, helpful and nice. They showed me Dunedin and took me to Wanaka, Queenstown and Alexandra.



5. How has your experience at OGHS transformed you?

I got better at talking in English, especially to strangers.





My host family was welcoming, helpful and nice. They showed me Dunedin and took me to Wanaka, Queenstown and Alexandra.



6. Would you encourage other international students to study at OGHS and why?

Yes, the people I met here were nice and I had a lot of fun during my stay here.

7. What advice would you give to other students who are thinking about studying abroad?

Try as many things as you can even if you are not sure if you are going to like them.



Rubie Schuster

Nationality: German



1. How long did you study at OGHS?

I studied at OGHS for 2 terms.

2. What did you love about studying at OGHS?

I loved the variety of clubs and participated in rock climbing, surfing, handball, badminton, knitting club, library club and played flute in concert band.

3. What is one OGHS memory that you will never forget?

I will never forget my first rock climbing trip to Christchurch because I didn't know anyone before we went on the trip and it ended up being one of the best experiences in my whole time in New Zealand. After that, I had a lot of friends in rock climbing, but also in normal classes.





4. Describe your homestay family. Did you enjoy the homestay experience?

My homestay family is really nice and I always felt welcomed and at home with them. We went on a few trips together which were memorable. This was the first time my homestay family hosted a vegetarian student, so I appreciate the large variety of vegetarian meals that they made especially for me. Overall, I really enjoyed the time with my host family.



5. How has your experience at OGHS transformed you?

I think I have become more open minded and can talk with people better than before and obviously my English is way better now.

6. Would you encourage other international students to study at OGHS and why?

I would really recommend going to OGHS, especially when you went to a mixed school before, it is fun to experience something new. But I also liked OGHS, because of so many different options for clubs, sports, cultural events and trips with the internationals.

7. What advice would you give to other students who are thinking about studying abroad?

My advice for everyone who is thinking about studying abroad is just do it; at least that's what I did. You'll worry a lot if everything will work out alright (and so did I), but it will. You might feel a little bit lost at first, but then you're going to make such good friendships and it will be the best time you ever had.

I will never forget my first rock climbing trip to Christchurch because I didn't know anyone before we went on the trip and it ended up being one of the best experiences in my whole time in New Zealand. After that, I had a lot of friends in rock climbing, but also in normal classes.

Felicitas Seraphim

Nationality: German



1. How long did you study at OGHS?

Two terms.

2. What did you love about studying at OGHS?

Everyone was super friendly and OGHS offers so many cool subjects so that you can learn a lot of different things that you don't learn in Germany.

3. What is one OGHS memory that you will never forget?

The trip to Borland was amazing. We did amazing activities, such as kayaking and climbing and I saw a lot of New Zealand's nature, for example a kea.

4. Describe your homestay family. Did you enjoy the homestay experience?

They were super nice and welcoming. They also took me on trips to Wanaka and places around New Zealand.

5. How has your experience at OGHS transformed you?

It made me more confident in talking English to new people.

6. Would you encourage other international students to study at OGHS and why?

Yes, because my stay was super fun and everyone I met was really nice.





7. What advice would you give to other students who are thinking about studying abroad?
Talk to new people who live in New Zealand and try to do as many new things as

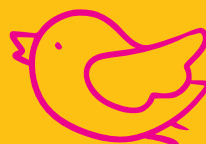


The trip to Borland was amazing. We did amazing activities, such as kayaking and climbing, and I saw a lot of New Zealand's nature, for example a kea.



FAREWELL TO OUR LEAVING LEADERS TERM 3

Wow,,



Yurika Moriya

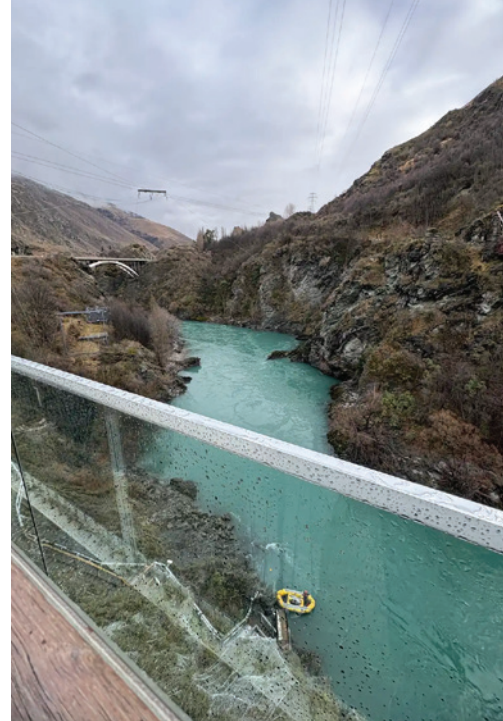


Flora Janke



Yurika Moriya

Nationality: Japanese



1. How long did you study at OGHS?

For one month.

2. What did you love about studying at OGHS?

I loved how friendly and welcoming everyone was at OGHS. I really enjoyed spending time with my new friends and also interacting with some other Japanese students. The classes in English, especially maths and sciences, were hard for me to understand at first, but it made me feel that I should study English more.

3. What is one OGHS memory that you will never forget?

Cultural day. I enjoyed preparing fruit punch with my sister and two Japanese students. Also the event showed me many different cultures, cultural diversity in OGHS, and the importance of value our own cultures.

4. Describe your homestay family. Did you enjoy the homestay experience?

Yes, I really enjoyed my homestay experience. My homestay family was so kind and they took me to many famous places in Dunedin and also to Queenstown once. I'm really grateful that they always included my sister in our outings and made opportunities for us. My host sister, Lucia Shen, was really kind to me at home and at school.

I really enjoyed my homestay experience. My homestay family was so kind and they took me to many famous places in Dunedin and also once to Queenstown. I'm really grateful that they always included my sister in our outings and made opportunities for us. My host sister, Lucia Shen, was really kind to me at home and at school.

5. How has your experience at OGHS transformed you?

My experience at OGHS made me more confident in speaking English and communicating with people from different backgrounds. At first, I was nervous about speaking English since I thought I must speak "perfect" English. However, talking in English with my new friends and homestay family, I started to think that I don't have to speak "perfect" English but to speak my mind. I want to talk is important and I don't think it's only in English. Now I am not afraid of making mistakes like I was before. This experience made me confident.

6. Would you encourage other international students to study at OGHS and why?

Yes, definitely! I would encourage other international students to study at OGHS because everyone is very friendly and welcoming which helped me feel comfortable in a new environment. I enjoyed spending time with my friends and teachers and experiencing a different school life from Japan. I think studying at OGHS is a great opportunity to learn English and make unforgettable memories.

7. What advice would you give to other students who are thinking about studying abroad?

My advice is to talk to as many local people as possible, even if they are studying abroad as a part of a group from Japan. It can be easy to spend time with other Japanese students because they feel comfortable with them, but talking with native English speakers would be a great experience to improve their English and learn about the local culture. Also, not to be afraid of making mistakes.

28 *Just try to speak English and enjoy the experience.*



Flora Janke

Nationality: German



1. How long did you study at OGHS?
9 weeks in Term 3 2026.

2. What did you love about studying at OGHS?

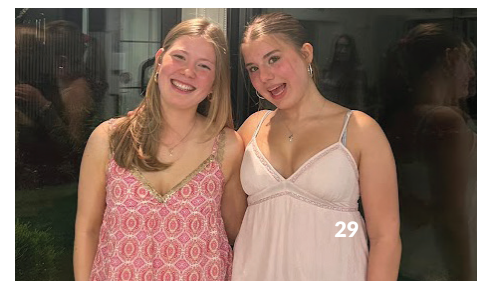
The people; I have a lot of friends here now from the community and also my hockey team. I played for the Otago Girls' hockey team, and I also played for a club team. It was really good.

3. What is one OGHS memory that you will never forget?

It was my birthday. My friends surprised me with a small birthday party at school. That was so kind of them and it is a memory that I will never forget.

4. Describe your homestay family. Did you enjoy the homestay experience?

My host family is super nice. I felt really comfortable. They helped me with everything; they are like a real family for me in Dunedin. I didn't really miss my family in Germany. They showed me some places and did some hikes with me which was super cool.





5. How has your experience at OGHS transformed you?

It is easier for me now to talk to new people and have an open mind.

6. Would you encourage other international students to study at OGHS and why?

Yes, definitely because it was the best decision that I made. And although I was a bit scared at the beginning, everything went so well and I don't regret anything (unless that I should have stayed longer).

7. What advice would you give to other students who are thinking about studying abroad?

You don't have to be scared because you will find someone who will help you and it is a good opportunity to learn more about yourself. Don't overthink it.



My favourite part of studying at Otago Girls' is that I love the people, I have a lot of friends here now. I love the community and also my hockey team. I played for the Otago Girls' hockey team, and I also played for a club team. It was really good!

AWARDS

Surfing Superstar

6 May 2026

Huge congratulations to Zara Owen (Year 9) on an incredible achievement over the weekend!

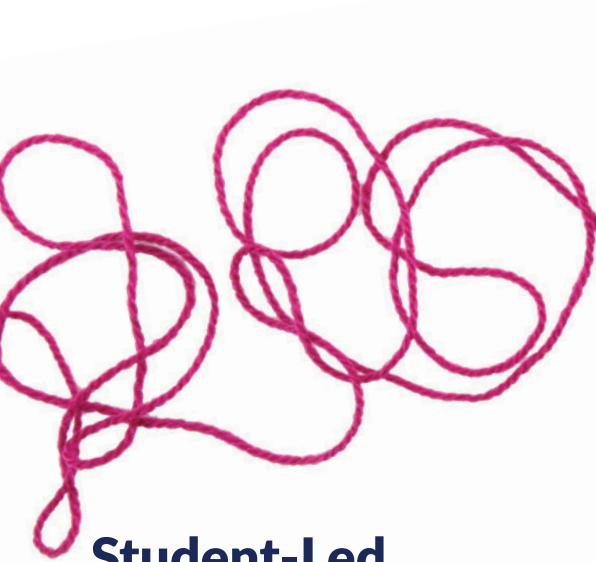
Zara travelled to Gisborne for the final leg of the National Grom Series, where she secured 1st place in the Under 16 Girls!

This stellar performance has earned her a coveted spot on the New Zealand Surfing Team. She will be heading to El Salvador this September to represent our country on the world stage.

What makes this even more special is that it's a family affair—Zara will be joined by her brother, Alexis, who is also representing New Zealand in the Under 18 Boys.

We are so proud of you, Zara. We can't wait to cheer you both on from afar!





Student-Led Knitting Club

30 April 2026

Big thanks and kudos to Emma Walker (Year 11) for her initiative in starting our new lunchtime Knitting Club today!

Emma has shown wonderful leadership by organising and leading this activity herself, providing a great example of student-led community building at Otago Girls'. We are so proud to see our students taking charge and sharing their talents!

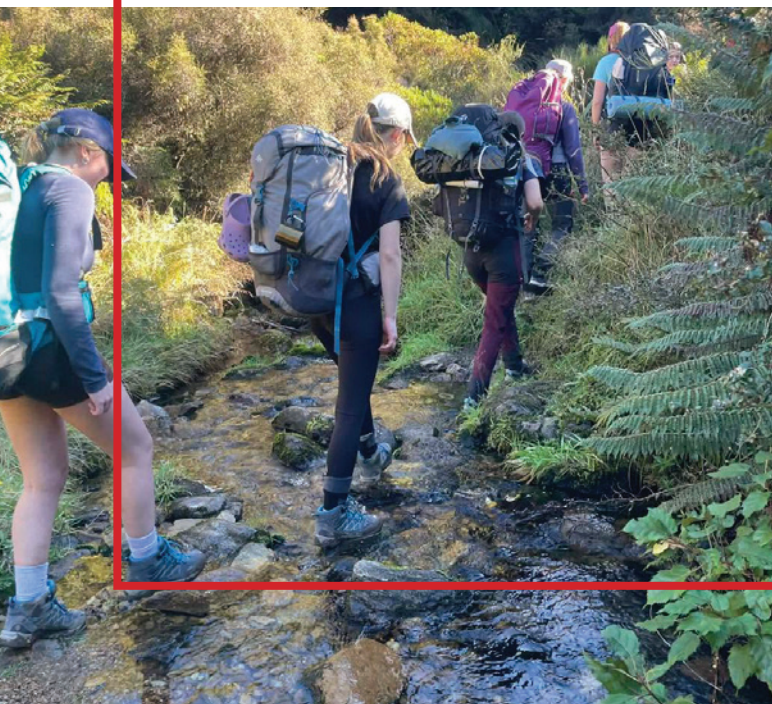
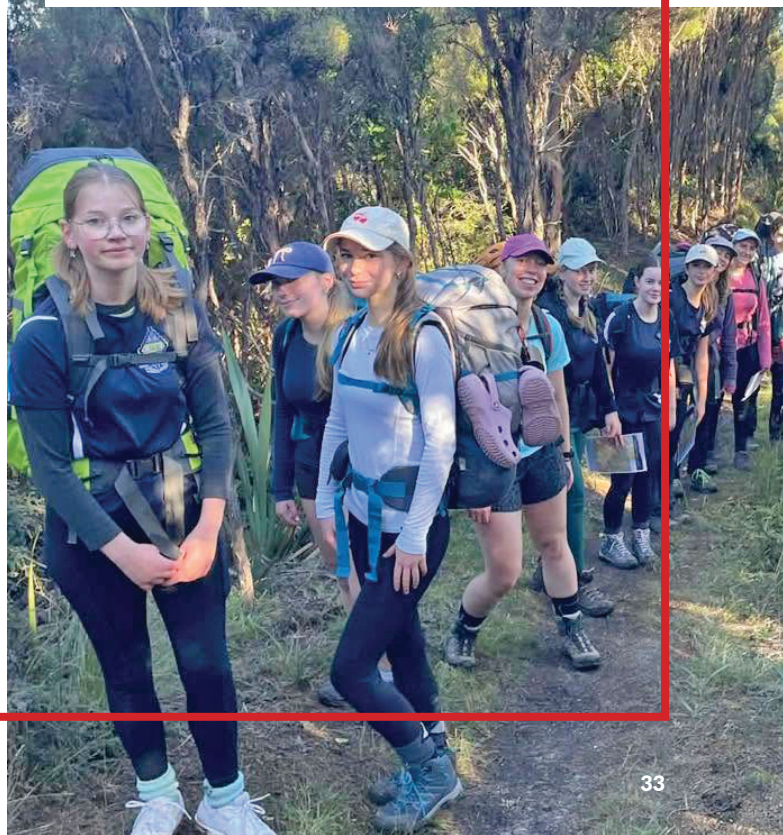




Year 12 Outdoor Education Trip

2 May 2026

They say the Silver Peaks test you, but this week they just rewarded us. Two days of grit, incredible weather, and deep connection with the environment. 12OE Jubilee Tramp: Done.





2 May 2026

So proud of our different groups hitting the track for Relay for Life! It's a privilege to support such an incredible cause and see everyone putting in the mahi to raise vital funds. Soak up the atmosphere and keep those legs moving!





Parents Visit from Thailand

4 May 2026

It was such a pleasure meeting Grace Thanasothorn's parents at school today! We have truly loved having Grace as part of our international community. As the family prepares to head home to Thailand later this week, we want to wish them a safe journey. We'll miss you, Grace!





Year 12 Science Trip

6 May 2026

Our Year 12 Science students spent a glorious Monday exploring Dunedin's geological history. From Rotary Park to Swampy, we visualised the massive 1,000m-tall shield volcano that erupted 16 million years ago, visiting its basalt remnants at the Pyramids of Okia Reserve and the Organ Pipes.

We also headed south to see the Haast Schist—rock formed 170 million years ago at the edge of Gondwanaland and uplifted by the Akatore Fault just 1,000 years ago!

A fantastic day of discovery in our own ancient backyard.





Parents Visit from Japan

6 May 2026

It was so special to host Mina Ohta's family from Japan this week. Her mum, dad, and sister visited us to see where Mina has been busy studying.

The best part? Mina's younger sister enjoyed the visit so much that she has already decided to study with us in the future. We love seeing our international connections grow into family traditions. Safe travels to the Ohtas!



Education Agent Visits from Thailand

9 May 2026

This week, our Director of International Students, Rose Gilani, welcomed Patrick Wattanayakorn, Managing Director of Happy Owl Education. We look forward to working together with Patrick in the coming years to welcome more students from Thailand.



Otago Girls' Hosts Rugby Tournament

12 May 2026

On Saturday, the Otago Girls' High School 1st XV had the privilege of hosting Mid-Canterbury Combined Girls 1st XV at Eastern Rugby Club. The travelling side proved strong competition, giving our young team valuable experience and opportunities to grow.

The spirit of rugby and sisterhood was on full display, with both teams enjoying time together at the after-match function. A huge thank you also to the King's High 1st XV students who stepped up to take the whistles and flags — your support was greatly appreciated.



New Term 2 Student from China

13 May 2026

A very warm welcome to our newest international student, Shiyi “Yoyo” Duan, who joined us yesterday.

We are so excited to have Yoyo as part of our school community. Our students are enjoying showing her around and helping her settle into school life. Welcome to the family, Yoyo!



Special Thanks to Support Staff

15 May 2026

Our support staff do it all—supporting students, helping teachers, and keeping the gears turning. Today’s morning tea was a small way to say a big thank you.

To those not pictured because you were busy doing what you do best: we see you and we appreciate you! We are so lucky to have such a dedicated team.



Pink Shirt Day

16 May 2026

It's ALL ON at OGHS! Yesterday our school was a sea of pink as we stood together for Pink Shirt Day. By taking part, we are joining a powerful movement to spread aroha and kindness while committed to ending bullying in our community.

While the official celebrations were yesterday, the kaupapa lives on all year round. Let's keep choosing kindness every single day!





International Lunch

22 May 2026

A fantastic afternoon was had by all at yesterday's International Lunch! It was a great opportunity to enjoy some delicious food and, most importantly, catch up with our wonderful international students.

Thank you to all the staff and students who made it so enjoyable.





Climbing Wall

28 May 2026

The much-awaited for and impressive new climbing wall has finally arrived. We are super pleased to be able to climb again at our school and provide the opportunity to young people to start climbing with us.



Talented Sailors

31 May 2026

Congratulations to our talented OGHS sailors who picked up awards and recognition at the Macandrew Bay Boating Club!

Award Recipients: Ada Hu, Annie Wagner, Jacqueline Liu, and Ashling Coffey

Season Effort & Commitment: Mina Ohta, Amber Lin, Lucy Griller, Yae Maeda, and Yuri Takashima

A special shout-out to Abby Middleton and Chihiro Smithies for their incredible leadership, coaching, and dedication to growing sailing at OGHS.

Thank you all for representing the school so well. Fair winds for the next season ahead!



Lucia Shen: Our Artist of the Week

3 June 2026

Congratulations, Lucia Shen! You are our Artist of the Week with this incredible piece!





The Big Sing Choir Performance

9 June 2026

Well done to all of our singers and instrumentalists who participated in the regional rounds of the The BIG Sing choral festival yesterday. Choir director, John Buchanan, and accompanist, Dr Will Martin, are to be congratulated for preparing two choirs that performed to a high standard with a variety of challenging and entertaining repertoire.

Our Fortress choir started with the beautiful "Pacem" with our sopranos and altos beautifully engaging in melodic dialogue with violinist Phoebe Martin. The highlight of their set was a spine-chilling performance of Anthony Ritchie's "Song", a piece that featured four part harmonies, cluster chords and a variety of sonic effects to capture the dark mood of the lyrics. Fortress closed their set with the fun and energetic "Hakuna", an East African Worship song that was propelled along by the conga playing of Nicole Lo.

Nautilus Chorale was the largest girls choir at the regional festival, highlighting the healthy state of choral culture at our school. The choir began with the expansive Tundra that featured soloists Audrey Tran, Bella Yeoman and Lucy Feillet, showcasing the refinement of our choir and ability to tackle complex repertoire. The sacred song "Ave Maria" was followed by the Latin jazz number that was accompanied by Callan Power on tenor saxophone, Eve Fraser on bass and James Phipps-Green on drums. "Sway" was an audience favourite during the day and in the gala concert, with Zoe Martin's vibrant choreography adding a touch of sass to this toe-tapping tune.

All singers are congratulated for their dedication in rehearsals and passion for singing. They will keenly await the announcement of the finalists for the next rounds of the festival.





Library Day

9 June 2026

Today we celebrated our 89th consecutive Library Day in absolute style! The school was buzzing with creativity as students and staff brought the theme of “Royals, Heroes, and Villains” to life with some truly spectacular costumes.

A major highlight of the celebrations was a special recorded interview with acclaimed author and OGHs ex-girl, Juliet Marillier!

Attending Otago Girls’ back in the 1960s, Juliet now resides in Western Australia and has become a literary powerhouse, writing 27 historical fantasy books and winning numerous international awards. In the recorded session, she shared incredible insights into her journey as a writer, offered invaluable advice on how to get a book published, and reflected fondly on her school days here at Otago Girls’.

It was an absolutely wonderful day filled with fun, inspiration, and a love for reading. Check out some of the costumes from the day in the photos!

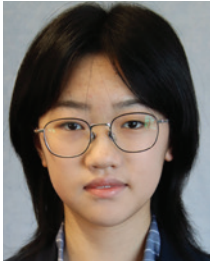


Moana Li: Math Champion

15 June 2026

We are absolutely thrilled to celebrate the incredible success of three of our amazing students in the International Maths Online Challenge!

A huge round of applause goes to:



Moana Li



Amy Li



Ashling Coffey

All three of these brilliant minds were placed as Elitists - a prestigious title awarded only to students who score between the 80th and 95th percentile worldwide!

To compete against the brightest young mathematicians across the globe and come out near the very top is a phenomenal achievement.

Theatre At Its Best

18 June 2026

The stage is set and our combined OGHS/OBHS school production, Once Upon a One More Time, is officially a must-watch!

Our incredible students have poured countless hours of practice, dedication, and creativity into this production, and they have put on a truly spectacular show.

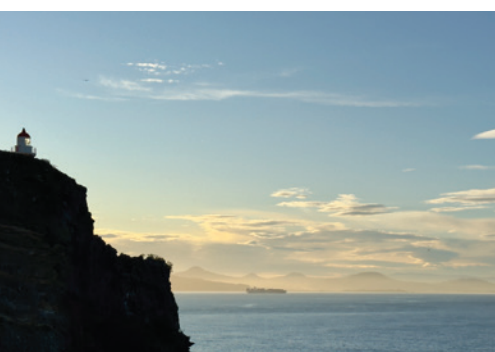
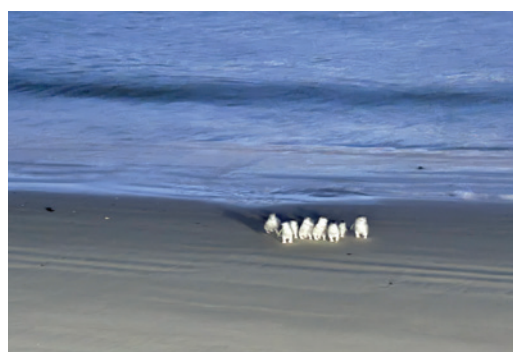
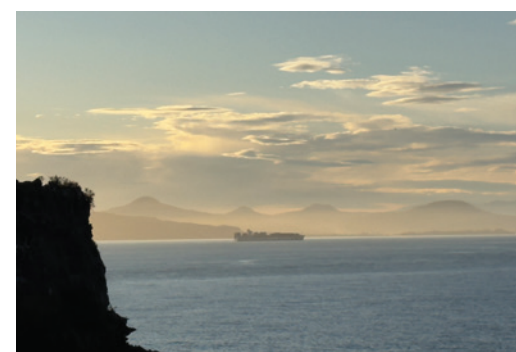
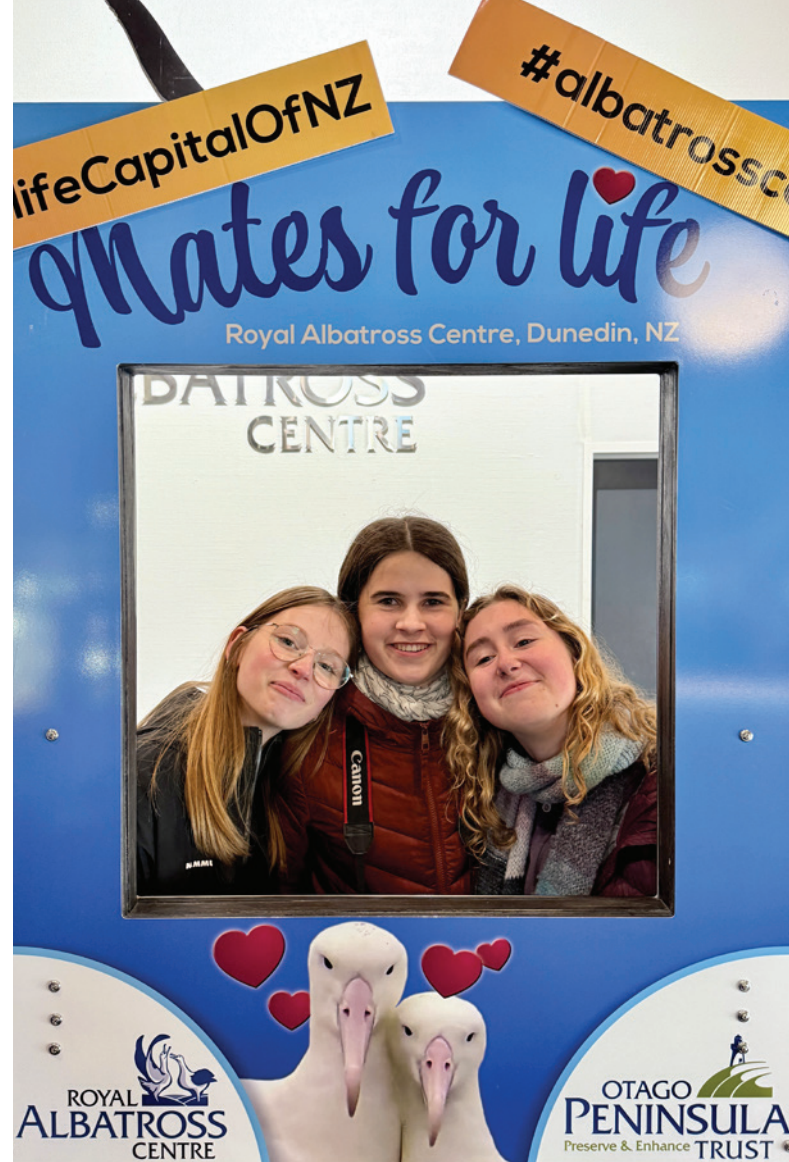
Get out there, fill the seats, and support our amazing cast and crew! Don't miss out on celebrating their hard work—head along for a fantastic night of entertainment.



Cuteness Overload!

23 June 2026

On a beautiful Dunedin afternoon, three German students got to enjoy the beautiful and scenic drive along the Otago Peninsula to the Royal Albatross Centre. You could hear the raft of penguins coming in the water as they were calling out to each other, then once on land, they grouped to form a waddle to safely traverse the sand to their hides. It was a delightful time watching them come ashore.





Chemists at the University of Otago

23 June 2026

Yesterday was the first day of our Year 13 chemists assessment at the University of Otago. The students were investigating varying chloride ion concentrations at different locations along the Tomahawk Lagoon. We are very thankful to the Chemistry Department, University of Otago, who allow our students to have this great opportunity to work in a university laboratory setting.



Rugby Win in the Rain

25 June 2026

Otago Girls' braved the wet conditions last night to play a stellar game against Taieri College, securing a fantastic win and getting right back into the winners' circle. Big thanks to the sideline supporters who withstood the weather with us.

The winning streak didn't stop there—our junior team also took out a huge top-of-the-table clash against South Otago High School to clear their spot at the top of the ranks.

The double win means the treats are on Mr Trickey!



Significant Visit from Japanese CEO

1 July 2026

Today, our Director of International Students, Rose Gilani, welcomed Kimihiro Tanaka, CEO of Asia Japan Co Ltd. Mr Tanaka has been sending numerous long-term Japanese students to our school. We greatly value our relationship and look forward to welcoming more students from Japan.



First New Student for Term 3

13 July 2026

A big welcome to our first international student arriving for Term 3!

Clara Giner has arrived safely from Germany. Her homestay family—who happen to be longtime family friends—are absolutely thrilled to finally have her here.

First up on the agenda is a trip to Queenstown before the school term kicks off. We hope you have the best time exploring, Clara!



Parents Equally As Excited as New Students

15 July 2026

Our community grew a little bigger today, and we are excited.

Flora Janke (arriving from Germany with her mum, Martina) and Ella Zhao (arriving from China with her mum, Swee) both made it safely to their new homes.

Thank you to the homestay families who opened their doors today with kindness—and a special nod to little host sister Summer, who stole everyone's hearts during the introductions. Welcome to you all.

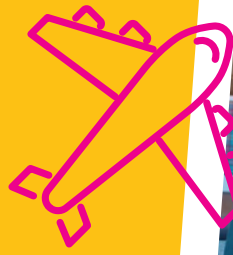
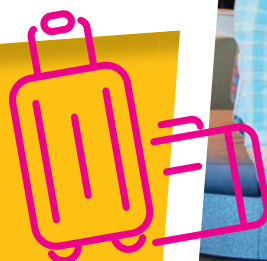




Sunny Skies and New Arrivals

19 July 2026

Sunny skies and new arrivals. Welcome to Lena, Nao, Reina, Ziva, Luzia, and Annabell, who just landed from Germany and Japan over the weekend! We look forward to welcoming you to school this week.



Warm Welcome after Long Flight Delays

22 July 2026

After hours of flight delays, it was an absolute joy to finally welcome our newest international students to Dunedin yesterday!

A very warm welcome to Fiona, Sunny, and Autumn from China! We are also thrilled to have Autumn's mum and Sunny's parents join us for the arrival.

Each girl brings her own unique personality to our school, and their homestay families were all smiles to finally meet them.

A massive thank you to Simon Wang, Managing Director of NZCIU, for his incredible support today—we truly couldn't have done it without you!



Keeping It In the Family

25 July 2026

Sumika Moriya from Japan has been part of our school community for 3 years now—and it looks like her sisters are following right in her footsteps!

In Term 1, her younger sister, Erika, came to study with us. This term, sister number three, Yurika, has just arrived! And youngest sister Moeka (who is only 10) is already counting down the days until she can join the OGHS family, too. It's a full Moriya family affair.

Pictured at the airport welcoming Yurika is Lucia, who is sharing the same homestay experience with her!

We are so honoured to be a home away from home for this family. Welcome to OGHS, Yurika!





Visit from Our Sister School In Japan

30 July 2026

Konnichiwa and a very warm welcome to the students and staff visiting us from Yasuda Girls' High School!

We are delighted to host our sister school from Hiroshima once again this year. Our decades-long partnership with Yasuda is a special part of our school's history, and this annual visit is always a highlight on our calendar.

We know our guests will have a fantastic time experiencing school life and spending time with their wonderful host families. We have a busy, fun-filled programme lined up for the coming days, and we can't wait to share it with you. Welcome!



Resistance Climbing

1 August 2026





Cultural Day

3 August 2026

Our annual Cultural Day was a wonderful showcase of diversity, unity, and talent. The day's festivities featured an assembly, stunning performances, and a bustling food hall filled with traditional dishes. Here are the highlights from today's event...



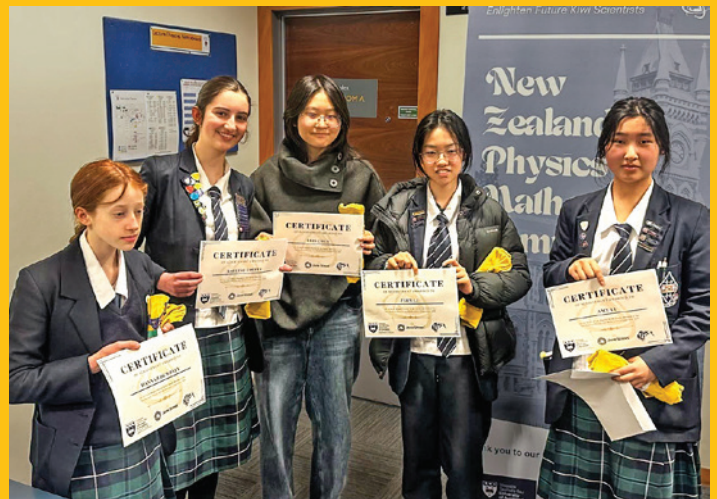
Success in Maths & Physics Competition

7 August 2026

Shoutout to our students who represented the school in the NZ Maths and Physics Competition.

Congratulations to Ashling Coffey for taking out 3rd place in the Junior division!

Awesome effort from Hannah, Eris, Zijin, Amy, and Ranya (not in the photograph) for taking on the challenge and giving it their best.



Year 11 Digital Technology Class Visits Deloitte

13 August 2026

Inspiring the next generation of women in tech!

Our 11Digi class spent Shadow Tech Day 2026 down at Deloitte, exploring tech careers, tackling real client solutions, and getting a front-row look at how technology drives global business. Huge thanks to Deloitte for an amazing day of real-world insights and inspiration.





Year 13 Physical Education: Cross Country Skiing Adventure

14 August 2026

Fresh tracks, cold air, and unmatched mountain views. Our 13PE cross-country skiers are making their way down after another epic day! Everyone is living the dream. Safe travels home, team!



Year 11 Outdoor Education Trip

21 August 2026

11OE took on Flagstaff, Buttars Peak, and the Organ Pipes today, soaking up every bit of sunshine along the way. Nothing beats a clear day out on the trails!





First Two Students From Dubai

25 August 2026

A warm welcome to our two newest international students, sisters Shanzay and Hanya Khan, who have joined us all the way from Dubai!

Shanzay and Hanya were officially welcomed to school by our Director of International Students, Rose Gilani. The sisters are moving here for the long term, joined by their youngest sister Aaima and their mum, Mehwish.

This is a real milestone for our International Department, as Shanzay and Hanya are the very first students from Dubai to enroll at Otago Girls' High School.

We are so glad to have the Khan family as part of our OGHs whānau and look forward to supporting the girls as they settle into school life in Dunedin!





Kayak Training in Outdoor Education Class

27 August 2026

Our senior Outdoor Education classes have wrapped up their kayaking unit at Moana Pool. It has been really neat watching everyone's confidence grow as they picked up new skills over the unit. From practising rescues to taking part in relays and pool games, the students put in great effort to build up their competence on the water. Well done to everyone involved!





Special Weaving Class

27 August 2026

Our senior Outdoor Education classes were lucky to take part in a raranga (weaving) session with Te Raita. It was a wonderful hands-on experience for the students, helping them learn traditional skills and connect with the tikanga behind the craft.

A big thank you to Te Raita for sharing your time and knowledge with us!



International BBQ

27 August 2026

What a great evening at our International BBQ last night!

We want to say a huge thank you to our awesome homestay families—we literally couldn't host our international students without your care and support. It was lovely to show our appreciation and officially welcome the new students who joined us in Term 3.

A big thank you as well to our Pasifika group for running the sausage sizzle, and to Mrs Boomer and Mrs Trickey for all their hard work getting the food ready for everyone.

It was a fun night, and wonderful seeing everyone enjoying themselves!





Ski Trip 2026

27 August 2026

Bluebird day and happy skiers. It doesn't get better than this.

With all the fresh powder on the mountains, there was certainly plenty of snow waiting for our students.

Heading off on the annual ski trip is a long-standing Otago Girls' tradition, so to mark the occasion we thought we'd share a few snaps from the archives—starting with our school ski team back in 1935, alongside trip photos from 2008, 2013 and 2015!

Have an amazing time on the slopes, everyone. Have fun, look after each other, and bring back plenty of stories!





Year 12 Formal

29 August 2026

As the term ended, our Year 12 students celebrated with their formal at Glenfalloch.

Here's a look at the night.





Ice Hockey Fun

29 August 2026

Our OGHS ice hockey players teamed up with Queen's High School and Trinity Catholic College on Thursday for a trip to Alexandra.

The combined Dunedin team played two games against Dunstan High School on the outdoor ice rink. While the results didn't go our way on the

scoreboard, the girls had an absolute blast, gained some awesome experience, and loved having extra ice time between games.

We are hoping to build girls' ice hockey in Dunedin and look forward to more exchanges like this in the future. Anyone can join the team next year—no experience needed! If you're keen to give a new sport a try, consider giving ice hockey a go.



Special September Programme: Tunnel Beach & Baldwin Street

10 September 2026



Special September Programme: Monarch Wildlife Cruise

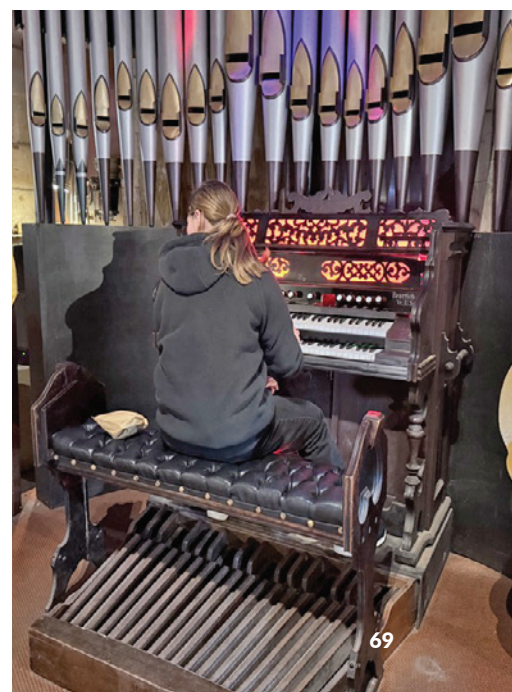
12 September 2026





Special September Programme: Waitaki Tour

15 September 2026



Film Club

20 September 2026

Our very talented film club students including Yiling Zhang and Ada Hu have been working around the clock to produce high-quality, informative and entertaining content that is used to promote our school. It is really gratifying to see the high-quality work that is being produced. Well done, girls!



Leavers' Ceremony



Term 3 Farewell Party





STUDENT ARTICLES

Geography Camp

By Mina Ohta

15 May 2026

I went to Mount Cook with geography class from Monday 20 April to Wednesday 22 April and learned about the natural environment as it is the study of geography and how people use this public space. This experience is so special for my life, because I've climbed mountains in Japan, but I had never seen a glacier. If I didn't come to New Zealand and take geography, I wouldn't have ever seen that so I was very lucky. Also the weather was always nice and sunny, but it was colder than Dunedin. We had to wear warm clothes. I took a lot of time to prepare for geography camp. For example, a hat, warm gloves, merino socks, pants and tops. It was difficult to find these in shops. When I explored the glacier on a boat, it was so cold. I'm glad I bought these because of this.

The first day, I arrived at the school at 8:15 and left the school at about 8:40. The night before I thought it was earlier than normal to go to school, so I had a difficult time waking up, but I could wake up on time. I think this is because I was very excited to go to Mount Cook. I took the bus. It was so relaxing. In the bus I ate snacks, talked to friends and I slept very well. I rode the bus for about four hours, and we arrived at the building where we stayed for two days. We arrived at about 3pm, so we didn't do anything, just relaxed in each room. I ate snacks, noodles, and talked to friends who were my roommates. At 6 pm, we ate eating dinner. It was so nice. I ate lasagna, salad, ice cream and garlic breadbreads. On this day we were very tired, so I think we slept at about 10pm.

The next day, we did many events. We woke up about 7 am, ate breakfast and packed our lunch. We departed about 8 am and went to the Hooker Valley, Tasman Valley and Hermitage which is like a hotel for tourists. This was a very busy day. I was tired, but it was an awesome day. The most memorable event was exploring the Tasman glacier. It was my first time to see the glacier and touch the water and ice in the glacier. The ice and water was so cold and during the boat ride; it was so cold. I felt like the temperature in the glacier was colder than 0 degrees. I had never looked at glaciers with my own eyes. I only looked at photos or tiktok. That's why this experience was most memorable. I arrived at our accommodation at about 6 pm and ate dinner together which was cooked by Ms Joice. It was great.

On my last day, we were going back to the school from my accommodation. I woke up at 7 am and ate breakfast as on the second day. After that, we walked around the accommodation and took photos in front of the river as the accommodation is by the river. I got on the bus and headed to our school. About an hour after we were getting on the bus, we stopped at the park and ate pizza. I think we had been taking the bus for four hours. Finally we arrived at the school at 4 pm.

These were great experiences for me because all day was nice weather, I could see beautiful nature, know the history of Mount Cook and about the tourists of New Zealand. I can not see the big mountains and glaciers in my region where my house is in Japan, so If I get the chance to go there again, I really want to go.





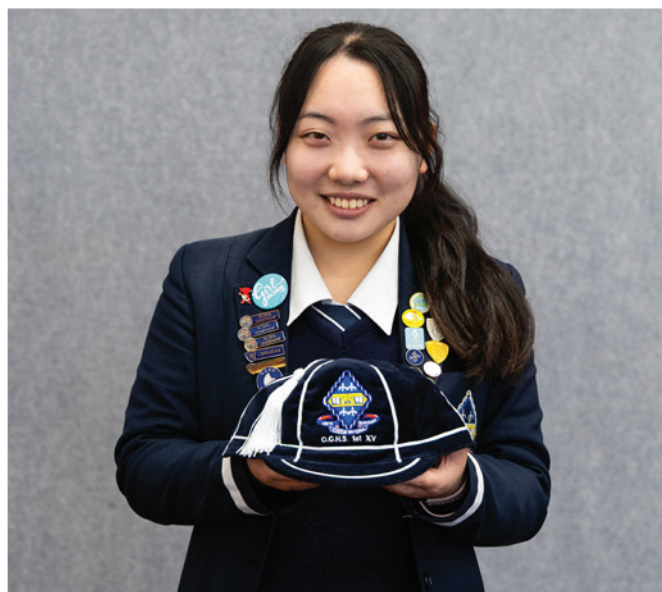
Rugby Cup

By Sumika Moriya

3 September 2026

I started playing rugby when I arrived at Otago Girls' High School in Year 11. When I came to New Zealand, I wanted to try something new as I have always enjoyed trying different sports. Before rugby, I had played tennis, swimming, synchronised swimming, and other sports. I used to watch rugby games a lot, but playing rugby was completely new to me, and I had a lot to learn, but my teammates and coaches were supportive and helped me learn and grow.

This year, I was honoured to receive a rugby cap for reaching 25 games with the First XV. I'm proud to be part of this milestone as OGHS presented caps to the rugby players for the first time. I'm also grateful



to my coaches, teammates and everyone who has supported me to play rugby.

My three years playing rugby with the OGHS First XV have been one of the memorable, good experiences of my time studying abroad in New Zealand.





Otago Girls' High School International Ambassadors

Ada Hu and Sumika Moriya

7 September 2026

Hello! We are Ada from Taiwan and Sumika from Japan. We are International Student Ambassadors at Otago Girls' High School.

The reason we started this is that we heard many international students feel nervous when they first arrive and need help adjusting to get into school and life in New Zealand who came to study overseas on their own. We want to help students feel more welcome, connected, and supported during their time here.

As International Student Ambassadors, we organise fun activities with international students from Otago Girls' and other schools across Dunedin twice a term, during the weekends, and twice during a term break. We also organise meetings with international leaders from other schools to plan activities together. This year, our first activity was an Otago Girls' and Otago Boys' get-together.





At the start of term 3, we also held a welcoming event to welcome our incoming international students. Around 70 students from different schools joined us. It was great to see so many students come together, make new friends, and exchange different cultures.

We also run the International Friends Programme by organising fun icebreakers at lunchtime to help new international students make friends with local students, chat, and enjoy lunch together at school.

Besides fun activities, we also support students who need help settling into school. For any academic questions, homework, subject selection, club selection, or uniform shopping, etc., they can come to us, and we will find a way to sort out the questions for them. We have an Instagram account where we share our activities and promote international student life at OGHs, and for local students to learn and know more about us.

Here is our Instagram account, please check it out if you are interested!

@intl.students.oghs



ALUMNI NEWS

Alumna Antonia Barten Studies Once Again at Otago Girls' High School

6 August 2026

Look who made a return trip! Yesterday we greeted Antonia Barten at the airport alongside her host sister and close friend, Esme Garcia.

Antonia studied with us in 2024 and 2025, and loved it so much she chose to spend her German summer break back in Dunedin with us. She even packed the school uniform she took home as a souvenir! We're so happy to have you back, Antonia!









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