



Prefects' Investiture and Leadership Assembly – Rector's Address

Christine Leighton
Friday 2 February 2024



E nga mana
E nga reo
E nga iwi
o te motu

Tena Koutou Katoa

Welcome to this morning's Prefects' Investiture and Leadership Assembly, when we honour our student leaders for 2024. In this, our first official assembly for the year, we recognise the important place of leadership development in all young people, and we hope that you will all continue to seek opportunities to grow and develop your leadership capacity.

It gives me pleasure to welcome Mrs Felicity Odlin to this assembly as Chair of the Board of Governors. Welcome Mrs Odlin and I thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to present some awards and honour today's leaders. Welcome back to Lily Champion-Smith and Poppy Rumble, Head and Deputy Head Prefects from last year, who are here to support and hand over to our new leaders.

A special welcome to parents and guests who have joined us this morning. You have every reason to be proud of your son or daughter who is being recognised in a leadership role for 2024. And now to our celebration of leadership for our prefect group, followed by the various leadership roles for senior students. Due to current gym restrictions on numbers and a large number of guests in assembly today, this assembly is for Senior College. Middle School leaders will be recognized next Friday.

Being a good leader, just like being a good person, is a life-long process. At St Andrew's we are encouraged to manage ourselves, understand and develop our character strengths through diverse experiences, and appreciate the skills, dispositions, and diversity within our community.

I urge you all to value the opportunities you have here and use these to grow the best attributes within yourselves.

Remember, the first person you need to lead is yourself, and this is about being the best that you can be. It means knowing your strengths and building upon these, confronting your fears or weaknesses and taking opportunities to learn and grow.



We also know that attending to the small things in our daily lives, showing kindness, watching out for others, being honest and knowing and delivering what is expected of us is an important place to start. In this way you will grow your character along with your capabilities.

In our country and across the world we witness many types of leadership from Prime Ministers and Presidents, health experts and passionate advocates for change. Our place as leaders at StAC is less conspicuous but nevertheless it is important within our community, and we can truly make a difference to those around us. Every one of you can aspire to be the kind of leader, who practices selflessness and inspires trust, one who makes the right choices and can honestly say you have done your best.

Our student leaders of 2024 will at times be tested and challenged. You will at times have to draw upon inner strength or support of others. Perhaps you will have to choose a course of action which is not popular, or what your mates are doing.

What really matters is how people see your contribution to your leadership role at the end of the year, not the fact that you are receiving a badge today.

These comments are of course relevant to you all at the start of a new year, whether you are in a recognised leadership role or not. You can all make your mark by the smallest of actions, you can draw on the principles of manaakitanga and make our StAC community a safe, inclusive and happy place for all.

On Tuesday New Zealand will celebrate Waitangi Day, 184 years after Te Tiriti o Waitangi was signed. This foundation document for New Zealand has presented some challenges for successive governments of Aotearoa, but as a country we have made significant progress towards an agreed and positive interpretation. In the late 1980s the principles of Te Tiriti were defined as the three Ps:

- Partnership
- Protection and
- Participation

In partnership, Māori and Pakeha working together, we value the taonga each other bring to Aotearoa. By protecting Māori knowledge, language and values we bring a sense of unity to Aotearoa. By ensuring participation for all, we empower Māori, Pakeha and all New Zealanders with equal opportunities in our society. There are continued leadership challenges to achieve this vision for all New Zealanders and here at StAC is a good place for us to embrace these.

Being a student leader in a school gives you an opportunity to develop some important life skills. The responsibility of leadership comes with certain requirements. The seven essential qualities I want to emphasise today are a great place to start:

1. Curiosity – what works and what doesn't.
2. Emotional Intelligence – how do I impact others?
3. Self-discipline and organisation stepping up to responsibility: getting things done.
4. Open mindedness and flexibility – open to others' ideas, being inclusive.
5. Trustworthiness – meeting expectations.
6. Good communication skills – taking others with you, personal and public speaking style.
7. Positive thinking – positive thoughts, words and actions which develop mindful habits.



St Andrew's College

For our student leaders taking on roles and responsibilities in 2024 we recognise that our College values of Truth, Excellence, Faith, Creativity and Inclusivity must guide not only what we say but what we do in our everyday actions and relationships. Alongside the StAC values we also recognise Whanaungatanga, Manaakitanga, Kaitiakitanga and Rangatiratanga in our commitment to “Together, growing better people for life”.

No reira

Tena koutou, tena koutou, tena ra tatou katoa.