



Morning Comment

Leadership Assembly and Prefects' Investiture

Head Prefects Jake Elvidge and Kate Simcock, and Deputy Head Prefects Sophia Voice and Ricky Kotepong



Kate: Kia ora, welcome back everyone.

It's my pleasure to introduce Jake Elvidge, your Head Boy for 2025. He joined St Andrew's College in Year 9 from Medbury School, and from the moment I met him at Production, it was clear he was going places. Back then, he was about a foot shorter, but still filled with the endless enthusiasm he has today, throwing himself into every performance. This earned him a standout role in that production and was the start of many incredible shows. Jake approaches every aspect of his school life with this same passion – whether it's excelling in cultural activities, academics, or on the rugby field. Jake has been playing rugby since the age of eight and has continued to shine throughout his time at St Andrew's (unlike his cricket career, which as he admits, peaked in Year 9).

As the famous quote goes, "Happiness is the key to success. If you love what you are doing, you will be successful." Jake embodies this perfectly – his love for what he does, whether on the field, stage, or in the classroom, has been the not-so-secret secret to his success. Adding to Jake's impressive list of achievements, last year he was the very well deserving recipient of the Robert Burns scholarship. He spent a month in Scotland, fully immersing himself in the culture, visiting five different schools, and exploring Scottish heritage. While Jake has no problem travelling the world, he has yet to venture back into the



Science block since his Physical Science class in 2023, so do not expect to find him anywhere near there. Jake's talents are undeniable, but it is his kindness, humour, and relatability that truly make him stand out. So if you do see his head bobbing above the crowds, don't hesitate to say hi, because whether it is for a laugh, a chat, or just some good company – he's always up for it.

Jake: When someone says, "Don't compare yourself to others," they probably mean don't compare yourself to Kate, who, let's face it, has likely outperformed you twice over. It has been this way since she joined the College in Year 9. Coming off a wonderful year at Cobham Intermediate School, Kate arrived with such enthusiasm, and it is safe to say she has taken every opportunity presented to her. Taking a look at Kate's resume at St Andrew's, it's nearly flawless and it goes on and on. I wish I could name all of her achievements in the length of this speech, but the reality is we would be here all day.

Kate has been in the 1st XI hockey team since Year 9, she has achieved NCEA Excellence Endorsement in both Level 1 and Level 2 (gaining an outstanding 100 Excellence credits in 2024 alone), she has been in every single cultural group at the school, such as Production, Choir, and Sustainability Council (which she was the Head of last year), and don't even think about getting into a debate with her, because let's be honest, it'll be over before it even starts. Somehow on top of all this, she finds time to participate regularly in community service, where she has just finished her Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award this year. If all-round success was a student, the student's name would be Kate Simcock. Kate is one of the hardest-working people I have ever met, and she deserves all of her achievements and accolades. If you can find a moment when Kate isn't doing one of her many extra-curricular activities, I highly recommend you go up and have a chat with her, as she is one of the most genuine and friendly people I know.

Sophia: Hi everyone this is Ricky Kotepong, Deputy Head Prefect for 2025.

Ricky joined St Andrew's back in Year 5, instantly making a fashion statement with a blazer three sizes too big and socks pulled past his knees. Since then he has grown significantly as a person, but unfortunately, as you can see, the same can't be said about his height. During his time at St Andrew's Ricky has thrown himself into all aspects of College life, particularly shining on the sports field, where he has excelled in athletics, football, and tennis. Ricky has



especially stood out in tennis, making the Senior A team in Year 9, winning the South Island Secondary School Championships, and even securing a runner-up spot at Mixed Nationals. Despite his serious and competitive nature on the tennis court, Ricky is genuinely one of the most friendly and approachable people you will meet. His unique ability to get along with anyone, combined with his positive attitude makes him widely admired and loved by all. So, if you see Ricky around school, definitely don't hesitate to say hi as he's always keen for a good chat – but be careful not to miss him, as he's been known to blend in with the new Year 9 students!

Ricky: Hi everyone! It is my absolute pleasure to introduce Sophia Voice, Deputy Head Prefect for 2025. Sophia's connection to St Andrew's College runs deep, as she is a third-generation student, and joined the College in Year 7. Throughout her time here, Sophia has truly made her mark in many ways. In sports, she has competed in touch and volleyball, but her standout achievements include winning the U15 Maadi Quad title and earning the Most Promising Rower Award in the same season. While rowing wasn't her long-term path, Sophia continued to excel as a key player in the hockey 1st XI. But Sophia isn't just a star on the sports field; she's equally as impressive in the classroom, where she earned Excellence Endorsements in both Level 1 and 2, and even sat two Scholarship exams. Just a fun fact – last year alone, she achieved an impressive 117 Excellence Credits!

Despite these achievements, Sophia's character is what truly sets her apart. She's not just accomplished; she's incredibly humble and hardworking. Even as the "baby" of the group, she has already shown her leadership and kindness by serving as a Peer Support Leader, connecting effortlessly with the younger students. Sophia is a wonderful role model for us all, and if you see her around, don't hesitate to start a conversation.

Kate: Every year at St Andrew's, we focus on a theme created by the head students and prefect team. After much thought and collaboration, our theme for this year is "Grounded by the Thistle, surrounded by connection." This theme reflects not only who we are as a College, but also the values we aim to embody as a community.

Jake: The first part of this theme – "Grounded by the Thistle" reflects our deep connection to St Andrew's values. The concept of the thistle is not only a symbol of our Scottish heritage, it illustrates the strong roots of our



community. To be grounded by the thistle means to stay true to who we are and to celebrate the qualities that make St Andrew's so special.

Kate: The second part of our theme “Surrounded by connection” is all about the relationships we build. Just as thistles grow together and support each other through their roots, we thrive when we are connected with others. This is about recognising that no matter where you come from, or what you're passionate about, you belong here. Connection is the life of our community, and it's what transforms our school into a family. So as your prefect team, our vision is to strengthen these connections and to foster a culture where every student feels they have a place and a purpose. This year, we challenge you to embody the spirit of our theme. Stay grounded in our shared values while reaching out to create new friendships, support one another, and build bridges between groups, teams, and year levels.

Jake: To ensure everyone is “Grounded by the Thistle,” we encourage you to get as involved with life at St Andrew's as possible. Whether that's trying a new thing this year, or even just showing up every day to tackle a new challenge. To be “surrounded by connection” this year make the effort to build meaningful relationships, engage with our community, and support those around you.