

2009 Leavers Speech

I would like to thank you all for joining us here tonight to celebrate our Year 8 children's achievement in their final year of primary school and to wish them well for their future.

This has been a wonderful group of Year 8s. They have been adaptable in working with two very different teachers this year, and thriving under both. One of the skills many employers look for is the flexibility to work with a great range of different people and you all learnt the skills of coping with this big change from Mrs Hicks to Mr Pampalone two extremely different people.

The Y8 group were fabulous to take away on camp, as they were so very well behaved and with the great attitude they took with them, saw them give events a try. It was delightful to watch them tackle challenges that they feared - from the high water slide, and the mud slide, to the tramp around the lake, many individuals grew from facing these challenging activities.

Sports opportunities are greater in the senior school, and over the year you have experienced a wide range of sports, and sporting events where many of you have shone as you have great sporting skills. Then in music, how lucky you have been, to have two rock bands in action, under Darrel Greaney, who has nurtured your musical skills and talents to come third in the Battle of the Bands just weeks after playing throughout our school production. On stage several of you had lead parts and again your talents could shine through to entertain and delight most of the Maungaraki community.

Many of you have taken up the opportunities leadership has offered. The House Captains have taken on this responsibility well, with some captains extending beyond their call of duty to organise events themselves, to give younger students opportunities that they would otherwise not have got.

The two netball tournaments are examples where the concept grew from an idea and with time and effort, paid off school wide. The netball tournaments offered great opportunities for both our House Captains and other seniors in roles from creating game draws, collating points to umpiring and organising cheerleaders. These are life skills that can be adapted into other situations. You showed the key competencies of self management, perseverance, participating and contributing and relating to others.

I hope that the colleges you have chosen will provide many learning experiences, that continue to motivate you, you need to sign up for some of these so you can continue to try new things and thrive from the stimulation, each opportunity will give you, because tackling new things helps you to develop into an interesting individual so that others want to spend time with you.

Opportunities are out there waiting, but you have to make them happen. If you have an interest in speech making why not try debating, if you are keen on sports why not try a team event like Dragon boating. If you are musical how about trying out for the barbershop quartet, or the jazz band, what you try doesn't matter as long as you take up some of the new opportunities. That "give it a go attitude" is what winners have. It maybe that some of the things you try will inspire you, some may challenge you and others you may find are not as you had thought, but if you have given it a go, you will know, if it is for you or not. And with every new event you will have grown more as a person.

At assembly today I talked about friends. With you all going in different direction for college it is important that you work hard to bridge the gaps in geography and lifestyle because the older you get, the more you need the people you knew when you were young. When new doors open, never close the old ones. Keeping in contact will help you to look after your precious friends.

Take with you the memories which Maungaraki School has provided for you, because it is the memories you will look back upon with fondness in the future.

I wish you all the best for a bright future and look forward to following your successes in forth coming years. I would like to finish with a poem written by Lydia Jacks, who wrote the poem when she left her school in Year 6.

Now We've Left

We've now left school,
It's how the story ends,
Tears of happiness are what we recommend.
But there's always a little pain,
Because once you've left,
It's not the same.
You could walk through school and you would see,
Your friends, who have grown up incredibly.
But now you've gone,
It's not the same,
As you may never see them again.
Your friends who have grown up right beside you,
Who have helped you through your daily life,
We will go ahead and leave them behind,
Even if you want the same old life,
But you cannot live your life in the past,
Hoping that the memories will last,
You have to move on and just be glad,
That leaving has made you so sad.
So go ahead and live your life,
And become what you want to be.
But don't forget the days you spent,
At Maungaraki School with me.

Dorothy Law Nolte which might help you all understand a little better. It is called "Children Learn What They Live":

If a child lives with criticism, he learns to condemn,
If a child lives with hostility, he learns to fight,
If a child lives with fear, he learns to be scared,
If a child lives with pity, he learns to feel sorry for himself,
If a child lives with ridicule, he learns to be shy,
If a child lives with jealousy, he learns to feel guilt.

That's how I felt at my old school. And then I came to Forest Park...

If a child lives with tolerance, he learns to be patient,
If a child lives with encouragement, he learns to be confident,
If a child lives with praise, he learns to be appreciative,
If a child lives with acceptance, he learns to love,
If a child lives with honesty, he learns what truth is,
If a child lives with fairness, he learns justice,
If a child lives with security, he learns to have faith in himself and those about him,
If a child lives with friendliness, he learns the world is a nice place in which to live.

The point I am trying to make is that Maungaraki School did not just teach me maths, English, science or any other subject you might expect on a school timetable. Maungaraki School also taught me the most important lesson of all, to be myself. So thank you.