



## Whānau Pānui

12 February 2021

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Kia ora e te whānau

### Tumuaki/Principal's Message

Naumai haere mai! Naumai hoki mai!

Welcome and welcome back. We are excited by all the possibilities that 2021 brings us. We have welcomed almost 110 Year 9 students. 11 students from Years 10-13 have also joined us, including four international students from our partner school, Evacona Education. We make a big effort to help new taiohi find their way around and get to know how we do things. There is no such thing as a silly question, so make sure that you ask whenever you are unsure.

We welcome five new kaimahi (see below) to our school.

I am so pleased by the big effort by everyone to arrive with all the right uniform and materials to support our tikanga and learning. Please take the time to review the procedures and requirements that are published on our website. There is more about this below.

We had some great NCEA results from 2020, thanks to the efforts of all students and staff.

92% of our Year 12 students achieved NCEA level 2, and over 85% Year 11 students achieved NCEA level 1. 72% of Year 13 students achieved NCEA level 3. These rates compare very favourably with the national averages, as below:

%	THS	National
Year 11/Level 1	85	70
Year 12/Level 2	92	79
Year 13/Level 3	72	71

We are very proud that our Year 13 students have overwhelming found their personal success in achieving the pathways they desired. For those expecting a university pathway, 85% (28 out of 33)



achieved that. Those that have not quite made it yet are still on the path to success as they are catching up remaining credits needed or doing transition courses. The second most popular destination for our Year 13s of 2020 is employment (20 out of 68) followed by enrolment in a course (7) and that is a great credit to them and the school. Many of these opportunities for employment are apprenticeships and pathways that were supported by our fantastic Careers/vocational department. Thanks to Mrs Debbie Driver and Mrs Jane Stove for this great success.

It is very clear from our results that outcomes are great for those that attend regularly as most of students that have not quite got their qualifications have erratic attendance. The single biggest thing that someone can do to achieve qualification success (and social wellbeing) is to attend school. Anything that we can do to support better attendance, please advise us.

To end this message, I would like to encourage you to contact me if you have any comments, queries, or concerns.

### Covid-19 Update – still Alert Level 1

At the first school assembly for the year, it was pointed out that we need to remember that we are still at **Covid-19 Alert level one**. This means that for us to STAY HEALTHY:

- Stay home if you are sick.
- Seek medical advice if you have a fever, dry cough, sore throat, etc.
- Wash and dry your hands regularly.
  - Hand sanitiser is still a good idea if you cannot access washing facilities.
  - Bring your own sanitiser or there is sanitiser still in locations at school.
- Cough or sneeze into your elbow.
- Our cleaners will clean surfaces every day and ensure that regularly used areas are wiped down.
- **Keep track of where you have been:**
  - As a school, all visitors sign in, and we encourage use of the tracing app
  - We are all encouraged use the tracing app.

Remember young people are unlikely to get seriously unwell, but we need to keep doing these things for everyone, like our whānau and friends.

### Powhiri – Friday 5 February

Our powhiri for our new students and staff was a very uplifting experience. Nga mihi (many thanks) to Matua Wati Ngamane and Whaea Kelly from our mana whenua, Ngāti Maru for the kaikararanga and kaikoreo.



Following the powhiri our Year 9 students were allocated to the roopu classes and continued their orientation that started last year for most.

The day ended with a round of activities led by our wonderful senior leaders, and other senior taiohi.

### New Kaimahi / Staff

Naumai haere mai, (welcome) to five new Kaimahi. Miss Taryn Slee joins us as Head of Health and PE, following the promotion of Mrs O'Neil as Deputy Principal. Miss Madelaine Barrett joins us as Teacher of History, replacing Mr Kieran Taylor. Miss Jasmine Yorke joins us as Teacher of English, replacing Mrs Jennifer Glenn. Mr Yongbin Zhao joins us as Teacher of Mathematics, replacing Mrs Linnea McDonald. Mrs Miriam Kyle-Coles joins us as Special Education Needs Coordinator (SENCO) replacing Mrs Ruth Howes who is now our fulltime Librarian.



## Be safe - being sun smart

We **strongly encourage** the use of a plain navy blue or black hat in Terms 1 and 4 especially. Hats worn to school must be logo free.

We **expect students to wear a hat** for big outside day events like swimming sports and athletics day. As these days are not in uniform then **any suitable sun** hat is expected. The best sort of hat is a bucket or rimmed hat. This is clear responsibility for parents to provide their children with a suitable hat and the school will support this by encouraging.

Along with hats we encourage all aspects of the slip, slop, slap and wrap message for **outdoor** activities.



### Slip on a shirt

Slip on a shirt with long sleeves. Fabrics with a tighter weave and darker colours will give you better protection from the sun.



### Slip into the shade

Slip into the shade of an umbrella or a leafy tree. Plan your outdoor activities for early or later in the day when the sun's UV levels are lower.



### Slop on sunscreen

Slop on plenty of broad-spectrum, water resistant sunscreen of at least SPF 30. Apply 20 minutes before going outside and reapply every two hours and especially after being in water or sweating.



### Slap on a hat

Wear a hat with a wide brim or a cap with flaps. More people are sunburnt on the face and neck than any other part of the body.



### Wrap on sunglasses

Choose close fitting, wrap around style sunglasses. Not all sunglasses protect against UV radiation, so always check the label for the sun protection rating.

[Read the New Zealand Association of Optometrists \(NZAO\) information on sunglasses](#) 

Source: <https://www.sunsmart.org.nz/be-sunsmart>

For more information visit the [Sun Smart website](#)

We will be undertaking some consultation on uniform this year and this important topic will be part of the information gathered.

## Kahui Ako Connection Day

On Thursday 4 February, it was a privilege to be welcomed onto Mātai Whetū Marae and connect with our local community of schools (kahui ako). We were privileged to also learn more about the connections and history of Ngāti Maru, by Matua Wati.

After that, we travelled to Te Puru School and were fortunate to learn of the whakapapa and connections of Ngāti Tamaterā. Matua Dr Apanui Skipper regaled us with a fascinating history and then we visited the historical pa, Te Āputa. We were also introduced and learnt to sign the connecting Hauraki Waiata, Te Akau o te Te Aroha, by Matua Dr Korohere Ngāpō.

If you have not yet visited this important archaeological site, it is certainly worth it, to find out more about the huge pa once there.

## Senior courses / timetable

Many thanks to all Year 12 and 13 students who confirmed their course on Wednesday 3 February. We did need to spend time this week making changes too, as students returned. We have managed to get a timetable that gave most students their first choices. We do need to make a few more changes to balance out some class sizes, so please bear with the disruption that this will cause. Barring anything major, we should have it sorted by the start of next week.

More information about timetable 2021 was provided in the [pānui at the end of last year](#).

## Work & Income – School and Year Start-up Payment

If you are caring for someone else's child and need help with pre-school or school-related costs at the beginning of the year, you may be able to get the School and Year Start-up Payment. Applications close **28 February 2021**. More information: [School and Year Start-up Payment](#)



## Coaches and managers needed!

### Applications for Coaches and Managers

Thames High School Sport welcomes applications for coaches and managers for 2021. Application packs can be found on the THS website and Facebook page, or by email our sports coordinator Susan Barriball; [susanbarriball@thameshigh.school.nz](mailto:susanbarriball@thameshigh.school.nz) or collecting a form from the school office.

**Applications close: 19 February 2021**

### The use of cars for sport and activities

One of our main priorities is that our taiohi / students are always safe. This includes transport to and from sports events which they are attending as part of Thames High School.

In accordance with our sports policies, which have been signed by our whānau / families, we would like to reiterate that if you do have a drivers license, either restricted or full, that taiohi / student drivers do not transport their friends or sibling/s to and from events. If we do hear that this is occurring, this will be treated seriously.

### Attendance/Absences

Information about attendance, absence, lateness, and leave can be found on our [school website](#).

Under Section 36(1) of The Education and Training Act (2020) – “the Act” – all registered students at a school **must attend** when it is open for instruction, unless there is a justified reason, such as sickness, sudden and serious illness of a parent, or other equally serious situation that means a student cannot attend.

The options for notification of any absences must include a clear reason for absence. to the school are the below. If there is no reason given event though it has been reported, it will be recorded as advised but unjustified (no reason). By law we must know the reason for absences.

- **Email** [attendance@thameshigh.school](mailto:attendance@thameshigh.school)
- **Phone** the office on **07 868 8688**
- **Text message** the school on **3255**. Please include **thsc** at the beginning of the message. Ensure that your **child's full name and Year level** are included.

[For more information, check our website.](#)

## Staying on site

Taiohi / students are to remain at school **all day** so that we can assure their safety.

If parents wish to have lunch with their child then they will need to sign the student out at that time.

We encourage secondary school students to have self-management and bring their materials and lunch to school. In the rare instance that does not happen, parents are advised they must bring the any items to the front office. This is a health and safety requirement of all schools.

Lunch passes for other year levels will only be issued in very special circumstances; any requests must be directed to the deputy principals. There is information on the website about this process.

The only exceptions are for Year 13 taiohi / students that may leave at break times and for some study times, so long as they maintain an attendance rate of 95% and demonstrate great values and adhere to all our expectations.

### Year 13 Lunch and Study Passes

We have advised Year 13 students that their privilege to go to town for lunch (not interval) will be allowed only after we are assured that they are attending classes and have got their uniform to the standard expected.

Until that decision is made, they must remain onsite.

Once there is a pattern of meeting expectations of their presentation, behaviour, attendance, and punctuality to we will also consider the issuing of off-site study passes for study periods at the start and end of days, from week 5.



## Every day counts matters and every minute matters

On the website there is a description of the effect of absences on progress and wellbeing.

Students with attendance below 90% may not be eligible to participate in optional school activities e.g. representing the School in co-curricular activities, the Year 13 Leavers' Dinner, the School Ball etc. or may have privileges such as Study periods or town lunch (Year 13) removed. If a student's attendance affects eligibility to participate in such activities, then appeals can be made to the Deputy Principal in charge of monitoring attendance.

### “Every Day Counts”

1 or 2 days a week doesn't seem that much but...

If your child misses	that equals...	which is...	and over 13 years of school that's...
1 day a fortnight	20 days per year	4 weeks per year	Nearly 1.5 years
1 day a week	40 days per year	8 weeks per year	Over 2.5 years
2 days a week	80 days per year	16 weeks per year	Over 5 Years
3 days a week	120 days per year	24 weeks per year	Nearly 8 years

### The effect of absence on progress

A whole year has 365 days; a school year has 190 days. That leaves 175 days to spend on family time, visits, holidays, shopping and other appointments.

No Absence	10 days absence	12 days absence	19 days absence	29 days absence	38 days absence
190 days of education	180 days of education	178 days of education	171 days of education	161 days of education	152 days of education
100%	95%	94%	90%	85%	80.00%
Very Good	Worrying		Serious Concern		

Best chance of progress and success. More likely to be socially happy.

Harder to make progress or experience success. Harder to make friend and more likely to be less happy at school.

This is **persistent absence** and Very hard to make progress and social outcomes are often poor. Referral to Attendance Services is likely.

## Right place, right time, ready to learn!

This means getting to class, on time, with the right attitude and resources - bag, pens, books, BYOD, etc. This sets you up for learning.



**DID YOU KNOW?** If you are 15 minutes late each day you will have missed 2 full weeks of school in one year?

## Healthy Lifestyles

At school we need to promote healthy choices of food, drink and other behaviours. This includes bans on the use or possession of tobacco/marijuana, vaping and any associated paraphernalia, and any other drugs or alcohol. They pose a risk to wellbeing to individuals, and the school workplace, and are likely to be a harmful example to others. These behaviours are rightfully treated as serious 'gross misconduct' and may lead to stand down and/or suspension.

### Hydration

Thames High School encourage students to maintain healthy hydration by having a water bottle, and these can be consumed in class (except in rooms such as labs where food and drink are prohibited).

While not in the same category, bringing high sugar-content drinks (fizzy or otherwise) is strongly discouraged. These include the 'sports' or 'energy' drinks that contain high levels of caffeine too. Big bottles of soft drink or drinks like 'tea drinks' fall into this category too.





It is not just the nature of the drink that is an issue, but the volume; in many cases students observed with such drinks are consuming, in the case of 'energy drinks' the mega cans of close to 600 mL, and in the case of soft drinks, bottles of 1.5 L or more. It is most concerning to see taiohi arriving to school saying that a big can of such drinks is their breakfast. The same money can provide a much better option to provide the right foundation for good learning. Some [supermarkets do not sell such drinks](#) to under 16 years-olds for good reason. We are confident that parents do not support such habits, and we encourage you to reinforce this message.

As we are trying to discourage the consumption of these beverages, we reserve the right to remove such a drink from students, and students may collect them at the end of the day (if it is healthy to do so).

#### Takeaway foods

Takeaway foods must not be brought into school during the school day; they typically are high-fat and often come with a sugary drink. Please do not deliver such foods to school as we may have to keep it until afterschool.

There will be further review of the items provided in the canteen to make sure we are providing the right balance of good nutrition for young people there too.

Your support of us to encourage healthy habits is much appreciated. If you wish to discuss further, please call the school on (07) 868 8688.

#### Some further references:

- [Time magazine](#)
- [Stuff Article about Energy Drinks](#)
- [Stuff Article about banning Energy Drinks to under 16 year-olds in the UK](#)

## Recommended reading - on our website

[Attendance, absences, etc. including exit passes](#)

[Behaviour expectations](#)

[Stationery and BYOD \(bring your own device\)](#)

[Uniform](#) – including shoes that are allowed and not

[Our School board and meetings](#)

## School Policies - SchoolDocs

Our school works with SchoolDocs to host our policies and procedures.

SchoolDocs provides us with a comprehensive core set of policies, which have been well researched and follow the Ministry of Education National Administration Guidelines. The policies and procedures are tailored to our school, and the school supplies specific information such as our charter, and procedures for behaviour management, reporting to parents, etc.

SchoolDocs updates, modifies, or creates policies in response to changes in legislation or Ministry guidelines, significant events, reviews/requests from schools, and regular reviewing from the SchoolDocs team. Our school board views changes/additions and comment on them before they are implemented. We will advise you when policies are up for review and how you can take part in the review.

We invite you to visit the site

<https://thameshigh.schooldocs.co.nz> (note that there's no "www."). Our username is "thameshigh" and password "sealey"

As always, I welcome comments.

Please email [principal@thameshigh.school.nz](mailto:principal@thameshigh.school.nz) or call 07 868 8688

Ngā mihi

Michael Hart  
Tumuaki/Principal



## 2021 Key dates for reference

[See the school website for all dates](#)

Dates may be subject to change and will be advised.

Wed 17 Feb Year 9 Whanaungatanga  
Parents/whanau meet the roopu  
kaitiaki

Fri 19 Feb **Swimming Sports**

Mon 22 Feb Board Hui (5.30 pm)

Fri 26 Feb **Athletics Sports**

Tue 9 Mar Photolife photos

Fri 12 Mar Mufti Day (term 1)

Wed 17 Mar Interim Reports Term 1

Wed 17 Mar **Year 11-13 Direction Day Hui**  
(1.30 pm – 6.00 pm)  
School closes early at 1 pm

Mon 29 Mar Board Hui (5.30 pm)

Friday 2 Apr Good Friday (School closed)  
Mon 5 Apr Easter Monday (School closed)  
Tue 6 Apr Easter Tuesday (School closed)

Fri 16 Apr **End of Term 1**

Mon 3 May **Term 2 starts**

Mon 3 May **Staff Only Day**  
(Te Tiriti o Waitangi)

Tues 4 May **All classes begin for Term 2**

Wed 12 May Cross Country

Wed 18 May NCEA Accord **Teacher-only Day 2**

Mon 7 Jun Queen's Birthday (School closed)

Wed 16 Jun "Mid-year" Reports Term 2

Tue 22 Jun Conferences (1.30 – 7 pm)  
Student-parent-subject teacher

Thu 1 Jul Conferences (1.30 – 7 pm)  
Student-parent-subject teacher

Fri 9 July **End of Term 2**

Mon 26 July **Term 3 starts**  
Wed 4 Aug Year 9 Open Evening (6 pm)

Thu 12 Aug NCEA Accord **Teacher-only Day 3**  
Tue 24 Aug Co-curricular photos

Thu 12 Sept to **Year 11-13 School Exams**  
Tue 21 Sep

Fri 1 Oct **End of Term 3**

Mon 16 Oct **Term 4 starts**  
Wed 3 Nov Senior Prizegiving (7 pm)  
Fri 5 Nov Year 11-13 "End-of-year" Reports

Mon 8 Nov NCEA Exams start  
(until Thu 2 Dec)

Tue 23 Nov NCEA Accord **Teacher-only Day 4**  
Mon 25 Oct Labour Day (School closed)  
Mon 13 Dec Junior Prizegiving (1 pm)  
Fri 17 Dec Year 9-10 "End-of-year" Reports

**Fri 17 Dec End of Term 4 / End of School Year**  
(subject to change)

## Start-up dates 2022

**(to be confirmed)**

Thu 27 Jan 2022 Teacher only day

Fri 28 Jan 2022 Senior course confirmation

Mon 2 Feb Powhiri (Year 9 and 13)  
School starts for Year 9

Tue 3 Feb School starts for Years 10-13

Mon 7 Feb Waitangi Day observed.

