



Whānau Pānui

23 March 2021

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Kia ora e te whānau

ERO visit 7-9 April 2021

We have been advised that the Education Review Office will visit after Easter, from Wednesday 7 April to Friday 9 April.

We will begin with a welcome (mihi whakataū) on Wednesday 7 April at about 9.45 am, and we intend to introduce the ERO team to the school at our regular school assembly. The team of four will be led by Mr Neil Harray (our evaluation partner – see below).

As part of the review the team from ERO will meet with taiohi (students), whānau (parents

and caregivers) and kaimahi (staff) in the form of discussion focus groups to hear perspectives on how we are doing as a school.

The focus on the review is to update our journey of improvement as a follow up on the recommendations in the 2018 review. These areas were about the way we manage and use data in the school, the ongoing focus on evaluation and how we as a school are addressing the disparity in achievement between Māori and Non-Māori and Males and Females. That is, how we are seeking to achieve equity and excellence for all.

The review is also a stocktake that will set the baseline for our ongoing evaluation process as part of a new approach by ERO. We are one of 75 trial schools in a new operating model where we will have an evaluation partner regularly working with us. You can [read more about the new operating model on ERO's website](#).

School "Strike for Climate"

You may be aware that there is a planned Climate Change Rally on the afternoon of Friday 9 April.

Our senior leaders for the Environment are involved in the local planning group and I wish to thank them for notifying us of their plans. They have planned an afternoon rally to reduce the impact on learning. Those involved will likely leave at lunchtime on that day.

As a school we acknowledge the importance of this issue to all of us and respect that many of our young people are committed to contributing to positive change.

Ultimately this is a decision for whānau / parents to condone participation or not. As a social action we certainly support taiohi / student rights to be involved. We also need to balance our responsibility for ensuring



attendance and safety at school (and remain open for instruction). The school cannot take any responsibility at the rally for the wellbeing of those that attend as we are not responsible for the event.

If you wish your child to attend the Climate Rally, then normal attendance procedures will apply. That means if you provide a signed note/verified email or permission slip (that is being organised by the leaders) to advise us that you would like your child to participate then their afternoon absence will be recorded as 'explained, but unjustified' in terms of Ministry of Education guidelines. In doing so, whanau / parents and caregivers will be accepting responsibility for the safety of their children at this event.

I hope that you support the stance taken by the school in the matter, although happy to receive your views on this.

Bringing your own learning device

We promote the use of learning devices in learning and recommend their use in class. More details can be found about this [on our website and stationery lists](#).

Our recent survey about BYOD devices, about eLearning and preparing for higher alert COVID levels found that 60% of students have a suitable device for learning that is theirs (not a shared device). 60% of those students said they bring the device to class, 'regularly' although teacher experience would put this figure down to about 25-50%. That means that two or three out of ten, on average, bring a device, regularly.

We encourage more students to bring their device so that teachers can more reliably plan digital lessons. So please can you encourage your child to bring his/her device for learning. Then we can provide better access to devices for those that **do not have** a device, rather than to those who **choose not** to bring a device. If more students bring the device they already have then, that will promote more use by teachers.

If devices cannot be relied upon to be available, teachers plan different lessons and that reinforces the choice not to bring a device and the downward spiral of use continues. Many taiohi / students reported that the reason they do not bring their device

is that it is not needed. The other main reason is that students get to borrow a device provided for the lesson. However, we do not have enough devices to support the sort of learning many departments wish to pursue, ideally with one device per student. We have a total of 120 devices for classes. We do not have enough funding to buy many more devices, although we are continuously looking for ways to get such funding. Much of the school ICT budget goes into maintaining the network and replacing the existing stock of aging Chromebooks.

Uniform – Winter Uniform (Terms 2-3)

As we are heading into the cooler seasons and it is a good time to be reminded of the expectations for warmer clothing and footwear. As you purchase footwear to move from summer sandals please look at the requirements for shoes and other uniform items on our [website](#).

We value the support of whānau, / parents, caregivers and taiohi / students in following these expectations and expressing pride and respect for our school. Correct uniform is expected from the time of leaving home to the time of returning home. The overall standard is that taiohi / students appear "neat, tidy and clean".

A reminder this means that **any thermals or undergarments may not be visible** whilst wearing the uniform. We want taiohi / students to be warm, but the uniform must also be **tidy** and there are warm options included in the uniform (jerseys and jackets). Hoodies and visible thermals are **casual** and **informal** and can appear untidy.

For clarity:

- Darker **short-sleeved thermal vest** (navy blue or black) may be worn under the Years 9-12 uniform tops (as they are navy blue tops).
- A **white singlet or short-sleeved thermal vest** may be worn under the white polo shirt for Year 13.
- If a long-sleeved thermal is worn it must be under the school jersey (and therefore not seen).



- **No hoodies** are allowed, either above or below uniform items.

Uniform is available from [Snowden's Menswear, Pollen St, Thames.](#)

Shoes

If you are looking to replace shoes, please do not replace with the flat style skater shoe, both the the canvas ones and those with a rubber toe, or other sports or casual styles. Sports trainers, Vans, Converse (or similar) styles are not expected as they are too casual.

We welcome inquiries to check that shoes are suitable, rather than the disappointment of being asked to purchase new shoes. Examples of 'smart shoes' are on the website but a sample is included below too.

Boys' styles of shoes (examples only)



Girls (examples only)



Support for uniform and other needs

If there are difficulties in obtaining correct school uniform items and other requirements for school (such as stationery and devices) please notify Rōpu or Whānau kaitiaki and/or Student Support Officer / Kaimahi Tautoko Whaea Roanne Mitchell-Te Teira at studentsupport@thameshigh.school.nz

In some circumstances uniform items may be borrowed or given by our Student Support Officer / Kaimahi Tautoko. Requests for such items should be made with the Student Support Officer / Kaimahi Tautoko, Rōpu or Whānau kaitiaki or our Counsellor / Kaiāwhina who can make the appropriate arrangements.

There are other **sources of support for school uniform and other requirements** for school (such as stationery and devices), for instance the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) - Work and Income. Information about such support is available from the [Beneficiary Advisory Service](#) or directly from [Work and Income](#) (Ministry of Social Development). **Note that you do not need to be a beneficiary to qualify for such support, although income limits apply.**

Student Equity Trust Fund

There are limited funds that can allocate help support families experiencing financial pressure. If we can help, please contact our Student Support Officer / Kaimahi Tautoko or your child's Rōpu or Whānau kaitiaki or our Business Manager.

Donating uniform

If you do have uniform items that can be donated for others please contact the school office or Student Support Officer / Kaimahi Tautoko. We have had many generous donations and we ensure that these are provided to those in need.



Consequences for incorrect uniform

Consequences for not following uniform code range from correcting the item immediately, for example removing an extra earring, being asked to correct the issue by a certain date (i.e. the next day), contact home to discuss, or arranging a conference to discuss the issue.

If taiohi / students repeatedly wear the incorrect uniform then items may be **confiscated** or other disciplinary actions may follow, as by this stage the matter is likely to be about disobedience or defiance.

Thanks again to everyone for supporting us in meeting these expectations. Any concerns may be referred to the Deputy Principals or directly to me.

Exit passes

If your son/daughter has an appointment thanks for requesting an exit pass in advance, so an Exit Pass can be issued at break times.

Please provide an appointment letter or slip, or present a note signed by parents, or parents can send an email to studentsupport@thameshigh.school.nz.

Taiohi / students must pick up an exit pass and sign out and back in, as we all must when leaving the kura / school site.

Please do not arrange to pick up your child unless it has been arranged via Student Services.

Taiohi / students may not leave class at the right time without an Exit Pass so therefore it is important to have one in advance.

Full details about absences, lateness and leave are found on our [website](#).

Year 13 Lunch and Study

Year 13 students' privilege to go to town for **lunch** (not interval) will start Wednesday 24 March. They must ensure that they follow the expectations for their presentation, behaviour, and punctuality back to school is as expected.

This privilege is for Year 13 students who have the required minimum attendance levels and how have shown they are role models in upholding our expectations.

The use of first or last period study passes will be reviewed by the end of term one. Those Year 13 taiohi / students who have the expected minimum attendance (90%), who are great role models with correct uniform and behaviour may be granted more flexibility in the use of that time. During the day study (for example, period 2) will remain onsite.

Mental Health Supports for young people

We encourage self- and parent- referrals to our counsellor Mrs Barbara Thomas when there are concerns about a young person's wellbeing. We encourage Rōpu or Whānau kaitiaki to refer taiohi / students when they have been made aware of such issues.

There are a large range of self-help tools and other supports available for young people who may feel they are not coping.

Helplines

- [The Ministry of Health have a directory of help services](#), including the **1737** help line: Free call or text **1737** any time for support from a trained counsellor.

Services specifically for young people include:

- [Youthline](#) 0800 376 633, text 234, email or webchat (7-11pm daily) for young people and their parents, whanau and friends
- [Rainbow Youth](#) (09) 376 4155 (11am-5pm weekdays), or webchat (3-5 weekdays) for peer support for youth in the rainbow community, their friends and whanau.
- [What's Up](#) 0800 942 8787, text 234, email or webchat to talk about anything with trained counsellors.
- [Kidsline](#) 0800 543 754 for young people up to 18 years old.
- [The Lowdown](#) 0800 111 757, text 5626, email or webchat to get for support for young people experiencing depression or anxiety.



Vacancies – Teacher aides

We are currently advertising for teacher aides. Please visit, or refer interested people to, our website at

<https://www.thameshigh.school.nz/vacancies>

Thames Community Centre – mentor drivers needed.

Thames Community Centre helps learner drivers get their learner license and practical experience to get restricted license. Last year they mentored many drivers of which 15 were from Thames High School, where our students gained 7 learners licenses, 2 restricted licenses, one full license and four were supported with defensive drivers courses.

Learner drivers are asked to give time back to the community by volunteering with local community groups.

The Centre now has had a car donated by Valley Toyota. Wayne Richards at Toyota was keen to be involved when he heard about the centre's work within license education. The centre's new Toyota hybrid will see drivers receiving a couple of practices a week next to a mentor who will work with local driving instructors.

Mentors needed

The Centre is looking for more driver mentors so if you can give a couple of hours a week to a learner driver and your happy to work with our local instructors and attend some initial training, then get in touch with Jeff at the Centre on 027 8689797 or email tcrc@xtra.co.nz

The Centre is are holding a training evening mid-April.

As always, I welcome comments.

Please email 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.

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)
Wed 7 Apr	ERO visit
To Fri 9 Apr	
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
Wed 23 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 Tue 21 Sep	Year 11-13 School Exams
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

(subject to change)

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.

