



Whānau Pānui

27 October 2021

Kiā ora e te whānau

In this Pānui

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Covid-19 Updates

Like you, we are responding to the rapidly changing rules as announced by the government. In many cases the announcements are followed by lots of details to understand and comply with. The [11 October Pānui](#) highlighted significant changes to make sure that all schools are as safe as possible, including ensuring that anyone working at schools – whether paid or not – must be vaccinated – at least single dose by 15 November and fully vaccinated by 1 January 2022. We are also required to ensure we have an up-to-date register of the vaccination status of workers on site and students.

We have been busy collecting the information and we really appreciate that this has meant having to respond and provide documentation.

You will know that each day we hear more about how we are moving from an elimination strategy (including lockdown and levels) to a suppression (control and a [traffic light system](#)) strategy is revealed by the government.

Many of the 'freedoms' are connected to having vaccine certificates and testing.

On page 3 there are some links to resources about vaccinations that you may find useful.

Travel from level 3 to level 2 for education

Another recent change (from 11.59 pm, Friday 22 October) is that any students and staff that have been previously stopped from attending school, [can now do so](#). This reflects that education is an essential activity and that any risk can be managed by vaccination and testing. The requirement is that anyone 'crossing the boundary' must be fully vaccinated and there must be a negative covid test result before travelling and regular negative testing. In addition, other protocols must be followed, such as wearing a face covering, physical distancing and all the other level 2 protocols.

We have three staff and a few students who have been away with the previous restrictions. We appreciate that this has had an on the learning of some classes, although other staff have done a great job in supporting those classes.

We expect that any return can be managed early next week. All the relevant protocols will be followed.

If you have any concerns about this, then please contact me principal@thameshigh.school.nz

Buses and face coverings

Thanks so much for the support we have received of the requirement, of the Public Health Order that **requires all students aged 12 and above to wear a mask on school and public transport.**

After a week of education and encouragement, we are getting very good compliance, at least from school, onto the bus. If there are any issues about this, we encourage parents to contact the school so



we can discuss your concerns. If someone does not comply then we will be obliged to have consequences, such as needing to travel to and from school using private transport.

The requirement for wearing face coverings must also be followed for any use of the school vans for group transport, for sport and other trips.

Vaccination opportunity

[Thames Medical Centre](#) at 817 Rolleston Street, a short walk away from the school, is offering a **walk-in opportunity** for vaccinations on **Thursday 4 November** from 10 am to 2 pm. You do not need to be a patient of Thames Medical Centre as they are a registered Vaccination Centre.

We have heard from several parents asking if students can get vaccinations during the school day? **Yes, they can!** We thank those parents who have advised the school of bookings and we simply ask that normal procedures of signing out and in are followed.

To take up this opportunity at the Thames Medical Centre we encourage a student's parent or caregiver to **accompany them** to the centre or **provide written consent to leave school for this purpose** by note or email to studentsupport@thameshigh.school.nz. Please send this by Wednesday 3 November so we can advise the centre how many people are expected.

If you are feeling anxious, Thames Medical Centre have trained staff will support you and have the resources to accommodate for every need that may arise. If you want to go as a family or have a support person with you during this time, this is encouraged. They have also offered to have a registered doctor at school if you wish to talk to someone confidentially, or our school nurse Tracey Hilt is also available.

Thames High School have agreed that they will release students in support of this vaccination. All that we require is consent for them to leave the school. They will receive a Covid 19 pass to

go to the medical centre and then return to school.

If your child is over the age of 16 no consent is needed, and they are free to go and receive this vaccination.

As a school we are offering this service during school time, to try to reduce any time limitations that families have during a normal school day and week.

Thames Medical Centre have also offered to have a registered nurse on site, if you wish to discuss in more detail any concerns your or your whanau may have.

I have responded to several queries about consent. The [rules about consent for vaccinations](#) will be always followed by the school.

Here are two references about health consent in general:

- <https://www.occ.org.nz/childrens-rights-and-advice/health-rights/>
- <https://www.healthnavigator.org.nz/health-a-z/i/informed-consent/>

These guides explain the concept of informed consent, parental rights, and the rights of the individual. This is something of which we must always be aware as we have a registered nurse and doctor service in the school, and I am really pleased that we can offer professional health support to young people.



NCEA Examinations

Based on current public health advice, exams can go ahead at Alert Levels 1 to 3.

Revised guidance has been sent out by NZQA which aligns with the public health measures needed at each alert level. For reassurance here are the key points about examinations at levels 1 to 3.

Exams for any region at Alert Level 1

- There are no restrictions on the number of students in an exam room as gathering limits do not apply in schools and kura, although there are guidelines.
- In all exam rooms there must be a gap of 1.5 metres between students in all directions.
- Along with all teachers, other school staff including NZQA's examination workforce must have received their first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine by Monday 15 November unless a medical exemption is provided.

Exams for any region at Alert Level 2

- All protocols under Alert Level 1 apply.
- There will be a cleaning regime before, between, and after exam sessions.
- Rooms must be sufficiently ventilated.
- Additional supervision protocols apply – supervisors should limit themselves to supervising a section of a hall, limit movement between desks, and only attend to candidates with raised hands.
- Wearing a face mask is strongly encouraged, but not required, at Alert Level 2.

Exams for any region at Alert Level 3

- All protocols under Alert Levels 1 and 2 apply.
- Staff, including NZQA's examination workforce, who are not fully vaccinated will need to complete weekly COVID-19 tests.
- All exam centre staff, even if fully vaccinated, must receive a negative COVID-19 test the week before entering school property for the first time.
- All students and exam supervisors are required to wear face masks while inside the exam room unless they are exempted from doing so.

Congratulations – Art Competition

The Thames Society of Arts held an exhibition competition. The exhibition was a great showcase of the talent and passion of young artists. Congratulations to those who won prizes.

1st Prize: Jenny Yan (Year 13)

2nd Prize: Helena Meyer (Year 13)

3rd Prize: Ruby Molloy (Year 11)



Student Board Member

Congratulations to Tyler Groenewald (Year 12) who was elected to the board in September.

Tyler has already attended two board hui and has impressed with how she has represented students' perspectives articulately and confidently.

New Staff

Naumai haere mai, welcome to two new staff members who started in Term 4.

Our new **physics and science teacher** is Mrs Jonah Caigoy. Mrs Caigoy is the whānau kaitiaki for D1.

Our new **Sports Coordinator** is Mrs Tessa Watts.

Ngā manaakitanga

Michael Hart

Tumuaki / Principal

principal@thameshigh.school.nz

07 868 8688



Information about vaccinations

We are aware that some students have expressed hesitancy about vaccines, and you may find these resources useful.

Videos

- Mihingarangi Forbes sat down with Dr Hinemoa Elder [to discuss some key concerns and hesitancies](#).
- [Vax Facts with Māori Doctors](#): Dr Anthony Jordan, Dr Papaarangi Reid, Dr Rawiri McKree-Jansen, Dr Maia Brewerton (specialists and activists in Māori health) take phone calls from the Public about Covid and the Vaccine. (Most callers are unvaccinated.)
- Nigel Latta, Dr Maia Brewerton and Dr Helen Petousis-Harris recently [answered questions in a Facebook live event](#).
- Dr Ashley Bloomfield, Dr Nikki Turner, Dr Siouxsie Wiles and Dr Vanisi Prescott recently [answered questions about the COVID-19 Vaccine](#), moderated by Mihingarangi Forbes.
- [A rangatahi panel with Dr Jason Tuhoe](#) to kōrero about the vaccine from different perspectives (vaccinated, vaccine hesitant, wants to be vaccinated but whānau pressure not to).

Articles

- [Why some people struggle to change their minds about vaccination](#) is a video and article in The Whole Truth series on Stuff.
- A recent article in The Herald where University of Auckland vaccinologist Associate Professor Helen Petousis-Harris looks at [10 vaccine myths circulating on social media](#).
- In this [The Spinoff](#) article, Kate Hannah (a cultural historian at [Te Pūnaha Matatini](#)) shares some thoughts on how to talk to loved ones who are vaccine hesitant.

Key Dates 2021

Events and dates are still subject to change and will be advised.

Fri 29 Oct	Dress up day for Year 13 Students Only (Theme: Choose a Decade)
Fri 29 Oct	Year 13 Leaver's Dinner (Thames on Kirkwood) – 6 pm
Fri 5 Nov	Mufti Day (for all)
Tue 9 Nov	Arts Exhibition Evening (Library) – 530 to 7.30 pm
Wed 17 Nov	Senior Prizegiving (7 pm) – details to be confirmed – physical / virtual event
Fri 19 Nov	Year 11-13 "End-of-year" Reports
Mon 22 Nov	NCEA Exams start (until Thu 14 Dec)
Sat 20 Nov	Board Strategic Planning (9 am – 1 pm) Wharenui
Friday 26 Nov	NCEA Accord Teacher-only Day 4
Mon 29 Nov	Full Board Hui – 5.30 pm, Wharenui (Te Puna o Te Pito Mata)
Mon 13 Dec	Junior Prizegiving (1 pm)
Tues 14 Dec to Thu 16 Dec	Year 9 and 10 end-of-year activities, including Year 10 camps (TBC)
Thu 16 Dec	Last day for Year 9 and 10 students
Fri 17 Dec	Year 9-10 "End-of-year" Reports
Fri 17 Dec	Staff only Day / End of School Year

