



Whānau Pānui

6 December 2021

Kiā ora e te whānau

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Junior Prizegiving – Monday 13 December

We look forward to our junior prizegiving on Monday 13 December from 1 pm. All Year 9 and 10 taiohi / students will attend this event.

The event acknowledges the diligence and achievement of taiohi / students. It is expected to be finished by 3.00 pm. It is a highlight for those recognised as well as their friends and whānau.

While we would love everyone to be present, our current Covid-19 restrictions mean it is not possible to have large numbers of visitors at school, so the event will run like the senior awards – physically for students and parents/ whānau virtually, the appropriate instructions (with a link) will be sent out separately.

Year 9 and 10 Activities

Year 10 taiohi / students will be involved in optional activities from Tuesday 14 December to Thursday 16 December. Many thanks to the organisers of these local activities. This is a change for previous years as the uncertainties of Covid-19 and the reduced number of people who had opted for the camps that were offered earlier this year. Mrs D Sawyer has done a great job ensuring all activities are well planned.

The activities on offer are:

- Local Sport
- Water Activities
- Arts and Crafts
- Going Bush
- Coding
- Other at School Activities

Students have been allocated groups and activities that will run for the whole day, with a new activity each day.

Meanwhile, Year 9 will be involved in a programme with a range of activities. Students will work as a rōpū and will get to experience some creative, fun, and interesting lessons. Kaiako/ teachers will work with each rōpū to enjoy the range of activities on offer.

School start and finish will be as normal - 8:45 - 3:10. With a change to the day timetable, which will be 3 longer periods with an interval or lunch break in-between. Each day will start with rōpū for 15 minutes to ensure students are set up for the day.

Please ensure your child has the following items for the 3 days: Hat, drink bottle, snacks / lunch - our Canteen will only be open for small, pre-packaged items. Correct school uniform is required on each of these days. Any items required, the Kaiako will contact you directly.

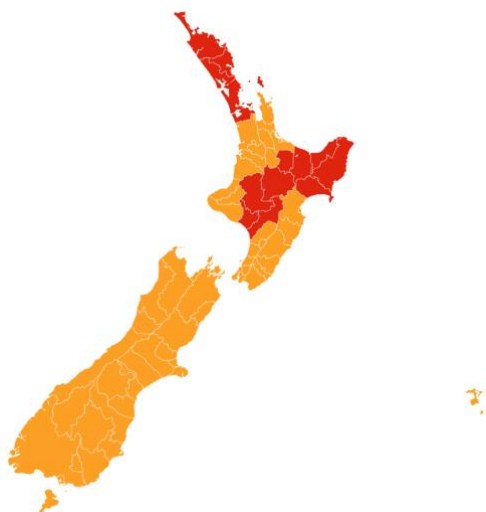
New COVID-19 Protection (Traffic Light) Framework

You may have heard that everyone in Aotearoa has moved to the new [COVID-19 Traffic Light Framework](#) on Friday 3 December. We are currently at **Orange**.

This change has been made by the government as the elimination strategy has done its job with



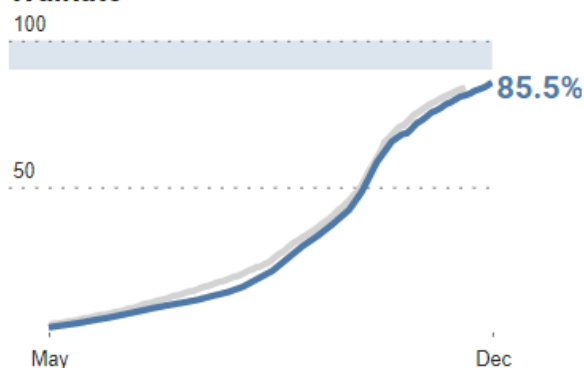
Aotearoa/ New Zealand having the lowest numbers of cases and hospitalisations in the OECD. While controlled, Delta is in our communities and the strategy now focuses on minimising its impact.



With increasingly high levels of eligible New Zealanders fully vaccinated (by mid-December it is expected to be approximately 90%) this allows a careful reopening while continuing to protect New Zealanders.

For your interest the vaccination rates in our areas of direct interest are (as of 5 December):

Waikato



Area	At least one dose %	Fully vaccinated %
Thames Coast	88	82
Thames North	89	83
Thames Central	89	82
Thames South	88	81

What the settings mean for schools

In schools there will be **no changes until 2022**, as the current level 2 settings are in place until the end of the year.

For next year, we can confirm **that everyone will be back onsite for learning from the start of the school year, regardless of what setting** under the new Traffic Light Framework

Currently we expect our setting to be [Orange](#). This is good news and means we can plan for a great 2022. But we need to be ready for change.

Health measures in place at school

This year and next, health, safety and wellbeing will continue to be a priority for us and the same public health measures you are very familiar with will remain in place:

- good hygiene and cleaning
- contact tracing systems in place
- vaccination requirements for workers (paid and unpaid)
- if you are sick, you must stay home and get tested
- good ventilation.

Face coverings

At [Orange](#), there are places where you must wear a face covering such as on public transport in supermarkets, and in healthcare facilities.

Face coverings are **encouraged** when inside at school.

Face coverings **are required** on school transport for Ākonga aged 12 and up.

Visitors

At [Orange](#), we can have visitors on site. Visitors do not need to have vaccination passes.

- There are no restrictions on visitors on site, but they need to be captured in a visitor register or similar, to support contact tracing.
- They must also meet any other health requirements applicable at the time. This will include limits on numbers, such as 50 inside.




For schools at Orange:


- The people refer to visitors in addition to students and staff

No vaccine pass required


Orange settings are currently in place



Wear a face covering



Scan in



50 people
in this venue only

What happens at Red?

If we are at [Red](#) at any stage:

Schools and kura are open for on-site learning with public health measures in place

- Use the COVID-19 tracer app and record where you have been
- **face coverings will be required** at school when indoors for **students and staff**.
- Physical distancing
- If you are sick or feeling unwell, stay home.
- **We will ask that only essential visitors come onsite.**
- Non-curriculum related events should be limited and may only go ahead if a vaccination certificate is required.

Finally

With all these measures in place, public health has confirmed the risk of infection remains low when at school, with households continuing to be where COVID-19 is spreading the most.

If we do have someone confirmed with COVID-19 in our school, we have a plan in place to manage this and will contact you as soon as possible.

If you'd like to learn more about the framework visit [COVID-19 Protection Framework](#).

Phones and school - consultation

Throughout this year we have responded to the behaviour of students that has – for the most part – started or occurred mainly online. For example:

- Cyberbullying is common, and we are faced with the consequences from a mental health perspective and the resulting disputes that we become aware of at school.
- Sexting, and other risky behaviours, like the sharing of explicit images is becoming more common.

This is something that we must face up to and work out what we can do about it, together.

Many schools have reviewed the ways they manage phones at school, and the Thames High School Board would like to do the same. **We would like to hear from you about your thoughts about how we manage these challenges.**

We know that social media can be very addictive and sadly is harming many of our young people. They are exposed to risks, and they engage in behaviour that put themselves and others at risk. Levels of anxiety and depression for young people are increasing nationwide, and [influences include social media, along with other societal and family pressures](#).

Our current level of control is at the level trying to prevent phones being a distraction in class, so they are to be in bags or left with the teacher at the start of the class. Unless the teacher has allowed the use for learning. This has proved challenging in some classes, and we have issues with consistency across the school. At break time, students are often in groups, heads buried in their phones.

Is that sufficient? Should we move to a more limited level?

Options for different levels of control:

- No phones at school – keep them at home. They become a banned item.
- No phones from 8.45 to 3.15 pm, including breaks. No exceptions.
- No phones in class time. No exceptions. Allowed only at break times.
- No phones in class time unless permission is given (current setting).
- Remove all restrictions and leave it to individual choice.

Where there are controls then phones (like they currently may be) will be confiscated and returned to parents and/or at the end of the week.



[LINK TO SURVEY](#) (closes Monday 20 December)

Here are some news items that show how some schools have changed their settings.

- [Bay of Islands College in Kawakawa has announced a full mobile phone ban will start on May 3](#)
- [Students reading books and playing board games following Christchurch school's mobile phone ban](#)
- [Mobile phones now off limits at Opihi College](#)
- [South Auckland high school bans phones - raises mental health concerns](#)
- [Cellphones 'getting in way of learning' at Southland school](#)

Cyber Safety

Aside from thinking about controls to limit use and impact, there is also an important role for us all to play in educating young people. Sometimes parents do not know what is happening, so we have provided some ideas.

As parents and guardians, you have a role to play in providing access to the online world therefore the responsibility to help navigate the online world. As with any behaviour, as guardians you need to be part of this world to help guide and support good decision making.

Below is an extract from Netsafe Parent Toolkit

Resource which can be found at <https://www.netsafe.org.nz/parenttoolkit/>

Learn about the risks and challenges your child may face.

Young people find the internet an easier place to explore their identity, challenge adult norms and boundaries, experiment with relationships and practice a range of behaviours. But many of the consequences and implications of these things are amplified online. Netsafe's research has identified that nearly 19 per cent of teens have experienced an unwanted digital communication negatively impact on their daily activities. The same research identified that most teens response to unwanted contact was to block the person, ignore the situation or report the problem to an adult. While the difficulties young people face varies depending on their age and what they do online, there are some key challenges every parent should know.

The five challenges we have shared in detail are:

1. Online bullying
2. Unwanted contact
3. Social media
4. Sexting
5. Inappropriate content

You can learn more about other challenges on Netsafe's website. For further information visit [netsafe.org.nz/understand](https://www.netsafe.org.nz/understand).

10 INTERNET SAFETY TIPS FOR PARENTS

- 1** Don't block all access to technology. Help your child learn to use tech **safely** and **positively**.
- 2** Take an **interest** in your child's favourite apps or sites. Co-view or co-create at times.
- 3** Be the parent. You're in charge. Set **boundaries** and consider using filtering software.
- 4** Create a family media **agreement** with tech free zones such as cars, bedrooms, and meals.
- 5** Teach your child what **personal information** they should not reveal online (YAPPY acronym).
- 6** Help your child learn to **filter** information online and navigate fact from fiction.
- 7** Navigate digital **dilemmas** with your child. Avoid using devices as rewards or punishments.
- 8** **Balance** green time and screen time at home. Focus on basic developmental needs.
- 9** Don't support your child to sign up for sites with **age restrictions** (e.g. 13+) if they're underage.
- 10** **Learn more:** Explore reliable resources for parents so you can educate yourself.

@kathleen_morris www.kathleenamorris.com

Source:

<http://www.kathleenamorris.com/2019/05/16/inter-net-safety-parents/>

Strategic Plan 2022 - consultation

The board met on Saturday 20 November and has drafted its strategic plan 2022-2025. This followed consultation with students and parents. Staff were consulted following the board hui. The board considered the feedback on the existing Charter and looked at its obligations under the [Education and Training Act \(2020\) in particular section 127](#) and The [Statement of National Education and Learning Priorities](#) (NELP)

The results of the consultation, broadly, were that the vision and mission of the school (revised in 2019) are still fit for purpose.

Our Vision:

Kia kōtahi ai te piki ake, kia ikeike rawa ki te taumata - We grow together to achieve one's true potential.

Our Mission:

Kia mahara o neherā; Kia aratakina āiane; Hei waihanga ā mua - To acknowledge our past; To inspire our present; And transform our future.

Our Values were seen as fine, but there was some questioning of the need to have another layer of Our Tikanga - ROLES, consequently the board has determined that additional values along with the current three will be the foundation of our expectations.

The existing values:

- **Manaakitanga** Everyone belongs, everyone matters, everyone has potential.
- **Whakawhanaungatanga** We build connected and collaborative relationships that acknowledge and embrace our community.
- **Mātauranga** We deepen our knowledge of understanding to empower learning.

The new two:

- **Whakamana** We build each other up and support our presence and status
- **Whakapono** We are honest with ourselves and others and show integrity in all we do.

The new three strategic intents:

- *We are committed to the intent of Te Tiriti o Waitangi.*
- *Everyone feels valued, safe, and acknowledged for who they are.*

- *All students/taiohi will progress to their highest potential.*

We would like to hear your thoughts on these 'big ideas' with a simple survey which will close in 2 weeks, Monday 20 December. This will allow us to see if we have broad support and therefore plan with confidence from 2022. Or make changes.

[LINK TO SURVEY](#)

Staff Appointments

We are pleased to announce that we have made the following appointments.

Head of Mathematics

With the retirement of Mrs Petro Jager, Mr Daniel Neufeld has been appointed as Head of Mathematics.

Careers Advisor

Ms Leanne Donovan, who is currently acting Careers Advisor and Pathways Manager, has been appointed to this permanent position.

Kaiāwhina / Pastoral Leaders

Kaiāwhina / Pastoral Leaders support our rōpū Years 9 and 10) and whānau (Years 11-13) kaitiaki as the key supports for taiohi at school.

Ms Madelaine Barrett and **Mrs Carolyn Green** are the junior school (Years 9 and 10) Kaiāwhina

Mrs Penny Keet will have a support role for the junior team and a particular focus on Year 11.

Mrs Jen Fletcher will support the senior school, with a specific oversight of Year 12.

Our deputy principals also support the pastoral team: Mrs O'Neil will be responsible for the junior school and Whaea Maria Baird, the senior school. Whaea Maria will have a specific oversight of Year 13 taiohi, along with support from Ms Donovan who supports the pathways planning for Year 13 taiohi.

Ngā manaakitanga

Michael Hart

Tumuaki / Principal

principal@thameshigh.school.nz



Key Dates 2021

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

Mon 22 Nov to Thu 14 Dec	NCEA Exams continue
Mon 13 Dec	Junior Prizegiving (1-3 pm) – physical / virtual event
Tues 14 Dec to Thu 16 Dec	Year 9 and 10 end-of-year activities, Day trips only this year.
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

Key Dates 2022

(Subject to change)

Thu 27 Jan 2022	Staff only day
Fri 28 Jan 2022	Kahui Ako Whanaungatanga (Connections) Day
Mon 31 Jan 2022	Anniversary Day (holiday)
Tue 1 Feb	Course Confirmation Day (Years 11-13)
Wed 2 Feb	Powhiri for new students (Year 13 in support) School starts for Year 9 Orientation for Year 9
Thu 3 Feb Mon 7 Feb Tue 8 Feb	School starts for all Years 10-13 Waitangi Day observed. School term continue.
Thu 14 Apr	End of Term 1
Fri 15 Apr	Good Friday
Term 2:	Monday 2 May to Friday 8 July
Term 3:	Monday 25 July to Friday 30 September
Term 4:	Monday 17 October to Friday 9 December 2022.

