

Whānau Pānui – 5 May 2022

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Welcome back

We trust that everyone has enjoyed the term break and students and staff are ready for a busy term ahead. We hope the parents, caregivers and whānau enjoyed at least the public holidays as a break from work, and perhaps took the opportunity to have a longer break with some annual leave before winter.

We welcome several new students and their whānau to our school community and we also welcome new staff (see below).

ANZAC Service

During the break our senior student leaders represented Thames High proudly at the ANZAC parade and service on Monday 25 April. We recognise and are thankful for the sacrifices those who served made and are mindful that many ex-students of the school made the ultimate sacrifice in several conflicts. Many are named on the memorial and honours boards at school.



Several speakers at this year's commemorations reflected that the current war in Ukraine is a sobering reminder of the terrible effects of conflict.



Head Student, Luke Steward's speech was well received. Luke pointed out that, thankfully, our students do not know war. While that is the case, he said, we should continue to be grateful for those who have served and sacrificed so much that we may enjoy our freedom.



Lest we forget. We will remember them.



Staff only day

We have a staff-only day on **Monday 9 May**. This is one of four days provided by the Ministry of Education for staff to learn more about the changes to NCEA (see the Key dates for the other dates).

We presented information last year about [these changes](#). One of our key topics this year is more understanding about the [changes to the requirements for literacy and numeracy](#). The new standards, [one for numeracy](#) and [two for literacy](#), become a must-pass co-requisite for NCEA from next year.

What this means is that unless students pass these assessments then they cannot be awarded NCEA levels 1, 2 or 3. The good news is they can keep gaining credits in their other subjects and when they do pass the literacy and numeracy standards then they will get their full qualifications. Currently, the literacy requirement comes from a range of subject areas, but from 2023 they are separate literacy and numeracy (maths) assessments.

The maths department is involved in the numeracy trial this year. We are working hard to make sure we prepare our current Year 10 students for both the numeracy and literacy standard as they are the first to require this new requirement. This is one of the reasons for why we now have full-year courses in English and Maths at Years 9 and 10. It is worth highlighting that those Year 12 and 13 students who do not reach the current literacy and numeracy standards this year, will need to reach the new co-requisite from next year.

You may have recently seen some stories in the media about these changes coming in for 2023, and the concern they are causing.

[Stuff \(2 May\)](#)

[Radio New Zealand \(26 April\)](#)

[How NCEA is changing \(Ministry of Education\)](#)

NCEA and Scholarship Success

NZQA has recently announced that the results for 2021 have been finalised.

It is an opportunity to recognise and congratulate those who achieved great results, by being endorsed with excellence or merit. This means that they achieved at least 50 credits at excellence or merit level, respectively.

Level 1 Excellence

Lauren Boersen, Daniel Chen, Paige Hale, James Harvey, Rosie Juby, Ruby Molloy, Baromey Rous, Noah Stein, Kyla Wilson, Chalise Wise

Level 1 Merit

Lucy Busch, Asha Cullen, Ashton Foster, Lauren Harrison, Violette Hollis, Jimmy Jamieson, Matthew Jones, India Lockley, Millar Morton, Savannah Newton, Harry Oxford, Hunter Rodgers, Scarlett Stanley, Summer Visick, Olivia Walton, Levi Wilson

Level 2 Excellence

Delilah Ballantyne, Chevy Barnes, Nicole Reid, Luke Steward, Beth Torrance-Hetherington

Level 2 Merit

Izzy Fox, Milly Hinson, Ava Leathem, Emma Fogg, Tyler Groenewald, Sienna Hall, Alex O'Grady, Faith Wilson, Grace Wood

Level 3 Excellence

Gabrielle van de Geer, Lillian Balfour, Stella Cory-Wright, Daniel John, Ka-in Kim, Helena Mayer, Jenny Yan

Level 3 Merit

Ana Johnston, Chelsea Buchanan, Anita Arbury, Moana Ngamane-Harding, Tarryn Hooper, Ella-Grace Metz

University Entrance

Over 80% of last year's Year 13 students that aimed to pursue a university pathway, achieved University Entrance.

We value and recognise that many Year 13 students are seeking to for level 3 and not pursue a university course. They aim to get employment or earn while the learn with [apprenticeships](#).



Scholarship

[Scholarship assessments](#) are an option for academic students to seek recognition and financial awards. Scholarship success recognises the commitment to academic excellence and reflects ability and preparation for this examination. Approximately the awards recognise the top 3% of students in New Zealand.

Three students gained scholarship success last year, including two outstanding scholarships (top 1%).

Stella Cory-Wright – Scholarship in English

Helena Mayer – Outstanding Scholarship in German. Helena was also named as the Top Scholar, so the top performer in New Zealand. A fantastic achievement.

Moana Ngamane-Harding – Outstanding Scholarship in English

Teen Esteem Workshops

We are very grateful to the team from [Teen Esteem](#) who are running Year 9 Confidence and Connection Workshops for all our Year 9 taiohi, held at school. This programme was going to be run last term, but because of COVID restrictions it is now running.

Teen Esteem "strive to empower adolescents by teaching them the tools and strategies which facilitate goal-setting, problem solving skills, and better communication skills. We increase the participants' self-esteem by dealing with issues that directly impact this group, such as Peer pressure, bullying, and how to deal positively with "success and failure."

Starting this week, with 9FRG, each year 9 class has been divided into two groups to complete a one-day workshop with the Teen Esteem facilitators.

Week 1 - 9FRG (3 and 4 May)

Week 2 - 9MCN (10 and 11 May)

Week 3 - 9NEU (17 and 18 May)

Week 4 - 9VCE (24 and 25 May)

Cross Country

This year there is a return to a full-school Cross-Country activity on Monday 16 May. House points are on the line as well as places for our competitive runners.

There will be a competitive cross-country run, from 10.00 to 10.45 am, for those who enter. This will be

followed by an "Amazing Race"- type participation activity, from 10.45 am to 12.00 pm (for all).

The rest of the school day is a normal school day (periods 1, 3 and 4).

Photos (portrait)

On Wednesday 11 May we will be doing the catch-up portrait photos (for those absent last term when these were taken).

If you would like the opportunity for siblings to have a portrait photograph, please email our Business Manager, Mrs Baker, by Tuesday 10 May: sharynbaker@thameshigh.school.nz

Parents' Forum

We expect that meetings will be held monthly on a Monday evening. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday 16 May (time to be confirmed after the survey below).

From Tracey Hinton:

Have your say about the Thames High School Parents' Forum!

We are a solution focused, helpful, free, and supportive group formed to assist each other in navigating the ins and outs in all that is high school. We are aiming to create a support network, so you aren't on your own, when needing information, to meet each other and perhaps make some new friendships. You are invited to share your views and preferences with us in a short survey. The survey asks about the when to meet and possible presentation topics and should only take a few minutes to complete. [Link to the Survey](#)

Many thanks to you all!

Rongohia te Hau whānau survey

Since late 2019 Thames High School has been involved in professional learning and a change programme to help us have better learning and teaching. This involves growing how we are 'culturally responsive'. We have been helped in this work by [Poutama Pounamu at Waikato University](#).

As part of this work a survey was carried out in 2020 and it is now time for an update.

We are surveying parents and caregivers (whānau), students and teachers to see how we are going. In addition, there are classroom observations that the team do to get a snapshot of how learning happens in our school.



Parents/caregiver are invited and encouraged to participate in the whānau survey to get your impressions of your child's experience at school. Like all surveys the more people that have their say the better the information we get.

The survey will remain open until **Friday 20 May**. It should take 5-10 minutes to complete. [Link to the survey](#)

Phones at school

It has been previously advised that the board decided to increase the limits on the use of phones within the school. After discussions we have decided that our first step will be to get consistency of not allowing phone use during class time.

The key message is phones are to be in school bags on silent or off, and not be used to distract from learning. Kaiako/teachers will remind students if phones are seen. Note that it is about being seen not a discussion about if the phone is being used, or how. The exceptions to phone use in class time will be where some students have health monitoring apps on their phone.



Focus on learning without distractions

If the reminders are not followed or are repeatedly having to be given, then a teacher may take the phone for safe keeping. Depending on circumstances, it will be taken for the rest of the period or given to our Student Support Office for safe keeping.

The phones can be collected by parents or caregivers on the same day, or they will be returned Friday afterschool. Students will only be allowed to collect their own phone, not a friend's phone.

Should this be repeated, then we may ask for a meeting with parents/caregivers to discuss how we can together make a plan that a phone is not a

potential or actual distraction. One option will be a week's ban on having the phone at school or giving it every day at the start of the day to Student Support Office and picking up again at the end of the day. If that does not work, then we will apply an individual ban on having a phone at school for a period of time, i.e. it is kept at home.

Break time

For the time-being phones will be allowed to be used during interval and lunchtime. We are looking into further controls in the use of our WiFi network for learning in order to reduce the use of phones for social media or other use that is not about learning.

Exit passes (appointments)

Contacting students

Please continue to support us and not expect students to receive or respond to messages from home during class time. Interval is at 10.20 to 10.40 am and lunch is from 1.00 to 1.45 pm. If there is an urgent need to contact your child then please contact the school 07 868 8688

Requesting to have students sign out

A reminder that if you wish to have your child sign out of school for an appointment or other reason then please contact the school. We must know who off site and the reason for any absence is. For some young people, they leave the school to be picked up by mum or dad, and they haven't signed out, and we then must find out where they are. That is not good practice for health and safety and our duty of care.

Exit passes are covered [on our website under general information](#).

Students are not to directly contact their parents and ask to go home, and 'get permission'. It is challenging for our staff to have a conversation about the messages students may or may not have received. Please contact our Student Support Office. If the correct process is not followed, then it is an unjustified absence (truancy).

If a student is feeling unwell then the correct process is to report to Student Support and/or the nurse to get checked, and then the office will call parents/caregivers should going home be the right option.

Any concerns about this please contact us.



Donations

If you have paid any donations to the school over the last year you are able to claim these off your tax. If you would like us to send you confirmation of the donations paid, please send an email to accounts@thameshigh.school.nz and we will send you a confirmation letter.

Orange Covid-19 settings

We reported at the end of last term about the requirements at school under the current **Orange** settings.

We began the term with a whānau/rōpū class to get settled into school and to reinforce the key messages about Orange settings.

The main messages are

- Masks remain an important tool to reduce the spread of COVID-19 - **public health advice strongly encourages their continued use indoors**
- We strongly encourage the use of masks in classrooms and other indoor situations.
- Be kind to those who both choose to wear masks and those that do not.
- All parents, caregivers, whānau, and other visitors are asked to wear face masks on site when indoors.
- Students are still **required** to wear a face mask on school or public transport. This will also include school vans for activities, such as trips and sport.
- If there are several cases at school or in the community, **we may insist that masks are worn inside** for everyone's wellbeing.
- We need to practise good hygiene habits and other safe and sensible practices.
- Take individual responsibility for your own actions and well-being and that of others.

We ask that taiohi continue to bring a mask to school every day just in case they are needed, just as they are needed in retail stores.

We have avoided the disruptions that many schools have faced though good use of masks. With the colder weather we will sometimes find it hard to maintain the best ventilation and still stay warm.

There may be times that we'll ask students to wear a mask – for example, when we are having an assembly.

Because the limits on gatherings indoors and outdoors have been removed, school Assemblies are possible. The use of masks is strongly encouraged. We will start with senior and junior assemblies before considering a return to full school assemblies, depending on the covid situation at the time.

We will continue to keep all the other health measures in place at school that we know slow the spread of COVID-19 (or other infectious diseases).

These include ensuring our indoor spaces are well-ventilated, maintaining good hand hygiene and cough and sneeze etiquette, appropriate physical distancing whenever we can and, most importantly, staying home if we are sick.

You may be aware that there is an expectation that [there will a resurgence of influenza \('flu\) in our communities](#). It is worth remembering that our good habits will slow the spread of flu too.



Wash your hands with soap and water often (for at least 20 seconds). Then dry.



Cough or sneeze into your elbow or by covering your mouth and nose with tissues.



Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and objects, such as doorknobs.



Don't touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean.



Put used tissues in the bin or a bag immediately.



Stay home if you feel unwell.

Summary of all settings

RED	ORANGE	GREEN
Face masks required in most indoor settings	Face masks required in many indoor settings	Face masks encouraged indoors
Indoor capacity limits of 200 people. No outdoor capacity limits	No indoor or outdoor capacity limits	No indoor or outdoor capacity limits
Self-isolate for 7 days if you test positive or live with someone who has COVID-19	Self-isolate for 7 days if you test positive or live with someone who has COVID-19	Self-isolate for 7 days if you test positive or live with someone who has COVID-19

Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Government

Unite against COVID-19



Staff Update

New staff

School Counsellor

Whaea Ngaio Repia joins us as our school counsellor. Whaea Ngaio has extensive experience working with young people and their whānau as a social worker, both in schools and the community. She has completed a post graduate diploma and is actively completing her master's in counselling.

Canteen Manager

Mrs Sheree Riley joins us as our canteen manager. Mrs Riley has plenty of experience managing school canteens, most recently at Papakura High School.

Other roles and responsibilities

Tumuaki tuarua / deputy principals

Mrs Penny Keet is acting tumuaki tuarua / deputy principal (senior school and curriculum leadership), while Mrs **Natalie O'Neil** continues with her 'junior school' and pastoral leadership role.

Kaiāwhina (pastoral leaders / deans)

Mrs Keet will continue to be the **Kaiāwhina (pastoral leader) for Year 11**, and Ms Jen Fletcher is **senior kaiaawhina for Years 12 and 13 taiohi**

Years 9 and 10 Kaiāwhina - Ms Barrett and Ms Green

Starting soon

Starting on Monday 16 May, **Mrs Lisa Barnett** will be joining our Kāhui Ako as a [Learning Support Coordinator](#), joining Mrs Ann Hoover in that role. **Mrs Barnett** joins us from Hikutaia School and is looking forward to working with many schools. LSCs with our school and work with our different contributing schools to support learning.

The purpose of the LSC role is to make sure that children and young people with mild-to-moderate, neurodiverse, or high-and-complex learning support needs receive appropriate help when they need it.

Ngā manaakitanga

Michael Hart

Tumuaki / Principal

principal@thameshigh.school.nz

07 868 8688

Key Dates

As always, dates may be subject to change and will be advised.

Term 2: Monday 2 May to Friday 8 July

Mon 9 May	Teacher Only Day – NCEA Accord Day
Mon 16 May	THS Cross Country
Mon 30 May	Full Board Hui – 5.30 pm, Wharenui (Te Puna o Te Pito Mata)
Mon 6 Jun	Queen's Birthday (Public Holiday)
Wed 22 Jun	Year 9 Vision and Hearing checks
Fri 24 Jun	Matariki (Public Holiday)
Mon 27 Jun	Full Board Hui – 5.30 pm, Wharenui (Te Puna o Te Pito Mata)

Fri 8 July End of Term 2

Term 3: Monday 25 July to Friday 30

	September
Mon 1 Aug	Full Board Hui – 5.30 pm, Wharenui (Te Puna o Te Pito Mata)
Wed 10 Aug	Sport Team photos
Mon 23 Aug	Teacher Only Day – NCEA Accord Day
Mon 29 Aug	Full Board Hui – 5.30 pm, Wharenui (Te Puna o Te Pito Mata)
Mon 5-23 Sept	Triennial school board elections
Mon 26 Sept	Full Board Hui – 5.30 pm, Wharenui (Te Puna o Te Pito Mata)

Fri 30 Sept End of Term 3

Term 4: Monday 17 October to Friday 9

	December 2022.
Mon 24 Oct	Labour Day
Mon 31 Oct	Full Board Hui – 5.30 pm, Wharenui (Te Puna o Te Pito Mata)
Wed 2 Nov	Senior Prize giving
Mon 7 Nov-	NCEA Exams
Fri 2 Dec	
Fri 25 Nov	Teacher Only Day – NCEA Accord Day
Mon 28	Teacher Only Day – NCEA Accord Day
Fri 9 Dec	Last day Term 4

