

Te Kura Tuarua o Te Kauaeranga Thames High School



Kia kōtahi ai te piki ake, kia ikeike rawa ki te taumata

We grow together to achieve one's true potential

Te Ara Whakamana – Pathway to Empowerment Programme Overview (One Page Summary)

Summary

Te Ara Whakamana – Pathway to Empowerment is a new Te Kura o Te Kauaeranga [Thames High School] initiative designed to provide a **local, relationship-based, flexible learning pathway** for taiohi who require a supported alternative to mainstream schooling to succeed.

Programme Approach

Te Ara Whakamana is built around three core principles:

1. Personalised, Strength-Based Learning

- Each taiohi has an **Individual Education Plan (IEP)** and **Pathway Plan** co-designed with them, their whānau, SENCO, LSC, and DP.
- Learning is **authentic, relevant, and project-based**, designed to restore confidence and invite engagement through hands-on, meaningful tasks.
- Literacy and numeracy support is embedded in practical, purposeful activities.

2. Relationship-Centred Support

- A small-group, **low staff-to-student ratio** ensures calmness, consistency, and strong mentoring relationships.
- Social skill development, behaviour coaching, positive routines, and wellbeing support are woven into the daily programme.
- Students wear **full school uniform** to maintain dignity, belonging, and inclusion in the Kura.

3. Connected to Whānau, Community & Future Pathways

- The programme includes supervised participation in selected mainstream classes (e.g., art, technology, PE).

- Workplace and community-based learning is developed in partnership with local employers, agencies, and organisations (e.g., Menz Shed, youth services, etc.)
- **A focus on transition:** supporting taiohi to progress toward full mainstream learning, vocational training, or employment pathways.

Criteria for Inclusion

Taiohi may be considered for Te Ara Whakamana if they:

Learning & Behaviour Needs

- Have ongoing engagement or behavioural challenges that have not improved through standard school interventions.
- Show **low academic self-esteem**, withdrawal, or disengagement from classroom learning.
- Demonstrate **social immaturity or difficulty maintaining peer relationships**.
- Would benefit from a **low staff-to-student ratio**, predictable routines, and relationship-based support.

Pathway & Programme Suitability

- Need personalised, project-based, hands-on learning to re-engage successfully.
- Require coordinated support involving whānau, agencies, and school staff.
- Would benefit from workplace learning or community-connected activities.
- Understand and accept programme expectations, including **wearing uniform**, participation in IEP goals, and behaviour aligned with school values.

Whānau Engagement

- Whānau are willing to engage in IEP development and review, recognising that barriers to previous engagement will not be viewed negatively.

Exclusions (programme not suitable when):

- Needs indicate specialist clinical/therapeutic intervention beyond school capacity.
- Safety risks cannot be adequately managed in a small-group context.
- The taiohi's needs are better met through ORS or specialist education pathways.

What Success Looks Like

- Improved attendance, engagement, and learning confidence
- Measurable progress in literacy and numeracy
- Strengthened social skills and self-regulation
- Positive relationships with peers, staff, and whānau
- Participation in community or workplace learning
- Clear transitions back to mainstream learning or towards vocational/employment pathways.