Acting Principal's Report to the Board

Thames High School | October 2026

Acting Principal's Overview

The focus for Term 4 is to provide stability for staff, students and the wider school community. Maintaining a calm and settled environment will allow staff and students to concentrate on their work and complete the year's requirements as successfully as possible.

With considerable change already experienced and further changes continuing to be implemented, the intention is to avoid introducing additional significant changes this term wherever possible. Staff need time and space to focus on teaching, learning and bringing the year to a positive close.

Attendance

Regular attendance remains an area of focus. The Term 3 Every Day Matters report shows that 40% of students attended regularly, unchanged from Term 3 2025. Irregular attendance reduced from 32% to 26%, while moderate absence increased from 11% to 16% and chronic absence increased from 16% to 18%.

Illness and medical absence accounted for 45% of recorded absence. Friday had the lowest attendance, at 78%, compared with Tuesday at 85%. The report also shows that 87% of students were regularly on time to class.

These results highlight the continuing need to address persistent absence and strengthen engagement with students and whānau.

Supporting document: Term 3 2026 Every Day Matters Attendance Report

Student Achievement

The October NCEA progress reports provide a snapshot of achievement ahead of the end-of-year assessments. The categories below are mutually exclusive and show students who have achieved each qualification and the credit shortfall for those still working towards it.

Progress	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Achieved	20 (21.5%)	45 (64.3%)	25 (47.2%)
1–10 credits short	18 (19.4%)	10 (14.3%)	10 (18.9%)
11–20 credits short	11 (11.8%)	6 (8.6%)	7 (13.2%)
21–30 credits short	15 (16.1%)	4 (5.7%)	7 (13.2%)
More than 30 credits short	29 (31.2%)	3 (4.3%)	4 (7.5%)
Sufficient credits; literacy or numeracy outstanding	—	2 (2.9%)	—
Total students included	**93**	**70**	**53**

Percentages are rounded to one decimal place. Level 2 percentages total 100.1% due to rounding.

At Level 1, 40.9% of students have achieved the qualification or are within 10 credits. Three students included in these figures are undertaking planned two-year programmes, understood by the school and their whānau, and are not expected to complete the qualification this year.

At Level 2, 64.3% have achieved the qualification, with a further 14.3% within 10 credits. Two students have sufficient credits but have literacy or numeracy requirements outstanding.

At Level 3, 47.2% have achieved the qualification, with a further 18.9% within 10 credits. Two students in the credit-short categories also have literacy requirements outstanding.

The remaining weeks provide opportunities to complete outstanding assessments and gain further credits through external examinations. Credit progress must also be considered alongside outstanding literacy and numeracy requirements.

The Level 1 figures exclude the seven students previously identified for removal. Level 2 excludes seven students who are not undertaking NCEA. All students in the Level 3 report are included.

Pastoral and Behaviour

Since the last Board report, there have been seven stand-downs, all for gross misconduct with six involving threats of violence towards others and one of major indiscretion towards staff. These incidents highlight the importance of clear behaviour expectations and maintaining a safe environment for students and staff.

The pastoral incident summary for the last 30 days shows that attendance accounts for the largest proportion of recorded incidents, followed by classroom-related concerns. Smaller proportions relate to uniform, other matters and discipline. This reinforces the connection between attendance, engagement and behaviour as areas of ongoing focus.

Supporting documents:

- Stand down and suspensions summary
- Pastoral Incident Summary — October 2026

Staffing and Planning for 2027

The staffing reassessment has confirmed a reduction of 0.6 FTTE, which represents our best-case scenario. Two staffing matters are being brought to the Board at this meeting. Once these have been addressed, we will be better placed to confirm how the reduction will be managed and develop the most accurate staffing plan possible for 2027.

Curriculum Development

Curriculum areas are progressing with planning for the new curricula to be taught in 2027. Professional learning and development time this term is focused on this preparation, with time provided for staff to collaborate on planning and implementation.

A cluster teacher-only day on 13 November will provide a further opportunity for staff to learn and plan alongside colleagues from other schools.

ERO Review

Preparation for the ERO review has been completed, with supporting evidence and documentation organised for the visit. The review will be underway at the time of this Board meeting. Findings and any resulting next steps will be reported once feedback is available.