



NPGHS NEWSLETTER

August 2023

Tēnā koutou katoa

Our behaviour has changed over the past few years. We are better at staying home to recover when we are sick, and we recognise the importance of wellbeing and balance in our lives. Something that hasn't changed, however, is the link between attendance at school and achievement.

We understand that it might feel right to let a young person who says they 'just need a day off' spend the day at home. Or if they are tired, it might feel like the best thing for everyone to let them sleep and go to school mid-morning. But those days away, or missed spells add up. The national [Attendance and Engagement Strategy](#) sets 90% attendance as the level required for 'regular attendance'. This means that a learner that misses the equivalent of a week or more of school in a term will have 'non-regular attendance'. Missing a week each term adds up to a year of missed schooling by the age of 16.

We know students should stay away if they are unwell, and that sometimes there are family commitments, or sporting or cultural activities that mean people do miss school. The challenge is to minimise the other absences because our young people are following the same declining general trends described in the [ERO attendance report](#).

One of the most significant aspects of regular school attendance is the continuity it provides in a student's educational journey. Each day at school contributes to a mosaic of knowledge, ensuring that your child doesn't miss out on crucial lessons, engaging discussions, and essential skills. This consistent learning rhythm forms a foundation that can make a substantial difference in their overall academic progress.

Additionally, school is a unique social environment where students learn to navigate relationships, develop interpersonal skills, and work collaboratively. By attending school consistently, they have the opportunity to interact with peers, teachers, and other staff, acquiring skills that extend beyond academics. These interactions contribute to their emotional intelligence, resilience, and ability to

adapt to different social contexts. Our teachers provide some work on Teams, which means that students do have access if they are unwell or can refer to the work later. This provides a useful way to maintain some momentum if a student really does need to be away from school, but it is not a replacement for the lesson or the interaction that happens in class.



Our students participated in a survey to gather their thoughts on attendance and why they attend or miss school. Reassuringly, 90% of those who responded believe that their parents/whānau care if they go to school, with 60% strongly believing this to be true. Let's capitalise on that belief you have created and show them that none of us are comfortable with them missing school. I wonder if tangible actions that show them how to get to school every single day might be needed. Some might need assistance to establish routines that get them to bed early enough so they can wake up and make it to school on time. 29% of the students surveyed told us that one of the main reasons they didn't want to come to school was that they stayed up late and that was why they didn't want to get up in the morning. 27% felt there were enjoyable things they could do if they stayed at home during the day. Examples they gave were that if they stayed home, they were allowed to spend time with whānau/family members, play games, or use social media.

The report also tells us that what happens in school matters as well. School-based factors that influence students' attendance include how hard they find their schoolwork, if they like or don't like the other students or their teachers, and if they are interested in what they are being taught. We are working hard to provide access to learning for every student, to build positive professional relationships with each student, and help them build relationships with each other.



Students are more likely to attend if they think going to school every day is important and if it is important to their future. If the young people in your house express the need for a day off to address their wellbeing, it is essential to engage in open and empathetic conversations. While it is important to prioritise their mental and emotional health, finding a balance that ensures their wellbeing without compromising their education is key. Let's keep talking about why attending every day is important, and the doors it opens for the future.

You can check your child's attendance via SchoolBridge and the KAMAR portal. There are instructions later in this newsletter if you haven't used this before. If you see positive and strong attendance, congratulations and thank you! If you discover attendance is not where it should be, I'm sure you will start a conversation at home, and with us, to explore the steps that could improve attendance. Kāwai Huia teachers and Deans (Waka Kāitiaki and Waka Amo) are all involved with improving attendance, and you can also [contact any teacher](#) as we all have an attendance focus.

Ngā mihi mahana
Jacqui Brown
Principal

Introducing our pou

On 1 August we welcomed three new pou, with the support of whānau of Te Ātiawa. The pou represent our school values, while linking to pou in our school hall, tukutuku and other taonga through the school. We are told they are the talk of New Plymouth and we have certainly had a lot of positive feedback. We hope they will also create a welcoming entry to New Plymouth too.



The colours of red and blue represent our school colours, and the orange links to the brick buildings.

- Niho Taniwha (red) links with Whanaungatanga/Relationships
- Purapura Whetu (blue) links with Whakamana/Respect
- Poutama (orange) links with Haepapa/Responsibility

We are very grateful to the School Board, Hemi Sundgren, Jennie Aitken-Hall, Logan Sutton for their commitment and creativity, to Te Ātiawa for ongoing support and encouragement, and to the students, staff and whānau who were part of the initial 'soil turning' blessing and the unveiling of the pou. Thank you also to everyone who has made a connection or admired the pou and what they represent.



Save the date

Mark *Saturday 23 September* in your calendar - find your gardening gloves and/or your paintbrush, and come join the fun. We have a community planting and painting day planned, so we can add more plants to the corner of Northgate and Mangorei Road, where the pou now stand, and refresh the fences in the school grounds with a new coat of paint.

Students, parents, whānau, Old Girls, everyone in the community is welcome to contribute and be involved. More details to come, but please save the date now and hope for good weather!

Narrative murals - Past, Present and Future

The mural was conceptualised, designed and painted by students from Year 9 - Year 13 with support from Lizzie Thomas, an artist from Wanaka.

This project was funded by the Ministry of Education through the Creatives in Schools Project. Thank you to our fabulous Art teachers for making this happen.

The murals are now a wonderful addition to O Block.



NPDC Community Consultation - changes to Mangorei Rd

The NPDC *Mā Ake Lets Go: Your Way* team invite you to attend a BBQ and information session to show and explain the proposed walking and cycling safety improvements for Mangorei Rd. The NPDC Let's Go team will be set up at school to explain the proposal and to receive your feedback.

Venue: Year 13 Study (O Block, opposite main reception)

Date: Friday 18 August

Time: 3.00-4.30 pm (School community), 4.30-6.30pm (wider public).

If you can't attend in person you can leave feedback via the survey on NPDC website on the 'Have your Say page' under the 'Your Way' consultation. [Let's Go: Your Way \(npdc.govt.nz\)](https://www.npdc.govt.nz)



Sports Exchanges

We have had three very successful exchanges for our winter sports over Terms 2 & 3 against Whanganui Collegiate School (WCS), Whanganui High School (WHS), and Palmerston North Girls' High School (PNGHS). We would like to thank all those who have been involved in coaching, managing, and volunteering to help all these teams throughout the year, and we wish good luck to all our teams heading away for Winter Tournament Week in week 7.

	NPGHS	WCS
Hockey Junior A	0	1
Hockey 1 st XI	5	0
Football 1 st XI	6	1
Netball 9A	36	25
Netball Premier	53	54

	NPGHS	PNGHS
Netball 9A	40	20
Netball 10A	43	21
Netball Senior A1	31	10
Netball Premier	49	27
Hockey 1stXI	4	1
Hockey 2ndXI	1	0
Basketball Premier	75	31
Basketball Junior A	69	46
Badminton A	0	6
Badminton B	0	6
Rugby 1stXV	48	12

	NPGHS	WHS
Netball 9A	51	15
Netball 10A	41	19
Netball Senior A1	35	5
Netball Premier	28	19
Rugby U15	14	47
Hockey 2ndXI	3	0
Basketball Premier	109	21

TOPEC

The week long Year 10 camp at TOPEC this year was a spectacular success for the students who attended. They had an incredibly busy 5 days which included playing in the Waiwhakaiho River and developing water safety skills, climbing, sea kayak orienteering at Lake Rataipiko, and an amazing overnight experience on the southern slopes of Taranaki Maunga. Snow conditions meant they stayed at Konini lodge and got to explore Dawsons falls with plenty of snow for a battle and a snowman.



Without doubt this was a transformative experience for all, and the growth in relationships, resilience and confidence shone through along with the sun on the final day. Thanks to the school and TOPEC staff for making it happen. If you are interested in TOPEC experiences through NPGHS please contact Grant Robinson at grobinson@npghs.school.nz

Keeping Safe

We have had two reports recently, one of an incident in a park, and one of a person in a white van offering rides to students on Hobson Street. The police have been notified, but this is a good reminder to do all we can to keep ourselves safe and alert others or the police when we notice something that doesn't look right.



Accessing Student Attendance Details

Please go to the NPGHS Website and click the Sign In option (top right). This will take you to our SchoolBridge homepage. SchoolBridge is our main communication tool, and we would strongly encourage you to download the App onto your smartphone for future communications. Login to SchoolBridge using Google/Microsoft/FaceBook/Yahoo. Your choice depends on the type of email address that you provided us with on enrolment.

In SchoolBridge, select the KAMAR Portal option. The KAMAR Portal is a secure site that contains confidential information about your child. Your credentials were sent via email earlier this year. When you first login, you will be prompted to reset your password. If you do not have your credentials for the secure KAMAR Portal, please email reception@npghs.school.nz

Once in the KAMAR Portal you can select the Attendance option to view real-time attendance data about your child.

Making money go further - Applying for funding

We appreciate that finding the money for extra school activities can be hard. We have two funds that can be accessed when students want to take up opportunities but finances are tight at home.

- The Jain Gaudin Aroha Fund: Former Principal, Jain Gaudin, left a bequest to the school to support students with extra opportunities, further education, achievement in a particular field, or funds/resources to overcome hardship. This can be in any field including but not limited to academic, sports, culture, the arts. The guidelines for this fund ask for consideration be given to benefitting Māori and Pasifika students, as well as all current students. To apply, please complete the form available at [this link](#).
- The Centuria Sports Grant: We have received a generous donation from [Centuria](#), through [WaddellAssociates](#). This fund is specifically for students who might otherwise find it difficult to be involved in sporting activities due to financial pressures. To apply, please complete the form available at [this link](#). This fund could be used to access support for Winter Tournament Week trips, as an example.

While the amount available in each fund is limited, we encourage you to apply if you need assistance, as money is still available in each fund for this year. All applications are received by Jacqui Brown, Principal, and information is not shared outside the application process. Any money awarded from these funds is paid directly to the school activity or the organisation running the event, not to individual students or families.

2023 DATES

TERM 3

17 July - 22 September

TERM 4

9 October - 14 December

Mon 23 October - Labour Day

Mon 20 November – Teacher only Day

2024 DATES

TERM 1

1 February - 12 April

Thursday 1 February

8.40am – 3.20pm, Year 9 & 13, and new students in Y10,11,12.

Friday 3 February

8.40am – 3.20pm All students

TERM 2

29 April – 5 July

TERM 3

22 July - 27 September

TERM 4

14 October - 16 December

CONTACT US

RECEPTION

reception@npghs.school.nz

ABSENTEE

attendance@npghs.school.nz

ENROLMENTS

enrolments@npghs.school.nz

BOARDING

hostelenquiries@npghs.school.nz

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SCHOOLBRIDGE

'SchoolBridge' on app store