



NPGHS NEWSLETTER

24 April 2026

Tēnā koutou katoa

We often talk about senior curriculum and assessment or NCEA, but this message is focused on learning in the first two years of high school. As you may be aware, there have been some changes to the Year 9 and 10 English and Mathematics curriculum, along with how student progress is reported.

During 2026, schools can choose from e-asTTle, PAT, or SMART assessment tools while transitioning to the new curriculum. We have used e-asTTle for several years, and Year 9 and 10 students completed these assessments earlier this year as usual. As e-asTTle will not be updated for the new curriculum, this is the final year we will use it.

To assess progress against the new curriculum, we are moving to SMART (Student Monitoring, Assessment and Reporting Tool).

Over the coming weeks, Year 9 and Year 10 students will complete SMART assessments in Reading, Writing, and Maths. These are low-stakes 'check-ins' that help us understand where students are currently at, identify next learning steps, and track progress over time.

Students do not need to study for these assessments. To help them feel confident, they will complete a familiarisation activity in Maths beforehand. We have also allowed two spells for each assessment so students can work at a comfortable pace. The assessments include questions from across the curriculum for these year levels, so some content may not yet have been taught. If they see a question that is unfamiliar, students are encouraged to do their best and know that teachers will cover this learning with them in the future.

How parents/whānau can help

- Please ensure your daughter or young person brings their laptop and charger on assessment days.
- A good night's sleep and a normal breakfast can help students feel settled and ready.

- Reassure them that these are not high-stakes tests or qualifications. They are just one way of seeing what students know at the moment. Later in the year, students will sit similar assessments and be able to see the progress they have made.

Year 9 dates:

Writing – Wednesday 29 April, Spells 3 and 4
Maths – Friday 8 May, Spells 1 and 2
Reading – Wednesday 13 May, Spells 3 and 4

Year 10 dates:

Writing – Wednesday 29 April, Spells 1 and 2
Maths – Tuesday 5 May, Spells 3 and 4
Reading – Monday 11 May, Spells 1 and 2

Many Year 9 and 10 students will also sit the NCEA numeracy and literacy co-requisite standards (CAAs) in May. Completing the SMART assessments should give them useful practice in a digital testing environment as they work towards these. While SMART assessments are not a qualification, the NCEA co-requisites are required for NCEA.

Further information about SMART results will be shared once grades are available later in the term. If you have any questions in the meantime, please contact Deputy Principal Dr Michael Taylor at mtaylor@npghs.school.nz, or feel free to contact me at jbrown@npghs.school.nz.

Ngā mihi mahana
Jacqui Brown
Principal





Day Girls vs Boarders Rippa Rugby

Thanks to the initiative and leadership of hostel leaders Cahill Siebert-White and Queenie McClutchie, the Day Girls vs Boarders Rippa Rugby event at the end of Term 1 was a hugely successful and enjoyable occasion.

Cahill and Queenie worked closely with the school sports leaders and Director of Sport, Mrs Sam Vincent, to organise the tournament. Together, they met to plan the event and set a date. Their goal was to create more opportunities for hostel students to be involved in school activities, while also building friendly competition and contributing to the Day Girls vs Boarders trophy.

The match itself was a wonderful example of positive school spirit. Students participated with enthusiasm, showing excellent sportsmanship throughout the game. There was also a strong turnout of supporters, with many day girls and boarders on the sidelines cheering and encouraging their day girl friends and 'hostel family'. It was a closely contested match, with the day girls narrowly taking the win.

Building on the success of the Rippa Rugby tournament, Cahill and Queenie are already planning further activities for the year. They are hopeful that a netball tournament this term will attract a similarly strong level of participation and continue to strengthen connections between day girls and boarders.



2026 Taranaki Regional Shakespeare Festival

On Tuesday 31 March eight groups of students travelled to Stratford to participate in the Regional Shakespeare Festival. Students performed on the stage of the TET Kings Theatre which was a wonderful experience. It was a packed house, with students from schools all around the maunga and many supporters in the audience.

Junior groups included energetic Year 9 students directed by Mrs Simpson who performed scenes from *The Tempest* and four resilient and focused self-directed groups of Year 10s who performed scenes from *Much Ado About Nothing* and *Macbeth*.



Year 9 *Tempest* group backstage

Back row: Emme Laird, Eilidh Gilmour, Ruby Robinson, Zadie Rudman, Shriya Patel

Front row: Kaitlin Williams, Emily Maxner

Mr Ramsay directed a talented and musical group of Year 11 and 12 students in a scene from *Much Ado About Nothing* and two self-directed groups of Year 13 students performed creative and topical interpretations of scenes from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Taming of the Shrew*.

To perform in a festival like this takes many hours of line learning, rehearsal, and organisation of costumes and props. Students perform in an unfamiliar environment for a public audience. Our students showed respect for others, were impeccably behaved and performed their hearts out.

Many thanks to Suzanne Blackwell, festival organiser, the Stratford Shakespeare Trust and all those involved. We are so proud of our staff and students!



Attendance

It was wonderful to see so many students making a real effort with attendance in Term 1. The regular attendance rate (present more than 90% of the time) reached 60%, the highest it has been in more than five years. While we want that to be even higher, we are excited to see positive progress. 87% of our students attended for more than 80% of the time in Term 1.

As we head into Term 2, we know that genuine and severe illness might keep students from school occasionally. When students are well, though, we'd love to keep the positive momentum from Term 1 going.



Only 5% of students attended less than 70% of the time in Term 1, and we recognise there can be genuine, extenuating circumstances behind this. Our staff are doing an amazing job making connections with families. Please do keep communicating with us if you need support.

It was a real pleasure to send Principal's Attendance postcards to all students who achieved 'green' attendance in Term 1. I'd love to send even more in Term 2! Thank you to students, for making every effort to be at school with us, and to parents and whānau for your strong support.

ANZAC Day

Today we commemorated ANZAC Day with our traditional school service. Students led the readings, provided a musical tribute, played the Last Post, and reflected on the impact of war on those who serve and those who wait at home.

Students and staff will also be at the Dawn Service at the Cenotaph tomorrow, Saturday 25 April, and we welcome students from all year groups to join us in the formal part of the parade. If students would like to attend, we ask that they wear full school uniform (with layers underneath against the cold!) and meet outside the Len Lye Centre by 5.45am. Our student leaders will lay a wreath as part of the service and commemorate the day with others from around the city.





2026 Taranaki Science & Technology Fair

This annual event invites students from Years 7–13 to explore, create, and showcase innovative projects that solve real-world problems and celebrate science and technology.

Categories for 2026 include: Scientific Investigation, Technological Development, Scientific Essay, Scientific Photography, Observational Drawing, Advertising Poster, Robotics, Water Rockets, Year 10 Quiz.

To find out the themes for any of these categories, to get more details, or to enter, students can contact one of our fantastic Science Teachers, Donna Ainsworth, on Teams or by emailing dainsworth@npghs.school.nz.

Upcoming Events

Please check <https://npghs.bridge.school.nz/notices>, or the 'Coming Events' post on facebook, for even more information.

Sat 25 April	ANZAC Day
Mon 27 April	ANZAC Day observed – school closed
Wed 29 April	SMART Writing Assessments for Y9 and Y10
Thurs 30 April	Visual Art/Art History trip to Wellington TSSSA Football Hockey vs St John's of Buenos Aires (12noon at the New Plymouth Hockey Turf) Leaders' Forum for all Kāwai Huia representatives and Y13 Leaders (1.10pm in the Hall)
Fri 1 May	Last day for our visitors from San Nicolas de Myra, Chile. A genuine thank you to all host families, and the students who have made our exchange students feel so welcome in class.
Sun 3 May	NISS Dressage Championships
Mon 4 May	Y9 Hearing Tests begin TSSSA Orienteering
Tues 5 May	Sports Exchange with Whanganui Collegiate University of Otago Junior Maths Competition, Part 2
Fri 8 May	Next newsletter available. You can click here to see the current and previous newsletters.

2026 DATES

TERM 1

30 January - 2 April

TERM 2

20 April – 3 July

Mon 27 April Anzac Day (observed)

Mon 1 June King's Birthday

TERM 3

20 July - 25 September

Fri 21 Aug Curriculum Staff Only Day

TERM 4

12 October - 11 December

Mon 26 Oct Labour Day

Fri 20 Nov Curriculum Staff Only Day

CONTACT US

RECEPTION

reception@npghs.school.nz

ABSENTEE

attendance@npghs.school.nz

ENROLMENTS

enrolments@npghs.school.nz

BOARDING

hostelenquiries@npghs.school.nz

FOLLOW US

WEBSITE

www.npghs.school.nz

FACEBOOK

www.facebook.com/npghs

INSTAGRAM

[Npgirlshighschool](https://www.instagram.com/Npgirlshighschool)

SCHOOLBRIDGE

'SchoolBridge' on app store