



# Junior Curriculum Handbook 2021

---

---

---

# About this handbook

## Nau Mai, Haere Mai ki Te Kura Tuarua o Taraika ki Pukeahu

Through this handbook you are introduced to all aspects of our junior programme:

- Our philosophy, which focuses on the importance of the strong connection between school, whānau and you, our student
- The Herengatahi system and the central role of rōpū in your school life.
- The junior curriculum. This includes the subjects that you will study in Year 9 and 10, how you will be assessed and how this will develop in to your senior programme of study.

## Our Philosophy

Wellington High School works in partnership with you and your whānau to support you in developing the skills that will contribute to your success. Each partner has responsibilities and goals to aim for:

Responsibilities	Goals
<p><b>WHS Responsibilities:</b></p> <p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide a safe learning environment</li><li>• Provide expert teachers</li><li>• Emphasise student centred learning</li><li>• Meet the national curriculum</li><li>• Assess your learning needs</li><li>• Extend your learning</li><li>• Monitor your progress and measure your success</li><li>• Communicate with you and your caregivers about your learning</li></ul>	<p><b>WHS Goals:</b></p> <p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Give you a sense of belonging to our learning community</li><li>• Successfully prepare you to start national qualifications</li><li>• Fully complete your programme of study</li><li>• Produce a student of whom we are proud</li></ul>
<p><b>Whānau Responsibilities:</b></p> <p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure that our student is at school</li><li>• Help create a learning environment at home</li><li>• Encourage and supervise homework</li><li>• Be positive about learning</li><li>• Be responsive to and supportive of WHS</li></ul>	<p><b>Whānau Goals:</b></p> <p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Support you to do your very best in your learning programmes</li><li>• Support you to enjoy your learning at WHS</li><li>• Be proud of what you achieve</li><li>• Be prepared for success in national qualifications</li></ul>
<p><b>Student Responsibilities:</b></p> <p>To support my learning, I will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Attend all my classes, unless I have a legitimate reason for being absent</li><li>• Be on time</li><li>• Be prepared with the right equipment</li><li>• Behave in a way that promotes my own learning and the learning of others</li></ul>	<p><b>Student goals:</b></p> <p>My broad goals are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Be a successful learner</li><li>• Graduate the junior school with the learning skills that will ensure that I will be successful in the senior school</li><li>• Take advantage of the range of opportunities available to me at WHS</li><li>• Feel proud of what I achieve</li></ul>

---

---

# Herengatahi — Your whānau group

In Year 9 and 10, you will belong to a Herengatahi whānau of up to 60 students, **your most important connection will be a rōpū (group) of about 15 students**, and you will be working closely with a teacher who will support you, coach you to improve your learning performance and really get to know you as a person.



## Why is this important?

As a successful learner you will be working with other young people and your teacher, while you will cooperate with them to discuss important ideas and develop new learning targets. You will be able to negotiate some of what you want to learn and select from a full range of learning tools to do the work. Herengatahi will encourage you to be an active learner, to question and inquire and have your ideas supported and challenged by others.

## How does Herengatahi work?

### Connected students

- You are a member of a Herengatahi group (50-60 students) and a small rōpū (12-15 students) for two years.
- At least four subject teachers share the teaching across rōpū.
- A Dean oversees the year level and works with rōpū teachers to ensure academic and pastoral care.
- The key competencies outlined in the New Zealand curriculum are at the centre of your learning.
- You are encouraged to reflect on your learning through rōpū and subject programmes. Your ideas about how we design the learning with you are encouraged.
- Learning Services work closely with Herengatahi teams to support learners and assist with scaffolding learning.

### Connected Curriculum

- Herengatahi teaching teams meet weekly to discuss the learning needs of their students
- Teachers plan collaborative units of work connected by an issue, problem, question or universal theme, where possible.

### Connected Community

- Students and their whānau share a school tikanga and values based on WERO: whānau, excellence, respect and ora.
- Face-to-face as well as online relationships with parents and caregivers are encouraged.
- 'Learning conversations' are held twice a year, as well as Parent-Teacher interviews
- Whānau can access the school website and the online parent portal to see daily notices, their student's timetable and attendance data, assessment results, reports, and donation payments.
- Keep up-to-date with school events via Facebook, Twitter, the school website and the school app.



---

# Curriculum overview

## In Year 9 you study:

- English, Mathematics, Science, Te Ao Māori, Social Studies, Health & PE, and Digital Technology
- A language
- Two taster courses per term

The taster courses are to help you find your passion for further study. Taster courses are offered in:

- |                                   |                      |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------|
| • Art                             | • Fashion            |
| • Design and Visual Communication | • Financial Literacy |
| • Design Technology Workshop      | • Food Technology    |
| • Drama                           | • Music              |

In Term 1, you will do brief taster courses in a foreign language before choosing a speciality for further study in Term 2-4. Languages available are:

- |                    |           |
|--------------------|-----------|
| • Japanese         | • Spanish |
| • Mandarin Chinese |           |

## In Year 10 you study:

- English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Physical Education and Health, Digital Technology, and
- Choose up to FOUR other subjects (either half year or full year).

In Year 10 you can choose from the following classes (the ones marked \* are for a full year):

- |                               |                                  |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| • Art                         | • Industrial Arts Technology     |
| • Business Studies            | • Japanese*                      |
| • Chinese*                    | • Media Studies                  |
| • Classical Studies           | • Music                          |
| • Computer Science            | • Spanish*                       |
| • Drama                       | • Sports Science                 |
| • Design Visual Communication | • Te Reo Māori*                  |
| • Fashion                     | • Te Reo Māori immersion course* |
| • Food Technology             |                                  |



---

# Faculty Learning Areas

## The Arts

Students study three aspects of the Arts curriculum: Drama, Music and Visual Art. Our Arts courses offer an introduction to deeper investigation of the Arts in Year 10.

- **Visual Art:** Visual Art explores a range of art-making skills. Students investigate art from a range of cultural origins and develop ideas to produce artwork, such as sculpture, collage, drawing, and painting.
- **Music:** Students are introduced to musical instruments, composing and performing. They investigate different musical genres and learn music theory. **Note:** Wellington High School employs itinerant music teachers so that tuition in strings, drums, wind instruments, the guitar and voice are available for an affordable fee.
- **Drama:** Drama provides students with the opportunity to develop a wide range of personal and performance skills. Students will workshop and investigate theatre forms such as improvisation and devised work, building towards a group performance.



## English

The English curriculum rests upon the belief that everyone has a story, and that language is an expression of our individual and shared identities. Actively engaging with books, films and oral texts allows us the chance to imagine the world from a variety of perspectives and fosters empathy for others.

The junior English programme gives students a wide range of learning experiences connected to Making Meaning (reading, listening and viewing) and Creating Meaning (writing, speaking and presenting). We want to give students rich opportunities to communicate their stories using a variety of modes; visual, oral and written. We also wish to foster a love of reading and an appreciation of the way writers, orators and film directors use language to communicate valuable ideas.

## Languages

In Year 9 and 10 students learn languages through a task-based language learning approach that focuses on using communicative language in authentic situations. Developing cultural understanding through learning about that language's culture and customs is also a key part of our courses. The languages we offer are Chinese, Japanese, Spanish, te reo Māori as well as English Language courses for non-native English speakers. Te Ao Māori, which is a course that combines language and tikanga Māori, is compulsory for all Year 9 students.

---

---

## Mathematics

Mathematics in the junior school involves learning and developing skills in the areas of Number and Algebra, Geometry and Measurement and Statistics and Probability which have a broad range of applications in everyday life. Students develop the ability to estimate and think logically. They learn to process and communicate information, create models and predict outcomes in order to solve a variety of problems. We use Education Perfect as a tool, as well as individual, pair and group work in class.

## Health and Physical Education

The Year 9 and 10 Health and Physical Education program develops students' ability to make informed decisions for their own well-being and that of society. In our practical setting, students learn through the context of sport to enhance their movement skills, increase positive attitudes and develop their interpersonal skills. The health units focus on 'Hauora', the philosophy of total well-being. It includes areas such as mental health, sexuality, drug use, change loss and grief, body systems and nutrition.



## Science

Year 9 and 10 Science is a practical course. Students carry out investigations that involve generating and testing ideas, gathering evidence, and communicating and debating ideas with others in order to develop scientific knowledge and understanding. Students gain an understanding of the nature of science by studying the "big Ideas" of science – cells, particles, interdependence of living things, energy, forces and earth and space systems.



## Social Sciences

In Year 9 and 10 Social Sciences we strive to teach students about the world around them and how they can be active participants in society. We study the physical, social, political and natural world and human impact upon it. Besides Social Studies, we also offer Business Studies, Classical Studies and Media Studies.

## Technology

In Year 9 and 10 Technology classes, students rotate through five different aspects of the technology Faculty. They all have design and problem solving at their heart, but they give a chance to gain and practice skills. For example, students might work in the workshop with hard materials and electronics, work with fashion materials, graphical design projects, prepare a range of food products and develop computer programs with computer based design.



---

# Learning and assessment in the Junior School

Schools base their curriculum on the principles of the New Zealand Curriculum, to encourage and model the values, and to develop key competencies at all year levels. The Herengatahi system does this seamlessly.

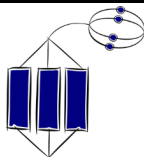
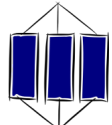



At WHS, we also take seriously our responsibility to prepare students for the senior school. We use a school-wide assessment framework so students have a clear understanding of what they need to do to progress. We help students ask: What am I learning? How is it going? What do I do next?

**Wellington High School uses the SOLO taxonomy to achieve this.**

## What is the SOLO taxonomy?

Solo Taxonomy (Structure of Observed Learning Outcomes) provides a simple, reliable and robust model for three levels of understanding – surface, deep and conceptual (Biggs and Collis 1982).

These levels of thinking are broken into categories with a different symbol for easy recognition. We assess learning using the SOLO taxonomy across all learning areas. Students are graded from 1 (pre-structural) through to 8 (Extended abstract) with clear reference to help the student identify the next steps needed for improvement.

Grade	Descriptor	SOLO	Explanation
8	Extended Abstract		At the extended abstract level the new understanding at the relational level is re-thought at another conceptual level, looked at in a new way, and used as the basis for prediction, generalisation, reflection, or creation of new understanding.
7			
6	Relational		At the relational level, the aspects of the task are known and are linked, integrated, and contribute to a deeper and more coherent understanding of the whole.
5			
4	Multistructural		At the multistructural level, several aspects of the task are known but their relationships to each other and the whole are missed.
3			
2	Unistructural		At the unistructural level, one aspect of the task is picked up, and student understanding is disconnected and limited.
1	Prestructural		At the prestructural level of understanding, the task is inappropriately approached, and the student has missed the point or needs help to start.

## SOLO taxonomy and NCEA

SOLO also provides the perfect platform for students as they move into the senior school. Much of the thinking behind the NCEA Achievement Standards is modelled on the same scaffolding SOLO taxonomy offers.

By introducing students to SOLO taxonomy in the junior school, students are better equipped to unpack exactly what is expected of them in the senior school and demystify how to approach Achievement Standards. Also, they should be able to express their level of understanding, discuss how to move forward and track their own progress.

---



---

# Reporting in the Junior School

Reporting to students and parents aims to be informative and timely so that students are provided with information to advance their learning.

At WHS, we report in a number of ways:

- **Learning profiles:** each term teachers assess students against key learning habits: these profiles are made available through the parent portal.
- **Online reports:** these are summative reports available at **the end of Term 4**.
- **Learning Conversations (twice a year):** these 20 minute meetings between students and their rōpū teacher focus on setting goals and reviewing learning. Learning Conversations take place in Term 1 and Term 3.
- **Parent-Teacher evenings (at least once a year):** These are five minute 'check in' conversations to get a quick snapshot of a student's learning across all their subjects.

## The Parent Portal

There is a direct link to the parent portal from our school website (<http://www.whs.school.nz>) under **the Whānau menu**. Usernames and passwords are emailed to families early in the school year.

A wide range of information is available through the portal. This includes:

- Student details including reports, pastoral items and assessment results
- Student timetable and attendance data
- Daily notices
- A secure area through which payments can be made.

## Learning with digital technology

Digital technology is a vital tool for learning in Years 9 and 10 at Wellington High School. Students use their own devices (usually laptops or Chromebooks) to access information, create their own pieces and collaborate with others.

There is a time and a place for using technology to aid learning in the classroom. Sometimes it will be appropriate; at other times teachers will use alternative strategies.



You can read more about what this looks like on our website at <http://www.whs.school.nz/learnwithtech/> and find out about recommended devices at <http://www.whs.school.nz/byod-recommendations/>

---

# Possible Future Pathways

Faculty	NCEA Level 1 →	NCEA Level 2 →	NCEA Level 3
ARTS	Visual Arts Drama Music	Design Printmaking Sculpture Painting Photography Drama Theatre Studies Music	Design Printmaking Sculpture Painting Photography Drama Theatre Studies Music
ENGLISH	English Classical Studies with English	English Classical Studies with English Eng with Science Fiction English for Writers English with Religion English for a Sporting World Painted Word English Passion Project	English English and Philosophy Painted Word
LANGUAGES	Chinese Japanese Te Reo Māori Spanish Pre-Intermediate English Language	Chinese Japanese Te Reo Māori Spanish Intermediate English Language Māori Performing Arts Indigenous Studies	Chinese Japanese Te Reo Māori Spanish Advanced English Language Te Reo Māori Immersion
MATHEMATICS	Mathematics Numeracy Numeracy for English Language Learners	Mathematics Finance	Mathematics Calculus Statistics
HEALTH & PHYSICAL EDUCATION	Health Education Outdoor Education Sport Science Recreation	Health Education Outdoor Education Sport Science Recreation	Health Education Outdoor Education Sport Science Recreation
SCIENCE	Science Horticulture Science for English Language Learners	Science Horticulture Biology Chemistry Physics Earth & Space Science	Science Horticulture Biology Chemistry Physics Earth & Space Science
SOCIAL SCIENCES	Business Studies Geography History Media Studies Classical Studies with English	Business Studies Geography History Moving Image Culture Classical Studies with English Psychology Journalism Papa Taiao	Business Studies Geography History Moving Image Culture Classical Studies with English Psychology Journalism Papa Taiao Sociology
TECHNOLOGY	Mechanical Engineering Electronics Computer Science Digital Media Design Visual Communication General Business Computing Fashion CREST Food Technology Hospitality Furniture & Cabinet Making Technology Smorgasbord	Mechanical Engineering Electronics Computer Science Digital Media Design Visual Communication General Business Computing Fashion CREST Food Technology Hospitality Furniture & Cabinet Making Technology Smorgasbord Barista Practical Workshop Sonic Arts	Electronics Computer Science Digital Media Design Visual Communication Fashion CREST Food Technology Hospitality Practical Workshop Sonic Arts

---

---



## Contact details:

### **Wellington High School—Te Kura Tuarua o Taraika ki Pukeahu**

PO Box 4035  
Wellington 6140  
New Zealand  
[www.whs.school.nz](http://www.whs.school.nz)  
[admin@whs.school.nz](mailto:admin@whs.school.nz)  
Phone: 04 385 8911

### Senior Leadership Team

Dominic Killalea	Principal
Megan Southwell	Deputy Principal
Karen Spencer	Deputy Principal
Shaun Tavernor	Deputy Principal
Julie McDonald	Deputy Principal
Caroline Lewis	Assistant Principal

### Heads of Faculty

Janina Bates	Arts
Caitlin Reilly	English
Sharon Henry	Languages
Carly Elder	Learning Services
Caroline Lewis	Mathematics
Randal Wakefield	Physical Education
Nicola Dow	Science
Henry Hollis	Social Sciences
Peter Jessop	Technology

---