



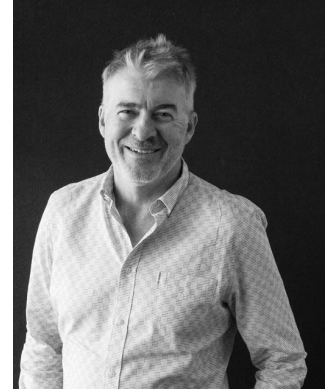
Wellington High School
Te Kura Tuarua o Taraika ki Pukeahu

Junior Whānau Guide
2026

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

Welcome to Wellington High School!

For more than 130 years Wellington High School has been providing the best education possible for many thousands of young New Zealanders. Throughout this time we have forged our reputation with an educationally progressive curriculum and attitude. From the very first director of the school in 1886, Arthur Dewhurst Riley, who conceived the school as a "continually expanding, ever changing institution" the school has always listened to the needs of the community and responded accordingly, providing an effective social learning environment which embraces individuality and allows students to navigate their own pathway to success.



Our students, staff and community have crystallised our priorities based around the Māori word for challenge - **WERO**. Each letter of WERO stands for a key value/expectation that we have of members of our community. **W** stands for **Whānau** and represents our individual roles in the social arrangement of small groups and more complex communities. It also represents the idea that we are a community and we support each other. **E** stands for **Excellence** and represents our drive to be the very best we can be in everything we do. **R** is for **Respect** and challenges and informs the nature of relationships and our interaction with others and with the environment. **O** stands for **Ora** and represents the physical and emotional wellbeing we seek to achieve, be it individually, in our actions supporting other people or collectively as a community that shares and cares. If you enrol your student at Wellington High School, you're signing up for these values and we commit to building and valuing a respectful relationship with you and your young person based on our high expectations around learning and engagement.

Wellington High has always stood for equity and excellence. We are frequently consulted by the Ministry of Education and the Education Review Office in areas such as bullying, gender diversity, restorative practices, and sex education because we are recognised for our regional and national leadership in these areas. In 2018 we made the decision to include Te Ao Māori in our year 9 curriculum as well as provide the opportunity to learn another language as this is one way that we can open up ourselves to new learnings and build greater cultural awareness and understanding.

One of my predecessors, Turoa Royal, who was Principal of Wellington High School from 1978 to 1986, quite eloquently summed up what we are aiming to achieve at High.

"Firstly, if nothing else, pupils should leave the school with a sense of self-worth, a sense of self-esteem, and a sense of high expectations that life has beauty, and of truth. [Ralph Waldo] Emerson's truism is worth quoting: 'Though we travel the world over to find the beautiful, we must carry it with us or we will find it not.' Secondly, whatever we teach, pupils should have the ability and skills to relate to others in a cordial, friendly and compassionate relationship - 'Ko te mea hui – ko te aroha' - the most important thing is love and compassion. Thirdly, students should have the widest and happiest experiences in schools so that on leaving, learning is seen as a continuing and enjoyable experience. Fourthly, [students should] be able to analyse problems, no matter how complex, so that if career tracks are changing more frequently, they are able to make wise choices. Fifthly, students should, through school practices be concerned for people and for mother earth. Mother earth is our past and our future."

At Wellington High School we are using our rich tradition to shape our present and our future. We believe connection is the key and your student will be warmly welcomed to a school where they will be respected as unique individuals. We will provide a range of academic, sporting, cultural and leadership activities to build their connection to our place. Further, we will provide an inclusive, co-educational environment that embraces diversity and promotes excellent achievement and mutual respect.

Mauri ora!

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Dominic Killalea', written in a cursive style.

Dominic Killalea
Principal

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

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 the rōpū.
- Deans oversee the year level and work 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 - the WHS Learning Habits
- 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 regularly to discuss the learning needs of their students
- Teachers often 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, the school website and the school app.



Orientation

Our goal is that students new to Wellington High School, whatever the year level of entry, quickly adjust to our special character and ethos, and that they soon feel that they are valued members of our school community. To ensure this happens we have a Wellington High School citizenship programme that takes place in the first few weeks of a new student's time with us.

New students at year 9 spend the first two days of the start of the year at school learning their way around and building relationships with their Herengatahi teachers and year 13 peer support leaders. This is before the rest of the school is on site. New students at years 10 to 13 spend a day of orientation getting familiar with the systems and surroundings. Students who arrive during the year are given a 'buddy' student and spend some time early in their stay with regular check-ins with their year level Dean.

Early in Term 1 each herengatahi will enjoy a camp experience together. We feel it is important to acknowledge the arrival and future contributions of all of our new students and for them to understand as much as possible about the unique character of their new learning environment. With full understanding from both parties, a successful partnership will ensue.

Academic Programmes

Wellington High School students follow the New Zealand Curriculum. Students in Years 9 and 10 need to acquire knowledge and understanding in the eight essential learning areas, while in Years 11, 12, and 13 they need to acquire knowledge and understanding across a range of learning areas so as to preserve a balanced education while allowing a degree of specialisation.

Learning is connected through shared concepts and themes with a strong commitment to building student learning competencies and dispositions. An important aspect of learning is sharing with whānau. All students are involved in student-parent-teacher learning conversations that are focused on cultivating and strengthening good learning habits.



In the junior years, our programmes are shaped by the SOLO taxonomy, while at a senior level, the National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) becomes a focus. In addition, we provide opportunities outside of traditional assessment to enrich student experiences. Where appropriate, we accelerate students from a junior level to access senior learning and we provide opportunities for remediation. The school provides a technology rich environment that makes full and effective use of the latest teaching and learning strategies. At Wellington High School we are committed to tailoring individual students' courses to meet their needs and progress at their own rate.

The school expects students at Wellington High to develop and support, through their actions: a positive attitude to learning; an understanding that learning extends beyond the classroom; an active assessment of their own learning, their contribution to the learning process, the courses of study that they take part in, and the school's learning environment in general.

Curriculum overview

In Year 9 you study:

- English, Mathematics, Science, Te Ao Māori, Social Studies, Health & PE, and Digital Technology
- An international 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
- Design and Visual Communication
- Design Technology Workshop
- Drama
- Fashion
- Financial Literacy
- Food Technology
- Music

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

- Japanese
- Mandarin Chinese
- Spanish

In Year 10 you study:

- English, Mathematics, Science, Aotearoa Studies, Social Studies, Physical Education and Health, 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
- Business Studies
- Chinese*
- Classical Studies
- Computer Science
- Digital Technology
- Design Visual Communication
- Drama
- Fashion
- Food Technology
- Industrial Arts Technology
- Japanese*
- Media Studies
- Music
- Spanish*
- Sports Science
- Te Reo Māori*
- Māori Performing Arts*



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.

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.



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.

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.

- **Aotearoa Studies (Year 10)** This course shares the stories of Aotearoa's past. It has a particular focus on the history of Māori before the arrival of other peoples. Chronologically it explores the time between Hawaiki and the end of the Nineteenth Century. Aotearoa Studies places special emphasis on the stories of the iwi represented within our school community, while acknowledging the special place held by Tangata Whenua.

Some of our topics include: voyages, pūrākau, the naming of places, iwi, He Whakaputanga - The Declaration of Independence and Kingitanga.



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 practise 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.

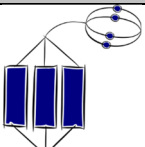
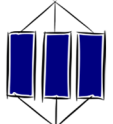



At WHS, we also take seriously our responsibility to prepare students for the senior school. We use a school-wide assessment framework so students have a clear understanding of what they need to do to progress. We help students ask: What am I learning? How is it going? What do I do next?

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/>



In line with government policy, Wellington High School implements a cell phone policy. This and other policies can be viewed on our website at: <https://www.whs.school.nz/policies-and-procedures/>

Student Support

Each student is part of an extensive and responsive guidance network that is responsible for individual wellbeing. This network provides assurance that students are safe and supported at school.

Key people include:

- **Rōpū teachers** who are the students' primary contact point
- **Year Level Deans** support the rōpū teacher and maintain an overview of the year level
- **Guidance Counsellors** provide additional personal support for students and their families
- **Peer Support** and peer tutoring provides student to student support and helps to develop connections between year levels

The Learning Services Faculty ensures all students' **learning** needs are met. The support is targeted to the needs of the individual and support may include:

- **Special Access Conditions (SAC)** so that students may have fair access to assessment for national qualifications
- **Reading and Literacy Support** for students who may need additional support to develop age appropriate levels of literacy. Similar programmes support the development of numeracy skills,
- **Social Skills and learning skills support** to assist students to work in larger groups or whole class environments,
- **English language** programmes for international students and students who are new to New Zealand,
- **Extension programmes** that enrich and extend the learning opportunities for able students.

Restorative Practice

Wellington High School works on the basis of mutual respect and shared responsibility. When things do not go as they should the school will always attempt to resolve the situation using the best principles of Restorative Practice.

Restorative practice is about helping people to be accountable for their actions, supporting them to see the impact of their actions and working together to find a way forward.

Our philosophy is one of inclusion and relationship building and restorative practices are built around these values.

Our Aims are:

- to educate students towards self-directed right behaviour,
- to promote, nurture and protect healthy relationships among members of the community, and
- to enable students to be accountable for the real consequences of any wrongdoing.

We do this by:

- having high expectations and insisting upon high standards of behaviour, and
- providing high levels of support and care for individuals.

A restorative approach

- encourages students to appreciate the consequences of their actions for others,
- enables students to make amends where their actions have harmed others,
- requires students to be accountable for their actions, and
- encourages respect for all concerned.

Opportunities to Participate

Wellington High School offers a full range of opportunities for young people to connect with the school through participation in enriching activities outside of their classroom lessons.

Sport in the school is managed by the Director of Sport and Sports Coordinator (sports@whs.school.nz) who organise and encourage all students to participate in sport. There are a wide range of sporting opportunities both in traditional sport codes and emerging codes. The school encourages parent and community involvement in these activities.

Over 60% of students at the school are regularly involved in competitive sport, and/or cultural activities, while many others take part in a range of outdoor activities offered by the school including tramping, skiing, and mountain biking.



The range of sports offered depends on student interest but includes:

Fencing
Hockey
Tennis
Rugby
Water Polo
Target Shooting
Floorball
Skateboarding

Squash
Basketball
Cricket
Football
Dragon Boating
Lawn Bowls
Parkour
Frisbee

Softball
Netball
Table tennis
Volleyball
Ultimate frisbee
Athletics
Tramping
Unicycling

Badminton
Futsal
Touch
Cross Country
Weightlifting
Underwater Hockey
Rock Climbing

The school also supports regular trips to overseas destinations including exchanges with schools in China, Japan and Argentina. Cultural opportunities abound and there is something to interest everyone. Opportunities are again based on student interest but include:

Shakespeare Society
Computer Club
Amnesty International
Chess

Debating
Kapa Haka
Duke of Edinburgh
Student Librarians

Drama
Pasifika Group
Peer Support
UltraViolet (LGBTQI+)

Bands/String Group
Music Tuition
Feminist Club
Wearable Art Club



Education Outside the Classroom (EOTC)

Wellington High School sits in the centre of an exciting landscape for learning. We enjoy proximity to amazing natural and cultural resources and we believe that learning should not be confined to classrooms. Getting out into the world puts learning into a different, richer context and we want to encourage teachers and students to take advantage of the opportunities afforded by our proximity.

We are committed to ensuring the safety of our students while engaging in low risk learning activities outside the classroom. This means activities that are close to school and that happen during the school day. Examples of this kind of activity are walking down to Te Papa to do a workshop or see an exhibition, or going to the New Zealand Film Archive for a movie viewing.

Teachers take responsibility for active supervision and for managing the slight risks that are involved, such as traffic safety and sensible behaviour. We have emergency procedures in place in case of earthquake or other natural disasters striking while the group is offsite.

It's really important, for this and many other reasons, to ensure that you keep us up to date about any health issues or other things that might impact on your student's learning or ability to function during the school day.

If there is any reason that your student should not participate in these **low risk** learning activities outside of the classroom that happen close to our school and within the school day please contact your student's rōpū teacher as soon as possible.

We will **always** seek your permission by letter/email for trips that involve higher levels of risk than those outlined above. Examples of this are water-based activities, multi day trips or trips that will take your student out of our immediate environment.



Enrolment Process for 2026

23 July 2025	Closing date for applications for Year 9 out-of-zone placements at WHS in 2026.
28 July 2025	Ballot for out-of-zone placements in Year 9 in 2026 held at Wellington College.
31 July 2025	Parents to be notified of the outcome of the Year 9 out-of-zone ballot by this date.
5 August 2025	Enrolment interviews for Year 9 2026 commence.
14 August 2025	Acceptance of place offered via the Year 9 out-of-zone ballot to be received by this date.
13 October 2025	Closing date for applications for out-of-zone Year 10 to 13 placements in 2026.
17 October 2025	Ballot held for out-of-zone placements in Years 10 to 13 in 2026.
20 October 2025	Enrolment interviews for Year 10-13 (in zone) commence.
22 October 2025	Parents to be notified of outcome of Year 10-13 out-of-zone ballot by this date.
5 November 2025	Acceptance of place offered via the Year 10-13 out-of-zone ballot to be received by this date.
12 November 2025	Enrolment interviews for Year 10-13 (out of zone) commence.

Note that, unless accepted through the out of zone ballot, students enrolling at Wellington High School must be living at their usual place of residence in zone on the day they start attending. Further details can be seen on our website at: <https://www.whs.school.nz/enrolment-scheme/>

Further information about enrolling at Wellington High School, including our online enrolment form can be found on our website: www.whs.school.nz/enrolment



Te Kura Tuarua o Taraika ki Pukeahu - Wellington High School

PO Box 4035

Wellington 6140

New Zealand

www.whs.school.nz

admin@whs.school.nz

Phone: 04 385 8911