Whangārei Heads School

Parent Information Book

Our Place to Grow and Learn together

Ko tātou kura, kia tipu, kia ako ngātahi

Nau Mai, Haere Mai

Welcome to Whangārei Heads School! We are located 30KM east of Whangārei, surrounded by bush on the lower slopes of Mt Manaia, overlooking the entrance to Whangārei Harbour. The school was established in 1858 and has a proud history of serving this rural-coastal community well.

The school roll sits between 150-170 students. It is a full primary school, from Year 0 to 8.

These are some of the excellent facilities found at our school:

- Combined Community & School Library
- Artshed Workshop Centre
- Swimming Pool
- Multi-purpose Pump track
- Netball/Basketball Court
- Large Multi-Purpose Covered Area
- School Hall - Te Māngoroa
- Modern Digital-Technology Equipment
- Fern Valley with an Outdoor Classroom and Boardwalks
- Large Adventure Playground
- Vegetable Gardens

School Vision

Our Place
Whangārei Heads School is in a unique location at the base of Mt Manaia

To Grow and Learn
We pride ourselves on a well balanced curriculum where children are able to experience learning across all essential areas and key competencies

Together
We are all learners, from the children, to the staff, to the community members who all contribute to our kura

Ko tātou kura, kia tipu, kia ako ngātahi

Nga Matapono / Our Values

The four values that guide us:

BELONGING/WHANAUNATANGA —Developing a sense of community and an appreciation of 'our place' . By connecting to Whangārei Heads School and Community; students involved in shaping and caring for the school and local environment; awareness and celebration of our history – including Tangata Whenua, Celtic history and founding families; building relationships and showing empathy for others.
Having a positive relationship with the other members of the school because they welcome you and accept you, and you accept them and support them through difficult times.

CREATIVITY/AUAHATANGA —Appreciating and encouraging individual talents and interest. At WHS we celebrate independent thinking and valuing individuality; differentiating and personalising the curriculum to create authentic learning and meet individual needs; offering variety and choice to encourage critical and creative thinking. We live in a very creative community and we value bringing into our kura local artists to work alongside ākgona in authentic ways.

KINDNESS/MANAAKITANGA - At our school it's treating people with kindness and respect. Kindness at WHS is marked by showing generosity, consideration, helping others, concern for others, without expecting praise or reward in return. Kindness goes beyond the classroom with our tamariki encouraged to show acts of kindness in our local community. This is often linked with our Kaitiakitanga or Environ Schools mahi.

RESILIENCE/MANAWAROA - Learning that life is challenging, and that is ok
Learning to manage challenging situations, seeing them as learning opportunities. Over recent years we have been challenged globally in ways we would never have anticipated. Today's children, more than ever, need to have a growth mindset, and see challenges as opportunities to grow.

2026 School Organisation

School Management /Ariki	Staff Member
Principal	Kelly Mercer
Deputy Principal	Tracey Morgan
	Dane Higgison

Classroom Teachers / Kaiako	Staff Member
Karearea - Year 7&8	Penn Evans & Tracey Morgan
Kotare - Year 6	Jamie Love
Korora - Year 4&5	Sharon Allen & Emily Drake
Ruru - Year 3&4	Dane Higgison
Tui - Year 2	Fiona Ellis
Piwakawaka - Year 0&1	Alex Hunter & Sara Robinson

Support Staff / Kaimahi	Staff Member
Office Administrator	Courtney Telfer
Learning Support Assistant	Jenny Snell
Learning Support Assistant	Dulcie Hering
Librarian	Aileen Ashman
Caretaker	Greg Ferrar
Public Health Nurse	Madison Curel

School Board

Rebecca Brown - Presiding Member	Dane Higgison - Staff Rep
David McDonald	Luke Ogle
Amy MacDonald	Steph Versteeg

The A-Z of Whangarei Heads School

Assembly (Whānau Hui / Hui a Kura
Assemblies are a great way to keep up to date with what is happening in your child's classroom and in the school community. Hui a Kura (Sharing Assembly is every Friday afternoon at 2.10pm. Classes take turns each week to share what they have been working on. Nga Mātapono awards are presented to celebrate the achievements of our students that align with our school values. We welcome whanau to attend this assembly.
We also have a Whanau Hui on Tuesday mornings for our Whanau Groups (Houses) to help start the week positively and develop our school culture, as well to to achieve our ongoing goals as an Enviro School.

Attendance and Absences
Pupils are required to be at school whenever it is open for instruction. It is important that the school is informed, and reason given, if your child is not going to be at school. You can advise the office of an absence via phone or voicemail, email, or a ClassDojo Message.
All children who arrive after 9am must report to the office to be marked present. Being on time to school each day helps set you up for success.

Behaviour Management
Our focus is on positive behaviours linking to our school Nga Mātāpono /values: Manaakitanga /Kindness - Auahatanga /Creativity - Whanaungatanga / Belonging - Manawaroa /Resilience
Our full Behaviour Management Plan in on the SchoolDocs website.
In 2025 we are moving into the PB4L - Positive Behaviour for Learning programme. More on this to come.

Find out more about PB4L

To learn more about PB4L initiatives and to see the resources available for them, go to pb4l.tki.org.nz or email PB4L@education.govt.nz.

Positive Behaviour for Learning

Biking To and From School

These are our recommendations for children biking safely to and from school.

- Children should be at least 10 years of age, before riding to and from school on their own.
- Children younger than 10 years of age should be accompanied by an adult, until such time as you feel they have the skills to ride with confidence in the traffic.

These skills include; sharing the road with motorists and other people on bikes, turning and signalling skills, riding in a straight line at least a metre from any parked cars, watching for potential hazards (car doors, potholes, uneven footpath and vegetation over the path way)

- We recommend children biking should wear a hi vis jacket over their school bag as well as shoes and a bike helmet that fits tightly.
- Bikes should have 2 working brakes.
- Map out the route between home and school, and discuss the safest way to cross Whangarei Heads Road and any other roads on the route
- Discuss with your child the plan should the bike break down or something goes wrong between home and school
- Consider not biking on days where the weather increases the risk.

We ask, for the safety of pedestrians, all cyclists please walk their bike from the playcentre into the school grounds along the footpath.

Board

The Board, Principal and Staff, welcome you, your child/ren and your whānau into Whangārei Heads School. We encourage you to get involved and support the school in any way you can and wish you all a positive and rewarding year. Board meetings are held twice per term and notification of meeting dates will be advised in the school newsletter and community calendar on our website.

Cellphones

If students need to bring cellphones to school, they must be handed in to the class teacher before school and will be returned at the end of the day.

Civil Defence

Whangārei Heads School is a civil defence site for the local community.

Communication

Our teachers like to keep in open communication with all parents. If you have a matter that needs discussing, we encourage you to make an appointment with your child's class teacher. We communicate with parents through our electronic newsletter, which is emailed out monthly and shared on Class Dojo. All classes are connected to parents through Class Dojo, as well as through our official Whangārei Heads School Facebook page. Your child's teacher will connect you with these.

Whangarei Heads School

Complaints Procedure

Make a time to meet with the class teacher to discuss your concern.

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If you don't feel you were "heard" or the matter wasn't resolved then contact Tracey Morgan (DP)

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If you don't feel you were "heard" or the matter wasn't resolved then contact Kelly Mercer - Principal

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If your concern hasn't been resolved by the previous steps then a formal complaint can be made to the Board.

You can find the steps for making a Formal Complaint on School Docs or contact Courtney at the office to send you a copy of the process.

School Docs: https://www.schooldocs.co.nz
Password: Caring

Our Place to Learn and Grow together

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Curriculum

At Whangārei Heads School, we teach all the essential learning areas of the New Zealand Curriculum (NZC):

- English
- Mathematics and Statistics
- Science
- Technology
- Social Sciences
- Health and Physical Education
- The Arts
- Learning Languages

As part of Learning Languages, all students develop foundational skills in Te Reo Māori.

Our teaching is underpinned by the key competencies that support students to be confident, connected, actively involved, lifelong learners:

- Managing Self
- Relating to Others
- Participating and Contributing
- Thinking
- Using Language, Symbols, and Text

We also uphold and integrate the principles and values of the NZC, ensuring they are encouraged, modelled, and explored throughout students' learning journeys.

Ngā Mātāpono – Our School Values

At the heart of our school culture are our core values, which guide how we learn and interact as a community:

- Manaakitanga – Showing kindness, respect, and care for others
- Whanaungatanga – Building strong relationships and a sense of belonging
- Manawaroa – Demonstrating resilience and perseverance
- Auahatanga – Encouraging creativity and innovation

There is a school-wide emphasis on structured literacy and numeracy, ensuring students develop strong foundational skills. Environmental education is also a key focus across all year levels, fostering a sense of responsibility and connection to our natural world.

Our learning philosophy emphasises student agency—encouraging children to be actively involved in all stages of their learning. We guide them to recognise their strengths, set goals, and understand their individual learning needs. By doing so, we aim to empower students to take greater responsibility for their education, both now and in the future.

Digital Technology
Each class has access to digital devices to support their learning. As part of our safety protocols, parents are required to sign an Cyber Safety Agreement annually. Students are also expected to sign an annual agreement to protocols for computer use and set-up within the class. Children are not permitted to access the internet without permission from the teacher or where the teacher is not able to monitor their use , e.g. break times. The use of the internet for social media, downloading music, or streaming services such as Netflix, is not permitted by students. Our internet use is monitored by Linewize to ensure Digital Safety.
Children will be encouraged to "Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) Chromebook for Years 5-8 from the start of 2024.

Dogs on school grounds
No dogs are allowed on school property at any time.

Dress Code
Whilst there is no compulsory school uniform, students are required to wear clean and sensible clothing. Hats must be worn outside of the 'covered area' during morning tea and lunchtime during Terms 1 and 4. Make up is not to be worn by students. Jewellery should be kept to a common-sense minimum, to be safe during physical activity and play.

Emergency Procedures
The school Board follows Emergency Procedure recommendations from SchoolDocs. A fire and/or other evacuation and emergency management drill is held by the school at least once per term.
All staff are familiar with the Emergency Procedures.

Enrolment
To enrol your child, please contact the school office for an enrolment pack. For pre-schoolers, we can arrange school visits to help provide a smooth transition to school, to support the whanau to be comfortable in the school setting, and to have a happy and settled start.

New Entrant children will have three Pre-School Visits from 9-11.20AM over 3 consecutive weeks.

- Visit 1; Fully parent supervised with the parent to remain in class.
- Visit 2; Parent can stay in class up to 9.45, when they can head up to the office and meet with the Principal for a coffee and chat
- Visit 3; Parents drop their child off no later than 8.50am, for an independent visit.

Enrolment - continued
All visits require the parent to supervise their child during morning tea (from 10.40 to 11.20). This allows the children to mix and make connections with new friends, but to be safe in the playground. Visits occur on Wednesdays and will begin three weeks from the child's anticipated start date.

Parents should provide the following information when enrolling their children, before their start date:

- The child's Birth Certificate and Immunisation Record
- Enrolment Forms - fully completed
- Specific Medical Information (medication, allergies, etc)
- Custody Arrangements

Whangarei Heads School now has an enrolment zone in place, Contact the office to find out whether your home is within this zone, or if you need to register your child for the next ballot.

Environment
We want our children to be actively involved in the care and development of the natural environment. Students are encouraged to have input into the school environment in a variety of ways. They are encouraged to develop an appreciation for, and connection with, their opportunities within our local environment. . An Enviro Council was established in 2023, and these children will assist in planning for on-going initiatives. We also work with local enviro-groups Predator Free Whangārei 2050, Backyard Kiwi, Bream Head Conservation Trust, Weed Action, Whitebait Connection and have experiences in our local marine reserves.

EOTC - Education Outside The Classroom
Our school runs a comprehensive outdoor education programme for all classes. As part of this programme our senior classes (Year 4-8) hold a class camp every year, usually in Term 1. Students will have the opportunity to take part in a range of outdoor activities, both within and outside our school community.

Facilities
Whangārei Heads School encourages wide community use of our facilities and involvement in our school activities and events, such as the Art Exhibition, Funky Fish - Fishing and Diving Competition School Productions and Sporting events. .
The Community Library is open to the public after school and on weekends, and the Art Shed is available for workshops, arranged through the school office. Local Environment groups also use Te Māngōroa (hall) for meetings.
Local community groups and individual members of the community visit the school to give talks and presentations to the children on specialised interest topics.

Funky Fish - Fishing and Diving Competition

This is our biggest annual fundraiser for the school and library, and a very popular event in our local community.

This fishing and diving competition usually takes place in Term 1. The event is co-ordinated by a dedicated team of school parents and staff, as well as receiving support and sponsorship from local businesses.

In 2024 we did a full review of the Funky Fish in the community and there have been changes made based on the feedback. We are moving towards a more sustainable Fishing and Diving Competition; encouraging Catch and Release, as well as limits on numbers of fish presented for measurement. As a result we have also moved to a length based measurement event. For full details of the new rules visit the Funky Fishing Website: https://funkyfishing.co.nz/

It is a fun family day out on the water, which is wrapped up at the Funky Fish Event HQ in Taurikura. Even if you don't take part in the fishing, there are plenty of activities for the family - bouncy castles, crafts, face painting, food stalls (with the freshest fish!) and drink stalls. There is even a craft challenge to create the “Funkiest Fish”.

Fish are measured for the competition and later auctioned off. The profits from the fish auction go directly to the school library, giving us the opportunity to purchase the latest books and encourage the love of reading in our tamariki!

Other profits raised on the day, from the raffle and stalls, are used for a school project, such as new playground equipment.

Each year we apply for a license for our Fishing Competition and Auction through the Ministry for Primary Industries. All fish breeds and weights are recorded and the results are given to MPI, along with the total funds raised.

Health and Medication
The Public Health Nurse calls at the school regularly.

New Entrant children are screened for Hearing and Vision testing during the first year at school. Children are re-tested as required or if a parent requests this, and parents are notified if problems are identified.

The Year 7&8 students have their immunisations as per their Child Health schedule. Information and consent forms will be sent home prior to the planned immunisation day.

Small first aid incidents will be treated by Courtney or the teachers. First aid courses are completed by all staff and kept up to date. Parents will be contacted for any major injuries, especially head injuries.

Written permission is required for staff to administer medication - please come to office to arrange.

It is important we are aware of any health issues or allergies.

Headlice are a problem in all schools. We ask that you inspect your children's hair regularly. A notice will be sent home if head lice are found on students.

Dental Health Services are available at the Onerahi clinic. For emergency dental appointments ring 0800 MY TEETH (0800 698 3384).

Homework
All children are required to read every week night, and to learn spelling words from Year 3 onwards. If a teacher feels the need to give homework to help maintain classroom learning objectives, they will let parents know about this at the beginning of the year. Children will sometimes take work home to finish what they were unable to complete in class.
To prepare Year 7 and 8 students for High school, more directed homework may be given.

Leadership
All students are provided with opportunities for leadership in the form of Whanau Leaders, School Councilors. Responsibilities for the library, bus monitors, gardens and recycling are offered to students throughout the year. All students are taught the importance of social responsibility.

Learning Support
We have two amazing Learning Support Assistants who work with students, classes and teaching staff for various reasons.
Some children have additional needs and require an Individual Education Plan (IEP) and extra support to help meet their potential.
Our Special Education Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) or Learning Support Co-ordinator (LSC) meets regularly with our Resource Teachers of Learning and Behaviour (RTLB) representative and MOE Learning Support to discuss individual cases.
We have a special intervention teacher to support learners as required.

Leaving School Grounds
Children are not permitted to leave the grounds during the school day without the consent of their parents and teacher. We need to know the whereabouts of all of our students during the school day—particularly if there is an emergency. Please report to the office and sign your child out if leaving during the school day.

Library
Our lovely library is an old church which was relocated onto our school site. The library serves both the community and the school and we strongly encourage you to utilise the resources available as community funding for the library is based on usage. The Mobile Library van also calls at our school on a regular basis ensuring a good supply of books. The library is managed by volunteers and we appreciate any help offered to keep it running.

Lost Property
Twice a term, clothing and footwear items are laid out for parents and children to claim. Naming your child's clothing is essential. All unclaimed items will be given to charity at the end of each term.

Newsletter
A comprehensive newsletter is emailed out monthly to school families. This newsletter contains information, class events, student's work and celebration items, sporting event information, as well as reminders for parents. These newsletters are also available on our website and Class Dojo.

Parent Contributions
School donations (voluntary parent contributions) have been kept to a minimum. These are $140 per child per year, and $240 per family per year. Whilst these voluntary parent donations are not compulsory, they assist us in providing valuable resources for the students.

Parent Support Group
This is a group of parents who organise social and fundraising events for school. Meetings are held in the lead up to school events. Notification of these will be via Class Dojo, the Whangārei Heads School Official Facebook Page, the newsletter and/or email.
Major events undertaken are:

- Movie Nights
- Discos
- Car Boot Sales
- Sausage Sizzles and lunches
- Refreshment stands at school events

Personal Items
We do not encourage children to bring valuable items or special toys along to school as they can be easily lost or damaged. If your child wishes to share a toy as news they can always send a photo through dojo to the class teacher. We ask that you keep toys at home.
Fidgets are an exception for students who require them. These should be small enough to be used in one hand, not light up or make noise, can be used under the line of sight, like under a desk or at the waist. They should not distract others.

Parking
We have two designated parent parking spaces.

The first runs along the roadside from the Playcentre to 'The Big Rock'. Please reverse into these parent parks to make for a safer exit during busy periods, and use the footpath behind 'The Big Rock' to enter the school grounds.

The second is inside the school grounds. There will be space here for parents to use for drop off and pick up both at the end and during the day.

When dropping off students in the morning, please take care not to block the driveways or to stop directly in front of 'The Big Rock' as this is where the Bus stops to let students out.

Pump Track Rules
The track has been designed for bikes, scooters, skateboards, and skates. That means there may be certain parts that are *not* suitable for your choice of "wheels" or your current skill level. **E-Bikes** are NOT permitted within school grounds.

- You must wear a helmet and shoes, and we strongly recommend skaters wear protective knee, elbow and wrist pads
- Go anti-clockwise only
- Bridges are for bike wheels only
- Children must be supervised on the track

The School Board will not take responsibility for any injury or accident that occurs through the tracks use outside of normal school hours.

Reporting
At the beginning of the year parents are invited to a Meet the Teacher Evening, where you will get to know your child's teacher and hear about their goals and vision for the class that year.

At mid-year, students receive a written report which is discussed at 3-way conferences, usually at the start of Term 3.

At the end of the year students will receive a more detailed written report including their achievement within the New Zealand curriculum.

New Entrant children will receive a report after 6 to 8 weeks at school.

Safety
We endeavour to maintain a safe environment for our pupils. We also encourage our students to consider their own safety and well-being in the “Keeping Ourselves Safe” programme. This extends beyond the school boundaries to matters such as road safety, sexual and physical abuse, bullying, and the importance of children having reliable people whom they can turn to.

School Bus
The Ministry of Education provides a free bus service to students within the school transport zone. These bus routes service the area from Ocean Beach to the northern end of McLeod's Bay for those students who are eligible. Ineligible students can sometimes use the bus routes on a casual basis, depending on bus numbers.

Please contact the office if you would like your child to begin using the school bus service.

All students using the bus must sign a Bus Code of Conduct form with their parents to confirm they understand the rules and expectations.

Bus Timetable:
Mornings
8:00AM Departs Taurikura
8:12AM Departs Ocean Beach
8:24AM Departs Ody Road
8:45AM Departs McLeods Bay (far end)

Afternoons
3:05PM Bus arrives at The Deck Cafe
3:10PM Bus arrives at the far end of McLeod Bay
3:35PM Bus arrives at Ocean Beach
3:45PM Bus completes Ody Road

School Hours
School commences at 9.00am and finishes at 3.00pm.
Morning Tea: 10:40am – 11:20am
Lunch Break: 12:50pm – 1:30pm
Office Hours: 8:30am – 4:00pm

School Docs
The School Docs website provides a comprehensive list of School Policies and Procedures that not only align with our School systems, are applicable to all New Zealand Schools. You can access School Docs at any time; just go to www.schooldocs.co.nz enter our school name, password: caring.

Smoking and Vaping
Our school is a Smokefree and Vapefree environment. We ask that you respect this rule at all times.

Sports Teams
Whangārei Heads School and Parua Bay School join forces to form our Manaia Sports teams; Manaia Tigers Football Club, Manaia Netball Club, Manaia Junior Rugby, and Manaia Hockey.
Gymnastics and Jujitsu are very popular with local families and are held at the Parua Bay Community Centre and the Taurikura Hall respectively.

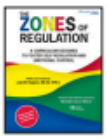
Stationery
We use Office Products Depot in Commerce Street for our student stationery packs. They hold classroom lists and will assist you with putting your packs together.

Technology
Our Year 7 and 8 class, Karearea attend Manaia View Technology Centre one day each week for their Technology unit. This unit has a Food Kitchen, Creative Design Studio and Resistant Materials Workshop. Total costs for each student to attend is $143. We ask for a $75 donation towards the take-home materials and the bus transport.

Well-being Programme
Promoting Well-being in both staff and students is important to us. We have developed our own Wellbeing model, pictured on the next page, in consultation with the children. This is on display in each classroom and forms part of our culture.

Part of this includes the Zones of Regulation programme;
Zones of Regulation is a programme that the school has implemented for helping children to self regulate their emotions and develop their social skills. It helps to improve the children's ability to recognise and communicate how they are feeling in a safe, non-judgemental way. It allows them to tap into strategies or tools to help them move between the zones.

The Pause, Breathe, Smile programme is used in conjunction with this.



To be used with *The Zones of Regulation*™ curriculum
Reproducible E

The ZONES of Regulation™

BLUE ZONE	GREEN ZONE	YELLOW ZONE	RED ZONE
Sad	Happy	Frustrated	Mad/Angry
Sick	Calm	Worried	Terrified
Tired	Feeling Okay	Silly/Wiggly	Elated/Ecstatic
Bored	Focused	Excited	Devastated
Moving Slowly	Relaxed	Loss of Some Control	Out of Control

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From *The Zones of Regulation*™ by Leah M. Kuypers • Available at www.socialthinking.com

Pause
Breathe
Smile

Brought to schools
by Southern Cross

WELL-BEING MODEL

Additional School Info

Contact us

School Office - 8:30AM to 4:00PM	09 434 0844
Email	office@whangareiheads.school.nz
Website	whangareiheads.school.nz
Address	28 Whangarei Heads School Road RD4, Whangarei 0174

Term Dates 2026

Term 1	Wed 4 Feb - Thu 2 Apr
Term 2	Mon 20 April - Fri 3 July
Term 3	Mon 20 Jul - Fri 25 Sep
Term 4	Mon 12 Oct - Wed 16 Dec

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WHANGAREI HEADS SCHOOL

• SINCE 1858 •