



Whānau Pānui (Newsletter) – 5 July 2023

Contents

<i>Have your say!</i>	1
<i>New Uniform Supplier</i>	1
Transition plan	2
<i>How will it work?</i>	3
Payment options	3
<i>More details about the uniform</i>	3
Other key features of the uniform	3
Accessories	4
<i>Uniform and Presentation Guidelines</i>	4
<i>Phones - in class and at school</i>	5
Misuse	6
Other controls we are putting in place	6
Concern about devices	6
Recently in the media	7
<i>Phones in school survey</i>	7
<i>NetSafe and Police Education</i>	8

Have your say!

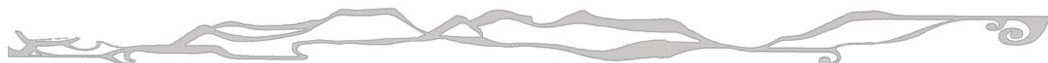
We want to hear your feedback on two topics now. There will seek further feedback on other topics soon.

- **Uniform guidelines** – the uniform policy was reviewed after consultation (in term one) and now we wish to consult on the uniform and presentation **guidelines** - [LINK TO Uniform Guidelines SURVEY](#)
- **Phone use in school** – Refer to the article below for more details - [LINK TO PHONE USE SURVEY](#)

There will seek further feedback on other topics soon.

New Uniform Supplier

Recently, the board update / pānui announced that the board has decided on a new uniform supplier. The process started back in 2021 when we completed a survey about our community expectations for uniform and satisfaction. Following a call for requests for proposals from several uniform suppliers the board completed a rigorous process to identify the best uniform supplier for the school based on our key criteria - that the uniform will be fit for purpose (be smart and provide good options), good quality and value for money (affordable).



We are delighted to announce that **NZ Uniforms** met all our criteria, and more, and will be our new uniform provider.

NZ Uniforms is a family owned and operated business that started in 1994. They have uniform stores throughout New Zealand and work with over 300 schools as well as sports clubs and businesses. One of those schools is Pārāwai School, so many of our parents have experience with this company.



Since the board made its decision in May, we have completed a more detailed design process, with focus groups - students, staff, board members - providing insights every step of the way. We are now able to share images of the design and more details. We will have specific samples next term, and there are a few more decisions to make about the final options.

Until then, here are some key images, to give an overview of the 'new look'

Some key features

- Traditional colours (navy blue and gold), with more royal blue (from our logo) to freshen the look.
- A non-gender specific uniform – students will choose from upper and lower options (see more below)
- "Junior" School upper (polo) – Years 9 to 11
- "Senior" School upper (polo) – Years 12 and 13
- Plain black crew socks for all.
- New blazer (optional or formal uniform)
- A standard PE uniform that doubles as a general sports uniform for sports that do not need a specialty uniform.

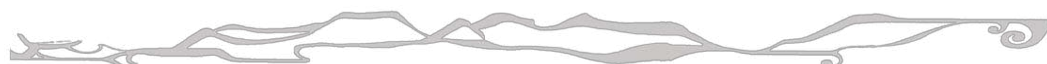


Transition plan

There is a **transition period** for the uniform, with the expectation that **by 2026** the full school will (mostly) be in the uniform. There are practical and financial reasons for the transition.

- We do not expect new uniform to be purchased for those who already have the current uniform.
- There is **existing stock** that needs to be supplied (sold) in the transition period – those year levels that need new items (due to wear and tear and new sizes) will continue to buy those options. Especially the lowers where there is not that much difference, yet it is a waste to not use the existing stock.
- We recognise that younger siblings use their older siblings' outgrown uniform, and that will continue. Year 9s in 2023 that have older siblings' uniform. Some may have intended to purchase second-hand uniform. For both those situations and other reasons can seek support from the school to get as many Year 9s in the new uniform as possible, although we recognise there will be some leeway required. The support will be from our Student Support Trust or other equity funding.

2024	2025	2026
Year 9 New uniform Year 10 Current Uniform Year 11 Current Uniform Year 12 New (white) or current (blue or white) polo, current lowers Year 13 New (white) or current (white) polo but can wear current lowers	Year 9 New uniform Year 10 New uniform Year 11 Current Uniform Year 12 New (white) polo, but can wear current lowers. Year 13 New (white) or current (white) but can wear current lowers.	All year levels in the new uniform There will no doubt be some current lowers in circulation and that is acceptable.



How will it work?

Te Kura Tuarua o Te Kauaeranga / Thames High School uniforms will be available in three main ways from NZ Uniforms:

- NZ Uniforms retail store in Hamilton 244 Tristram Street (from a date to be confirmed, after November 2023)
- an annual 'pop up' store at Thames High over 2 days (January 2024)
- ordering online and home delivery (from the same date of the changeover to NZ Uniforms)

There is a dedicated uniform website where you can order uniforms online 24/7. The online shop will offer the same products and services as the physical store, has a 'Live Chat' service during business hours for customer service support and offers the ability to generate WINZ quotes.

Payment options

There are a variety of payment options available including cash, debit, and credit cards as well as Zip.

NZ Uniforms also offer the 'Uniform Club' that allows families to put money aside during the year in preparation for the Back-to-School season. They also work closely with local charities and governmental organisations such as Variety and the Ministry of Social Development. WINZ quotes can be generated online.

The **NZ Uniforms website** www.nzuniforms.com has more information and you will soon be able to see the Thames High School uniform also featured online.

More details about the uniform

Other key features of the uniform

- Non-gender specific uniform – students will choose an upper and lower option.

o Uppers:

- Junior school (Years 9 to 11) navy blue with royal blue side panels, and gold piping; or
- Senior school (Years 12 and 13) white, with royal blue side panels, and gold piping

And

- A jersey; and/or
- A soft-shell jacket (with a hood)

o Lower

- A skirt or
- Shorts - regular or fitted style. The 'fitted style' may be more preferred for a more 'traditionally feminine' fit; or
- Long trousers - regular or fitted style.
- o Socks – plain black 'crew' (short to lower calf)
- o Footwear
 - plain black sandal with a back strap (various styles); or
 - plain black shoes (range of styles)
- o A formal uniform – regular uniform skirt or long trousers, white shirt or blouse, a tie, and a blazer.



- No specific description of a 'winter' and 'summer' uniform – this is personal preference.
- **Physical Education shirt and shorts**, are required, with suitable footwear.
- **Cap or bucket hat** (recommended for summer) – there is a school cap and bucket hat (reversible) option.



Style: PE Tee
Sizes: K4-K16, S-3XL, 5XL
Fabrication: 100% Polyester - Fully Sublimated
Weight: 160gsm
Colours: Navy, Royal & Gold



SOFTSHELL JACKET
Sizes: K4-K16, S-5XL
Fabrication: Outer 95% Polyester, 5% Elastane. Inner 100% Polyester Fleece
Weight: 320gsm
Colour: Navy

Accessories



Sizes: One size fits all
Fabric: 100% Recycled Polyester
Colour: Navy



Sizes: 55cm, 57cm, 59cm, 61cm
Fabric: 85% polyester, 35% cotton
Weight: 185gsm
Colour: Navy (Midnight) / Gold



Style: Scarf
Sizes: One Size
Fabrication: 80% Wool, 20% Nylon
Colours: Navy, Royal & Gold



SOCKS
Style: Crew
Fabric: 80% cotton, 17% polyamide, 3% elastane
Colours: Black

Uniform and Presentation Guidelines

Following the policy review (term 1/2) and with the new uniform supplier we have reviewed our uniform and presentation guidelines. There are some aspects we would like to both inform about and get feedback on.

The board will consider the feedback before the end of the year and finalise the guidelines.

Sometimes there is a more conservative prescriptive version and a less prescriptive version, the board may settle on something in-between. Both versions are 'less prescriptive' than the current guidelines (on our website) that have not been reviewed for many years and may reflect more traditional values.

This is detailed information as there are importance consequences for our school and individuals (e.g. consequences). Therefore, under the Education Act (2020) we need to consult about these details.

We appreciate you taking the time for your feedback. This survey will need 10-15 minutes to complete.

Only summary information will be shared with board, and comments will be used to only identify trends and areas that we can do better with. [Click here to complete the survey](#)



Phones - in class and at school

In late 2021 we surveyed our community to help us work out what level of control in our school for phones was supported by parents, students, and teachers.

The board considered the results and other information from a range of sources, including feedback from staff, students, and parents, to set the current limitation.

The board took the view that students needed to learn without the distraction of their phones, and therefore stipulated that phones were not to be used in class, to be kept in bags or handed in to teachers for safe keeping.

But phones were allowed to be used at breaks, as in other workplaces.

The board decided that we need to know when to use and when not to use phones. While it encouraged students to interact with others at breaks, it recognised that for some students, playing game or reading an article using their phone was recreation for them. It also recognised that a ban at break time would mean the need to remind students and potentially confiscate them for safe keeping, and that may not be a positive interaction. Therefore, it did not ban phones at break times.

We have the poster to the right in classrooms with this guidance -

- If you would prefer, give your phone to your Kaiako / teacher to lock away for the class.
- Please do not put your Kaiako / teacher in the position of having to remove your phone.
- If your phone is not in your bag, we may:
 - Remind you & expect you to put it away without comment or fuss.
 - Take your phone for safe keeping for the rest of the period.
 - If repeated: the phone may be taken to Student Support for safe keeping until the end of the week.
 - Contact your parents to discuss phones.



**Focus on learning
without distractions**

It is recognised that policing this expectation is inconsistent, and there may be times a teacher specifically allows use of a phone, for example to complete an online quiz, look up something, or take a picture to upload to an assignment. We do encourage consistency but know that it is being reported home that phones are being used in class time (sometimes).

While it may be preferable that there is a laptop (BYOD or school device) this is not always the case, and teachers may find it convenient to allow quick use of a phone.

We do have confiscation ('safe keeping') options in place, yet these do not seem to be used that often. When they do, we often have parents come in to get the phone and then give it right back to the student. Some parents do not do that, and we really appreciate that.



Misuse

If phones or other devices are misused, and it is verified, then connecting to WiFi from anything other than a school device is banned for that student. That is to make sure school work can be completed.

Other controls we are putting in place

The Network for Learning (N4L) WiFi network has recently been upgraded. We have taken the opportunity to also look at other controls we can put in place to ensure the WiFi is used for its purpose – to support learning.

- There will be a time limit on WiFi access from 8 am to 5 pm.
- We are working out practical details on how we can allow student to only connect to WiFi using a BYOD learning device – a laptop, **not a phone**.

This means that learning is supported, but phone access to the internet is not. Those without a BYOD device, can use their own. BYOD devices can also be misused of course but the normal filters and then consequences for ICT misuse if detected would be put in place. Larger devices may be easy to monitor.

With data plans, students may then only use data plans to access the internet using phones. This then becomes something that parents can support us and place limits on data. There are students that pay their own data accounts, so that would require a different approach. We often suggest putting limits on data use and Wi-Fi access at home, and we do get some support, but often the answer is no. Parents report how hard it is to separate a child from their phone, but we do encourage persisting.

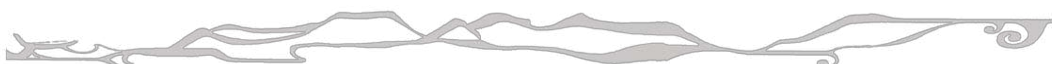
Concern about devices

We know that **most** young people are very responsible and take their responsibility of using phones and being kind to others very seriously. We also know that young people make mistakes or have yet to learn how to use their phones responsibly. We appreciate support we get from parents in dealing with issues, and

Like many parents, we are highly concerned with the misuse of phones, and we do have to deal with issues that happen with social media – social media bullying, inappropriate images being taken and shared and so on. Like all misbehaviour that is reported and has the potential to cause harm, we investigate and follow our procedures. We encourage reporting any misbehaviour involving technology, bullying or otherwise.

Our experience is most of the social media misuse happens after school time, but we know it also happens in school time. An online trend to get likes by recording something like a fight is one thing we have reminded students will be treated the same way as if you were fighting yourself. Fortunately, we have had to deal with only a couple of cases, and had great support from parents.

We encourage parents to only contact their child through the school office, and vice versa, during school time. Yet this doesn't always happen. Then the young person says to their teacher "I have to take this call from mum..." (and it is truly mum calling)



Recently in the media

Recently (7 June) there was a TV programme that highlighted some concerns about phones ([Episode 3 of Paddy Gower Has Issues](#)). There three key messages were relayed to the school at assembly:

1. A psychologist on the programme said that **those under 16 did not have emotional maturity (brain development)** (on average) to handle the complexity of a smart phone.
2. One recommendation was that parents give their children 'dumb phone' – that allows you stay in contact (phone calls and text) but so not allow social media. The big bonus is these phones are much cheaper. The [cheapest](#) can be about \$50.
<https://www.makeuseof.com/smartphone-vs-dumphone-reasons-switch/>
3. The other recommendation was to "ban phones from schools like they do in Australia", as that sent a message that phones for young people are not positive and one way to try to limit the potential harms caused.

There will be mixed feelings about these conclusions, but worth thinking about. Many of the studies involving phone use of younger children are concerning many.

For more: [to read and watch if you'd like](#). One quote:

"We heard a lot of stories about kids hitting their parents in the face when they tried to take their cell phone away from them. And one mom reported that her son peed himself instead of getting up, they wouldn't leave his gaming console," Dr Marsh said.

Dumb phones – even when there is just texting available – were a distraction in class, for those of us old enough to remember – but the access to social media has made the addiction to the internet so much easier and therefore a bigger distraction.

Phones in school survey

We are repeating our 2021 survey and ask whether you support the current limitations or would support a ban on phones, and an opportunity to gather an update on this issue.

A proposition to ban phones has come from our Parents Forum, and our commitment is to gather a broad voice, for the board to reconsider the issue.

[Click here to complete the phone use survey](#)



NetSafe and Police Education

For your calendar – **Monday 18 August 2023 at 5.30 pm**

- We are working with police (Senior Constable Brian Connors and [NetSafe](#)) to run an information / education session for parents / caregivers / whānau.
- We will invite parents / caregivers from all local schools.
- Following the presentation there may be an opportunity to then meet with the Parents Forum, scheduled for this date.
- While we must confirm arrangements, and the date is subject to change with NetSafe staff available, **but please put this in your calendar.**



Whānau and Community Presentation (60-90 minutes)

In this presentation, Netsafe Education and Schools Team cover key online safety messages for parents and whānau. We provide information and tools to support tamariki in navigating online environments and safely managing the challenges and risks.

We will explore:

- *Quick starter tips for parents, whānau and young people.*
- *Information to enhance your digital parenting knowledge.*
- *Details about the online risks and challenges your child may face.*
- *Advice about how you can help your child if something goes wrong online.*

We will also run a session for staff at school that covers important information for safety.

Staying Safe Online in Learning Environments (60 minutes)

In this session, we unpack what a digital citizen is, how this relates to school values and culture, and the resources available to support learning opportunities for ākonga. We also explore how the learning can involve whānau, caregivers, and members of your school community.

We will explore:

- *Agreements to foster safe and effective classroom and home learning.*
- *Developing a learner profile on digital devices to support effective active use online.*
- *Strategies for ākonga to reduce, minimise, and respond to online harm.*
- *Leadership opportunities to develop and promote online safety for your ākonga.*

