



NEW ZEALAND PERFORMANCE ACADEMY AOTEAROA

PROSPECTUS

2026

BOARD WELCOME



**NEW ZEALAND
PERFORMANCE
ACADEMY AOTEAROA**

Te Kura Whakapakari Tākaro o Aotearoa

We are excited to launch an exceptional academy for athletes—New Zealand Performance Academy Aotearoa (NZPAA)—where dedicated young individuals no longer have to choose between their education and their athletic dreams.

This purpose-built school offers a balanced curriculum that integrates rigorous academics with world-class athlete development, supported by flexible scheduling, personal guidance, culturally responsive teaching, and access to top-tier coaching and facilities.

Our vision is to create a learning environment where students thrive both in the classroom and in their chosen sport, developing the skills, knowledge, and resilience needed to succeed in all areas of life.

We warmly invite you to join us and be part of our inaugural cohort, experiencing firsthand what it means to be part of a school that truly understands and supports the unique journey of student-athletes. Together, we will set a new standard for education and performance in Aotearoa.



OUR KAUPAPA

(SCHOOL VISION, MISSION & VALUES)

MISSION STATEMENT

At NZPAA, our mission is to deliver a high-quality, flexible education that empowers young people to excel both academically and athletically.

We are committed to fostering a learning environment that integrates rigorous curriculum, personalised support, and world-class training, enabling students to pursue their passions without compromise. Through culturally responsive teaching, intentional planning, and a focus on wellbeing, we prepare learners to lead with purpose, contribute meaningfully to their communities, and thrive in all areas of life.

OUR VISION

The vision is to support young people in becoming resilient, capable and purpose-driven learners who are prepared for life, intentionally contributing to their community through the lens of sport and high performance.

OUR VALUES

- **Excellence** by aiming high and by persevering in the face of challenges by continuous assessment.
- **Innovation, inquiry, and curiosity** by thinking critically, creatively, and reflectively, and through data insights.
- **Diversity** as found in our different cultures, languages, and whakapapa.
- **Equity** through access to data insights, fairness and social justice.
- **Community and participation** to uplift the people around us including whanau and supporters.
- **Ecological sustainability** which includes care for the environment and exemplifying engagement.
- **Integrity** which involves being honest, responsible, accountable, and acting ethically.
- **Respect** the individual, each other, and human rights.

LOCATION AND FACILITIES



NZPAA is proudly based at the New Zealand Campus of Innovation and Sport (NZCIS) in Upper Hutt—a world-class facility that hosts elite sports organisations such as the Wellington Phoenix Football Club and the Wellington Hurricanes Rugby team. NZCIS also regularly welcomes international sporting teams, creating a dynamic and professional environment that inspires excellence.

This unique location directly enhances our student wellbeing and performance strategy, offering access to advanced infrastructure, expert personnel, and a culture of high achievement. Students benefit from:

A. WORLD-CLASS FACILITIES

- Purpose-built indoor and outdoor turf fields with integrated performance data collection
- Strength and conditioning zones designed for individualised training and assessment
- Recovery pools and medical suites to support physical wellbeing
- Sensory-friendly and wellbeing spaces to promote emotional balance
- A safe, supervised environment that supports consistent training regardless of weather

B. MEDICAL AND EMERGENCY SUPPORT

- Onsite access to medical professionals including physiotherapists and team doctors for rapid response to injuries or health concerns
- Emergency protocols aligned with NZCIS site-wide procedures, rehearsed regularly for student safety

C. MENTORSHIP AND CULTURE BUILDING

- Daily exposure to professional athletes fosters a culture of resilience, discipline, and wellbeing literacy
- Opportunities for guest speakers, workshops, and observational learning in athlete welfare and performance

For students wanting to attend from outside the region there is a self-funded option to utilise the existing boarding house onsite at NZCIS. This is not part of NZPAA, however is MOE accredited and established. Please email enquiries@nzpaa.school.nz for further information. **Accommodation – Wellington Phoenix Academy**

CURRICULUM

At the New Zealand Performance Academy Aotearoa, our curriculum is designed for Year 11- Year 13, and to be knowledge-rich, student-centric, and grounded in evidence-based practice and continuous assessment and data collection. We are committed to delivering a robust and flexible educational experience that aligns with the principles of the New Zealand Curriculum and supports the holistic development of every learner.

We offer full NCEA course options across a range of learning areas, ensuring students have access to meaningful pathways that reflect their interests, strengths, and future aspirations. Our curriculum includes a wide selection of assessment standards with applications to sport and other relevant contexts, allowing students to engage with content that is both academically rigorous and personally relevant. This flexibility also ensures that learning is tailored to the individual needs of students, supporting diverse goals and learning styles.

Our approach is not project-based; instead, we emphasise structured, intentional learning that builds deep conceptual understanding. A clear assessment plan beginning at enrolment, underpins our curriculum, with a strong emphasis on external

assessment to promote academic excellence and national recognition of achievement.

The curriculum design at the NZPAA is informed by effective pedagogy, including collaborative learning, formative feedback, and culturally responsive teaching. We prioritise student agency, encouraging learners to take ownership of their progress, and we will continually refine our practice through research, reflection, and benchmarking, to ensure the highest standards of teaching and learning.

The NZPAA curriculum is driven by our vision, values, assessment, and key competencies and includes (but is not limited to), the follow Learning Areas: English, Science, Mathematics, Social Sciences, Languages, Health & Physical Education and the Arts.

TIMETABLE SAMPLE

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8.15-8.30	Karakia	Karakia	Karakia	Karakia	Karakia
8:30-9:30	Maths	English	Business	Science	Health & PE
9:30-10:30	Business	Maths	English	Business	Science
BREAK					
10:45-11:45	Sport/Study	Health & PE	Maths	Sport/Study	English
11:45-12:45	Sport/Study	Sport/Study	Sport/Study	Maths	Business
LUNCH					
1:15-2:15	Health & PE	Science	Sport/Study	Sport/Study	Sport/Study
BREAK					
2:30-3:30	Science	Sport/Study	Health & PE	English	Sport/Study

PASTORAL CARE & STUDENT WELLBEING

As part of the academic timetable, students will participate in designated Sport/Study blocks, which can be used for gym sessions, specialised sports training, or focused study time. The use of this block will be tailored to each student, based on their personal goals, learning needs, and sporting commitments.

For students engaged in competitive or high-performance sport, this provides structured time to train without compromising their academic progress. For others, it offers a quiet, supported space to complete coursework, seek academic support, or engage in wellbeing-focused activities.

The wellbeing component may include sessions on nutrition, injury prevention, goal setting, time management, and mental resilience, supporting students to develop balanced, sustainable routines. This flexibility ensures that students are supported holistically—academically, physically,

and emotionally—leading to better overall outcomes and a stronger sense of personal responsibility and motivation.

At the New Zealand Performance Academy Aotearoa, student wellbeing is foundational to our high-performance model. We recognise that true excellence on the field and in the classroom is only possible when students feel safe, supported, and seen for who they are physically, mentally, emotionally, and culturally. Our designated Director of Sport and Wellbeing has responsibility and oversight for this.



ENROLMENT

Our enrolment process has been designed to be inclusive, transparent, and fully aligned with the Education and Training Act 2020. Students who apply for enrolment, understanding and agreeing with the model we are implementing, will be welcome to attend. All incoming students will be assessed at the enrolment phase.

- i. Free Enrolment and Free Education (Section 33): Our school will provide free enrolment and free education. We will not charge any enrolment or tuition fee.
- ii. Equal Rights for Students with Special Education Needs (Section 34): We ensure all students, including those with special education needs, have the same right to access and participate in our learning programme. We do not discriminate based on learning, behavioural, physical, or emotional support needs. On enrolment, students requiring additional support are identified collaboratively with families and through assessment. Students are provided with individualised support plans before they begin their education. Our staff foster inclusive supportive classroom and

sporting environments that remove barriers and promote achievement for all.

When student applications exceed the number of available places, we implement a fair and transparent independent ballot system. This process is run by an external party to ensure impartiality. All applicants who meet the general enrolment criteria will be entered into the ballot and selected at random, ensuring equal opportunity for all families. Families not successful in the ballot will be placed on a waitlist and notified promptly.

Our enrolment systems reflect our values of fairness, access, and inclusion—ensuring every student can grow academically, physically, and develop as a future leader, regardless of their background or personal circumstances.

DOWNLOAD ENROLMENT FORM

<https://nzpaa.school.nz/enrolment/>

TERM DATES 2026

TERM 1: Monday 2nd February to Thursday 2nd April
Statutory Holidays: Friday 6th February (Waitangi Day)

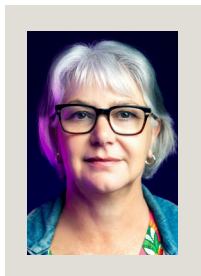
TERM 2: Monday 20th April to Friday 3rd July
Statutory Holidays: Monday 27th April (Anzac Day), Monday 1st June (King's Birthday)

TERM 3: Monday 20th July to Friday 25th September
No Statutory Holidays in Term 3

TERM 4: Monday 12th October to Friday 4th December
Statutory Holidays: Monday 26th October (Labour Day Observed)

OUR LEADERSHIP TEAM

KAREN VAN GEMERDEN DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS (CEO)



Karen is an experienced education and business professional with a strong background in school operations, financial management, and leadership across both charter and private schools. She holds a Master of Educational Management (MEdM) with Distinction and a Bachelor of Business Studies (BBS), equipping her with a strong foundation in both strategic leadership and practical administration.

Karen has successfully led initiatives that enhance school performance, streamline operations, and support student success. Her work spans governance, budgeting, compliance, and program development, with a focus on creating sustainable and student-centered learning environments. She is passionate about education that is both innovative and grounded in strong systems, and she brings a collaborative, solutions-focused approach to every role.



MEET THE BOARD



DAVID DOME

An employee of Wellington Phoenix for 18 years, 13 of them as General Manager, David has led the development and expansion for the club from one team in 2008 to two professional teams and eight Academy teams. Throughout his career, David has built up a network of sporting and education contacts from around the world which, combined with an overtly community focussed business approach, has led to a strong vision in the development of the proposed charter school.



RICHARD KERR-BELL (Ngāpuhi, Te Rarawa, Ngāti Kuri, Te Aupouri)

A strategic governance leader with fifteen years of service to advancing New Zealand businesses and organisations in education, sports, and social services. Currently steering strategic initiatives as Director at Te Ope Whakaora Salvation Army New Zealand Rūnanga. Member of the Tikanga Māori Tertiary Review of Qualifications Working Group since December 2013. Past educator at AUT, University of Otago (Senior Lecturer), and Otago Polytechnic.



BRETT O'RILEY

Brett has an extensive involvement with the education sector. CEO of NZTech (2009-2011) involved with the development of the digital technology curriculum, Deputy CE Ministry of Science + Innovation (2011-2012), and CEO of ATEED (2012-17) including responsibility for Study Auckland and international education. CEO of the Employers and Manufacturers Association (PTE) from 2019-2024, Member of the Establishment Board of Te Pukenga in 2019-2020. Brett chaired the 21C Digital Technologies Reference Group for Associate Education Minister, the late Hon Nikki Kay, which produced the report "Future Focused Learning in Connected Communities". He has been an advisor to AUT, University of Auckland, MIT, and Media Design School in several capacities, and was the Executive Chair of partnership school, City Senior School.



MARIA KERR

Has 21 years of experience in the education sector, as a teacher and educational leader. Has a strength in empowering individuals and teams to reach their potential, while fostering community, collaboration, and excellence. Currently Deputy Principal at Sacred Heart College, a mother and former New Zealand age group triathlete.



RAKESH NAIDOO MNZM

Rakesh is a senior public servant that has led national initiatives that strengthen public safety, meaningful engagement and community trust across Aotearoa New Zealand's diverse communities, particularly during times of crisis. Rakesh is a foundational member of the Football For All programme, a Wellington Phoenix initiative that provides fully subsidised football and futsal access to over 2,000 young people. Respected for his governance experience and 30 years of community service, he has served on both national sport and community organisations. In 2023, Rakesh was appointed a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit.

CONTACT INFORMATION

FOR ALL ENQUIRIES PLEASE CONTACT:

EMAIL: enquiries@nzpaa.school.nz

ADDRESS: New Zealand Performance Academy Aotearoa
X-Block
30 Somme Road, Trentham, Wellington, New Zealand

The NZCIS campus is well serviced by Heretaunga railway station Heretaunga Train Station which is right across from NZCIS, from Wellington CBD, the train journey to Heretaunga takes about 40 minutes and about 15 minutes from Lower Hutt. There is bus access next to, plus taxis and shuttles can drop you directly to the campus. Buses 110, 115, 930 and N22 serve the NZCIS bus stop right outside the campus. Additionally, students who require residential support may be eligible to live in the Phoenix, Ministry of Education-approved boarding establishment located adjacent to the school.



www.nzpaa.school.nz



