



NEW ZEALAND PERFORMANCE ACADEMY AOTEAROA

PROSPECTUS

2026

PRINCIPAL'S WELCOME



**NEW ZEALAND
PERFORMANCE
ACADEMY AOTEAROA**

Te Kura Whakapakari Tākaro o Aotearoa

Tēnā koutou katoa,

Welcome to New Zealand Performance Academy Aotearoa, a school built for young people who are committed to excellence in both their education and their sport.

We exist to support student-athletes who are striving for high performance on and off the field. Our learners are motivated, disciplined, and future focused. They require a flexible, responsive learning environment that enables them to meet the demands of training and competition while achieving meaningful academic success. At NZPAA, they do not have to compromise one pursuit for the other.

We are a school first. Academic achievement, critical thinking, and strong future pathways sit at the heart of everything we do. Our students work towards nationally recognised qualifications and develop the knowledge, skills, and habits needed for life beyond school. Sport is not a substitute for learning. It is a powerful partner to it, strengthening resilience, time management, teamwork, and the pursuit of personal excellence.

Alongside education and sport, wellbeing and hauora are essential pillars of our high performance model. We recognise that sustainable success is built on balance. Students are supported to care for their physical, mental, emotional, and social wellbeing so they can perform at their best in all areas of life. We encourage young people to understand that while their sport is a passion, it does not define their identity. They are scholars, leaders, teammates, and community members first.

Character sits at the heart of high performance. Talent alone is never enough. We expect our students to show humility, respect, and integrity in how they carry themselves, recognising that true leaders lift others up rather than place themselves above them. Through our daily practice, students learn that discipline, gratitude, and service are as important as winning. We are committed to developing young people whose actions reflect strong values, both in sport and in life.



We also recognise the importance of mauri, the life force and inner vitality that each learner brings. Nurturing mauri means creating an environment where students feel energised, purposeful, and connected to who they are and where they come from. When mauri is strong, confidence grows, relationships strengthen, and learning flourishes. This understanding shapes our commitment to holistic development and to honouring the whole person.

Our commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi underpins our practice and relationships. We strive to honour partnership, participation, and protection by valuing identity, fostering inclusive environments, and ensuring all learners are supported to succeed as themselves. This commitment strengthens our school culture and enriches the learning journey for everyone.

Our high performance environment reflects real world expectations. Commitment, accountability, and perseverance are not optional. They are part of our culture. We support students to pursue excellence in their chosen codes while ensuring their wellbeing, character, and academic progress remain the priority. Success here is holistic and sustainable.

Our values guide this work every day.

Tuakiritanga affirms identity and belonging. We honour who our students are and create an environment where they feel grounded, confident, and connected.

Whakaohooho inspires growth and aspiration. We challenge students to push their limits, embrace opportunity, and strive for continual improvement.

Rangatiratanga fosters leadership and self-determination. We empower students to take ownership of their learning, their choices, and their future, leading with integrity and purpose.

These values shape a culture where students support one another, uphold high standards, and represent themselves and our school with pride.

Partnership with whānau is essential. When school and home work together, young people are best positioned to thrive. We value your aspirations for your young person and look forward to working alongside you.

Thank you for considering NZPAA. We are proud to offer a learning environment where education, wellbeing, character, and sport work together to unlock potential, cultivate discipline, and prepare young people to succeed in whatever pathway they choose.

Ngā manaakitanga,

Ryan Clark
Principal | New Zealand Performance Academy
(NZPAA)
Tumuaki | Te Kura Whakapakari Tākaro o
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

NZPAA Values/Mātāpono



Tuakiritanga

Knowing Who You Are. Pride and Strength in Identity

Whakaohoho

You are energised, curious, reflective, and fully present.

Rangatiratanga

Aspiring to Your Best Future

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 to be knowledge-rich, student-centric, and grounded in evidence-based practice and continuous feedback and assessment. 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.

A clear plan beginning at enrolment, underpins our curriculum, with a strong emphasis on a range of assessment to promote academic excellence and national recognition of achievement.

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

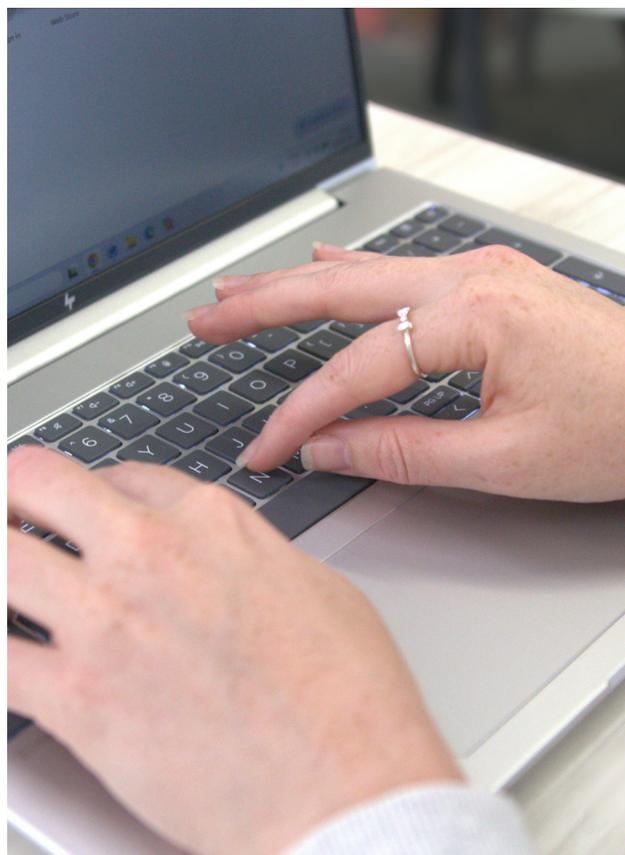
As part of the academic timetable, students will participate in designated Hāpai Āki blocks, which can be used for gym sessions, specialised sports training, or focused study time. The use of this block will be tailored to each student, based on their personal goals, learning needs, and sporting commitments.

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 TEAM



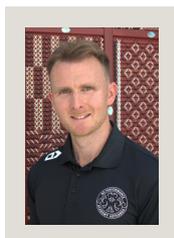
KAREN VAN GEMERDEN | Director of Business (CEO)

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.



RYAN CLARKE
Principal



ZAK BROWN
Director of Sport
and Wellbeing



KARLA MORTON
Director of
Curriculum



**CHARLOTTE
PULMAN-POTAKA**
Office Manager



NATHANIA HANNA
Admin Support



DIANA DIXON
Teacher



**KIT
SHERMAN-BALL**
Teacher



**LIVISI
LATAILAKEPA**
Teacher



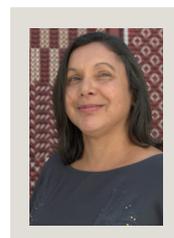
MAX PEARSON
Teacher



PETE DOWDEN
Teacher



RACHAEL WHITE
Teacher



**SHONA
VENKATASAMY**
Teacher

MEET THE SPONSOR 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.



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.



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.



DR SOLA FREEMAN MNZM

An educational consultant with over 20 years' experience in education, community sport and business. A background as a teacher, principal and lecturer in initial teacher education, with deep knowledge and understanding of curriculum and pedagogy.

For over 10 years Sola was an academic at Victoria University of Wellington, including lecturing trainee teachers, producing a PhD in the teaching of science, and undertaking research in tertiary student learning experiences, intentional teaching, philosophies of learning, curriculum and pedagogy. Sola has been on the Capital Football Board for seven years and is currently the Board Chair.

CONTACT INFORMATION

FOR ALL ENQUIRIES PLEASE CONTACT:

EMAIL: enquiries@nzpaa.school.nz

ADDRESS: New Zealand Performance Academy Aotearoa
48 Somme Road, Trentham, Wellington, New Zealand
Phone: 0204 058 9054

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

