



SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

WEEK 5 | TERM 1 | 2026



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PAPATOETOE HIGH SCHOOL



@PAPHIGH.OFFICIAL



Principal's message

Tēnā koutou katoa,

As you read this newsletter, we are now halfway through term 1.

While it feels like we only just started the school year, a great deal has already happened.

To begin with, our student roll has grown to 1800 students, which means we are currently operating at capacity in terms of classroom space. This week, the scaffolding will come down on the refurbishment of E Block, where new windows, carpets, and wall coverings have been installed. At the same time, we continue to work closely with the Ministry of Education in preparation for a new 12-classroom block, which is scheduled to be ready for the start of 2027.

The Ministry of Education has set a national target of 80% of students attending school regularly. Regular attendance is defined as attending 90% or more of the school year. What this means in practical terms is that a student will fall below 90% attendance if they have more than five days off in a term.

You can be assured that everyone here at Papatoetoe High School is doing everything we can to meet this target. What will help us enormously is the support from home in ensuring your children attend school every day. If your child is unable to attend school for any reason, the best way you can support us is by contacting the school to explain the reason for their absence.

Alongside attendance, we also set a high standard for punctuality. Each morning, I welcome our students as they come down Nicholson Avenue, and I do notice a number who arrive just after the bell, which unfortunately means they are late for school. As a reminder, students are required to be in their period 1 classroom by 8:40am, ready to begin learning at 8:45am.

Our 2025 NCEA results have just been released, and I am delighted to share that we have seen improvements across all levels.

- NCEA Level 1 achievement increased by just under 10%
- NCEA Level 2 achievement increased by 10%
- NCEA Level 3 achievement increased by 5%

Our Literacy and Numeracy results have also improved significantly, as shown below:

	Achievement	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13
2024	Literacy & Numeracy	49.6	71.3	84.5
2025	Literacy & Numeracy	71.0	86.5	89.9

The ASB Polyfest is just around the corner, and many of our students are busily preparing to represent their cultures in ways that make them, us, and you extremely proud. I would like to sincerely thank everyone involved managers, coaches and tutors, stage support teams, mums and dads, aunties and uncles who give up precious time to support our students in their preparation. To our students who are taking part, we wish you all the very best. Unfortunately, due to the new attendance rules, schools are not permitted to close to allow students to attend Polyfest. As a result, Papatoetoe High School is required to remain open for instruction for all students who are not taking part in PolyFest on Wednesday 18th, Thursday 19th, and Friday 20th March.

Thank you to all the families who ensure their children come to school in correct uniform. It makes us extremely proud to see our students wearing their uniform well. Papatoetoe High School means a great deal to our staff, and seeing our uniform worn with pride speaks volumes about the strong relationship we share with our community.

Finally, as I have shared previously, please don't underestimate the vital role you play in your children's success at school. Their success is the result of a team of three - us, them, and you. The more connected and involved whānau are with the school, the better the outcomes for our young people.

Ngā mihi nui,
Barry Williams - Tumuaiki/Acting Principal





ATTENDANCE

EVERYDAY COUNTS

Kia ora whānau,

Regular school attendance is essential for student success. Being at school every day helps students build strong learning habits, stay connected with everyone, and achieve their academic goals.

What does good attendance look like?



90% attendance = Regular Attender
This means **no more than 5 days absence** per term. Consistent attendance tracking supports student's achievement, wellbeing, and positive pathways for the future.

How attendance is recorded:

Papatoetoe High School periods:

- Most days: 60-minute periods
- Wednesdays: 50-minute periods



Half Day Present = Minimum of 120 minutes



Full Day Present = 240 minutes or more

How can whānau help?

- ✓ Check attendance anytime via the Parent Portal
- ✓ Report absences by phone or through the school website
- ✓ Planned travel during term time requires a formal letter to the principal well in advance
- ✓ For appointments during school hours:
 - Provide a signed note for Student Reception
 - Contact the school office in the event of an emergency before collecting your child. Only parents, caregivers, or approved contacts listed on the student's contact list are permitted to collect students.



Our Services



attendance@papatoetoe-high.school.nz



[Report an absence](#)



09 278 4086
and select option 1

ARTS & CULTURE UPDATE - ASB POLYFEST AND WHAT'S AHEAD



Polyfest

Our Arts and Culture Department is proud to share that our students will be performing at ASB Polyfest, taking place from **18–21 March**.

This is a major cultural festival for secondary schools and a wonderful chance for our students to celebrate identity, language, and tradition on stage.

Performance schedule:

Wednesday 18 March

1:00 PM – Fijian

1:20 PM – Punjabi

Thursday 19 March

1:00 PM – Samoan

Friday 20 March

11:00 AM – Tongan

2:40 PM – Tongan

Saturday 21 March

TBC (#3) – Cook Islands

TBC – Niuean

1:10 PM – Japanese

2:00 PM – Filipino

2:20 PM – Indian

If you cannot attend in person, there will be a live stream available on the Polyfest website.

Tickets can be purchased on the day at the event or online through the Polyfest ticketing page.



Groups and Clubs

We recently had a very successful Groups and Clubs sign-up day, with more than 30 groups available for students to choose from. It was great to see so many students getting involved and exploring the many opportunities available.

If students would still like to join a group, they can check **Student Hub > General > Clubs, Groups and Activities** for more information or speak with the Arts and Culture Coordinator, Mrs Ralphs.



International Week

In the last week of term 1, we will be celebrating International Week, a time for students to share and experience the many cultures within our school community.

Planned activities include:

Monday: Arts and Crafts

Tuesday: Food Day

Thursday: Quiz and Games

Friday: Cultural Dress and Performances

Careers

UPCOMING UNIVERSITY PRESENTATIONS

University of Waikato –
Tuesday 10 March in G5

UNITEC presentation –
Thursday 12 March in G5

MIT –
Monday 23 March in G5

University of Auckland –
Thursday 19 March in the
library

AUT –
Wednesday 25 March in
the library

**All presentations begin
promptly at the start of
Lunch.**

This is a fantastic opportunity for students to begin exploring their future pathway and to gain valuable insights into degree options, scholarships, and the various pathways available to them after school.

STUDENT VOLUNTEER ARMY

We encourage all students to sign up for the Student Volunteer Army (SVA). Students can easily join online and log volunteer hours throughout the year, earning badges that recognise their contributions. Being part of SVA supports our community and looks great on university scholarship applications.

UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO

On Friday 27 Feb, we had the University of Otago come and present to interested Year 13 students. It was well attended and students gained useful information and learned about opportunities that the University of Otago offer.



TRADES ACADEMY

Our Trades Academy programmes are now underway, with students attending MIT, NZMA, Kelston Trades Academy, and Manurewa Trades Academy. These programmes allow students to explore trade pathways while still at school, attending 1–2 days per week and earning credits while they learn. Places for 2026 are full, but advertising for 2027 will open in October 2026, so be sure to apply early as spaces fill quickly.

CAREERS WEBSITE

We're excited to launch the new Papatoetoe High School Careers website, now available for students and parents. The site will be your go-to place for career updates, including events, important dates, university presentations, scholarships, and news. We look forward to supporting you and your child on their career journey. Below is the link – check it out!

papatoetoehigh.careerwise.school

Gateway

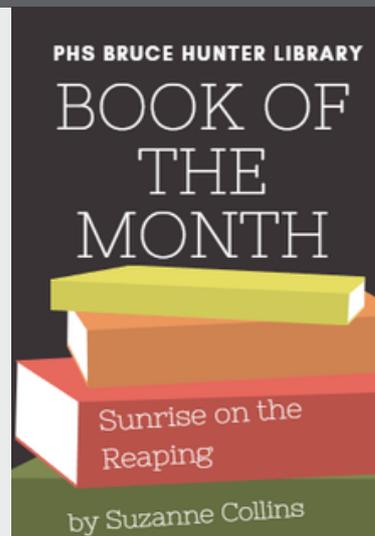
Gateway 2026 is off to a great start with 38 students participating in various work experiences.



LIBRARY

BOOK OF THE MONTH

Sunrise on the Reaping is a novel in The Hunger Games series by Suzanne Collins. It follows Haymitch Abernathy as a tribute for District 12, 24 years before the main trilogy. To celebrate the 50th Hunger Games, the Capitol adds a cruel twist: there are twice as many tributes. Haymitch just wants to return home to his mother, younger brother, and girlfriend, but to do that he must survive the Games. This novel explores themes of propaganda, rebellion, and life under totalitarianism.



PHS SUMMER SPORTS

Our summer sports season is in full swing, with students proudly representing our school each week across Archery, Futsal, Orienteering, Touch Rugby and Volleyball.



BOYS VOLLEYBALL

A special milestone this term has been our boys volleyball team competing in the prestigious Auckland Premier Grade for the very first time – a huge achievement and a testament to the growth and commitment of these students.

SENIOR TAG

Our students have been making their mark at one-day events, including the South Eastern Zone Senior TAG Championships where our girls performed exceptionally well to progress through to the Auckland Championships.

WAKA AMA

24 students were involved with the Senior Waka Ama Regatta where our girls U16 W6 crew paddled their way to an outstanding Bronze medal.



There's plenty more to look forward to this term with the Counties Manukau Athletics Zones, Kilikiti Festival, Auckland and National Volleyball Championships and the Auckland Bowls Cup. It's shaping up to be another exciting few weeks of competition and opportunity.

A big thank you to our dedicated coaches, managers and whānau for their ongoing support. Congratulations to all of our athletes for their hard work and school pride. We can't wait to see what the rest of the year brings!

SENIOR TOUCH TEAM

Our mixed touch team competed at the Senior Touch Championships. We are incredibly proud of our senior touch team, who were crowned Counties Manukau Mixed Division Champions, remaining undefeated throughout the competition!



DEBATING



The PHS Debating team has had an exciting and demanding start to the 2026 debating season. Over the past several weeks, our students have shown great commitment and discipline, reflecting the excellence and perseverance valued at Papatoetoe High School.

SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENTS

A special congratulations to Flora Vay (Year 13), who delivered an exceptional debating performance and was awarded **Highly Commendable Debater**.

We are also thrilled to announce that Ary-Elle Talitiga (Year 12) and Shirley-Ann Cullen (Year 12) were selected for the five-member Regional Debating Team as Third Speaker and Reserve respectively. They will represent the region at Parliament in May.

LOOKING AHEAD

The team continues to prepare for the Auckland Debating Seasonals, taking place on Saturday 7 March. With the level of commitment, we are confident they will continue to grow and represent Papatoetoe High School with pride

We are incredibly proud of our PHS debating team and look forward to sharing more successes in the coming months

COUNTIES MANUKAU DEBATING CHAMPIONSHIP

On Sunday 1 March, we entered four teams in the Counties Manukau Debating Championship at De La Salle College. It was a long and challenging day of competition.

While we didn't reach the finals, our teams earned several wins and showed strong growth in confidence, critical thinking, and collaboration.

A BIG THANK YOU TO THE STUDENTS WHO REPRESENTED PAPATOETOE HIGH SCHOOL WITH INTEGRITY AND DETERMINATION:

Angela Bui (Year 12)
Antonio Uaisele (Year 9)
Arthur Cassidy (Year 13)
Ary-Elle Talitiga (Year 12)
Azeema Khan (Year 12)
Charlotte Thompson (Year 10)
Devanjali Sharma (Year 12)
Ella Chhour (Year 13)
Flora Vay (Year 13)
Hadya Ahmed (Year 11)
Hemani Singh (Year 9)
Kaaina Kareemudeen (Year 10)
Lila Paparoa (Year 10)
Nysha Raj (Year 9)
Shirley-Ann Cullen (Year 12)
Shivam Kumar (Year 9)
Shukria Amiri (Year 12)
Tisharn Dysart (Year 12)
Yaduveer Dutt (Year 10)

IS YOUR SORE THROAT STREP THROAT?



Strep Throat is caused by the Group A Streptococcus (GAS) bacteria. If left untreated it can lead to rheumatic fever and possibly rheumatic heart disease.

Rheumatic fever rates are most prevalent amongst Māori and Pasifika populations. People aged 3-35 years living in the North Island are most at risk.



Why Does It Matter?

Sometimes the body's immune reaction to fight off the GAS infection can cause an inflammatory response within the body that can cause lasting damage to the heart.

PREVENTION IS THE BEST PROTECTION
(so let us know if you have a sore throat)

Rheumatic Fever Signs & Symptoms

If Strep Throat is left untreated you may develop:

- Sore & swollen or hot joints
- Jerky movements
- Fevers that lasts a few days
- Stomach pains
- Extreme tiredness
- Weight loss
- Unusual looking rashes

Rheumatic Heart Disease

The inflammation caused by rheumatic fever can scar the heart valves. This can cause permanent damage to the heart. This is rheumatic heart disease.

The risk of damage increases more with each presentation of rheumatic fever but can also result from the first episode.

Importantly, rheumatic fever is preventable.

Screening & Treatment is Easy

(Your school nurse will advise you further)

