

Description of the school

Northern Health School is a Ministry of Education funded school whose role is to provide education to students whilst unable to attend their regular school due to their high health needs – both mental and physical. The school is governed by a Ministerially appointed Board and is funded in the same way as any other school through a staffing allocation and a bulk grant.

Each year the Board agrees a Charter and associated strategic plan which guides the school.

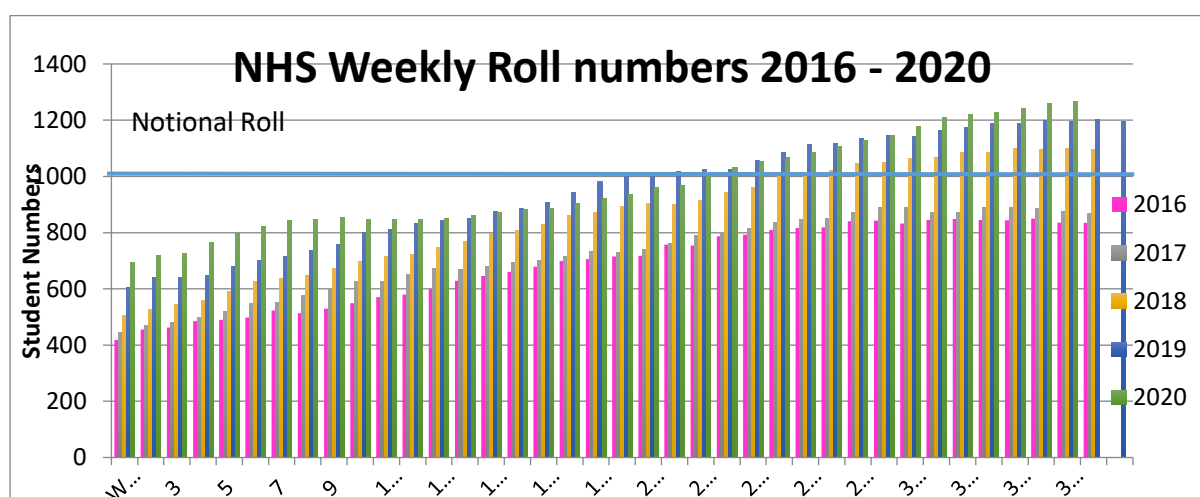
The school operates from 18 locations across the North Island. For those students not in hospital care, our community school units provide teacher support either at home or in our school unit classrooms. These units are based in Kaitia, Whangarei, North/Central/South Auckland, Hamilton, Thames, Tauranga, Whakatane, Rotorua, Taupo, Gisborne and Taranaki.

Inpatient units include Wilson Centre and Auckland Hospital (Starship, Child & Family and Ronald McDonald House). Students undergoing treatment in other hospitals are provided with support by the local community team.

Students remain on their regular school roll and are dual enrolled with Northern Health School. Programmes are customized to student school of enrolment programme to facilitate an easier transition from our service back to school as their health allows.

Northern Health School teachers have access to Te Aho o Te Kura Pounamu (the Correspondence school) curriculum content and this is used predominantly to support NCEA. The school is an NCEA exam center and our staff are required to work across the curriculum range from primary to secondary.

During the course of the year our school roll changes, historically doubling from January to December, while increasing by 10% each year. Our staffing is generated through a notional roll which will give the school 112 FTE for 2021. The school employs over 250 people many of whom are part time.



The school population includes students from years 0 to 14, however the bulk of our students are adolescents, predominantly years 11 and 12. Reasons for being on the roll include mental health (the largest proportion at around 65%), oncology (the second largest proportion at around 20%) and the remaining proportion includes a wide range of physical health issues.

Northern Health School has 2 main tasks

- Support student learning
- Assist in transition either back to school, onto tertiary training or employment.

Northern Health School operates in the following ways:

- Teacher home visits if the student is too unwell to leave home
- In hospital for inpatients – teacher will visit student on the ward or if student is able can attend hospital classroom
- Our community classrooms – students attend and work with their teacher and teacher aides
- Other locations such as public libraries or student's regular school – our teacher will arrange to meet with student for a lesson

Individual Learning Plans

Northern Health School teachers develop individual learning plans for each student in consultation with the student, the family, the regular school and the medical team. This may include secondary level qualifications and content may be provided by the regular school, Te Aho o Te Kura Pounamu or Northern Health School. Most students will be working on a reduced curriculum plan due to their illness.

The school has been providing support through online systems for some time and this has greatly increased since the Covid-19 pandemic. Staff skill levels have greatly increased in this area with a range of platforms being used, including Microsoft Teams which the school uses as its school-wide communication system, Google classroom and Zoom. This is an area we are continuing to focus on and develop.

In all areas we work closely with student's school of enrolment and do our best to match what the student is doing at their regular school.

Leadership

The school is led by a principal, deputy principal and business manager who are based in Auckland. Each school unit has a leader with responsibility for their unit staff and their appraisal, a Unit budget and the day to day management of the team. Leaders meet two or three times a term, either face to face or online for professional development and decision making.

Key Focus Areas for 2021

Through the Charter and strategic plan, the main areas of focus for 2021 are:

- Continuing to implement our Te Tiriti policy and to improve staff cultural capability
- Continuing the work started around the Learning Progressions Framework
- Expanding our wellbeing support programmes for staff
- Responding to changes in NCEA