



**Te Tāhuhu o  
te Mātauranga**  
Ministry of Education



**Te Poutāhū**  
Curriculum Centre

# The New Zealand Curriculum

# Health and Physical Education Year 3

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**Te Kāwanatanga  
o Aotearoa**  
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# Purpose statement

*He oranga ngākau, he pikinga waiora.*

*Positive feelings in your heart will raise your sense of self-worth.*

The Health and Physical Education learning area equips students with the knowledge, practices, and competencies necessary to thrive physically, mentally, and socially. Students are taught essential health and movement concepts that enable them to participate confidently in a wide range of physical activities and manage their own health in an informed way.

Through the study of Health, students learn how to navigate the complexities of modern life as confident individuals, connected members of their communities, and informed citizens. They are taught concepts that support their understanding of relationships, resilience, identity, and decision-making.

Through the study of Physical Education, students learn about specific movement patterns, activities, games, and sports. They are taught knowledge and practices to make informed decisions about their own healthy involvement in sport and physical activity.

As students progress through Health and Physical Education, they deepen their understanding of personal and collective wellbeing and learn how to embrace active and balanced lifestyles and cultivate habits that support long-term health. This provides students with a foundation for living well, thinking critically, and contributing positively to the world around them.

# Learning area structure

The year-by-year teaching sequence lays out the knowledge and practices to be taught each year. In *Health and Physical Education*, the teaching sequence for Years 0–10 is organised into two Knowledge Strands:

- **Health Education:** Focuses on physical, emotional, and social wellbeing. It develops students' understanding of identity, body, emotions, relationships, safety, and health-related choices across personal, community, and societal contexts.
- **Physical Education:** Focuses on movement skills and principles. It develops students' understanding of locomotor, non-locomotor, and object control skills, game structures, tactical thinking, outdoor activity practices, and aquatic safety through repeated practice in selected movement contexts.

The year-by-year teaching sequence, organised through Knowledge Strands and elements, sets out what is to be taught. Its enactment is shaped by teachers, who design learning in response to their learners, adjusting the order and emphasis, and adding appropriate contexts and content.

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# Introduction

Across Years 0–10, Health and Physical Education takes students on a rich and evolving journey of discovery. It begins with understanding their bodies and emotions and grows into developing the knowledge, skills, and confidence to manage wellbeing and participate fully in life. HPE is not just about movement or healthy practices; it builds a foundation for lifelong wellbeing through purposeful teaching, reflection, and connection. As students progress, they explore increasingly complex ideas about themselves, others, and the world around them. They learn how to care for their bodies, navigate relationships, and make informed decisions. Movement experiences develop coordination, cooperation, increasingly complex movement skills and outdoor education experiences.

In Years 0–3, teaching introduces foundational health and movement concepts that help students begin to understand how their bodies function and what supports wellbeing. Instruction focuses on everyday health practices, such as rest, hydration, hygiene, and movement, and how these contribute to growth and participation. Movement teaching centres on developing movement skills (MS) including balancing, running, and throwing. These are taught as discrete skills, allowing teachers to baseline knowledge and focus on accuracy and efficiency rather than sport-specific outcomes. Teachers also support students to notice and name emotions, linking feelings to behaviours. These years establish HPE as a learning area grounded in explicit knowledge, purposeful practice, and developmental progression.

In Years 4–6, teaching helps students connect everyday health practices with how their bodies function and change. Students learn that nutrition, hydration, rest, and movement contribute to growth and development, and that these needs evolve over time. Teaching introduces puberty, early learning about relationships and emotions, and decision-making that supports emotional wellbeing. Once MS are secure, movement teaching provides sufficient practice through discrete instruction and repetition in activities to enable more complex content. Students begin applying skills in games and sports across varied physical settings. Water safety, fair play, and preparation for outdoor activities are taught as essential knowledge for safe and confident participation.

In Years 7–10, teaching builds deeper knowledge about how bodies change and how health decisions influence physical, emotional, and social wellbeing. Students develop understanding of topics such as nutrition, substance use, sexual health, and media influence, and are supported to evaluate information and consider consequences. Movement instruction becomes more specialised, with students applying skills in different roles, environments, and physical activities, and learning how training and preparation affect performance. Across these years, teaching supports students to connect what they know with how they act, building the confidence and understanding needed to manage wellbeing and participate fully.

The Health and Physical Education learning area prepares students with the knowledge and practices to access related curriculum subjects for Years 11–13, such as Health Education and Physical Education.

The New Zealand Curriculum

# Health and Physical Education

## Year 3 teaching sequence

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# Health Education

Year 3		
	<b>Knowledge</b> <i>The facts, concepts, principles, and theories to teach.</i>	<b>Practices</b> <i>The skills, strategies, and applications to teach.</i>
<b>Bodies   Minds</b>	<p><b>Growing bodies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As people grow, their bodies change in shape and strength at different rates, and these changes reflect how food, movement, and inherited factors influence the development of bones, muscles, and coordination.</li> </ul> <p><b>Nutrition</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Energy and focus are influenced by what is eaten and drunk. The body's ability to process nutrients, the quality of sleep, and the timing of meals also play important roles.</li> <li>Even small imbalances in nutrition can make it harder to concentrate or stay physically active.</li> <li>Advertising and packaging use persuasive techniques that can influence food choices, including promoting products high in sugar, salt, or fat.</li> </ul> <p><b>Self-care</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learning to manage feelings and understand others helps people build relationships, and this is shaped by their surroundings and experiences.</li> <li>Physical states such as fatigue, hunger, and illness do not just affect how people feel, they can alter brain function, emotional regulation and social behaviour.</li> <li>Nutrition, movement, and hygiene practices support body systems, emotional regulation, and healthy physical and emotional development.</li> <li>Positive self-image supports emotional regulation and social connection, and is influenced by how people interpret their strengths, challenges, and appearance.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigating how growth and physical development vary between people by examining the role of nutrition, physical activity, and genetics</li> <li>Caring for the body involves more than routine habits; it requires understanding how movement, nutrition, rest, and hygiene interact to support strength, health, and the body's changing capability over time</li> <li>Developing critical thinking skills to recognise how advertising and packaging use persuasive techniques</li> <li>Developing reflective thinking skills to discuss feelings and emotions through role play</li> <li>Recognising everyday habits that impact on emotional, and physical development</li> <li>Using reflection to explore personal strengths</li> </ul>
<b>Relationships</b>	<p><b>Self and others</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Genuine respect for ways that people are different requires deeper reflection. It often means examining the different beliefs and assumptions shaped by peoples' backgrounds, upbringing and social environment.</li> <li>Interpersonal strengths such as active listening and problem solving contribute to social wellbeing by fostering trust, cooperation, and respectful communication.</li> <li>Social dynamics such as collaboration, conflict, kindness and competition, influence relationship quality by impacting trust, belonging, and emotional safety.</li> <li>Support from trusted adults during relationship challenges can help young people process emotions, develop coping strategies (e.g. deep breathing), and access practical help.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reflecting on personal assumptions and exploring diverse perspectives</li> <li>Developing listening and problem-solving skills further to build trust and work well with others, while being aware of group dynamics and responding in ways that support respectful relationships</li> <li>Developing learning strategies for recovering from setbacks using emotional regulation, problem-solving, and support networks which include trusted adults when relationships are challenging</li> <li>Using clear and respectful communication to encourage safe environments through role plays</li> <li>Recognising situations where consent is needed and practising how to ask for and give permission clearly and respectfully</li> <li>Using role plays about shared decisions-making, expressing boundaries, and supporting safe, fair, and respectful interactions with others</li> </ul>

Year 3		
	Knowledge <i>The facts, concepts, principles, and theories to teach.</i>	Practices <i>The skills, strategies, and applications to teach.</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resilience involves adapting to setbacks by using emotional regulation, problem-solving, and support networks to recover and continue engaging positively.</li> </ul> <p><b>Boundaries and staying safe</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using clear communication and noticing when others feel uncomfortable helps people feel safe and build respectful relationships.</li> <li>Seeking and giving consent ensures shared understanding and respect, reducing the risk of harm and supporting safe, equitable interactions.</li> <li>People should ask for permission and give clear answers when making shared decisions.</li> <li>Bullying is a form of aggressive or threatening behaviour that is usually intentional, involves a power imbalance, and is repeated over time.</li> </ul>	

## Physical Education

Year 3		
	Knowledge <i>The facts, concepts, principles, and theories to teach.</i>	Practices <i>The skills, strategies, and applications to teach.</i>
<b>Movement skills</b> <b>(Choreographed movement)</b>	<p><b>Choreographed movement (e.g. te ao kori)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A range of actions, including traveling, jumping, turning, and stillness, are fundamental to choreographed movement.</li> <li>Pathways can be explored by moving in different ways, such as straight, zigzag, curved, forward, backward, sideways, and diagonal.</li> <li>Movement complexity can be increased by using different mediums, including changes in level (low, medium, high), fluency (smooth, flow, control), and dynamics (sharp, soft, fast, slow).</li> <li>Body actions, shapes, and sequences can be used to communicate ideas, emotions, or narratives.</li> <li>Actions and pathways can be combined to demonstrate different speeds and levels within a movement sequence.</li> <li>Increasing flexibility through stretching requires awareness of the body's limits, stillness in stress, and avoiding bouncing to prevent strain and support safe, effective muscle lengthening.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Choreographed movement (e.g. te ao kori)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Travelling, jumping, turning, and holding stillness in response to cues or music</li> <li>Moving in different ways along straight, zigzag, curved forward, backward, sideways, and diagonal pathways within a defined space</li> <li>Performing a sequence of movements with smooth transitions, maintaining flow and control</li> <li>Varying movements to demonstrate sharp, soft, fast, and slow actions as directed</li> <li>Performing a duet that includes mirroring, matching, and one moment of stillness, responding to music with timing and coordination</li> </ul>
<b>Movement skills</b> <b>(Relays, games and invasion games)</b>	<p><b>Invasion games (e.g. netball/Kiwi Ferns)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Different passes have distinct techniques and are used for specific situations and distances (e.g. chest, shoulder, and bounce pass in netball).</li> <li>Accurate passing and receiving over short and longer distances depend on correct technique and body positioning.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Invasion games (e.g. netball/Kiwi Ferns)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Passing and receiving chest passes, shoulder passes, and bounce passes with accuracy, first over short distances and then over longer distances</li> <li>Passing and catching without travelling (e.g. footwork rule)</li> </ul>

**Year 3**

	<b>Knowledge</b> <i>The facts, concepts, principles, and theories to teach.</i>	<b>Practices</b> <i>The skills, strategies, and applications to teach.</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signal to receive a ball when in space and moving away from a marker.</li> <li>• Attack involves attempting to score points. Defence involves intercepting passes by reading the game and using strong body positioning to mark opponents and limit their options.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Selecting the appropriate pass for different situations (e.g. chest pass for short distance, shoulder pass for longer distance)</li> <li>• Demonstrating timing to intercept by moving quickly and reaching out at the right time during modified games or activities</li> <li>• Dodging to get away from the opposition (linked to agility)</li> <li>• Communicating when available to receive the ball in space away from the opposition</li> <li>• Using different body positions for first stage marking and defence</li> <li>• Sending, receiving, moving into space, and working with others in possession games</li> <li>• Avoiding contact and using controlled footwork to stay within the rules of the game</li> </ul>
<b>Movement skills</b> <b>(Striking and fielding)</b>	<p><b>Striking and fielding (e.g. T ball)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Underarm throwing or passing involves a low, stable stance with knees slightly bent and weight forward.</li> <li>• Overarm throwing involves rotating the hips and shoulders before releasing the ball.</li> <li>• Striking off a tee starts with correct grip, stance, and swing technique.</li> <li>• The correct ready position for catching a small ball (e.g. standing with feet shoulder-width apart, hands open ready to catch).</li> <li>• There are basic applications of rules and conventions in striking and fielding games (e.g. not being out if waiting safely at a base).</li> <li>• The attacking team attempts to score points by running around the bases.</li> <li>• The defending team tries to limit points scored by getting batters or runners out.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Striking and fielding (e.g. T ball)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fielding — being ready to catch, stopping the ball with different body parts, and throwing accurately</li> <li>• Gripping the bat correctly, using a balanced stance, and swinging to strike a stationary ball off a tee or pitch</li> <li>• Underarm and overarm throwing to a partner or target, including stepping with the opposite foot and following through</li> <li>• Tracking the trajectory of a ball in flight or across the floor and moving to stop and retrieve it</li> <li>• Catching a ball in flight</li> <li>• Catching a bouncing ball</li> <li>• Switching between batting, fielding, and base running roles within the rules of the game</li> </ul>
<b>Movement skills</b> <b>(Swimming)</b>	<p><b>Swimming</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic pool rules and water safety practices are essential in and around water environments, including beaches, lakes, and waterways.</li> <li>• Danger signs, flags, and environmental alerts help keep participants safe during water activities.</li> <li>• Activities like kayaking, waka ama, swimming, and paddleboarding require appropriate safety gear (e.g. personal floatation devices).</li> <li>• There are correct kicking and arm techniques for front crawl, including breathing basics.</li> <li>• A personal floatation device (PFD) or lifejacket is required for everyone onboard a powered boat or paddle craft. They must be checked and worn correctly.</li> <li>• Safe entry and exit techniques vary by activity, such as sit-and-slide for pools and stable movements for kayaks and waka.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Swimming</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performing safe water entry and exit techniques, including sit-and-slide, pool edge exits, and kayak/waka transitions</li> <li>• Practising basic swimming skills such as push and glide (front and back), paddling, and kicking with support</li> <li>• Practising treading water, star float, and rotating between front and back positions to stay afloat</li> <li>• Using kicking and arm techniques for front crawl</li> </ul> <p><b><i>This content is to be taught across Years 1, 2, and 3.</i></b></p>

Year 3		
	Knowledge <i>The facts, concepts, principles, and theories to teach.</i>	Practices <i>The skills, strategies, and applications to teach.</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic water survival skills include treading water, staying afloat, and exiting safely.</li> <li>• Preparation for swimming includes understanding buoyancy, flotation, and the importance of streamlined movement.</li> </ul> <p><b><i>This content is to be taught across Years 1, 2, and 3.</i></b></p>	
<b>Outdoor Education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning in the outdoors creates memorable and meaningful experiences.</li> <li>• In outdoor environments, there are signs and symbols to support locational awareness and plan routes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using maps and signs to navigate outdoor environments to determine location and plan safe routes</li> </ul>

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