



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



Te Poutāhū
Curriculum Centre

The New Zealand Curriculum

Health and Physical Education Year 4

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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 4 teaching sequence

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Health Education

Year 4		
	Knowledge <i>The facts, concepts, principles, and theories to teach.</i>	Practices <i>The skills, strategies, and applications to teach.</i>
Bodies Minds	<p>Growing bodies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The way different body parts grow can reflect complex biological patterns rather than a uniform process (e.g. foot size, hair process). Internal developmental factors contribute to individual differences in behaviour, emotional responses, and social development (e.g. a child's temperature may influence how they respond to frustration). <p>Nutrition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The impact of nutrition, hydration, and rest on physical strength and health can vary depending on individual needs, lifestyle factors, and environmental conditions. Eating healthy food, drinking water, and getting enough sleep can help people feel better, think clearly, and have energy. <p>Self-care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good self-care practices help proactively support mental, emotional, and physical well-being, build resilience against stress, and enhance overall quality of life. Strategies like deep breathing, physical activity, or seeking support from a trusted adult can support people to cope well in stressful situations. People can experience strong emotions such as happiness, excitement, sadness and love that affect the way they behave in different situations. Behaviour can vary depending on a person's coping strategies, support systems, and past experiences: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> fight — confront — muscles, tense, heart rate increases, and adrenaline surges to help defend flight — escape — run or avoid danger freeze — stay still — feeling numb or unable to move or act. A survival mechanism when fight and flight are not possible or safe. A moderate level of stress can sharpen concentration and improve performance (e.g. getting nervous before a school play helps to focus on remembering lines and speaking clearly). The ability to channel moderate stress through strategies like goal setting or positive self-talk can influence not just performance, but how people adapt to pressure over time. The effectiveness of hygiene practices in preventing the spread of germs can depend on consistency, access to resources, and understanding of how infections are transmitted. Medicines can help people feel better when used correctly but can be unsafe if taken without adult guidance or without following instructions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comparing growth patterns using visual tools to identify that growth is not always uniform Practising strategies like journaling, storytelling, or role-playing to explore how individual personalities, experiences, and learning shape feelings and behaviours in different situations Exploring how different people meet their health needs, using examples from home, school, or community Exploring techniques such as rehearsal, preparation, or breathing exercises to channel stress into productive action Developing strategies like breathing techniques, movement, or talking to a trusted adult to manage stress responses in safe and constructive ways Developing self-care and decision-making skills by identifying a range of hygiene practices that minimise the spread of viruses and germs Recognising how personal feelings, social feedback, and cultural messages influence self-image

Year 4		
	Knowledge <i>The facts, concepts, principles, and theories to teach.</i>	Practices <i>The skills, strategies, and applications to teach.</i>
Relationships	<p>Self and others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ability to use verbal and non-verbal communication can depend on context, cultural norms, and personal experiences, shaping how understanding and connection are built (see Oral Communication in English). Empathy involves interpreting emotional and non-verbal cues in context and choosing responses that reflect understanding and support. Body image and self-perception are shaped through personal feelings, social feedback, and cultural messages. <p>Consent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consent involves making choices about personal belongings, space, and bodies, and understanding these rights helps to set boundaries and recognise respectful behaviour. <p>Staying safe online</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The reliability, safety, and respectfulness of online content often depends on who created it and why it was shared. The permanence of personal content on online platforms can depend on privacy settings, platform policies, and how others choose to interact with or redistribute that content. Keeping personal information secure includes never sharing passwords, even with friends and logging out of shared devices when finished. <p>Stereotypes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stereotypes negatively simplify complex social information by assigning fixed traits to groups; these negative assumptions can be challenged by exploring diverse perspectives and building inclusive relationships. Avoiding assumptions based on group identity reduces bias and supports emotional safety, trust, and inclusion in social relationships. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing skills in adapting verbal and non-verbal communication to suit different contexts, cultures, and personal experiences Using strategies like observing emotion and body language cues, listening actively, and responding with empathy to build understanding and meaningful connection with others Respecting others' boundaries by seeking permission, accepting their response, and recognising consent is essential for safe and respectful interactions Developing strategies such as critical thinking, respectful discussion, and empathy to understand others more deeply and build inclusive, respectful relationships Examining online contact by identifying its source, purpose, and potential impact, and applying strategies to stay safe and respectful online Using privacy settings and safe sharing practices to manage personal content online, and recognising how others' actions can affect its viability and permanence Recognising and questioning stereotypes by exploring diverse perspectives and practising inclusive communication in social settings

Physical Education

Year 4		
	Knowledge <i>The facts, concepts, principles, and theories to teach.</i>	Practices <i>The skills, strategies, and applications to teach.</i>
Movement skills (Balance and movement)	<p>Balance, strength, and flexibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Balances can be used as start and finish positions and should be held with control and accuracy. Partner balances involve mirroring, matching, counterbalance, and counter tension and require trust, timing and shared control. 	<p>Balance, strength, and flexibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performing a range of balances, including supported and unsupported, as start and finish positions, holding with control and accuracy Working with a partner to demonstrate mirroring, matching, counterbalance, and counter tension, using clear body shapes and shared control

Year 4

	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"> • A roll involves controlled movement that requires body awareness. • Body shapes (e.g. tuck, straddle, star, straight) are used to create variety and expression in balances and rolls. • A movement sequence includes a combination of balances, rolls, and travel movements. • Control, fluency, and flexibility are essential for developing sequences that flow smoothly and show clear body shapes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executing a variety of rolls, including forward rolls, side rolls, and rocking in a tuck, combining them smoothly with balances and travel movements • Traveling on, over, across, and through obstacles (e.g. benches, mats), using different movement patterns such as crawling, jumping, and sliding • Creating and performing a short sequence that includes balances, rolls, and travel, showing increasing control, fluency, and confidence in transitions • Stretching with movements, such as wide straddles, extended shapes, and smooth transitions, between positions • Selecting and performing body shapes, such as tuck, straddle star, and straight, within balances and rolls to add variety and expression to a sequence
Movement skills (Invasion games)	<p>Invasion games (e.g. rippa rugby)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accurate passing and receiving techniques, including ready position, are essential for maintaining possession. • Players must decide when to pass and when to run based on the game situation. • Interceptions and movement into space are key strategies for regaining and maintaining possession. • Basic rules and conventions including passing, change of possession when the ball is dropped or goes out, and safe tagging. 	<p>Invasion games (e.g. rippa rugby)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passing and receiving the ball with increasing accuracy and speed, using correct technique • Running, throwing, catching, and changing speed/direction to create and exploit space • Applying basic attacking and defensive strategies, including scoring, tagging, and intercepting • Applying game rules and conventions during play (e.g. stopping immediately after being tagged, passing, changing possession if the ball is dropped)
Movement skills (Fielding, striking, and net and wall games)	<p>Fielding/striking (e.g. cricket/kilikiti/softball)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are multiple techniques for sending, receiving, and striking the ball, including catching, throwing, and using different bats (cricket, kilikiti, softball). • Effective fielding involves techniques like the long barrier, various catching styles (high, skim, close), and stopping with the glove or foot. • Batting and fielding require coordinated movement, timing, and tactical decision-making for both attack and defence. • Basic rules and conventions include how to get out (caught, bowled, run out), how to score and how the game is structured. • Throwing at a target (e.g. stumps or base) requires correct technique, including body weight transfer and aiming. 	<p>Fielding/striking (e.g. cricket/kilikiti/softball)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Throwing accurately at targets using correct technique, including stepping through and aiming • Striking balls consistently using different bats, focusing on grip, stance, back lift, timing, and ball placement • Fielding by tracking and catching, using long barrier, and stopping the ball using hands, glove, or foot • Applying rules, conventions, and strategies during gameplay, including scoring runs, identifying outs and making strategic decisions about fielding and throwing
Movement skills (Swimming)	<p>Swimming</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic water survival skills include floating, treading water, and safe entry/exit techniques. • The HELP (Heat Escape Lessening Posture) position (in a life jacket or with a tow float) and huddle position helps conserve body heat in cold water. 	<p>Swimming</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performing floating and sculling techniques • Demonstrating the HELP position and huddle position for cold water survival accurately • Performing safe reach rescues using flotation devices with awareness of safety risks

Year 4

	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"> • Safe reach rescues (e.g. using a noodle or kickboard) must be performed with awareness of potential dangers. • Breathing while swimming involves inhaling above water and exhaling below water. • Safety practices are essential during water activities, along with wearing the appropriate gear and following instructions. • Swimming technique can be adapted for different strokes (e.g. front crawl, back stroke, and breaststroke) and situations. • Open water conditions (e.g. currents, waves, and temperature) can influence safety and movement. • Risk assessment includes recognising environmental hazards and knowing when to enter, exit, or avoid water. <p><i>This content is to be taught across Years 4, 5, and 6.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swimming increasing distances using coordinated front crawl movements, including correct body position, leg action, arm action, and breathing • Analysing open water conditions and environmental hazards to identify safe decisions, including when and where to enter or exit water <p><i>This content is to be taught across Years 4, 5, and 6.</i></p>
Outdoor Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weather conditions influence human behaviour, enjoyment, and decision-making in outdoor settings. • Collaborative problem-solving (mahi tahi) and effective group dynamics can help people address challenges encountered during outdoor activities. Overcoming these challenges can be a source of satisfaction and enjoyment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluating weather conditions and making recommendations about activity options and clothing choices • Applying group problem-solving strategies to overcome challenging outdoor activities