



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



Te Poutāhū
Curriculum Centre

The New Zealand Curriculum Health and Physical Education Year 6

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**Te Kāwanatanga
o Aotearoa**
New Zealand Government

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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 6 teaching sequence

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Health Education

Year 6		
	Knowledge <i>The facts, concepts, principles, and theories to teach.</i>	Practices <i>The skills, strategies, and applications to teach.</i>
Bodies Minds	<p>Puberty</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Menstruation is a natural process where the lining of the uterus breaks down and leaves the body through the vagina. People manage menstruation in different cultural and social contexts. Emotional changes may occur during menstruation and there are practice strategies for self-care, like rest, gentle exercise, healthy eating, and seeking support from trusted adults. Menstruation occurs alongside other pubertal changes, such as breast development, growth spurts, and body hair growth, and strategies (e.g. rest and hydration) can manage discomfort. Physical changes during puberty can include sperm production, increased height, muscle growth, voice deepening, and the appearance of body hair. Emotional changes during development can include mood swings, increased sensitivity, and a growing awareness of body image and social relationships. <p>Nutrition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The impact of a nutrient-rich diet on immunity, stress, and cognition depends on the type, timing, and balance of nutrients consumed — deficiencies in key nutrients like vitamins, minerals, and amino acids can impair cell repair and brain function even when overall energy intake is adequate. Emotional wellbeing and cognitive functioning are influenced by physical needs such as nutrition, hydration, and sleep. <p>Self-care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each fight, flight, or freeze response is linked to the nervous system's activation of stress hormones which influence emotional reactions, such as fear, anger, or withdrawal. Behaviour can be affected by positive emotions such as happiness, excitement and love. Empathy for others involves moderating behaviour appropriately. Strategies such as healthy routines, problem-solving, and seeking support can help build resilience and manage emotional challenges. Different substances (e.g. alcohol, tobacco, vaping, and illegal drugs) affect the body and mind in various ways, and the level of harm depends on factors such as frequency of use, age, and context. Vaping can seriously harm the lungs, brain, and overall health; understanding the risks helps people make safer choices. Peer influence can affect decisions about substance use and understanding different refusal strategies (e.g. saying no in a firm assertive way, walking away, seeking support) can help people make safe and informed choices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exploring healthy habits and emotional regulation strategies, and identifying ways for respectful communication to manage the physical and emotional changes experienced through puberty Practising self-care strategies such as rest, hydration, and relaxation techniques to manage emotional and physical discomfort Exploring self-care habits that contribute to respectful classroom environments, and examining the connections between hygiene, physical health, and emotional wellbeing Investigating the ways nutrition, hydration, and sleep support emotional wellbeing and brain function, and how imbalances or deficiencies in key nutrients can affect immunity, stress response, and cognitive performance Acknowledging that the nervous system responds to stress through fight, flight, or freeze reactions and that strategies like healthy routines, problem-solving, and seeking support can help build resilience and manage emotional challenges Exploring positive self-talk to support emotional wellbeing by helping people reframe negative thoughts, build confidence, and respond constructively to challenges

Year 6		
	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"> Empathy includes recognising others' emotions, perspectives, and using this understanding to communicate respectfully and respond positively in relationships. Relationships change over time due to factors like personal growth, conflict, or life transitions, and adapting to these changes with effective communication and empathy supports emotional wellbeing. Bullying involves repeated harmful behaviour that uses power to control or exclude others, and can lead to long-term impacts on emotional wellbeing, learning, and social connection. <p>Consent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consent is communicated through clear verbal and non-verbal signals, and understanding these cues helps people recognise when interactions are respectful and mutual. Consent requires voluntary, informed, and enthusiastic agreement, and cannot be given under pressure, manipulation, or silence. <p>Staying safe online</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online content may use emotional triggers, misleading incentives, or idealised portrayals to influence behaviour, and recognising these tactics supports safer and more informed digital choices. <p>Stereotypes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stereotypes often shape the language people use, influencing descriptions of others and the assumptions made about them. Language influences inclusion by signalling respect, bias, or belonging. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using respectful communication strategies such as affirming language, tone awareness, and turn-taking in conversations that makes everyone feel welcome and avoids stereotypes Recognising how relationships may shift due to changes in circumstances, interests, or emotions Practising respectful communication strategies that promote inclusion, prevent bullying, and support emotional safety in group settings Using role-play or scenarios to practise giving and receiving consent in everyday situations, such as sharing belongings and joining games Analysing how language choices can include or exclude others and exploring ways to challenge biased descriptions Using communication strategies that promote inclusion, choosing respectful language, and listening actively Using critical thinking strategies to evaluate the reliability, intent, and impact of digital messages and media Practising making informed choices online by using critical thinking strategies and discussing digital safety with peers or trusted adults

Physical Education

Year 6		
	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>Choreographed movement (e.g. te ao kori/haka/poi)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dance uses specific movements (e.g. dynamics — sharp/soft, fast/slow, hard/light) and methods of travel (e.g. direction, speed, levels). Expression, gesture, and choreographic devices (e.g. canon, unison, mirroring, matching, contrast) support storytelling. Static balance involves holding still, while dynamic balance requires continuous adjustments. 	<p>Choreographed movement (e.g. te ao kori/haka/poi)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Balancing (static and dynamic) in isolation and as part of sequences Creating and performing movement patterns, using space and dynamics Applying choreographic devices such as canon, unison, mirroring, matching, and smooth transitions Improvising in response to music, themes, motifs, or visual stimuli Refining movement and performance based on feedback

Year 6

	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 stimulus (e.g. music, images, or movement words) can inspire improvised movements sequences. • Feedback and refinement are important for developing movement techniques. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluating a performance using specific vocabulary
Movement skills (Invasion games)	<p>Invasion games (e.g. rippa rugby/touch/turbo touch)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective attack in invasion games involves finding space, maintaining possession, and driving towards the try zone or goal. • Effective defence in invasion games involves marking opposition players and defending as a team by holding shape and maintaining formation. • A loose ball occurs when attackers drop the ball, creating an opportunity for either team to gain possession. • A turnover happens when a player gains possession for their team. • A player is offside and gives away a free pass or penalty if they are in front of a teammate passing the ball after a restart from a tag. 	<p>Invasion games (e.g. rippa rugby/touch/turbo touch)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playing modified games with basic positions, the application of rules, and game conventions • Passing accurately while running and using different passing techniques • Playing tactically and as a team, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ retaining possession after turnover ○ choosing appropriate passing options ○ running to pass or evade an opponent ○ timing runs to contribute to effective play or scoring ○ communicating with teammates ○ supporting players with the ball by moving into space and providing options
Movement skills (Fielding, striking, and net and wall games)	<p>Striking and fielding (e.g. cricket/kilikiti)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technique is important when batting, bowling, and fielding. It supports accuracy, power, and consistency in performance. • There are different bowling techniques with different ball movements and speed (e.g. standing overarm, wind-up, and run-up deliveries). • Basic game conventions include innings, overs, and scoring. • Tactical play includes batting choices and fielding positions. • Specific fitness components (e.g. running speed and reaction time) enhance performance. 	<p>Striking and fielding (e.g. cricket/kilikiti)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Batting using different techniques (e.g. defensive shots, drives, stepping into underarm pitches) • Bowling using different techniques (e.g. standing overarm, wind-up, and run-up delivery) • Fielding using different techniques (e.g. catching, retrieving, throwing) • Applying basic game conventions in modified games, including innings and overs • Making tactical decisions during gameplay (e.g. adapting batting, adjusting fielding positions, varying bowling techniques, and choosing when to run to maximise scoring) • Running with speed, reacting quickly to support effective play
Movement skills (Athletics)	<p>Athletics — run and jump</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Static stretching targets specific muscle groups such as quadriceps, hamstrings, deltoids, and triceps. • The long jump involves distinct phases: run-up, take-off (plant foot), flight and landing, and using the strongest take-off foot. • Sprinting and longer-distance running require different techniques and fitness components (e.g. reaction time and speed for sprints, pacing and stamina for longer distances and cross country). • Effective pacing and tactical decisions (e.g. when to overtake) are still important in longer-distance events (e.g. 300m, cross country). 	<p>Athletics — run and jump</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stretching for specific muscle groups, including quadriceps, hamstrings, deltoids, and triceps, before and after activity • Performing long jumps using a run-up and taking off with the strongest foot • Sprinting for short distances, with a focus on quick reaction time, high knee lift, and driving arms • Running longer distances (including cross country) with a focus on pacing, stamina, and tactics for overtaking • Monitoring changes in heart rate and breathing before, during, and after running events • Recording times and measuring distances to track and reflect on performance

Year 6		
	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"> • Basic physiological responses to exercise include increased heart rate and breathing rate to support muscle function. • Accurate data recording using stopwatches and tape measures supports performance tracking and reflection. 	
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. • 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>	<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 • 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"> • The joy of outdoor activities comes from balancing adventure with responsibility. • Natural landmarks, topographical features, and basic navigation tools (e.g. compass, sun position, contour lines) in outdoor environments are key to accurate map orientation and identification of cardinal directions. • Being responsible in natural environments involves minimising human impact on the land, wildlife, and ecosystems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using navigation tools to plan routes in outdoor environments • Identifying ways to engage responsibly with natural environments during outdoor activities (e.g. 'leave no trace' principles, demonstrating guardianship — tiakitanga)