ŌKAIHAU COLLEGE

Principal Appointment Information Pack



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Okaihau College

Principal U5, Years 7-13 secondary, staffing roll 260

Applications are now invited by the Ōkaihau College Board for the position of Principal at Ōkaihau College.

Ōkaihau College is a co-educational secondary school catering for students in Years 7 to 13 with a roll of approximately 260 students comprising 75% Maori. Our college is an integral part of Okaihau, a rural community in the mid northern region of Northland. We are situated one hour north of Whangarei, 20 minutes from Kerikeri, and 30 minutes from the Bay of Islands. We enjoy attractive and spacious grounds, and extensive and well-resourced, modern teaching spaces.

We are seeking a dynamic, innovative, industrious leader of learning to lead the college community to continue its progression towards its objective of a high quality, bicultural education for all our students.

We anticipate that the successful applicant will be available to take up the position at the commencement of Term 2, 2027, or earlier by negotiation.

Applications close 4pm, Friday 20th November 2026.

For an application pack, please contact Mr Alan Curtis

Email **allscots@gmail.com** or call Alan on 021 667 841

For information about the school please visit

http://www.okaihau-college.school.nz



Timeline

The Ōkaihau College Board of Trustees has set the following timeline for the appointment of their new Principal. Every effort will be made to keep to the following schedule in determining the successful candidate.

Timeline for the appointment of the Principal for Ōkaihau College	
Gazette Advertisement	Tuesday 27th October 2026
Closing date for applications	Friday 20th November 2026
Shortlisting completed	Tuesday 24th November 2026
School visits	Monday 30 November 2026 (Board members may wish to visit the schools of shortlisted candidates before the interview date.)
Referee reports closing date	Wednesday 2nd December 2026
Interviews	Saturday 5th December 2026
Second interview (if required)	Saturday 12th December 2026
Appointment confirmed	It is hoped to finalise the appointment by Monday 14th December or earlier.

Information for Applicants

Thank you for applying for the position of Principal at Ōkaihau College.

1. Please complete the application form personally. Read it through and then answer all questions. Make sure you sign and date where indicated on the last page.
2. Pages 9 to 14 from this pack have also been provided to you as a separate Microsoft Word document so you may complete this electronically.
3. If you wish you **may** attach a separate ***curriculum vitae*** containing any additional information relevant to the position. If you include written references, please note that we may also contact the writers of these references by phone.
4. Qualification certificates should be listed (***they do not need to be attached***). If you are shortlisted, at interview you will be required to produce originals as proof of qualifications.
5. Failure to complete this application and answer all questions truthfully may result in any offer of employment being withdrawn or appointment being terminated if any information is later found to be false.
6. In terms of a criminal conviction, the Criminal Records (Clean Slate) Act 2004 provides that certain convictions do not have to be disclosed providing:
   - You have not committed any offence within 7 (consecutive) years of being sentenced for the offence and
   - You did not serve a custodial sentence at any time and
   - The offence was not a specified offence (specified offences are in the main sexual in nature) and
   - You have paid any fines or costs.

   Custodial sentences include a sentence of preventive detention and corrective training. Non-custodial sentences include fines, reparation orders; community-based sentences and suspended sentences. Please note that you are not obliged to disclose convictions if you are an eligible individual under the Act but can do so if you wish. If you are uncertain as to whether you are eligible you should contact the Ministry of Justice.
7. The application form and supporting documents received from the successful applicant will be retained by the school. The successful applicant may access them in accordance with the provisions of the Privacy Act 2020.
8. Application forms and other documents provided by unsuccessful applicants will not be returned unless a stamped self-addressed envelope is provided. Those not returned will be held until the appointments process is completed and will then be destroyed.
9. All information collected from referees will be destroyed at the end of the selection process.
10. All information received will be confidential to the Ōkaihau College Board of Trustees and the board's adviser.
11. Terms and conditions of employment will be as set out in the Secondary Schools Principals' Collective Agreement.
12. If you are selected for an interview, you may bring whanau and or a support person at your own expense. Please advise us in advance if this is your intention.

About Ōkaihau College



Ōkaihau College Overview

Ōkaihau College recognises the value and importance of He Whakaputanga o Te Rangatiratanga o Niu Tireni in our history and we honour Te Tiriti O Waitangi.

We are located in the heart of Te Tai Tokerau, nestled between the Hokianga Harbour to the west, and the Bay of Islands to the east. We are an hour's drive north of Whangarei, and cater to 260 students, 75% of whom are Maori.

Ōkaihau College was founded in 1971, although our history goes back to the first school established in Okaihau in 1873. We recently celebrated 150 years of education in Ōkaihau, and our college continues to be an integral part of our community.

We offer a modern and welcoming learning environment, with dedicated and supportive teaching and support staff. We provide our students with a culturally rich and authentic educational experience and are committed to providing an education which nurtures intelligence and lifelong learning, encourages achievement, creativity, confidence and fosters relationships between home and school.

Academic Programmes

Ōkaihau College provides education for students in Years 7 to 13, recognising the diverse abilities, interests and aspirations of our learners.

We are committed to providing meaningful learning opportunities that support academic achievement, personal development and preparation for life beyond school. Our approach recognises the importance of offering students pathways that reflect their individual strengths and future goals.

Beyond the classroom, we value the role of sporting, cultural and other co-curricular opportunities in developing confidence, teamwork, leadership and a sense of belonging. These experiences contribute to the wider development of our students and encourage active participation in school life.

Cultural and Educational Values

At Ōkaihau College, we are committed to providing a high standard of education that nurtures intelligence and lifelong learning, encourages achievement, creativity and confidence, and fosters a strong sense of community.

Our aspiration is for every student to develop the skills and attributes needed to succeed and make a positive contribution to their community.

Guided by *E tipu e rea mō ngā rā o tō ao*, we recognise the importance of nurturing the mauri of every learner and supporting their academic, personal and cultural development.

Our college is guided by our three Whakarongorua values:

- Whanaungatanga
- Rangatiratanga
- Taha Wairua

These values provide a foundation for positive relationships, personal growth and a learning environment where students feel connected, supported and encouraged to achieve their potential.

We recognise and respect the diverse identities and backgrounds of our students, while valuing the cultural heritage and community connections that contribute to the unique character of Ōkaihau College.

Commitment to Wellbeing and Community

Ōkaihau College recognises that student wellbeing, positive relationships and a strong sense of belonging are important foundations for successful learning.

We value the relationships between students, staff, whānau and our wider community, and recognise the important role these connections play in supporting student engagement, achievement and personal development.

As a rural college, we understand the significance of our place within the community and the opportunities that come from maintaining strong relationships with families, local organisations and community partners.

We are committed to fostering a safe, welcoming and supportive environment where students are encouraged to participate, develop confidence and take pride in their college.

Job Description

JOB TITLE:	Principal
RESPONSIBLE TO:	Ōkaihau College Board
DIRECTLY RESPONSIBLE FOR:	The leadership and management of Ōkaihau College, including students, senior leaders, teaching staff, support staff and other school personnel.
EFFECTIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH:	The Ōkaihau College Board of Trustees, students, staff, parents, caregivers, whānau, iwi, hapū, neighbouring schools, education agencies and the wider community.
PRIMARY OBJECTIVES:	**Culture**: Provide professional leadership that fosters a positive, collaborative, inclusive and accountable school culture focused on enhancing teaching, learning and student success. **Pedagogy**: Lead a learning environment in which high-quality teaching, strong student engagement and continuous improvement support every student to experience success. **Systems**: Establish and maintain effective management systems that ensure the college operates efficiently, responsibly, safely and sustainably. **Partnerships and Networks**: Strengthen relationships, communication and partnerships that support student learning, community confidence and the long-term success of Ōkaihau College.

Accountability

The Principal is accountable to the Board for the effective day-to-day management of Ōkaihau College and the implementation of its strategic direction.

Performance will be considered against this Job Description, the Board's strategic priorities, agreed annual objectives, applicable professional standards and employment obligations.

This Job Description is to be read alongside the Board's policies, delegations and relevant employment agreement.

Key Responsibilities

The Principal is responsible for:

1. Educational Leadership

- Developing, implementing and reviewing curriculum and teaching programmes in accordance with the Board's strategic direction and applicable curriculum requirements.
- Monitoring student achievement, attendance, engagement and progress, and reporting outcomes to the Board.
- Leading school improvement initiatives and ensuring effective evaluation of teaching and learning programmes.

2. Personnel Management

- Managing the appointment, development, performance and conduct of school staff in accordance with delegated authority, employment agreements and legislation.
- Establishing appropriate management structures, delegations and accountability arrangements.
- Maintaining a safe and supportive working and learning environment.

3. Financial and Operational Management

- Preparing and managing budgets and allocating resources in accordance with Board-approved plans, policies and delegations.
- Maintaining effective financial, property, health and safety, and operational management systems.
- Monitoring financial performance, identifying risks and reporting significant matters to the Board.
- Ensuring the college meets applicable legislative, regulatory and reporting obligations.

4. Governance and Reporting

- Implementing the Board's strategic direction, policies and decisions.
- Providing timely, accurate and relevant information to support the Board's governance responsibilities.
- Operating within the Board's delegations and maintaining a clear distinction between governance and management.

5. Communication and Community Relationships

- Maintaining effective communication with students, staff, whānau, parents and the wider community.
- Developing and sustaining relationships with iwi, hapū, neighbouring schools, education agencies and community organisations.
- Representing the college and supporting partnerships that enhance student learning and opportunities.

Personal Attributes – Appointment Criteria

Our Next Principal

Ōkaihau College is a school with a proud history, strong community connections and considerable potential.

We are seeking a principal who recognises these strengths and is motivated by the opportunity to lead our college into its next chapter.

Our successful applicant will bring the experience, capability and personal qualities required to provide strong educational leadership, build confidence across our school community and ensure Ōkaihau College continues to be a place where every student has the opportunity to learn, grow and succeed.

The Ōkaihau College Board is seeking an experienced, capable and forward-thinking educational leader who will build on the strengths of our college while providing clear direction for its future.

Our next principal will be a visible, approachable and values-driven leader who inspires confidence, builds positive relationships and maintains high expectations for teaching, learning and student achievement.

We are looking for someone who leads with integrity, communicates openly, makes sound decisions and takes responsibility for delivering results. They will recognise the strengths of our students, staff and wider community, while having the confidence and capability to lead meaningful improvement and change.

Our principal will embrace the unique character of Ōkaihau College, uphold our values of Whanaungatanga, Rangatiratanga and Taha Wairua and be committed to providing a high-quality, inclusive education that enables every student to achieve their potential.

1. Educational Leadership and Student Achievement

Our principal will:

- Demonstrate strong educational and curriculum leadership, with a clear focus on improving teaching, learning and student achievement.
- Establish and maintain high expectations for all students, recognising their individual abilities, aspirations and learning needs.
- Use student achievement information, evidence and evaluation to identify priorities, monitor progress and drive continuous improvement.
- Support meaningful academic, vocational and alternative learning pathways that prepare students for life beyond school.
- Lead approaches that strengthen student attendance, engagement, retention and wellbeing.
- Promote an inclusive learning environment where all students have equitable opportunities to succeed.

2. People Leadership and School Culture

Our principal will:

- Lead by example, demonstrating integrity, professionalism, fairness and accountability.
- Be visible, approachable and actively engaged in the daily life of the college.
- Build a positive, respectful and supportive environment where students and staff feel valued.
- Provide clear direction, expectations and accountability for staff while encouraging professional growth and collaboration.
- Demonstrate the ability to manage performance, resolve conflict and address difficult matters constructively and fairly.
- Listen to different perspectives, communicate decisions clearly and follow through on commitments.
- Develop and empower an effective senior leadership team, fostering shared responsibility for school improvement.

3. Strategic, Financial and Operational Leadership

Our principal will:

- Demonstrate the ability to translate the Board's strategic direction into achievable plans, priorities and measurable outcomes.
- Possess sound financial management skills, including budgeting, resource allocation and responsible financial decision-making.
- Establish and maintain effective operational systems, processes and internal controls that support accountability and efficiency.
- Demonstrate strong organisational skills, sound judgement and the ability to prioritise competing demands.
- Lead change confidently and constructively while maintaining stability and continuity.
- Understand and respect the distinction between governance and management, maintaining a transparent and professional working relationship with the Board.
- Contribute to the long-term sustainability and success of Ōkaihau College through responsible planning and effective leadership.

4. Relationships, Communication and Community Engagement

Our principal will:

- Build and maintain genuine, respectful and productive relationships with students, staff, whānau and the wider community.
- Communicate openly, clearly and consistently, fostering trust and confidence in the leadership of the college.
- Actively seek and appropriately consider the perspectives of students, staff and whānau when making decisions.
- Strengthen the connection between the college and its community, recognising the importance of these relationships in a rural setting.
- Develop partnerships that support student learning, opportunities and pathways beyond school.

- Promote pride in Ōkaihau College and contribute positively to its reputation and standing within the wider community.

5. Cultural Responsiveness and Inclusion

Our principal will:

- Foster an inclusive school environment where the cultural identities, backgrounds and aspirations of all students are recognised, respected and valued.
- Demonstrate an understanding of Māori educational aspirations and a commitment to improving equitable educational outcomes for Māori students.
- Understand the college's legislative responsibilities relating to cultural diversity.
- Build positive and respectful relationships with iwi, hapū and the wider school community.
- Support culturally responsive teaching and learning practices that recognise the diverse needs of all students.
- Promote a strong sense of identity, belonging and mutual respect throughout the college.

6. Personal Attributes

The successful applicant will demonstrate:

- **Integrity and accountability** — acts honestly, makes principled decisions and takes responsibility for their actions.
- **Confidence and courage** — is prepared to make difficult decisions and address challenges with fairness and professionalism.
- **Empathy and respect** — listens genuinely, values others and treats people with dignity.
- **Resilience and adaptability** — remains composed under pressure and responds constructively to change.
- **Collaboration and teamwork** — builds trust, empowers others and values collective success.
- **Initiative and innovation** — identifies opportunities, embraces improvement and brings practical solutions to challenges.
- **Visibility and approachability** — is accessible, engaged and actively involved in school life.
- **Commitment and follow-through** — sets clear expectations, delivers on commitments and leads by example.

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The application form and referee report form are provided separately as Word documents