



Ohakune
Primary
SCHOOL

P.R.I.D.E



PRINCIPAL APPLICATION PACK

Ohakune School **Principal**

Term 1 2027



Welcome from the Board Presiding Member

Dear Applicant,

On behalf of the Ohakune School Board, thank you for considering the position of Principal, starting in Term 1, 2027. We would be pleased to hear from experienced and first-time principals.

Ohakune School is a full primary school with around 260 learners. Relationships come first here. Our children, staff and whānau are known by name, and our PRIDE values guide everyday school life.

Ohakune is a special place to live. Mount Ruapehu sits above the town, and Tongariro National Park is on our doorstep. Our children grow up with the mountain and the great outdoors as part of their learning and their play. Skiing at Tūroa and local bush walks are part of life here. If you love the outdoors, you will be well looked after. If you simply like a good view, you will not be short of one.

Our school also sits within the rohe of Ngāti Rangī. We want a Principal who values those relationships, takes the time to listen and learn the histories, identity and aspirations of our local whānau, and strengthens the sense of belonging that matters so much to us.

We are looking for a warm, visible and approachable leader who puts children at the centre of decisions. Someone who sets clear direction, supports and continues to grow our committed staff, and works with the Board and whānau so every learner can succeed, including getting every child to school, every day. Practical sense, sound judgement and a sense of humour will go a long way.

Please read through this pack and, if you can, visit us. It is the best way to get a feel for the school and the town. It would be good to hear what you could bring to Ohakune School and why this role appeals to you.

We look forward to receiving your application.

Warm regards,
Sarah Drinkwater
Presiding Member
On behalf of the Ohakune School Board

This application pack contains:

Application process

School profile

Referee process and application summary sheet

Personal Profile

Person Specifications

Referee Report form, three required

Application Process

1. Applicants should provide:

A CV

The Principal's Personal Profile

Three (3) referee reports, refer to notes below

A covering letter explaining how the school will benefit from their leadership and how they meet the person specifications

2. Deadlines for the appointment process:

Applications must be received via email by 4:00pm, Friday 13 November 2026.

Email to: vacancy@bged.co.nz

School Phone: 06 385 8384

Information: vacancy@bged.co.nz

Website: <https://www.ohakune.school.nz/>

ERO Report: [OHAKUNE ERO REPORT](#)

Late applications may be considered at the discretion of the appointment committee.

3. Referees:

Please deliver referee reports to your three referees.

Referee forms should be delivered separately from the application and received by Ohakune School no later than 4:00pm, Friday 13 November 2026.

Please label the email 'Confidential'.

Nominated referees may also be contacted by the appointment committee, or their agents, for further or more detailed information.



Application Process

4. Shortlisting:

Shortlisting will be completed by Tuesday 17th November 2026. Successful and unsuccessful candidates will be notified shortly after this date.

5. School visits:

If required, school visits to shortlisted candidates will take place before interviews.

6. Interviews:

Interviews will be held at Ohakune School on Saturday 28 November 2026. If you are not available for an interview at this time, please note this in your covering letter. The Principal Appointment will be confirmed as soon as is practical following the interviews and it is expected the Principal will be available to take up the position at the start of Term 1, 2027.

7. Visits to the school or requests for further information:

Any applicant is welcome to visit and shortlisted applicants will be given contact details should they wish to organise a tour of the school or make contact with Sarah Drinkwater, (Presiding member) on behalf of the Board for additional information.

School Profile

Our School

Ohakune School is a state, co-educational full primary school for Years 1 to 8, at 52 Arawa Street in Ohakune. The town sits on the southwestern slopes of Mount Ruapehu, at the southern end of Tongariro National Park, and is known as the carrot capital of New Zealand and the gateway to the Tūroa ski field. It is a small town of around 1,300 people, and the school is very much at the centre of it.

The roll is around 260 learners, and close to half identify as Māori. The school sits in the rohe of Ngāti Rangi, and te ao Māori is woven into learning through place-based programmes and a local curriculum. Puanga events, a pōwhiri at the start of every term, and strong links with whānau and iwi are part of the school year, and the Board is committed to Māori learners achieving as Māori.

The school values are PRIDE, and a tuakana teina approach shows up in the House system, ambassadors, house captains and student mediators, so older learners step up, and younger ones are looked after. PB4L guides behaviour expectations. Mathematics and writing are both under active development with curriculum leadership shared across the team, and the school is working with a structured literacy approach in reading and writing.

Whānau are welcomed in often. Whānau breakfasts, family fun nights, celebration assemblies, Grandparents Day and the interschool speech night are all part of the calendar, and the school takes part in community events like the Waimarino Art Awards, as well as sports and numerous events in Whanganui, including Rippa Rugby, Mathex and athletics.

Attendance is one of the Board's clear priorities. Ohakune has an Attendance Management Plan, reports attendance data to the Board regularly, and runs whānau initiatives including breakfasts and an Attendance Awareness Month. The next Principal will inherit that work, along with a staff and community who want to get it right.

Our Vision

“Young people who will be confident, connected, contributing, lifelong learners.”

Our Values

The school's values are PRIDE, the foundation for helping learners feel connected and confident:

P	R	I	D	E
Participation	Respect	Integrity	Determination	Environment



ERO

Latest ERO report: October 2025.

Key strengths: values that create an inclusive, collaborative learning environment with respectful relationships; high quality teaching that is improving progress and achievement in reading, writing and mathematics; leaders who build relational trust and collaboration at every level of the school; learners with complex needs who are well supported; and professional learning that develops teacher knowledge and is informed by research.

ERO's key priorities for the school are improving attendance, embedding the curriculum changes for English and mathematics, sustaining the schoolwide structured literacy approach and mathematics programme, and refining the use of assessment tools.

Our Principal

The new Principal will start at the beginning of Term 1, 2027, following the current Principal's move to a new role.

The Board is looking for a relational, visible leader who will build high trust with staff, whānau and the wider Ohakune community, and who brings real cultural capability: someone who will take the time to understand our local iwi and the place Ohakune sits in, listen before changing things, and make sure te reo, tikanga and mātauranga Māori are genuinely present in school life, not just named in a policy.

Alongside this, the new Principal needs a clear head for the work in front of the school: leading attendance as a strategic priority, bringing the refreshed curriculum to life across the learning areas coming in 2027 and 2028, moving assessment to the SMART Tool, and working with the Board on the strategic plan for 2027 to 2029. The Board wants a leader who builds on the shared curriculum leadership already in the school and makes it easy for staff to do their best work and prioritises a safe and empowering environment for our staff and students.

Above all, this is someone who wants to be part of a small town, who will be visible in the community, who brings a roll up your sleeves attitude and a sense of humour, and who staff, learners and whānau will trust from day one.

Person Specifications

Are you an energetic and inspiring leader able to support our talented and dedicated staff to achieve excellence?

The Board has established the following Person Specifications. We welcome applications from New Zealand registered teaching professionals with the following skills and attributes, with proven ability and potential to meet the key criteria stated below.

Key Criteria

1. Communication, Relationships and Community Partnership

To be an approachable, visible and effective communicator who builds positive, trusting relationships with the Board, staff, students, whānau and the wider Ohakune community. Demonstrates confidence in having constructive conversations. Actively participates in school and community life, strengthening the school's connections and sense of belonging.

2. Strategic Leadership and Leading Change

To be a confident, collaborative and future-focused leader who provides clear direction and inspires a shared vision for school improvement. Builds on the school's existing strengths, positive culture and established practices, taking time to understand the school before introducing change. Values distributed leadership, involves staff in decision-making and ensures agreed priorities are implemented consistently across the school.

3. Operational Management and Organisational Leadership

To be a highly organised and effective leader who establishes clear systems, expectations and procedures that support the smooth operation of the school. Demonstrates fairness, consistency and accountability in managing staff, resources, finances, property and school-wide processes. Ensures effective systems support teaching and learning while recognising the importance of managing staff workload and time.

4. Educational and Pedagogical Leadership

To be a knowledgeable and credible educational leader with current understanding of effective teaching practice, curriculum development, structured literacy and mathematics. Leads high-quality, consistent teaching and learning across the school, using evidence and assessment information to improve student outcomes. Supports teacher professional growth, encourages innovation and ensures teaching practices respond effectively to the diverse learning needs of all students.

5. Cultural Leadership

To be a culturally responsive leader who builds authentic relationships with local iwi, deepens their understanding of local histories, and honours the significance of the maunga, whenua and community in the life of the school.

6. School Culture

To be an inclusive school leader and actively promote a positive, respectful and supportive school culture. Builds on the school's existing values and traditions, ensuring students, staff and whānau experience a strong sense of belonging and pride in their school.

7. Staff and Student Wellbeing

To be a supportive, empathetic and fair leader who actively promotes the wellbeing, engagement and success of staff and students. Create an environment where staff feel valued, heard, and professionally trusted, with realistic expectations and appropriate support. Promotes positive relationships, student engagement, and a school culture where every learner and whānau feels welcomed, respected and supported.

Skills and Attributes

Leadership

Experience, or a genuine willingness to learn, leading a primary school within the dynamics of a close township community

Visible presence in all contexts where students represent the school, at school events and in the community

Understanding of, or commitment to learning about, finance, personnel, property and health and safety

Pedagogical Leadership

Passionate educator committed to evidence based pedagogy, with the drive to lead a well balanced, holistic programme of learning

Excellent understanding of the NZ educational landscape, including Te Mātaiaho, the SMART Tool and structured literacy, and able to lead change effectively while building on existing practice

Developmental approach that promotes leadership opportunities across the whole staff

Relational Leadership

Genuine understanding and honouring of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, with real commitment to te reo and tikanga across the school

Excellent communicator able to unite the Board, staff, whānau and the wider Ohakune community

Collaborative and collegial with staff, students and families, building high relational trust in a community where everyone knows everyone

Both consultative and decisive as appropriate, and able to listen before acting on change

Personal Qualities

Proven ability to connect with students inside and outside the classroom

Positive attitude, encourages a creative, fun environment, and brings a genuine sense of humour

Good communicator who inspires trust and collegiality with staff, students and the community

Calm, practical and resilient under pressure, including around attendance, whānau circumstances and the realities of life in a mountain town

Personal Profile

Application for Appointment

As Principal of Ohakune School

Important Notes for Applicants

Thank you for applying for a position with our school.

1. Please fully complete this form personally. First, read it through, then answer all questions and make sure you sign and date where indicated on the last page.
2. Attach a current curriculum vitae (CV) containing any additional information, if necessary.
3. Copies only of qualification certificates should be attached. If successful in your application you will be required to provide the originals as proof of qualifications.
4. 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.
5. All applicants are required to give consent to a Police vet. Applicants may not be employed as a children's worker if they have been convicted of a specified offence listed in Schedule 2 of the Children's Act 2014, unless they obtain an exemption. The Criminal Records (Clean Slate) Act 2004 will not apply to these specified offences, and these offences will be included in your Police vetting results. The Clean Slate Act provides that certain convictions do not have to be disclosed, provided you have not committed any offence within 7 consecutive years of being sentenced, did not serve a custodial sentence, the offence was not a specified offence under either Act, and you have paid any fines or costs. You are not obliged to disclose convictions if you meet these conditions but may do so if you wish. If uncertain, contact the Ministry of Justice.
6. Shortlisted applicants being interviewed will need to provide originals of both a primary identity document, such as a passport, and a secondary identity document, such as a New Zealand driver licence.
7. This information will be held by the employer. For the successful candidate, this document will be held on their personal file; otherwise the information provided will be securely destroyed after 30 days. You may access it in accordance with the provisions of the Privacy Act 2020.

Personal Details

Name:	
Address:	
Registration No:	
Home Phone:	
Work Phone:	
Mobile Phone:	
Email:	
Expiry Date:	

Present Employer

Name of present employer:	
Address:	
Position held:	
Work Phone:	
Other Phone:	
Date commenced:	

Referees

Note: at least one of these should be able to attest to your most recent work performance.

Referee 1

Name:	
Address:	
Home Phone:	
Work Phone:	
Mobile Phone:	
Email:	

Referee 2

Name:	
Address:	
Home Phone:	
Work Phone:	
Mobile Phone:	
Email:	

Referee 3

Name:	
Address:	
Home Phone:	
Work Phone:	
Mobile Phone:	
Email:	

Tertiary Education Qualifications

Institution attended	Year	Qualifications attained	Date awarded

Teaching Service

List all schools and positions.

Position	School	Date from	Date to

Professional Memberships

Please give details below.

Other Information

Yes	No	Are you aware of any injury or medical condition which this job may aggravate or contribute to, or know of any reason why you might have difficulty effectively carrying out the job description attached? If yes, please give details below:
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Yes	No	Do you have a current New Zealand Driver's Licence?
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Yes	No	Do you give permission for your police record to be checked?
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Yes	No	Are you a New Zealand citizen?
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Yes	No	If not, do you have residential status?
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Yes	No	A current work visa?
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Yes	No	Have you changed your name by deed poll or statutory declaration?
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Other names known by: _____

Yes	No	Have you ever been convicted or are awaiting trial of a driving offence which could result in temporary or permanent loss of licence or imprisonment? If yes, please provide details:
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Yes	No	Have you ever been the subject of any concerns involving child safety? If yes, please give details:
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Yes	No	Do you hold a current practising certificate from the Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand? Please enter your registration number: _____
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Yes	No	In addition to other information provided, are there any other factors that we should know to assess your suitability for appointment and your ability to do the job? If yes, please detail:
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Declaration

Yes	No	Have you ever been convicted of an offence against the law? Have you received police diversion for an offence, been discharged without conviction, are awaiting sentencing or have charges pending, or have ever been convicted of a driving offence which resulted in temporary or permanent loss of driver's licence or imprisonment, or know of any reason why you should not be employed to work in a school environment? A board may not employ or engage a children's worker who has been convicted of any offence specified in Schedule 2 of the Children's Act 2014. The Clean Slate Act does not apply to Schedule 2 offences. If yes to any of the above, please detail:
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Applicant's signature: _____ Date: _____

Applicant Declaration

I certify that:

The information I have supplied in this application is true and correct

I confirm, in terms of the Privacy Act 2020, that I have authorised access to referees

I know of no reason why I would not be suitable to work with children or young people

I understand that if I have supplied incorrect or misleading information, or have omitted any important information, I may be disqualified from appointment, or if appointed, may be liable to be dismissed

Privacy Act 2020

To be signed by the applicant.

This application is submitted with the understanding that any further information given is for the use of the employer and their authorised representatives, who may at any time have access to this information.

Furthermore, consent is given for members of the Ohakune School Board and its advisor to make enquiries of my present or past employers or colleagues, or any other person who may assist in establishing my suitability for the position of Principal at this school, including accessing any information used by the Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand.

Applicant's signature: _____ Date: _____

Note: if completing this form electronically, a signed hard copy must be provided at interview.



Referee Report Form

Ohakune School Principal Position

Referee Report Form

Cover Letter

From the applicant to their referee. Please complete and give this to each of your three referees.

Dear _____

I am an applicant for the position of Principal at Ohakune School, and have named you as a confidential referee.

Please forward the completed referee's report to:

vacancy@bged.co.nz

Please label the email 'Confidential'.

Please ensure that the report is received at the above address by 4:00pm, Friday 13th November 2026.

Yours sincerely,

Referee Form

Confidential Referee Report: Principal Applicant

Name of Applicant: _____

Name of Referee: _____

Relationship to Applicant: _____

Instructions

Please assess the applicant's performance for each of the following indicators by selecting the appropriate rating.

Rating scale: 1 = Not Satisfactory 2 = Needs Development 3 = Competent 4 = Area of Strength 5 = Outstanding

Section 1: Personal Qualities

Please rate the applicant on the following:

Indicator	1	2	3	4	5
High personal standards: holds themselves to consistent expectations					
Positive energy: brings calm enthusiasm and steady presence					
Warmth in relationships: genuinely connects with staff, students and whānau					
Approachability: easy to talk to, listens without judgement					
Inner motivation: self driven, proactive and committed to improvement					
Integrity: honest, fair, dependable and trustworthy in all dealings					
Respectful social conduct: interacts with others with courtesy, dignity and cultural awareness					
Sense of humour: uses humour wisely to build connection and ease pressure					
Professionalism: consistently presents a balanced, reliable and thoughtful demeanour					
Organisation and efficiency: naturally inclined toward orderly, clear and purposeful work habits					

Section 2: Professional Qualities

Capacity to:

Indicator	1	2	3	4	5
Strategic clarity: see the big picture, set direction, and align people and systems around shared goals					
Curriculum expertise: strong understanding of curriculum design and effective pedagogy across all year levels					
Data informed decision making: uses assessment, wellbeing and attendance data to guide actions, monitor progress and evaluate impact					
Leader of learning: actively supports high quality teaching through coaching, guidance and modelling effective practice					
Organisational efficiency: maintains orderly systems, manages time well and ensures smooth day to day operations					
People leadership: builds capability in others, delegates wisely and fosters distributed leadership across the school					
Communication skills: communicates clearly, respectfully and professionally with staff, whānau, students and the wider community					
Cultural responsiveness: leads in ways that honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi, uplift te ao Māori and respect the cultural identities of all ākonga					
Problem solving and judgement: navigates complex situations with calm logic, fairness and appropriate consultation					
Financial and resource stewardship: manages budgets, resources and school property responsibly, ensuring sustainability and transparency					

Section 3: Relationships with Ākonga

Capacity to:

Indicator	1	2	3	4	5
Earns genuine respect: builds trust by being fair, consistent and genuinely engaged with ākonga					
Builds warm, culturally responsive relationships: connects with all ākonga in ways that honour their culture, identity and needs					
Empowers ākonga as active learners: promotes learner agency and self management					
Promotes high expectations and positive conduct: supports ākonga to meet clear behavioural expectations with self regulation and respect					

Section 4: Relationships with Colleagues

Capacity to:

Indicator	1	2	3	4	5
Leads a cohesive, high functioning team: creates clarity and shared purpose so staff work together confidently					
Builds positive, trusting relationships: fosters a culture of openness and respect where staff feel valued and supported					
Inspires, motivates and challenges: encourages growth, celebrates strengths and lifts professional practice					
Recognises and harnesses strengths: identifies the abilities and expertise across the team and distributes leadership so others can shine					
Communicates with clarity and purpose: communicates openly and listens actively so everyone feels informed					

Section 5: School Organisation and Management

Proven skills in:

Indicator	1	2	3	4	5
Financial and resource stewardship: manages budgets, resources and school property responsibly, ensuring sustainability and transparency					
Recruits and retains high quality staff: selects staff strategically and creates conditions where great teachers want to stay					
Promotes the school and its achievements: promotes the school widely, building community pride and confidence					
Implements effective professional growth systems: strengthens teacher capability through clear, supportive professional growth systems					
Works productively with the Board: builds a transparent, trust based partnership with the Board					

Summary Recommendation

How would you rank the applicant for the position?

- ☐ Outstanding (No Reservations)
- ☐ Highly Recommended
- ☐ Competent
- ☐ Needs Developing
- ☐ Not Satisfactory

Additional comments. Feel free to add more on a separate page.

Signature: _____ Date: _____