



Wellesley

COLLEGE | YEARS 1-8



CANDIDATE BRIEFING INFORMATION

Principal

OCTOBER 2026

"Each boy has every opportunity to excel"

sheffieldsearch 

About Wellesley

Located in Days Bay, Lower Hutt, Wellesley is one of New Zealand's most respected independent schools for boys in Years 1-8.

Founded in 1914, Wellesley combines strong traditions with an ambitious and progressive approach to education focused on preparing boys for the future. Grounded in its Anglican character, Wellesley combines rigorous academics, strong pastoral care and a breadth of co-curricular activities to give boys the foundations, confidence and opportunities to find their feet.

Wellesley is a special place. The Days Bay campus, nestled between native bush and harbour foreshore, blends heritage buildings with modern facilities, giving boys a distinctive, adventure-rich setting to learn and grow.



Our Vision, Mission & Values

Our Vision *"Each boy has every opportunity to excel"*

Wellesley is a unique place for boys. Our Vision is "Every boy has every opportunity to excel". This simple statement carries profound meaning. We believe that every boy who walks through our gates deserves all of what Wellesley offers, from specialist teaching to learning support, from sporting fields to art rooms, from quiet library corners to centre stage. Excellence looks different for every boy, and Wellesley is committed to guiding each one to find his own version of success.

Our Mission *"We bring out the best in each boy – body, mind and spirit"*

At Wellesley, we achieve this through empowering, intentional teaching in our remarkable setting between bush and sea. Our ethos grounds us in service and gratitude. Our inclusive culture ensures every boy belongs, while blending over a century of cherished traditions prepares boys for tomorrow's world. It is a holistic approach that recognises boys need physical challenge, intellectual stimulation and spiritual grounding to truly thrive.

Our Values

Risk-taking in learning: At Wellesley, the real learning happens when boys step beyond what is comfortable and certain. We celebrate curiosity and welcome questions. Our boys learn that when you are not afraid to have a go, there is no limit to what you might discover. Importantly, we instil a culture of intellectual courage, which supports boys to develop into flexible, critical thinkers who see challenges as opportunities.

Perseverance for personal bests: Wellesley celebrates effort alongside achievement, knowing that true success comes from pushing through when things get tough. Boys learn that personal bests are about becoming better versions of themselves. Through encouragement and diverse opportunities for leadership and growth, boys build resilience that serves them well beyond our gates.

Respect for self, others and Wellesley: At Wellesley, we treat others as we wish to be treated. Boys learn to stand in the shoes of others, to look out for one another, and to value fairness. This creates genuine relationships across our community and teaches boys to respect themselves, their peers, and the special place that is Wellesley. We have a school where everyone belongs.

Learning at Wellesley

Where curious minds become confident learners through hands-on discovery and genuine relationships.

Excellence at Wellesley is multidimensional. Academic rigour coexists with cultural richness and physical vitality; and each is valued equally. Teachers know their students through genuine connections that acknowledge each boy's strengths. Wellesley is divided into three syndicates: Years 1-4, 5-6 and 7-8, with dedicated head teachers ensuring smooth transitions as boys advance. Classroom teachers deliver the core subjects, based on the New Zealand Curriculum, with an unwavering focus on the foundations of literacy and numeracy.



Specialist Teaching

Developing competence alongside confidence, building skills and self-belief.

Specialist teaching begins from Year 1, giving boys the chance to discover their talents and develop essential skills early. Specialist subjects include visual arts, performing arts, physical education, STEM and French, each taught by teachers who bring deep expertise and genuine passion in their specialist subject. These classes complement classroom learning while opening new ways to connect with ideas, peers and the wider world. Working with subject specialists from such a young age means boys can discover and extend their learning across a range of subjects, developing competence alongside confidence.

Our specialist teachers understand how boys learn best. They create environments that are hands-on, structured and full of opportunity – experimenting in STEM, rehearsing for a performance, exploring movement in PE, or creating in our art room.



Wellbeing, Pastoral Care and Character

Wellesley's approach to wellbeing is woven through everything Wellesley does, rather than treated as a separate programme, because grounded, supported boys are ready to excel academically and socially. Daily moments for mindfulness and tailored, year-level Wellbeing and Resilience programmes sit alongside the school's Anglican character, which is expressed through chaplaincy, assemblies and the values embedded in the school's traditions, song, prayer, motto and crest.

Small classes and strong relationships give teachers the opportunity to understand the boy in front of them, when he needs encouragement, when he is ready for challenge, and when he may need additional support, helping him grow in confidence and independence while feeling secure in who he is.



Community

Wellesley's community extends well beyond the school gates. Current families, staff and generations of Old Boys maintain strong ties to the school through its Alumni network, active Parents' Association (which supports social events and fundraising) and the Wellesley Foundation, which provides scholarship opportunities, enhances school facilities and helps secure Wellesley's future for generations to come.

Useful Links

[Click here for further information](#)



Governance Structure

Wellesley is governed by a Board of Trustees, which meets approximately eight times annually.



Liang Zhong
Board Chair



John Healy
Chair of Wellesley
Foundation



Andrew Allan
Foundation/Board
Member



Catherine Levermore
Board Member



Cormac Denton
Board Member



Sarah Bartlett
Board Member



Michael Bain
Principal –
Representative



Samantha Batchelar
Chair of Parents’
Association –
Representative



Nicola Swann
Board Member



Glen Jorna
Staff Representative



Peter Lischner
Board Member

Position Description

Title	Principal
Reports to	Chair, Board of Trustees
Location	Days Bay, Lower Hutt

Purpose of the Position

To provide exceptional leadership for Wellesley and lead the school into its next chapter. The Principal provides strategic leadership, driving Wellesley's strategic direction and providing a compelling vision to current and prospective families. The Principal is the lead educator, maintaining and enhancing excellence across all learning areas within the school. The Principal is responsible for the school's operations including all areas of financial and commercial management as well as recognising opportunities for the school as a business. The Principal is also responsible for leading high-performing staff and enabling the special character of Wellesley to continue to thrive.



Key Responsibilities

Strategic Leadership

- Drive Wellesley's strategic direction - work with the Board to create clear priorities and an annual action plan.
 - Use school data and evidence to inform decisions and track progress against strategy and annual action plan.
 - Build on and communicate a compelling vision and value proposition for Wellesley, engaging staff, families and the wider community behind it.
 - Lead in a personal, visible way that reflects Wellesley's culture and values.
 - Provide thought leadership and anticipate how independent education is changing, including the impact of technology and AI, and respond accordingly.
 - Implement and monitor an appropriate risk management framework.
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Learning & Teaching

- Act as Wellesley's lead educator, maintaining and enhancing the standards of excellence and keeping every boy's interests and wellbeing at the centre of teaching and learning.
 - Ensure teaching at Wellesley reflects best practice, the NZ Curriculum, and Wellesley's own values and goals for high expectations of student achievement.
 - Track and report student progress and achievement to parents and the Board.
 - Help each boy find and pursue his own version of excellence, across academic, physical, social and cultural pursuits.
 - Oversee culturally responsive teaching, including how te ao Māori is reflected in the curriculum.
 - Ensure teaching and learning environments are inclusive and equitable for every boy.
 - Keep up to date with educational developments and show progressive and innovative education practice, including leadership in the thoughtful use of technology and AI.
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Key Responsibilities

People & Culture

- Recruit, develop and retain staff who are motivated, skilled and committed to continuous improvement.
 - Consistently demonstrate the values of Wellesley and build a culture of collaboration, trust and respect that empowers staff to do their best teaching.
 - Drive a high-performance culture setting clear goals and holding staff accountable through effective performance appraisal, linked to school's strategy and values.
 - Support staff development through guidance, supervision and genuine professional development opportunities.
 - Give staff a real voice through good consultation and act on what is raised.
 - Promote health, safety and wellbeing for all staff, meeting the Board's good employer obligations.
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Financial & Commercial Management

- Operate within the annual budget, following a genuine consultative budget process with the Finance Committee, staff and other stakeholders.
 - Ensure financial systems, procedures and reporting meet all audit and legal requirements.
 - Oversee marketing and roll growth strategies, and ensure roll numbers meet targets agreed with the Board.
 - Develop and maintain the school's property and facilities in a way that supports Wellesley's goals, including delivering capital projects on time and within budget.
 - Advise the Board on financial planning, budgeting and resourcing decisions.
 - Understand legislation impacting the school and ensure full compliance in all areas.
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Governance & Board Relationship

- Build an open, honest working relationship with the Board, with clear and timely reporting.
 - Provide the Board with the advice it needs to meet its statutory and governance obligations.
 - Report on student achievement (literacy, mathematics and curriculum) at least twice yearly, and on progress against strategic goals.
 - Ensure Board-adopted policies and plans are implemented and complied with across the school.
 - Contribute to reviewing and developing the school's strategy, capital plan and budget, ahead of Board decisions.
 - Act on Board decisions and keep the Board informed of anything relevant to its responsibilities.
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Key Responsibilities

Special Character & Pastoral Care

- Enable the special character of Wellesley to thrive ensuring the Anglican ethos is maintained and developed.
 - Ensure pastoral care systems reflect and reinforce that special character.
 - Ensure robust health, wellbeing and safety systems for staff and students.
 - Implement clear, fair behaviour management policies and procedures.
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Community & Stakeholder Relationships

- Promote a warm, open and welcoming environment for staff, boys, current and prospective parents, and the wider community.
 - Build genuine rapport with boys and their families, giving them confidence in the school and its future.
 - Address parent and community concerns effectively and promptly, following school policies where appropriate and reporting to the Board as required.
 - Maintain and strengthen Wellesley's relationships with Māori whānau and actively build relationships with all other ethnic groups in the school community.
 - Develop and maintain relationships with the entire community including past parents, alumni, benefactors, ISNZ and other key stakeholders.
 - Provide genuine opportunities for the school community to have input, through good consultative practice.
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Education, Experience, Skills, Qualifications

1. Bachelor's degree qualified teacher (Masters preferred), with substantial experience teaching Years 1-8.
2. Strong senior leadership experience, whether as a Principal, Deputy Principal, or in an equivalent leadership role preferably within the independent school system.
3. Current and relevant knowledge of the NZ Curriculum and evidence-based teaching practices.
4. Ability to support and engage staff in progressive and modern learning practices.
5. Strong commercial nous and financial and administrative experience, including budgeting, planning and policy development.
6. Excellent interpersonal skills that enable the highest level of engagement whether it be written, verbal, listening, or negotiating.
7. Experience leading and developing staff, including performance management.
8. Strong self-management: sound judgement, decision-making and initiative.
9. Experience working with, or a clear understanding of, a Board governance structure.

Person Specification

1. Values led, visionary leader who is committed and passionate about Wellesley's values, and special character, and acts with integrity at all times.
2. A passion and commitment to ensure that the best quality education is delivered to students.
3. A personal, relational style that enables natural and genuine rapport with students, their families, our community and our staff.
4. A commitment to the wellbeing and potential of every boy.
5. Brings both energy and capability that inspires staff, enabling a high-performing culture where they feel trusted, valued and enabled to grow.
6. Excellent people and communication skills, with the ability to build trust across every part of the Wellesley community.
7. A strategic thinker who sees the big picture of a boy's education and who operates with the highest levels of professionalism, discretion and confidentiality at all times.
8. Recognises and embraces the diversity of learners and cultures within the school.
9. Approachable, energetic and empathetic with staff, students, parents and the community.

Key Relationships

- Students, staff and Board of Trustees
- Whānau and the Wider School Community
- Current and Prospective Parents
- Parents Association
- Wellesley Foundation
- ISNZ and other NZ Independent Schools
- Ministry of Education
- Education Review Office
- Other agencies/organisations as required
- Suppliers and Contractors
- Alumni



Approximate Timeline

28 September -
30 October 2026

Search and Advertising - Applications close on 30 October 2026 at 5.00pm

During this period, a Sheffield Search Consultant may contact candidates to discuss their application, explore motivations for applying and assess suitability and fit with the key competencies for the role. All applications received will be acknowledged via email.

w/c 16 November

Longlist Interviews with Sheffield Search

Sheffield Search will conduct behavioural-based interviews with those candidates selected for progression (virtually or in person).

w/c 30 November

Wellesley Shortlist Interviews

These will be conducted in-person.

w/c 7 December

Due Diligence, Decision

Further interviews to be conducted in person if possible. Reference and probity checking completed.

TBA

Commencement Date

To be agreed between appointee and Wellesley.

Applications

To apply, in strict confidence, please click **here** or via email by attaching your cover letter and CV in PDF format wherever possible and sending to cvakl@sheffield.co.nz quoting 9122. Applications close on Friday 30 October 2026 at 5.00pm. For more information please phone Rebecca Jamieson on +64 21 983 176.

If of interest, please see our candidate handbook **here** which provides valuable information and suggestions for your job search.

Sheffield Search Consultants



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