

# AQUINAS COLLEGE

*Hold Fast to Truth - Kia Mau ki te Pono*







# Welcome

Quality education is a gift for life. At Aquinas College, your child will be inspired, challenged and empowered within a learning community that knows and cares for them.

We are committed to educating the whole person to strive for excellence in accordance with the Catholic tradition of hope, faith and love.

Success in the classroom, in the wider curriculum, and in personal growth is recognised and celebrated. We are justifiably proud of our record of academic achievement, as seen in our NCEA results over time. Our commitment to Scholarship ensures all learners are nurtured and supported in their learning

to realise their potential.

Our students are supported and encouraged to pursue their gifts and talents. We provide extensive opportunities in sport, the arts and cultural pursuits. No matter their interest or passion, we aim to encourage, grow and challenge our young people to be the best they can be.

Students at Aquinas College benefit from outstanding pastoral care and guidance. We commit to ensuring our young people belong in a safe

and compassionate space of tolerance and acceptance in our school community. As a Catholic community, we are called to encounter the loving and merciful face of Jesus Christ in all circumstances as is modelled to us in the teachings of the Gospel.

I invite you to join us on the next phase of your child's educational journey by making Aquinas College your first choice in college education.

**Matt Dalton** *Principal/Tumuaki*



# History

Aquinas College is a Year 7-13 integrated co-educational Catholic College. We opened in January 2003 for Years 7, 8, 9 and 10 students. Our school now has 750 students (maximum roll).

The College was not founded by a religious order like many Catholic schools in New Zealand. Instead, it was established by the Catholic community of Tauranga, with the support of Bishop Dennis Browne, to provide a quality Catholic education pathway for the young people in our community.

The College is named after St. Thomas Aquinas (1224-1274), the patron saint of students

and Catholic schools. He was born into an aristocratic family but committed himself to a life of prayer, study, research and action in the Dominican order. He is perhaps the greatest of the Doctors of the Church, gaining a strong reputation for his ability to reconcile faith, reason and science. St. Thomas Aquinas was always a man of God – in prayer, his love of the Mass and the Eucharist, his search for Truth, and his generosity to others. St. Thomas Aquinas

serves as an excellent role model for our students - he was a man of the heart and humility and a great servant to his community.

St. Thomas Aquinas is also historically connected to Tauranga Moana. On March 7, 1840, when Bishop Pompallier first arrived on the harbour foreshore, he dedicated the Catholic Mission in Tauranga to St. Thomas Aquinas.





# About Us

## **Our Motto:**

Hold Fast to Truth - Kia Mau ki te Pono

## **Our Mission Statement:**

To educate students in the Catholic Tradition of hope, faith and love, recognising the uniqueness of the individual and challenging them to realise their potential in a multicultural environment that constantly strives for excellence.

## **Our Vision:**

Educating Catholic Leaders through Faith and Action.

## **School Prayer:**

Loving God, we gather in your name and ask that your Spirit be with us – a Spirit of wisdom and encouragement, of gentleness and peace.

Be with us in all that we do and help us make Aquinas College into a truly Catholic educational community;

Supporting **Family** Life  
Promoting **Scholarship**  
Seeking **Truth** in all its forms  
**Serving** and caring for others  
Grounded in **Prayer**  
And full of **Joy**

We make this prayer in Jesus' name, and through the intercession of Thomas Aquinas and of all the saints, Amen.

# Our Touchstones

The Aquinas College Touchstones are based on Gospel values and reflect the Dominican connections of our Patron Saint - St. Thomas Aquinas. Each Touchstone calls us to live the values as a connected Disciple of Christ.

## **Family**

We grow an authentic sense of belonging when we show care, compassion and love to all in our community. We are called to love one another just as God first loved us. As a faith community, we belong to a Family that cares for us and provides us with a nurturing environment to grow.

## **Scholarship**

We seek personal excellence in all we do, realising that hard work and resilience are necessary to reach our true potential. The Touchstone of Scholarship is connected with our search for Truth. We must develop our ability to think, reason and understand to see God's fingerprint in creation. St. Thomas Aquinas gave us an excellent example of Scholarship in his devotion to faith and reason.

## **Truth**

Jesus is the Truth we aspire to. He is our Truth and the model for us as disciples. The search for Truth is continuous by seeking a moral way to live our lives and ground ourselves in a set of values upon which we can base our whole being.

## **Service**

Service is central to our mission and ministry as Christians. Jesus calls us to put the needs of others before our own, particularly those most vulnerable in our society. We are encouraged to recognise the face of Christ in others and respond to their needs through our understanding of Catholic social teachings.

## **Prayer**

We are called into a personal relationship with Christ through a life of Prayer. Jesus himself took time out to pray before anything he did. Through Prayer, we will grow and develop our personal relationship with our heavenly Father. Our Christian lives are a journey nourished by Prayer to support not just ourselves but those who journey with us.

## **Joy**

Knowing Jesus intimately through a personal encounter is the Joy we all aspire to and connects us to the message of the Gospel. Putting our trust in God and focusing on Christ rather than our circumstances enables us to experience Joy even in times of hardship.



## Aquinas College Graduate Profile

*We aim, by modelling, for our graduates to:*



# Graduate Profile

Our Graduate Profile expresses our commitment to educating the whole person to strive for excellence in accordance with the Catholic tradition of faith and love.

At Aquinas College, our learners have the opportunity to **Belong** in a faith community, **Believe** with Reason and **Become** Disciples of Christ. This allows each student to forge their own path and realise their true potential by developing their unique gifts and talents. The Graduate Profile is reflected in our learning programmes and across broader experiences of our College.

The aspirational outcomes of our Graduate Profile grow our students to be servant leaders who positively influence others through their actions and words. We aim for our graduates to have a strong sense of self, be active participants in their community, lead with moral purpose and strive to be the best they can be.



# Te Ao Māori

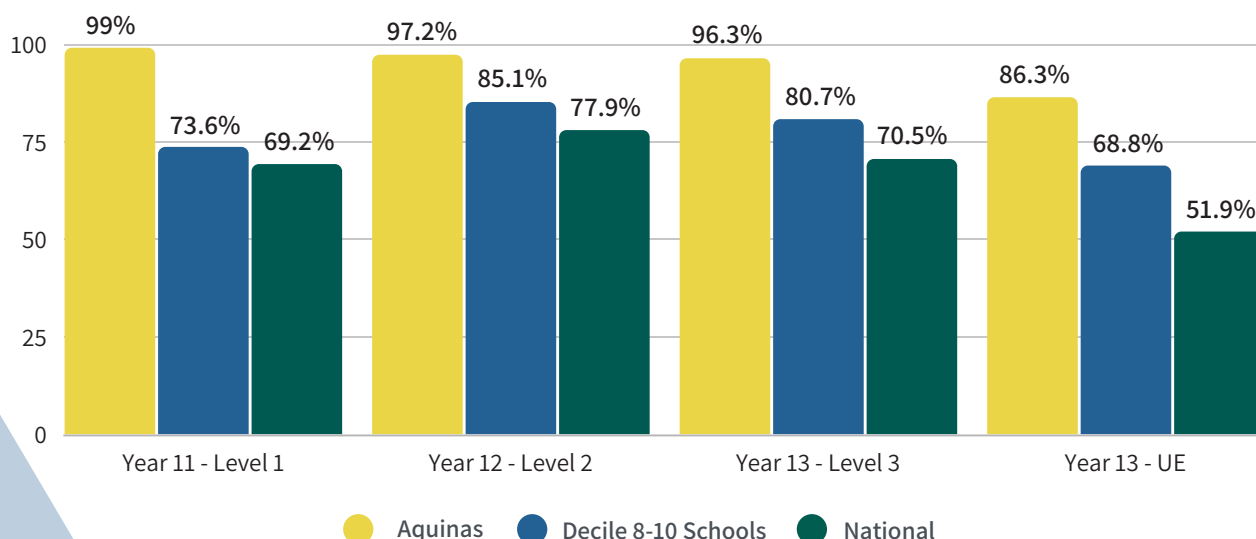
We focus on building whanaungatanga for all students, a sense of belonging to our College, our faith community and where we are positioned in our local community. This kaupapa is supported by our own Te Reo Māori Learning area and connections with our whānau group and mana whenua.

The embedding of Mātauranga Māori, Māori knowledge, including traditions, values, concepts, philosophies, world views and understandings, is a priority at Aquinas College. We are deeply committed to developing Treaty honouring partnerships and confident participants in bicultural Aotearoa. The taonga that is our college whare, Te Taumata, is used by all of our students and staff in various ways.

Our kapa haka rōpu continues to develop and work towards their aspirations of competing at a regional level. Waiata and haka competitions run in House groups are other opportunities for students to support our Te Ao Māori kaupapa. The whole school celebrates Matariki and Te Wiki o Te Reo Māori. Ngā Manu Kōrero speech competitions celebrate and promote the use of Te Reo Māori and Kaupapa Māori.

# AQUINAS COLLEGE

## NCEA RESULTS 2021



# Academic Excellence

Guided by our Touchstone of Scholarship, Aquinas College has an exceptional reputation for academic excellence. We strive to support every student to realise their true potential in an inspiring, supportive and caring learning environment.

Our curriculum aims to instil in each student a curiosity about the world in which they live and equip them with the tools to question, reason and communicate articulately.

We are justifiably proud of our record of outstanding academic achievement, as seen in our NCEA results over time. These exceptional outcomes are a result of learning practices that are personal, engaging and empowering. Our teaching and learning programmes are designed to extend our students' thinking, challenge them to think creatively and critically, and take ownership of their learning.





# Arts & Culture

The arts and cultural pursuits are an integral part of Aquinas College. Talent and potential lie within each of us, and we are committed to discovering and nurturing these gifts through the arts and in cultural pursuits.

Through such opportunities, students develop skills of creativity, collaboration and critical thinking while learning about themselves and their identity.

We boast a broad range of opportunities for students to explore in the visual arts, performing arts and in cultural pursuits. Students are given the platform to participate, create and perform in local, regional and national competitions. Traditionally, the College has staged biennial large-scale productions, enabling students to practice, hone and exhibit their performance skills in front of a public audience.





# Sport

We are deeply committed to creating an environment where students can freely participate and enjoy a quality sporting experience that reflects our Special Character.

We strongly believe in promoting all students' health, fitness and wellbeing. We seek to develop talent and grow a life-long enthusiasm for sport and exercise.

We have a proud history of sporting success at local, regional and national levels for both teams and individuals and across a wide range of codes. Students are strongly encouraged to explore their gifts and talents through sport; many belong to one or more sports teams. The College offers 24 sporting codes under the guidance of talented and experienced coaches catering to various interests and abilities. We are proud that more than 70 percent of our students are engaged in our sporting programme, making us a leader in this regard, both regionally and nationally.





# Wellbeing Focus

Students are accompanied on their journey of growth and development by our pastoral care network of an assistant principal for pastoral care, a dean and a mentor teacher. This group is additionally supported by classroom teachers, peer mentors, student leaders, learning support and two guidance counsellors.

We aim to understand the needs of students by meeting them where they are at and using restorative practices to uphold the mana and dignity of every individual while maintaining relationships. We have the strongest commitment to the development of the whole person, focussing on wellbeing while being guided by our Special Character.

Our innovative and differentiated Mentoring Programme allows students to explore topics

that will help them flourish and develop resilience and life skills. Areas of focus include — but are not limited to — healthy lifestyles, coping with stress, study skills, developing healthy relationships and future pathway planning.

We strive to be proactive in our model of pastoral care. Students and their families benefit from a supportive, enriching, empowering environment to learn, grow, and develop at Aquinas College.



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