



# AQUINAS COLLEGE

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*Together a future of Success*



# Welcome

*“Ngā mihi nui kia koutou katoa. Nau mai Haere Mai.  
Greetings and warm welcome to Aquinas College.”*

**Matt Dalton** *Principal*

Aquinas College is a proud Catholic community of learners, living our motto ‘Kia mau ki te pono’ (Hold fast to Truth). Our Touchstones of Family/Whanau, Scholarship, Service, Truth, Prayer and Joy are a special feature of the college providing the everyday context for our values-based philosophy.

We seek to develop young men and women who strive for excellence and pursue their full potential. We believe in the holistic development of students, grounded in Gospel values. We are committed to empowering our students to become compassionate, just and successful citizens, committed to the service of others.

We have 750 students (maximum roll) who love the sense of belonging and the special character that is unique to our College. We are privileged to work in partnership with our students’ whanau to achieve our vision of developing future Catholic leaders.

***Mā te Atua koe e tiaki. We are blessed by the Lord.***

The academic focus for our students is based on a broad core curriculum. A strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy is consistent through all levels to enrich students' learning, and opportunities to build on existing knowledge.

As students move into the senior school (Year 11–13), they select optional subjects to deepen their specialist subject understanding.



**COURSES AVAILABLE**

FACULTY	YEAR 7-9	YEAR 10	YEAR 11	YEAR 12	YEAR 13
<b>Religious Education</b>	Religious Education	Religious Education	Religious Education	Religious Education	Religious Education
<b>Physical Education</b>	PE and Health	PE and Health	Sports Science	Sports Science	Sports Science
				Outdoor Education	Outdoor Education
<b>Science</b>	Science	Science	Science	Biology	Biology
			Biological Science	Chemistry	Chemistry
				Physics	Physics
<b>Technology</b>	Technology	Technology	Technology	Technology	Technology
	(Hard Materials)	(Hard Materials)	(Hard Materials)	(Product Development)	(Engineering)
	Design and Visual Communication	Design and Visual Communication	Design and Visual Communication	Design and Visual Communication	Design and Visual Communication
	Food Technology	Food Technology	Food Technology	Food Technology	Food Technology
	Digital Technology	Digital Technology		Hospitality	
<b>Mathematics</b>	Mathematics	Mathematics	Mathematics	Mathematics	Mathematics
			Mathematics with Statistics	Statistics	Statistics
<b>Social Sciences</b>	Social Studies	Social Studies	History	History	History
		Enterprise Studies	Geography	Geography	Geography
			Economics	Economics	Economics
			Business Studies	Business Studies	Business Studies
			Accounting	Accounting	Accounting
<b>Languages</b>	French	French	French	French	French
	Te Reo Maori	Te Reo Maori	Te Reo Maori	Te Reo Maori	Te Reo Maori
<b>English</b>	English	English	English	English	English
					Alternative English
<b>Arts</b>	Music	Music	Music	Music	Music
	Art	Art	Art	Art - Sculpture	Art - Sculpture
	Drama	Drama	Drama	Art – Design	Art – Design
				Art – Painting	Art – Painting
				Art – Photography	Art – Photography
				Art – Printmaking	Art – Printmaking
				Drama	Drama
					Art History





*Touchstone*

# Prayer

## *The 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 to 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.



*Aquinas College is unashamedly Catholic in character and ethos and we follow Jesus, who according to the Holy Scripture is the Way, the Truth and the Life (John 14:6). Our college motto is "Hold fast to Truth". Our search for the Truth has its beginning and end in the person of Jesus Christ.*

Our college prayer asks that God be with us in all that we do. All our endeavours at school: all our Family-building, all our Service and caring for others, our work in the classroom, seeking out Truth in all its various forms, is carried out in response to the love of our Creator God; so we ask that God be with us each day.

Our hope is that Jesus enters the life of every student and transforms them to be the very best that they can be, a person who is a beacon of God's love in the way they live their lives now, and into the future.

- There are external signs that we follow Jesus, signs such as the large cross at the entrance to the college.
- Prayer is a part of every day.
- Holy Mass is celebrated at the college each week.
- School Masses at St Thomas Aquinas parish and All Saints by the Sea parish.
- Chanel Shield competition with other Catholic secondary schools in our diocese.
- Link to latest Special Character Review  
<http://www.aquinas.school.nz/vdb/document/553>





*Touchstone*

# Service

*Service is at the heart of our college. We have a culture of serving others.*

Servant leadership is the focus for both staff and students alike. This provides an opportunity for students to go beyond themselves, actively living out the Gospel reflection of “We are His hands here on earth”. We challenge our students to play their part in providing justice to the most vulnerable in our world.

In the spirit of Francis of Assisi: “The deeds you do may be the only sermon some persons will hear today.”



**SERVICE GROUPS**

Young Vinnies is a junior branch of St Vincent de Paul Society. There is huge enthusiasm from students from Year 7 to 13 to participate and lead areas of outreach to the less fortunate. Young LEOs is a junior group of Lions who model serving the community in a variety of ways.

**SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES**

Our focus on service begins in our tutor classes. There are numerous opportunities for service through taking an active part in a wide variety of committee activities.

**SERVICE DAY**

Each year, all staff and students offer service to the community for a full day. Students are enthusiastic about the opportunity to provide service to many individuals and groups.

**FIJI SERVICE TRIP**

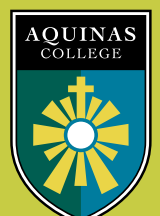
Each year a group of Year 13 students and adults travel to Fiji to work with locals building community facilities in the village of Vanuakula.

**AQUINAS SERVICE PROJECT (ASP)**

The purpose of the Aquinas Service Project (ASP) is for each student entering Year 12 and 13 to identify, design, carry out and reflect on one example of personal service within the community. The expectation is 20 hours but most students do far more.

**SERVANT LEADERSHIP**

Part of the focus of our student leadership is understanding what it means to be a leader. This is modelled in our college's approach to leadership.





*Touchstone*

# Family

*Aquinas College prides itself on being a welcoming, inclusive and caring extended family for all students and their families.*

Through our quality pastoral care systems, attentive staff, and a host of programmes offered, we encourage each student to reach their potential in a supportive environment where students feel valued and respected.





*Together we support and build our college family in the following ways:*

- Meeting in tutor groups is an important start to the day. This is an opportunity for students to get to know one another, build relationships through conversations, and begin the day in a safe, accepting environment.
- The vertical grouping of our tutor classes, based around the four houses, is a leadership opportunity for juniors and seniors to interact, providing support and assistance to each another.
- New students are welcomed and briefed by their Year Level Dean. The buddy system offered at Aquinas helps new students to settle and familiarises them with our school environment.
- An effective and supportive PTA strives to make Aquinas a joyful place for students, staff and the wider community through the annual Twilight Festival, the quiz night, entertainment books, fundraisers for various teams and activities and other events.





Touchstone

# Truth

*Being true to oneself involves finding out what values underpin the way you want to live your life.*

Aquinas College encourages personal integrity and strong relationships based on gospel values. We provide a safe environment where students and staff value and respect each other. Each person has a responsibility to be aware that their actions and words affect the lives of themselves and others.

We promote this approach through our R, R and R (Respect, Resilience and Responsibility) programme.



*As well as individual and family work, and the school wide Respect, Resilience and Responsibility approach, we provide the following support programmes to foster positive peer relations in our College.*

**PEER SUPPORT**

5 week programme with Year 11 Leaders working with new Year 7 students at the beginning of their school year. The programme is designed to help students achieve success at school by developing relationship skills, self-esteem and sense of belonging.

**SENIOR STUDENT SUPPORT LEADERS**

A select group of Year 12 students are trained to work and support younger students (Years 7 -10). These leaders can also facilitate mediation between students and have ongoing supervision from the counsellor.

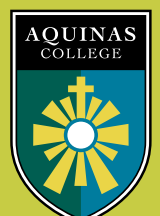
**FOCUS GROUP WORK**

Outside providers from various community agencies support students to make positive changes in areas they may be struggling with.

**GRATITUDE JOURNALS**

Each tutor class spends time each week in a quiet space, reflecting upon things they are grateful for in their lives. Research has shown that increasing gratitude in young people has positive effects on their life satisfaction, happiness and hope.

Some students require additional support around building personal resilience. This is facilitated in various ways such as individual counselling, family counselling, group work with the students' teachers, dean and/or support from a senior student mentor.





*Touchstone*

# Scholarship

*Aquinas College students are successful in gaining national qualifications and well-prepared for their future studies.*

Aquinas College has a broad approach to our curriculum. This means that students learn within all of the eight learning areas of the curriculum as well as in Religious Education. We aim to prepare our students for a successful future in whatever field they choose to pursue. This involves engaging learning that has a focus on excellence and empowering the student.



*Learning at Aquinas College is about the whole person. We develop the key competencies of our students so that each student can be in charge of their own learning. As students move through their time at Aquinas College they begin to develop specialist areas aligned with their interests and passions. We have found that expert teaching of engaged students leads to excellent learning.*

The curriculum focus within our junior school (Years 7–10) is on a broad-based core curriculum that covers all areas of the New Zealand Curriculum (including Arts, Languages, and Technology). There is a strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy - students with a strong base in these areas tend to be successful in their later studies.

As students move into the senior school they begin to differentiate their course of study by selecting from a comprehensive set of course options.

Results in NCEA show that Aquinas College students are successful in gaining national qualifications and well-prepared for their future studies.

There is a strong academic focus and students are encouraged to attempt scholarship programmes in their final years at the school.

In addition to the excellent preparation that occurs within their formal course of study, students also have the opportunity to be extended through involvement in national and international competitions, trips and international tours, Gifted and Talented Education programmes, and various academic clubs at the school.





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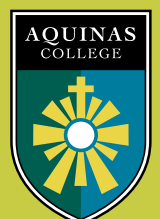
# Joy

*St Thomas Aquinas is credited with writing “Man cannot live without Joy” and “Joy is the noblest human act.”*

For us this means loving and respecting ourselves and others, having a positive outlook to all those around us, and enjoying and caring for our environment. In doing this we reflect our love of God. We aim to make this visible in all that we do. At Aquinas College we promote and celebrate optimism and Christian hope, both in the school setting and also in our wider community.

The college’s Catholic character challenges us to bring enjoyment and passion to all that we do. Students enjoy a positive, engaging classroom environment that fosters a love of learning. This, together with the co-curricular life of the college, enables us to share in the joy of participation, progress and achievement.

These activities include our annual house-based Swimming, Athletics and Cross Country events; student-led celebrations on Aquinas Day; PTA’s Twilight Festival; biennial musical productions; International Languages celebrations; our musical groups and choirs; Chanel Shield and other inter-college sports fixtures and competitions.





# Arts

*The Arts Programme at Aquinas College provides a wide range of opportunities for students to express themselves creatively.*

We inspire students to fully develop their artistic potential and meaningful aesthetic appreciation.

Through Art, Music and Drama we pride ourselves on promoting quality and encourage a culture of Pure Joy through our co-curricular groups in the college and community.







# Sport

*Students engage in a wide variety of traditional and emerging sports with a major focus being on using sport as a means to develop the whole person.*

Through effective coaching and mentoring, staff, parents and outside providers ensure Aquinas teams are competitive, and play hard but fair. Above all, Aquinas teams embrace the true spirit in which sport should be played.



*Sport plays a significant part in the life of an Aquinas student. Through the varied programme of traditional and emerging sports available at the college, students have ample opportunity to engage and express themselves from beginner through to elite levels.*

All students are encouraged to represent the college in their chosen codes and we are proud that the majority of them do.

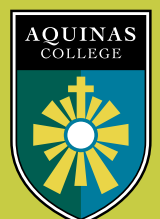
In 2009, the college recognised the value of starting a Sports Academy and under the guidance of the school's Sports Director, it has offered elite athletes further development opportunities.

We are proud of our record of outstanding sporting achievements over the relatively short space of time that the college has been open, and it is our intention to continue to build on those.

In 2015 Aquinas College:

- Boasted a participation rate of over 75% involvement in Sport compared to the national average of 52%.
- Fielded 112 teams across 27 codes.
- In terms of representation - 75 students were selected in regional teams, and 14 students gained NZ Representative Honours.

Our students compete in local competitions and also represent the college at summer and winter tournaments. Year 7 & 8 students compete annually at the national AIMS Games.





# International

*International Students thrive in our supportive, close-knit environment.*

Aquinas College welcomes new international students each year in January and July. Students come from Asia, Europe and South America, and thrive in our caring school community.

We provide personalised English tuition which supports mainstream learning and caters for individual needs. Aquinas host families offer international students a genuine New Zealand experience where they can improve their English outside the classroom and create life-long global connections.



*Aquinas College enrolls a limited number of international students at each year level of the school. Our small size helps us to understand each student personally and enables us to provide individual attention and support throughout the year. International students fully immerse themselves into college life, join social groups and form lasting friendships with local students.*

A key feature of our international programme is the English (ESOL) course which is tailored to suit each student's learning needs. International students either study with us short-term for up to one year, or long-term from intermediate level through to graduation. They are guided through the academic pathway with patience and assistance to help them achieve their goals with pride and success.

International students may live with their parents, a designated caregiver or a host family arranged by the school. Host families provide a warm, welcoming environment where students feel like a family member rather than a guest. Aquinas host families receive a weekly payment and are required to be police vetted every three years. All host families are extremely well supported throughout the experience with regular monitoring, home visits, care and attention.

If you would like to welcome an international student into your family, please contact Cathi Fourie, Director of International Students on [cfourie@aquinas.school.nz](mailto:cfourie@aquinas.school.nz) or visit the school website for more information.

