New Zealand
School Property Agency

Great schools, great spaces

Standard designs for school gyms and halls

VERSION 1.2: OCTOBER 2026

New Zealand Government
Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa

Introduction

Great schools need great spaces. Welcoming, safe, and well-designed gymnasiums (gyms) and halls that support a wide range of activities. Spaces that adapt to how your school teaches, plays, performs, and gathers. Buildings and facilities that are part of your school and your community, while also being practical and easy to maintain.

We have collaborated closely with architects, engineers, builders, and educators to develop designs that achieve all this — consistently and affordably.

We have called these standard designs. They meet all New Zealand building requirements and work for most schools. They are designed to reflect your school's identity, site, and the different ways that your staff, students and community use these spaces.

We plan to keep improving these standard designs. As we gather feedback from schools, builders, and designers, we will review and update our standard designs to ensure they work for everyone.

Acknowledgements

These standard designs have been developed through the collaboration of many teams and individuals.

We thank the architects, engineers, quantity surveyors, and builders who contributed to this process. Their expertise has helped ensure these designs are practical to build, easier to maintain, and deliver quality outcomes for schools and their communities.

We also acknowledge our educator reference groups, peak bodies, and curriculum writers for their contributions and shared insights. Their feedback has helped shape designs that support teaching and learning.

This shared effort has resulted in a set of standard designs that respond to the needs of schools across Aotearoa New Zealand.

athfield architects limited

athfield architects limited

JASMAX

McKENZIE HIGHAM ARCHITECTS

Architecture

Holmes

mesh we engineer.

MARSHALL DAY Acoustics

aurecon

Engineering

MALTBYS DEFINING COSTS · MANAGING RISK · DELIVERING RESULTS

Beca

Quantity Surveying

Project Management

About this guide

What this guide covers

This guide features a range of standard designs for school gyms and halls. It shows the available choices that can be tailored to meet your school's needs and how we will work with you to make those decisions.

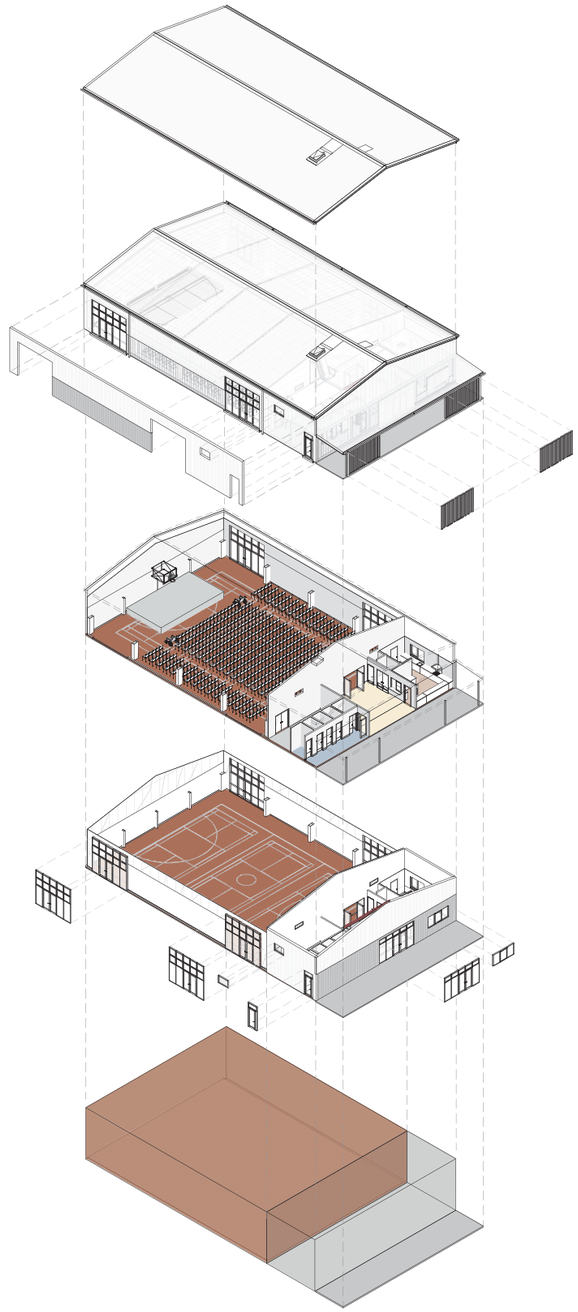
It does not cover every building type or technical requirement. Visit www.schoolproperty.govt.nz for more detailed information about these options, including guidance for project teams and construction professionals, as well as more detailed layout drawings.

How to use this guide

Use this guide to understand:

- the journey from planning to construction and handover
- what decisions are made during planning
- what layout and building material options are available
- what your school can choose and help shape
- what is already set in place by the standard designs.

Your project team will work with you to talk through the parts that apply to your project. Not every option in this guide will apply to every school or site.





Finishing choices

The colours, finishes, materials, connections and other details you can choose from that help the building fit with the rest of your school.

Layout options

The internal classroom and amenity arrangements you can choose from to get the best fit for your learning environment.

Standard designs

The building types, modules and systems you can choose from with our help.

Planning

How we understand your needs, school site, and option preferences.

What this means for your school

Standardisation for clarity, cost-efficiency, speed and quality

Using standard designs means your school can expect:

- a clearer process from planning through to handover
- open and clear communication from us at every stage of the process
- faster delivery because the key design work has already been done
- high-quality learning spaces
- layout options that we know work well, based on what we've heard and learned that best supports student learning.

Some parts of the design — such as structural systems, roofing, acoustic design, ceiling heights and window dimensions — are standard because they help us to better manage cost, quality and delivery time. But other parts can be chosen by you, so the final building works for your site, your students and your way of working.

Choices to reflect your kaupapa and community

'Standard' does not mean the same. Within these design options, your school has choices — about building placement, how spaces are arranged, what materials best reflect your kaupapa and community, and how your buildings flow and connect with the rest of your environment.

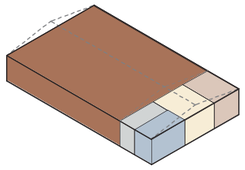
How our building modules work

Standard designs are a series of modular building blocks that can be added to and organised to create a building that is suitable for a school's needs. This gives schools choice and flexibility, based on proven designs, to ensure buildings are well planned, consistent, and delivered efficiently.

The gym and hall modules provide a flexible, multi-purpose space with extra room for equipment, storage, and support functions as needed. Amenity modules can provide changing rooms, toilets, administration, or support spaces, depending on the agreed project scope and what already exists on your site.

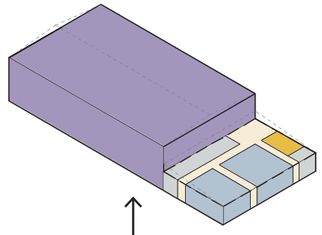
We also have standard modules for window shading, bag storage and other supporting elements. Over time, we may develop more standard modules as we identify needs.

Modules and examples



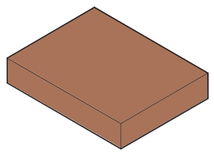
Example: Large Hall Primary School

hall module (as required) (as required)



Example: Single Court Gymnasium

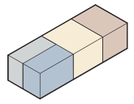
gym module (as required) (as required)



Hall module

Net floor area ~510m²

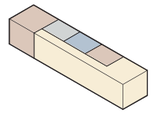
~19m x 25.6m



Amenities & resource module- short side

Provides supporting spaces such as toilets, storage, foyer and kitchen depending on your project.

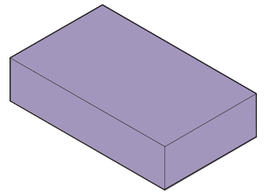
Net floor area varies



Amenities & resource module - long side

Provides supporting spaces such as toilets, storage, foyer and kitchen depending on your project.

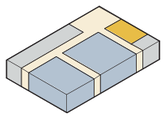
Net floor area varies



Gym module

Net floor area ~731m²

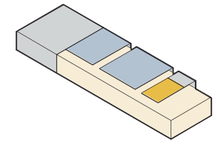
~20m x 35m



Amenities & resource module - short side

Provides supporting spaces such as changing rooms, storage, foyer and staff room depending on your project.

Net floor area varies



Amenities & resource module - long side

Provides supporting spaces such as changing rooms, storage, foyer and staff room depending on your project.

Net floor area varies

These modules can be combined in different ways to suit your site and your school's particular needs.

Additional modules support how the building works day-to-day, such as stairs, verandahs, shading and storage.

Planning for your site

Every school site is different. During standard planning, we work with you to look at how a new building will fit into your wider school environment.

This includes:

- connections to other learning spaces
- access to outdoor areas
- sunlight, shade, trees, and wind protection
- existing buildings and heritage features
- services and drainage
- ground conditions
- future development of your school.

Standard planning also considers how the building can reflect your school's identity and kaupapa, and support mātauranga Māori where appropriate. The aim is to make the standard design work well in your school and wider community, both now and into the future.



Choosing the right building - gyms

Standard building types give us a reliable and consistent starting point for new school buildings. Delivering the right type of building for your school depends on your student roll, site, existing buildings, and future plans.

Single and double court gyms are designed for school and community level sporting activities.

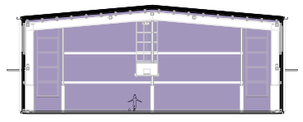
The building typologies shown here outline the different options for where amenities can be added, for example at the end of the building, or attached to the side. These can be scaled up or down, depending on the school's site constraints.

Canopies are optional and can be added where appropriate. These can provide covered connections between buildings, sheltered gathering spaces, or weather protection to key entry and circulation areas.

Legend

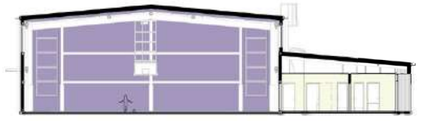
- Gym
- Foyer / circulation
- Storage
- Changing rooms / bathrooms
- Amenities circulation
- Administration
- Structural portal frames

Typologies



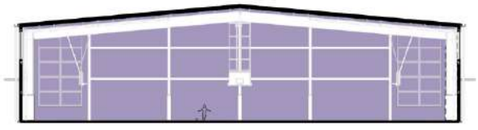
Section - GS-S

Single Court Gymnasium with amenities on the short side



Section - GS-L

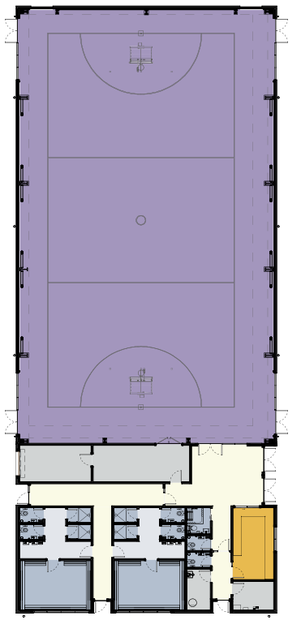
Single Court Gymnasium with amenities on the long side



Section - GD-S

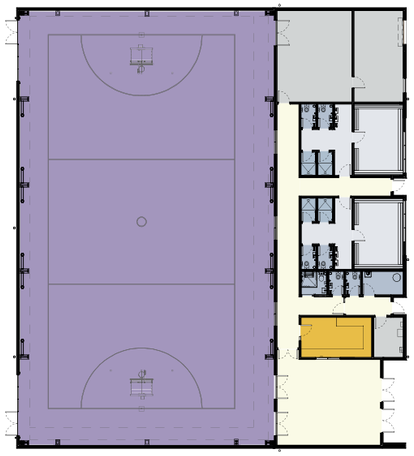
Double Court Gymnasium with amenities on the short side

Typical plan



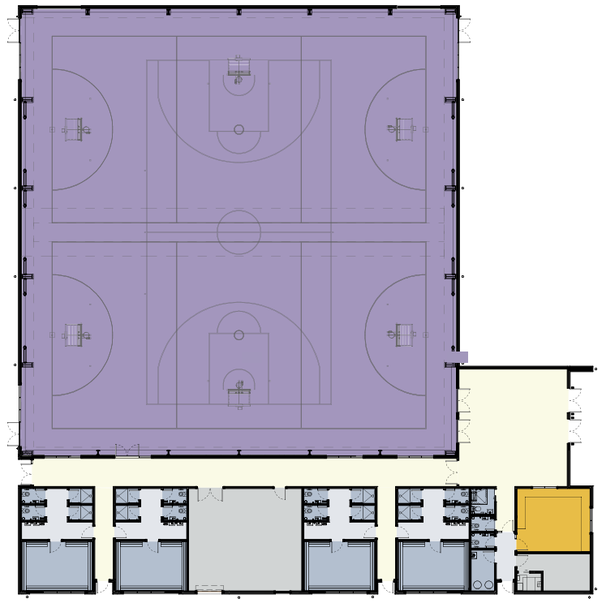
Floor Plan - GS-S

Single Court Gymnasium with amenities on the short side



Floor Plan - GS-L

Single Court Gymnasium with amenities on the long side



Floor Plan - GD-S

Double Court Gymnasium with amenities on the short side

SCALE 1:500 at A3

0 5 10 15 30m

Choosing gym layouts

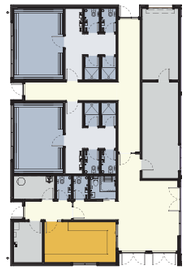
Gymnasiums can be arranged in different ways to support your school's physical education, sport, recreation, and wellbeing needs. These standard layouts show a range of options, including different court configurations, seating arrangements, amenities, storage areas, and flexible zones that support a variety of activities and events.

Your project team will work with you to help choose the layout option, or combination of options, that best supports your needs.

Each layout is based on a detailed brief informed by educational and operational requirements, and prioritises different ways of using the building for sport, recreation, and community activities.

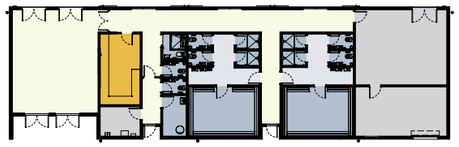
These briefs outline the typical equipment, amenities, and resources required for gym environments, and help ensure there are practical, functional zones that support multiple uses.

If you feel these layouts don't fully meet your needs, we will work with you to ensure your practices are supported in your new building.



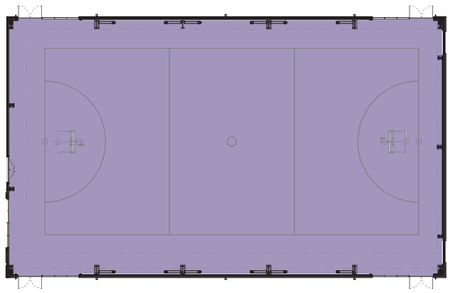
Amenities short side

GS-S amenities

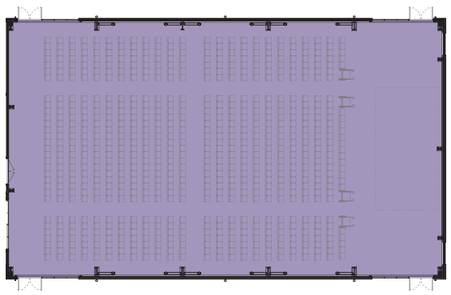


Amenities long side

GS-LD amenities

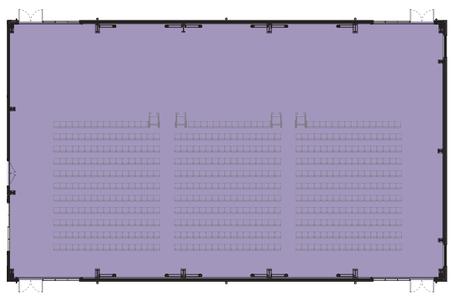


Layout A



Layout B

GS seating layout



Layout C

GS alternative seating layout

Legend

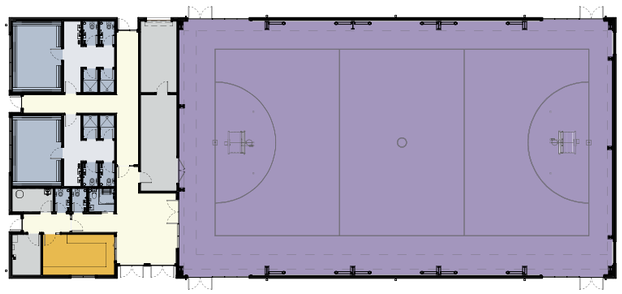
- Gym
- Foyer / circulation
- Storage
- Changing rooms / bathrooms
- Amenities circulation
- Administration
- Structural portal frames

SCALE 1:500 at A3

0 5 10 15 30m

Examples: Gym spaces

These examples show how the gym, amenity and support modules can be combined to respond to a sample site, but are not the only possible arrangements. We will work with you to confirm what arrangement works best for your school site.



Example A - GS-S single court

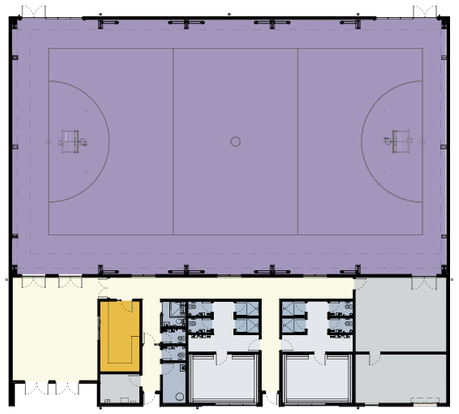
Single court gymnasium with amenities on the short side

Legend

- Gym
- Foyer / circulation
- Storage
- Changing rooms / bathrooms
- Amenities circulation
- Administration
- Structural portal frames

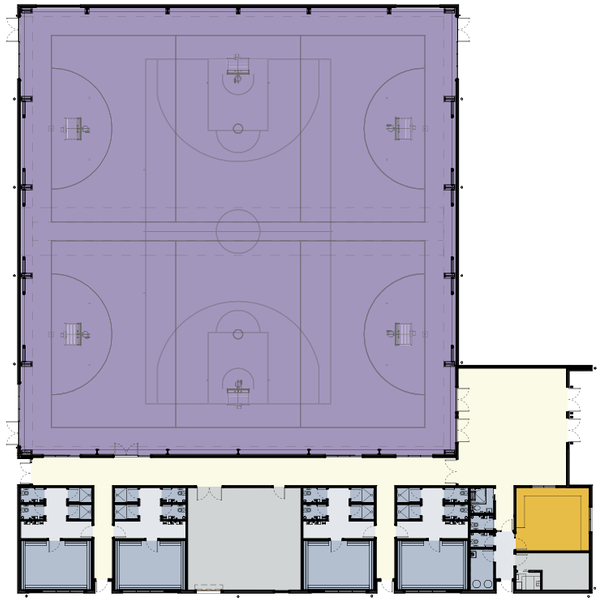
SCALE 1:500 at A3

0 5 10 15 30m



Example B - GS-L single court

Single court gymnasium with amenities on the long side



Example C - GD-S double court

Double court gymnasium with amenities on the short side.

Choosing the right building - primary school halls

Standard building types give us a reliable and consistent starting point for new school buildings. Choosing the right type of building for your school depends on your student roll, site, existing buildings, and future plans.

There are a range of different hall options depending on the type of school and its particular needs.

The typologies shown here provide options for where amenities can be placed, and can be scaled up or down depending on school site constraints.

Gable roof forms are appropriate, with amenities added, either as a lean-to structure attached to the main building, or as an extension of the roof form.

Canopies are optional and can be added where appropriate.

Legend

- Hall
- Hall supporting spaces, i.e. kitchen / multi-purpose space
- Foyer / circulation
- Bathrooms
- Amenities circulation
- Structural portal frames
- Storage

Typologies



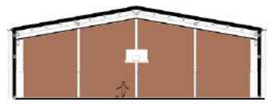
Section - HS-S-P

Small Primary School Hall with amenities on the short side



Section - HM-S-P

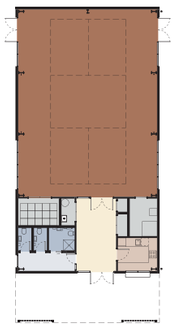
Medium Primary School Hall with amenities on the short side



Section - HL-S-P

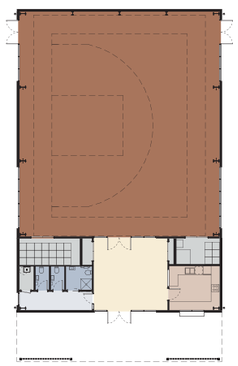
Large Primary School Hall with amenities on the short side

Typical plan



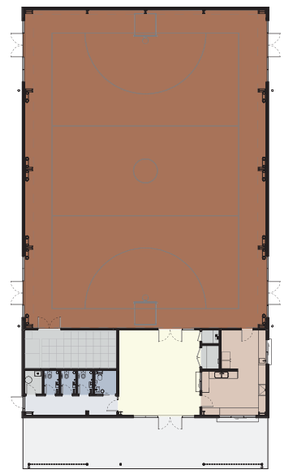
Floor Plan - HS-S-P

Small Primary School Hall with amenities on the short side



Floor Plan - HM-S-P

Medium Primary School Hall with amenities on the short side



Floor Plan - HL-S-P

Large Primary School Hall with amenities on the short side

SCALE 1:500 at A3

0 5 10 15 30m

Choosing the right building - secondary school halls

Standard building types give us a reliable and consistent starting point for new school buildings. Choosing the right type of building for your school depends on your student roll, site, existing buildings, and future plans.

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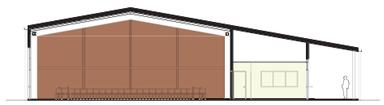
Gable roof forms are appropriate, with amenities added, either as a lean-to structure attached to the main building, or as an extension of the roof form.

Canopies are optional and can be added where appropriate.

Legend

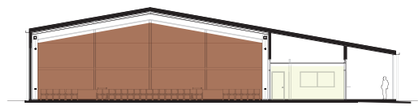
- Hall
- Hall supporting spaces, i.e. kitchen / multi-purpose space
- Foyer / circulation
- Bathrooms
- Amenities circulation
- Structural portal frames
- Storage

Typologies



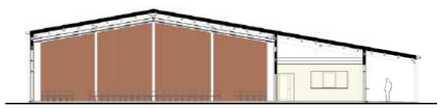
Section - HS-L-S

Small Secondary School Hall with amenities on the long side



Section - HM-L-S

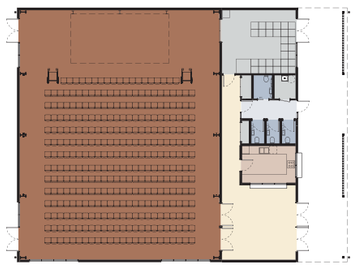
Medium Secondary School Hall with amenities on the long side



Section - HL-L-S

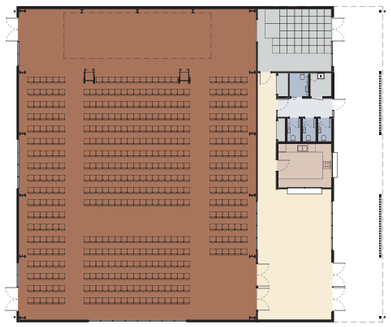
Large Secondary School Hall with amenities on the long side

Typical plan



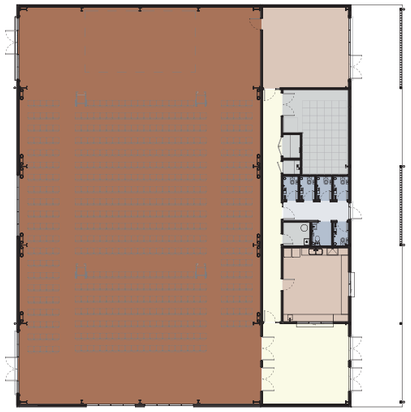
Floor Plan - HS-L-S

Small Secondary School Hall with amenities on the long side



Floor Plan - HM-L-S

Medium Secondary School Hall with amenities on the long side



Floor Plan - HL-L-S

Large Secondary School Hall with amenities on the long side

SCALE 1:500 at A3

0 5 10 15 30m

Choosing hall layouts

Halls can be arranged in different ways to support your school's learning activities, gatherings, performances, recreation and community events. The standard layouts show a range of options, including different seating configurations, amenities, supporting facilities, storage areas, and flexible zones that can accommodate a variety of activities.

Your project team will work with you to help choose the layout option, or combination of options, that best supports your staff, students and day-to-day needs.

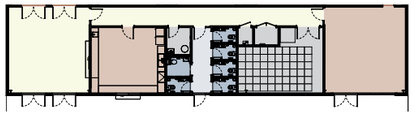
Each layout is based on a detailed brief informed by educational and operational requirements. This prioritises different ways of using the building for assemblies, performances, sporting and community events, and other activities.

These briefs outline the typical equipment, amenities, and resources required for hall environments and help ensure there are practical, functional spaces that support flexible and efficient use.

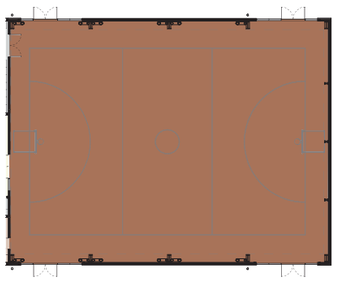
If you feel these layouts don't fully meet your needs, we will work with you to ensure your practices are supported in your new building.



Amenities short side

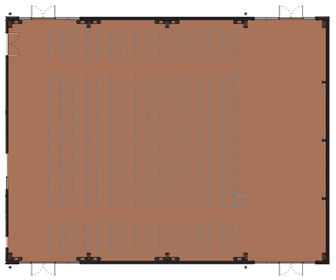


Amenities long side



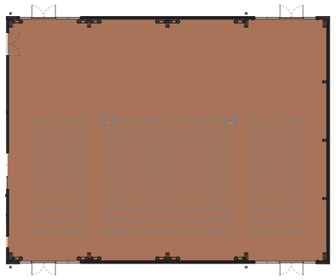
Layout A

HL-P court layout



Layout B

HL-P seating layout



Layout C

HL-P alternative seating layout

Legend

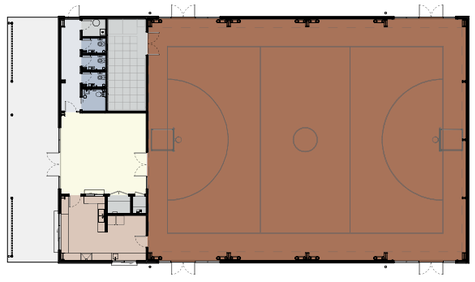
- Hall
- Hall supporting spaces, i.e. kitchen/ multi-purpose space
- Foyer / circulation
- Storage
- Bathrooms
- Amenities circulation
- Structural portal frames

SCALE 1:500 at A3

0 5 10 15 30m

Examples: Hall spaces

These examples show how the hall, amenity and support modules can be combined to respond to a sample site, but are not the only possible arrangements. We will work with you to confirm what arrangement works best for your school site.

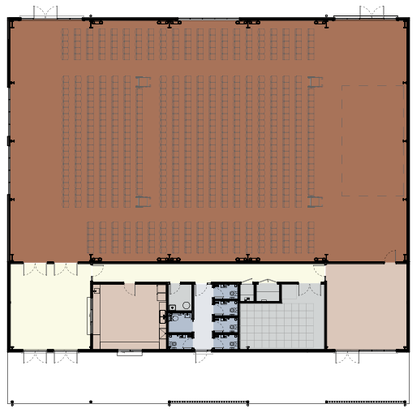


Example A - HL-P Large primary hall

Large primary hall with amenities on the short side

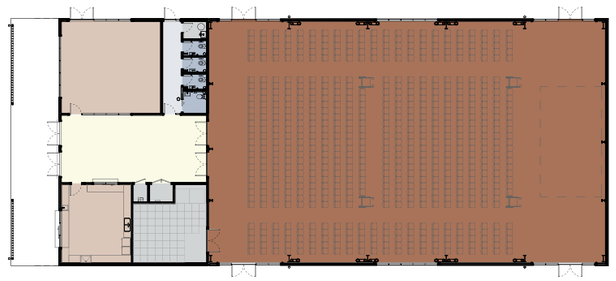
Legend

- Hall
- Hall supporting spaces, i.e kitchen / multi-purpose space
- Foyer / circulation
- Storage
- Bathrooms
- Amenities circulation
- I Structural portal frames



Example B - HL-A-S large secondary hall

Large secondary hall with amenities on the long side



Example C - HL-B-S large secondary hall

Large secondary hall with amenities on the short side

SCALE 1:500 at A3

0 5 10 15 30m

Choosing materials & finishes

Your school will be able to choose from a range of materials and finishes that have been proven in school environments. These selections are included to help the building better align with your school's identity, while supporting long-term maintenance and value for money.

A range of other material choices are listed in this table. However, some choices may be limited by climate, orientation, durability, maintenance, cost or technical requirements etc. Your project team will help guide you through these options and finalise which ones will work best for you.

	Element	School selected option	School selected finish
	Wall cladding	A - Profiled metal cladding	Select from standard range of coil-coated metal finishes
		B - Painted fibre cement	Wide spectrum of paint finishes
	Roofing	NA (metal-clad warm roof)	Select from standard range of coil-coated metal finishes
	Exterior windows and doors	NA (powdercoat finish aluminium frames)	Select from standard range
	Glazing manifestation (also interior)	NA (vinyl applied to glazing)	School specific design
	Hall / Gym layout	A - Standard court layout	NA
		B - Transverse performance seating plan with stage	
		C - Longitudinal performance seating plan with stage	
	Wall linings	A - Perforated plywood lining	Select from standard range
		B - Plywood	Select from standard range
		C - Acoustic panel	Select from standard range
	Dry floor finishes	NA (carpet tile)	Select from standard range
	Wet floor finishes	NA (vinyl)	Select from standard range

Exterior materials & finishes

Exterior materials help define how a building looks, performs, and weathers over time. Standard exterior material options provide durable, cost-effective solutions that can respond to different sites, climates, and school environments.

Your school can choose from a range of materials and colours to reflect your identity and how the building fits within the wider school environment.

Standard exterior options include combinations of profiled metal and painted fibre cement cladding. These can be used in different ways, depending on building height, location, and environmental conditions.

Windows, doors, balustrades, roofs, and shading elements are also standardised to ensure quality, safety, durability and long- term performance.



Roof finish
- Profiled metal
- Finish based on standard ranges

Wall cladding options
- Option A: profiled metal
- Option B: painted fibre cement
- Combinations of options available

Window finish
- Aluminium framed exterior windows and doors
- Powder-coat finish to aluminium based on standard range
- Position adjustments to respond to site and interior layouts
- Ability to pair finish with solar shading where shading elements are required

Siteworks
- Project specific design

Glazing manifestation
- Project specific design

Screens & canopies
- Optional screens & canopies to provide sheltered gathering spaces, or weather protection to key entry and circulation areas.

Options

School specific

Exterior cladding

Choosing cladding

Your project team will work with you to select cladding from the available options, taking into account:

- the building type and height
- the local climate and exposure to weather
- seismic and structural requirements
- long term maintenance and durability
- how the building fits within the wider school environment.

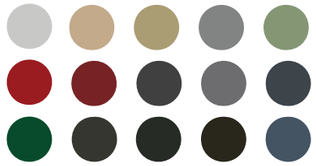
Not all cladding options are suitable in every situation. Some combinations may be limited by site conditions or building configuration.



Option A: Profiled metal

- Profiled metal cladding (i.e. corrugated, trapezoidal) from standard ranges
- Factory painted metal (i.e. Colorsteel, Colorcote)
- Finish based on standard proprietary colour ranges within MoE requirements

Finishes





Option B: Profiled metal and painted fibre cement

- Fibre cement vertical shiplap cladding
- Use at low-level height only (refer to examples below)
- Use in combination with profiled metal at high level
- Paint finish in wide spectrum of colour ranges within MoE requirements

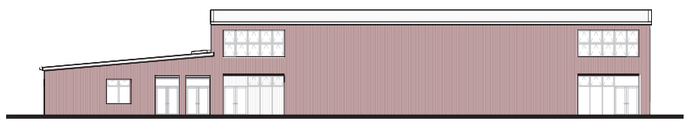




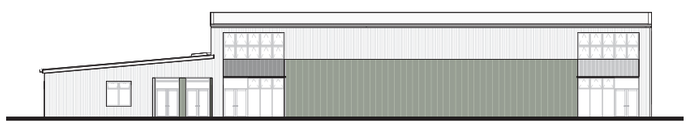
Option C: Profiled metal, painted fibre cement and multiwall polycarbonate

- Use at high-level height only (refer examples below)
- Use in combination with glazing, profiled metal or fibre cement at high level

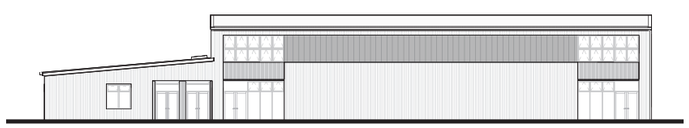
Examples



Profiled metal cladding



Painted fibre cement



Multiwall polycarbonate

Examples: Exteriors for gyms & halls

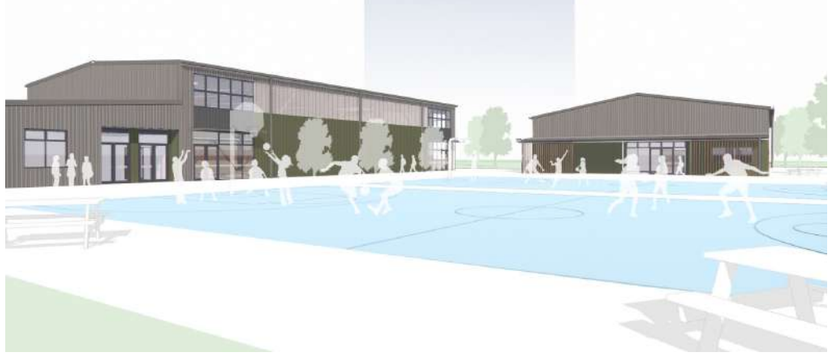
These examples show how standard exterior materials and finishes may be used in different combinations. When selecting colours and finishes, it's important to consider sunlight, glare, heat gain, and how the building relates to its surroundings. Some colours may be limited if they affect building performance or durability.

These examples are illustrative only. Final selections will be confirmed with you during the design process.



Option A: Profiled metal

- Full height profiled metal cladding
- Optional covered canopy with screens



Option B: Profiled metal and painted fibre cement

- Painted fibre cement cladding in high traffic areas



Option C: Profiled metal, painted fibre cement and multiwall polycarbonate

- Painted fibre cement cladding in high traffic areas
- Profiled metal cladding in both upper and lower walls

Interior materials & finishes for gyms & halls

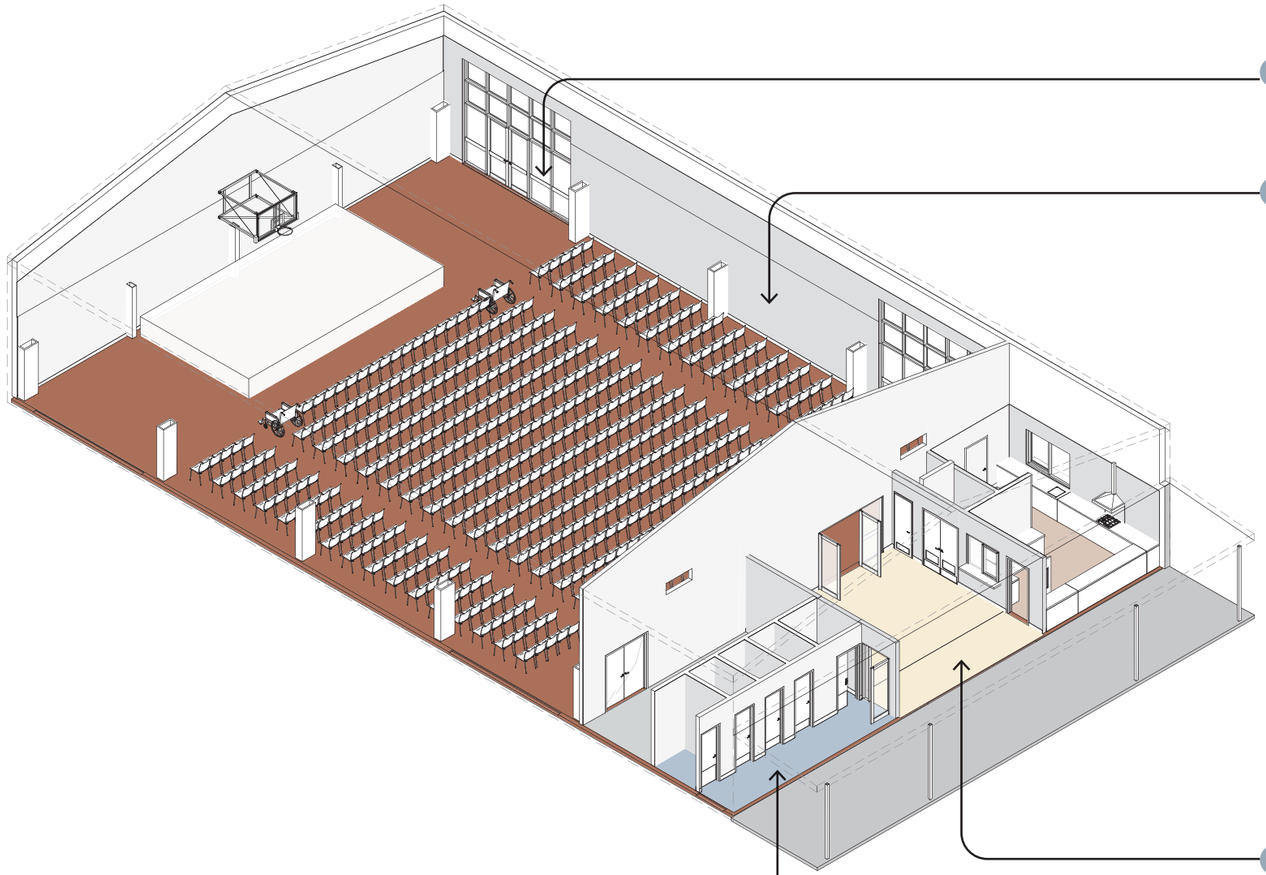
Interior materials play an important role in how gyms and halls feel, function, and perform. Standard interior materials balance durability, ease of maintenance, cost, and comfort.

Your school will be able to choose finishes that reflect your identity and support how your spaces are used.

Using Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment (FF&E) funding

The detailed gym and hall layouts on our website explain what's included in the base build and what's purchased using FF&E funding.

Visit www.schoolproperty.govt.nz for more information about FFE funding for schools.



Glazing manifestation
- Project specific design

Wall linings
- Mix of perforated plywood lining for acoustic control and regular plywood for durability in gyms and halls
- Option for paint finished plasterboard at high level only

Dry-area flooring
- Carpet tile
- Finish based on standard ranges

Wet-area flooring
- Vinyl bathroom and kitchen
- Finish based on standard ranges

Options

School specific

Examples: Interiors for gyms & halls

These examples show how standard layouts, materials, and finishes can be combined to create practical and welcoming gyms and halls.

These examples are illustrative only. Final selections will be confirmed with you during the design process.



Layout option A:

- Plywood lining
- Perforated acoustic lining
- Sports flooring
- Acoustic ceiling.



Layout option B:

- Plywood lining
- Perforated acoustic lining
- Carpet tiles
- Performance seating arrangement.



Layout option C:

- Plywood lining
- Perforated acoustic lining
- Carpet tiles
- Performance seating arrangement - alternative option.

Daylight, ventilation & comfort

Natural light

Standard designs are developed to provide good natural light under typical site conditions.

During planning, we consider how the building is positioned on your site — including orientation, nearby buildings, and trees. This helps to ensure that spaces feel bright, comfortable, and usable throughout the day.

In most cases, the standard design will already meet daylight requirements. Where site conditions are more constrained, the project team may review lighting levels to confirm that the spaces will still perform well.

Heating and ventilation for comfort

Standard designs aim to provide comfortable learning spaces year-round, using simple, efficient systems.

The preferred approach combines natural ventilation with straightforward heating. This works well in most climates and helps reduce cost, energy use, and long-term maintenance.

We also consider your climate zone and site conditions when planning. We take into account the six climate zones across Aotearoa | New Zealand and consider local environmental constraints such as noise.

In some situations – such as colder climates or noisy locations – alternative heating and ventilation systems may be needed.

Services

We will work with you to understand any existing infrastructure and services already in place. This includes discussing your current systems and any suppliers you may already be working with, so we can factor these into the project. Examples include:

- ICT
- Security
- PA systems
- Fire alarms.



Climate zones 1, 2 & 3

Warmer or temperate climates

Climate zones 4, 5 & 6

Colder or alpine climates

'Colder climates' are a consolidation of Climate Zones 4, 5 and 6 as defined by the New Zealand Building Code (NZBC).

Working with you

At each stage, your feedback is welcome, and plays a key role in shaping how standard designs are used to plan and deliver new school buildings. Contact us at:

property.improvement@schoolproperty.govt.nz

New Zealand Government
Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa