



Houghton Valley School

Charter, Strategic and Annual Plan 2018

Our vision

**Confident, collaborative, inspired children;
learning for life.**

Houghton Valley School aims to support children to develop into well-rounded, self-confident and resilient citizens of the future. The school is known for its committed staff, creative people in the neighbourhood, natural setting and whānau-friendly atmosphere. Students and staff enjoy learning together in partnership with the school's parent/caregiver community (please note that from hereon in, wherever the term parent/whānau is used, it should be understood to include all care-giver arrangements).

Houghton Valley School is the centre of a vibrant, interested community.

Situated near Wellington's beautiful South Coast, Houghton Valley School has extensive grounds, surrounded by native re-growth forest. This environment creates a variety of opportunities to learn. An adjoining coastal 'rainforest', planted by Houghton Valley School children some years ago, now has large coastal trees and sign-posted tracks. A bike track, flying fox and adventure playgrounds offer children exciting options for physical play, and are enjoyed by the whole community outside of school hours. Environmental stewardship is a key value of the school, and the driver behind the installation of solar panels as part of the Genesis Energy Schoolgen Programme, and our status as a proud EnviroSchool. Our setting adjacent to bush reserve with adjoining open fields, provides wonderful opportunities for picnics and community events. We also enjoy the many opportunities for field trips the proximity to Wellington's South coast has to offer.

The school uses the adjoining fields for its summer picnic and the local coast for class field trips. The staff keep informed about opportunities children may be able to take advantage of in Wellington city.

School staff delivers comprehensive academic programmes through Houghton Valley School's curriculum - Te Kaupapa o Te Kura o Haewai - which is based on the New Zealand Curriculum. Numeracy and literacy are foundations and teachers also ensure that children have a range of opportunities across the curriculum.

Parents/whānau are encouraged to be involved in the life of the school and many are, in a range of ways; in-class reading assistance and after-school sports teams to name just two. The Board of Trustees is responsible for the governance of the school, focusing on the big picture and working strategically to ensure success for all. There is a very active Home and School Association made up of parents/whānau of enrolled students, who organise activities and fund-raising events. The school also offers an After School Care programme run by Kelly Club.

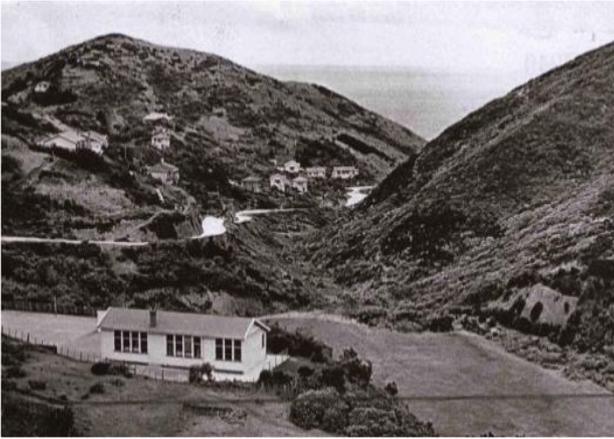


Figure 1. Houghton Valley School circa 1935



Figure 2. Houghton Valley School circa 2013

Houghton Valley School is a significant landmark, sitting at the heart of Houghton Valley and the Houghton Valley community.

Values

The following 'Wordle' shows the values important to our school's community, based on feedback received during community consultation in 2014. These will be revisited during 2018.



Vision and Objectives

Following the consultation in the latter part of 2014, the school vision and objectives were updated to reflect the following key themes that emerged and continue to be the basis of our vision:

- Children being great learners, knowing how to learn
- Children being confident in their abilities and understanding their strengths
- Strong relationships between children, parents/whānau, teachers and the wider community
- Having a focus on the environment
- Embracing and celebrating diversity

The diagram on the following page depicts the relationship between our vision and underlying objectives for HVS.

The Board of Trustees were reassured, by the consultation, that the school already reflects the preferences of the community quite well. For this reason some of the strategies are not new. A collaborative learning model, for example, is well embedded and has become business as usual for teachers and students.

The consultation also identified some key things that warrant more time and attention. Two areas will receive particular focus:

- 1) Embedding the inquiry model of learning into the way things happen at our school. The inquiry model of learning is based on supporting children to achieve the skills to help them learn, i.e. learning how to learn. The NZ curriculum encourages all students to reflect on their own learning processes and to learn how to learn. *NZC Principles, pg 9*. The inquiry model of learning helps children to develop into lifelong learners with the skills to seek out and critically appraise information. Inquiry-based learning is a constructivist approach, in which students have ownership of their learning. It starts with exploration and questioning and leads to investigation into a worthy question, issue, problem or idea. It involves asking questions, gathering and analysing information, generating solutions, making decisions, justifying conclusions and taking action.
- 2) Developing the environmental aspects of our school curriculum. Our school community places great importance on the environment and our curriculum can develop more in this area to reflect this. This will also help our school achieve an improvement in our Enviroschool status.

Strategic Approach



We believe that by providing lots of opportunities for children to succeed, be responsible and accountable, exercise natural curiosity, work collaboratively, and connect with the environment and

Cultural Diversity

Our community is proudly diverse and values cultural diversity highly. As a school we endeavour to foster positive cultural understandings and reflect the realities, histories and traditions of all our people across our policies, practices and curriculum. In particular we recognise the unique position of Māori within our school's cultural equation. Teaching staff are encouraged and supported with professional development to extend their current abilities in te reo Māori. The school has built an action plan (based on the Hāutu review tool) that focuses on building a partnership between the school and whānau Māori in order to support the educational success of Māori as Māori at Houghton Valley School.

Te Reo Māori me ona Tikanga

The school culture recognises and values the unique position of Māori in New Zealand/Aotearoa society. We create deliberate acts of teaching around the understanding of the Treaty/te Tiriti o Waitangi.

All students have the opportunity to acquire some knowledge of te reo Māori me ōna tikanga (Māori language and culture) in their classrooms and through weekly kapa haka sessions.

Whānaungātanga

A priority is for Māori students to feel comfortable and positive about being Māori within the school environment. We build respectful relationships with Māori learners, all other learners and their whānau, hapū and iwi. We build family and community connections and recognise the importance of identity as individuals and members of the Houghton Valley school community.

Manaakitanga

We make people feel welcome both formally and informally through developed practices and the appreciation and expectation of good manners. We demonstrate integrity, sincerity and respect for Māori beliefs, language and culture.

Tāngata Whenuatanga

We endeavour to provide relevant cultural contexts for learning language and culture, and supporting Māori learners to achieve and learn as Māori so their identity, language and whānau is affirmed. We endeavour to facilitate participation of whānau and people with the knowledge of local context, tikanga, history, and language to support classroom teaching and learning programmes. Teachers engage with students as learners and facilitators by generating opportunities for students to use 'who they are' and bring 'what they know' into the learning through culturally responsive contexts. The learning environment and teaching practice reflect and affirm identity, language and culture and seek expertise, resources and knowledge from the wider community, for example whānau, iwi.

Our community is proudly diverse and values cultural diversity highly. As a school we endeavour to foster positive cultural understandings and reflect the realities, histories and traditions of all our people across our policies, practices and curriculum.

In particular we recognise the unique position of Māori within our school's cultural equation. Teaching staff are encouraged and supported with professional development to extend their current abilities in te reo Māori. The school has built an action plan (based on the Hāutu review tool) that focuses on building a partnership between the school and whānau Māori in order to support the educational success of Māori as Māori at Houghton Valley School.

Ako

We support Māori learners and all other learners to be responsible for their own learning and to learn from each other (reciprocity, looking after each other).

Taonga

We recognise and appreciate our treasured things – students, staff, whānau, community, land, property and environment. We support and encourage learners to value and respect the natural and cultural treasure of New Zealand/Aotearoa.

Provision of Te Reo Māori

In recognising the unique position of the Māori culture, Houghton Valley School takes all reasonable steps to provide instruction in tikanga and te reo Māori for students whose parents/whānau request it. If a whānau requests a higher level of tikanga Māori and/or te reo Māori than appears to be at present evident in our school's Māori programme, staff and family should further explain the existing programmes, further extend the existing programmes if and as appropriate and discuss and explore the following options:

- Combine with a nearby school for parts of the day/programme
- Dual enrolment with Correspondence School
- Provision of in and outside of school support and resources to further enhance inclusion of te reo Māori and tikanga Māori within the child's classroom
- Support to explore other schools that offer programmes closer to their expectations

Houghton Valley School Curriculum

TE KAUPAPA O TE KURA O HAEWAI

