



# Mission Heights Primary School

## Curriculum

*'Growing Excellence' through innovative and constantly evolving personalised learning*

| GROWING EXCELLENCE                 |                                 |                               |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Education | The New Zealand Curriculum      | Innovative Environment        |
| Learning Capabilities              | Learning Areas                  | Personalising Learning        |
| Learning Strategies                | Knowledge, Skills, Competencies | Digital Learning Technologies |
| GROWING THE LEARNER                |                                 |                               |

### Our Vision

Mission Heights Primary School is committed to 'Growing Excellence' through providing innovative, constantly evolving personalised learning.

The Mission Heights Primary School vision sets the direction for all learning and teaching in the school. It is based on our vision of what characterises a 21<sup>st</sup> century education, the innovative learning environment that the school will provide, and the framework of the New Zealand curriculum.

To deliver this vision Mission Heights Primary School provides an environment where:

- students can be confident, active, reflective and high achieving independent learners;
- key curriculum learning opportunities are embedded in the class programme;
- effective assessment tools and strategies are used to co-construct learning;
- students and staff engage and identify with positive learning communities;
- learning is supported by meaningful professional development and collaborative relationships within a robust culture and climate of high trust; and
- services and resources are accessible to support ongoing learning and the pursuit of excellence.

### Our Values

The New Zealand Curriculum identifies a number of values that have widespread community support. These values match with the four key values of Mission Heights Primary School which are encouraged, modelled and explored by students and staff.

- *Responsibility*: by being honest, responsible, accountable and acting ethically
- *Respect*: by caring for the environment, different cultures, languages, and heritages
- *Inquiry*: by thinking critically, creatively and reflectively
- *Excellence*: by aiming high and by persevering in the face of difficulties.

Supporting, emphasising and empowering all students to care about people other than themselves and to think about the effects of their actions on others and the environment both in the present and in the future is at the centre of 'good citizenship' at Mission Heights Primary School.

### Growing Excellence – Kia Hiranga Ake

The motto of Mission Heights Primary School is “**Growing Excellence-Kia Hiranga Ake**” where teaching and learning is visible and active. Excellence in student learning and achievement is at the centre of all that we do in teaching and learning and the decision-making processes surrounding these activities.

Excellence at Mission Heights Primary is pursued through the implementation of a rigorous, future-focused and challenging school curriculum. All staff are actively committed to the ongoing process of improving student learning outcomes, enhancing the quality of teaching and learning, monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning practices and outcomes, using engaging and innovative learning strategies and technologies and spending significant time and effort in fostering student achievement.

## 21<sup>st</sup> Century Education

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Schools of the 21<sup>st</sup> century must meet the needs of communities that are increasingly diverse, where technology and its use is ever advancing and increasing and where students must be prepared for a changing and complex world of the future. Learning in schools is no longer just about the teaching of facts and knowledge of content. It is about acquiring life long learning capabilities, learning strategies and competencies.

Mission Heights Primary's interpretation of learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is to provide opportunities where students can achieve to the best of their ability across all dimensions of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values. Learners at Mission Heights Primary School will be self-directed, creative and enthusiastic problem solvers.

Our future focused curriculum design is founded on the belief that students will, from an early age, exert ownership and responsibility for their own learning. Accordingly, our curriculum aim is to be reflective, effective, use research-based teaching methodologies, utilise appropriate hands-on and authentic learning experiences, provide opportunities for students to explore interests and curiosities, and employ appropriate core academic materials.

Our expectation is that students will be engaged in challenging, appropriate and meaningful work, supported by a unified community of adults (teachers, parents and the wider community). We are committed to rigorous programmes of learning and teaching that promote continuous improvement and individual development while responding to the intellectual, social, environmental and emotional needs of students at the different stages of their development.

## The New Zealand Curriculum

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The New Zealand Curriculum framework and its learning areas, knowledge and skills underpin all learning, teaching and assessment at Mission Heights Primary School in the following areas:

- English;
- The Arts;
- Health and Physical Education;
- Mathematics and Statistics;
- Science;
- Social Sciences
- Technology
- Digital Technologies

The Mission Heights Primary School curriculum gives effect to the New Zealand curriculum by addressing the particular needs, interests and circumstances of the school's community and students. It describes how Mission Heights Primary School delivers the national curriculum, how students' learning needs will be met, and how students' achievement will be monitored and assessed. Mission Heights Primary School's curriculum builds on effective pedagogy in the primary school years, and an integrated curriculum. The School's integrated curriculum makes connections across disciplines, to real life and authentic contexts through connections that are both skill-based and/or knowledge-based.

The school's curriculum acknowledges the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi and the bi-cultural foundations of Aotearoa New Zealand. It puts students at the centre of teaching & learning and affirms New Zealand's unique identity.

An important tool in the delivery of the curriculum is the effective use of appropriate interactive technologies. The day-to-day use of learning technologies are supported by the school's physical design, its flexible learning spaces, the use of authentic learning contexts and the provision of the state of the art digital learning environment that is modern and responsive to students learning needs.

## **Innovative Environment**

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The school's innovative learning environment is characterised by quality physical and teaching and learning environments. The use of innovative technologies and flexible learning facilities along with a shared vision of collaboration with Mission Heights Junior College extends to staff, students, parents and community members of both schools, to contribute to a culture of sustainability, greater ecological awareness and student leadership opportunities. This vision for collaborative practice is enhanced by the physical design and environment of the school. The dual schools campus incorporates ICT-intensive teaching and learning facilities, shared library and play fields. Flexible learning studios, spacious learning zones and the use of glass create a sense of collaboration, visual connectedness, space and interaction, that are integral to an innovative 21<sup>st</sup> century curriculum.

Students and teachers at Mission Heights Primary School have access to a wide variety of hardware and software technologies to represent information in multiple formats and media through multiple pathways for students' action and expression. Our aim is to provide multiple ways to engage students' interest and motivation to achieve excellence in learning and teaching using digital technologies in a safe and responsible manner.

## **Personalising learning**

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Personalising learning involves thinking about knowledge as an active process. Teaching and learning at Mission Heights Primary reflects a commitment to personalising learning through our A.C.E. (Abilities, Curiosities, Essentials) and Learning advisor programmes. The ACE programme is an innovative programme that allows for further personalisation of learning across the curriculum. This commitment is to make a difference to the life and learning of all students at schools and to enable them to be confident achievers and life long learners in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### A.C.E. Programmes

- *ABILITY – the areas where students have particular strengths and talents;*
- *CURIOSITY – the areas where students have a particular passion and want to learn more; and*
- *ESSENTIALS – the areas where students need to learn fundamental knowledge and skills.*

Opportunities for students to be engaged in the ACE facets of their own learning are provided during the normal course of the school day (Wednesday-Friday). The ACE programme caters for all students and teaches them how to be proactive in managing and taking responsibility for their learning. It includes catering to the needs of students achieving below the expected level and also for gifted and talented students across the curriculum. Learning opportunities in other areas such as learning a second language, creating a mural for the school, training for a sports or cultural event, and pursuing personal passions and interests be it in academic or robotics. ACE meets the needs of students, and is based on their interests. As such, it is flexible in nature and scope, and students have input into its design. The programme allows the school to utilise students passions and abilities, staff expertise, community partnerships and interests. It is aimed at developing students capabilities for life and learning, allows for collaboration with other students and teachers and importantly promotes the school's vision of "Growing Excellence". Students are encouraged to achieve to the best of their ability, to know what they know, how they know it, and what they need to learn next. Through ACE students learn 'how to learn' as they grow their passion, curiosities and essential learning skills.

### Learning Advisor Approach

As part of personalising learning the A.C.E. programme includes a "Learning Advisor" approach that is embedded in our school's vision of Personalising Learning. Learning advisors are mentors and coaches to vertical groups of Years 1-6 students who support the holistic development of the students in their group. Learning Advisors encourage the building of relationships amongst and across various peer levels within each group-emotional, physical, social and academic development and positive learning dispositions and attitudes for life.

## Use of Digital Technologies

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Our students are growing up in a rapidly changing world where ICT and 'Thinking Digital' first will, more so than ever, be a fact of their everyday future life. To be true to our vision, our goal is to provide our students with an authentic, relevant and constantly evolving ICT environment which supports their learning. The school's IT infrastructure and the web based MHP online learning management system takes anywhere any time learning flexibility and security to the next level of their schooling. In terms of sharing digital information all students have a personalised log in from years 1-6 to use on mobile as well as wired hardware e.g chromebooks, ipads and computers for online learning purposes. Efficient and secure school and home access, for learning and digital communication is a fundamental aspect of our 'Think Digital' vision for teachers, students and parents. With the MHP online learning management system, the IT system, remote access to the school network for learning, information and communication is made possible by means of log on from any computer connected to the internet whether in NZ or overseas to make teaching 'Ubiquitous'.

At Mission Heights Primary School all staff have access to professional development so that they can use these ICTs effectively with students in learning programmes to enable students become responsible, independent and active users of the technologies. Learning Zones are digitally-intense environments where students have access to use a range of technologies in appropriate ways at every available opportunity. ICTs are integrated into the curriculum wherever their use makes skills and knowledge more accessible, more stimulating, more relevant, more authentic and of high quality. Teachers recognise that students are often more capable, confident and creative users of ICTs than adults are, and these skills are capitalised on whenever possible.

## Growing Learners

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We believe that effective teaching is critical to excellent student outcomes. Therefore our teachers use sustainable, innovative, and evidence based teaching strategies.

In summary Mission Heights Primary School's curriculum will:

- enable students to develop the habits of life-long learners;
- engage every student with exciting and relevant learning;
- empower students with meaningful, challenging and demanding learning; and
- develop pathways for all students to continue their success through the next stage of their schooling

This will be achieved through:

- developing and implementing high quality learning and teaching programmes that reflect the vision and values of the school;
- promoting creativity, independence and initiative in learners whilst maintaining a focus on the core literacies of learning;
- meeting the special needs of all learners;
- motivating learners to guide and enact their own learning;
- building resilience, risk-taking attitudes and perseverance in learners;
- developing and maintaining high expectations for academic achievement;
- using effectively the digitally intensive cyber learning environment;
- utilising the unique design and physical environment of the school.
- promoting students' ability to understand things from multiple viewpoints and to appreciate diversity; and
- developing students' understanding that what is "true" now may not be true in the future and may not have been true in the past.
- supporting a positive transition process for newcomers coming to MHP and those graduating from MHP at the end of Year 6.