

Chairperson's report

Introduction

Seatoun School has a well deserved reputation for educational excellence.

Educational excellence embodies more than simply able teaching in literacy and numeracy. Although deservedly strong emphasis is placed on these core areas, one of the strengths of the school is the recognition of the value and importance of a wide range of skills.

The school's adoption of the Four Pillars of Education illustrates the school's expansive educational approach. These four ideals: learning to know, learning to do, learning to live and learning to be, provide a framework for developing confident, connected, actively involved, lifelong learners.

The adoption of this model has meant that the community's expectation is that students will not only achieve well in the core competencies, but will also leave the school as "strategic learners", equipped to identify and seize learning opportunities throughout life.

The curriculum

The values, competencies and learning areas that must be taught in New Zealand schools are those identified in the New Zealand Curriculum.

The interpretation and tailoring of the New Zealand Curriculum for the school's students involves discussion, evaluation, self review and consequently constant refinement and improvement.

This process is very effectively informed by the collection and analysis of achievement data. As a result the school's curriculum is dynamic and reactive, and all planning decisions are made on an informed basis.

Importantly the curriculum is not implemented homogeneously; it is sufficiently flexible to allow teachers to ensure that the needs of every student are met.

School culture

Seatoun School's positive culture is one of the school's enduring strengths.

In part it is the product of the encouragement and recognition of student effort, progress and achievement, and because the school values creativity, innovation and fun. The school celebrates achievement which assists in the development of a positive learning environment.

The school culture is also a by-product of the shared values of the school community: respect, responsibility, positiveness, compassion, giving, self control, honesty and courage. The students understand and accept these values and the resultant behavioral expectations. The consistency of these behavioral expectations across the school may be one of the reasons why there is no truancy or any significant disciplinary issues in the school.

The school culture is positively enhanced by the house system and buddy programme which help to promote a sense of belonging amongst students, and assists in the development of empathy and understanding.

Academic achievement

2010 has been another successful year for Seatoun School.

During the year the Board of Trustees received regular and comprehensive curriculum reports from teachers with allocated responsibilities in specific curriculum areas. These curriculum reports plotted student progress against identified objectives, and showed that during 2010 the school produced excellent student achievement across all aspects of the curriculum.

The 2010 Variations Report provides evidence of the success of the school's approach to education and achievement in the core areas of literacy and numeracy. Achievement continued to be strong in reading and the school wide data showed that 29% of girls and 26% of boys are above expected level, and a further 62% of girls and 57% of boys are at the expected level. Children continued to achieve well in mathematics.

The school ensures that every child is provided with the support necessary to ensure that his or her potential is met. Accordingly Seatoun School's support programmes are comprehensive and targeted to meet individual student needs. The school is extremely fortunate to have a team of highly experienced teacher-aides whose work is at the core of those programmes. Furthermore extension of students is a priority and various challenges are available to students including the Otago problem solving, the Literary Quiz and the opportunity to sit the Australian exams in a number of different subject.

National Standards

The introduction of Nationals Standards throughout New Zealand has been controversial and divisive. Although the Principal and Board have reservations about the efficacy of the standards, Seatoun School has implemented the standards after first devising and carrying out a National Standards Implementation Plan.

Teachers confidently applied the standards and the school's reporting processes were altered to take into account the new statutory requirements. A parent survey was overwhelmingly supportive of the school's reporting processes and the quality of the information received.

Trump Challenge

The successful Trump Challenge home learning programme is a fine example of how students are encouraged to become strategic learners.

The programme allows participants to develop the key competencies required by the New Zealand Curriculum outside of the school environment: thinking, relating to others; using language, symbols and text; managing self and participating and contributing. At the same time students develop a taste for independent thought and action given they choose which challenges to conquer and how to best tackle each task.

Feedback was gathered from both students and parents about the programme. It was very positive and the feedback provided a number of suggested refinements which has informed the 2011 version of the Challenge programme.

Enviro school

Seatoun School's status as an Enviro School has been embraced by students and parents.

The school's gardens have been tended by students and the produce has been used during cooking classes. The students have reacted positively to other "enviro" initiatives such as composting and recycling and enjoyed taking part in a beach clean-up.

Resourcing

The school operates in a fiscally prudent manner. The Principal provides comprehensive reports to the Board at every meeting on expenditure against budget. The obligatory annual audit provides an independent assessment of the school's financial processes and accounts.

The Board is grateful that parents have continued to support the school financially, and our target for voluntary donations in 2010 was achieved.

2010 saw a surplus over budget at year's end.

The PTA

The relationship between school and community is greatly enhanced by the work of the PTA.

The PTA's activities generally embody an element of fundraising which augments the school's operating budget and provides opportunities for students and parents to meet and socialise which enhances a feeling of community.

During 2010 the PTA held an extraordinarily successful school fair and a very well received Father's Day breakfast, provided morning teas for parents of new entrants, organised and ran the school discos, and provided PTA lunches.

The school community

Seatoun School is extremely fortunate to have a high level of parent involvement in all aspects of school life. Parents are able to (and do) attend school hui which celebrate the work students are doing in class, and student achievement whether academic, cultural or sporting. Many parents attend the school athletics and swimming days and the Visual Arts week. A number of parents and grandparents assist in the classroom. This support supplements the teacher-aide programme and is gratefully received.

Summary

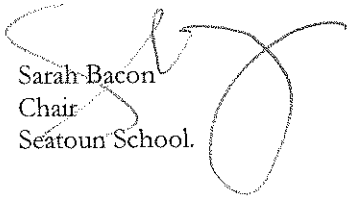
Seatoun School is an excellent school.

We are extremely fortunate to have teachers of a high calibre who are very ably led by Pete Pointon. Pete and his staff are passionate educators who genuinely care about the children that attend Seatoun School and engender a love of learning and a desire to excel.

We are also extremely fortunate to be part of a community that is supportive and actively involved.

2010 was a great year for Seatoun School. 2011 will be even better.

Sarah Bacon
Chair
Seatoun School.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sarah Bacon', written over the printed text.