



SEATOUN SCHOOL

**2009**

***CHARTER***

***ABRIDGED VERSION***



**Seatoun School is a dynamic, quality school that empowers learners to fulfil their potential**

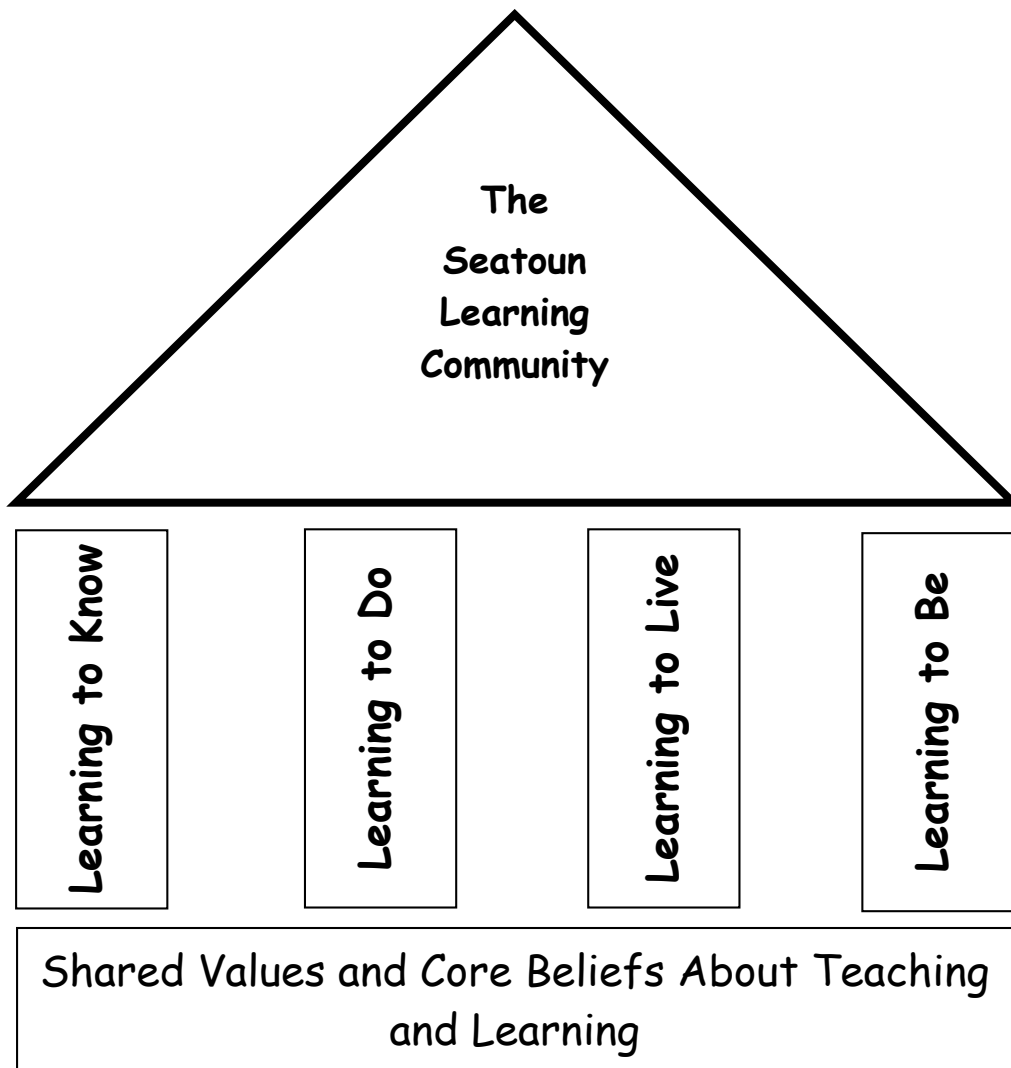
Ministry of Education I.D Number: 2987

## Our Educational Approach

We aim to create a co-operative teaching and learning environment that is relevant, purposeful and challenging. We believe students need support to take risks and become independent learners.

We place a strong emphasis on the core areas of literacy and numeracy, but also recognise and value the importance of all the essential learning areas and skills.

We encourage and recognise effort, progress and achievement and value creativity, innovation and fun. The diagram below is based on the "Four Pillars of Education" as presented by the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-First Century Report to UNESCO, "Learning: The Treasure Within".



**Learning to know**, by combining a sufficiently broad general knowledge with the opportunity to work in depth on a small number of subjects. This also means learning to learn, so as to benefit from the opportunities education provides throughout life.

**Learning to do**, in order to acquire not only occupational skills but also, more broadly, the competence to deal with many situations and work in teams. It also means learning to do in the context of young peoples' various social and work experiences, both formal and informal.

**Learning to live together**, by developing an understanding of other people and an appreciation of interdependence, carrying out joint projects and learning to manage conflicts in a spirit of respect for the values of pluralism, mutual understanding and peace.

**Learning to be**, to better develop one's personality and be able to act with even greater autonomy, judgement and personal responsibility. In that connection, education must not disregard any aspect of a person's potential: memory, reasoning, aesthetic sense, physical capacities and communication skills.

Great value is placed on the importance of each student's self-esteem and self-appraisal. Personal responsibility and pride are values we hold strongly. With professional guidance, students are helped to take increased responsibility for themselves and their decisions.

Education is a life-long process. Opportunities are provided for children to develop their curiosity and interests. Learning that happens at school is transferred and vice-versa. We are fortunate that our children receive a wealth of experiences on which to build their knowledge, values and attitudes. We endeavour to work closely with parents to maximise every opportunity.

The Four Pillars upon which our learning community is constructed, learning to know, do, live and be are embedded in a foundation of shared values and core beliefs about teaching and learning. These values and beliefs provide a common language of expectations to achieve our vision, whilst acknowledging the importance of individual initiative and creativity.

#### Shared Values

- Respect - to treat self, others and property with consideration and care
- Responsibility - accepting to conscientiously fulfil a task or duty which one is entrusted
- Positive - being optimistic and concentrating on what is good
- Perseverance - to persist; to maintain an effort and stick to a task until it's done
- Compassion - sympathy and helping when others are distressed or suffering
- Giving - to make available to another; kindness and sharing provided freely without asking or expecting anything in return
- Self-control - being able to control your own feelings and behaviour, to live within the limits mutually agreed upon and established personally
- Honesty - being truthful in words and actions, honouring the trust others place in you
- Courage - even when afraid, being brave to do what you think is right

## **Core Beliefs about Effective Teaching and Learning**

Pathways to achieve our vision:

- Passion, joy and celebration
- High expectations and personal best
- Foundation learning in place
- Strategic learners
- Quality teachers
- Powerful learning
- Co-operation and teamwork
- A safe, welcoming environment

### **Passion, Joy and Celebration**

"Good teaching is not just a matter of being efficient, developing competence, mastering technique and possessing the right kind of knowledge. Good teaching also involves emotional work. It is infused with desire; with pleasure, passion, creativity, challenge and joy." Hargreaves, Andy 1994.

We will:

- Savour the moment - appreciate the need for flexibility and spontaneity
- Encourage students and teachers to share their passions and ignite learning for others
- Foster a love of learning for the pleasure of understanding, knowing and discovering
- Value humour, joy and celebration

### **High Expectations and Personal Best**

A sense of pride in all we do is our over-riding aim.

We will:

- Hold the highest expectations for all to do their best
- Ensure students, teachers and parents understand the need for quality over quantity
- Help students understand and appreciate the intrinsic value of personal effort
- Recognise the importance of time for reflection and review
- Provide specific criteria in terms of content and presentation, to achieve quality outcomes

## Foundation Learning in Place

Effective learning is built on core skills and knowledge in:

- Literacy - listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing and presenting
- Numeracy
- Essential health and fitness
- Essential values and attitudes for life

We will:

- Implement school-wide literacy and numeracy programmes
- Endeavour to achieve school literacy and numeracy achievement targets
- Identify students at risk and focus programmes accordingly
- Ensure all children have the essential health and fitness skills
- Ensure all children demonstrate the essential values and attitudes for life

## Strategic Learners

Strategic learners are equipped to identify and seize learning opportunities throughout life. They take increasing responsibility for their own decisions and learning

We will:

- Help students to see the 'big picture' of their learning
- Teach thinking skills - creative thinking, systems thinking, decision making, problem solving, reasoning and questioning skills and the use of planners and graphic organisers
- Help students to recognise different learning styles and match appropriate learning style to task
- Provide opportunities for students to demonstrate knowledge, strategies and skills in realistic settings
- Ensure students use school-wide essential 'learning to learn' skills and strategies

## Quality Teaching

Quality teachers can justify what they do, why they do it and show they make a difference. They are committed to, and enjoy their job

We will:

- Demonstrate comprehensive knowledge of effective learning and teaching, curriculum and resources
- Know our students and families
- Follow school-wide guidelines and formats for planning, processes, monitoring and assessment and reporting
- Ensure teaching is focussed - we are able to state where the student is at, how we know and what the next learning steps will be
- Ensure learning is focussed within meaningful contexts, engages students and is made explicit to the learner
- Scaffold learning to ensure all students experience personal success
- Provide timely focussed feedback, acknowledge efforts and celebrate success
- Reflect on our practice, participate in personal and school professional development and support colleagues

## **Powerful Learning**

Powerful learning challenges students to experience learning as a dynamic, engaging and empowering activity

We will:

- Assist students to understand and build on their experiences to make sense of the world
- Integrate the curriculum to help learners make meaningful connections
- Provide opportunities for students to work with a variety of technologies and support them to choose and apply technology appropriate to the task, and care for equipment
- Plan and teach a range of 'rich topics' that cover broad concepts through an integrated, coherent approach
- Promote higher-order thinking
- Foster curiosity, creativity and innovation

## **Co-operation and Teamwork**

Co-operation and teamwork, valuing diversity and respecting the beliefs, ideas and contributions of others is critical to a learning organisation

We will:

- Model, practise and apply our school values
- Create an environment characterised by collaboration and collegiality
- Teach effective communication skills
- Teach co-operative skills, explaining the purpose and benefits of working in a team; and the roles, responsibilities and procedures necessary for teams to operate effectively
- Teach trust-building, conflict resolution and negotiation skills

## **A Safe, Welcoming Environment**

Seatoun School is intentionally inviting to all and has a culture of encouragement, safety and shared responsibility

We will:

- Provide a secure, supportive environment
- Promote and celebrate risk taking
- Encourage a climate of asking for help
- Ensure communication between students, staff and parents is timely, clear and focuses on positive outcomes for all
- Share and celebrate efforts and achievement

# The New Zealand Curriculum

The revised National Curriculum was published in its final form in 2007. Schools have until 2010 to work towards its full implementation. This revised document aims to:

"Affirm and retain what is effective and worthwhile in the previous national curriculum. At the same time, taking into account of social change and new understandings... It gives schools greater flexibility to design and implement curriculum that is tailored to the learning needs of their students and the expectations of their communities." From the NZ Curriculum to School Curriculum. Pg 3; MOE, Learning Media, 2007

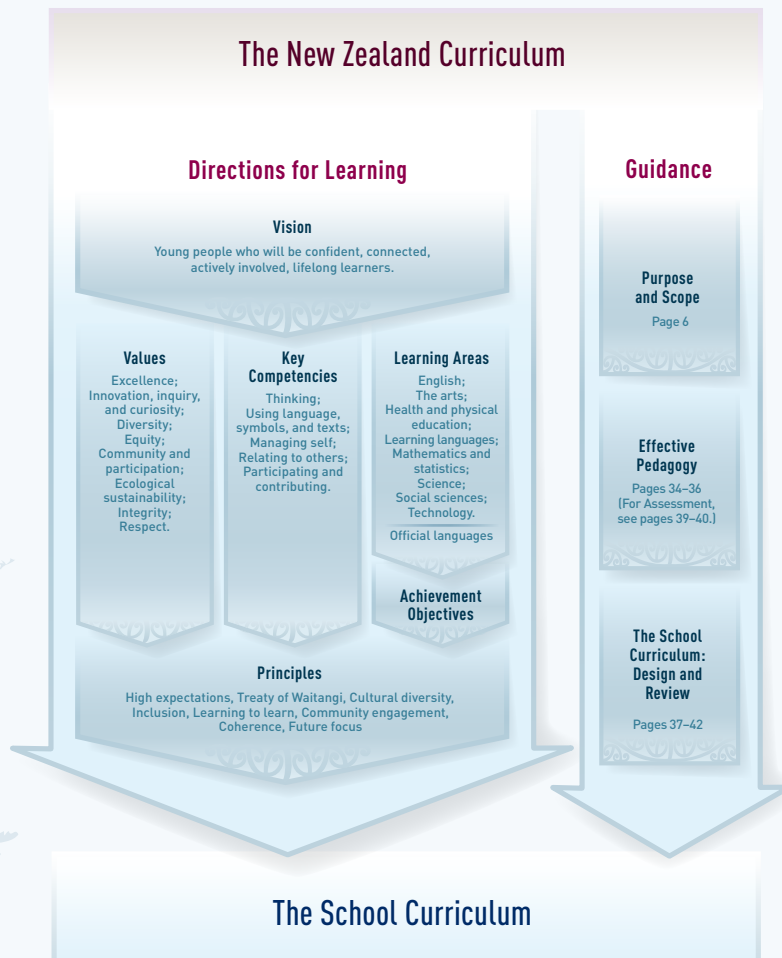
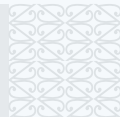
The intent of the document is to provide a clear statement of what New Zealanders deem important in education. It includes a set of principles on which to base curriculum design; and values that are to be encouraged and explored. Five key competencies are defined, as are each of the learning areas.

Achievement objectives have also been revised to better ensure currency, relevance and well-defined outcomes for students.

"The New Zealand Curriculum is a statement of official policy relating to teaching and learning in English-medium NZ state schools. Its principal function is to set the direction for student learning and to provide guidance for schools as they design and review their curriculum." The NZ Curriculum. Pg 6; MOE, Learning Media 2007

## Overview

A schematic view of this document



## 1. INTRODUCTORY SECTION

### **School and Community Description:**

Seatoun School was established in 1916 as a 'side school' of Worser Bay. In 1921 Seatoun was recognised as a separate school and in April 2002 the school was relocated onto its present site, the old Fort Dorset army base. The building of the new school was the responsibility of the Board of Trustees and whilst primarily funded by the Ministry of Education considerable community funding was necessary to complete the project.

The school is built for a maximum roll of 416 students. However since 2001 there has been steady roll growth as the popularity of Seatoun as a place to live, the high level of residential building over the last few years and the growing reputation of the school as a place of quality teaching and learning saw the roll peak at 425 in 2007. In 2009 the school is staffed and funded on a roll of 415 students. The optimal roll is between 420-425 students and the Board endeavours to sustain this figure. The changing economic and employment climate impacts on the school roll as historically the population of the community fluctuates through both immigration and employment options. These factors make it difficult to accurately predict student numbers out beyond one year, but given this uncertainty, and the roll growth trend, the Board will not seek to change to the enrolment zone in the short term.

In 2002 Seatoun Kindergarten was relocated immediately next door to the school and the existing relationship was strengthened further by this move, for example children from the kindergarten regularly visit the school library. It also provides greater impetus to the site as being a focal point in the community. There is a broad range of early childhood providers on the peninsular and all contribute children to Seatoun School.

Seatoun School is classified as a decile 10 school. Schools with this classification receive the lowest level of Government funding and assistance. There is an expectation that schools located in high socio-economic areas will substantially subsidise their operation by community fundraising and parent donations [financial and expertise]. As in 2007, the 2008 Board budget figure of \$95,000 for the voluntary donation was surpassed. This is a clear indication of satisfaction and a desire to be involved and support the school.

The school caters for students from new entrant to year eight and reflects Seatoun's multi-cultural community. Our successes result from an effective and ongoing partnership between the Ministry of Education, the Board, the staff, the students, their parents and the wider Seatoun community.

### **Procedural Information:**

#### **Community Consultation**

Seatoun School consults its school community, including its Maori community on a regular basis. Consultation includes:

- Community surveys and questionnaires - general and focused on specific initiatives e.g. reporting, health
- Meetings - operational and financial issues, curriculum delivery, parent partnership in learning
- Regular PTA meetings
- Opportunities to attend Board meetings
- Information sharing through the fortnightly school newsletter and many syndicate/class newsletters
- Informal meetings, discussions, phone contact
- PTA involvement in strategic planning day
- Parent involvement in school initiatives

Developing a new strategic plan to span the period 2009-2011 was a key task for the Board in 2008. In addition to the on-going self - review process [e.g. analysis of student achievement data, regular reports to the Board and planning day discussion] three other significant planned data gathering methods were employed. They were:

- the ERO review report
- the community and staff surveys
- meeting with Maori parents

The broad parent survey aimed to ascertain the level of understanding and support of such things as the school's strategic direction and values, curriculum and learning emphasis, leadership and management and effectiveness of communication.

The staff survey focused on areas such as school direction and leadership, support professional development opportunities, staff satisfaction levels and school culture. The ERO reviewers were also requested to report on school culture and this included surveying staff.

45% of families responded to the parent survey. Whilst down on the previous two surveys (69% 2005 & 49% 2003), this is still a high response rate which provided valuable insight into parent thinking. 100% of staff (82% 2005 & 68% in 2003) completed the survey. As has been the case in previous years, the overall levels of satisfaction and agreement with the culture, direction, performance and effectiveness of the school were very positive.

Maori parents were invited to a meeting convened to share and discuss Maori student achievement information and any other issues around how the school caters for the learning needs of its Maori students.

The findings of the ERO endorsed the school's own self review process. The Review Office report acknowledged the strong professional culture, quality of teaching and learning, positive relationships between students and teachers, engagement and attitude of students, commitment of board and active support and involvement of parents in the school.

### **Catering for New Zealand's cultural diversity and the unique position of Maori**

Seatoun School, as appropriate to its community, will develop procedures and practices that reflect New Zealand's cultural diversity and the unique position of the Maori culture.

9% [March 01, 2009] of students are identified as Maori. Consultation has been carried out with the tangata whenua and a positive relationship has been established between the school and the local Kaumatua. An appropriate Kaupapa has been established for formal school occasions.

Whilst the school has high expectations of all students in terms of achievement and behaviour, school achievement data identifies any disparity in achievement between Maori and non Maori students as a tool to help ensure their learning success.

In recognising the unique position of the Maori culture, Seatoun School will:

- Maintain the positive relationship with the tangata whenua and whanau
- Maintain the use of Te Reo and Tikanga as appropriate in formal school ceremonies e.g. assemblies
- Incorporate Te Reo in everyday communications e.g. greetings
- Integrate Maori language and culture across the curriculum

Seatoun School also acknowledges and celebrates its cultural diversity. Students and families with European, South African, Pacific Island, Indian, Greek, Asian and other backgrounds enrich our school and where possible these cultural differences are shared in order to enhance learning and understanding.

### **Planning Timeline and Process**

The annual self-review process is shown in the Strategic Plan section of the Charter. The Annual Plan falls out of the Planning Day held annually in late August-early September. As a result the following year's draft budget and Annual Plan are prepared and presented no later than the December Board meeting. The drafts are confirmed at the February Board meeting when the December accounts have been processed and other updated information is available.

The Annual Plan is reviewed at each Board meeting. Curriculum teams, management and board sub-committees also meet as required to review and report against agreed goals and objectives.

Student achievement against set targets is generally reported twice per year. Baseline data is collected in Term One and then comparative data collected in Term Four.

The Annual Report and Annual Meeting are the formal mechanisms by which the Board and management report to its community and the Ministry. The timeframe for this process is set in legislation.

The Education Review Office undertakes a formal school review on behalf of the Ministry of Education. This currently follows a three-year cycle, but a policy introduced this year outlines that schools with a record of consistently good reviews will be reviewed at four or five year intervals. Schools are still awaiting notification as to the date the new policy takes affect.

Seatoun School will lodge a copy of its annually updated Charter and its Report on Annual Targets with the Ministry of Education by 30 June each year.