

HORA HORA SCHOOL

Location Whangarei

Primary (Years 1 to 6)

Decile 3

Roll 345

Ethnicity Maori 65%; Pakeha 30%; Pacific 1%

Principal: Shirley Tuckey

History

The values programme at Hora Hora School “self-generated” out of an awareness of the needs of students and as a result of collective staff decision-making. It was clear in the early stages that a primary goal was to have students feeling good about themselves. It was also clear early on that all the values that were important to their community could be summed up in a single short phrase – “At Hora Hora School we look after each other.” This phrase now provides a foundation for everything that goes on at the school.

The present Principal says that the school prefers to say that it has a values philosophy, rather than a values programme. The values that are at the heart of Hora Hora School are so integrated that they are difficult to separate from the work and play that goes on every day. At Hora Hora School they “teach the values by living the values.”

The Principal has refined the manner in which values operate in the school simplifying and integrating the system so that every child can understand the shared “language,” the expectations that attach to the values and the consequences that follow inappropriate behaviour.

Systems

The enclosed notes provide a summary of the school’s philosophy regarding values and relationships in the school in a report provided by the Principal. She shows how the concepts they have developed, and the systems that support them, affect behaviour management, and how teaching and learning, work and play, are positively influenced on a day-to-day basis.

Results

- Maori students are doing well and academic goals are being met.
- Teachers are strongly supportive of the school's philosophy and work well together as a team. The school enjoys a stable staff.
- The statistics kept by the current Principal indicate that students requiring behaviour interventions are fewer in number and as an overall number represent only a small proportion of total students. There have been no suspensions or stand-downs.
- School tone has variously been described as "excellent", "very pleasant" and as having "a very warm feeling to it"...
- "You are a superb school" (ERO)

Key Features

- Values are fully integrated, to the extent that the Principal was reluctant to describe the "values programme" as a separate entity. The single catch-phrase – "At Hora Hora School we look after each other" is an example of how a single, easily understood concept expressed in simple language can support a whole system of concepts that make up a successful values programme.
- The school holds an annual community barbecue to ensure that parents feel welcome and that there are no barriers created between the school and its parents. At enrolment care is taken to explain the school's values and to ensure that parents understand the school's vision. Parents are very supportive of the school's values statement and also of expectations that are set regarding behaviour. Parents also support the school's positive strategies for dealing with any unacceptable behaviour.
- Standards of behaviour are set and expectations are made very clear. A guideline sheet for staff is provided (enclosed) outlining the "Assertive Discipline" model. While a chat is almost always enough to bring a child back on track, the principal means of behaviour management is through positive reinforcement and reward for good behaviour.
- Boys and girls welfare is managed separately.
- Teachers are clearly the driving force behind the values philosophy and central to its success.
- Professional Development exercises with teaching staff, and shared ideas relating to child health have benefited the school within the concept of Kura Hauora, and the school's aim of "looking after each other".