

Freemans Bay School/Waiatarau is ...

A green oasis for play and learning



Our extensive grass fields allow space for students to be physically active and to learn through free, unstructured play. This encourages their intellectual, emotional and physical development and is particularly valued in an inner-city school adjacent to the CBD, where green space is scarce.

Informed by a strong Maori perspective



We have two classes in which the New Zealand Marautanga curriculum is taught in te reo Maori and in which tikanga Maori is observed. This dimension filters through the entire school and includes powhiri in which the entire school welcomes new staff and new families into our community.

We are a United Nations of students



Our zone includes the established and increasingly gentrified suburb of Freemans Bay as well as the entire CBD, two areas with entirely different population profiles. The result is that we welcome and celebrate students and their families from a wonderfully diverse range of nationalities and cultures. This diversity enriches our school and helps our students to learn respect for difference of all kinds.

Become confident, caring and respectful learners



Freemans Bay students make a big impression on visitors, who invariably describe them as distinctively open, respectful and caring, with an easy confidence in talking to adults. Teachers have long been addressed by their first names, adding to an informal environment of mutual respect.

Who are at the centre of a 21st century learning environment



Everything we do is about improving learning, with the child placed at the centre of a mutual learning journey in which staff and students are engaged. We promote student involvement at all levels, including student led conferences twice a year which are completely led by students.

We value children and strive to always listen to them. As part of this we use the Habits of Mind approach to more effective learning. As part of our commitment to e-learning we are implementing the internet-based KnowledgeNet system to encourage parental involvement in their child's classroom work.

Engaged in a broad curriculum using the latest teaching methods



We believe children's learning is best enhanced by exposure to a broad-based curriculum including music, art and PE as well as the core skills of reading, writing and maths. Our commitment to Education Outside the Classroom includes annual separate events for senior students in years 4, 5 and 6.

We are committed to extensive staff professional development in order to improve teaching proficiency, gain exposure to the latest evidence-based methods, and build links with the university community carrying out cutting-edge educational research. Our school is frequently visited by educators from overseas seeking to understand the New Zealand approach.

Involving all of our community to enhance learning



The evidence shows student learning is hugely enhanced if parents and caregivers are actively engaged. As well as KnowledgeNet, our student-led conferences are designed to help parents to understand their child's learning stage and follow their progress through the year.

We test student progress using a variety of nationally normed and standardised assessment tools. This data is used to form overall teacher judgements and we supply the full results to each student. We hold regular English lessons for ESOL parents which are well attended and huge fun. We acknowledge the barriers of language and culture facing many immigrant families, and we are always looking for innovative ways to better engage them in their children's learning.