

HE PUNA KORIKORI CASE STUDY

Mangakino School

Enhancing Education Through Outdoor Education and Māori Values



Mangakino School: Ko Wai?



Mangakino School Values:

MANAAKITANGA- *Kindness*

TUAKIRITANGA- *Identity*

MĀHAKITANGA- *Humility*

WHANAUNGATANGA- *Relationships*

Mangakino School, located in a small town near Tokoroa, serves students from years 1-8, all of whom are Māori. Facing challenges such as rural isolation, low economic status, and concerns about attendance, behaviour, and well-being, Mangakino School is undergoing a

transformative phase. Under the leadership of new principal Cherie Hill and a revitalised School Board of Trustees, the school has embraced a community-driven approach to education, supported by funding from the He Puna Korikori (HPK) Fund.

Ngā Whāinga Matua o Mangakino School

- Rangatahi wellbeing is supported and maintained within a safe learning environment.
- Rangatahi to have increased connection to the Taiao through activity based learning.
- Rangatahi to have increased confidence in accessing and relating to the Taiao.
- Rangatahi to gain an improvement in their sense of identity as Māori.

Transformation and Localised Curriculum

Mangakino School (MS) has recently overhauled its staff and revamped its local curriculum design, focusing on education outside the classroom. Through community engagement meetings, MS crafted a new local curriculum endorsed and co-designed by the community, emphasising health, well-being, and the rich history that defines the local Māori community.

“Our Localised Curriculum is focused on health and well-being, immersing our students into our stunning natural environment, and strengthening our foundations through the rich history that identifies us as people.” – Mangakino School website

<https://www.mangakino.school.nz/home>

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Strategies for Educational Transformation

1. **Culturally Responsive Pedagogy:** MS aims to integrate Māori values, traditions, and perspectives into the curriculum, ensuring that learning is relevant and meaningful for all students.
2. **Whānau Engagement:** Strengthening relationships with whānau supports student learning and well-being. MS is focused on maintaining regular communication with whānau, encouraging involvement in school activities, and collaboration on educational strategies to foster a sense of community and partnership.
3. **Bicultural Competence:** Both staff and students work to develop a deep understanding and appreciation of Māori culture and language through professional development, the use of Te Reo Māori in the classroom, and the celebration of Māori events.
4. **Student-Centred Learning:** MS strives to create learning environments tailored to the needs and strengths of students to give all students access to quality education.
5. **Holistic Approach to Wellbeing:** Recognising the interconnectedness of academic, social, emotional, and physical well-being, MS emphasises the use of the Te Whare Tapa Wha model to support student wellbeing.

Education Outside the Classroom (EOTC)

The new local curriculum at MS includes a values-based learning approach, promoting teamwork, cooperation, communication skills, and resilience through recreation and outdoor

activities. HPK funding received in 2023 is set to play an important role in this approach, as it will allow for Bush School initiatives to take place on school grounds.



Bush School Initiative

With the funding from HPK 2023, MS purchased a commercial grow tunnel and fenced off an area of the school for an orchard/maara kai. This initiative promotes a sustainable connection to the natural environment and extends hands-on, recreation-based learning. The EOTC programme has an ongoing focus on integrating mātauranga Māori, such as whakapapa, maramataka, kaitiakitanga, and tikanga, into the learnings. Although the grow tunnel is not yet operational, progress is being made towards its full utilisation.

Community Engagement and Support

MS has been supported by various community partnerships:

- **Taupo District Council:** Collaborating on conservation programmes, including pest management and plant re-establishment.

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- **Mangakino Hapori Services:** Providing programmes such as Rangatahi Afterschool and School Holiday Programmes that support and endorse MS's learning and culture.
- **Enviroschools:** Delivering programmes and resources to educate and model environmentally sustainable practices.



Barriers and Challenges

While MS has made significant progress, challenges remain in areas such as truancy, whānau engagement, and the full embedding of the local curriculum. The school continues to work on overcoming these barriers through sustained community involvement and targeted support systems.

Outcomes and Impact

The desired outcomes of MS's initiatives include improved attendance, engagement,

and academic performance, alongside a strong sense of identity and well-being among students. The Bush School and other outdoor learning activities are designed to provide students with lifelong, practical skills and a deeper connection to their cultural heritage and natural environment.

Conclusion

Mangakino School's transformation demonstrates the power of community-driven, culturally responsive education and strong leadership. By prioritising community partnerships, embracing a localised curriculum, and focusing on holistic student well-being, MS is working towards creating an empowering and supportive learning environment for its students.

References and Readings

Synergy of Local Curriculum Development. *Enviroschools*. Retrieved June 1, 2024, from <https://enviroschools.org.nz/creating-change/stories/synergy-of-local-curriculum-development/>

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