



LATEST NEWS AND EVENTS **[08/02/2010]**

Curriculum Implementation - We are well prepared.

[8/2/2010]

Elmwood Normal School will be fully implementing the recently revised New Zealand Curriculum in 2010. Our teachers are well prepared to implement the changes needed to align their curriculum delivery strategy to the New Zealand Curriculum. Further they are well placed to trial assessment tools that will assist the children strive to achieve at their potential level based on learning readiness factors that influence progress growth. The school has reviewed and revised its programme delivery with this in mind, and we will be implementing our interpretation, of what we understand is required within the NZ curriculum, as well as providing the educational extensions that we believe are fundamentally important to the children's development.

The Board of Trustees is responsible for the implementation of the New Zealand Curriculum with focus on Literacy and Numeracy and accepts that every child in this school shall have the best possible learning opportunity.

Our implementation strategy will centre on Elmwood's Curriculum Framework created by the staff over the past two years. The direction of this framework encompasses a vision that young people will be confident, connected, actively involved and life-long learners. This involves the provision of a balanced curriculum, which enables all learners to acquire knowledge and skills, while at the same time developing capabilities to further existing knowledge and practise new skills.

The changes brought about with the alignment to the New Zealand Curriculum are not about taking out the things that are already proving to be successful, but more about injecting new thinking about the importance of key competencies and values for living. Basic skills will be learned. Realistic personal standards of achievement will be set. Learning will be valued and encouraged at every level. Every child will be aware of the dual cultural heritage of New Zealand and the multi-cultural image of our society.

In terms of reporting achievements, at Elmwood Normal School our priority is to balance the importance of being able to inform on our children's levels of attainment in a set of realistic benchmarks aligned to our current direction and focus. In doing so, we will develop thought processes, key competencies and values and extend learning abilities through the creative and innovative teaching styles our teachers are encouraged to employ.

Elmwood teachers will continue to use a comprehensive range of assessment and reporting procedures that already provides quality information on achievement growth, trends and comparisons within individual and age group expectations. Our current procedures are well placed to work towards implementing the National Standards. I therefore expect the refinement needed to incorporate any national testing tools that are yet to be developed, will simply be an addition to what we already do.

Parents will be aware that there remains much controversy around the introduction of National Standards, and the real concerns felt by many schools are not the standards themselves but the introduction of school league tables that would rate schools against schools and children against children based on the data gathered from the testing. Our concerns relate to the potentially narrow focus that such prescriptive benchmarks can lead to, if they become the 'sole' objective in children's learning. We know that a child's "readiness to learn" in the early years varies, thus development occurs at different rates. This usually has little correlation to how successful they are in their adult life.

We will not be adding "undue stress" to a child's pace of learning as a means to satisfy a standard that does not take into account the reality of the child's starting point and individual potential. Rather we will continue to encourage children to become self motivated towards becoming life long learners, ambitious to reach their full potential, resilient and equipped with strong values and ethics.

Kevin Gooch
Principal