



INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS

Our application process is confidential until after short listing. Short-listed candidates will be required to present to our whole community (including students, staff, parents). We will advise short-listed candidates of topics, format, timings and the process after short listing has occurred.

1. **Unlimited Paenga Tawhiti Secondary School**

We are a fully funded State Secondary School established as a 'special character' school under section 156 of the Education Act.

Our special character is described in a foundation document called 'The Ten Tenets'. These are listed elsewhere and on our website. www.unlimited.school.nz

We are different from most other secondary schools. In their most recent audit (August, 2009) the Education Review Office described many of the unique and special features of the school.

<http://www.ero.govt.nz/Early-Childhood-School-Reports/School-Reports/Unlimited-Paenga-Tawhiti-27-08-2009>

"There are strong partnerships between students, parents and learning advisors, based on the principle that everybody is a learner and every body is a teacher. Positive supportive relationships exist among students and between teachers and students. Students told ERO that the school was a safe environment without bullying".

"Students have opportunities to learn and gain qualifications through a variety of pathways. They can learn in class, in the community and through learner directed experiences. Many students achieve well, with some gaining NCEA qualifications ahead of their usual year level or passing university papers".

Students benefit from receiving an education, which is student directed and focused on the individual learner. Learning advisors have one-to-one meetings with students each week and complete an individual education plan with students and their families each term. These meetings enable learning goals to be set and monitored".

"Students who are engaged and motivated can follow their passions and interests to the full extent of their abilities. Many learning activities involve entrepreneurship and community service. ERO spoke to many students who were confident, competent, mature and articulate."

"Students are proud of their school and the learning culture they are part of. They show a strong sense of belonging. Students recognize that diversity is an acknowledged and significant aspect of school culture".

"Many students show a good level of personal initiative. Students appreciate the opportunity to learn in such a flexible, positive and accepting environment".

"Students take responsibility for their learning and are active in the design of their own individual learning programmes. They make decisions about what they want to learn and how they want to learn it. During the review, many students spoke enthusiastically about the opportunities they have to follow their interests. They felt they were able to learn in ways that suited them and helped them achieve their potential".

"Students who are highly motivated achieve well. The school collects learning stories to illustrate how students learn and achieve".

The OECD's Centre for Educational Research and Innovation is studying Innovative Learning Environments. The New Zealand Learning Discovery Trust schools - Discovery1 for Years 1 to Year 8 students, and Unlimited for Years 9 to 13 students - provide the context for New Zealand's case study.

http://unlimited.school.nz/content/community/news/OECD_ILE_paper.pdf

2. **Our Strategic Focus** - Success is not just a destination, it also includes the journey.

Our Special Character
(Our foundation document)

1. Students are central in directing their own learning.
2. Students follow individual interests and enthusiasms.
3. Curriculum and qualification needs are met through a students chosen path not a prescribed route.
4. Learning experiences extend beyond boundaries of place, time, age, methods of learning and areas of study.
5. The entire community is the learning environment.
6. Families are vital and active partners in the holistic learning for students
7. We encourage nurture and celebrate creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship
8. The individuality of each student is valued
9. We are a high trust community, treating each other with mutual respect and kindness
10. Everyone is a learner and everyone is a teacher

To make our ten tenets live we have developed a number of unique practices that are a very important part of the Unlimited Paenga Tawhiti way:

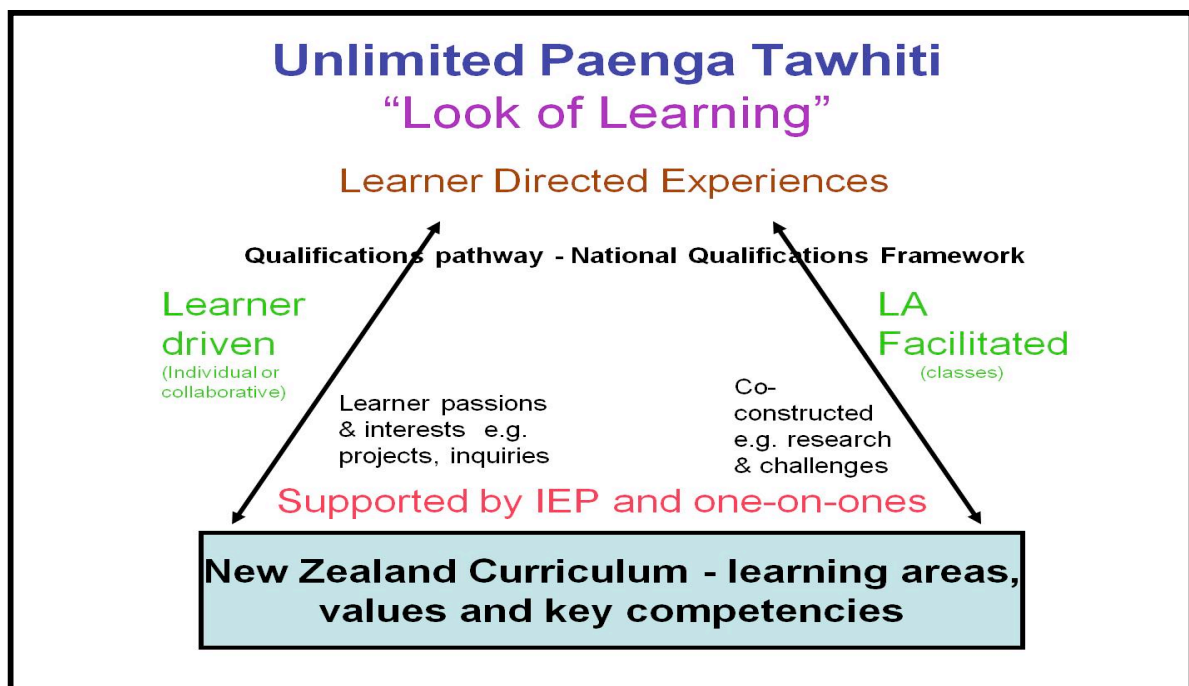
- A focus on learning, supporting learning, and building learning capacity with facilitated support from Learning Advisors who consistently work in a close and positive way;
- A personalized approach to learning through an Individual Education Plan (IEP) negotiated and monitored three times a year plus regular (usually weekly) one-on-one meetings with a Homebase Learning Advisor;
- Flexibility and choice for learners through our distinct "Look of Learning" which includes student initiated inquiries through to Learning Advisor facilitated learning as well as the opportunity to be part of authentic holistic learning plus intensive and Inspire experiences often led by other students and/or parents.
- Our open approach to students being able to explore learning without restrictions of age; and,
- Our commitment to always seeing and supporting students as capable learners always 'at potential'..

Obviously as a state school, we use the state curriculum.

Outcomes we seek for learners:

- Enthusiastic, confident and competent individuals who can contribute as active, thinking and responsible members of society;
- Engaged and challenged learners who understand about and take responsibility for their learning;
- Individuals who feel valued and trusted;
- Learners who have experienced and grown from the nurture and support of peers, staff, parents and whanau;
- Learners who have achieved through diverse pathways; and
- Learners who are able to learn from and contribute to learning in the wider community.

3. Our Look of Learning -



Learning at Unlimited Paenga Tawhiti

- At our school we give a strong emphasis to learning. We believe that this is enhanced if the student is at the centre of that learning and to achieve this we support students who choose to undertake their own inquiries or work with others on group learning experiences. We also provide a schedule of classes organised in five week modules where student get to choose their classes to support their study goals and pathway.
- We seek a balance between student initiated and directed learning and learning facilitated by our Learning Advisors.
- We understand learning as the processes we go through to acquire new understandings or knowledge and to develop skills and competencies.
(Our understanding is that each of us carries in our head a set of ‘mental models’ which represent the sum of our past experiences and previous learning. When we encounter new information, have new experiences or are exposed to new or different ideas our ‘mental models’ become challenged and if, as a result, we adjust or construct a new ‘mental model’ we have gone through the process called learning).
- We understand that learning involves many different processes - often in secondary schools these processes focus on listening, reading, writing and working with numbers and text. At our school we also believe these process and the process of learning itself are enhanced when the learning activity is fun; it involves ‘hands-on’ experiences; is an authentic or meaningful real life experience; and, involves personal inquiry and discovery
- We also know that learning is enhanced when it is shared, explained to others and celebrated
- To ensure deep and powerful learning we also encourage supportive and positive relationships, opportunities to reflect, constructive feedback and challenge to think about next steps.

How we structure learning at Unlimited at present

- Timetabled 1 on 1 sessions for homebase students
- Timetabled homebase/community time
- Timetabled class time.
- Timetabled, for some staff, support for students undertaking independent and collaborative inquiries.
- Timetabled planning/development/support time
- Non contact time
- Opportunities to undertake intensives with a colleague
- Support for Inspire and Sport