



## Introduction

### Who are we?



#### *The School*

Russell School is a decile 5, state full primary school, catering for children in Years 1-8. Approximately half the children are of Maori ethnicity, with around 40% NZ European, and the remaining 10% made up of a variety of ethnicities including Australian, British/Irish and Pacific Islanders.

The school is one of the oldest in New Zealand. Education has been part of this historic town for over 170 years, beginning with classes held at the Pompallier Catholic mission in 1839. The first “state” school in Russell opened in 1865 and has been located on the present site since 1892. Our school is registered with the New Zealand Historic Places Trust.

The facilities include 6 classrooms, a whare wananga (containing a library, kitchen and hall), a music room, outside stage, aspecial needs rooms, teacher resource areas, a school vegetable garden and orchard, an administration and staffroom wing, two court areas, playground areas for junior and senior students, a sports field, and two school pools. We also have a good range of musical equipment and an extensive sound system. Year 7-8 students travel to Moerewa for technology classes. Fibre Optic cabling allows for a good internet speed.

There are currently around 90 pupils. The staffing is stable with minimum turnover, and a great range of skills and abilities reflected in the make-up of the teaching team.

#### *The Community*

The school serves a wide rural area, centred on the small town of Russell in the Bay of Islands. Tourism plays a vital role in the local economy, with the wider area supporting agriculture, aquaculture and fishing. The community is relatively isolated, due to the main access being by vehicular or passenger ferry from Opuia and Paihia respectively. The social structure has been affected by the change in many dwellings from permanent residences to holiday homes and the development of lifestyle blocks on the coast.

The community has expectations of the school in the areas of academic achievement, and providing cultural and physical programmes. The community appears very satisfied with the performance of the school, and this is reflected in the high level of support the school enjoys.

The school is a focal point of the community, with a strong, two-way relationship. Parents and the wider community provide funding, resources, instruction at school, support in out-of-school activities such as camps and sports tournaments, and opportunities for students to take part in unique real-life learning experiences outside the school. In return, the school actively participates in community events and festivals, such as Kororareka Day and the Birdman festival, and with local organisations such as Russell Landcare Trust.

#### *The Board*

The Board is entrusted to work on behalf of all stakeholders and is accountable for the school’s performance. It emphasises strategic leadership, sets the vision for the school and ensures that it complies with legal and policy requirements. The Board is proactive rather than reactive in its operations and decision-making, and does not involve itself in the administrative details of the day to day running of the school. The planning year for the Board is from 1 January to 31 December. The Board is committed to:

- Ensuring a curriculum that engages and challenges children, is forward thinking and inclusive, and affirms the unique identity of Russell and surrounding area;
- Supporting high quality responsive teaching which is vital for student success;
- Setting high expectations of achievement for all students, particularly Māori boys;
- Having accurate, up-to-date information on student achievement;
- Sharing this information with students, parents and the community;
- Undertaking self-review and professional development to improve performance;
- Maintaining a close working relationship with parents and the community including local iwi.
- Use the ERO School Evaluation Indicators to achieve equity and excellence of education.
- Use the *Effective School Evaluation* resource and the *Internal Evaluation: Good Practice exemplars* and the *School Evaluation Indicators* to develop more targeted planning to accelerate student achievement.



## Introduction (continued)

### *What do we want to be?*



**Mission Statement:** Respecting the Past, Challenging the Present, and Creating a Positive Future

<b><i>Vision Statement</i></b> <b><i>(what we want for our school)</i></b>	<b><i>Values/Virtues</i></b> <b><i>(what we hold as important)</i></b>	<b><i>Cultural Diversity</i></b> <b><i>(how we recognise each other)</i></b>
<p>Russell School, in partnership with the community, will provide students with a secure and supportive learning environment so that they will achieve excellence and develop into lifelong learners who are confident, connected and actively involved.</p> <p>We want our school to be a place where students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discover their natural abilities to learn, explore and create;</li> <li>• Develop life-skills so that they can stand tall, be proud and seek out challenges;</li> <li>• Obtain a sense of well-being and a desire for personal growth;</li> <li>• Gain an awareness of the world and Aotearoa New Zealand, and their place in it; and</li> <li>• Want to come because the teachers care about and believe in them.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Aroha/Mana</b> We believe in promoting and supporting a spirit of honesty, trust and mutual respect for all people and all cultures, and creating a place where people inspire, motivate and encourage each other.</li> <li>• <b>Wairua</b> We believe people need to know where they come from and are able to stand proud in that knowledge, recognizing and embracing the unique historical, natural and spiritual environmental in which we live.</li> <li>• <b>Manaakitanga</b> We believe that all members of the school community should show genuine care for each other in order to create a learning environment that is safe, secure, happy and emotionally healthy for all.</li> <li>• <b>Ahu Whakamua/Hiranga</b> We believe in progressing with excellence for the higher good of all – in teaching, leadership, governance and student achievement.</li> </ul>	<p>Through our policies and practices, Russell School will provide opportunities for students to learn about and respect the diverse ethnic nature and cultural heritage of New Zealand people, with acknowledgment of the unique position of the Māori culture. While celebrating the diversity of the school whanau, we want to enhance the Māori dimension throughout the school by providing opportunities for all students to acquire some knowledge of tikanga Māori (culture) and te reo Māori (language). Some of the ways we will do this are by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pronouncing names correctly;</li> <li>• Using bilingual signage and instructions where appropriate;</li> <li>• Singing the national anthem in English, Māori and sign language;</li> <li>• Incorporating waiata into assemblies;</li> <li>• Using basic protocol, including karakia, pepeha and mihi, when appropriate;</li> <li>• Including tikanga and te reo Māori in class programmes;</li> <li>• Promoting the kapa haka group where students are instructed in waiata, poi, haka and taiaha; and</li> <li>• Attending annual kapa haka festivals and encouraging participation in other such events e.g. Armistice Day, Kororareka Day, ANZAC Day</li> </ul>