

Pūrākaunui School Community Survey 2021

Thank you for taking the time to provide the Board of Trustees with your feedback.

Strategic Plan

Feedback on the goals outlined in the strategic plan was largely positive. There were more mixed opinions on how the school is tracking to achieve these aims, with many of you commenting that there is room for improvement here. The recent classroom refurbishment and the upcoming playground development was highlighted as a success, making the grounds appear more fresh and vibrant.

There were several suggestions that were raised in your responses. The key points from these are summarised below, illustrated by anonymous selected quotes:

Matauranga Māori

The predominant theme that was raised was a need for a greater focus on matauranga Māori in the school curriculum.

Strengthen your matauranga māori; make it accessible and valuable

Really hoping for another noho marae soon as an important part of learning tikanga. Have noticed less te reo this year - keen for more!

Community Engagement

Many of you also expressed a need for greater engagement with the wider community - you think the school needs to both involve the community and their expertise more in school activities, and become a community hub outside of school hours.

More community events could be held at the school - evening talks, film evenings (especially over winter)

We have such a vibrant group of humans that are connected to the school either now or in the past and maybe into the future ... I take Purakaunui, Long Beach, Osborne etc as being quite divided, I would love to see the school be a place of inclusion, learning, discovery and community for all those in the area.

Storytelling and Marketing

Another important part of community engagement is storytelling and fostering the school's reputation, in order to advance the aim of drawing more pupils to the school.

Give a book from Purakaunui School to babies born into the neighbourhood

Identifying and marketing the alumni of the school ... there is a free-thinking and critical literacy that the school achieves that is to be celebrated. Students from Purakaunui have an x-factor in critical questioning and curiosity that sets them apart.

School Grounds Safety

Most of you considered that the school grounds are adequately safe for children.

The primary concern raised with safety was around the school entrances and boundaries, and associated road safety.

The general opinion expressed was that the school grounds themselves are adequately safe, especially with the new playground developments, and that going overboard in terms of safety within the school grounds is not beneficial to the children's development.

They were less safe when my kids were there and part of their resilience is built in roaming free and adapting to hazards. You send kids to a country school to be immersed in a country environment. Obviously there are certain basic safety things you need but kids get hurt on the most basic playgrounds and it is part of growing up. Sanitising everything too much has longer detrimental effects.

I think the boundaries are well defined. I like that there are risk elements to the grounds. I think this is very important.

Senior Programme

Many of you commented on the identified need for the development of a fresh and exciting Year 7 and 8 programme to keep senior pupils engaged and retain them into their intermediate years.

I think that the school curriculum has many repetitive elements and this is a challenge by the time children get to the senior years. I'd like to see a senior programme developed which is exciting and fresh.

Specialised programme for Year 7 & 8 that involves interaction with other East Coast Cluster Schools

Parent Teacher Relationships

There was a need identified for more structured relationships and communication of information between the school and parents.

As a parent I would like the parent- teacher partnership to be vastly improved. I have very little idea of what is being taught day to day and how I can support that learning at home. The parent teacher interviews that I've had haven't covered this and are very friendly, but too unstructured.

Embracing the Strengths of a Small School

Several of you identified that being a small school can bring specific benefits that wouldn't be found in larger schools, and that we need to focus on fostering these rather than trying to contend with larger schools.

This is a truly amazing great school where both of my kids flourished. They were forced to mix with a wide range of people and get on with it as there is no choice in such a small school but what they gained from that goes with them for life.

The half-hour at-your-house parent interviews were also a complete bonus and inspired the learning conferences we now have at the school I teach at. The quality of these conversations was something other schools could not achieve due to their high teacher-student ratios.

There are a lot of good things about Purakaunui, such as the strong education outside the classroom focus, lots of initiatives bringing outside educators into the classroom, the end of term assemblies bringing the community together, the supportive culture among the students and the teina/tuakana buddy system. The teaching staff deserve a pat on the back for these initiatives.

After School Care

Many of you identified the development of an after school care programme as something that would help to grow the school roll by making it a more viable option for working parents. The responses generally indicated a need for after school care until 5:30pm 3-5 days per week.

Other themes

- Support for Garden to Plate initiative and a greater focus on food education and outdoor/environmental education
- Support for a school van
- A need for greater support of student and staff welfare
- A need for more specific information on the school curriculum and the structure of the school days/weeks, for parents of both prospective and current students