

# **Are Our Schoolchildren Fundamentally Skilled?**

## **Are We Headed For Sedentary Lifestyles?**

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I would like to thank the Teachers Study Awards and the Board of Trustees of Ongaonga School in supporting my sabbatical and making it possible. It has been a valuable time of reflection and refreshment.

As I began this study into are our children receiving the basic fundamental skills and are schools looking to educate and develop children's fitness it became clear that schools were making a real effort with limited guidance.

What started my investigation was observing the Rep Cricket side I was coaching. As soon as they finished playing they were pushing buttons on cell phones and gaming on Play Stations.

Our life styles have changed dramatically over the last 30 years in particular. Children are growing up in a digital world but this leads to a concern that there is an increase in inactivity and more sedentary lifestyles. Research into this is available but is becoming more important in guiding agencies to support improvements and changes in being active to support academic progress.

In New Zealand being active is no longer being guided in schools by educational agencies as it is now schools responsibility to source guidance independently. This is now dependent on availability and budget.

### **Scope and Range of Observations**

As part of this study I have aimed my focus on schools from around 75 to 250 children. I have looked at 2 outlier schools one being around 500 and the other under 30 children. I have visited schools in the Central Region of New Zealand (Hawkes Bay, Manawatu, Wairarapa and in the Marlborough region).

## **Background**

### **Purpose-**

The purpose of this sabbatical to investigate and explore the teaching of Fitness and Physical Education in Primary Schools, what schools are doing to either support or educate children about fitness and sport, and in particular what is proving effective in the development and teaching of fundamental skills and to develop teacher practice in the teaching of these Skills further supporting this by producing a resource to support teacher practice to improve fundamental skills in students.

### **Benefits of Sabbatical**

1. **Links to issues important to school-** At Ongaonga School Sport, Physical Education and Fitness is an important part of our school. We hold a large sports tournament annually and we looking to ensure that we are preparing our students to be life-long learners in Sport and Physical Education. This may also result in the establishment of a fundamental skills programme throughout Ongaonga School and Central Hawkes Bay.
2. **Links to school's strategic or annual plan** - The annual plan has Physical Education as a curriculum focus to develop. Ongaonga School Charter has Strategic Goal-To improve achievement in P.E. & Sport through the development of a Sports & Recreation Programme. This would be further developed by the observations.
3. **Links to personal and professional development-** Currently I am a Level 2 New Zealand Cricket Coach coaching a variety of cricket teams at all levels. Not only do I want to further develop my understanding of sport and Physical Education in relation to cricket but continue to develop this knowledge to support programmes at my school and in my area. With this information I hope to further develop the Ongaonga School Draft Curriculum.
4. **Links to current schooling sector priorities-** As stated in NAG 1 Each board, through the principal and staff, is required to:
  - (a) develop and implement teaching and learning programmes.
5. **Links to issues important to school-** At Ongaonga School Sport, Physical Education and Fitness is an important part of our school. We hold a large sports tournament annually and we looking to ensure that we are preparing our students to be life-long learners in Sport and Physical Education. This may also result in the establishment of a programme throughout Central Hawkes Bay.
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8. **Links to current schooling sector priorities-** As stated in NAG 1 Each board, through the principal and staff, is required to:  
(a) develop and implement teaching and learning programmes:

i. giving priority to regular quality physical activity that develops movement skills for all students, especially in years 1-6.

The National Education Priorities have a heading 'Success For All'.

At Ongaonga School our priority, Academic, Cultural, & **Sporting Success** will be encouraged and celebrated at Ongaonga School. The commitment and drive in the kiwi sport initiative and the importance to kids being active in New Zealand definitely links to the current schooling sector priorities.

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### **Outcomes of Surveys Undertaken in Schools**

This is only a small sample undertaken due to time available to visit the schools involved. 22 Schools were visited and surveyed during the sabbatical.

### **Teaching and Frequency of Fundamental Schools**

On the whole most schools PE programmes were based around Fundamental Schools with 18 out of the 22 schools surveyed taking fundamental skills within their PE lessons.

A variety of skills were taught with a frequency of at least once a week up to schools where lessons were taught daily.

Skills surveyed were;

Throwing Underarm Small and Large Balls
Throwing & Passing Small and Large Balls
Throwing Overarm Small and Large Balls
Catching Close Small and Large Balls
Catching Long Small and Large Balls
Catching High Small and Large Balls
Running Fast-
Running Long Distance
Jumping Up and Down
Jumping Long
Kicking Short
Kicking Long
Hitting

- Significantly 7 out of the 22 schools did not teach the Running Fast Skill.
- All other skills were taught through a variety of mediums including specific skill lessons, through sports and games and through using outside specialist.
- One of the larger schools was able to employ a teacher part time to run and teach the PE programme
- The frequency of the sessions varied with;
  - 5 schools teaching skills once a week,
  - 6 schools twice a week,
  - 9 schools 3 times a week and
  - 2 schools 4 times a week.

### **Summer and Winter Sport Involvement**

Comparison was made between the Summer and Winter Sports involvement by Schools in the Sample.

- The numbers of children involved in sport both summer and winter were surveyed.
- It was significant that a larger number of students were involved in sport during the winter months with an average of 73% of students playing sports in the winter.
- A noticeable drop off occurred in the summer with only 38% playing.
- The reason behind this would require a further investigation on a wider basis involving communities as well as schools.

Some possible reasons for these results to consider;

- Continuity in the winter better due to a shorter break between parts of the season, 2 weeks between Terms 2 & 3 compared to 6 weeks between Terms 3 & 1.
- Parents spending more time working in particular closer to Christmas.
- Parents having a focus on leisure time activities in the summer.
- Length of games, cricket longer.

### **Attitude to teaching P.E.and Fitness by staff.**

On the whole the attitude to the teaching of PE was positive with few teachers being reluctant to teaching.

- Some felt they lacked confidence but were prepared to teach with support.
  - The availability of skilled practitioners was deemed to be a problem and the lack of professional development to support improving the quality of teaching in Physical Education.
  - Again larger schools were able to employ staff to meet this requirement.
  - National Standards has not hindered the teaching of Physical Education with schools already running programmes around reading, writing and mathematics.
- i. NAG 1 giving priority to regular quality physical activity that develops movement skills for all students, especially in years 1-6.

- Schools were teaching well to NAG 1 with quality programmes in fitness and skills being taught and the application of these skills catered for in sports programmes both within schools and from clubs.

### **Teachers College Expectations**

Over the past few years teachers college training has become most varied and widespread not confined to Training Colleges attached to Universities.

An emphasis on National Standards has meant a reorganisation of staff with a focus on these areas. Where in the past advisors were assigned to particular curriculum and learning areas this no longer occurs. Whilst there is still a component in teaching training the opportunity to focus as a strength in their training no longer exists. Trainees will have completed a degree in PE which would usually see them tend to teach at Secondary Level.

### **A loss of Innocence**

During the last 20 years a change in the innocence has occurred in New Zealand. Children often walked and cycled to school at all ages. Whilst this still occurs a large number of children are delivered to school in cars.

One factor that could be considered in this development is the loss of innocence with some high profile crimes against children which have shocked the nation. Parents have become more protective transporting children to schools and further to this, the establishment of safety checks have become mandatory within schools. Where previous to this children often cycled or walked to school contributing to a healthier life style.

As a child growing up in Blenheim I walked 2 miles daily to Primary School and cycled 8 miles a day to Intermediate. In rural areas the school often had a horse paddock, now due to all sorts of reasons there are very few schools still operating one.

### **Size Counts**

A contributing factor to the success of the PE programme could be that smaller schools with less staff will have a more limited skill base than a larger school with a bigger budget and a wider skill base to deliver fitness and PE programmes.

Bigger Schools have the potential to employ Specialised Staff to undertake the teaching of PE and Sport. Smaller schools tended to be resourceful utilising local organisations to complement the skills of the staff.

### **Australia**

As part of my sabbatical I visited Australia, visiting the New South Wales Institute of Sport, Gosford Primary School and an outpost of the University of Newcastle in Gosford.

### **NSW Institute Of Sport**

It was most interesting meeting with Kim Crane from the New South Wales Institute of Sport. This meeting looked at high level sporting performance and based around the Olympic Village in Sydney. An amazing complex where at the time I visited 22 high performance

coaches and high performance managers from 22 different sports were working together in the one room preparing for the Olympic Games.

The sharing of generic information would be incredibly powerful.

Upstairs was Research & Development where I was unable to have a look around due to the sensitive development of innovations. This is being replicated in New Zealand at the Millennium Institute in Auckland.

Downstairs there was a comprehensive video analysis room where coaches and athletes work together and across the hall a gymnasium equipped with a 30m indoor running track, a high altitude pressurized room. I was told this is old technology as now they have a portable device that can be inflated and put over lanes in a swimming pool and presto you are training at altitude. A fully equipped work out gym was being used at the time by a winter Olympian training for the luge and an area where 2 floors were chopped out surrounded by cameras for use with a trampoline for divers and gymnasts.

Quite mind-blowing, a space that would be very useful at school.

It was interesting that during our discussion Kim Crane outlined the model used for identifying high performance coaches and the pathway to get to this stage.

Coaches met criteria and were assessed as potential international coach, a developing international coach and finally meeting all criteria to be an international coach.

## **Gosford Primary School**

Gosford Primary School was most interesting. It was sited next door to the Blue Tongue Stadium on the waterfront in Gosford. The school had been sold to Real Estate for development and was moving to land beside the local college.

I was able to observe a morning tea and a PE Lesson during my time at Gosford. Firstly there was no grass, children playing a well organised game of cricket and a few games painted on the ground. Juniors were separated from the seniors more from a space need. The juniors played on an all-weather surface covered by a permanent shade roof.

The PE lesson was based around the theme of Live Life Well focusing developing a whole school fundamental movement skills program. It also aimed to improve teacher practice in teaching physical education and also increase student activity time in line with curriculum requirements. The Action Plan was linked into nutrition and looked at improving opportunities for students and staff at school. Staff were offered pedometers, sports equipment reviewed. Parent's knowledge about nutrition was improved through newsletters.

In discussion with the Principal and the teacher it was interesting that the programmes were developed in conjunction with advisors. The programme was developed and planned by advisors and support was also given to implement the programme.

## **University of Newcastle in Gosford**

Although not planned a passing comment by my Aunt saw me enquire at the University of Newcastle regarding their involvement with physical education. I was connected to the Health Development Unit. It was a goldmine, I spent an hour with a lecturer who was working on the focus of 'Sedentary Lifestyles'.

A pack had been developed for schools outlining what could be done to make children and families more active.

It involved homework cards with activities that could be done as a family. Also attached to this was a guide showing equipment you could use at various price levels.

## **Summary**

The purpose of this sabbatical as stated was to investigate and explore the teaching of Fitness and Physical Education in Primary Schools.

Physical Education is still being taught in Primary Schools throughout the schools I visited. The schools have developed programmes or have used outside agencies to develop programmes. The flexibility of the curriculum has allowed schools to do this although this seemed to have been an easier task in larger schools where there is more knowledge available and more funding.

What schools are doing to either support or educate children about fitness and sport is varied in through all the schools. , and in particular what is proving effective in the development and teaching of fundamental skills and to develop teacher practice in the teaching of these. Fundamental skills are often taught through a sports focus and staff developed accordingly. Staff are using their own expertise in smaller schools.

I was able to link with Jo Tapine from Sport Hawkes Bay who had been working on a programme at that time. She had used a programme from an overseas company who had withdrawn it to further develop it. This resulted in her developing a programme herself and trialling this throughout Hawke's Bay. I was involved with this programme as part of a cluster in Central Hawke's Bay. The Professional Development was impressive and the follow up modelling and support also most valuable giving a very good programme for Years 1-3. These skills did not include swimming.

It was interesting that the schools I visited did have swimming pools but a large number of schools in Marlborough in particular visited the local Stadium in Blenheim for a skills programme including swimming, ball skills and squash run by the Stadium.

I have attached a number of programmes that could support PE programmes in schools. It is mainly based around sport. All programmes have a contact and will give schools a chance to develop programmes within their schools.

Finally again I would like to thank the Teachers Study Awards and the Ongaonga School Board for making this Sabbatical possible.

## Appendix 1

### Examples of Teaching of PE Sport and Fundamental Skills Programmes Useful to Schools and Teachers

#### **1. Fundamentals Skills Programme (Sport Hawke's Bay)**

9 Units with supporting Professional Development and Teacher modeling by designer of the units Jo Tapine Sport Hawke's Bay.

Fundamental Skills in

- Running
- Jumping
- Hand Dribble
- Chest Pass
- Catching
- Overarm Throw
- Underarm Throw
- 2 handed strike
- Kicking

[www.sporthb.net.nz](http://www.sporthb.net.nz)

#### **2. Marlborough Lines Stadium Fundamental Skills Programme**

##### **Sport Marlborough**

A variety of experiences including swimming at the Marlborough Stadium. All activities are based on a sports model including Squash, Mini-ball, Indoor Soccer, Volleyball

[www.stadium2000.co.nz](http://www.stadium2000.co.nz)

#### **3. PMP Programme Perceptual Motor Programme**

Designed from Perceptual Motor Programme by Group Special Ed focusing on Gross Motor Skill development usually aimed at children 3-7 although used with Special Needs Children highly effective with Down Syndrome Students but least effective with children on the Autistic Spectrum.

A Perceptual Motor Program aims to give the child experiences in seeing, hearing, touching, processing, making perceptual judgements and reacting though carefully sequenced activities which children enjoy doing like running, hopping, skipping, jumping, balancing, crawling, climbing, throwing, catching, bowling, sliding, etc., using a variety of common and specially designed equipment.

(Check with Group Special Ed Napier)

- #### **4. Kiwi Sport-** Minor versions of major sport enabling children aged 9-12years to learn games with adaptive equipment. Sports have modified the traditional rules and equipment of several leading sports to suit the capabilities of the children 9-12 years.

Sports involved are Athletics, Badminton, Golf, Cricket, Mini-Ball, Hockey, Netball, Orienteering, Rugby League (Mini-Footy), Rugby Union New Image, Soccer-Mini Soccer, Softball Mod-Softball, Table Tennis, Tennis Short Tennis, Trampolining, Volleyball.

Manuals should be in schools but copies, maybe attained from local Sports Organisations e.g. Sport Hawke's Bay, Sport Manawatu, Sport Marlborough.

[www.sporthb.net.nz](http://www.sporthb.net.nz)

## **5. National Player Development Framework NZ Football**

ASB First Kicks Programme 4-6 Years Initiating

ASB FUN Football 7-8 Years Playing

ASB Mini Football 9-12 Years Learning

Youth Football 13-15 Years Specialisation

Youth Football 16-19 Years Transitioning

[www.nzfootball.co.nz](http://www.nzfootball.co.nz)

## **6. Small Whites Soccer Development Programme**

An award based development programme with players attaining levels by achieving competence in a variety of skills challenges.

Levels based relating to ages.

[smallwhites.co.nz](http://smallwhites.co.nz)

## **7. New Zealand Cricket Coaching Development Opportunities**

**Have A Go Cricket-** Beginners Introduction to cricket but a lot of generic skills involving hitting, throwing, catching, bowling and fundamentals of cricket.

Excellent for beginners to cricket. Ideal resource for teachers to implement in Years 1-4PE/Sports Programme- 1 ½ Professional Development Session

**Kiwi Cricket-**A progression on from Have A Go orientated around playing the game using adaptive equipment applying further the skills at Have A Go Level. Years 3-5 Sports Programme-1 ½ Professional Development Session

**Coaching A Team-** Aimed at serious orientated cricket coaching suitable for hard ball cricket ages Year 5-College Level. Professional Development 8 hours, usually 2 X 4 hour Sessions.

**Level 1 New Zealand-**Residential Coaching Course usually over 2 days. A focus on technique in batting, bowling and fielding. Involving all shots and styles of bowling.

**Level 2 New Zealand-**More advanced Professional Development 3 ½ day residential course focusing on more sophisticated aspects of coaching including Bio-mechanics, analysis of fault, and coaching styles (VARK)

**Level 3 New Zealand-** By invitation. A 2 year module based Professional Development looking at developing 1<sup>st</sup> Class and International Coaches.

Contact your local Cricket Associations Development Officer for information on these courses. [www.blackcaps.co.nz](http://www.blackcaps.co.nz)

#### **8. Kiwi Max Cricket - (Cricket CHB Modified Version of Kiwi Cricket)**

Using the same format as Kiwi Cricket the modifications are;

Wides and No Balls are free hits off a batting tee.

A Max Zone 20m wide is set up behind the bowler using 2 cones. Batters score 8 or 12 by hitting in this zone.

#### **9. New Zealand Cricket Website – Modified Cricket Link**

[www.blackcaps.co.nz](http://www.blackcaps.co.nz)

#### **10. Small Blacks Rugby**-Card based guide programme available from New Zealand.

[www.smallblacks.com](http://www.smallblacks.com)

#### **11. Kelly Sports**-After School and Holiday sport based programmes building fundamental skills and confidence in children 5-8 years

Developing coaching skills in young school leavers

[www.kellysports.co.nz](http://www.kellysports.co.nz)

#### **12. SMALL STICKS HOCKEY SKILLS**

A free booklet on basic skills for children under 12 compiled by Hockey New Zealand's Coaching and Development Department.

[www.hockeynz.co.nz](http://www.hockeynz.co.nz)

#### **13. Mini-Mod Rugby League**

Both boys and girls can participate in rugby league. The Mini Mod program introduces children between the ages of 5 to 12 years to rugby league in a fun and safe environment. Children can begin playing competitive rugby league as young as 12 (Under 13™s). Mini- Mod Rugby League is non-competition and representative teams are not picked. This is due to the focus being on fun, enjoyment, participation and learning the basics of Rugby League. Due to rugby league being a contact sport, boys and girls cannot play against each other once they are older although NZRL is developing a specific modified version of the game for girls. As rugby league is a contact sport, the risk of injury needs to be taken into account when deciding whether to participate.

NZRL have strict guidelines to make the game a safe option which are enforced through our Zones and Districts. .

[www.nzrl.co.nz](http://www.nzrl.co.nz)

#### **14. Grass Hoppers Tennis**

[www.tennisnz.com](http://www.tennisnz.com)

#### **15. Slow Pitch Softball**

[www.softball.org.nz](http://www.softball.org.nz)

#### **16. Fun Ferns Netball**

[www.mynetball.co.nz](http://www.mynetball.co.nz)

#### **17. Health & PE Strand NZ Curriculum**

[www.tki.org.nz](http://www.tki.org.nz)

The learning activities in health and physical education arise from the integration of the four concepts above, the following four strands and their achievement objectives, and seven key areas of learning.

The four strands are:

- **Personal health and physical development**, in which students develop the knowledge, understandings, skills, and attitudes that they need in order to maintain and enhance their personal well-being and physical development.
- **Movement concepts and motor skills**, in which students develop motor skills, knowledge and understandings about movement, and positive attitudes towards physical activity.
- **Relationships with other people**, in which students develop understandings, skills, and attitudes that enhance their interactions and relationships with others.
- **Healthy communities and environments**, in which students contribute to healthy communities and environments by taking responsible and critical action.

The seven key areas of learning are:

- mental health
- sexuality education
- food and nutrition
- body care and physical safety
- physical activity
- sport studies

- outdoor education.

**18. Basketball-(Miniball)**

A modified version of basketball for Years 4-8.

[www.bbmc.org.nz/Miniball%20Rules.htm](http://www.bbmc.org.nz/Miniball%20Rules.htm)

**19. Touch-(Rugby)**

A modified version of rugby without tackle.

[www.touchnz.co.nz/](http://www.touchnz.co.nz/)

**20. Volleyball**

[www.volleyballnz.org.nz/](http://www.volleyballnz.org.nz/)

**21. Athletics – Run Jump Throw**

[coaching.athletics.org.nz/](http://coaching.athletics.org.nz/)

**22. Badminton**

[www.badmintonnz.co.nz/juniors.html](http://www.badmintonnz.co.nz/juniors.html)

**23. Squash**

[www.nzsquash.co.nz](http://www.nzsquash.co.nz)

**24. Cycling-Police Ed Programme-Cycling CHB**

[www.police.govt.nz/school-road-safety-education](http://www.police.govt.nz/school-road-safety-education)

**25. Futsal**

[www.hbfutsal.org.nz](http://www.hbfutsal.org.nz)

[www.nzfootball.co.nz](http://www.nzfootball.co.nz)

**26. Gymnastics**

[www.nzgymnastics.co.nz](http://www.nzgymnastics.co.nz)

**27. Triathlon- HB Multi-Sports**

[tryathlon.weetbix.co.nz](http://tryathlon.weetbix.co.nz)

[www.triathlon.org.nz](http://www.triathlon.org.nz)

**28. Surf Life Saving**

Ocean Beach Kiwi Surf Life Saving Club runs a Junior Surf (Nippers) program for under 7 - 13 year olds at 10.30am on Sundays during the summer. We do accept under 7 year olds if they are especially keen.

**Website:** [www.obk.org.nz](http://www.obk.org.nz)

## References- Other Contacts and References that could be useful

- Q4 Family Activation Pack-Central Coast Health Promotion, Central Coast Health, NSW Government
- Redwood & Canterbury Community Trust Fundamental Skills Programme- Marlborough Lines Stadium 2000
- Live Life Well @ School Action Plan- Gosford Public School
- Challenge Programme-Haumoana School
- Good For Kids, Good For Life. Teaching Fundamental Movement Skills-NSW Health, Hunter New England Area Health Service
- Fundamental Skills Units-Jo Tapine, Sport Hawke's bay
- Developing Speed, Agility and Quickness-Grant Hastings GJ Training, Sport Hawke's Bay
- English Cricket Board Level 2 Flip Cards-English Cricket Board
- The Black Box Small Blacks Skills- Adidas, New Zealand Rugby Union
- Small Whites Coaching Units-Soccer NZ
- PE Trial Units-department of Education NZ
- The Essential PE Handbook-User Friendly Resources
- MILO Have A Go Cricket Manual-New Zealand Cricket Coaching and Development
- Dance 4 Creativity with Sue Lane-Presentation at Central Coast Primary PDHPE Network Workshop 2008 (DVD)
- Primary School Physical Activity Ideas (Fun, Inclusive, Safe, High Involvement-FISH)-Central Coast Primary School PDHPE Network Workshop 2008
- Dr Phil Morgan Childhood Obesity and the Role of Schools-Central Coast Primary Schools PDHPE Network 2007
- Dr Phil Morgan Teaching Fundamental Movement Skills- Central Coast Primary Schools PDHPE Network 2010
- Let's Play-Central Coast Health Promotion Unit 2005
- Dr John Irvine Importance of Social Skills to Participation in Active Play-Lets Play 2005 Central Coast Health Promotion Unit
- Schools on the Move- Central Coast Health Promotion Unit 2003