

In School and Learning

A two pronged approach to reducing stand
downs and suspensions through:

Restorative Practice

&

Sport in Education

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He aha te mea nui o te ao?

He tangata, He tangata, He tangata

What is the most important thing in the world?

It is people. It is people. It is people.

Executive Summary

Schools are under enormous pressure to increase educational outcomes for students. Retaining students, achieving NCEA Level 2, and providing a caring, supportive learning environment encompass a range of expectations.

The means for reaching these outcomes also vary and are plentiful. There is no doubt that currently there is an abundance of initiatives in schools, and choosing what will impact on both student learning and meeting needs of the school, can be overwhelming.

All of the above educational outcomes can only occur if students have a positive experience at school. Negative experiences at school are often reflected in poor attendance and lack of engagement. Stand downs and suspensions are often the end point of such negative experiences.

What can we do for these students?

I have concentrated on two possible methods to reduce stand down and suspensions; through a cultural change and an engagement tool. Engaged students working in a positive, caring environment is the overall goal.

Sport in Education provides a context for learning that is both engaging, topical and is proving to have a big impact on student outcomes as illustrated in research currently coming out of the United Kingdom. It can be implemented in a way to meet the needs of an individual school community, and is flexible in the way it is delivered. It is a tool to assist staff collaboration, integrated learning and provides a meaningful, active context for students.

Restorative Practice is a change of culture for a school. It is more than just a tool for teachers to use to manage behaviour. As Michael Fullan states in his book The Principal, Three keys to maximising impact (2014) 'A fool with a tool is still a fool.' The aim is for restorative practices to be fully embedded in the school through capitalising on positive relationships and emphasising the work initiated through Positive Behaviour for Learning (PB4L).

The overall goal is a positive engaging learning environment that has an outcome of students achieving in the school system and becoming active and contributing members of the community.

Background

Mountainview High School is a Decile 6 Coeducational Year 9-13 Secondary School located in Timaru. Timaru is well served for Secondary Schools and a dropping demographic has resulted in greater competition amongst them. My role is the Head of the Junior School as of 2015, after a Senior Leadership restructure at the end of 2014. Previously I was the Assistant Principal in charge of Pastoral Care, a position I started in 2011.

The purpose of my sabbatical was to look at two ways to reduce stand downs and suspensions in Secondary Schools.

Although I aimed for schools of a similar decile as Mountainview High School I extended this wider. I focussed on Restorative Practice as well as Sport in Education and visited schools within these specific contexts, rather than focusing on decile rating.

I chose a reduction in suspension and stand downs as it was a focus area, highlighted by the Ministry of Education, which required improvement within our school. This was based on statistics which showed Mountainview High School as having a higher percentage of stand downs and suspensions than other Decile 6 secondary schools. The data published on the Education Counts website indicates that in 2013 Mountainview High School had 52 observed stand downs with the expected stand down number being 23.8. This is a 47.3 age standardised stand down rate per 1000 students. The decile six number for 2013 is 21 students receiving stand downs per 1000 students. On analysis of the statistics across ethnicities and gender Mountainview High School tends to have double the number of stand downs than what would be expected in a similar school.

As a member of the Senior Leadership team with the pastoral care portfolio, I deal with these stand downs and realised we were encountering repeat offenders. Although we were standing students down, the student was not learning from the situation nor was the student being equipped with the necessary interpersonal skills required to modify either their behaviour or response to a situation.

My original proposal was solely focussed on Sport in Education. This is a pilot programme being implemented in eight secondary schools across New Zealand and uses five work streams to contextualise learning through sport. It is an engagement tool that has shown signs of being successful in these pilot schools in terms of: improved outcomes for students, better attendance and a reduction in stand downs. Much of the evidence at this stage is anecdotal as the focus has been on the content and cross curricula approaches rather than data collecting. Staff at all schools I have visited suggest that over time evidence will suggest improvements in all of the above in comparison to the wider cohort. Data is also difficult to obtain as schools are varied in the way they have implemented Sport in Education and it doesn't always involve having a specific Sport in Education class. At Mountainview High School our students show a strong interest in sport and numbers in Physical Education, Health and Outdoor Education reinforce this. Our numbers in recent census data however

shows we are behind other schools in the area in both participation in school sport rates and staff involvement in coaching and managing. We have recently set up a Sports Council which involves a school and community partnership to improve sporting opportunities for our students. I see Sport in Education playing a part in encouraging students to play sport for the school, be involved as coaches and a way to better recognise sporting talent across our school and in to the community.

As I was considering my proposal I decided to add a school cultural element, which tied in well with our school being accepted to pilot Restorative Practice through Positive Behaviour for Learning (PB4L). The idea behind this was to best prepare our school for the implementation of Restorative Practice by visiting schools who have done exactly that. I felt an engagement tool like Sport in Education would be well suited to work alongside Restorative Practice, and the progress already made by PB4L in our school to best meet the needs of students at risk of stand down and suspensions. It also gives a much needed impetus into PB4L, which has tapered off at the completion of Tier 1.

I have therefore split my time between investigating Restorative Practice schools and Sport in Education Pilot Schools, which differs from my original proposal. I did this to best suit the needs of our at risk students and to fit with where our school is at during the time of my sabbatical, not where it was when initially preparing the proposal.

Methodology

The information and trends discussed in this report were a product of visiting schools and talking with key personnel in schools. In most cases this was a Senior Leader and or a Head teacher.

There was a mix of schools, coeducational, single sex, special character, low and high decile.

The opportunity to attend the PENZ conference in Hamilton in July 2015 enabled me to speak and listen to North Island Schools in the Sport in Education pilot as well as Gary Carnachan and Roger Wood from Sport New Zealand. I had initially focussed on South Island Schools to make it easier to visit, so the conference was invaluable. These presenters are included in the acknowledgements at the front of this report but it is worth outlining these interactions were largely in a small group setting at a specific presentation rather than a one on one meeting.

Sport in Education schools were easily contacted and identified as there are eight pilot schools published on the Sport New Zealand website. All schools I contacted were happy to share their experiences and welcomed me in to participate and observe what they were doing with Sport in Education. These schools also made readily available resources for me to take away, which I am incredibly grateful for. All schools in this pilot are into their third year of the three years funded by the Ministry of Education and Sport New Zealand.

Restorative Practice schools were harder to identify. I appreciated input from Christopher Meakin from the Ministry of Education who pointed me in the right direction and to the sabbatical report of Jacky Young, who in 2014 looked at schools which had combined Restorative Practices and PB4L. The result of this combined expertise was five school visits to secondary schools that have had success with a Restorative model from as far south as Cromwell to Kaiapoi.

The table below illustrates the schools visited or represented at PENZ conference in the case of four Sport in Education Schools:

Sport in Education Schools	Restorative Practice Schools
Hillmorton High School	Kaiapoi High School
Kaikorai Valley College	Aranui High School
Queens High School	Cromwell College
Aotea College	St Thomas of Canterbury
Howick College	
Papakura High School	
Te Kuiti High School	

Findings:

No schools I visited were involved in both Sport in Education and Restorative Practice. Cromwell College, Aranui High School and Kaiapoi High School are all both PB4L and Restorative Practice Schools. St Thomas' of Canterbury decided to do Restorative Practice instead of PB4L. Schools seemed to value the link and positive effects of both PB4L and Restorative Practice. The Ministry of Education has invested also in this combination by rolling out a pilot of schools already involved in Positive Behaviour for Learning with Restorative Practice.

In regards to Sport in Education most schools are PB4L with Queens High School combining the two to create better opportunities and recognition for students in sport.

Restorative practice findings:

Schools went into Restorative Practice often because they were dissatisfied with the way they were managing students and wanted a more relational method. Some of the schools also had high suspension and stand down rates and wanted to address that. Schools also recognised they were dealing with repeat offenders when it came to stand downs and were dissatisfied in the outcomes following the stand down from school. Schools also wanted to capitalise on the work done with either Restorative Practice or PB4L as it became apparent that a combined approach could be very beneficial for students. The way Restorative Practice was implemented differed in schools and all schools related the implementation to change management and creating a more positive school culture. Schools also recognised the work of Marg Thorsborne from Restorative Education and her books and resources as being valuable to the change process.

I have split the findings into five areas: implementation, resourcing, maintenance, barriers and community.

Implementation – This is one area that schools seemed to be divided on. Two schools went in the ‘whole hog’ and after training of key personnel started Restorative Practices with the whole school. The others tended to have trained a few staff first and ran a trial that varied in length from one term to a year. One area they all agree on however is knowing why you are going into this and being explicit with that with the full staff from the beginning. Schools were all mindful of the change process and didn’t want this to be something that went well for a start and then stopped working or became watered down. In most cases of the schools I visited, staff were on board as they recognised the way they were doing things was not working.

Resourcing - Resourcing Restorative Practice was an area identified by the schools I visited as being a key ingredient in ensuring the change to Restorative Practice was successful. All schools spoke of the importance of proper training as being the most important but it comes at a significant financial cost. Training key staff initially was favoured in most schools and this was seen as being effective as those key staff were able to provide momentum to the cause when it came to staff that were resistant. The rest of the staff then followed, usually in a full teacher only day format. External providers of the training were exclusively used initially and this seemed to have been well received by all schools. The common theme was to out-source this Professional Development to those who can facilitate the course well. Schools then tended to differ on resourcing further training with some schools not sending new staff on a course to receive full training but instead opting for an in house introduction provided by one of the school staff involved in the leadership of restorative practice. All schools agreed, if they had the resources to send all new staff on a thorough course for training that would benefit the maintenance of Restorative Practice in the school more adequately. One school in particular made specific mention of training your support staff so the whole school as a community were trained and confident in dealing with matters in a relational and restorative manner. Schools also commented on the fact that as this is a shift in mind set or second order change it should be a priority for resourcing and should be reflected in the school charter.

Maintenance - Maintenance of the system, policies and enthusiasm for restorative practice is key to ensuring this isn’t just a short term change, but something that is embedded into school culture. Helen Timperley in her book Realizing the Power of Professional Learning (2011) debates the difference between maintenance and sustainability. She notes that maintenance usually refers to a short term influx of resources. Professional development is offered initially and then withdrawn. She also implies that we are opt for the status quo as being satisfactory, and there is no need for further improvements. In contrast, sustainability requires on going reflection and improvement and implies a closer link to what the result of restorative practice is. In this case, on indicators such as learning and engagement. All schools mentioned the need to continue to put time and resourcing into the programme and for senior leadership to be represented in the running of restorative practices. Most importantly

for it to be modelled by all staff in all situations. Most schools would have a review cycle for Restorative practice. In one school this was every two years; other schools tended not to be so specific in regards to a time frame. Two schools reported that the key to sustaining Restorative Practice was in your staff. All systems need to be aligned and ongoing training of personnel to ensure the system is future proofed and embedded as a culture change, not just something done some of the time.

Community - A sound school community partnership is also a key ingredient in a successful Restorative School. Educating your wider community about Restorative Practice is reported as being key. The example below from Cromwell College indicates the importance of understanding your community and its values. An initiative from Mason Stretch, Principal of Cromwell College was to write an open letter to the public via the newspaper outlining the schools stance on drugs. Understanding the stance of your community can influence how far a school is to go with the Restorative Model to ensure you don't go too far one way or the other for your community too soon. Key outside agencies such as the RTLB service also need to be aware of the school values and restorative responses so their work can align. All schools had given some reference to what impact Restorative Practice has had on their wider community.

Barriers - Barriers to Restorative Practice were similar in the schools I visited. They tended to revolve around the school and wider community seeing restorative as an 'easy out' for the student in the wrong and that there were no longer consequences. All schools made mention of this and Mason Stretch Principal of Cromwell College was kind enough to share his insight on the initial stages of Restorative Practice. On reflection he thinks they went too far in to Restorative Practices initially without taking into account the rather conservative nature of the town and the way things had previously been done. The community and staff were used to stand downs in some situations and he mentioned that in some cases when restorative conferences had been implemented and every avenue explored for the student a stand down can act as a line in the sand. Restorative processes are in place when a student is stood down and on return to school. Staff attitudes towards Restorative Practice can also differ greatly and all schools spoke of some staff members that have been slower to come on board than others. This can be a problem as Restorative Practice highlights the nature of the relationship between teacher and student and requires an active role of both parties to make the relationship functional. Schools mentioned that some staff can find this challenging. Staff inconsistency in dealing with a situation is common in the schools I visited as highlighted by three of the four schools visited. Time is always a factor in schools and one school in particular highlighted a barrier as being that staff perceive they don't have time for the restorative chats. It was emphasised at that school that by using a model conversation and removing the student for a short time to have this chat was highly beneficial to the problem being both solved quickly and not escalating to the point where a removal from class was needed. Also related to time it was emphasised at two schools that at a more severe disciplinary level the conference organisation and implementation takes a lot of time. Most schools use their Guidance Counsellor or Head of the Pastoral team to set up and facilitate those larger conferences. Two schools also mentioned with the large

amount of initiatives currently being offered to schools there tends to be a lot of change initiatives on the go at one time, this means there is competition for both resourcing and time spent on it. The risk is in today's schooling environment that it just becomes another fad or another thing to do for staff already disgruntled with change.

Sport in Education findings:

I managed to make contact with seven of the eight Sport in Education pilot schools in New Zealand during this sabbatical. This was made possible by attending the PENZ conference in Hamilton in the July holidays. Four schools were presenting here which previously I had been unable to visit due to their location. My findings are based on school visits at both Queens High School and Kaikorai Valley College and the other schools were a more generic experience by attending their conference breakouts. I had visited Hillmorton High School on a previous occasion, so have included information obtained during that visit as well.

After collating my notes I formulated that the programme was highly successful in all 8 of the pilot schools. I established that the following factors have been utilised by all or most schools to contribute to their success. Sport New Zealand have issued a critical factors resource which is available on their website. I have purposely looked at aspects that have stood out for me in relation to my school context. This resource should be considered however along with my findings.

Key ingredients for a successful Sport in Education project include having a clear objective or rationale behind why the school has opted into this, Followed by a structured and self-paced implementation. The recruitment of enthusiastic and passionate people and the involvement of the wider school community,

1 – Understanding the ‘Why’

All schools involved in the pilot had a very clear rationale as to why they were going in to the programme initially. The reasons ranged from: identifying a group of at risk students who would benefit from such a programme, a need to increase leadership opportunities for junior students, to provide a meaningful way to demonstrate PB4L values, and a means to build a stronger sense of community within the schools and extending to the contributing schools. The schools objectives are linked to the rationale for involvement and all schools had a vision of what they wanted to get out of the programme in terms of meeting the needs of their students. This may have developed or changed during the three year journey, but there was a foundation at the start.

The ‘why’ for the contributing schools are summarised below:

Queens High School (Dunedin)	Decile 4	Single Sex	PB4L
Promotion of PB4L values and recognising sport as a tool for engagement and to develop a greater sense of belonging through an increased number of students			

involved in sport

Aotea College (Wellington) Decile 5 Co-education PB4L

Links that PB4L values have with sport. Keen to use Sport in Education to provide leverage for these values. Provides an opportunity to use integrated learning and providing authentic contexts for students to provide leadership.

Hillmorton High School Decile 4 Co-education

Sport in Education had strong links to the school pedagogical goals and could assist with building a community post-earthquake.

Howick College Decile 8 Co-education

Support of Principal and Senior Management who were elite sports players before becoming Secondary Teachers. They saw the potential of this based on their experiences. A method to develop strong relationships and a chance to run a 'boys only' class.

Te Kuiti High School Decile 3 Co-education PB4L

School wanted to capitalise on sporting talent and interest in sport that students demonstrate. Also the school saw Sport in Education as a way to strengthen the culture and values of the school alongside the PB4L programme initiated in 2014.

Tauranga Boys College Decile 6 Single Sex PB4L

As a strong sporting school, Tauranga Boys College wanted to capitalise on this to make stronger connections between sport and curriculum. Also using the programme as a means to integrated learning and linking the schools PB4L values to a sporting context.

Kaikorai Valley College Decile 5 Co – education PB4L

Using Sport in Education as a way to promote students to live the school values Encourage teachers to utilise strategies to get students active more often in classes.

Papakura High School Decile 1b Co-education PB4L

School recognises that it has highly skilled sportspeople and that sport can be used to engage students and build their confidence as learners. Sport in Education is also used to connect with other initiatives such as PB4L, Te Kotahitanga, Starpath and Secondary Schools Student Achievement contract.

For Mountainview High School our 'why' could be a targeted group of Maori Boys who historically are at risk of leaving without qualifications and have shown disengaged behaviour such as attending below the school attendance goal of 85%. These students are also over represented in stand down and suspension statistics. This is a focus area in our school charter and the alignment of school goals,

Department goals and in our case whanau goals is essential when it comes to prioritising time and resourcing. We are also a Positive Behaviour for Learning school which could use a bit of re energising. Promoting these values through sport may provide a further impetus. Another reason for Sport in Education at Mountainview is a motive similar to Howick in that we are traditionally not a 'sporty' school and in a falling demographic where competition for students is rife we need to address an initiative to get the students good at sport through the gate at Mountainview High School and not getting on a bus to go across town.

2 – A self-paced and structured implementation

Schools could implement Sport in Education in their own way. There was no set pro forma and this gave schools the flexibility to address their own unique contexts and find a programme that suited them. There were some similarities and some differences in the way schools chose to start the programme.

All schools I spoke with suggested the need to start small. The importance of this when leading change is it is imperative to have early successes to celebrate and build on. John Kotter (1995) in his model on change management labels this as generating short term wins. Some schools started small by focusing on one of the 5 work streams – Curriculum, Leadership, Community, Culture and Values.

Others worked with one or two classes where the impact was most needed. Schools didn't try to fit sport in to everything, just where it was relevant and meaningful.

Below is a summary of how the 8 schools implemented the programme initially:

Queens High School	Values and Sport Participation to ALPS Class
Initially Queens focussed on getting more students involved in playing sport and improved the visibility of good sporting role models around the school. A sports expo encouraged students to be involved. This moved on in 2014 when the school identified a group of Year 11 and 12 students who were at risk of not achieving and likely to leave school without qualifications. This was designed to include an added pastoral care component including time management and study skills. The class was activity focused and offered a variety of relevant unit standards. These students decided to have a class Basketball team which contributed to the students having a stronger sense of school identity. The results from this class in terms of behavioural referrals, engagement and academic success was excellent.	

Aotea College	Sports Studies Class
Creation of a Level 1 Sports Studies Class for students identified as being at risk of achieving NCEA Level 1. Covered curriculum areas of English, Mathematics and Physical Education. 12 hour per week were taught by PE teachers who taught another curriculum area also. Class was taught with a coach and a team metaphor rather than teacher and class. Results showed an increased attendance for this class in comparison to a matched group and referrals were halved based on the previous year's data. 20 out of 23 students achieved 80 credits to achieve NCEA Level 1.	

Howick College

Students were taught PE, English and Maths by teachers who peer planned and experimented in ways to use sport contexts to engage students. The class then developed into year 10 the following year and adding Science. This progression in 2015 has now seen 2 x Year 9 Classes, 3 x Year 10 classes and 2 x year 11 classes. Students must apply to be in the Sport in Education classes.

Hillmorton High School Year 9 Class Integrated Learning in PE, Maths and English

One Year 9 class was taught using integrated learning with sport as a focus in three core subject areas. Teachers shared non-contact time and used this to develop the shared units. PLD time was used also to work on an inquiry related to Sport in Education. The class then developed into both Years 9 and 10 the following year and Social Sciences and Science came on board. The results of this class showed significantly lower referral data and average grades in assessments were higher in Sport in Education class than comparison sample.

Te Kuiti High School Sport in Education specific class

Te Kuiti started with a class where teachers collaborated on one shared unit per term. As it began to grow more teachers came on board. The class used the metaphor of teachers as coaches. Curriculum areas English, Maths, Science and PE started the programme. This then led to an innovative Year 11 shared unit using Maths, English, Science and PE with the context of Caving. This enabled students to gain 20 credits in 6 weeks of work.

Tauranga Boys College Collaborative teaching of one low band class

This class was initially taught PE, Maths and English by a team of teachers. This then developed into Year 10 and Science and Social Studies came on board. Teachers placed sports and teamwork at the forefront of the learning as students enjoyed these as contexts. A team culture was created and as a result attendance was higher than an equivalent class, fewer pastoral incidents and successes in academic results in Maths and English were higher than an equivalent group.

Kaikorai Valley College Two year 9 Sport in Education classes

This originally started with Maths and English taught by Sport in Education team members. As with other schools this increased the following year to include Year 9 and 10 classes and other curriculum areas became involved. The concept has since progressed to all year 9 and 10 classes being taught using 'active learning' where students are up and moving in most lessons.

Papakura High School HASSA (Health and Sports Science Academy)

This class started in 2012 and is designed to identify students with a vocational interest in Sport, Exercise and Health. These students participate in PE and Health, English, Maths and Science together. Sport acts as a 'hook' for these students and learning is made meaningful through the vocational connections.

This has since developed through into a Year 12 course where Biology was added. The results for HASSA have included higher attendance at external examinations, fewer stand downs and behavioural incidents and more endorsements in NCEA.

In summary all schools started small and built a strong team. Schools tended to focus on PE, Maths and English due to increasing pressure to raise literacy and numeracy standards. They say success breeds success and once the culture of these introductory classes became evident more people wanted to be involved. This in all the schools allowed the programme to gain traction.

3 – Passionate People

The recruitment and importance of passionate people is a consistent factor emphasised by all the schools I spent time with. I have touched on this by mentioning that often staff were shoulder tapped initially. This ensured that enthusiastic teachers who were willing to try a new approach in terms of integrated or collaborative pedagogies were involved with the programme. The outcome of this was to break down the silos that are often evident in schools. The dynamics of a staffroom contributed to the enthusiasm for what these teachers were doing initially and this then spread. Everyone wants to be involved with a successful, engaged and high achieving class. I mentioned earlier the importance of early successes on the programme however this also applies with teaching staff who are likely to want to be involved as they hear success stories. Promoting success within the staff at meetings or a similar forum will help staff be informed of exactly what is happening within the class therefore generating interest.

4 – Your wider community

One of the work streams that all schools tended to pick up on and run with was a greater involvement in the local community. Schools operate in an increasingly competitive environment for students and being well represented in the local community can have a significant impact on enrolments and therefore funding. Sport in Education has provided an opportunity to welcome sports organisations into schools and alternatively enable student leadership opportunities through coaching or mentoring students in contributing schools.

Below are examples of how the pilot schools have used Sport in Education to enhance relationships they have with the wider community:

Queens High School	Fun with Fundamental Skills	Year 11
Year 11 students worked with early childhood students to build basic movement skills using a Teaching Games for Understanding coaching method. They used 'Growing Coaches' Resources to plan. Improved Achievement Standard results in		

comparison to what was done previously was one of the ways an impact was made through this unit. The Early Childhood setting was innovative and was a success for both sets of students.

Papakura High School Connections between Primary and secondary students build a Healthy community

Year 13 PE students were used in a leadership role to promote health and wellbeing in local primary schools. Students met with the primary students to determine their needs. They planned a 10 week Health and Wellbeing programme utilising a Maori model as most students at the school identified as Maori. Some activities were held at the Primary School and some at the High School. This class gained the best results in this standard over two years.

Howick College Integrated Learning around a Memorable event

A Year 10 Sport in Education class invited in an elite athlete in to the school to help make a meaningful experience for students and to promote athletics which has been a target for the school. They interviewed the athlete using questioning skills they had perfected in English. Students also collected data by comparing their shotput ability with his. This was then used in Maths.

Aotea College Building leadership and community links through community connections through tuakana-teina

A Year 13 class coached primary school students culminating with a tournament at the end. An AFL coach the coaches' programme was also implemented into the primary schools. A teacher attends the Porirua sports cluster to strengthen links between secondary and primary. Year 13 students have also taught the school haka to younger students. As a result more students are enrolling at Aotea from these participating schools and results for the Aotea Year 13 students are higher than a comparison group.

Hillmorton High School Officiating at Athletics Competition

Sport in Education students have been given leadership opportunities through going on camp and completing ABL activities, working in groups productively in class and then officiating at a local primary schools athletics day. The feedback of the students was very positive and that they acted as good role models for the younger students.

Te Kuiti High School Developing students leadership capabilities

Senior students were involved in coaching in local primary schools where historically there was very little contact. An outcome was also a smoother transition between Year 8 and 9. Students ran a range of activities including teaching games for understanding and Ki-o-Rahi. Senior students reported an increase in confidence levels, more willingness to apply for school leadership roles and better results in the designated Achievement Standards.

Tauranga Boys College Utilising beginning of year camp to introduce Hellison's Model of Social Responsibility

Students involved in Sport in Education went away on a beginning of the year camp. This experience in the wider community led to the development of the Tauranga Boys College Model of Social Responsibility. Students were then regularly self-assessing against the model in the quest to develop into decent young men.

Kaikorai Valley College Growing coaches and a sense of community

Year 13 PE students ran coaching sessions at local primary schools. These students had completed the 'Growing Coaches' Programme the previous year. As the links with the community develop Kaikorai Valley College are getting requests to assist with primary school sport. A Primary Schools sport Expo was the highlight of 2014 with 550 primary students visiting the school to try out different activities on offer. The senior students, as a result, are well represented in school leadership roles and there was a 100% increase in the number of students wanting to do the programme the following year.

It is important to note that this was one of five work streams which made up the Sport in Education Programme so in some cases schools focussed significantly on the curriculum aspects first. The community links and leadership in some cases came later when the learning aspect was running smoothly.

At Mountainview High School we have built strong community links with our contributing schools over the last five years. We delivered a futsal tournament for primary school students in 2015 as part of the Year 11 Physical Education programme. We also run ABL activities at Primary Schools as part of the Outdoor Education Programme. The deficit in these opportunities is in the Junior School. The Sport in Education Programme would give junior students the opportunity to develop leadership skills and to get to revisit their primary schools as a secondary school student. This programme could also be vital for getting local sporting organisations back into the school. They seem to be well represented in primary schools but then it stops or tapers off. The benefit of these providers is to establish greater links between schools and clubs benefiting school leavers.

Conclusion

By considering both Restorative Practice and Sport in Education a school is likely to have strong relationships between staff and students.

Students are made accountable for their actions through restorative chats or conferences and are not punished but taught and role modelled pro social behaviours when needed. Restorative practice also brings about a closer link with whanau who can be actively involved in the process. This school – home partnership is invaluable when considering the holistic needs of a student.

Alongside a relational model such as Restorative Practice is Sport in Education where students are encouraged to be active in class and teacher collaboration provides a meaningful context for learning across a range of curriculum areas. It is flexible in providing a context to meet an individual school's objectives, but most importantly within the eight pilot schools, students time and again are displaying high engagement and increased attendance compared to similar cohorts.

This report has endeavoured to establish key elements to increase the likelihood of both programmes being successful within schools. The result for students, based on my findings indicate that a strong engagement and learning programme such as Sport in Education could be invaluable in hooking students into their learning. Other advantages are increasing retention of at risk students and providing an integrated approach. This working alongside Restorative Practices both at classroom level, Middle Management and Senior Leadership allows a student to learn behaviour strategies and increase their likelihood for better learning outcomes. These students, as a consequence, remain at school learning positively, rather than experiencing negative outcomes such as stand downs and suspensions.

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