



# AO TAWHITI UNLIMITED DISCOVERY

CHARTER 2014-2016

## OUR SPECIAL CHARACTER



Ao Tawhiti Unlimited Discovery is a special character state school with a fundamental tenet that the student is central in directing their own learning so that the enthusiasm and love of learning is retained. We believe that learning can happen anytime and any place, thanks to the rich involvement of whānau and community. We have five guiding principles and five core values that define our special character

# GUIDING PRINCIPLES

We provide a mana-enhancing learning environment where:

- STUDENTS ARE CENTRAL IN DIRECTING THEIR LEARNING
- LEARNERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO BE CREATIVE, INNOVATIVE AND TAKE RISKS
- DIVERSE AND FLEXIBLE INDIVIDUAL LEARNING PATHWAYS ARE SUPPORTED
- LEARNING IS A PARTNESHIP
- EVERYONE IS A LEARNER AND EVERYONE IS A TEACHER



# CORE VALUES

## WHANAUNGATANGA

By accepting the rights and responsibilities of being part of Ao Tawhiti Unlimited Discovery we develop relationships and a sense of belonging that strengthens each member of our learning community. The relationships we form through shared experiences and working together give us a solid foundation to nurture, guide and support our students.

## RESPECT

We commit to honouring the individual while celebrating our diversity. We respect ourselves and each other as we aspire to build an empowering learning community.

## KAHA

Ao Tawhiti Unlimited Discovery encourages/supports energetic and powerful learning. Our students are courageous as they push the boundaries of their own learning by taking risks and developing their own path.



## TRUST

Building your own learning path requires that Ao Tawhiti Unlimited Discovery students live up to their commitments and responsibilities. They are trusted to make decisions and follow them through with integrity, and to behave in ways that positively promote Ao Tawhiti Unlimited Discovery to the world.

## AROHA

Ao Tawhiti Unlimited Discovery actively strives to celebrate the uniqueness of individuals, while unifying the community. We share our successes and work through our difficulties with compassion, caring and tolerance.



# OUR WAY OF DOING THINGS TE AO MAORI



We acknowledge Te Tiriti o Waitangi as:

- The founding document of Aotearoa New Zealand and that it is relevant, central to, and symbolic of, our national heritage, identity, and future.
- A document that protects Māori learners' rights to attain true tangata whanautanga (citizenship) through growing a range of vital skills and knowledge
- We strive to provide a high quality education that is accessible, equitable and responsive to the diverse aspirations of our learners. In order to achieve that we endeavor:
- Grow our knowledge and our understanding of Te Ao Māori in order to develop and maintain a school culture where tikanga Māori and te reo Māori is woven through in all we do.
- Support all our learners to participate competently and confidently in both the Māori world and the non-Maori world and are able to move comfortably from one world to the other.
- Engage and consult with our Māori whānau and the wider community to develop and strengthen our understanding of a kaupapa Māori world view.
- Ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to provide instruction in tikanga Māori and te reo Māori.
- The school will re engage with the He Kakano project to develop leadership skills that promote learning opportunities for our students within te Ao Maori.

# SCHOOL ORGANISATION & STRUCTURE



Ao Tawhiti Unlimited Discovery was established on 27 January 2014 under section 156(a) of the Education Act as a state school with special character designation, as a result of the merger of Discovery 1 and Unlimited Paenga Tawhiti.

The school is currently located on two sites. 145 Year 1-6 students are located at our Discovery campus in Halswell, while 355 Year 7-13 students are located at our Unlimited campus at the University of Canterbury. The school will eventually move onto a purpose built single site in the CBD. (Currently planned for September 2016).

A vital part of the school's special character is its connection to the central city. With both campuses currently located outside of the central city, there is a desire to develop opportunities to use the central city whenever possible.

# STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

- Students, learning advisors and whānau collaboratively plan and design students' learning around their strengths, passions, interests and needs.
- Regular individual education meetings (IEMs) between students, whānau and learning advisors, provide collaborative opportunities to reflect on past learning and plan for future learning, to evaluate and report on learning progress, identify support from whānau and discuss ways to extend learning.
- Students co-construct goals that support learning new knowledge and skills, stretch their thinking, encourage creativity and innovation and pursue personal passions, interests and needs.
- Students are consulted on the structures and frameworks of how learning is organised within the school. And student voice is evident in key decisions around learning.





# PARENT AND WHANAU ENGAGEMENT



At Ao Tawhiti Unlimited Discovery we strive to grow a learning community where students are central to directing their own learning, collaboratively supported by staff, whānau and community experts. Whānau involvement is critical to our holistic, personalized approach to learning and can take many forms .

- Learning experiences across curriculum and interest areas.
- Project based learning.
- Inquiries; helping to locate resources, experts and mentors.
- Organising trips and transport and accompanying children on trips.
- Being present to comfort, engage in conversations, questions and discussion.
- Organising community events, promotion, and fundraising.
- Becoming a school trustee.
- Off site learning and learning at home opportunities.

The wider local community also supports us also by helping with fundraising, supplying resources, providing learning environments, helping with experts and mentors and in various other ways.



# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



Our school is founded on the belief that students learn best when they and their whānau have a voice in their own education. In order to ensure that student and whanau voice are evident in all decisions, and we create an empowering and inclusive learning community, we endeavour to engage and consult with our community.

In our consultation during 2014 we identified ten trends for our focus in 2015

1. Ensure student's voice is visible and evident in key decisions and learning.
2. Create learning opportunities to collaborate across the community as well as outside our community.
3. Develop clarity around the understanding and application of our special character and values.
4. Expand our learning opportunities beyond the constraints of lessons and classrooms.
5. Create safe and healthy learning environments for our students and whānau.
6. Ensure we communicate effectively with our students and whānau.
7. Empower all our students to engage and direct their own learning.
8. Support our students to follow their passions, interests and fascinations.
9. Ensure our teaching and learning practices consistently meet the guiding principles of our special character.
10. Grow into a strong, supportive and robust learning community.

# STRATEGIC GOALS



From our Consultation with Community we set Four Strategic Goals as a focus for 2015:

1. TO GROW A COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS
2. TO DEVELOP A STUDENT CENTRED LEARNING CULTURE
3. TO RECOGNISE AND FACILITATE INDIVIDUAL STUDENT SUCCESS
4. TO TRANSITION OUR COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS BACK INTO THE CBD

# STRATEGIC GOAL 1: TO GROW A COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS

## 2014

Establish regular meetings with parents at both sites to discuss ways we can build community.

Professional learning and development around establishing and maintaining community will be provided for staff. This could be widened to include parents and students.

Trial community of learners across the two sites (Y7-10).

Connections to businesses, schools and organisations in the CBD will be made to help facilitate our return to the city.

Find ways to work with other educational providers to grow our learning community beyond the physical confines of our campuses.

Continued our involvement in the He Kākano project for 2014. This will further promote the needs of Māori learners and grow the leadership's focus on building Māori achievement into our community.

## 2015

Review how effectively the BOT and SM team consulted and engaged with the students and wider community regarding growing a community of learners during 2014 in order to continue to strengthen and develop in 2015.

Continue to provide appropriate PLD for staff and the wider community in order to support and promote a community of learners.

Continue to trial and review communities as designed in 2014 with the aim of full implementation in 2016.

Continue to build connections to businesses, schools and organisations in the CBD in order to help facilitate our return to the city.

Continue to explore and develop ways to work with other educational providers to grow our learning community beyond the physical confines of our campuses.

Re-engage with the He Kākano project, with the aim to develop leadership practices that will strengthen the learning opportunities for our Māori students and to implement Te Ao Māori ways of being and doing in our community of learners.

## 2016

Based on the experiences of 2014 and 2015, the provision of student-centered learning and the impact of this on student achievement will be reviewed and documented by the senior leadership group.

Research from an external provider will be encouraged to analyse student centered learning at our school.

Appropriate PLD will continue to be provided for staff and parents.



## STRATEGIC GOAL 2: TO DEVELOP A STUDENT CENTRED LEARNING CULTURE

### 2014

All learning advisors and support staff will work together to identify ways in which student-centered learning can be delivered. A list of key methods will be developed, explored, trialed and implemented.

All students, parents / caregivers will identify ways in which they believe student-centered learning can be delivered. A list of key methods will be developed, explored, trialed and implemented.

A comprehensive consultation process will be carried out to review the school's special character. This process will focus on developing an agreed set of tenets for the merged school.

Appropriate PLD will be provided for learning advisors to support student centered learning. Induction programmes/PLD for parents/ caregivers created and trialed.

Community Leaders will trial an agreed way to support student centered learning outside of classes / classrooms.

### 2015

Consult with Māori and Pasifika community to develop an understanding of the context and needs of these groups with regard to promoting and resourcing culturally relevant student-directed learning opportunities.

Review the trials of 2014 through consultation with students and the wider community, a review will be carried out of and put a plan put in place for the long-term delivery of student-directed learning.

Implement further trials aimed at the delivery of student-directed learning. .

Continue to provide appropriate PLD for staff that supports the development of a student centered learning culture across years 0-15.

Develop a set of exemplars of what the special character guiding principles look like in action across a learner's pathway from Years 0-15.

Continue to resource, develop and trial project based learning opportunities to support student directed learning, both in and outside classes/classrooms.

### 2016

Based on the experiences of 2014 and 2015, the provision of student-centered learning and the impact of this on student achievement will be reviewed and documented by the senior leadership group.

Research from an external provider will be encouraged to analyse student centered learning at our school.

Appropriate PLD will continue to be provided for staff and parents.

## STRATEGIC GOAL 3: TO RECOGNISE AND FACILITATE INDIVIDUAL STUDENT SUCCESS

### 2014

Strategies to promote individual student success, including the importance of achievement setting personalised learning outcomes and achievement (this may be NCEA or it may be another more appropriate outcome for the student).

Appropriate PLD will be provided for staff around managing and appropriately recognising individual learning programmes.

A process for the development of a school wide (Y0-15) approach to individual learning plans, and school wide celebration of individual student learning, will be developed and implemented.

Consultation with Māori and Pasifika communities will be held to understand the context and needs of these groups with regard to promoting personal (academic or other personal) success.

Through consultation with the community, we will develop a shared understanding of what achievement entails at the various

### 2015

Consult with Māori and Pasifika communities to understand the context and needs of these groups with regard to promoting personal (academic or other personal) success and make these understanding visible in learning and teaching structures.

Consult with students and the wider community, to continue to develop and review shared understandings of what achievement looks like at the various stages of a student's pathway, and how to promote individual student success, which includes setting and achieving personalised learning goals.

Review strategies that were developed in 2014 to promote student success and processes for individual learning plans t, and revisions made to practice where necessary.

Provide appropriate PLD for staff to continue to develop their understanding of how to recognise and facilitate individual student success.

### 2016

Progress during 2014 and 2015 in the promotion of student success will be reviewed and documented.

Appropriate PLD will continue to be provided.

## STRATEGIC GOAL 4: TO TRANSITION OUR COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS INTO A NEW SHARED AND PURPOSE BUILT BUILDING IN THE CBD

2014

2015

Work with the MOE to design our school within the CBD.

Consult and engage students, whānau, staff and the wider community in their needs and aspirations for the new school.

Develop a strong culture of learning [as per goals 1, 2 and 3] in order to facilitate a successful transition in 2016.

Develop a transition plan for 2016, to ensure minimal disruption for students.

Develop a logo and branding for our school.

2016

Transition to the new building.

Progress school identity & branding ready for transition to new building.