AO TAWHITI

UNLIMITED DISCOVERY

Strategic Plan
2023 - 2025

Contents

School Description

Ao Tawhiti Unlimited Discovery was established on 27 January 2014 under section 156(a) of the Education Act 1989. It was established as a state school with special character designation, as a result of the merger of Discovery 1 and Unlimited Paenga Tawhiti.

2001	Discovery 1 School opens
2003	Unlimited Paenga Tawhiti opens
2011	Both schools lose their buildings in the Christchurch earthquakes
2014	Schools merge to form Ao Tawhiti Unlimited Discovery operating from two locations under a designated special character status
2019	Ao Tawhiti relocates to a purpose-built site in the centre of Christchurch

The school is located in the centre of Christchurch as a vital part of the school's special character is its connection to the central city. We have a strong belief that this location allows us to provide learning opportunities that are not easily available to students at other schools.

The school has 166 Year 1-6 students and 507 Year 7 – 13 students.

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 anyplace, 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

Ao Tawhiti Unlimited Discovery provides 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 learning pathways are supported
- Learning is a partnership
- Everyone is a learner and everyone is a teacher.

Core Values

Whanaungatanga

By accepting the rights and responsibilities 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.

- We actively participate as community members
- We support others to feel a sense of belonging and ownership of our school
- We choose to place the needs of the group above our individual needs

Belonging   Sharing   Relating

Whakaute

Ao Tawhiti Unlimited Discovery commits to honouring the individual while celebrating our diversity. We respect each ourselves and each other as we aspire to build an empowering learning community.

- We act with care and consideration of others feelings, their learning, their property and the environment
- We listen to others, their points of view, their feelings and their opinions
- We empower others to make their own choices, have their own beliefs and chase their own dreams

Honour   Diversity   Empowerment

Kaha

Ao Tawhiti Unlimited Discovery encourages and 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.

- We persevere to take our learning further even when facing challenges
- We work hard to produce quality outcomes in all of our learning opportunities
- We display courage when trying new things
- We aspire to achieve the things we dream

Powerful learning   Risk taking   Courage

Tiakitanga

Building your own learning path requires that Ao Tawhiti Unlimited Discovery learners 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.

- We follow through with our agreements, commitments and goals
- We make choices that inspire confidence in us
- We role-model the values of our school

Commitment   Integrity   Trust

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.

- We appreciate and show empathy for each other
- We celebrate the achievements, the uniqueness and passions of ourselves and others
- We nurture our own and other well-being

Celebrate uniqueness   Unity   Compassion

Our commitment to Tiriti o Waitangi

Ao Tawhiti Unlimited Discovery acknowledges 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 living document that protects Māori learners' rights to attain true Tangata.
- Supporting whanaungatanga through culturally sustainable practice that values Te Ao Māori and Te reo Māori as taonga.

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 will:

- Grow our knowledge and our understanding of Te Ao Māori in order to develop and maintain a school culture where tikanga Māori and reo Māori is woven through all we do.
- Support all our learners to participate competently and confidently in both the Māori world and the non-Māori world so they 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 Reo Māori.
- Develop capacity within staff in order to develop leadership skills that promote learning opportunities for our students within Te Ao Māori. Mentoring students and working with whānau to develop strong and relevant learning opportunities and outcomes.

Engagement

Student Engagement

Students, learning advisors and whānau collaboratively plan and design students' learning around their strengths, passions, interests and needs. There are regular individual meetings (IEMs) between students, whānau and learning advisors to 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. Student voice is evident in key decisions around learning.

Whānau 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 the wider community, Whānau involvement is critical to our holistic, personalised approach to learning and can take many forms.

- Learning experiences across curriculum and interest areas
- Providing a holistic learning environment
- Help to locate resources, experts and mentors
- Organise trips, transport and accompany students on trips
- Being present to support, engage, question and discuss
- Organise community events, promotions and fundraising
- Become a school trustee
- Offsite learning and learning at home opportunities

Kaupapa

To be a school of global standing

The direction in which we head is determined by the voice we gather from our community of learners, kaimahi and whānau.

We aspire to be a school:

- that lives out its special character authentically
- that is recognised globally for its forward thinking and cutting-edge pedagogy
- that other schools aspire to
- where teaching professionals actively seek employment
- that is in hot demand by learners from a wide geographical area
- that educates other educators locally and globally.

AO TAWHITI UNLIMITED DISCOVERY

Ao Tawhiti Unlimited Discovery Strategic Plan 2023 – 2025

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 anyplace, thanks to the rich involvement of whānau and community.

Kaimahi	Hapori Whanui	Ākonga
Teaching for Learning	**Relationships for Learning**	**Leading Learning**
To ensure every individual is challenged to achieve success in their learning and are supported to do so	**To maintain a sense of community with everyone knowing and living our Core Values and Special Character**	**To develop a culture where learners take responsibility for their learning**
Kaimahi journey with Ao Tawhiti learners as they identify and explore passions and interests	Our community strives to embody the Core Values and Special Character and this is evidenced throughout interactions with each other and the wider school environment	Learners use our Core Values and Special Character to guide their choices around learning
Kaimahi teach Ao Tawhiti learners how to direct their own learning	Our community uses the Core Values and Special Character as the foundation for all decision making within the school environment	Learners value learning and this is evidenced in consistent attendance and engagement
Kaimahi empower learners to achieve their goals	Our community uses the Core Values and Special Character to frame up any learning conversation	Learners deliberately choose to engage in a the widest range of learning opportunities

Ao Tawhiti Unlimited Discovery Annual Plan 2023

KAIMAHI   Teaching for Learning

Whāinga Tahi: To ensure every individual is challenged to achieve success in their learning and supported to do so

Context: Our school exists to support students to gain access to individual education programmes through the opportunity to be self-directive with learning. This is the point of difference for our ākonga and whānau. Every family has the option to attend their local kura, but instead choose to come to Ao Tawhiti, so that their child can access individualised learning programs, therefore it is important that we provide the frameworks and support necessary for students to be able to effectively direct their own learning. We have a responsibility to empower our learners and whānau by teaching the capabilities needed to be successful learners. This means we provide the frameworks so ākonga know how to learn. We provide the language and support so they are able to articulate how they are learning and what they are aiming to achieve. We provide the reflective tools that enable students to evaluate their learning and develop relevant next steps that will support them to reach their learning goals.

Targets:

Kaimahi journey with Ao Tawhiti learners as they identify and explore passions and interests

Kaimahi teach Ao Tawhiti learners how to direct their own learning

Kaimahi empower learners to achieve their goals

Raraunga:

We have an initial framework below. We are aiming to develop age specific frameworks that work alongside the initial reporting system below.

Directed	Supported	Autonomous
Cannot stay focused unsupervised.	Needs occasional redirecting.	Stays on task without support.
Isn't invested in working on something passion/interest-based.	Has passions/interests but needs help to see how they can become projects.	Is driven by passions/interests and identifies the elements of these.
Cannot create reasonable goals unassisted.	Can come up with ideas but need help to turn them into fully-formed goals.	Can set appropriate goals unassisted.
Cannot set plans to work towards goals.	Can see a path to completing the goal but needs help working out the details, often completes goals.	Can plan out a series of steps towards completing the goal and complete them.
Can't reliably reflect on previous work/SDL sessions.	Can reflect on successful tasks but sometimes struggles to see what they could've done better.	Can reliably reflect on the previous week's work and knows where time was well or ill-spent.
Does not manage time well and rarely shares evidence.	Is growing the skills of time management and often uses them and often shows evdence of learning.	Manages time consistently and competently and always has evidence to share.
Takes no responsibility for learning.	Is regulalry taking responsiblty for their learning and is progressing because of this.	Always takes responsibility for their learning.

ABLE data is a measurement of how effectively our learners are managing their own learning. Engagement in learning is measured by the Home Base Learning Advisor weekly, and disengagement is noted so that support can be provided for students.

Year Level	2020 % disengagement	2021 % disengagement	2022 % disengagement
1	6	6	5
2	12	27	9
3	19	6	12
4	15	4	0
5	3	0	0
6	7	0	0
7	3	11	12
8	16	9	10
9	17	18	18
10	22	19	19
11	20	31	19
12	16	29	30
13	27	24	24
Female	14	15	14
Male	19	20	17
Māori	24	29	24
Pasifika	40	0	80

Tukanga:

- Rebrand *Self-Directed Learning* to *Arotahi*. The aim of this action is to shift the culture that has developed around SDL, in particular amongst older students who can use SDL as time to do very little learning.

- Rebuild the Learning Management System to launch in 2023. This system will be streamlined to allow a clear focus on strengthening the 1:1 conversations and the IEM conversations. The aim of this action is to support Learning Advisors to provide greater support to ākonga as they develop individualised learning programs.

- Professional Learning Groups will be developed within Communities, and led by the Community Leaders. The intended outcome of these Professional Learning Groups is to support Learning Advisors to develop stronger pedagogical practice to enable effective Arotahi programs.

- Community Leaders will be supported and resourced to work closely with Home Base Learning Advisors, in a mentoring role to support effective pedagogical practice around Arotahi. This will be the focus of professional learning in 2023.

- Change our reporting from ABLE to AACE to align more closely with strategic planning. AACE means Home Base Learning Advisors will be reporting against Attendance, Arotahi, Core Values and Engagement. This raises the mana of self-directed learning (Arotahi) within the school.

HAPORI   Relationships for Learning

Whāinga Rua: To maintain a sense of community with everyone knowing and living our Core Values and Special Character

Context: At the core of all learning at Ao Tawhiti Unlimited Discovery is the triangle that exists between whānau, ākonga and kaimahi. It is when all three groups work together that students are able to thrive in our environment and within our special character. We want to grow these relationships and this is a focus for us moving forward. One way we can strengthen these relationships is through more effective use of IEMs. In 2021 we engaged in community consultation and upskilling of staff to develop and strengthen the relational aspect of these conversations. We began to look at how to make the conversations more robust in terms of discussing learning outcomes and achievement. We continued this mahi in 2022, as it is fundamental in supporting students to develop effective self-directed and individualised learning programs. We will continue this mahi in 2023. We have also realised the value of sharing our core values with our whānau and ākonga. If we promote these values than we can create a sense of community. Research shows that a sense of belonging can be a factor in student engagement and attendance.

Targets:

Our community strives to embody the Core Values and Special Character and this is evidenced throughout interactions with each other and the wider school environment

Our community uses the Core Values and Special Character as the foundation for all decision making within the school environment

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Our community uses the Core Values and Special Character to frame up any learning conversation.

Raraunga:

Why do we have IEMs/ 1-1s?	What are the positives about IEMs/ 1:1's?	What are the challenges about IEMs/ 1:1's?	What would you change about them?	What do you think makes a great IEM/ 1:1?
Relationships x 7	Relationships x 10	Not enough time x 5	LMS x 3	Student input into education x 4
To set and reflect upon goals x 4	To help me (students) x 4	Not valued x 2	More consistency across LAs x 2	Celebrate successes x 3
So LAs can help students x 3	To set goals x 3	Remembering to go & what was said	Make it easier to see progress over a term x 2	Set challenging goals x 3
Tracking/ accountability x 2	IEM day is a day off! X 2	Stopping what I'm doing to attend a 1-1	The time of the 1-1 x 2	I can change my goals if I want x 2
So I have stuff to do x 2	Confidential	Awkward if there is nothing to discuss	More time	Conversation x 2
A 'bridge' between learning that has been and learning that is to come	Learning how to cater to students passions, interests, needs	Lack of subject LA feedback		They're fun, time with LA
	Accountability			Relationships
	Opportunity to talk about difficulties			Presence of parents
				When IEMs/ 1-1s are positive and enthusiastic
				1-1s are valued by LAs

Whānau voice	Think about the most recent IEM you attended. What did you like?	If you have attended other IEMs, how did the most recent one compare?	What would you like more of?	How useful are the IEMs in knowing what your child does at school?	How helpful are the IEMs in building a relationship with HBLAs?
177 responses	Relationships x 130	There was not much here - people were mostly polite and whilst it was acknowledged that some IEMs between different LAs are different, there was little feedback around comparisons	Lots here however...Various requests for more & more timely info about classes/ SDL/ kids with SLDs/ how HB will run/ how the timetable works/ explanation of levels/ NCEA/ options for Y13 and beyond/ cross-curricular opportunities x 27	5 = 94	5 = 120
Parents new to Ao Tawhiti x 55	Informal & informative x 38	Parents would like more consistency across LAs	Time to prepare before the IEM, ie. LAs not making requests the night before x 9	4 = 48	4 = 31
Parents with some experience of Ao Tawhiti x 66	Right amount of time x 9		More time for the appointments, or evening appointments x 9	3 = 12	3 = 10
Parents with lots of experience at Ao Tawhiti x 50	Needs/ goals - focussed x 11		Access to subject LAs x 6	2 = 10	2 = 1
	Positive, relaxed		Feedback throughout	1 = 1	1 = 1

	professional LAs x 13		the term x 6		
	That we have IEMs x 4		Appointment times being stuck to x 4		

2 people commented on the following:
- Students to be asked about wellbeing etc and not sole focus on academic goals
- For a staff profile board/ map
- Examples of past SDL projects for inspiration
- Detailed regular feedback
- Praise for the easy booking system

1 person commented on the following:
- Regular communication
- No paper ✓
- More information about our jargon
- More student voice
- A cultural focus
- Consultation with how the school is run
- Reflection on last year during the IEM
- More choice of classes
- Time without the student present
- Some LAs seem disinterested/ disconnected
- The importance of IEMs
- A desire for social occasions
- More information before the IEM

Is there anything else you'd like to add?
- There was some frustration about students picking classes which they were then asked to leave because they were too full - processes around this, and maybe picking a second option in case of this arising again
- Appreciation that plans are made during the IEM but things change
- Many parents commented on how much they appreciate the IEM, and expressed gratitude for us having them
- Relationships are key

Tukanga:

- We will build on this initial work in 2023 through an adaptation of our student management system to enable the framework for effective learning conversations to happen. We have developed a new student management system called Arotahi, and this can be shared with whānau. It will be the platform for the collation of learning conversations that happen in 1:1s and IEMs. To address the 'lack of time' in the senior school we are building in more opportunities for self-reflection and goal setting by incorporating it into Friday Hapori lessons as well.

- We will survey whānau in 2023 around the impact of IEMs on their confidence to support their children with their learning programs. We have also composed a guide sheet for whānau, so they have a list of questions that they can ask at IEMs, to better support their understanding of how the school works.

- A 'within-school' Kāhui Ako Learning Advisor has taken on the portfolio of supporting transitions and a part of her work this year will be supporting the transition of new students and whānau with some education around how to make the most of IEM and 1:1 time. Often IEMs and 1:1 meetings are new to students and it can take some time to understand how to maximise the value of them.

- There will be increased focus on our Core Values when transitioning in new students and whānau to the school.

- We will further develop the coaching and mentoring role of caregivers in the school, so we have more whānau supporting student learning.

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ĀKONGA   Leading for Learning

Whāinga Toru: To develop a culture where learners take responsibility for their learning

Context: Although we made slight gains on attendance last year, during a pandemic year, our school is still sitting below the average attendance for students in Aotearoa. There are a number of factors that impact our attendance. The first is that we have a number of students who engage in off-site learning and staff aren't always accurately recording this. The second factor is that we attract a large number of students who struggle with mental health. This means that students' anxiety and other health factors negatively impact on their ability to sustain full-time education. A third factor is that our school attracts students who have disengaged from traditional education. They come to Ao Tawhiti with habitual disengagement and it can take time and effort to reverse this behaviour. Our staff work hard to establish strong relational practice and support students with a variety of flexible practices. We now need to ensure that this relational practice and flexible practice results in greater engagement in learning as evidenced through attendance statistics.

Targets:

Learners use our Core Values and Special Character to guide their choices around learning

Learners value learning and this is evidenced in consistent attendance and engagement

Learners deliberately choose to engage in a the widest range of learning opportunities

Raraunga:

Attendance Data	Ao Tawhiti 2021	Aotearoa 2021	Ao Tawhiti 2022	Aotearoa 2022
➢ 90%	28.2%	59.70%	31.9%	50.6%
➢ 80%	63.0%	83.80%	62.2%	76.2%
➢ 70%	76.7%	92.30%	79.4%	87.6%

< 70%	23.3%	7.70%	20.6%	12.4%

Priority Students Attendance Data	Ao Tawhiti 2021 Māori	Ao Tawhiti 2022 Māori	Ao Tawhiti 2021 Pasifika	Ao Tawhiti 2022 Pasifika
➢ 90%	26%	19%	0%	0%
➢ 80%	65%	41%	50%	40%
➢ 70%	80%	64%	25%	20%
< 70%	20%	26%	25%	40%

ABLE data is a measurement of how effectively our learners are managing their own learning. Leading learning is measured by the Home Base Learning Advisor weekly, and students who struggle to lead their own learning are noted so that support can be provided for students.

Year Level	2020 % struggling to lead learning	2021 % struggling to lead learning	2022 % struggling to lead learning
1	0	11	10
2	8	17	5
3	22	0	6
4	11	4	4
5	10	0	0
6	10	0	0
7	3	7	12
8	12	12	17
9	19	17	22
10	18	13	21

11	25	24	19
12	17	23	26
13	15	20	18
Male	18	17	14
Female	11	10	18
Māori	20	27	21
Pasifika	40	25	60

Tukanga:

- Whole school professional learning focus on how to improve students' ability to direct and lead their own learning. This will build on the staff only days facilitated by Dr Julia Atkin in September 2022.

- Development of a whole school systemic process to support whānau and ākonga who are struggling to maintain regular attendance at school. This process will also include referrals to external agencies.

- Change our reporting from ABLE to AACE to align more closely with strategic planning. AACE means Home Base Learning Advisors will be reporting against Attendance, Arotahi, Core Values and Engagement. This raises the mana of regular attendance within the school.

- A school-wide target of 85% of our students achieving 80% attendance over 2023.

- Continue to work with external agencies, our Kāhui Ako social worker, our Kāhui Ako mental health nurse, our guidance team and Home Base Learning Advisors to support students to attend school. This is because the majority of our non-attenders, or students who struggle to engage in school are suffering from mental health and anxiety.

- Continue to resource a staff member to provide timely data for staff and whānau around attendance, so interventions can be prompt.

Analysis of Variance 2022

STRATEGIC GOAL: Kaimahi Teaching for Learning

To support learners to achieve their goals.

Whāinga: To develop self-directed learning frameworks that provide opportunities for all learners to achieve success with their learning goal.

Context: Our school exists to support students to gain access to individual education programmes through the opportunity to be self-directive with learning. This is the point of difference for our ākonga and whānau. Every family has the option to attend their local kura but instead choose to come to Ao Tawhiti, therefore it is important that we provide the frameworks, and support, necessary for students to be able to effectively direct their own learning. We have a responsibility to empower our learners and whānau by teaching the capabilities needed to be successful learners. We provide the language and support so they are able to articulate how they are learning and what they are aiming to achieve. We provide the reflective tools that enable students to evaluate their learning and develop relevant next steps that will support them to reach their learning goals.

Targets

The drafting of age specific frameworks that ākonga, whānau and kaimahi use to support effective self-directed learning.

Increase in engagement for our senior students to less than 15% disengagement

Raraunga

Year Level	2019 % disengagement	2020 % disengagement	2021 % disengagement
1	0	6	6
2	17	12	27

3	17	19	6
4	10	15	4
5	8	3	0
6	24	7	0
7	2	3	11
8	0	16	9
9	17	18	18
10	22	22	19
11	20	27	31
12	16	18	29
13	27	27	24

Tukanga

We had Dr Julia Atkin, an education professor and expert in self-directed learning, come on site and spend a week delivering whole staff professional learning. The focus of this was to develop effective pedagogy to best support students to be successful in self-directed learning.

We supported our middle leaders to upskill and lead their Home Base Learning Advisors to develop effective pedagogy around self-directed learning.

We developed a traffic light system that allowed Home Base Learning Advisors to report against their students' ability to effectively self-direct their own learning. This was developed using 'student speak' so Learning Advisors could discuss this with their students. Students were hearing consistent language to describe self-directed learning across all discussions with staff. Students could measure themselves against this criteria and staff would also report against this criteria. It supported early identification of students who were struggling to engage at school.

Directed	Supported	Autonomous
Cannot stay focused unsupervised.	Needs occasional redirecting.	Stays on task without support.
Isn't invested in working on something passion/interest-based.	Has passions/interests but needs help to see how they can become projects.	Is driven by passions/interests and identifies the elements of these.
Cannot create reasonable goals unassisted.	Can come up with ideas but need help to turn them into fully-formed goals.	Can set appropriate goals unassisted.
Cannot set plans to work towards goals.	Can see a path to completing the goal but needs help working out the details, often completes goals.	Can plan out a series of steps towards completing the goal and complete them.
Can't reliably reflect on previous work/SDL sessions.	Can reflect on successful tasks but sometimes struggles to see what they could've done better.	Can reliably reflect on the previous week's work and knows where time was well or ill-spent.
Does not manage time well and rarely shares evidence.	Is growing the skills of time management and often uses them and often shows evdence of learning.	Manages time consistently and competently and always has evidence to share.
Takes no responsibility for learning.	Is regulalry taking responsiblty for their learning and is progressing because of this.	Always takes responsibility for their learning.

We trialled various frameworks at different ages and gathered student and staff voice around efficacy of those frameworks.

Putanga

Year Level	2022 % disengagement
1	6
2	27
3	12
4	0

5	0
6	0
7	12
8	10
9	18
10	19
11	19
12	30
13	24

Frameworks and feedback on the frameworks.

Here are a couple of examples of frameworks being used

What has worked:
Students are more likely to be successful in self-directed learning when they fill in a form outlining their goals. This enables Learning Advisors to see if there is enough in the goal to determine a direction. This also helps students to break down the goal into smaller pieces to track success.

Learning Advisors have found that students vary a lot in terms of their ability to complete the form and break down their goals. Parents are often invited in to help. This has the added bonus of parents knowing what their children are trying to achieve. It also means that students aren't choosing a self-directed learning block because they don't like all the other classes in that option line.

Pūnga

Frameworks and feedback on the frameworks.

What has worked:

Year 1 – 6 have found that having specific goals and scaffolding steps towards achieving goals is working. The goals are published and displayed, as well as shared with parents. Before beginning a self-directed learning block the students have to make a plan, and following the plan they have to do a reflection.

Year 7 upwards students are more likely to be successful in self-directed learning when they fill in a form outlining their goals. This enables Learning Advisors to see if there is enough in the goal to determine a direction. This also helps students to break down the goal into smaller pieces to track success

Learning Advisors have found that students vary a lot in terms of their ability to complete the form and break down their goals. Parents are often invited in to help. This has the added bonus of parents knowing what their children are trying to achieve. It also means that students aren't choosing a self-directed learning block because they don't like all the other classes in that option line.

Engagement Data.

We had an increase in engagement in Year 11, from 69% to 81%. But we didn't reach our target in the senior schools. As students' focus increasingly shifts to NCEA qualifications, self-directed learning takes a back seat in terms of priorities. They are less interested in self-directed learning, and more likely to fill their timetable with NCEA classes. This isn't necessarily a bad thing as students are able to work towards earning a qualification. However, it does mean that they aren't necessarily taking full advantage of the opportunity to do self-directed learning that is available at this school.

Our staff member who has management units for supporting effective self-directed learning worked with the middle leaders to gain insights into what was and wasn't working with self-directed learning and student engagement. A summary of the key findings is below.

- *Effective mentoring made a clear difference in student engagement. Learning Advisors who had been historically mentored in SDL were working more effectively with their students.*
- *Key attributes that helped student engagement and effective self-directed learning were passion projects that were worked on collaboratively with students mentoring each other and Learning Advisors being actively involved in the passion project process, enthusiastic Learning Advisors.*
- *Well-designed goal setting done within regular 1:1 conversations was effective.*
- *In the junior communities parental support is a strong indicator of success with self-directed learning.*
- *There is a lack of consensus across staff as to what effective self-directed learning is and this needs to be addressed.*
- *Lack of skill banks to scaffold and support the development of self-directed learning.*
- *Lack of material resourcing to support the development of self-directed learning.*

Arotakenga

Effective use of frameworks, scaffolds and pedagogical practice to enhance students' efficacy with self-directed learning continues to be a priority in 2023. One of our strategic goals for 2023 is that Kaimahi teach Ao Tawhiti learners how to direct their own learning. To support this goal we have built on the whole staff professional learning completed in 2023 to set up Professional Learning Groups, facilitated by middle leaders, that focus on effective pedagogical practice to support students' self-directes learning. Professional learning groups enable the sharing of knowledge and successful practice.

We have also repackaged self-directed learning into programs called Arotahi. Arotahi means 'to look in one direction, concentrate on, take aim, look steadily'. For senior students, self-directed learning had come to mean 'free time'. It was increasingly used in an educationally non-productive manner and this was contributing to the high disengagement we were seeing in our school building. We changed the name and the student management system to improve the connotations attached to self-directed learning in the senior school.

We will continue to promote and share successful frameworks, such as those trialled in the second half of last year and shown above. These frameworks are proving successful in the younger school, so we are looking at how we develop these with older students.

We are starting to use whānau support and expertise. This is being trialled in the Years 7 – 9 communities in the form of parent coaches and mentors. They are whānau members who come into school and work with students in an area of expertise. These coaches are 'trained' by the staff in our school. We will continue this and see if we can extend it through the wider school.

STRATEGIC GOAL: Hapori Relationships for Learning

To maintain a sense of community.

Whāinga: To strengthen our relational IEMs and 1:1s, so the conversations within the community, support the development of effective self-directed and individual learning programs.

Context: At the core of all learning at Ao Tawhiti Unlimited Discovery is the IEM and 1:1 conversations that happen on a regular basis. The school resources these meetings with time that is timetabled into Home Base Learning Advisors timetables. We also purposely limit the number of ākonga in Home Bases to ensure that every ākonga has one 1:1 meeting per week, or fortnight in Years 1- 6, and one IEM per term. This resourcing emphasises the importance of this relational practice within our kura. In 2021 we engaged in community consultation and upskilling of staff to develop and strengthen the relational aspect of these conversations. We began to look at how to make the conversations more robust in terms of discussing learning outcomes and achievement. We continued this mahi in 2022, as it is fundamental in supporting students to develop effective self-directed and individualised learning programs.

Targets:

All Home Base Learning Advisors are confident to incorporate scaffolded, self-directed learning plans in the 1:1s and IEMs.

All ākonga and whānau are confident to articulate their self-directed learning plans, including the steps that they are undertaking to achieve their learning goal.

Raraunga

Why do we have IEMs/ 1-1s?	What are the positives about IEMs/ 1:1's?	What are the challenges about IEMs/ 1:1's?	What would you change about them?	What do you think makes a great IEM/ 1:1?
Relationships x 7	Relationships x 10	Not enough time x 5	LMS x 3	Student input into education x 4
To set and reflect upon goals x 4	To help me (students) x 4	Not valued x 2	More consistency across LAs x 2	Celebrate successes x 3
So LAs can help students x 3	To set goals x 3	Remembering to go & what was said	Make it easier to see progress over a term x 2	Set challenging goals x 3
Tracking/ accountability x 2	IEM day is a day off! X 2	Stopping what I'm doing to attend a 1-1	The time of the 1-1 x 2	I can change my goals if I want x 2
So I have stuff to do x 2	Confidential	Awkward if there is nothing to discuss	More time	Conversation x 2
A 'bridge' between learning that has been and learning that is to come	Learning how to cater to students passions, interests, needs	Lack of subject LA feedback		They're fun, time with LA
	Accountability			Relationships
	Opportunity to talk about difficulties			Presence of parents
				When IEMs/ 1-1s are positive and enthusiastic
				1-1s are valued by LAs

Whānau voice	Think about the most recent IEM you attended. What did you like?	If you have attended other IEMs, how did the most recent one compare?	What would you like more of?	How useful are the IEMs in knowing what your child does at school?	How helpful are the IEMs in building a relationship with HBLAs?
177 responses	Relationships x 130	There was not much here - people were mostly polite and whilst it was acknowledged that some IEMs between different LAs are different, there was little feedback around comparisons	Lots here however…Various requests for more & more timely info about classes/ SDL/ kids with SLDs/ how HB will run/ how the timetable works/ explanation of levels/ NCEA/ options for Y13 and beyond/ cross-curricular opportunities x 27	5 = 94	5 = 120
Parents new to Ao Tawhiti x 55	Informal & informative x 38	Parents would like more consistency across LAs	Time to prepare before the IEM, ie LAs not making requests the night before x 9	4 = 48	4 = 31
Parents with some experience of Ao Tawhiti x 66	Right amount of time x 9		More time for the appointments, or evening appointments x 9	3 = 12	3 = 10
Parents with lots of experience at Ao Tawhiti x 50	Needs/ goals - focussed x 11		Access to subject LAs x 6	2 = 10	2 = 1
	Positive, relaxed professional LAs x 13		Feedback throughout the term x 6	1 = 1	1 = 1

	That we have IEMs x 4		Appointment times being stuck to x 4		

2 people commented on the following:
- Students to be asked about wellbeing etc and not sole focus on academic goals
- For a staff profile board/ map
- Examples of past SDL projects for inspiration
- Detailed regular feedback
- Praise for the easy booking system

1 person commented on the following:
- Regular communication
- No paper ✓
- More information about our jargon
- More student voice
- A cultural focus
- Consultation with how the school is run
- Reflection on last year during the IEM
- More choice of classes
- Time without the student present
- Some LAs seem disinterested/ disconnected
- The importance of IEMs
- A desire for social occasions
- More information before the IEM

Is there anything else you'd like to add?
- There was some frustration about students picking classes which they were then asked to leave because they were too full - processes around this, and maybe picking a second option in case of this arising again
- Appreciation that plans are made during the IEM but things change
- Many parents commented on how much they appreciate the IEM, and expressed gratitude for us having them
- Relationships are key

Tukanga

We had Dr Julia Atkin facilitating professional learning with the whole staff. The focus of this professional learning was to develop effective pedagogy to best support students to be successful in self-directed learning. This involved using 1:1s and IEMs as tools to support effective self-directed learning.

We supported Community Leaders to upskill and lead Home Base Learning Advisors to develop effective pedagogy around self-directed learning using 1:1s and IEMs as a platform for learning conversations.

We developed frameworks to support Home Base Learning Advisors to structure effective 1:1 and IEM conversations that support whānau and ākonga to articulate and record their learning plans and progress with these plans.

Putanga

Feedback from Home Base Learning Advisors continues to show a mixed level of confidence in their ability to incorporate scaffolded learning plans in weekly 1:1s. The staff working with students in the Years 1 – 8 communities have more confidence in working with students around using 1:1s to support self-directed learning, than the staff in the Years 9 – 13 communities. Staff in the senior school didn't have as much time with their Home Base students as staff working in the Years 1 -8 communities and this is negatively impacting on the depth and detail of learning conversations.

However, there is a consensus across all year levels in the school that staff are confident in IEMs to talk about learning goals and programs with whānau.

The lack of confidence felt by Home Base Learning Advisors working with older students is mirrored by senior students in years 9 – 13. The majority of students felt that 1:1s were a valuable resource in terms of supporting them to achieve learning goals, however they didn't view scaffolded self-directed learning plans as necessarily relevant to their context. They liked to talk about NCEA goals and found their Home Base Learning Advisors receptive and supportive around NCEA goals. They were almost peripheral to the learning that students felt was important. The majority of senior students also indicated enthusiasm for the relationship they had with their Home Base Learning Advisor, and enjoyed the conversations because 'it is nice to have someone to talk to'.

The majority of students in Years 1 – 8 felt that they could articulate self-directed learning plans and that they got effective support from their Home Base Learning Advisors around goal setting and learning goals.

We haven't collated whānau voice this year.

Arotakenga

We will build on this initial work in 2023 through an adaptation of our student management system to enable the framework for effective learning conversations to happen. We have developed a new student management system called Arotahi, and this can be shared with whānau. It will be the platform for the collation of learning conversations that happen in 1:1s and IEMs. To address the 'lack of time' in the senior school we are building in more opportunities for self-reflection and goal setting by incorporating it into Friday Hapori lessons as well.

We will survey whānau in 2023 around the impact of IEMs on their confidence to support their children with their learning programs. We have also composed a guide sheet for whānau, so they have a list of questions that they can ask at IEMs, to better support their understanding of how the school works.

A 'within-school' Kāhui Ako Learning Advisor has taken on the portfolio of supporting transitions and a part of her work this year will be supporting the transition of new students and whānau with some education around how to make the most of IEM and 1:1 time. Often IEMs and 1:1 meetings are new to students and it can take some time to understand how to maximise the value of them.

We have made the strengthening of relationships a focus of 2023 with the development of strategic goals that enhance relationships as this will enable us to develop this work in more detail.

- Our community strives to embody the Core Values and Special Character and this is evidenced throughout interactions with each other and the wider school environment
- Our community uses the Core Values and Special Character as the foundation for all decision making within the school environment
- Our community uses the Core Values and Special Character to frame up any learning conversation

STRATEGIC GOAL: ĀKONGA Leading for Learning

To develop a culture where learners take responsibility for their learning

Whāinga: To have 85% of our ākonga at 80%, or above attendance for 2022.

Context: Our school is sitting below the average attendance for students in Aotearoa. There are a number of factors that impact our attendance. The first is that we have a number of students who engage in off-site learning and staff aren't always accurately recording this. The second factor is that we attract a large number of students who struggle with mental health. This means that students' anxiety and other health factors negatively impact on their ability to sustain full-time education. A third factor is that our school attracts students who have disengaged from traditional education. They come to Ao Tawhiti with habitual disengagement and it can take time and effort to reverse this ingrained behaviour. Our staff work hard to establish strong relational practice and support students with a variety of flexible practices. We now need to ensure that this relational practice and flexible practice results in greater engagement in learning as evidenced through attendance statistics.

Target

To have 85% of our ākonga at 80%, or above attendance for 2022.

Raraunga **(initial database – attendance statistics)**

2021	Ao Tawhiti %	Aotearoa New Zealand %
➤ 90%	28.2	59.70
➤ 80%	63	83.8
➤ 70%	76.7	92.3
< 70%	23.3	7.70

Tukanga

We had a whole school focus on improving attendance by talking through weekly attendance with students in 1:1s. Part of this conversation meant an accurate recording of attendance by giving students the opportunity to show evidence of their off-site learning, so staff can update attendance. This also gave non, or low attending students the opportunity to talk about barriers to regular attendance. Home Base Learning Advisors could then begin to work with the school and family to address those barriers.

Attendance was regularly shared with whānau so they understood what was happening with their children, as students can be truanting while still in the school building.

We resourced a staff member with 2 hours per week to analyse attendance data and identify at risk students. This staff member liaised with guidance teams, who in turn accessed external agencies to support chronic non-attenders and their whānau.

We utilised our Kāhui Ako social worker and mental health nurse to support whānau in their homes to get students back into school.

Putanga

2022	Ao Tawhiti %	Aotearoa New Zealand %
➤ 90%	31.9	50.6
➤ 80%	62.2	76.2
➤ 70%	79.4	87.6
< 70%	20.6	12.4

Pūnga

Our school had a slight increase in attendance with an improvement of 3% of students attending over 90%, and 3% over 70%. We had a decrease in the number of chronic non-attenders who attended less than 70% of the time.
The overall attendance in Aotearoa dropped in 2022, as this was a year heavily impacted by Covid, so our minimal increase in attendance is a step in the right direction.

Arotakenga

We are a 'second chance' school for a number of students, who have become disengaged from education and habitually non-attend education programs. We work hard to re-engage students into learning. The vast majority of our non-attenders are struggling with mental health and anxiety, and are engaged with a number of agencies to support reintegration into education.

In 2023 we are continuing to resource two counsellors, a mental health nurse and a social worker (through the Kāhui Ako), so our students have a range of supports to engage them back into learning, and into the school building. We will also continue to resource a staff member to provide up to date data on attendance so our guidance team and Home Base Learning Advisors and whānau have accurate information about attendance.

We will continue to resource time in Home Base classes and small numbers in these classes, so Home Base Learning Advisors will be able to develop strong relationships with students and whānau, as research shows that effective relational practice can have a positive impact on students' willingness to attend school.

Attendance will continue to be a whole school priority and as such, it is one of our strategic goals for 2023.
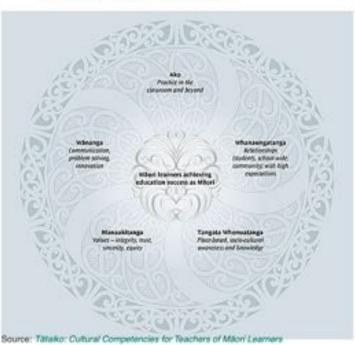
Ao Tawhiti Unlimited Discovery Plan 2023 – 2025

Māori Achieving Success as Māori

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 anyplace, thanks to the rich involvement of whānau and community.

This plan is informed by voice from whānau, kaimahi and tauira. Thank you to Iri Mahuika for facilitating kōrero with whānau and tauira.

It has been developed using the Tātaiako framework. Tātaiako is a framework developed to help kaiako understand and value what is important when taking a Māori world view in relation to teaching Māori tauira. It utilises five competencies that are essential values that need to be present when engaging Māori tauira.

TĀTAIAKO COMPETENCIES

Source: *Tātako: Cultural Competencies for Teachers of Māori Learners*

	Akoako	Hohenga	Hapori?	Ua?
Ako	*Successful students (academically and when pursuing passions)* *Knowing the learner as individuals* *A current and positive view of Māori* *Learning to learn*	Implement the Aotearoa New Zealand Histories curriculum throughout Years 1 – 10 Start embedding the curriculum refresh which better honours Te Tiriti Develop tikanga for IEMs and share with staff Update name from IEM - use Te Reo Māori with a focus on relationships. Opportunity to mihi and pepeha at every IEM and use Karakia to open and close the space (option available for whānau).	Professional Learning Group Kaimahi Aotearoa New Zealand Histories Curriculum Coordinator SLT Craig and SLT Alix to share some ideas around developing Tikanga.	2023 Staff workshops 2022 - ongoing Beginning to upskill kaimahi in 2023

	Akoako	Hohenga	Hapori?	Ua?
		Prioritise culturally sustaining professional learning for kaimahi through ensuring all professional learning groups and staff hui have a Māori lens applied to their contexts.	SLT and Kāhui Ako	Term One 2023
		Māori giftedness – professional development for kaimahi so this is recognised and celebrated	*tbc*	
		[Recognising Māori giftedness](#)		
Whanaungatanga	*Happy tamariki and rangatahi*	Regular whānau hui established in the school calendar - rotate timings so that some are in the evening and some are for breakfast (at least once a term).	SLT Craig Perry	2023
	Students making social connections			
	Strong relational practice in all areas of the kura	Social whānau meetings. Kapa Haka promoted as a time for whānau to meet (Thursday 10am).		
	Bring the community together more			

	Akoako	Hohenga	Hapori?	Ua?
	A space for whānau	Start the year with a picnic and promote the opportunity to connect with the whānau group.		
	Consistent and regular attendance for all our Māori ākonga	Create a space for Māori ākonga and whānau. This will be 2.3. Whānau and ākonga will be invited to share ideas about what this looks like and the process to establish tikanga in the space.	SLT Property Manager	
		Notice board in whānau room and timetable (to show room availability).		
		Soft furnishings to be available.		
		Kura is available for whānau after hours as a place to meet. This is Māori only to provide a safe space for discussion.	Alix and Kate	

	Akoako	Hohenga	Hapori?	Ua?
Tangata Whenuatanga	*The kura needs to meet the cultural needs of Māori ākonga*	We need to establish stronger connections with mana whenua so we can work together to develop our cultural narrative and use this as a foundation for establishing future practice.	Board and Director	Ongoing
	Matauranga Māori needs to be more evident in learning			
	A clear cultural narrative needs to be developed, shared and celebrated	Support student leadership and connections with mana whenua to establish school wide tikanga and practices that are reflective of our identity.	Kaimahi	2023
		Establish Māori role models who can be available for student support.	Whānau group SLT	Ongoing
		Add a page to school website acknowledging Mana Whenua, how we are honouring Te Tiriti and our Special Character	Craig Perry	Ongoing

	Akoako	Hohenga	Hapori?	Ua?
		Space on website for whanau updates.		Term One 2023
		Involvement in events, competitions, performances (such as Kapa Haka, Te Reo comps).	All whānau Abby + Kate to share information around events (timing, location etc)	
		Kaimahi marae visits	Craig to follow up on Jess McCarthy's idea of having a Karakia on display like the one that Discovery used to have.	
		Ākonga and whānau noho marae		
		Have a Karakia visible at our entrance. Check with Whānau for appropriateness/suggestion	Craig Perry	

	Akoako	Hohenga	Hapori?	Ua?
Manaakitanga	*Visible valuing of Māori culture and identity*	Increase the visibility of te ao Māori within the building.	Kaimahi	Ongoing
		Ricky Manual's carving is being restored.	Ian Hayes	January 2023
	Cultural celebrations and opportunities			
	Visible means of sharing information and knowledge	Provide greater visibility of Toi.	Property Manager	2023
		Use the beams in spaces and other building structures to feature Toi	Ākonga and Kaimahi	
	Further development of tuakana teina opportunities	Te Reo labelling of key kupu for spaces around the building.	Abby and ākonga Property Manager	
		Establish Kapa Haka throughout the kura	Megan Taylor	Term One 2023
Wānanga	*Learning to learn*	Continue to enrol and encourage kaimahi to engage in Te Ahu o te Reo courses and utilise te reo Māori in the kura with the aim of normalising te reo Māori.	SLT and Administration Staff	Term Four 2022
	Build kaimahi capacity with te Reo Māori			

	Akoako	Hohenga	Hapori?	Ua?
	Normalise use of te Reo Māori within our school community			