

*Together We Learn*

WAIHOPAI SCHOOL

*Incorporating the Park Unit for students with physical disabilities*

CHARTER

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Purpose of the Charter

The School Charter is a very important document. At its fundamental level it is a contract between the Board of Trustees and the Minister of Education, to establish goals and objectives for the school and to outline how the school is organised and managed to achieve them.

Waihopai School's Charter does far more as well. It identifies the values our school community wishes to be reflected in operation of the school and the expectations that we have of the education that is provided.

The Charter also includes the strategic plan that the Board has mapped out for the school over the next 3 years. It is therefore the principal guiding document for Board decision-making.

Finally, the Charter includes the school's annual plans, which give the details of specific actions and expenditure to be taken each year to give effect to the strategic plan goals. It is therefore the main guiding document for management decision-making and reporting to the Board as well.

### Organisation of the Charter Document

There are 4 sections to the Charter:

Section 1 contains a general overview of the school and its community, and some general information about the national education framework in which the school operates. It also includes a brief outline of the respective roles of the Board and Principal.

Section 2 presents the over-arching principles that the Board believes are important to the community, in guiding both planning and decision-making for the school, and its day-to-day operation.

The statement "Together We Learn" is adopted as the school motto, and the **mission statement**:

*"to provide our students with outstanding primary education that is strongly focused on literacy, numeracy and development of the whole person".*

reflects the school's key role, and the expectations that the community has of Waihopai School.

Our future intentions for the school are summarised in the **vision** statement:

*“to be recognised in the community as a leading provider of excellent primary education”.*

Our values include provision of educational opportunity for those with high needs through physical disability.

### Section 3: Strategic Plan.

The Board has identified 6 strategic goals clustered within 5 Focus Areas, on which to concentrate over the next three years. Most are things the school is already doing, but the Board acknowledges that there is always room for innovation and improvement.

### Section 4: Annual Plans

The principal has responsibility for producing the school’s Annual Plan each year. They describe in detail the actions, programmes, priorities and expenditure that is planned to make progress in achievement of the Strategic goals. The Board will monitor progress in implementation of the Annual Plan throughout the year. The outcomes are reported in the school’s Annual Report, which is produced by the end of March each year.

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

This Charter is an undertaking by the Waihopai Board of Trustees to the Minister of Education, to establish aims, goals and objectives for Waihopai School and to demonstrate how the school is organised and managed to enable these to be achieved.

In particular, the Charter establishes the directions, priorities and targets for the key areas of student achievement and use of school resources that will give effect to the Government's National Education Guidelines (see section 1.5 below).

Sections 60 – 64 of the Education Act 1989 contain the legislative requirements that must be adhered to in the development and amendment of a charter.

**The Charter contains the Strategic and Annual Plans for the school, and is used as a reference for all Board activity. It forms an important part of the information that is considered by the Audit Office and the Education Review Office in their review of the school.**

The Charter is organised as follows:

Section 1 contains an overview of Waihopai School and the education framework within which it is operated, in order to provide context and meaning to the information that is contained in the following sections.

Section 2 presents the mission and vision statements and the core values that guide the school in its decision-making.

Section 3 contains the Strategic Plan for 2005 -2008.

Section 4 contains the Annual Plans prepared by the Principal to give effect to the Strategic Plan.

## 1.1 Waihopai School Overview

Waihopai School is a State Contributing Primary School, providing education for children from New Entrant to Year 6. The school is currently one of the largest primary schools in Invercargill, and has a relatively stable roll that varies between about 360 and 410 annually. Currently 82% identify as European/Pakeha, 13% Maori and a further 5% from other nationalities (Chinese, Indian, Middle Eastern). At the present time there are no Pasifika children attending Waihopai School.

The school also operates the Park Unit, which provides educational support and therapy services for up to 30 students with high and very high needs as a result of physical disabilities. This is designated a “special programme” by the Ministry of Education.

The school grounds cover 2.56 hectares (over half of which is playing field), adjacent to the northern edge of Queens Park.

## **1.2 The School Community**

The school operates an enrolment scheme, with the home zone covering Queens Park and the suburbs of Gladstone and Avenal. This community in this area is characterised by the following features:

- it is well established and stable
- there is a high proportion of families with both parents in the workforce
- there is a high proportion of parents in professional or managerial employment
- it provides good support for the school, with a high level of parent participation and excellent parental co-operation
- it places high value on education, and has high expectations of the school.

### 1.3 School Governance

The education system operates primarily as a partnership between the Ministry of Education and school Boards of Trustees. Parents and caregivers, principals, staff and students all contribute to this partnership as well.

The Board of Trustees is entrusted to work on behalf of all these parties. It has overall responsibility for the school, including certain legal obligations including preparation of the School Charter, reporting to the Ministry of Education and the school community, and ensuring proper management of school finances, property and personnel.

It is responsible for ensuring effective delivery of the curriculum, it establishes goals, develops and reviews policies, employs staff, monitors school performance and manages and supports the principal.

**One of the Board's key responsibilities is accountability for student achievement.** It aims to exercise this accountability by emphasising strategic leadership in the organisation and running of the school, and focusing strategic planning on the improvement of student achievement through effective teaching and learning programmes, and effective information gathering, reporting and review processes.

### 1.4 School Management

The relationship between the Board of Trustees and the School Principal is defined by Sections 75 and 76 of the Education Act 1989:

*s.75 Boards to control management of schools –  
Except to the extent that any enactment or the general law of New Zealand provides otherwise, a school's board has complete discretion to control the management of the school as it thinks fit.*

*s.76 Principals –  
(1) A school's principal is the board's chief executive in relation to the school's control and management.*

*(2) Except to the extent that any enactment or the general law of New Zealand provides otherwise, the principal –  
(a) Shall comply with the board's general policy directions; and  
(b) Subject to paragraph (a) of this subsection, has complete discretion to manage as the principal thinks fit the school's day-to-day administration.*

The Waihopai Board of Trustees delegates all authority and accountability for the day-to-day operational organisation and running of the school to the Principal (for details see the Board's Governance Manual).

## 1.5 The National Education Guidelines

The National Education Guidelines provide the framework for education in New Zealand. They are made up of three principal parts:

- National Education Goals (NeG's)
- National Curriculum Statements
- National Administration Guidelines (NaG's)

### National Education Goals

These are statements of the Government's priorities for education, and may be summarised briefly as:

- High achievement for all
- Equality of educational opportunity
- Education relevant to society's needs
- Sound foundation in the early years
- Priority in literacy, numeracy and physical activity
- Setting objectives, and monitoring student performance against them
- Improved outcomes for students with special needs
- Improved outcomes for Maori students
- Respect for the cultural heritage of New Zealand people

The Board of Trustees recognises these goals. The school implements them at governance and operational levels by giving them full consideration when planning school developments and/or school and class programmes.

### National Curriculum Statements

The NZ Curriculum contains 7 Essential Learning Areas and 8 Essential Skills:

<u>Essential Learning Areas</u>	<u>Essential Skills</u>
Language and languages	Communication
Mathematics	Numeracy
Science	Information
Technology	Problem solving
Social Sciences	Self management & competitive
The Arts	Social & co-operative
Health and physical well-being	Physical
	Work & study

For each of the 7 Essential Learning Areas there is a national curriculum statement. It is the Board of Trustees' responsibility to ensure that the school meets and follows these statements.

### National Administration Guidelines

These are guidelines to assist a Board in ensuring that it meets all its obligations. They cover 6 key areas of school operation:

- NAG 1 Curriculum implementation
- NAG 2 Planning, reporting and review
- NAG 3 Employer responsibilities
- NAG 4 Financial and Property management
- NAG 5 Health and Safety
- NAG 6 Administration

The Board recognises and uses these guidelines in its planning, charter and policy development and review, and its self-review procedures.

## **1.6 Cultural Diversity**

When developing policies and practices for the school every endeavour is made to reflect New Zealand's cultural diversity and the unique position of the Maori culture. Teachers are encouraged to use greetings from different languages. Many junior classes also sing a song that identifies greetings from different cultures.

Te Reo is encouraged in all classes with children having an understanding of level 1 Te Reo. However it is proving difficult to make the transition from level 1 to level 2 because:

- staff perceive they have a lack of knowledge in Te Reo
- to date a suitable tutor fluent in Maori has not been found.

Over the next four years the school's objectives are to have at least one interested member of staff further develop their expertise in Maori language, by attending an appropriate course (SIT for example). Our aim is also to locate and employ a suitable tutor to establish an extension/enrichment programme in Maori. The school will also seek, where appropriate, the assistance of the local Maori community to providing students with opportunities to experience and participate in tikanga Maori (e.g. visits to local marae at least every 3 years).

When a parent of a full-time student requests that their child(ren) be provided with instruction in Te Reo Maori the Principal, on behalf of the Board, will:

- discuss with the parents the ways the school currently involves Te Reo and Tikanga Maori in our life and programmes
- discuss with the parents whether the student would have access to Te Reo in the home
- where appropriate support an application for dual enrolment at Correspondence School for the student/s, and provide support staff assistance.

## **1.7 Procedural Information**

The planning year for the Board is from 1 January to 31 December.

The Principal reports regularly to the Board on the implementation of the relevant Annual Plan. Progress is reviewed in September each year, and this forms the basis of development of the next annual plan by early January in the following year.

The annual plan together with the report on progress in the previous year (the Annual Report) is lodged with the Ministry of Education by 31 May each year.

## 2. A DIRECTION FOR WAIHOPAI SCHOOL

### 2.1 Mission

The mission statement summarises the key role of Waihopai School.

**“To provide our students with outstanding primary education that is strongly focused on literacy, numeracy and development of the whole person.”**

### 2.2 Values and Expectations

Waihopai School promotes:

- Literacy and numeracy
- Success and achievement
- Self esteem and respect for others
- Honesty
- Acceptance, inclusion and teamwork
- Fairness
- Friendliness
- An environment where children enjoy their learning experiences and want to come to school
- Educational opportunity for those with high needs through physical disability

Students are encouraged to:

- Enjoy learning and confidently accept new challenges
- Strive for success and maximise their potential
- Take a growing responsibility for their learning & behaviour
- Accept difference and demonstrate respect for and tolerance of others
- Develop their individuality and personality
- Enjoy New Zealand’s bicultural heritage and multi cultural diversity

Staff are expected to:

- Demonstrate awareness of, and commitment to, the mission, vision and values of the school

- See themselves as a team, and participate as appropriate, in decision-making
- Maintain the highest level of professionalism
- Provide interesting teaching programmes that challenge and extend all students according to their ability
- Recognise, celebrate and share success
- Demonstrate a commitment to inclusion of biculturalism and to recognise multiculturalism in teaching programmes as appropriate.

### 2.3 A Vision for the School

Our vision is a statement of our future intent.

**“To be recognised in the community as a leading provider of excellent primary education.”**

What this will mean in practice is that:

- the school can demonstrate, via the use of appropriate and easily understood data, how it is enhancing the achievement of its students throughout their time at Waihopai School.
- the school will have up to date teaching resources in all classes and be maintaining active and well-planned professional development for teachers.
- parents and caregivers will be satisfied with their children’s progress while they are attending Waihopai School.
- parents and caregivers will be actively choosing to send their children to Waihopai School.
- former pupils will be able to say that they felt happy and fulfilled with their primary school experience, and prepared for their transition to high school.
- the school’s performance will be endorsed and supported by favourable ERO reports.