



**Waikite Valley School**  
*Developing Learners for Life*

# GRADUATE PATHWAYS ACADEMY



**2022**



**Year 7 & 8**

**INFORMATION BOOKLET**

Thank you for choosing Waikite Valley School for your child's Intermediate Years. This time in a child's life is significant for a number of reasons, it is the beginning of adolescence, it is also the pathway into high school and their NCEA school years.

Over the past 5 years we have put a real emphasis on specialising our intermediate program to meet the needs of our community, and more than this, to rival the opportunities that any other school in our region offers. This has led to a wide range of experiences and activities that our students have done that many other schools have not been able to offer, or many of the students don't have the option to take part in. We are extremely proud of the students who have stayed with us to the end of their primary/intermediate schooling and the schools that receive our students have given very high praise for the qualities that they arrive with. It is fair to say that our students 'stand out' for their independence, motivation, problem solving and team-work skills.

At Waikite Valley School, our Year 7 and 8 students are involved in four major **EOTC experiences per year**. Each term they will take part in a new outdoor experience. These can include a range of activities - the students in the class plan these outings as each term arrives. They take part in a National Young Leaders Day. In 2021 it is as yet undecided where we will travel. This will be discussed with the class very early in Term 1. The ideas and learning that happens over these days feeds into the leadership roles that the students will **all** fulfill in the school.

In 2019 we trialled our own technology program and have continued to build on it using specialty teachers in the school and experts in the community. This has been very successful, thus we will continue in 2022, this takes place for 2-4 hours a week and covers the topics of:

Culinary arts/Cooking

Sewing

Woodwork/Construction

Robotics/ Programming / Graphics

Our students in the Graduate Pathways Academy will have the opportunity to take part in a number of competitions and sports activities over the year. We will have an intermediate hockey team again in 2022 - usually involving most members of the class.

The Graduate Pathways Academy students will also have teams entered into the Rotorua local cluster events and baywide sports activities (depending on what is available).

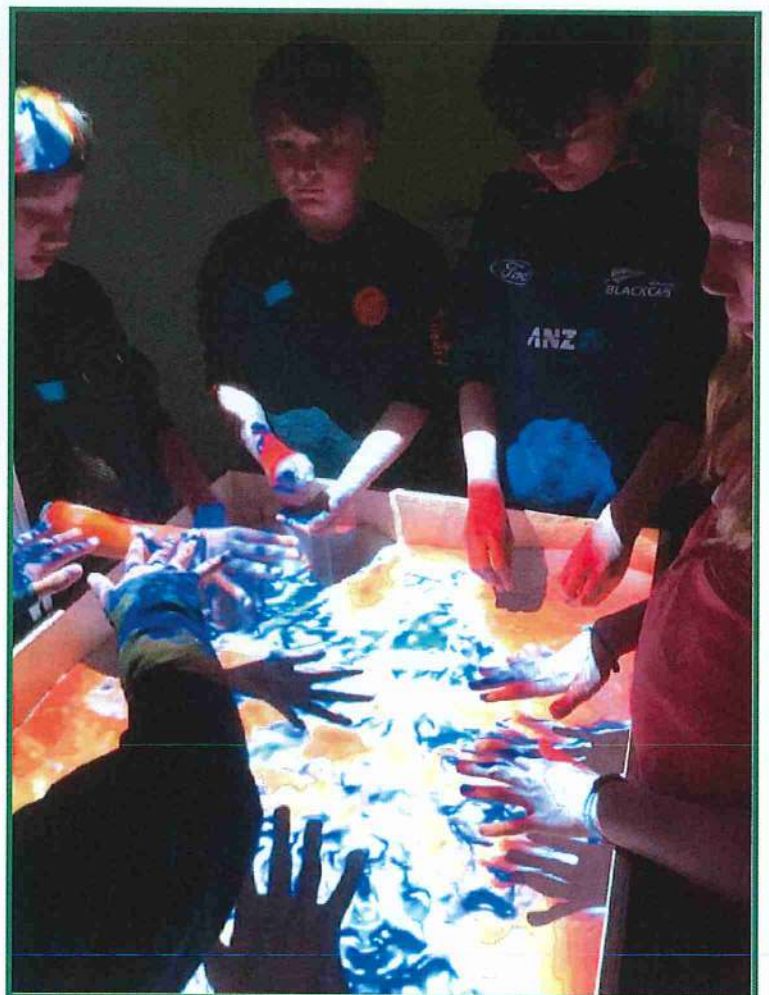
Other areas of learning that will be intensified in the Graduate Pathways Academy will be careers education, budgeting/finances, self-organised learning and creative problem solving.



Kapa Haka training, performance and opportunity to show leadership.



FIRST LEGO LEAGUE TOURNAMENT, DECEMBER 2020



OHOPE BEACH CAMP 2020

GNS SCIENCE SANDBOX 2020

Our Graduate Pathways Academy students will develop the essential skills, self-organisation and learning dispositions to ensure they are ready to enter high school at Year 9 with the best opportunity for success.

Research shows that in *"Years 7-10 students need opportunities to achieve to the best of their abilities across the breadth and depth of the New Zealand Curriculum – values, key competencies, and learning areas – laying a foundation for living and for further learning."* – *The New Zealand Curriculum P.41*

We want to develop a Year 7-8 curriculum that is responsive to the students we are teaching, that recognises that students in these years are undergoing rapid physical development, becoming increasingly socially aware, and encountering increasingly complex curriculum contexts. Of great importance are positive relationships with adults, opportunities to be involved with the community and authentic learning contexts (adapted from the New Zealand Curriculum).

The Year 7 – 8 years are the start of adolescence, which is the transition period from childhood to adulthood. We are very aware of this and know that there is a need for a clearly different learning and teaching pedagogy for students in their middle years of schooling (there is a lot of recent New Zealand research to support this). Also, students' learning progress is closely linked to their ongoing development of literacy and numeracy skills – which continue to require focused teaching.

The period of emerging adolescence (10-14 years of age) is marked as a period of developmental change second only in importance to the first two years of life (Stewart and Nolan, 1992; Carr Grieg, 2002; Nagel, 2007). The inter-related developmental changes, (physical, psycho-emotional, cognitive and social), have lasting effects on the development of self-concept, academic and social adjustment to social norms. This stage determines the kind of person the emerging adolescent will finally become. Psycho-emotional development is characterised by the search for personal identity. Social development is characterised by decreasing parental affiliation and increasing peer influence. The development of strong peer group conformity is coupled with a growing acceptance of and interest in members of the opposite sex.

It is widely accepted that the best type of school to meet the needs of emerging adolescents is one which responds to identified needs. We strongly believe that Waikite Valley School does this in an all encompassing way – we know our students and their whanau so intricately, that we are quick to respond to social, academic and physical needs according to the individual child. All of our students are treated as individuals and encouraged to explore their strengths and passions in a genuine way. This enables us to nurture the development of well-rounded adolescents, ready to continue their journey towards becoming a young adult. By the end of Year 8 they should be self-confident, well-grounded learners with the skills and attributes to continue their learning journey with gumption.

Teresa Topp

Principal

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