



Houghton Valley School
INSPIRATION, CHALLENGE, ACHIEVEMENT
TE HIRINGA, TE WEROHIA, TE WHAKATUTUKITANGA

CHARTER REVIEW RESPONSES FROM PARENTS 8 JUNE 2011

Around 20 parents (including 5 BOT parent reps) met on Wednesday 8 June 2011. A questionnaire and invitation to contribute email were also sent out to parents.

The following is a list of responses, which had been recorded by groups of parents then displayed for all to read.

Parents revisited questions one and three, putting adhesive spots next to things they considered to be more important.

QUESTION ONE – LIFE AT SCHOOL

What are the most important things you want for your children during their years at HVS?

(Spots = actual spots plus other equivalent mentions)

- Literacy/numeracy – reading, writing/maths (7 spots)
- Empowered to create change/lead (6 spots)
 - make a difference
 - be active citizens
- Challenged (6 spots)
- Values (6 spots)
 - manners, respecting others, respecting environment
- Adaptability (4 spots)
- Self confident (4 spots)
- Creative thinking (4 spots)

- Finding joy in giving (3 spots)
- Academic achievement (3 spots)

- Truth without fear (2 spots)
- To not be bullied (2 spots)
- Wide range of experiences (2 spots)
- Resilience (2 spots)
- Be happy – I love my school (2 spots)
- Feel valued (2 spots)

- Belief in themselves and love of community (1 spot)
- To be heard – being understood (1 spot)
- Global awareness – sense of whole world (1 spot)
- Potential (1 spot)
- Look at the big picture (1 spot)
- Security and safety (1 spot)
- Friendships creating, maintaining, lifelong (1 spot)

OTHERS

- extended
- take on responsibility
- consistency
- exposure to other cultures, the environment
- flexibility
- time management
- confidence – learn to take healthy risks
- support – emotional and academic
- variety
- active
- values
- extend themselves creatively
- leading to a life as conservationists
- association of fun with learning
- extend themselves physically
- up to date with recent human achievements in science and technology
- technology – prepare for the modern world
- theatre
- confidence to find out their own answers
- artistic excellence
- encourage a lifelong love of learning
- adventure
- discovery
- exposure to other languages especially Te Reo
- confidence to find out their own answers

- Te Tiriti
- Interpersonal skills
- Learn respect for difference
- Wholistic approach to learning
- Multicultural perspectives
- Excellent role models in principal and teachers
- Opportunity to learn/practise a wide variety of life skills
 - o social
 - o art/creative
 - o physical – co-ordination, fitness, strength, diet, posture, love of exercise
- Social cohesion; empathy, part of a group
- Key skills – maths, English, science, history, geography, art, sport
- Confidence to participate – have opinions, stand up at assembly
- Independence
- Think for self
- Make decisions
- Responsibility for others

QUESTION THREE – ACHIEVEMENT

What achievements (in a broad sense) would you like your child to make by the time they leave the school?

- Reach their own academic potential (3 Rs – numeracy/literacy) (11 spots)
- Have a broad range of experiences in art, drama, music, sport, gardening...while they are open minded and ‘elastic’ (10 Spots)
- Love of learning (5 spots)
- Experience of performance – music, dance, theatre, visual art(4 spots)
- Social skills (4 spots)
- Positive and optimistic (3 spots)
- Express themselves (3 spots)
- Problem solving skills (2 spots)
- Basic understanding of Te Reo Maori (2 spots)
- Understanding the ecology the school’s surroundings – beach, bush, urban (2 spots)

- Be enabled to discover and explore passions (2 spots)
- Having the confidence to try (1 spot)
- Participate in sports – incl. teams (1 spot)
- Achieve a clear understanding and enactment of the school's social, environmental and academic values (1 spot)
- Ability to solve conflict (1 spot)
- Friendship – ability to make new friends (1 spot)
- Fit and healthy (1 spot)
- Can swim (1 spot)
- Present verbally on issue or topic (1 spot)
- Confident and comfortable in themselves – ready for the next step (1 spot)

OTHER

- Academically – be at or above expected level of achievement
- To be able to work as part of a team but also apart
- Awareness of physicality
- Can grow food
- Capable of effective teamwork
- Basic ball skills
- Computer literate
- Working with others
- Healthy choices and look after yourself
- Be active participants in school and wider community (akin to civics)
- Confidence and be able to express selves freely and clearly
- Be lateral thinkers
- Feel part of community
- Good social skills
- Confidence in learning
- Great communication skills
- Enquiring mind – creative expression, mechanics and what makes things happen – environmentally, socially, physically
- An understanding of another language
- A concept of what subjects he excels at to pursue a natural course in his older academic subject choices
- Life skills – communication, presentation, conflict resolution, health and wellbeing, financial

QUESTION TWO – VALUES

What values would you like to see being promoted at HVS?

(in no particular order)

- Accountability
- Politeness
- Respect for other people√√
- Respect for difference - pluralism
- Respect for rules
- Respect for the environment√
- Honesty √√
- Empathy √√
- Independence
- Inclusion
- Freedom of expression
- Not being afraid to fail
- Dignity of risk
- Critical and constructive thinking
- Compassion
- Inner convictions
- A sense of the 'divine', the mystery, the wonder of life
- Self care and value
- Stick to task from start to end/perseverance √
- Care for the environment
- Teamwork – collaborative, co-operative√√
- How to be good at sport
- Healthy competition – knowing how to win and lose √
- Giving
- Learning
- Fair play
- Truth
- Compassion
- Ability to be reflective
- Openness
- Bravery
- Trust
- Conservation
- Peace and harmony
- Creativity
- Curiosity
- Mindfulness
- Inspired

- Considerate
- Kindness
- Challenged/stretched to do better
- Resilience
- Strive to do best with a balanced approach to competition
- Appreciate beauty in the world
- Optimism – ‘glass half full’
- Integrity
- Excited by the world
- Inspired
- Value learning
- Tolerance, acknowledge people’s different strengths
- Awareness o multiculturalism and diversity
- Health
- Value of trying
- Positive attitudes to school and education
- Citizenship/civics
- Value analytical and creative thinking
- Equality – gender and ethnicity in particular; but also social stereotypes (e.g. ‘gay’ as a derogatory term)
- Politeness
- Importance of family and community
- A sense of belonging, positive future and variety
- Integrity
- Honesty
- Ownership – taking personal responsibility
- Fun – a fun and interactive learning environment

QUESTION FOUR – LOOKING AHEAD

What would you like the BOT and school to specifically develop over the next 3 years?

- Every child to play/try playing an instrument
- Newsletters, web pages and performances produced by children
- Dedicated art teaching
- More school sports teams (like current netball)
 - soccer
 - rugby
 - mixed netball
 - chess
 - group opportunities for kids not into sport (e.g. art room)
- Continue full use of library and continue with librarian – encourages a passion for reading
- Whole-of-school projects that study local and global themes

- Continuous cross grouping for maths – not just for fractions etc
- More electives so can explore new areas
- Music programme
- Arts programme
- Science programme
- Life skills for students and staff (taking care of mental health)
- Earthquake and disaster plan – understanding practical measures
- Lego in every classroom
- Growing food and green energy
- Movie making
- Revamp of lower playground
- More possibilities for adventurous play
- Co-creative learning through discovery
- Making more use of our valley
- A science lab
- More classroom space
- Dedicated computer space using Macs
- Computer skills – not just use, but basic programming
- Ensuring access to computer technology
- Artist in residence
- Performer in residence
- Scientist in residence
- Specialist teacher part time – science projects
- Bi-monthly workshop for parents, teachers and children e.g. expressive movement and musical ‘have a go’
- Sister school relationship project with children in another country – share resources, raise awareness, develop social responsibility
- Light in classrooms – skylights, more windows?
- Alternate energy sources – wind turbine to generate our own electricity and contribute to grid
- Solar panels
- Heating floors – cool heads/warm feet; and insulation
- Growing food
- Self review of weakness
- Teacher/child ratio
- Opportunities to learn foreign language
- Peer support/mentoring
- Promotion of fitness and being in the outdoors
- How to achieve the above in an engaging and supportive way
- Languages and music learnt independently from standard classes and more integration of language, Art, music into the school
- Engagement models between children and teachers.
- Identifying ways to improve learning outcomes through environment/teaching styles

QUESTION FIVE - FEEDBACK

What does the school do well?

- ✓ Welcoming, happy atmosphere
- ✓ Broad focus, with a wide range of opportunities for kids e.g. academic, arts, environmental focus, sports, community, school outings
- ✓ Dedicated staff, willing to upskill
- ✓ Family involvement encouraged
- ✓ After school care
- ✓ HVS feels safe, friendly, caring, inclusive
- ✓ Part of community
- ✓ Flexible to attend to individual needs
- ✓ The school bus is a good idea
- ✓ Love the rainforest
- ✓ Approachable staff, including Barry
- ✓ KC cards
- ✓ Social events are well patronised
- ✓ Library
- ✓ Confidence building
- ✓ Maori component – could do more
- ✓ Plenty of physical activity/balanced with school work
- ✓ Employs teachers who care
- ✓ Barry knows every child's name (and parents)
- ✓ Academic support/interaction with parents (constant support required)
- ✓ Dealing with control issues in relation to academic ability
- ✓ Communicates really well with parents
- ✓ Involves parents
- ✓ Inclusion
- ✓ Creates a good vibe – welcoming enjoyable, safe
- ✓ Fair
- ✓ More men staff
- ✓ Tuakana/teina approach
- ✓ Celebration of success
- ✓ Performance assemblies
- ✓ Good leadership
- ✓ Teachers work as a team
- ✓ Flexibility
- ✓ Seniors running assembly
- ✓ Librarian
- ✓ Cohesive – brings the school together well
- ✓ Communication with parents – good newsletter
- ✓ Sport, creativity and without comparison, learning the basics

- ✓ The art focus
- ✓ Reading
- ✓ Love the newsletter
- ✓ Community involvement
- ✓ Adult learning nights- 'Bangers and Maths'
- ✓ Denise is awesome

What could be improved?

- The website
- Lighting in classrooms
- Higher status for the arts
- More Te Reo/Te Tiriti/Tikanga maori
- More communication channels for parents
- More out of classroom/active learning – esp for boys
- Clearer distinction in newsletter about school-led versus independent operator holiday activities
- Increased citizenship and sustainability activities
- Need an additional classroom
- Bring back buddy reading
- Need teachers to keep in touch more with parents of new arrivals
- New entrants could be let out when the bell goes
- Include families more e.g. siblings at mat time
- Encourage parent help
- Communicate expectations with parents
- More feedback – through a variety of different ways on child's progress
- Need to be told sooner rather than later if my child is struggling in any area so that I can be involved in supporting them to overcome any obstacles
- Visits to galleries (e.g. Te Papa and New Dowse are fantastic and free) In 4 years our daughter had been to no gallery trips or events and one teacher hadn't heard of the New Dowse!
- The school needs to recognise diverse family groups - especially the fact that some children have gay parents/step-parents – the school leadership and teachers need to do something about 'gay' being used as an insult
- The technology of the classrooms – better boards or larger ones
- Kapahaka needs a lift
- Communication to parents about any issues or progress
- Homework schedules – have a full week not just a few weekdays to complete

Any other comments?

- Keep up the great work
- Let us know how we can help
- We feel proud and lucky to have our kids here
- I'm very happy with HVS – it's a great school