

Discovery One School – Rationale for change

This document has been prepared to assist discussions with parents and communities about proposals for education renewal for greater Christchurch.

Why is change needed?

A strong education network is vital for the renewal of greater Christchurch.

The extent of damage and ongoing impact of people movement in the wake of the 2010 and 2011 earthquakes mean it cannot be restored to the way it was.

We need to accept in areas that have been depopulated we will have to do things differently, which will inevitably mean some change to services. The viability of existing individual schools and increased demand for new schools are a key consideration going forward.

The earthquakes, while devastating, have provided an opportunity beyond simply replacing what was there, to restore, consolidate and rejuvenate to provide new and improved facilities that will reshape education, improve the options and outcomes for learners, and support greater diversity and choice.

Education renewal for greater Christchurch is about meeting the needs and aspirations of children and young people. We want to ensure the approach addresses inequities and improves outcomes while prioritising action that will have a positive impact on learners in greatest need of assistance.

With the cost of renewal considerable, the ideal will be tempered by a sense of what is pragmatic and realistic. Key considerations are the practicalities of existing sites and buildings, the shifts in population distribution and concentration, the development of new communities and a changing urban infrastructure.

Innovative, cost effective, and sustainable options for organising and funding educational opportunities must be explored to provide for diversity and choice in an economically viable way.

Discussions with schools, communities and providers within learning community clusters have and will continue to be to informing decisions around the overall future shape of each education community. Ways to enhance infrastructure and address existing property issues, improve education outcomes, and consider future governance will form part of these discussions which are running in parallel to consultation around formal proposals.

“We have a chance to set up something really good here so we need to do our best to get it right” – submission to Directions for Education Renewal across greater Christchurch.

Why is it proposed my school merge?

People movement and land and or building damage as a result of the earthquakes are the catalysts for change across the network across greater Christchurch.

With existing capacity already under-utilised, and ongoing changes in demographics as families re-settle in new locations, the viability of existing individual schools and increased demand for new schools is a key consideration going forward.

Many school buildings suffered significant damage, school sites have been compromised and there were 4,311 fewer student enrolments across greater Christchurch at July 2012 compared to July 2010¹.

Even before the earthquake there were around 5,000 spaces already under-utilised in the network.

Discovery One School and Unlimited Paenga Tawhiti schools were located in Christchurch's Central Business District (CBD) which was significantly damaged by the February earthquake. Both schools operated from leased premises.

The impact on buildings within the CBD has forced both these schools to relocate to the suburbs.

Over time as the new CBD is established, as with other modern cities, apartment style living is expected to be the norm for a large number of people including families.

Because the CBD is likely to start from a central hub, and because it will take time for people to move back, we expect less demand for inner city education provision than before the earthquakes.

The Ministry is therefore proposing to merge the two existing inner city schools to establish a single year 1-13 school within the CBD, provided a suitable site can be found.

Over time as the CBD expands and demand increases, the Ministry will consider additional options for inner city education provision.

Land and Buildings

Because Discovery One school was in a leased building these costs are not applicable, and there is no geotechnical information.

People

Discovery One school had a roll of 168 at July 2012, which is slightly less than in 2008 and 2010.

Unlimited Paenga Tawhiti had a roll of 381 at July 2012, which is similar to its roll in 2008.

¹ This figure includes international fee-paying students.

Rolls of schools in the cluster: Total July rolls 2008, 2010, 2012²

School Name	Type	Authority	2008	2010	2012
Discovery One School	Full Primary (Year 1-8)	State	180	179	168
Unlimited Paenga Tawhiti	Secondary (Year 9-15)	State	382	391	381
Total			562	570	549

Student Distribution Patterns³

Although both Discovery One School and Unlimited Paenga Tawhiti School were physically located within the central city prior to the Canterbury earthquakes, their special character draws students across the city.

An analysis of students residing in the Central City cluster is therefore not appropriate for these schools.

The central location of these schools provided equitable access for students across the city to attend these special character schools and the two schools have similar student distribution patterns.

Number of students residing near the pre-quake school locations⁴, July 2012 student address data:

Distance (Km)	Discovery One School	Unlimited PT
0-1	0	0
1-3	45	62
3-5	29	74
5-10	64	163
over 10	30	79
Total	168	378

Percentage of students residing near the pre quake school locations, July 2012 student address data:

Distance (Km)	Discovery One School	Unlimited PT
0-1	0	0
1-3	27%	16%
3-5	17%	20%
5-10	38%	43%

² July School Rolls are total July rolls, excluding international fee paying students.

³ Analysis includes all crown 'funded' students only, i.e. regular, regular adult, returning adult & extramural. It reflects the student's home address – which bears no relationship to the school they were enrolled at. Not all student records were address matched.

⁴ Based on a centre point of the pre earthquake Discovery One School location. Pre-quake, Discovery One and Unlimited PT were located near to each other in the central city.

over 10	18%	21%
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No Discovery One or Unlimited PT students reside within 1 km of the schools' pre-quake locations.

The majority of Discovery One and Unlimited PT students reside some distance from the schools pre-quake locations, with 56% and 64% respectively residing more than 5 kms away.

Population change⁵

There are significant areas of CERA 'Red Zone' land within the catchment of Discovery One and Unlimited Paenga Tawhiti Schools. These schools draw students from across the entire greater Christchurch area.

Approximately 11% (18) of the 168 Discovery One School address matched student records at March 2010 lived within areas now classified as "Red Zone" land by CERA. At March 2012, only 4% (6) of the 142 address matched records remained in these areas.

Analysis of the March 2010 student address data⁶ shows that approximately 7% (28) of Unlimited Paenga Tawhiti students lived within areas now classified as "Red Zone"⁷ land by CERA. At March 2012, only 3% (12) of the 395 address matched records remained in these areas.

This shows that while the majority of students have left the red zone areas, a number still remain in these areas.

There is greenfield residential development proposed in Hornby and Marshland, where these schools draw some students. However, the net gain in households in these areas is offset by the retreat from red zone properties.

On this basis the scale of household change in the schools' catchment is not expected to significantly change demand for schooling provision at Discovery One and Unlimited Paenga Tawhiti.

Other factors, such as parents choosing education at a special character school over local providers, are likely to have a greater impact on roll change at these schools.

The Ministry will continue to work with agencies such as the Christchurch City Council and CERA on projected population change.

⁵ March data has been used for the comparison across the period 2010 to 2012, as no relevant historical July student address data exists.

⁶ Student address records are geocoded (address matched) records from the respective school roll returns. Not all records were address matched.

⁷ CERA Red Zone data at 24 August 2012

What would proposed merger mean for the school and its community?

Merging Discovery One and Unlimited Paenga Tawhiti Schools would enable funding to be invested where learners would most likely go, and into the network generally to provide modern learning environments for a larger number of students.

Safe and inspiring learning environments are key to meeting the New Zealand Property vision for greater Christchurch schools, which means:

- Ensuring any health and safety and infrastructural issues are addressed
- Taking into account whole of life cost considerations, to allow cost over the life of the asset, rather than initial capital cost to drive repair or replacement decisions
- Enabling all entitlement teaching spaces to be upgraded to meet the 'Sheerin' Core modern learning environment standard – which has a strong focus on heating lighting, acoustics, ventilation and ICT infrastructure upgrades.

This will include provision of appropriate shared facilities across schools within a cluster that can be used by both schools and the community and other agencies as appropriate.

An effective merger brings together the strengths of both schools. The particular programmes which are run in the merged school are decisions made by the board of the continuing school, however, it is likely the successful programmes, culture etc which have been developed within either school would be continued in the merged school.

The Ministry would expect a merged school would want to work with all learners in its community.

If a merger is to proceed the move would not be piecemeal.

The board of the continuing school would discuss an implementation plan for the merger with the Ministry. This would then be implemented.

If a final decision to merge is made by the Minister, and gazetted, the board of the continuing school or a new board as appropriate, would oversee the process. This will include decisions around school name, uniform, branding etc.

There must be at least one full term between the gazetting and when the merger is implemented. In some cases, the Minister agrees to appoint a board for the continuing school. The appointed board can co-opt members as required.

Elections for a new board of trustees must be held within three months of the date of merger. At this time, the newly elected board will be representative of all families at the merged school.

The Ministry will ensure appropriate provision for learners within this cluster to support any changes that may result from consultation.

The Ministry will provide information around enrolment options to families and provide required support.

There is a school transport policy for students and provision will be available as appropriate.

Staff, including support staff, will be able to apply for positions in the merged school. Alternatively redundancy may apply in respect to reduced or full loss of hours.

The provisions of the respective employment agreements will apply for staff.

How would the proposed merger of my school fit into the overall plan for the network as a whole?

The merger of Discovery One and Unlimited Paenga Tawhiti would support the retention of options for students to continue to enjoy the provision provided by special character schools.

Because the CBD is likely to start from a central hub, and because it will take time for people to move back, merging Discovery One and Unlimited Paenga Tawhiti would ensure the option for central city education provision can be retained, providing a suitable site can be found.

Over time as the CBD expands and demand increases, the Ministry may need to provide additional options for inner city education provision.

Facts and Figures

School Rolls are confirmed total 1 July rolls, excluding international fee paying students.

Student Distribution data is drawn primarily from the address matched July 2012 School roll return dataset (excluding international fee paying students). Where March 2010 and March 2012 student address data has been used, the use of these datasets is indicated.

Individual student records have been cleaned of all sensitive data and address matched (geocoded) to street addresses. Not all student records were address matched, as some records were not able to be geocoded, and student records identified with a privacy risk indicator have been excluded from the data. Across all schools in greater Christchurch, approximately 95% of records were address matched.

Where a school has an enrolment scheme, this is legally defined in a written description and is available from the relevant school. School enrolment scheme “home zones” or “school zones” are legally defined in the written description, and the display of any enrolment zone in a map is only a visual representation of the written description. School enrolment schemes, enrolment zones, and associated maps are reviewed periodically

Land and infrastructure information has been drawn from a variety of sources as outlined above.

Utilisation: The amount of student space being used (peak roll) as a percentage of the total student spaces available. Total student space has been based on the number of classrooms as at February 2012.

Peak rolls used: Primary – the October 2011 roll

Secondary and Intermediate – the March 2012 roll return

Relevant reports and documentation will be provided.

Contact us

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