

# Health Consultation Summary August 2009

## What we wanted to find out:

In order to develop a statement on what the Health Curriculum looks like at Worser Bay School we consulted with parents, students and teachers. We wanted to find out what each group valued as priorities in Health for students at Worser Bay School. We also wanted to ascertain an idea of where different contexts should be taught, whether it be home, school or a combination of both.

## The process for finding this out:

To gain this information, our first step was make sure that parents and students had some knowledge of the four strands within the Health Curriculum. We achieved this by highlighting one strand of the curriculum in the weekly newsletter for four consecutive weeks. Alongside these strands were a series of key questions designed to motivate families to discuss where their priorities lay and think about the current Worser Bay Health and PE curriculum. Once the community had a basic understanding of the curriculum we were able to begin the consultation process.

To gather the information we collated data from three specific groups (teachers, students and parents/caregivers).

Our key focus questions were:

- What do you think should be taught within the WBS Health and PE curriculum? Why?
- What are the main priorities? Why?
- Where should the main impetus come from when teaching these areas - home and/or school? Why?

Data was collected from teachers during a staff professional learning session . The staff were asked to rate their own Health and PE knowledge and teaching skills and then completed a task where they had to rank a number of topics on a continuum from most important to least important , based on our student's needs.

The student sample was collected in much the same way with a group of Year 6 students being selected to rank areas of priority on the same continuum.

To gather data from our parent community we held a Parent Information Evening where parents were invited to come and talk about the current WBS Health and PE curriculum. The evening was run in the form of circle time so that parents got some understanding of how and why circle time is being used within the school. Parents were given the opportunity in groups to complete the same continuum and were asked to fill in a Venn Diagram showing which areas they thought should be taught at school and/or home.

## The key findings (including priorities):

As Health and PE is a very personal issue, opinions on topics differed amongst all groups. Within each of the three groups there were a range of priorities and even within each sub group there was no real consensus on preferences. In saying this, some aspects did stand out

- One of the biggest findings was that it was very hard to separate which skills needed to be taught at school and which ones should be taught at home.
- All three parties saw that a combined approach from both school and home would be the most effective.
- Concepts, skills and ideas being taught at school and then backed up and practised at home was thought to be important.
- For this to happen there needed to be stronger links between home and school so that parents and caregivers knew what was being covered at school and had some idea of what they needed to be doing to back this up at home and how/where they could access resources to do this.
- Another finding that was interesting was the way parents viewed the concept of competition. Many parents felt strongly that we should be teaching that competition isn't necessarily a bad thing. Children need to know how to deal with competition and the emotions that arise.
- It was thought that competition shouldn't just be about winning but also dealing with winning and losing and the feelings of disappointment or happiness that may come with them.
- From the data it is also possible to see that all groups saw strong personal identity, tolerance and the ability to deal with emotions and difficult or conflicting situations as important. The general idea of students having a positive mental attitude and feeling like they are in a safe environment where they can take risks was a theme that came from all three groups.
- Fire and civil emergency was also highlighted as a priority due to where our school is situated and the fact that we are a civil defence centre.
- One interesting area that was highlighted as a waste of resources and time by parents was swimming. Many thought this was an area that didn't necessarily benefit the majority of students as lots have private instruction.

**Table Showing Priorities/Non Priorities Comparisons (Fig 1)**

<b>Teacher's priorities</b>	<b>Student's priorities</b>	<b>Parents/Caregivers priorities</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fire and civil emergency safety</li> <li>• Dealing with emotions</li> <li>• Conflict resolution</li> <li>• Resilience</li> <li>• Tolerance</li> <li>• Teamwork</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fire and civil emergency safety</li> <li>• Dealing with emotions</li> <li>• Conflict resolution</li> <li>• Resilience</li> <li>• Tolerance</li> <li>• Sex education</li> <li>• Teamwork</li> <li>• Stereotyping and discrimination</li> <li>• Assertiveness</li> <li>• Road sense</li> <li>• Sunsmart</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fire and civil emergency safety</li> <li>• Dealing with emotions</li> <li>• Conflict resolution</li> <li>• Resilience</li> <li>• Tolerance</li> <li>• Risk taking</li> <li>• Competition</li> <li>• Conflict resolution</li> <li>• Fair play</li> <li>• Fundamental skills</li> <li>• Stereotyping and discrimination</li> <li>• Assertiveness</li> <li>• Road sense</li> <li>• Sunsmart</li> </ul>
<b>Teacher's non priorities</b>	<b>Student's non priorities</b>	<b>Parents non priorities</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dog patting (safety)</li> <li>• Stranger danger</li> <li>• Sports skills</li> <li>• Sports studies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dog patting (safety)</li> <li>• Stranger danger</li> <li>• Sports skills</li> <li>• Sports studies</li> <li>• Creative play</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Swimming</li> <li>• Sports skills</li> <li>• Dog patting (safety)</li> <li>• Body systems</li> <li>• Safety in the home</li> <li>• Sports skills</li> </ul>

## The questions for further investigation from the Parent Evening Consultation

Did we have a large enough cross section of the parent/caregiver community to give us an accurate reading of their opinions?

How can we get more parents involved in the consultation process?

How do we ensure that we cater for all students needs? ( i.e. Swimming)

How do we as teachers foster home involvement so that the concepts being taught at school are discussed and practised at home?

How do we measure student achievement in such a holistic approach/area?

What is the current teacher knowledge level? What will we need to develop and how?

How do we communicate the findings of our consultation to the school community?

What is our timeframe for implementing the newly developed Health and PE programme?

What resources are available to us in the form of outside experts, parents and money?

## Actions

As we were unclear as to how much of a cross section of our community we had covered with the parent evening, it was decided that the next step was to create and promote a survey that could be accessed via a link from the school newsletter. The intention of this was to try and engage more parents, and also find out what resources and ideas we had within our community that we could use to our benefit. The data that we had already collected from the parent evening allowed us to really focus our questions, and target areas or ideas that had been raised, for instance, swimming.

Having parents complete a survey gave us a clearer idea of where parents' priorities lay. The parents evening was a useful tool to get ideas for further investigation while the survey provided quantitative data that largely supported these ideas.

Attached below are the results/findings from the aforementioned survey.

Please rate how important you think the teaching of the following are:

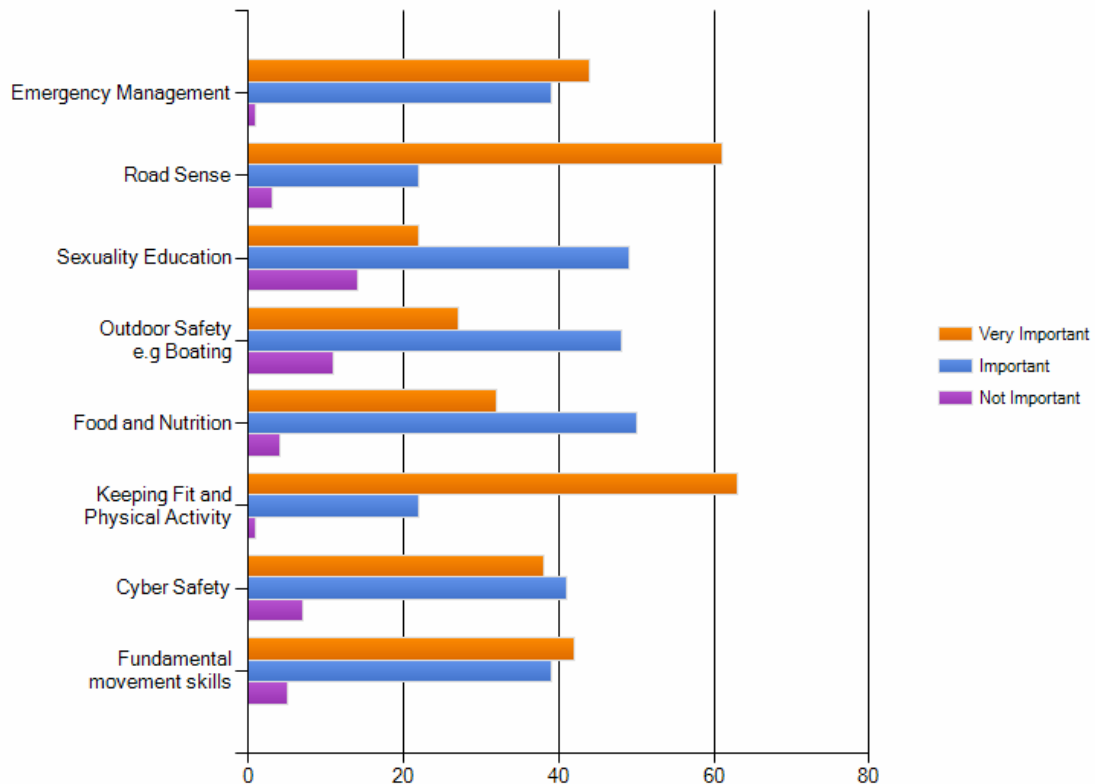


Fig 2

Figure 2 above shows that parents see Road Sense, Keeping Fit and Physical Activity, and Emergency Management as being the most important curriculum strands to focus on at school. It was interesting to note the importance placed on teaching Cyber Safety.

These findings support the priorities that came through in the Parent Evening discussions, as can be seen in the table showing priorities (fig 1).

In discussions at the Parent Evening the concept of competition was debated. Many parents felt strongly that we should be teaching that competition isn't necessarily a bad thing. Children need to know how to deal with competition and the emotions that arise. Parents also felt that the concepts about self and how we relate to others were important skills that children should learn.

In the survey parents were asked to give feedback and suggestions on these ideas. As you can see from the responses below, parents who completed the survey displayed similar views to those from the Parent's Evening. Overall the comments relayed a need to find a balance between competition and co-operation, teach children to deal with winning and losing and help children become more aware of themselves and others.

**Q2.As part of our focus on the Key Competencies we are currently building students' resilience and tolerance. Other focus areas include:**

**Dealing with competition**

**Assertiveness**

**Leadership**

**Co-operation and Teamwork Conflict**

**Management**

**Are there any additional areas that you would like us to consider?**

### **Responses**

- Learning from mistakes
- Empathy
- Negotiation as part of conflict management
- You should play sport/games to win.
- I don't think it is about "dealing with competition" but the ability to be competitive - there is too much co-operation and not enough competition in the New Zealand Curriculum
- Honesty & integrity
- Persistence
- Problem solving
- Emotional mastery - interpersonal communication skills
- Fairness and ethics
- Racial discrimination and integration
- Compassion, empathy - understanding of others' problems and perspectives
- Humility and values. This may be the flip side of 'Dealing with competition' but competencies need to be built around dealing with achieving and success along with being challenged or losing
- Dealing with losing - eg. being involved for the sake of it and winning not always being the main goal (even though it's great when that happens) – celebrating other people's achievements.
- Valuing yourself - unique strengths and attributes

### Swimming at Worser Bay

As mentioned previously one interesting area that was highlighted as a waste of resources and time by parents was swimming. We wanted to investigate if more parents shared a similar view. We asked specific questions about how many children had private instruction outside of school as well as how satisfied parents were with the current swimming programme. As you can see below many children do attend private lessons and 57% of the parents surveyed felt that they did not feel that they get value for money through the current programme.

We are currently investigating the swimming programme at WBS for 2010. Please indicate below if your child has swimming lessons outside of school or if you rely solely on WBS for your child's swimming education.

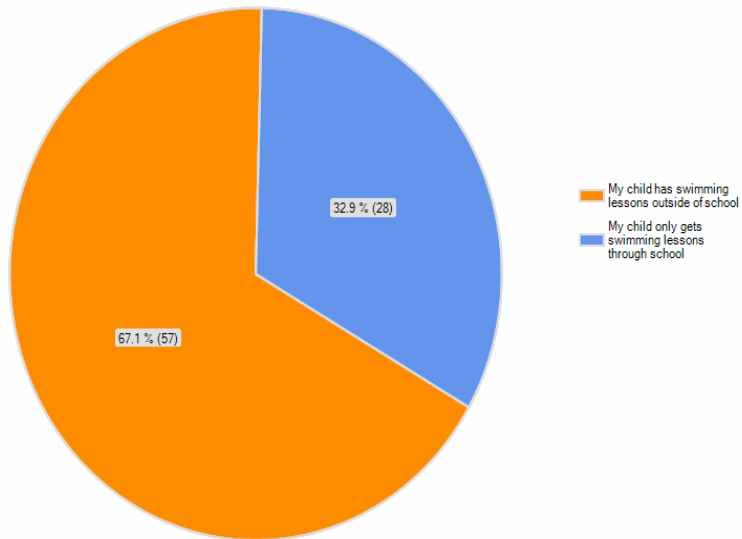


Fig 3

Do you feel that you get value for money and time through the current school swimming programme?

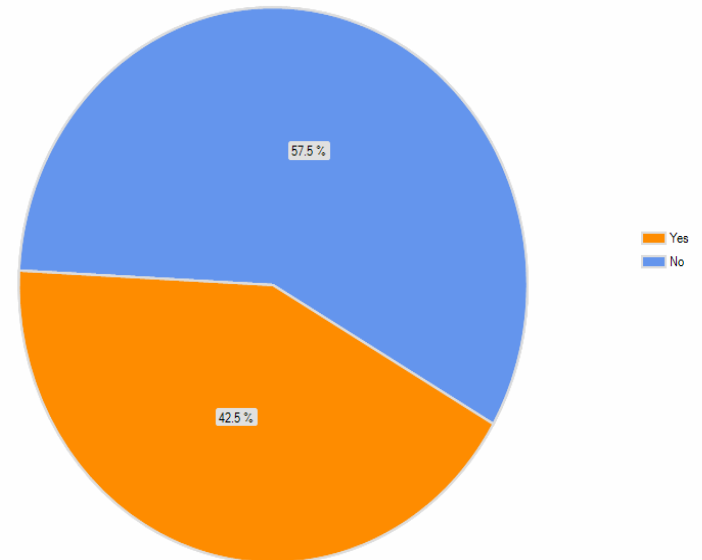


Fig 4

Thinking about Worser Bay's unique situation and the recreational use of the local beach environment we posed the question as to how we could make better use of this resource. This also tied to the previous findings of dissatisfaction towards the swimming programme. The majority of parents surveyed would like to see better use of our local environment, as shown in fig 5 below.

In developing our own school's curriculum, we are looking at our local beach and water environment as a valuable and relevant resource for our students. We would like to increase the focus on activities that take place in, on and around the water. Would you like to see this resource utilised more frequently?

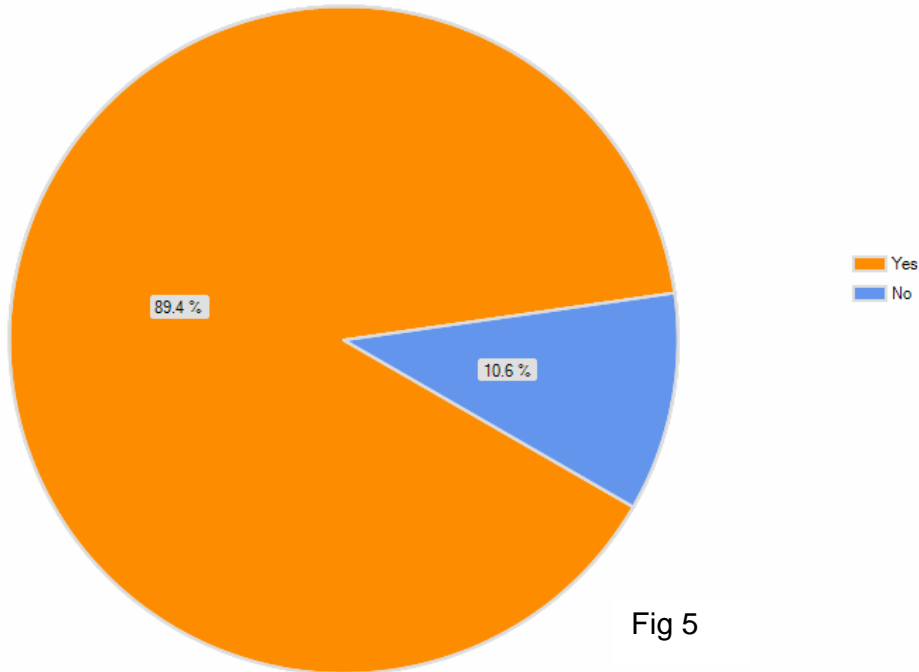


Fig 5

Parents also provided a number of useful ideas as to what skills they feel should be taught at the beach. These included:

- Water/Beach safety including knowledge of rip currents
- Ecology/Biodiversity/Geography/Geology/Meteorology
- I think it would be good (though not critically important) for the kids to learn some skills in how to keep warm (clothing choices, cotton vs polyester vs wool when wet), how to light a fire for cooking and how to build a basic shelter. Also that sand holes collapse and crush so to be careful.
- Learning about and caring for marine environments
- Water sports - sailing, kayaking
- General water safety and confidence
- How to swim safely in the sea
- Lifesaving and Sailing
- Kayaking, sailing.
- Water safety, hazard awareness
- The Rocky Shore -rock pool observations

## Recommendations

Based on the findings from both the Parent Evening and the survey we recommend the following:

- ⇒ Continue to provide parents with information about what is being taught within the Health and PE Curriculum so that links can be made between home and school
- ⇒ Continue to look at the current swimming programme and ways that we can adapt it to suit the identified needs of our students using the resources available to us. This may include working with the Kilbirnie Aquatic Centre, Worser Bay Yacht Club, Worser Bay Surf Club and other local organisations
- ⇒ Look at ways that we can tie EOTC (Education Outside the Classroom) into regular curriculum programmes
- ⇒ Continue to look at how we can use the Key Competencies and Enterprising Attributes to teach students values, skills and strategies that relate to the Health and PE Curriculum
- ⇒ Develop a long term plan for the teaching of specific areas/contexts within the Health and PE Curriculum. These will take into consideration the identified needs of our students as well as the priorities highlighted by parents, teachers and students