

Pōhutukawa Learning Centre

Personalised Learning Centre





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Goal

The overarching goal of the Pōhutukawa Learning Centre (PLC) is to cater for the needs of diverse learners at St Cuthbert's College. Diversity encompasses many characteristics including giftedness (learning enrichment), as well as learning differences (specialised learning intervention). The PLC provides structure to the process of identification and provision for these students resulting in a smooth transition between the Junior and Senior Schools.

Knowledge-rich Learning

Knowledge-rich learning is underpinned by a belief that all students should have access to a curriculum that is academically challenging and enables them to learn at their full potential. The role of the PLC is to ensure that every student is able to engage with the school curriculum in a way that aligns with their learning needs and strengths. In a knowledge-rich school, this broadens their learning capabilities to enrich their understanding of how the world works.

St Cuthbert's recognises that some students will require enrichment opportunities to unlock their learning capabilities. Support for students will be considered on a case-by-case basis with evidence-based interventions provided to enhance and improve academic or social/emotional learning.

Exam Support

For our Senior students, exams are a crucial opportunity to measure progress and achievement. It is imperative that students are able to demonstrate their best learning potential. For qualifying students, we provide Special Assessment Conditions (SACs) for NCEA internals and exams for Year 9 –13.

Parent Support and Information

We embrace opportunities to engage with parents to address, advise, and support on issues of concern.

The Scope of Pōhutukawa Learning Centre (PLC) Support

Classroom Teaching and Learning

The PLC provides a full scope of supports for our students, ensuring that learning opportunities are optimised within mainstream classes from Year 1 to Year 13. We do this by liaising with Deans and Teachers to ensure our work aligns with classroom programmes. The PLC is part of a larger team that identifies and attends to the progress and success of our students. At St Cuthbert's, every teacher strives to meet diverse learning needs within their classrooms. To do this, the PLC provides resources to equip teachers to understand and respond to diverse learning needs, both in general and for individual students. PLC staff work alongside subject departments to provide evidence-based interventions and help teachers to create layered supports to remove barriers to learning.

Specialised Learning Intervention

A small number of students, for a variety of reasons, benefit from targeted instruction to support their development in literacy and numeracy. The PLC

offers extensive specialised literacy and numeracy interventions in the Junior and Senior Schools. Targeted, evidence-based interventions range from one-to-one instruction, group withdrawal programmes, and personalised learning plans. Students who would benefit from PLC support are identified in collaboration with Classroom Teachers and Deans using a strengths-based approach, driven by data.

Pōhutukawa Enriched Learning Support (PELS)

PELS is a timetabled class offered to students in Year 7 –12 who benefit from additional support beyond their regular classroom programme. The invitation only class draws on the curricula of core subjects to ensure all students are able to experience success in these subjects. Additionally, students in PELS develop skills and competencies in order to foster independence, self-management, and most importantly, self-efficacy. The small class sizes allow for greater opportunity to ask questions and for targeted learning support.



GaTE (Gifted and Talented)

St Cuthbert's defines a gifted child as one who naturally performs, or who has the ability to perform, at a level significantly beyond their chronological age. Giftedness can apply to either one, or a variety of learning areas and domains. Gifted students exhibit asynchronous development and may experience learning difficulties in certain areas, known as twice-exceptionality.

At St Cuthbert's, gifted and talented students are entitled to an appropriately challenging and stimulating curriculum. Ongoing provision for exceptionally able children is a matter of equity and will help them to reach their optimum development and achieve intellectual, creative, emotional and social well-being.

Provision for gifted students is dependent on individual

need, with a combination of extension, enrichment and acceleration opportunities available.

This is catered for within the PLC and extracurricular opportunities:

Junior School

Philosophy, Channel 70, Stretch, enrichment within subject areas, and personalised learning plans.

Senior School

Quest, Humanities Extension, enrichment and/or accelerated learning pathways, Future Problem Solving, Writing Workshops, Writing Extension Group, Lit Quiz, Future Problem Solving, opportunities for multi-levelling in certain subjects and extensive co-curricular programmes.

GaTE Programmes

Philosophy for Children

Selected Junior School students (Years 3 – 6) are identified and invited to participate in this critical and caring thinking programme. Students stay in the programme for four years, building up increasingly sophisticated skills in philosophical inquiry.

Channel 70/Quest

Students are identified and invited to participate in these extension programmes for gifted and twice exceptional students. Quest is an enrichment and extension programme for selected Year 7 and 8 students. Channel 70 is an equivalent Junior School programme, for selected students in Years 3 – 6. These weekly programmes enable students to experience challenge, complexity, collaboration, creativity, connective thinking and abstraction in their learning. The approaches used are woven into a multidisciplinary approach, identified as best practice for gifted and twice exceptional learners. Each week the students engage in activities that develop their critical thinking skills, extend their creative thinking and broaden their understanding of issues that are philosophical in nature. There is a strong focus on exploring the ethical dimension of topics, via discussion, research and philosophical inquiry. Participants' social-emotional needs are supported in a context of meaning, enabling the students to gain heightened awareness of how they operate as learners and individuals.

Wordsmiths

Wordsmiths is an extension creative writing programme for selected Year 7 and 8 students. The programme offers opportunities for writers to develop their writing skills and submit pieces to writing competitions or for potential publication in writing journals.

Future Problem Solving (FPS)

Teams from Year 7 – 13 are entered in the National FPS programme and competition. Future Problem Solving is a programme that develops creative problem solving, based around futuristic scenarios. The process helps students to improve their analytical thinking skills and extend their creative thinking abilities. FPS also enhances students' verbal and written communication skills, research techniques and ability to work collaboratively. FPS provides students with a six-step problem solving model that can be integrated into their own lives. Students focus on Global Issues Problem Solving, enabling them to grapple with existing or emerging international issues. In Term Three, students compete to be selected for the FPS National Finals in Term Four.

Humanities Extension

This course is designed to extend and challenge our gifted students in Year 9 and 10. Invited students are given the opportunity to explore ideas and themes from philosophy, ancient civilisations, literature, writing, and politics. The students regularly meet in small groups, engaging in lively discussions with specialist teachers and guests. Participation in the Humanities Extension programme enables students to extend their knowledge and gain wisdom through free enquiry.

Student Testimonial

Hi, I am Amber Bason. I am in Year 9 and have been at St Cuthbert's for six years. I have had help from the PLC team ever since day one of being at the school and it has helped me in so many different ways. I've improved my reading, spelling and writing abilities plus it has also given me the confidence to speak up in class and answer questions. One thing I really enjoy about the PLC is that it gives me a head start with work and helps me better understand the topic I am learning in class. I think that PLC time is one of the best subjects at St Cuthbert's and I would really recommend it to you and your girls.

