

A blue-tinted photograph of a school hallway. In the foreground, a group of students is hugging. One student is wearing a backpack. In the background, there are glass doors and a bulletin board with some papers pinned to it.

HOBSONVILLE POINT SECONDARY SCHOOL


Hapara

HOBSONVILLE POINT SECONDARY SCHOOL LOOKS INNOVATIVE.



Innovation is cast into the very foundation of Hobsonville Point Secondary School (HPSS). By its outward appearance, HPSS looks like a place where state-of-the-art learning happens. HPSS was built three years ago as a **“modern learning environment.”** Specifically, a school that features large, open spaces typified by break-out rooms and specialized learning spaces.

“When students are engaged, and they find the things that they’re curious about, they go deeper with it, and they’re motivated...”

– Steve Mouldey, Specialized Learning Leader

THE CHALLENGE

The true challenge was how to live up to the “look” of innovation, and create instruction that would, as the vision statement of HPSS states, “innovate, engage, and inspire.” According to Steve Mouldey, a Specialized Learning Leader at HPSS,



BUT THE REAL INNOVATION IS WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE CLASSROOM.

“a school like HPSS allows you to adapt spaces towards the types of learning that needs to occur. We have **classes with two teachers and 50 students**. Our class yesterday was a quick 10 minute overview; then half the class went with us two teachers; the other 25 chose between three different student led workshops.”

Claire Amos, Deputy Principal, emphasizes that what truly sets HPSS apart is its instruction. “We think what is truly innovative about HPSS is the pedagogy and not the space. There’s no doubt that our space is the thing that allows us to do the things that we do...while we don’t believe that the environment is the highlight of what’s going on here, there’s no denying that it absolutely enables and encourages us to work in a different way. That comes with a caveat. We’ve seen a number of similar schools open in recent years and it’s easy to run traditional classrooms in open spaces as well. These things don’t happen by accident. They happen by design.”

And that design is anchored by a teaching philosophy that’s steeped in **project-based learning, personalization, and academic differentiation**.

CHALLENGE *continued*



A cornerstone at HPSS is learner agency. Defined as the learner having a sense of ownership over his or her own learning, **learner agency is an important part of education** in the 21st century and an important part of the educational mission of HPSS. At HPSS, it's believed that young people have to increasingly understand how to manage themselves, how to direct their own learning. In essence, how to learn to learn. Students are challenged to go deeper than ever before with their learning. They're required to engage with authentic inquiry and project-based learning. It's a move from schools that dictate a single system towards those that personalize for the students so they can engage more fully with what interests them.

According to Amos, it's a complex system. Modules are integrated to learning areas, and there is also a choice of single-subject modules that take one hour per week. In addition, students are engaged with larger projects that extend for two terms, or one semester. They participate in extended learning clubs three times per week.

On Wednesdays, students work on projects with community partners. What that means for students is the opportunity for choice and a sense of designing their own singular learning path in partnership with their learning coaches. ■



HPSS CHOOSES HAPARA

At HPSS, personalized learning is firmly at the forefront. Students actually design their own curriculum program out of a choice of modules that specifically matches their interest. Whether it's subject matter selection or providing material at each student's proper ability level, this degree of differentiation ensures **HPSS is successful at meeting a wide range of learning needs.** Hapara makes it easy to facilitate this, from independent learners to those who would benefit from a more scaffolded approach.

With this level of personalization going on, the reality of this approach can be daunting. In a class of 50 students there can be up to 20 different projects happening consecutively. How is differentiation on such a large scale managed? **"Without Hapara, this would be insanely difficult to manage,"** says Mouldy. "The technology let's you personalize far easier, and gets collaboration to occur far easier, the sort of things that have allowed us to get as far as we have in the last two years."

The initial step towards Hapara was for the use of the teacher dashboard to make document control easier. HPSS was formerly using different platforms that narrowed subject matter choices. By choosing Hapara, HPSS is provided with

HPSS CHOOSES HAPARA *continued*



not only more choice, but also allows scaffolds specific to the problems students may have and that overlay with subject matter of interest. Students only see the material that is relevant to them. It's much less confusing and less complex. Plus, since all students progress at a pace unique to them, students can finish one part of their work and move on to the next step while their fellow students might be working on something quite different.

So how has all of this influenced instruction? According to Amos, "When you look at how Hapara Workspace can be used with the students, there's no denying that it has allowed teachers to cater to a far more diverse range of needs in the classroom by being able to differentiate for interests, curriculum level, and the level that students are working...it provides **an important structure for learning that actually frees the teacher to work in a different way.** They can now move around the classroom, work alongside students and provide more personalized one-on-one support in the class because they're no longer juggling how they're going to distribute different resources to different groups of students in different ways. It can be done quickly and easily...they're then free to spend their

HPSS CHOOSES HAPARA *continued*

ABOUT HPSS

- ✓ Co-educational state school located in Hobsonville Point, Auckland
- ✓ HPSS is a new Modern Learning Environment School that opened in 2014.
- ✓ In 2015-16 school year, open to Year 9 and 10 students. Adding Years 11, 12, and 13 over the next three years.
- ✓ School Mission: To create a stimulating, inclusive learning environment that empowers learners to contribute confidently and responsibly in our changing world. The guiding principles adopted by HPSS to achieve this lofty goal are to innovate through personalized learning; engage through partnerships; and inspire through challenge and inquiry. The end goal is to create empowered learners.
- ✓ Region: Hobsonville Point is approximately 22 kilometers northwest of Auckland, New Zealand.

class time workshopping with smaller groups of students, working with students 1:1, and also easily giving feedback to students online. What we really like about Hapara Workspace is the ease in which we can comment on and grade student work without having to hunt down their folders...it's all there in a single place for the teacher and for the student." ■

Prior to Hapara, there was a lot of wasted time on the management of materials....it freed us for the really important stuff, which is the teaching and learning we did with those resources.

- Claire Amos, Deputy Principal

