

Neighbourhood Play System

Terrace End School

AUGUST 2023



TE KURA O TERRACE END
TERRACE END SCHOOL



Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Government

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Executive Summary

Play is vital to the development of our tamariki and whānau and to the future of Aotearoa communities. Sport Manawatū commenced work alongside Sport New Zealand Ihi Aotearoa and other partners to define and develop neighbourhoods through the context of play. This work is called the Neighbourhood Play System.

The purpose of the Neighbourhood Play System model is to grow play at the neighbourhood level through co-designed projects to, therefore, understand and unlock community strengths. This report presents our findings for the Neighbourhood Play System surrounding Terrace End School and poses recommendations to support the development of a play-friendly environment.

To gain an authentic understanding for the current state of play across the Terrace End School Neighbourhood Play System, we employed a range of research methods

and captured a spectrum of voices. After completing a desktop analysis of the current state of play, we conducted passive observation through transect walks and a range of participatory exercises with community and school staff. The research process was completed through a student survey and in-class activities. We consider that this has given us a rich basis for action.

Terrace End School is in the suburb of Roslyn in Palmerston North. This report recognises Rangitane as the manawhenua of Papaioea. Palmerston North is an ever-changing and burgeoning neighbourhood with a diverse range of people, cultures, and spaces. It has a large mix of age demographics, as well as residential and commercial components, which makes it a complicated and extremely busy place.

Figure 1: The Terrace End School Neighbourhood Play System, 750m walking radius around the school.





Figure 2: Tamariki playing at Terrace End School.

In recent years, Terrace End School has been charged with meeting the needs of an increasingly diverse community, including migrant and refugee communities and whānau in temporary housing. The school community is strongly represented in adverse crime and deprivation statistics, and challenging socio-economic realities are manifested as pastoral challenges for school staff each day.

“ If you keep the standards really high, we are setting these kids up. For these kids, it starts with ensuring that they get breakfast and have shoes and ends with us closely working on their development – we have a daily equity challenge. ”

School leader

Terrace End School is an important link in the community chain. Being one of the oldest schools in Palmerston North, the school has a long history with a series of good Education Review Office (ERO) reports.

Through energetic leadership, the school has chosen to move forward as the centre of its community – a hub for connection. The school leadership’s current energy and positivity has led to the development of school assets to support the hub and better reflect the school’s make-up.

However, the defining feature across the wider neighbourhood is the dominance of the car. The suburb is divided by numerous high-traffic-volume roads with 17,765 cars passing by the school gate each day. The majority of tamariki at Terrace End School are dropped off and picked up from school, because 44 percent of students surveyed do not feel safe travelling actively (such as walking, biking, or scootering). In addition, the presentation of the public sphere is of a low standard. Litter, tagging, and poorly maintained thoroughfares are present across the neighbourhood. All these things have compounded to create a sense of danger across the area, which limits free movement and play agency.

There are four play assets within the Terrace End School Neighbourhood Play System zone, including one of the city’s destination playgrounds, Memorial Park. While only a few hundred metres away from the school, Memorial Park is cut off from the Roslyn suburb by the severance of the road, and there is a strong sense of it being ‘so close but so far away’ by those who need it. The remaining play facilities are generally grass reserves in variable states of repair (based upon their renewal dates), which are less used by the community.

As a result of all these factors the tamariki in the area are experiencing fewer quality play opportunities than their cross-town counterparts and peers. They express fear, boredom, frustration, and a lack of overall agency. Actioning the recommendations of the Terrace End School Neighbourhood Play System Report, and improving the suburb of Roslyn, will be critical in being able to give independence back to the children of Terrace End School.

Report findings

To ensure the Terrace End School Neighbourhood Play System supports tamariki to flourish, findings from this report show we need:

- pedestrian priority
- safe active transport opportunities
- more safe access to playful environments
- more public environments that tamariki can see themselves in and be proud of.

These things will minimise the sense of fear and restore the everyday freedoms of our tamariki, allowing them to reconnect to each other and the community.

A range of partners (with formalised aspirations and strategies) that can enable play want to support the tamariki of Terrace End School and the wider community to become connected and active citizens of Palmerston North. Our recommendations in this report will help unite their thinking.

Overall, this report will support decision-making to create the time, space, and permission for the children of Terrace End School to play, as well as the broader neighbourhood and beyond. The most important contributors to this report are, of course, the local tamariki who have shared their ideas and aspirations for play.



The Neighbourhood Play System

The Neighbourhood Play System blueprint

The Neighbourhood Play System provides a blueprint to identify key barriers and opportunities for tamariki to play inside their school and in their surrounding neighbourhood. This is approached through the eyes of tamariki and their whānau who live, work, and play in that community (see Figure 3). The blueprint seeks to link with local plans and funding opportunities and considers how to embed play elements through school grounds, footpaths, streets, alleyways, green spaces, waterways, industrial zones, marae, churches, and shops to promote play every day.

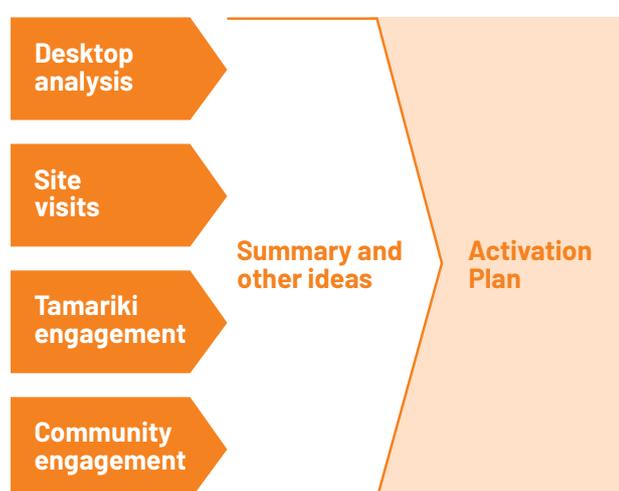


Figure 3: Neighbourhood Play System approach.

Actions, messaging and infrastructure

This report highlights some of the key issues and current play context at a city, neighbourhood, and school level within, and surrounding Terrace End School. It also proposes a set of recommendations that can be implemented by enablers of play through integrated actions, messaging, and infrastructure that promotes play and independent active mobility of tamariki (see Figure 4).

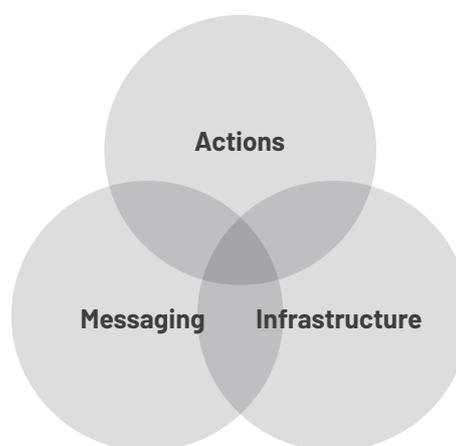


Figure 4: Shows the three domains of work which will sustainably grow play.

- Actions are short-term activations, programmes, projects, and events, which drive action. These are often low to no cost, are temporary, and may include play streets or the activation of school and community play spaces.
- Messaging is about how we shape systems, communities, and places for play. This occurs with consideration of council documents, perceptions, and the ongoing impacts/context of spaces. We will usually try to evolve case studies and learnings from locally led approaches into policies, strategies, and plans.
- Infrastructure is about the transformation of our public spaces to create playable communities. This recognises the value that play has in the lives of tamariki and whānau, shaping how we consider and design urban environments to be 'child-friendly'.

For example, to address road safety concerns 'infrastructure' could include installing safe pedestrian crossings along with 'messaging' (policies) to reduce vehicle speed in the area and 'Actions' to educate tamariki and the community about road safety and the benefits of active and independent mobility for play.

What is play?

If we think back to our childhood, play is spontaneous, tamariki-led, fun, accessible, social, and freely chosen with no predetermined outcome. It is usually highly active with elements of challenge and risk that test boundaries in an imaginative way. Play allows tamariki the space to practice, learn, and develop the skills they need to be active for life. These include fundamental movement skills, self-directed creativity/innovation, social and emotional connections, resilience, independence, leadership, and informed risk-taking.

For more information about how we might grow our Aotearoa play system, visit sportnz.org.nz – [Play | Play Development | Sport New Zealand - Ihi Aotearoa.](#)

The right to play

Children have the right to play, and this right is encapsulated in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child - Article 31: "That every child has the right to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child, and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts".

Figure 5: The Rights of the Child - Article 31

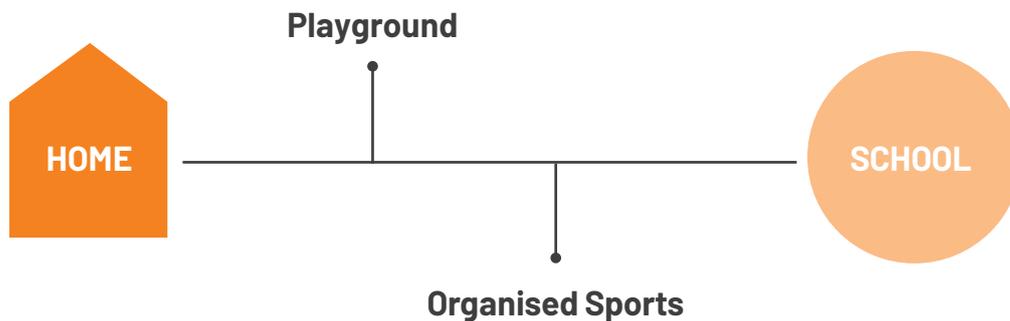


Play is under threat

The playful upbringing enjoyed by previous generations is no longer as accessible to many tamariki due to changing social, environmental, technological, and economic pressures. Young people need the time, space, and permission to play. But with increasingly structured lives and reduced free time, the loss of traditional play spaces, such as streets and driveways, heightened fears around safety and risk, and a loss of societal connections means play deprivation is increasingly becoming a national and international concern.

Play spaces and play locations have become car-centric destinations. This requires whānau to drive tamariki to specific areas for play to occur (see Figure 6). For too many tamariki, however, access to these play spaces and play locations is determined by systemic barriers, such as income and postcode.

Figure 6: Car-centric play system.



The neighbourhood footprint

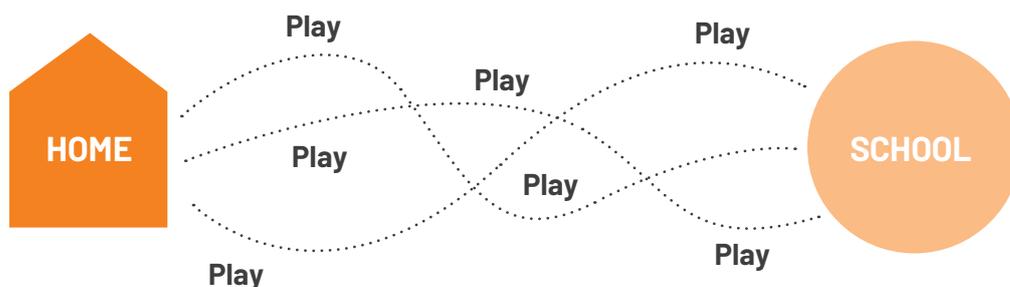
Tamariki and whānau need safe and clean streets, access to green spaces, clean air, things to do, the ability to get around, the freedom to see friends, and somewhere to call home.

Each neighbourhood across Palmerston North has the opportunity to build upon its own cultural, political, socio-economic, and environmental contexts to realise the benefits of play through child-friendly urban planning.

Schools are usually located at the heart of neighbourhoods and communities, but, increasingly, school grounds are not publicly accessible after hours (with many schools fenced and gated), which diminishes opportunities for play. The neighbourhood footprint surrounding a school is also important in creating a liveable and playful city for tamariki and their whānau.

The two settings of home and at school, where tamariki spend most of their time, should be used as anchor points for play within the neighbourhood footprint. Providing safe travel routes to enable independence and create a network of opportunities to 'play on the way' and in every space available, helps form the foundations of a truly child-friendly city.

Figure 7: Walkable play system.



Approach

Desktop analysis

Desktop analysis was conducted to gain insight into the local context surrounding Terrace End School, including the built and natural environments.

Basic details of the school and surrounding area were noted, including, but not limited to:

- Socio-economic deprivation profiles
- One Network Road classifications
- Play spaces or initiatives within the surrounding area
- Healthy Active Learning and Tū Manawa Active Aotearoa funding history for the school.

Mapping was also used to identify the locations of:

- Dedicated play spaces (for example, playgrounds, parks/ fields, green space)
- Other play locations (for example, community halls, churches).

Mapping was also used to gather details about the following:

- Walkable catchments (for example, footpaths)
- Pedestrian crossings
- Cycle paths
- Main roads
- Traffic speed
- Public transport routes.

Site visits

Site visits were vital to gain a first-hand perspective of the natural and built environments of the school and the surrounding community. The following aspects were evaluated to identify barriers and enablers to play for the Terrace End School tamariki: accessibility, current conditions of existing infrastructure, traffic around the school, and any outstanding hazards that could be minimised or eliminated.

Using the radius on the map in Figure 1, multiple walk-arounds were taken both during the day and at specific times when Terrace End School students were travelling around the school and surrounding neighbourhood.

The following was observed during the visits:

- The condition and impression of play spaces and locations both at the school and in the surrounding areas
- Physical barriers that might reduce accessibility to tamariki for play spaces and play locations (for example, difficulty using footpaths, busy roads, high-speed areas, gated play location, street lighting, vandalised areas, and narrow cycle paths)
- Shade and shelter, coverage from rain, wind, and sun (for example, shading, trees), and seating
- Whether houses in the area have outdoor spaces for play (for example, front/back yards, berms)
- Where tamariki 'hang out' and the journey they take between play spaces and locations and home (for example, public spaces, play on the street)
- Whether tamariki are by themselves or supervised by adults.

The transect walks around the neighbourhood, which took place on different occasions, at different times of the day, and during different weather conditions allowed us to look for opportunities for community improvements.



Figure 8: Students with their crafted play opportunities within one of the tamariki engagement sessions.

Tamariki engagement

A class of Year 4 and 5 students was selected to engage with the Neighbourhood Play System process as a legacy project. The class included a mix of genders and ethnicities, enabling a wide perspective on play from differing understandings. These students had the opportunity to contribute and witness first-hand some of the project outcomes, while still attending the school.

We had a series of engagement sessions with the class to gain tamariki insights, which included:

- Drawing maps of their neighbourhood, from their home to school and the places that they live, play, or travel around
- Gaining a snapshot of the current state of play through a student survey
- Creating art that demonstrated the ways in which tamariki like to play
- Tamariki leading a transect walk around the school and community to view the current play sufficiency from their perspective.

This engagement took into consideration:

- Using different mediums of engagement with the aim that every tamariki felt comfortable engaging with at least one
- Using a survey tool that would keep answers anonymous, so tamariki felt comfortable answering honestly
- Ensuring all voices were heard and captured.

Community engagement

While we didn't include any formal feedback sessions for parents, educators, and members of the school community as part of this research, we did have a series of conversations with those groups. Their feedback has been curated and included where appropriate throughout this report.

As we look to further support the school with play provisions, we will work towards advocacy outcomes alongside those in the community who wish to be part of this conversation.

History of Terrace End School

Terrace End School is a primary school catering for Years 1–6 students in Palmerston North. Bordering the suburbs of Roslyn and Terrace End, it has a school roll of 160 children (2022). It is part of the Palmerston North-East Community of Learning (CoL) and is an English medium school with nine classrooms.

A Positive Behaviour for Learning school (PB4L), the school's vision statement backs its commitment to students: Enter to learn and learn for life.

The core values and attitudes of the school spell out the intention of the school to work as a TEAM:

T: TRUST – we work together

E: EXCELLENCE – we try our best

A: ACTIONS – we make good choices

M: MANAAKITANGA – we look after each other



The school offers a vast range of educational learning for their students to become well-rounded learners, covering a range of areas from arts to sports, inquiry and discovery learning, to well-planned literacy and mathematics programmes.

Terrace End School is one of the oldest schools within Palmerston North. When it opened in 1884 it was only the second public school in town. On 8 September 1885, the school moved to its present location on Ruahine Street (previously Terrace Street until 1926), with several new buildings constructed on school grounds between 1927 and 1960.

At its beginnings, Terrace End School was surrounded by 19th century totara and bush. Today, the school is surrounded by, and embraces, all the technology of the 21st century. It has been rebuilt, refitted, and rejuvenated for whatever comes next.

In 1923, the Terrace End Memorial Swimming Baths were opened by James Nash MP, and dedicated to the memory of ex-pupils who served in World War I. The pools were used for years until the school changed its structure and older children went on to attend Palmerston North Intermediate School. A new smaller pool was built elsewhere on the school grounds in 1958 and the old pool was demolished, with the memorial fence and gate remaining today. The new pool is still used regularly with all students having swimming and water safety lessons daily during term one.

In the period between the last two Censuses, the suburb of Roslyn has grown by 6.1%. Meanwhile, the school roll has dropped from 187 to 160 over the last five years. This can be attributed to ebbs and flows in the cohort sizes.

With new leadership at the school, there is renewed energy, innovation, and opportunity for progress. The school leadership has a progressive vision for the future, and aspirations for the school include being central to the progress of their tamariki and whānau. The school is also working with local kuia and kaumatua to ensure that progress is informed by the cultural history of the land.



Figure 9: Terrace End School in 1939 showing the Ruahine Street entrance where the memorial gate and hall still stand today.



Figure 10: Terrace End School today.

Current conditions: Roslyn and Terrace End

Demographics

For the purpose of this report, most demographic data has been drawn for the suburbs of Roslyn and Terrace End.

Population, gender, and age

At the 2018 New Zealand Census, Roslyn had a population of 2,364 – an increase of 135 people (6.1%) since the 2013 Census, and an increase of 195 people (9%) since the 2006 Census.

There were:

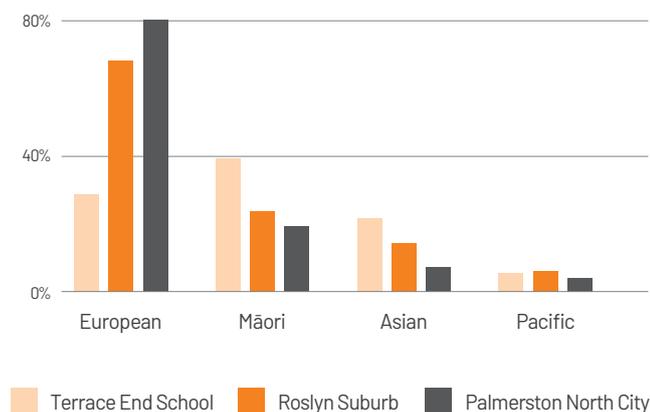
- 870 households
- 1,182 males and 1,185 females (1:1 male:female)
- Median age 31.6 years (5.8 years younger than national median)
- 501 people (21.2%) aged under 15
- 621 (26.3%) aged 15 to 29
- 936 (39.6%) aged 30 to 64
- 303 (12.8%) aged 65 or older.

At the 2018 New Zealand Census, Terrace End (comprising the statistical areas of Terrace End and Ruamahanga), had a population of 6,177 – an increase of 279 people (4.7%) since the 2013 census, and an increase of 399 people (6.9%) since the 2006 census.

There were:

- 2,280 households
- 2,994 males and 3,186 females (94:100 male:female)
- 1,350 people (21.9%) aged under 15
- 1,452 (23.5%) aged 15 to 29
- 2,568 (41.6%) aged 30 to 64
- and 816 (13.2%) aged 65 or older.

Figure 11: Terrace End ethnicity comparison demographics (taken from Statistics NZ).



Ethnicity and religion

In Roslyn, ethnic breakdown was:

- 66.9% European/Pākehā
- 23.5% Māori
- 7.9% Pacific peoples
- 15.6% Asian
- 3.2% other ethnicities.

In Terrace End, ethnic breakdown was:

- 74.6% European/Pākehā
- 21.5% Māori
- 5.9% Pacific peoples
- 12.0% Asian
- 3.4% other ethnicities.

Religious beliefs across Roslyn and Terrace End was recorded as:

- 47.8% no religion
- 35.7% Christian
- 2.6% Hindu
- 2.4% Muslim
- 0.7% Buddhist
- 3.7% other religions.

As seen in Figure 11, this diversity is reflected in the school roll. There are over 30 ethnicities represented amongst the 160 school students. This breaks down as:

- 39.2% Māori
- 32.2% NZ European
- 10.2% Southeast Asian
- 4.4% Other Asian
- 6.3% Pacific peoples
- 4.5% Indian and Sri Lankan
- 1.9% Middle Eastern
- 1.2% Other.

“

Looking back, Roslyn families are full of hard workers. Twenty years ago we had the Title Works, the Power Board station, and the surrounding farms further out on the eastern side of Roslyn had many of the Chinese market growers. We still have that here today – lots of hard-working whānau doing their best. ”

Long-term resident

Built and physical environment



Figure 12: Aerial photograph of the Terrace End School Neighbourhood Play System.

Located 3km northeast of Palmerston North central city, Terrace End School is connected to the rest of Palmerston North through a network of busy main roads. The school is bounded on the north by the North Island Main Trunk Railway (Milson), on the east by Palmerston North–Gisborne Railway (Kelvin Grove), on the south by Main Street East (Terrace End) and the west by Ruahine Street (Palmerston North Hospital Area).

The school is 2.1km from Palmerston North Airport, and less than 1km from the Palmerston North Hospital.

In the 140-year history of the school on this site, the surrounding area has changed due to the expansion of industry, urbanisation, and economic growth.

The findings in this section suggest that throughout this change, we have left our tamariki behind.

Traffic and roading

Ruahine Street – the main feature of the school community – is one of the busiest roads in Palmerston North with up to 20,000 cars per day passing the school gates. We know from data and transect walks that most of the cars moving along the main roads are 'fast moving' (Figure 12). The design of the area creates gridlock, which results in 'rat-running' drivers, going down side streets at high speed. As a result of all of this, 44% of tamariki feel unsafe travelling to school.

According to recent school surveys, only 28 tamariki travel actively to school. This represents 16% of the student population against a national average of 28%. There are few crossings on State Highway 3 and Ruahine St to support easy access to playgrounds, and the issue of traffic severance caused by these two roads has been a recurring theme of discussions.



Figure 13: Ruahine Street entrance pedestrian crossing – outside main entrance.



Figure 14: Traffic backed up down Ruahine Street at school pick-up time.



Figure 15: Traffic backing up to the school from the Featherston Street lights.

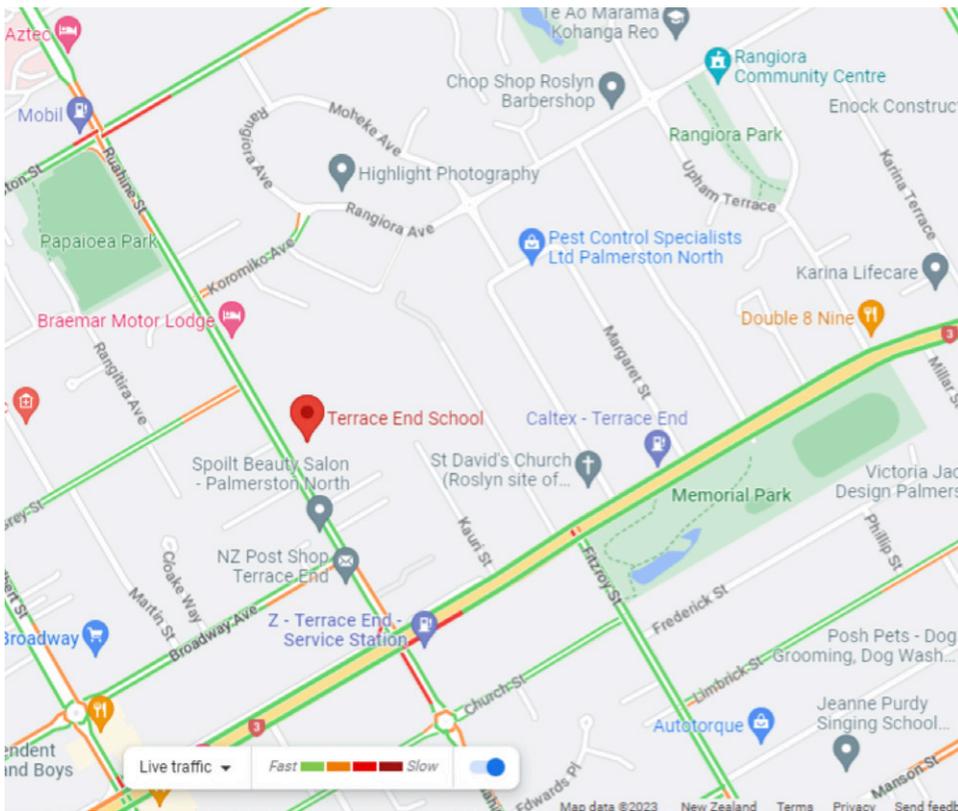


Figure 16: Speed representation of traffic on surrounding roads.

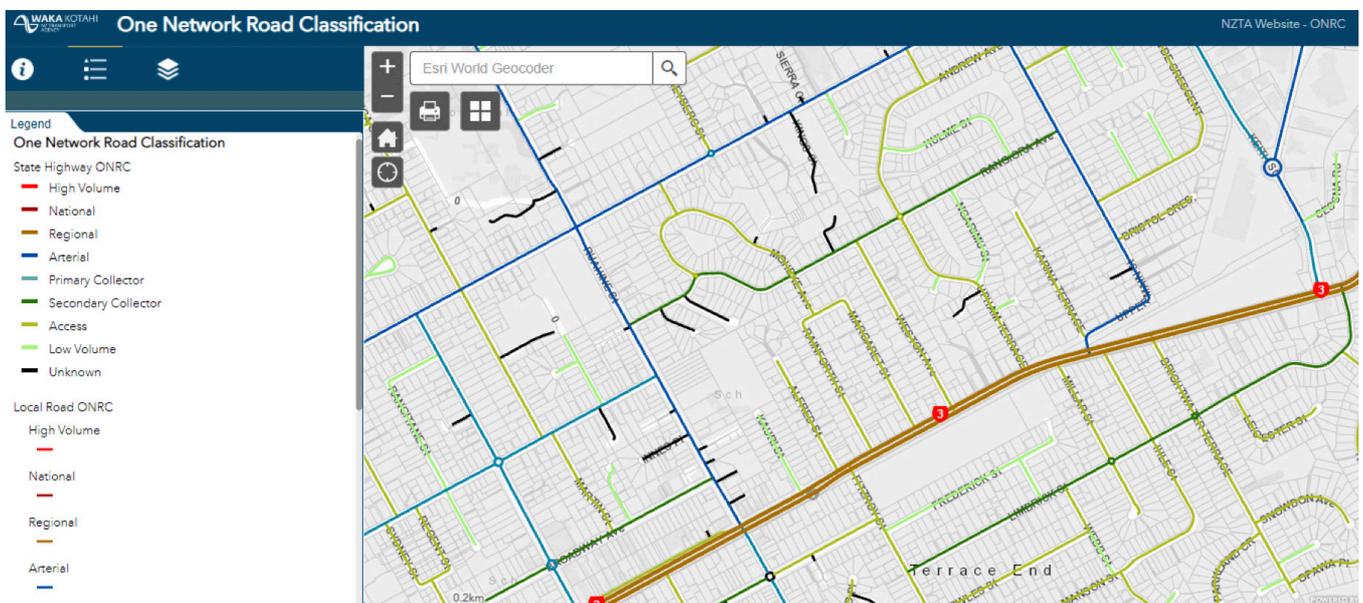


Figure 17: The taxonomy of streets surrounding Terrace End School.

The roads linking main arterials are wide and present significant barriers to the enablement of play for tamariki and their whānau due to rat running, clogged intersections, and a high number of parked cars. In addition, according to Palmerston North City Council data, of all suburbs in Palmerston North, Roslyn has the lowest percentage of tree canopy cover. All of this contributes to the community feeling 'drab and grey' (using respondents' words).

The streets in Roslyn are generally wide and tree-lined. The suburb is relatively flat, supporting mobility by bike or on foot.

Neglect and lack of maintenance

Assuming tamariki can overcome the challenges presented by traffic, there are other issues to contend with when moving around the neighbourhood. A significant proportion of the footpaths have not been maintained or resurfaced in recent years, there is overgrowth, signs of neglect and dereliction, and, in general, Roslyn presents an average or below average walking and wheeling environment.

“ The frustration that you deal with all the time is that you have to wait in a queue to get basic maintenance of the child’s environment. ”

School leadership

“ Roslyn is the forgotten neighbourhood of our city. ”

Long-term resident



Figure 18: Unsafe and unmaintained alleys and access points surrounding the school.



Figure 19: Alleyway footpaths, used by tamariki to get to and from school, in need of repair.



Figure 20: Overgrown greenery in walkways is a safety issue rather than an explorative feature.



Figure 21: Streets bordering the school are common 'burn-out' areas.

Spotted around the neighbourhood is a range of green and grassy spaces, though these are often neglected or littered.



Fly tipping in the neighbourhood.



Figure 23: Back entrance into the school grounds via Wharenui Terrace.

Safety measures

On the streets backing onto the school, traffic-calming measures like speed bumps, cushions, and narrowing have been installed to make the area safer.



Figure 24: Traffic-calming measures in Rangiora Crescent.

Palmerston North City Council is currently consulting on a series of proposed changes covering the immediate streets around the school, where there is a high volume of pedestrians and pick-up/drop-off areas. In general, most of these changes are focused around slowing traffic speeds on key access and arterial routes.



Figure 25: Palmerston North City Council “safer speeds in our neighbourhood” proposed changes around Terrace End School.

Housing and property development

In terms of the residential housing stock, most of the sections within the Neighbourhood Play System are quarter-acre sections. Most of the local housing was built in the 1930s to 1960s, and, as evidenced by aerial photographs, there is space for back- or front-yard play in most of the sections in the area – although, anecdotally, tamariki in the area lack play options due to cost barriers.

A high number of small flats or breeze block and summerhill stone homes within the catchment of the school are favoured by the elderly and migrant communities as a low-cost solution to their housing needs. However, this housing only provides a limited play space for families.

“ Now most of the homes here have got really high front-fencing; it’s like a barrier between home and street. ”

Long-term resident

As evidenced by new property development data, the suburb is becoming more dense to cater for a 9% population increase (2018 Census). Regular housing developments in the neighbourhood include the current Tūapapa Luxury Apartments being constructed across the road from the school, and a Kāinga Ora housing development planned for the broader suburb.

Palmerston North City Council has started to put their intentions to improve the provision of play across the neighbourhood into action. However, each child’s experience is hugely impacted by traffic severance and other factors that limit their roaming – anecdotally most tamariki play in their back yard.

Palmerston North City Council aims to maintain or improve on 80% of residential land meeting a 500m walking distance criteria, however this criterion does not factor in barriers such as principal or arterial roads.



Figure 26: Luxury apartment developments opposite the school.

Spaces for play

From walking around the area, you get a sense that play has been engineered out of the lives of the tamariki in this community.

There are uncapitalised opportunities for play enablement as well. There is clear evidence of both child-led play, and parental play leadership, including installing basketball hoops (Figure 26), paddling pools, and many bikes and scooters. Our assumptions about the appetite of whānau to support local play have been validated in our conversations with each group.



Figure 27: Adult play leadership sees the installation of a basketball hoop.

There are a few cul-de-sacs near the school that could be activated for play, including Kauri Street and Wharenui Terrace. Other potential play spaces include St David's Church, Kohanga Reo, and St Peter's Anglican Church. Though, upgrading or modifying dedicated play areas and assets could be a better use of resources than developing these sites.

The more established streets in the community, like Alfred Street, have wide berms and established trees. Overall, they present a more pleasant and child-friendly environment with the potential for activation through tree climbing and berm development – although this remains to be tested.

“ Back in the years gone past, the state houses of this area never had front fencing. Your back yard would be fenced, but never your front yard. Everyone's front doors opened to the street and children were free to roam across other front yards, so it was like one big long front yard. The community raised us kids and no one ever locked their front doors. Now most of the homes here have got really high front fencing – it's like a barrier between home and street. ”

Long-term resident



Figure 28: Wide berms and tree canopy on Alfred Street.

Common pathways and alleys that link the community are accepted as a 'blank canvas' and present the potential to illuminate the whole area through play. Due to high foot traffic and an appetite for improved passive supervision in the area, these sites present as logical 'arteries' that may link to the schools 'heart' through design. This could also be a strengths-based solution to local crime challenges.

“ The wayfinding, the safety, the tidying of the alleyways, the attractiveness of the neighbourhood – that all can make a difference. ”

Terrace End School educator

School Play Environment

The following sections of this report tackle the school play environment as well as access and egress to the school.

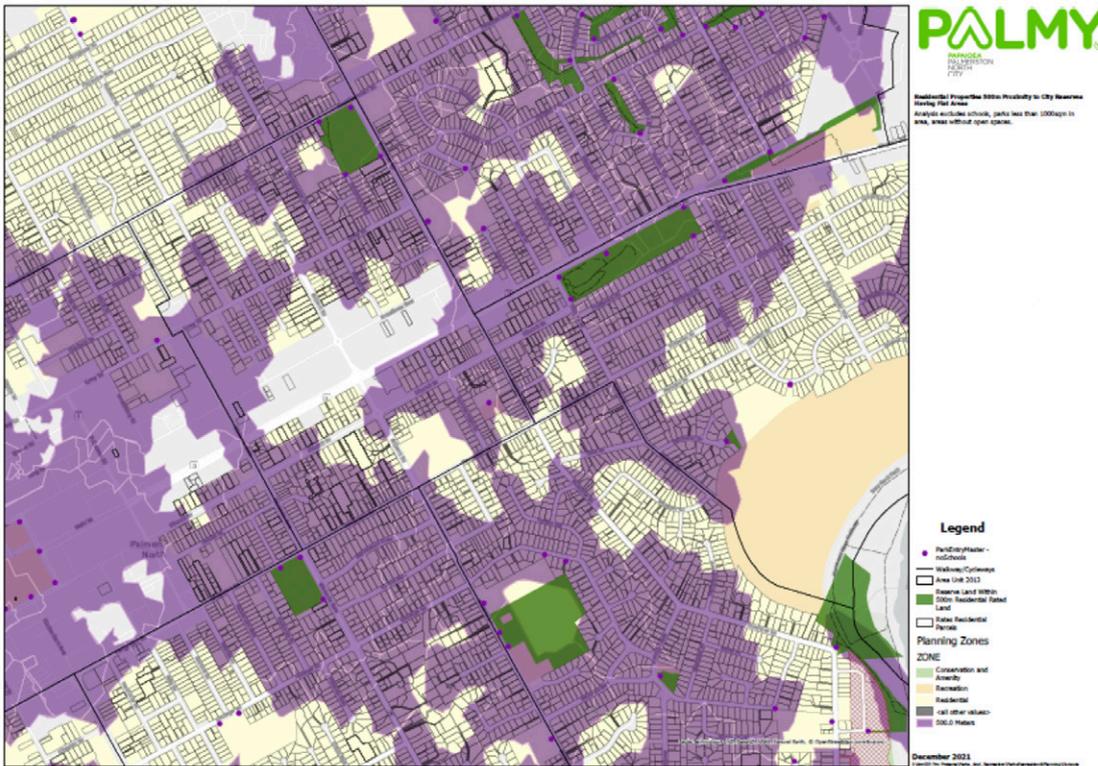


Figure 29: Palmerston North City Council map of homes within 500m of green space.

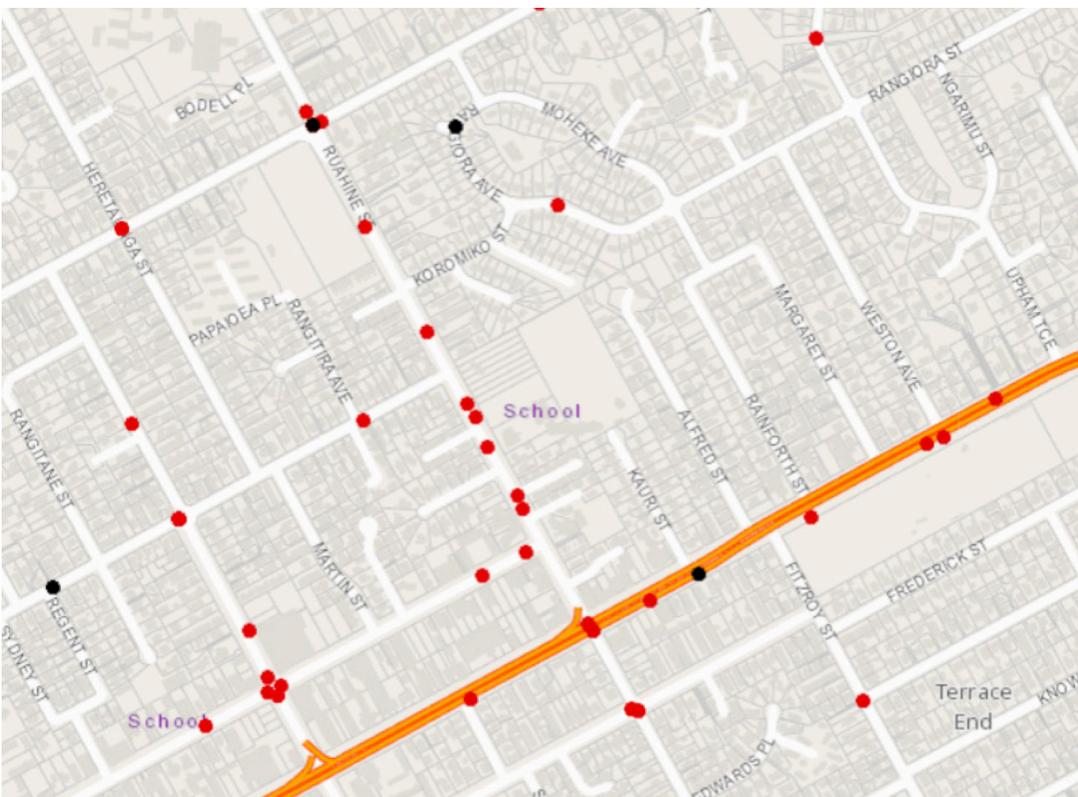


Figure 30: The number of serious car crashes occurring near the school since 2000, with black dots representing fatalities.

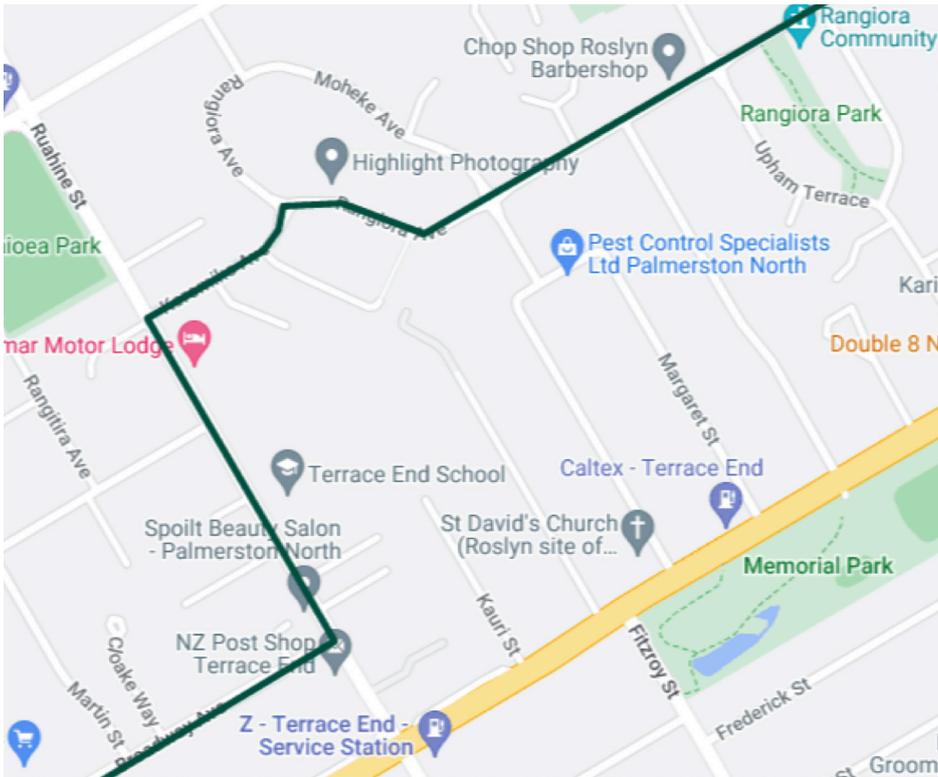


Figure 31: Bus route past the school gates with a bus stop right outside the front entrance.

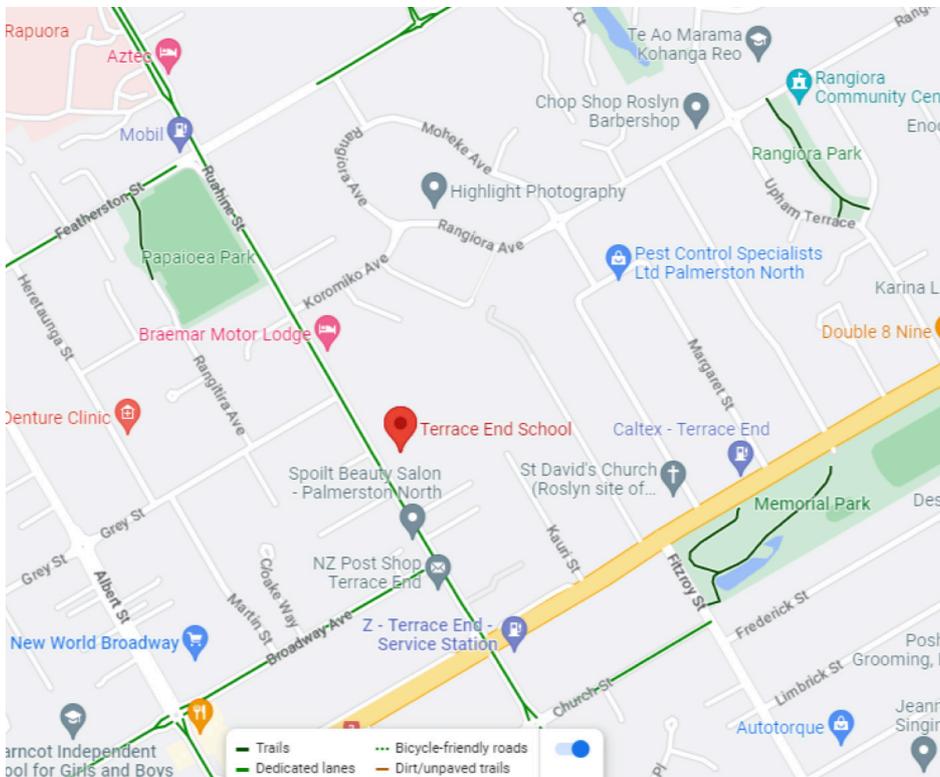


Figure 32: Dedicated cycle lanes on surrounding roads.

Terrace End School play sufficiency

Play within the school grounds

Outside the school gates

The school has given much thought to how their community can access their school safely, but major roading continues to present daily challenges to access and egress. There are multiple access points into school grounds and reasonably wide footpaths that lead into the gateways, but there remains a daily logjam of vehicles at the beginning and at the end of each school day (Figures 32–38).



Figure 33: Front school entrance via Ruahine Street.



Figure 34: The school entrance driveway via Ruahine Street.



Figure 35: The school's side entrance Kauri Street.



Figure 36: Ruahine Street entrance showing via parents/caregivers trying to exit after picking up their tamariki within school grounds.



Figure 37: Kauri Street entrance cul-de-sac with wide footpaths and drop-off zones.



Figures 38 and 39: Wide footpaths and signs at the drop-off zones at the Kauri Street entrance.

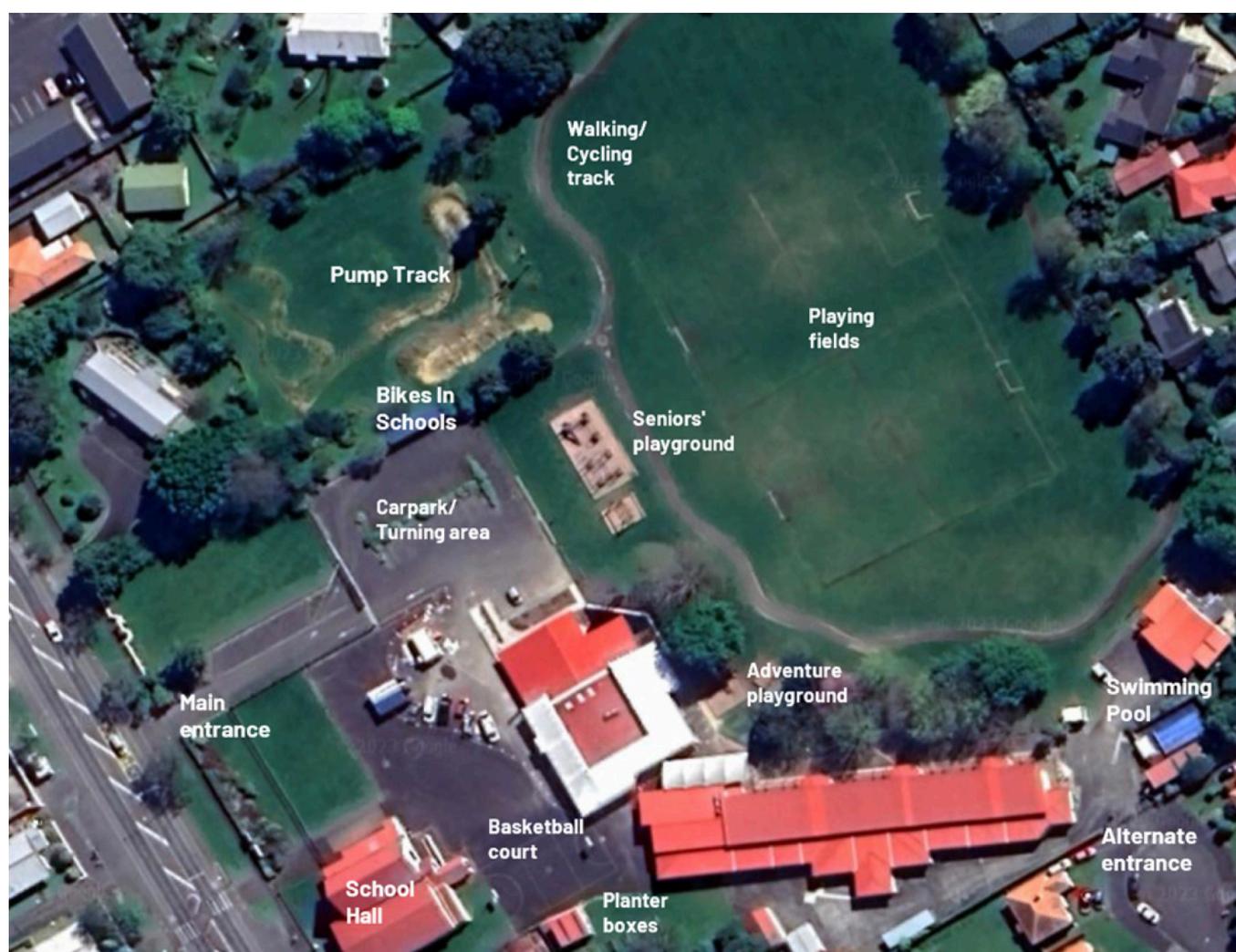


Figure 40: Key physical features of the school play environment.

To access the grounds of Terrace End School, you have to negotiate two car parks and a turning bay, which extends the car-centric environment onto school grounds. This is a response to high levels of parents dropping off children and an appetite from school leadership to support them to do so safely.

There is a large black fence in front of the school and a large concrete court space used for basketball at the front of the school.

Inside the school gates

Inside the school gates, the school has large park-like grounds with established trees and a range of assets and facilities that support and promote play, family time, and diverse forms of recreation. The current playgrounds offer a range of play opportunities and challenges for the school's range of ages, with many opportunities to swing and climb and hang, with natural elements being incorporated. However, the play opportunities are not accessible for everyone.

The school has a large park-like field area surrounded by trees, playgrounds, planter boxes and fruit vines, concrete court areas, and a swimming pool. Surrounding the field is an asphalt track beside a limestone dirt pump track, both of which are hugely popular with tamariki on bikes and scooters.



Figure 41: Students using the school pool in summer months.



Figure 42: Concrete courts for tamariki to play on.



Figure 43: One of the two playgrounds within the school.



Figure 44: The second playground within the school, bordering the field.



Figure 45: School vegetable garden planter boxes.

Many of the classrooms are new and were developed with an eye towards innovative teaching approaches and adding to the utility of the school day. An example of this is a series of raised classrooms fronted with canopy-covered steps, which are used for more informal teaching moments and eating lunch.

The school has a hall that can also be used for play, with community groups using the space for recreation activities – its current use is near maximum capacity.

Strong consideration has been given to accessibility, with the inclusion of a developed ramp system for new classrooms and future-thinking being developed around inclusiveness.

When the current principal arrived at the school, the gates were locked to the community outside of school hours. From a strengths-based position, and to support making the school a regular community hub, security cameras were installed. The installation of cameras has enabled the school to increase a sense of community, rather than to catch crime such as vandalism. The school has learnt that it has the potential to draw in a diverse range of groups to meet their play, recreation, and family needs.

The school has a positive attitude to growing community connectivity and has built connections with a range of partners and initiatives to support play accessibility and activation, including Healthy Active Learning, Bikes in Schools, and the Tū Manawa fund.

“ This place is busy. The Indian community plays here every single Saturday, and mums, dads, and kids are on our pretty average basketball court. There are family picnics underneath the trees. If we put the infrastructure front-facing, we can do even more. ”

Terrace End School educator

Modes of active transport

Children in year 4 (aged 8 or 9 or above) are welcome to ride bicycles to school. This criterion is in line with police recommendations. Terrace End School has a bike rack where bikes can be locked up securely with a chain and padlock. Tamariki are welcome to use their own or the school's bikes during morning break and must wear helmets and shoes.

Terrace End School supplies a helmet for each child to use while at school. The helmets are school property so remain at school. A scooter rack is also available, which is locked up during the day (Figure 45). A student 'school traffic safety team' supports awareness and provides services to keep the area safe.



Figure 46: The scooter rack shows a limited number of students use scooters to get to school.



Figure 48: The Bikes in Schools' storage container containing all of the school's bikes.



Figure 47: Students using bikes on the tar seal track around the school field.

Terrace End School has been a Bikes in Schools school since 2016. Bikes in Schools is all about regular and equal access to a bike at school for every child. Bikes are stored at the school for tamariki to use at lunch breaks and during lessons. There is also a limestone pump track for children to ride on different surfaces.

Terrace End School also delivered Bikes in Schools' cycle skills instruction to its tamariki and teachers with the last course delivered by Sport Manawatū in 2018. There was another planned for term 2 of 2023.



Figure 49: Limestone pump track built alongside tar seal track and field.

Tū Manawa Active Aotearoa

Terrace End School has received around \$12,000 from the Tū Manawa Active Aotearoa fund within the past two years for school gymnastics equipment and programme delivery.

With 100% of students participating in gymnastics, including adaptations for diverse learners, the initiative was used to develop the motor skills of students. Simultaneously, teachers were exposed to professional development and now have the skill set to have gymnastics as a physical education focus for years to come.



Figure 50 and 51: Tamariki using the gymnastics equipment.



Figure 52: Healthy Active Learning advisor and school staff.

“ We are giving a positive impression to those visiting the school, but, really, this is a blank canvas for much, much more; we need to present a tapestry of who we are. ”

School leadership

Healthy Active Learning

The school became part of the Healthy Active Learning initiative in February 2022. Since then, all staff have undergone professional learning development around the health and physical education curriculum, including one-on-one sessions with an advisor around best practice for health and physical education with their class.

The Healthy Active Learning advisor is actively involved in the school's sports events, including cross countries and triathlons, and has also helped the school refresh their physical education gear shed with equipment to complement the MoveWell resource. The advisor has supported all conversations surrounding the Neighbourhood Play System, and will continue to follow the process and input where necessary.

In general, the first impression of arriving at the school for play is a good one. At the time of creating this report, we saw the play assets on school grounds were good or satisfactory. School leadership and governance has articulated a desire to develop a sensory, responsive playscape that follows the arc of teaching spaces, draws in the learner, and addresses the needs of their students.

The school has a progressive and open approach to working with the community to create a 'wow' environment. The school is also well connected with community partners that are well-placed to support playful outcomes.

Community play sufficiency

Play sufficiency is a concept that promotes the idea that children have the right to play freely and without unnecessary adult intervention. It emphasises the importance of providing children with the time, space, and opportunities for unstructured play, which is vital for their healthy development. This section explores how the Terrace End School Neighbourhood Play System provides for, and supports, children's play experiences.

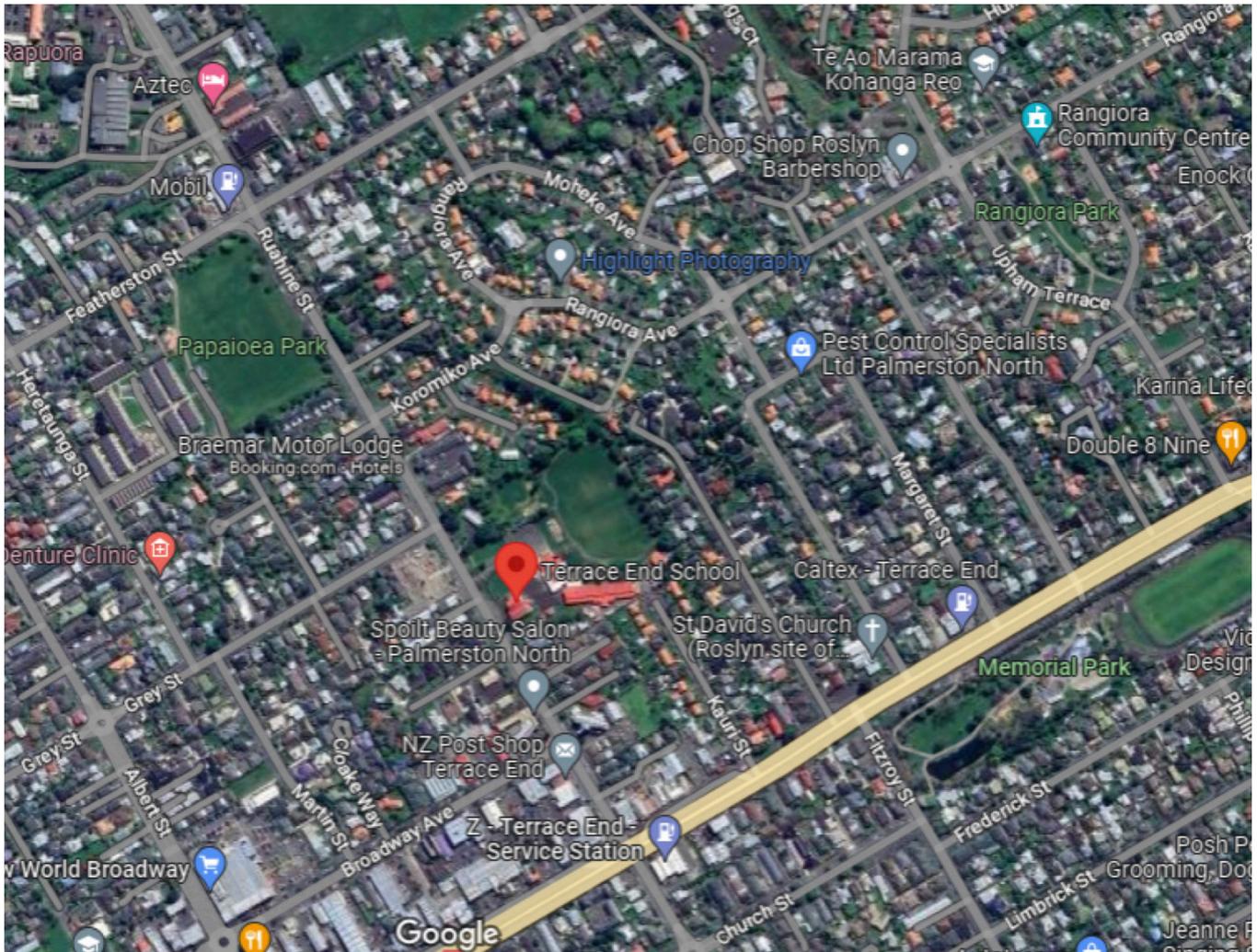


Figure 53: Aerial view of Terrace End School and surrounding play assets.

Play assets in the Roslyn community

Play development in the Roslyn community has improved over the last couple of years with the introduction of Palmerston North City Council's Play Policy.

Memorial Park

Memorial Park has been upgraded and is now inclusive and accessible for all ages and abilities. New sensory areas, a splash pad, and an upgraded free paddling pool are all new features. Lots of green space and trees for shelter mean tamariki and whānau can spend a good amount of time there. This is a true destination for children across the city.

However, the tamariki of Terrace End School do not have easy access to this park with the four-laned State Highway 3 between them and the park. As a result, the park does not show up in research as a common play area for Terrace End School tamariki.



Figure 54: Aerial shot of Memorial Park upgrade.



Figure 55: Fort-like playground with wide ramps for accessibility and poppies representing the park's memorial aspect while providing shade.



Figure 56: Memorial Park upgrade splashpad. During summer, the water is turned on daily from 10.00am until 9.00pm.

Papaioea Park

Another play space around Terrace End School is Papaioea Park, situated a few hundred metres from the school. Papaioea Park has a playground, outdoor gym equipment, and grass field, which is typically used as a football field in winter and as a cricket pitch in summer.

In 2019, Palmerston North City Council completed the construction of a social housing complex that backs onto the park. The park is on the opposite side of the road from the school, with the road being a major arterial route with busy traffic all day long. This park does have access to toilets and water.



Figure 57 and 58: Papaioea Park playground and field.



“ We don't go to Papaioea Park because we don't play sports. ”

Year 6 student

Other parks and reserves in the area

Within the radius of the school, there are also a couple of suburban reserves and parks including:

- Rangiora Avenue, and
- Norton Park



Figure 59 and 60: Rangiora Avenue playground running between Rangiora Avenue and Upham Terrace.

Both utilise green space available for play, with Rangiora Avenue including a small playground. These playgrounds appear dated with fixed colourful plastic equipment and low wooden fences surrounding them. They are not easily accessible by everyone. Like most small parks and reserves, these spaces do not have safe lighting, toilets, or accessible water.

There is also a Scout Hall close by, which can be hired by the community.



Figure 61: Roslyn Scout Hall entrance via Andrew Avenue.

Overall, the neighbourhood is served by a good number of formal and informal play spaces of various sizes.

However, the lack of a safe and pleasant connection system limits movement and inhibits tamariki from taking full advantage of them. A low safety perception also puts up a barrier to tamariki exploring independently across the neighbourhood.

Strategic environment

Palmerston North City Council Rēhia Papaioea! Play Palmy, Play!

Palmerston North City Council has been on its play journey for a number of years and is making great progress in turning Palmerston North into a playful city. It has been steadily upgrading playgrounds to become more accessible and include a variety of the different types of play around the city.

In 2021, its official play policy passed to help guide future decision-making on providing a range of play opportunities across many operational areas.

The Palmerston North City Council also has a guiding document, The City Centre Framework, which focuses on city centre play and bringing pop-up play activities into the heart of the city. The Palmerston North City Council has recently appointed a play advocate to bring the policy to life – one of only five such roles in Aotearoa (as of July 2023).

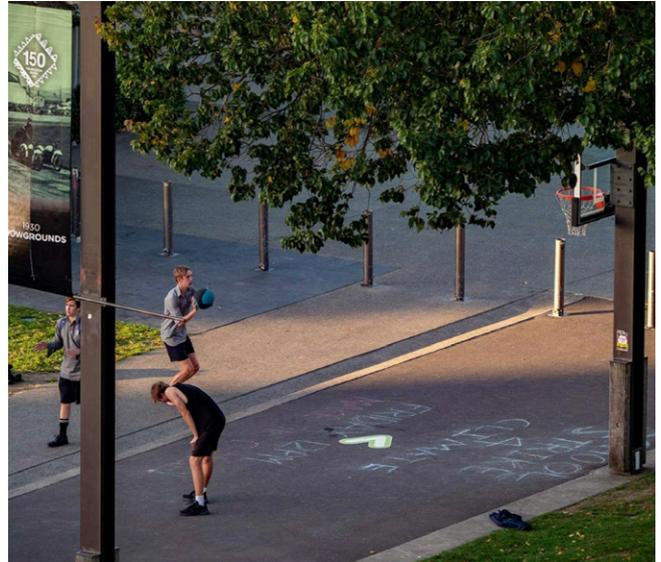


Figure 62: A basketball hoop erected within the Te Marae o Hine – The Square in the CBD, which gets daily use by all ages.



Figure 63: Pop-up chairs to promote a fun and playful city.

PLAY POLICY 2021

RĒHIA PAPAIOEA! PLAY PALMY, PLAY!

Play provides opportunities to improve both individual and community wellbeing. Palmerston North City Council is making a commitment to reflect a playful, fun and flexible approach in all Council public spaces, facilities, events and activities.

NGĀ WHĀINGA O NGĀ KAUPAPAHERE POLICY OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the policy is to provide guidance for Council decision-making to achieve the following objectives:

- Everywhere in Palmerston North has places to play
- Everyone has opportunities to play
- Council is a play innovator and uses its expertise to inspire others.
- Play spaces enable mana whenua and the wider Māori community to play and participate in ngā taonga tikaro (traditional games and sports).
- Play spaces enable multi-cultural communities to play and participate in traditional games and recreation activities.
- Play opportunities reflect our diverse community needs, by being inclusive and accessible to all.
- People feel encouraged to use all public spaces and facilities to play, express themselves and be active without fear of judgment.
- Council works across sectors to lead and co-create play opportunities, play spaces and services.

KUPUTAKA DEFINITIONS

- Play – is activity for enjoyment and recreation that is freely chosen for fun, creativity and personal challenge.
- Play space – areas where people can play, including playgrounds, and public spaces.
- Public space – An outdoor area that is open to or used by the public that is under the control of the Palmerston North City Council, and including, but not limited to, reserves, parks, riverbanks, roads and verges.
- Play champion – a person who has a passion for play and recognises its contribution to wellbeing.
- Free play – unstructured and spontaneous play that has no cost.
- Pop-up Play – temporary play opportunities.
- Play street – where safe neighbourhood play is enabled by the community through temporary street closures.

ARATOHU GUIDELINES

Council will:

1. Advocate for and actively promote play.
2. Introduce fun, playful and creative elements into public space development at early project planning stages.
3. Support community play champions and initiatives to access external funding for play resources in communities that need more assistance to play and be active.
4. Work with other organisations to achieve better play outcomes.
5. Develop a decision-making process to inform the renewal and development of Council's play spaces.
6. Engage with communities and listen to their ideas for play to inform decision-making.
7. Grow a network of play champions in the community and support them to lead local play opportunities.
8. Support free play in our parks, reserves and public spaces.
9. Provide play spaces that are safe, inclusive, accessible and comply with council's health-related policies.
10. Provide play spaces that are designed to engage people of different ages, stages and needs.
11. Provide play spaces that express and provide for Rangitane and Māori cultural needs.
12. Encourage pop-up play opportunities.
13. Provide play spaces for a wide range of play types that challenge, allow for discovery, creative expression and movement, and offer an element of surprise.
14. Formalise an approach to play streets that enables and encourages people to play in their streets and neighbourhoods.

TE AROTAKE ME TE AROTURUKI EVALUATION AND MONITORING

1. An implementation plan will be developed.
2. Progress towards implementing the Play Policy will be monitored and reported to Council annually.
3. The policy will be reviewed in 2024.

PALMY

Palmerston North City Council
www.govt.nz / info@pncc.govt.nz / 06 336 8700 / Te Marae o Hine – 52 The Square, Palmerston North

Fig 64: Palmerston North Play Policy: Rēhia Papaioea! | Play Palmy, Play!

Play strategies

There are many organisations actively advocating for play and tamariki across Aotearoa, including the contributing partners in this report. Many formal documents at national, regional, and local levels support this work and the ongoing development of play to be used as a vehicle for active tamariki. The following documents have an impact on the Neighbourhood Play System area.

Sport NZ Everybody Active Strategic Plan 2020–2024

This plan outlines Sport NZ's commitment to play through the following visions of play:

1. All tamariki and rangatahi are physically active through play, active recreation, and sport
2. No one must miss out on the benefits of play, active recreation, and sport, regardless of factors such as gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, or where they live in Aotearoa New Zealand
3. Every New Zealander is able to access quality play, active recreation, and sport experiences at home, within their neighbourhood, and across their community
4. Neighbourhoods are collaborating, generating ideas, and owning the creation and promotion of opportunities for all New Zealanders to be active

Kia Hīanga, Sport NZ Ihi Aotearoa Play Plan 2022–2025

Kia Hīanga includes a series of actions that Sport NZ Ihi Aotearoa has committed to, to improve the quality of experiences, opportunities, and support for play, and further develop the Aotearoa Play System. Sport NZ believes a strong bicultural foundation is critical to Aotearoa New Zealand's national identity and wellbeing, therefore Kia Hīanga use Māui Hīanga as the foundational framework to give shape, reason, and rationale to our commitments and actions.

Sport NZ is committed to improving the quality of experiences, opportunities, and support for play, and, as such aims to invest in a set of actions to create a sustainable environment for play to flourish in Aotearoa New Zealand at government, regional, local, and neighbourhood levels. Funds will be directed toward:

- the development of a cross-government play approach
- continued development of national and regional play system leadership to influence other agencies and their work plans
- more active play opportunities for all tamariki throughout the community, at home, and at school.

Sport Manawatū Everyone Active Strategic plan 2022–2026

The Sport Manawatū strategic plan has a vision of thriving communities enjoying Pae Ora – healthy futures, with a purpose to get everyone active through play, active recreation, and sport. Sport Manawatū will do this through their strategic priorities of:

1. Active communities – He hāpori kamakama: communities live more active lives through play, active recreation, and sport
2. Active influence – He awenga rangatira: a capable sector delivering a diverse range of quality play, active recreation, and sport experiences for our communities, with a specific focus on engaging those who are inactive
3. Active systems – He pūnaha whitawhita: Sport Manawatū and our sector partners are valued, skilled, and committed to the kaupapa with reflection and adaptation to improve health and wellbeing for everyone
4. Active engagement – He hononga tangata: a diverse range of partnerships and collaborations that add value and contribute to our vision of thriving communities where everyone is active for life
5. Active capability uplift – He pikinga ora: providing innovative solutions and options to our communities that guide play, active recreation, and sport to remain relevant and fit for purpose for the future

Palmerston North City Council Active Communities Plan 2021–2031

With a priority to be one of the most active communities in New Zealand, Palmerston North City Council has indicated it will contribute to achieving this through play by:

- its play policy informing its operational decisions
- providing sport and recreation opportunities in all of the city's parks and reserves, which respond to the needs and views of communities of interest
- promoting opportunities to be active. The Palmerston North City Council's project, the Featherston Street safety upgrades, has the potential to affect how students get to school in the future.

Palmerston North City Council Play Policy 2021

Expanding on its Active Communities Plan, Palmerston North City Council is leading the way by formally committing to providing a range of play opportunities throughout operational areas. The Palmerston North City Council has adopted a play policy and is currently working on enacting it through a policy implementation plan.

Below is evidence of the work that Palmerston North City Council has already started doing to support a more playful city with varied play opportunities.



Figure 64: Albert Street forts support adventurous and challenging play.



Figure 65: Milverton Park upgrade, which includes natural elements.

Tamariki engagement

As we begin to grow the value and impact of play within a community, we must first ensure that the voices of tamariki and rangatahi from all backgrounds and abilities are integrated. Co-creation of play ensures that our solutions are optimised to the needs of the communities, and draw upon the strengths inherent in the local context.



“ My favourite thing was when my dad took me to Linklater Reserve and we pretended to be foxes and rabbits. ”

School leadership

“ My favourite play memory was when I used to play with my sister in the back yard, but we’ve moved to a much smaller place with no back yard now. ”

School leadership

This way, communities take ownership, value their assets, and see play as integral to their own development. It is important to treat tamariki as urban citizens and enable their right to the city.

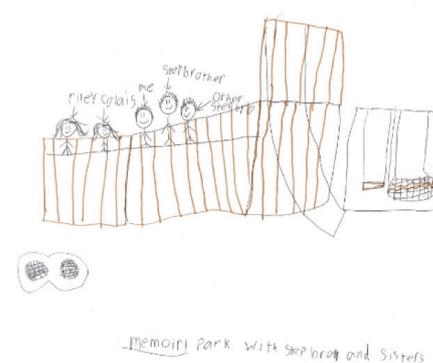
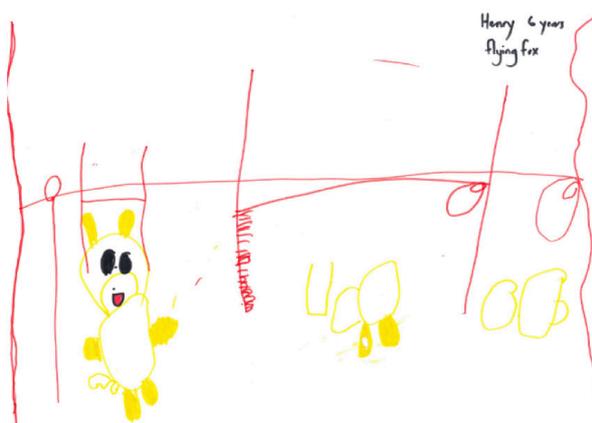
It was vital to undertake engagement sessions with classes of Terrace End School students to understand play from their perspective and get their thoughts about play within their school community.

These sessions included students:

- using craft material to depict their favourite way to play
- completing a survey on current play trends through a Kahoot quiz
- drawing maps to show how they got to school each day
- using Tinkercad to draw their ideal playground and create a 3D version of their drawing
- walking around the school community to identify things they would play with or areas that they normally avoid.

Exercise 1: Favourite play memory

Tamariki were asked to depict their favourite play memory with coloured felt pens on paper. Examples of their pictures follow:





Students used a broad and colourful palette to represent their thoughts. From these images, strong and repeated themes emerged, including:

1. **A strong desire for connection:** this was seen through repeated mentions of friends and family, and a general sense that solo play is less impactful or memorable. A strong expression of feelings and emotions came about through connecting with others (probably more than we have seen elsewhere).
2. **A strong desire for stimulus:** the most frequently mentioned play assets were the most extravagant, such as swimming pools, which featured strongly.
3. **Play is fluid:** many images combined sport with playgrounds, as well as technology and the school experience.
4. **Play away from home:** the most memorable play opportunities take place across the community – Memorial Park and the school are most notable.

Exercise 2: Build your way to play

Tamariki used craft materials to bring to life their favourite ways to play. Sport was a recurring theme in their creations, such as basketball hoops, goal posts, and hanging and swinging structures.



Figure 66: Students showing their favourite ways to play using craft materials.

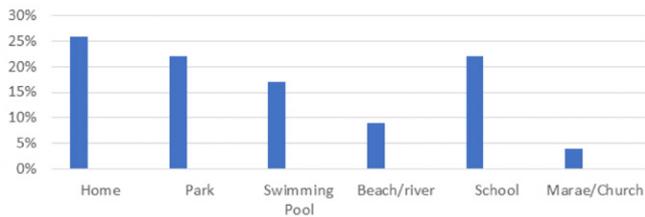
Exercise 3: School survey

A seven-question survey was developed to capture the perceptions of Terrace End School tamariki about the factors that impact play and play sufficiency.

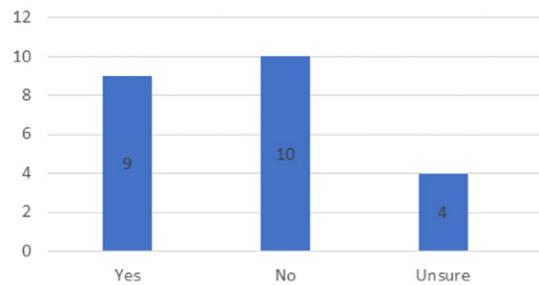
Themes common to other Neighbourhood Play System environments emerged from this session. They include low levels of play around the community and at dedicated play assets, a tendency towards sedentary screen time, and evidence of what we know about the challenges to independent mobility.

On a more positive note, the results presented an appetite amongst children for connection with each other through play, and a strong interest in water play.

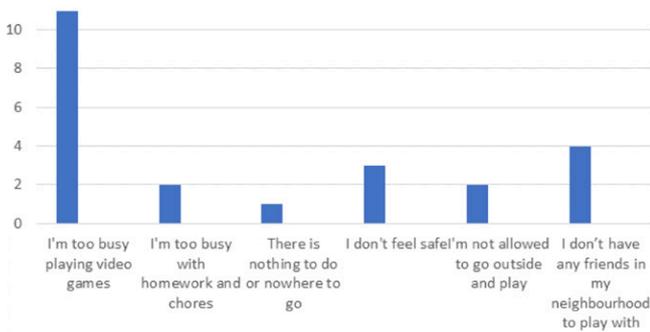
Where is your favourite place to play?



Is it safe for you to get to and from school?



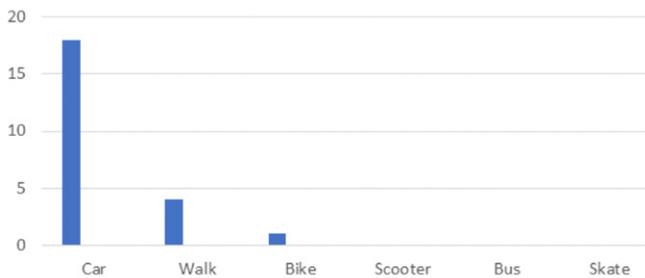
What stops you from playing outside in your neighbourhood?



What is one word you think of when you hear play?



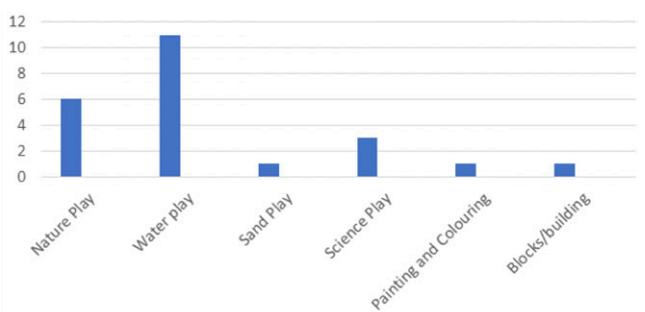
How do you get to school most often?



What is the one thing you would like to see in your neighbourhood to play with?



What is your favourite way to play?



Exercise 4: How tamariki are playing now

As an exercise to understand the play preferences of class groups of tamariki, a series of local reserves and green space maps were placed on tables. Students were asked to place a dot in places where they liked to play or have visited for play, which are shown in the following images.



Clyde Crest Reserve



Hulme St Reserve



Memorial Park



Rangers Park

These images reflect the findings from elsewhere across the country, where we see that the typical grass reserves that have been prioritised for community use are valuable, but perhaps don't present the opportunities for connection and stimulus that our tamariki and rangatahi desire.

Exercise 5: The journey to school

As an exercise to understand how tamariki view the world, we asked them to place dots on city maps to show the area they live in. We were able to assess how our tamariki live from a spatial standpoint. We found that many students traverse large swathes of the city to access the school, and there was a lack of straightforward journeys being made.

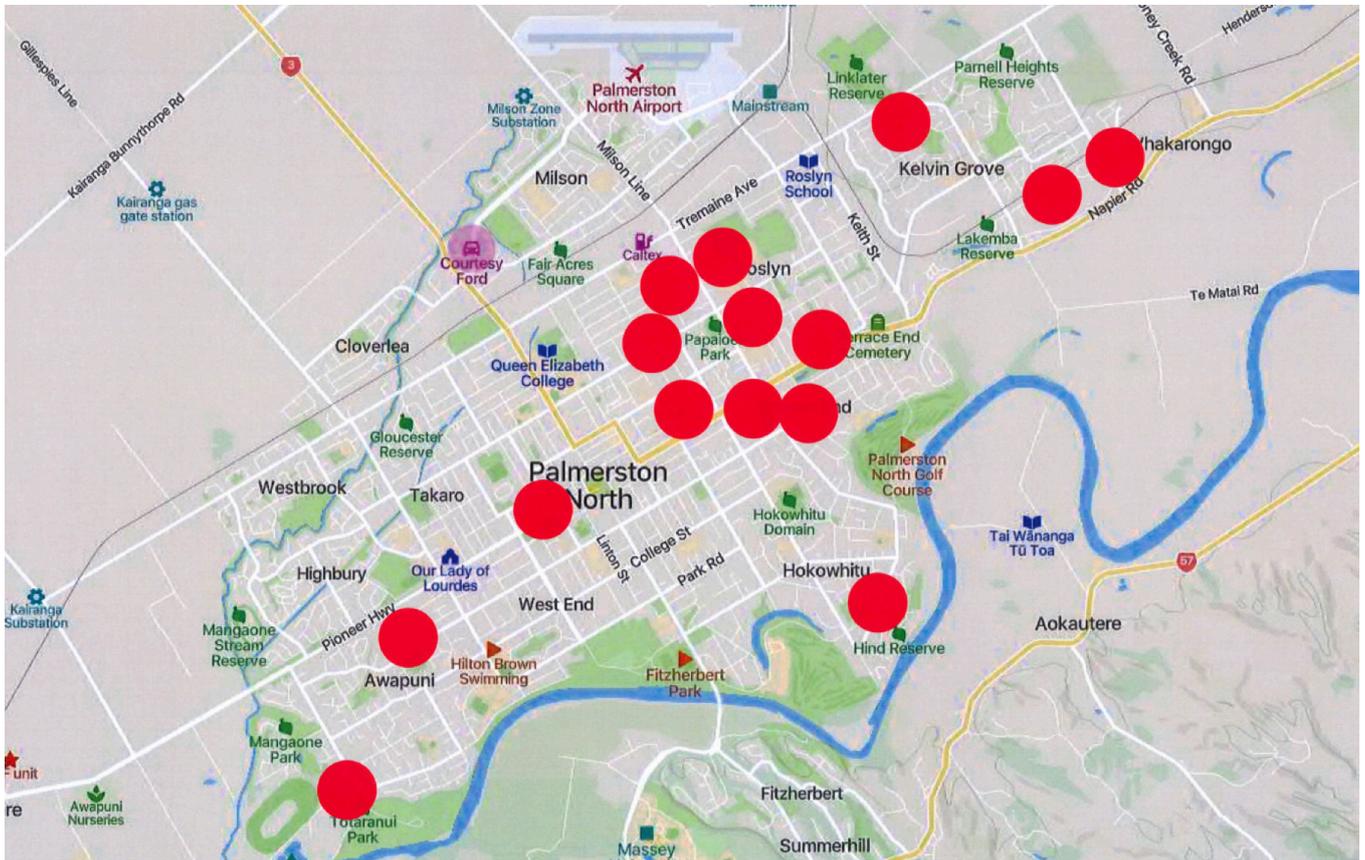


Figure 67: Students placed dots representing where they live.

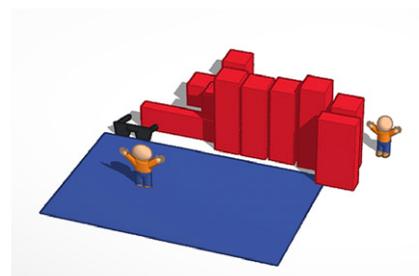
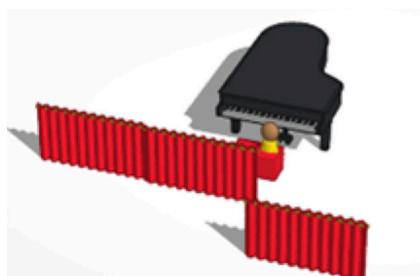
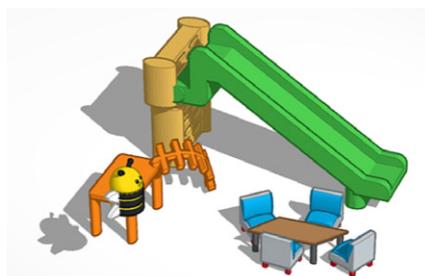
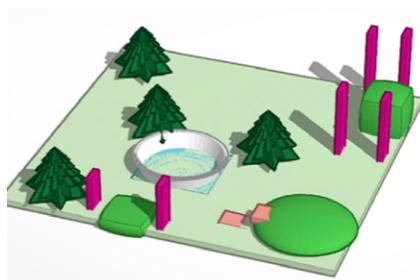
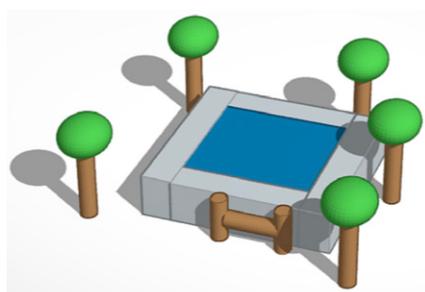
Tamariki were then asked to draw their journey to school. The main themes that emerged included the dominance of the car (one of the drawings featured a petrol station), buildings as the ‘poles’ between which tamariki were moving, and a general reinforcement of their car-centric lives.



Exercise 6: Tinkercad playground designs

Students were given the chance to draw what they would like to see in their ideal playground and used Tinkercad (a free online 3D modelling programme) to design their drawings in 3D and see them come to life.

Common themes of their creations included natural elements, water play, and interconnectedness between different play types, as well as additions that support family inclusion, like seating.



Tamariki engagement summary

In engaging with our tamariki using different methods, we were reminded of how creative and aware of their world they are. There were many valuable reflections of how they enjoy playing and what play could look like across the school catchment, although it is clear the tamariki are mindful of the barriers and limitations that they face. This came through strongly in their depictions of gas stations, roads, and hospitals.

Terrace End School tamariki love their whānau and to be active. They enjoy fluid types of play, such as melding sport with nature play, water play, and often technology-driven play.

Football, as a truly global sport, came through strongly as a means of uniting the diverse ethnic groups represented at the school.

The tamariki are really excited by the developments at the school and there is a burgeoning sense of pride. They value being involved in this discussion and look forward to more.

Play sufficiency: What good looks like

Our aspiration is that this report will provide the context and evidence for adult enablers around Terrace End School to collaborate to provide all tamariki of this school and community the ability to move freely and engage in play when and where they want to throughout their day. If successful, the community environment will look like:

Access and movement

Tamariki of Terrace End School (and neighbouring schools) can freely move around their community. They are safe to travel to and from school with their peers and whānau using active transport. Footpaths are wide and free from dangers, traffic moves at speeds safe for cycle lanes to be used, and school access points are playful and safe for all tamariki to enter through.

Built and natural environment

The Terrace End School environments and surrounding community are safe and are places where tamariki want to spend time with others. Play spaces are all-inclusive and provide a range of varied and challenging play opportunities. The natural environment is enhanced to be enjoyed by tamariki, and the environment is reflective of the diverse cultural community it caters for to provide a sense of belonging.

Awareness and agency

Terrace End School engages with a variety of play, and play-based learning is offered through Healthy Active Learning. Tamariki are given the time and permission to engage in how they would like to play with their peers throughout the school day. They are also encouraged to play within the school grounds and surrounding neighbourhood outside of school and are safe to do so.

Enjoyment

Tamariki at Terrace End School have access to play opportunities, which are continuously maintained and age and ability appropriate. The school represents the cultural diversity of its whānau so tamariki feel a sense of belonging within their school community. Access to the school allows it to become a community hub where all whānau can come together to enjoy and engage in play.

Recommendations

This section captures the actions, messaging, and infrastructure improvements that we should pursue to address the findings of this report. These recommendations align to the strategic directions and priorities already identified in the Palmerston North City Council's strategies and other strategies.

The four main approaches identified to promote play around Terrace End School are:

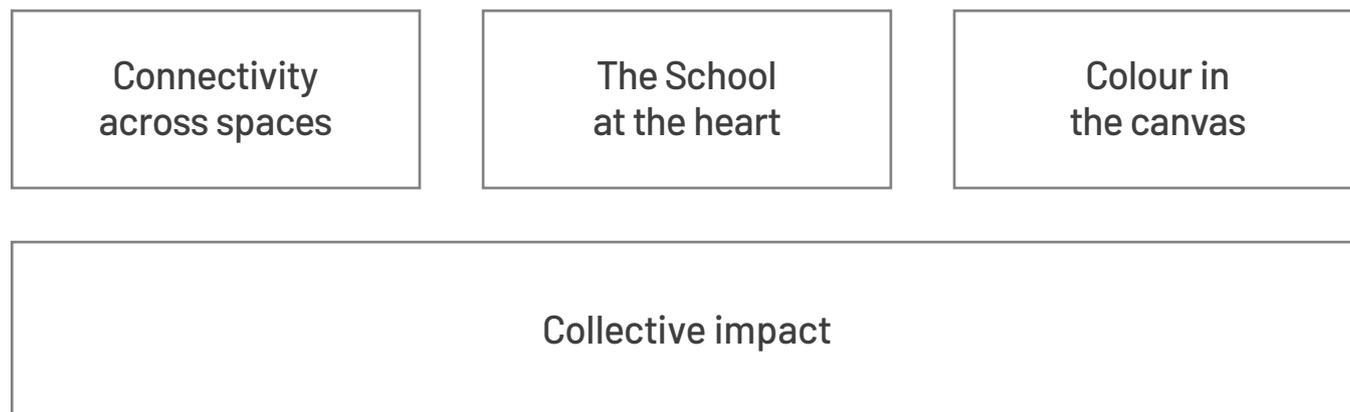


Figure 68: The building blocks of the Terrace End School Neighbourhood Play System.

1.

Collective impact

In collating this report, we have been struck by the strong sense of community and whānau present in the Terrace End School catchment. It will be vital to harness this in informing the shaping of their future world.

Terrace End School leaders acknowledge that the evolution of their physical environment will take time. The Neighbourhood Play System project group (including school leadership) is clear on the need for community participation. Top-down decision-making processes are likely to miss the nuances of the day-to-day needs and experiences of the local community, and particularly those of community members marginalised by race, disability, age, and other differences.

Community-led engagement, and the ongoing participation across different levels of decision-making, is crucial in ensuring that any changes respond to the specific, place-based needs of residents. So, we would like to start conversations in a consistent and focused way. A tactical conversation needs to take place with Palmerston North City Council transport about future developments in the area

and how we retrofit our environments to promote more safe mobility. Our Palmerston North City Council play advocate is well placed to unite the key people involved.

It is vital that adults within the lives of Terrace End School tamariki become enablers of play in the four aspects of home, school, club, and community. Building an understanding of play with these adults will help them to value play in tamariki lives. Sport Manawatū can facilitate workshops to help achieve this and encourage the adults to provide the time, space, and permission for tamariki to play in ways that are important to them. Sport Manawatū is well placed to collaborate with Terrace End School to deliver messaging to parents, teachers, and the Board of Trustees, and to work across regional sports organisations, community organisations, and agencies to deliver the same messaging.

2.

Connectivity across spaces

In responding to this body of data, we must prioritise the safe and playful movement of tamariki across their neighbourhood.

Undeniably, this area could experience the most impact by developing constructive conversations with those involved in roading and transport planning towards the development of appropriate calming and road-crossing measures. As an example, we need to make Ruahine Street outside the school safer to cross, as this is a key contributor of cars into the community and, at present, it is considered they move too fast.

Meaningful conversations could lead to the development of:

- pedestrian crossings
- cycleways
- removal of trees to improve lines of sight
- signs that promote awareness
- transport awareness training
- a safe zone of 100m around the school
- school street campaign
- a new school crossing on State Highway 3
- improved safety around access and egress into the school
- general improvements to footpaths and berms, and the tidying of neglected banks.

This type of change won't happen quickly, but it will support Terrace End School students to safely access play opportunities across their neighbourhood. A generational conversation needs to start now.

Looking at the data of tamariki who live in surrounding areas of the school, there is potential to increase the number of students who use active transport to get to school. Creating some fun and playful aspects around the surrounding streets of the school would encourage students to walk, bike, or scooter and play on the way to school. Play aspects could include:

- footpath play
- tree planting
- artwork, murals, and so on.

The Active Aotearoa fund is well placed to support these interventions. More on this in item 3.

At present, despite best efforts, there is a general sense that active modes of transport are neither attractive, inclusive, nor accessible. Statistically, they are not working. There are immediate actions that could be taken to ensure that both social and built environment factors are addressed in making the Terrace End School community feel safer and adopt active modes of transport.

Work is under way to address the social variables that limit active modes of travel in the area. While we don't have a fully holistic sense of the factors leading to low levels of active transport in the area, and with some scepticism present in the community, this project needs a willing local leadership structure to tackle the social variables (such as perceptions and travel attitudes) that limit active modes. More research is needed.

3.

The school at the heart: develop and maximise the role of the school in the neighbourhood

In the process of this data capture, Terrace End School leaders repeatedly expressed that they were up to the challenge. This wasn't just where building foundations of academic achievement was concerned, but also growing social inclusiveness and belonging for the whole neighbourhood. There is a suite of actions that have been identified towards this goal.

We must explore actions (programmes, projects, and events) that would make the school busy as often as possible, and ensure that those on its boundaries voluntarily adopt a kaitiaki role over the school and its assets, and therefore ward off vandalism and unwelcome behaviour.

Examples of this include:

- an event which welcomes and celebrates the 'neighbours' of the school
- opening the cul-de-sacs and right of ways onto school grounds through new gates, naming, and signposting accessways
- formalise the kaitiakitanga of school planter boxes and welcome public harvesting
- inviting local sports clubs and groups to use the school's assets (basketball, volleyball, local churches)
- inviting interest to deliver after-school or weekend activity programmes on school grounds
- inviting a swimming teacher to base their lessons at the school pool
- promoting hall hire and usage and more of a 'front-facing' school aesthetic. It may be that more security-focused interventions are a necessary part of the transition to an 'open' school.

Most of those involved in the school community said the school play assets are satisfactory, but they could be exceptional. If the spectrum of play offerings within school grounds was developed to an 'outstanding' level, the school could realise its goals and unlock the development of social capital.

4.

'Colour in the canvas'

A phrase that we kept hearing was 'the school and the neighbourhood are a blank canvas'. Yet, when we asked tamariki to reflect on meaningful play, their imagery was bright and colourful, and celebrated the colourful developments and assets that were nearby.



Adult decision-makers have the opportunity to colour in the canvas across their neighbourhood, rather than just at playgrounds.

As shown in the demographics of the student population of Terrace End School, the school is a multicultural school with a high percentage of Māori, Asian, and Pasifika alongside European. However, looking around the school grounds and the neighbourhood, this is not clearly identifiable. The schools last Education Review Office report suggests that further developing culturally responsive practice and embedding this across the local curriculum should reflect in design and implementation.

Using the voice of tamariki, the school and Sport Manawātū could work together to include aspects of play from the different cultures around the school – at entrances, in wayfinding, in play spaces, and art design. This would help every culture feel a sense of belonging in their school, and pride in being part of a community.

An obvious opportunity is the large concrete (basketball court) space at the front of the school – a vibrant tapestry could extend across alleyways, footpaths, and reserves.

Terrace End School tamariki have shown and articulated that they know how they like to play through the engagement sessions they were involved with. Terrace End School is currently going through a redevelopment process within the school grounds with term 2 and beyond having a focus on play spaces. Listening to the voice of the tamariki when designing the new playground components will help ensure a variety of play features that interest them, while giving them a sense of ownership and legacy over the assets within their school. It may be possible to share the learnings of this process with Palmerston North City Council officers prior to any upcoming council playground renewals.

Recommendations at a glance

Short term:

Can be addressed now

- Play advocacy workshops with relevant community stakeholders.
- Assemble a group of kaitiaki to enable this plan.
- Footpath activation on back alleyways to the school.
- Tū Manawa Active Aotearoa fund applications which support play.
- Tree planting on berms.
- Formalise the kaitiakitanga of school planter boxes and welcoming public harvesting.
- Develop an event which welcomes and celebrates the 'neighbours' of the school.
- Promoting hall hire and usage by the community.

Medium term:

Should be a priority within the next few years

- Consultation with tamariki and community to inform playground design.
- Artwork/Murals that draw upon the diversity of the school to bring to life dull parts of the neighbourhood.
- Wayfinding that directs the community towards the school and local reserves.
- Engagement between the kaitiaki group, students, and Palmerston North City Council to make playground renewals as impactful as possible.
- Removal of trees to improve lines of sight.
- Discussions with local sports clubs to use the school as a base.
- Opening the cul-de-sacs and right of ways onto school grounds through new gates, naming, and signposting accessways.
- Inviting interest to deliver after-school or weekend activity programmes on school grounds.
- Develop school pool infrastructure to enable the asset to be utilised by the school and community (neighbourhood) stakeholders.
- General improvements to footpaths and berms, and the tidying of neglected banks.

Long term:

Major changes that require multi-agency cooperation

- Improved pedestrian crossings, with flashing signs, notably on State Highway 3 and Ruahine Street.
- Cycleways that connect to the school with high-density areas of students.
- Transport awareness training that addresses perceptions and fears regarding active transport.
- A school streets campaign that co-designs safe transport options around the school.

Conclusion

The educators at Terrace End School carry a heavy burden. The impacts of economic hardship and transiency are felt within the school gates on a daily basis, and generate stern pastoral challenges for them to overcome. Despite this, school staff remain resolutely pointed at what matters most – creating great futures for the children in their charge. Play has been firmly identified as a key tool in meeting this end.

“ If play isn’t accessible, the learner misses out. ”

Terrace End School educator

Terrace End School is situated in an area with considerable challenges for achieving an optimal play environment. An expression we kept hearing was that the area and its assets were a ‘blank canvas’ for development.

Despite this, school governance and leadership are united in their vision of the school being the emotional, as well as the physical centre of the neighbourhood. There is much work to do so that the built environment, social networks, and project interventions can support this aim and bring colour to the neighbourhood ‘canvas’. Luckily, the tamariki at Terrace End School are expert urban designers and keen to share their ideas.

As children grow up, opportunities for playful engagement in their environment help build physical, emotional, and social resilience – crucial factors for personal wellbeing at every age group. Our colleagues across tiers of government continue to grow in their understanding of this, as well as understanding the barriers to play in our cities are complex and numerous.

This report aims to provide evidence to support diverse players with influence across the Terrace End School catchment to take affirmative action to meet the unique needs of Terrace End School tamariki. This will ensure that future generations that attend Terrace End School continue to be proud of where they are from.

We are grateful to all of those who have contributed to this report. Writing it has been uplifting – our conversations have presented a myriad of ways of how we can do more, and better. We’ve learned how positive action to better support play can transpire at Terrace End School, across Roslyn, and beyond.



“ We need to acknowledge all of the great things that we do and have in our neighbourhood, and help people to be proud and positive. Our challenge is to work with others to keep lifting the bar for these kids, because negativity and thinking that you only deserve second best is self-perpetuating. This is these kids’ place, their turangawaewae – it needs to be great, it needs to be of the highest standard. ”

School leader



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