

An Everybody Counts (EBC) approach to HPE

Our shared ethos

In and beyond the school gates

Refers to the desire that learning that takes place in class can be used both within and beyond the school. For example, children may learn 'how to get along with each other' (or at least articulate it), but when they move into a context outside of classroom, they don't! We want children to be able to use and know when, why and how to use knowledge in different contexts.

Celebrating diversity

Ordinarily, particular kinds of bodies (e.g. thin ones, athletic ones); abilities (e.g. in running, large ball skills); activities (e.g. cross-country, aquatics, sports); cultures (e.g. Pakeha, European) and ways of living are privileged in school-based HPE. In EBC, a re-fashioned version of HPE, we want to celebrate a range of orientations towards physical activity and health and the values associated with each. We are also keen to create an EBC learning environment that is non-judgemental and non-moralistic – that does not make children who can't run, are fat, or eat the 'wrong' foods feel like they are unhealthy, lazy or bad people. Rather we want children to enjoy moving their bodies and minds in ways that are pleasurable, functional, creative, and relevant/meaningful and applicable to them in their own particular contexts (homes, classes, families, communities). This means we will need to ensure that our students have the critical thinking/enquiry capacities needed to challenge accepted norms and to appreciate/investigate diverse perspectives (e.g. body size/shape does not necessarily indicate health status, food can be a source of celebration as well as fuel).

Broadening understandings

We want to go beyond mechanistic understandings and applications of *whare tapa wha* (Durie, 1994) to embrace multidimensional, holistic, inter-related notions of wellbeing that facilitate deep thinking and learning. We also want to move beyond traditional notions of PE as "sport" or "fundamental motor skills" or "fitness" or "games" and beyond health education as the "food pyramid" and eating and exercising 'right'. We want to encourage children to articulate/express/question/share/understand multiple perspectives about being well, engaged and active (e.g. large people succeeding in competitive sports, disabled athletes, older people climbing mountains, babies playing with pots, cleaners' vacuum-cleaning and dusting; families playing at the beach, fishing, gathering paua).

Movement as a vehicle for learning about self/others/world

Movement is a powerful medium for learning in all sorts of disciplinary areas and about oneself and one's relation to the world. We are keen to use movement more in our teaching. In so saying, we recognise that physical activity is (or can be) simply fun for kids – something they enjoy regardless of what might be learned while doing it. Where, how, why and when we move are questions we can ask of children... we want to encourage children to explore movement in familiar and unfamiliar contexts; to recognise and appreciate that walking the dog on the beach; playing games with their families; using a Wii; flying a kite and so on count as physical activity (not just running and traditional sports).

If we don't imagine, nothing will change.
Our efforts will look and feel different in different contexts and times.