

Learning for the Future

Curriculum Overview



“Happiness is achieved when we find the right balance of meaning (or purpose) and enjoyment of our tasks, and when we are engaged in an activity that has both present and future benefit.”

These wise words come from Rachel Simmons, internationally recognised educator and author of the New York Times bestsellers *Odd Girl Out*, *The Curse of the Good Girl* and *Enough as She Is*. Simmons explains that “students experience an internal sense of potential when they do what challenges them, performing activities that use them fully and well.”

Finding purpose, meaning and pleasure in learning is fundamental to success and shapes learning at Marsden. As students progress from the junior years, when their curriculum is marked out for them, to the senior years, where they are making choices, we want them to experience breadth, challenge, enjoyment and a sense of achievement.

Our innovative courses include core foundations of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values, transformative competencies and a cycle of anticipation, action and reflection, which are an integral part of the OECD Future of Education and Skills 2030 framework. We have identified curiosity, creativity, critical thinking, problem-solving, systems analysis and digital fluency as crucial skills for the future. By choosing broadly from the curriculum, students maximise the opportunity to develop these skills. Choose what challenges you, where you find enjoyment

and connection, and step beyond your comfort zone.

Rachel Simmons has this to say about following your passion: “Knowing what you love isn’t a prerequisite for real-world success. Knowing yourself is. Listening to the voice of your thoughts – what you like and don’t, what you want/need and don’t – is the far more valuable compass that will lead you, when you’re ready, to your passion.”

The course offerings at Marsden reinforce the essential skills at the heart of learning in a positive and supportive learning environment. Academic and pastoral staff work together to monitor progress, meet individual needs, and foster each student’s strengths. Enrichment is offered within and beyond the classroom, ensuring all students are challenged and energised by their learning. Personalised learning programmes are also available for students with identified and specific learning needs.

At Marsden we strive to be innovative, and this is a feature at all year levels. Te Kākano (Seed), our adventurous life skills programme for Years 7 to 10, provides Middle School students with opportunities to build confidence as leaders in their community. The curriculum is sufficiently open for students to pursue areas of personal interest. The challenge and the spark of a new passion may come from

the Year 9 Science Fair project, or the Year 10 Market Day.

As part of our commitment to academic stretch, students engage with aspects of the Cambridge International curriculum in Years 10 and 11, alongside the New Zealand Curriculum, building rigour and confidence for senior pathways.

At Year 11 we offer our innovative, inclusive NCEA+ programme, which focuses on teaching collaboration through entrepreneurship, active citizenship and social awareness with real-world applications, while gaining NCEA Level 1 in five traditional subject areas.

In Year 12 we offer NCEA+ as an optional subject. This is a space where students can follow the same or different theme from Year 11 in our collaborative learning environment. Students can personalise their approach to their theme and work with a coach to design their course.

Year 13 students might ignite the spark through an exploration of a self-selected literary theory in the advanced English programme or by taking a university paper as part of the NCEA+ pathway. Opportunities to learn, explore, and discover new talents and interests abound.

Marsden *Inspiring Girls*

Curriculum and Course Planner

	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
English	English	English	English
Mathematics	Mathematics	Mathematics	Mathematics
Science	Science	Science	Science
Social Sciences	Social Sciences	Social Sciences	Social Sciences
Languages	Introduction to Languages: Chinese, French, Te Reo Māori	Introduction to Languages: Chinese, French, Te Reo Māori	Chinese French Te Reo Māori and Tikanga Māori (compulsory 1st half year) Te Reo Māori (option 2nd half year)
The Arts	Visual Art Music	Visual Art Music	Visual Art Photo Magic Performance Media Music
Technology	Technologies: Food, Digital and Textiles	Technologies: Food, Digital and Textiles	Digital Technology and Robotics Digital Animation Creative Textiles Fibre Obsession Taste and Technique International Cuisine
Physical Education, Health and Wellbeing	Physical Education Health	Physical Education Health	Physical Education Health Sports Science
Hauora	Awhi	Awhi	Awhi
Religious Education	Religious Education	Religious Education	Religious Education
Project-based Learning			
Language and Learning Support	ESOL io Structured Literacy	ESOL io Structured Literacy	ESOL Learning Support

Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13
English (NZ Curriculum and Cambridge IGCSE English Language, Years 10–11)	English	English	English or
	Drama (NCEA+ collab course only)	Stage and Screen	English (Advanced Programme)
			Stage and Screen
Mathematics	Mathematics	Mathematics	Calculus
io Cambridge IGCSE Extended Mathematics + Level 1 and Level 2 NCEA		Applied Mathematics	Statistics
Science	Science	Biology	Biology
		Chemistry	Chemistry
		Physics	Physics
Social Sciences	History	History	History
	Geography	Geography	Geography
	Commerce (NCEA+ collab course only)	Accounting /Business Studies	Accounting
		Economics	Economics
		Classical Studies	Classical Studies
Chinese	Chinese	Chinese	Chinese
French	French	French	French
Te Reo Māori	Te Reo Māori	Te Reo Māori	Te Reo Māori
Painting and Printmaking	Visual Art	Design	Design
Design and Sculpt	Design (NCEA+ collab course only)	Painting	Painting
		Photography	Photography
Music	Music	Music	Music
Web Design and Robotics	Digital Technology	Digital Technology	Digital Technology
Creative Digital Design: Gamer	Design Visual Communication/DVC (NCEA+ collab course only)		
Social Action Textiles	Textiles Technology	Textiles Technology	Textiles Technology
Fashion Designer			
Food Product Design	Food and Nutrition	Food and Nutrition	Food and Nutrition
Foods for Life			
Physical Education	Physical Education	Physical Education	Physical Education
Health	Hauora (includes Financial Literacy, Religious Education, Physical Education and Health)	Life Skills	Life Skills
Sports Science			
Awhi	Awhi	Awhi	Awhi
Religious Education	Religious Education: (NCEA+ collab course only)		
	NCEA+ collab courses	NCEA+ collab courses	NCEA+ Pathways & Leadership
ESOL	ESOL	ESOL	ESOL
Learning Support	Guided Study	Guided Study	Guided Study

Hauora/Wellbeing

Marsden has long been known for its exceptional pastoral care. Our approach to hauora is school-wide and embedded in everything we do.

To help students recognise their own worth and place value in living well, we

have created Awhi, our tailored wellbeing education programme. Grounded in our school values, wellbeing education at Marsden is intentional and specifically designed to best nurture students as they grow with us.

You can learn more about wellbeing at Marsden here: <https://www.marsden.school.nz/about-us/wellbeing>



Manu Rere Ao

'Manu Rere Ao' is the bird that flies the world. It is the name given to our strategy to grow culturally confident graduates who are prepared to take on the world.

Through the Manu Rere Ao strategy, Marsden is committed to preparing our students to participate actively in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Te Reo Māori is taught to all students in Years 7 to 9. Te Reo Māori is an option in Years 10 to 12. Students across year levels encounter Māori concepts, practices and skills in a range of curriculum areas, such as the creation of Māori motifs in Year 8 Art and artefacts in Year 9 Technology, and a study of Parihaka in Year 11 History.

Marsden values its responsibility to fulfil the obligations of the Treaty of Waitangi, in strengthening our understanding of Te Reo (language) and Tikanga Māori (customs and practices).

Technology

Technology is integral to learning at Marsden. As well as being an area of study in its own right, it is a powerful tool that supports creativity, collaboration, and innovation across the curriculum.

Students use personal digital devices to access a secure, connected learning environment, enabling seamless learning both at school and beyond the classroom. Digital platforms support collaboration, communication, and access to a rich range of resources.

Through the thoughtful integration of technology, students develop digital fluency and the confidence to engage with ideas, people, and opportunities in both local and global contexts.

Qualifications

The National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) is an internationally recognised qualification that can be used to gain entry to tertiary institutes around the world. All Marsden students work towards achievement in this national qualification: Level 1 at Year 11, Level 2 at Year 12 and Level 3 at Year 13. It is a standards-based qualification, assessed by coursework during the year and also by external examinations in November.

As part of our commitment to academic stretch, students may also engage with aspects of the Cambridge International curriculum (IGCSE). Cambridge is

internationally recognised for its rigorous academic programmes, which broaden knowledge and strengthen skills alongside NCEA.

For students seeking further academic challenge, New Zealand Scholarship examinations are offered in Year 13. Scholarship is aimed at the highly motivated, independent learner and is supported by small group tutorials, online learning or additional work done out of regular class time.

Additional information can be obtained about these qualifications on the following websites:

NCEA:

<https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/ncea/understanding-ncea/how-ncea-works/>

Cambridge (IGCSE):

<https://www.cambridgeinternational.org/programmes-and-qualifications/cambridge-upper-secondary/cambridge-igcse/>

Scholarship examinations:

<https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/qualifications-standards/awards/new-zealand-scholarship/>

Beyond School

“The best thing parents can do is to teach their children to love challenges, be intrigued by mistakes, enjoy effort, and keep on learning.”

Carol Dweck

During her extensive research on achievement and success, world-renowned Stanford University psychologist Carol Dweck developed the concept of the Growth Mindset. Dweck's work has shaped much of our thinking today about

the importance of having an open mind to change, effort, making mistakes and understanding that learning is a lifelong process. A locked-in, fixed mindset is not good preparation for tertiary study or the modern workforce.

Marsden's focus on developing creativity, collaboration, curiosity and tenacity is aimed at building a growth mindset. These essential skills, combined with strong academic performance across a range of curriculum areas, set students up for challenging and rewarding future learning as well as meaningful, enjoyable work.

While some specialisation may be necessary in the Senior School, it is wise to keep options open. Education must prepare students to be adaptable, life-long learners. Students should both recognise their strengths and respond to challenges. Research shows us that today's students will work through a mosaic of different phases, roles and careers in their lifetime. At Marsden students learn how to learn and develop the values, knowledge, and competencies that will enable them to live lives of meaning, accomplishment and genuine happiness.