



The Twenty-Three

**A Year in the Centre for
Excellence in Teaching
and Learning.**



Introduction

Welcome to our second volume. It has been an exceptionally busy year in the Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning and within these pages you will find a snapshot of all the wonderful things that have been happening to support our staff and students at Westlake Boys.

The first half of the year was very much focused on the planning and preparation for the International Boys' School Coalition Annual Conference. The behind-the-scenes work began in term 4 of 2022 but really kicked off with full force as we returned from the summer break. From the rooming of workshops to the mentoring of Action Research participants, the Centre was not only the venue of our weekly planning meetings but a hive of activity both before and during the very successful event.

Our core programmes of Provisionally Certified Teacher support and Aspiring Middle Leaders development continue to go from strength to strength. Our interactions with the full range of teachers from different levels of experience and backgrounds is one of the most fulfilling parts of our roles, and this year was no different. Following the disruptions of the past few years, we also welcomed teachers from overseas who we were able to support in their familiarisation with the NZ Curriculum and Westlake.

Always looking for new ideas and the ability to respond to emerging research in the sphere of boys' education, we continue to develop our reach and our programmes both within Westlake and beyond to other schools in the Auckland area. At the heart of this is true team work and collaboration. The Centre is not just a physical location, it is the people who work within it.

Please enjoy our summary of 2023. Much of the work mentioned in this volume is ongoing and if you would like to get involved, or have ideas as to how we can support or develop teaching and learning, please get in touch.

With thanks,

Jude, Kelly, Casey and Becky

Thank you to the following staff for contributing to our second volume:

Kelly Easton, Casey de Wit, Carla Boniolo, Becky O'Gram, Mikayla Scarlett, Saira Ahmad, Liv Jackson, Jeremy Richards, Penny Weakley, Gareth O'Brien, Keryn McAlpine, Chris Okey, Molly Smith, Helen Jorgenson, Nick Brown, Natalie Stettler, Rob Turvey, Jessica Pawley Copping.

Collated and edited by: Jude Arbuthnot

IBSC Conference Kia moemoeā

The Annual IBSC conference was the highlight of our year in the Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning. Months of planning and preparation culminated in 630 delegates from 15 countries and over 160 schools descending on Forrest Hill at the start of July.

Every year, this unique event stands out for its superior quality of speakers and sessions, creative inspiration of the programme, warm hospitality, and special opportunity to meet and share views with educators who remain steadfastly dedicated to equipping boys with the tools they need to survive and thrive in our rapidly changing world. This year at Westlake Boys High School was no different.

A group of about 40 staff were involved in the organisation of the conference to ensure every guest to our school left feeling welcomed, enthused and inspired about teaching boys. The conference's theme this year was to 'Dream Beyond Limits', and in planning and execution we certainly did.

We asked some members of the organising committee, presenters and attendees to reflect on the whole experience from conception to conclusion.

Becky O'Gram

It was a really special privilege to be on the organising committee for the IBSC Conference 2023. Having been planning the event for well over a year, it was exciting when we finally got to July and could welcome our guests. There was such a buzz around the campus as we shared our school with pride, and had enriching conversations with other professionals in the boys' education arena from around the world.

Some particular highlights for me were the keynote speakers and the wealth of knowledge and experience gleaned from them in such a short time. As a woman in leadership, it was particularly meaningful for me to hear Susan Hassell's thoughts on leading boys and showing love.

A favourite workshop that I attended was listening to Hal Hannaford's ideas on what truly makes a "good" school or teacher; with the key takeaway being a willingness to stick with a tricky problem and work on it, rather than push it away and only keep what's already "good". Although it was a little nerve-wracking, I relished the opportunity to share our research on academic outcomes of boys in boys' schools, revealing that at every level they exceeded outcomes for boys in co-educational schools.



Perhaps most enjoyable of all was working alongside my colleagues who have such dedication to both Westlake and boys' education that, even though we were attending during our holidays, it did not feel like work. The hugely enjoyable evening events helped with that! I am so grateful to have had the opportunity to have been fully involved in this experience.





Jessica Pawley Copping

This year's IBSC conference was the first I had attended, and I was also fortunate to be accepted as a workshop presenter. A key benefit of the experience was a sense of solidarity; reassurance that the challenges we face in education (mental health, social media, politics) are being faced by our colleagues across the world. We aren't alone!

The ideas, actions and programmes that other schools are making are similar to ours in many ways, but some new things I heard about that I would like to see Westlake trial or adopt include using after-exam time at the end of the year to implement a 'camp'-like programme that focuses on social and life skills, e.g. "Iron Man" competition (ironing clothing), cross-year activities to earn house points, and applying for "jobs" invented by teachers; e.g. writing cover letters and CVs, and going for "interviews".

One big idea that really struck me was the reframing of awards at assemblies; the team captain presents the award to the Headmaster and school in recognition of the support they gained from the school and that their win is in the school's name. This reframes the boys' behaviour and actions outside of school as always being part of the brotherhood, and seeking to achieve for the community, not just personal glory. I feel this could be a very powerful perspective shift.

It is always valuable seeing things from a different angle, and that was certainly a major benefit of attending the conference.

Kelly Easton

Being involved in hosting the IBSC Conference was a career highlight in 2023 for me. From inception to realisation, it was a privilege being involved in showcasing what we, as a team, offer here at Westlake Boys. The early mornings, long days and late evenings brought us closer as a group as we were all so passionate about making educators from around the world feel welcome, not only at Westlake, but in New Zealand.

From day one of the Conference, the Centre for Excellence was used as a base for the IBSC Action Research Team. This opening section embodied the philosophy of how our space should be used to 'share the theory and practice of teaching and learning'. Laura Sabo and her professional team of researchers were truly inspiring in setting the tone for the rest of the learning that was to occur across the week of the conference.

The stand-out keynote speaker for me was Susan Hassell. I was moved by her ferocious warmth as a female leader of an all-boys school. Her keynote was clear, that in leadership there is space for explicitness and wholeheartedness. She conveyed that one does not come at the expense of the other. It has provided me with assurance in my own middle-leadership role to be true to these values and confidently express these when supporting and working alongside teachers at Westlake. Overall, the conference left me feeling proud of our school, proud of our staff, and proud of our students.



Casey de Wit

Participating in the planning and hosting of the annual IBSC Conference was a significant milestone in my career. I have never felt such a strong sense of pride, honour, and inspiration from my workplace, colleagues, and students. The hard work invested in creating a space that delegates could enjoy was truly rewarding.

One of the key insights I gained from the conference came from the plenary speakers, who emphasized the importance of teamwork and trust within a group. This message prompted me to reflect on my working relationships and the level of trust we have in our collaborative efforts.

Another valuable takeaway was the realisation of the abundant talent within the IBSC community, comprising exceptional teachers and leaders. It underscored the importance of fostering connections and continuous learning from one another. After the conference, I felt truly integrated into this community and eagerly anticipate the ongoing opportunities for mutual growth and learning.

Nick Brown

The 2023 IBSC Conference was a remarkable experience, and one that ranks as amongst the most important of my time at Westlake Boys High School.

On one level, it was profoundly rewarding to be amongst like-minded, passionate educators, who recognised and valued

the importance of boys' education. On another level, the skilled privileging of our indigenous culture – te ao Māori – to our delegates made one proud to be a Kiwi, and the tears and joy that the delegates shared was deeply moving.

As MC of the conference, I had a rare position from which I could admire the legion of staff who worked so hard to make this conference a remarkable event. The countless hours of first planning then executing the week-long conference was deeply impressive, as was the grace and selflessness that accompanied it.

Finally, it was a real treat to meet once more my rugby coach – Sir Graham Henry – who led Blackheath Football Club in the 1990s, where I had played. Sir Graham was one of our guest speakers, and did so with wit, warmth, and whimsy, as only a man of such singular talents can. As MC, I thoroughly enjoyed thanking him for his speech, commenting upon our time years earlier, and then catching up after for a good korero.

Helen Jorgensen

Being involved in the planning committee for the IBSC was a busy but exciting time. I was so proud of Westlake and how the conference all came together. Being involved in the spousal programme and being a representative at the conference hotel allowed me to meet so many people and hear how their conference experience was going. I enjoyed so much making new friends and showing off our school and our home. What an amazing, special experience: I was so grateful to be part of it.





Support to Succeed

Supporting our beginner teachers at the start of their professional journey is at the heart of our work in the Centre for Excellence.

A successful programme to support Provisionally Certified Teachers to become Fully Registered at the end of two years continues to run in the centre on Tuesday mornings before school. These sessions incorporate the voices and experiences of a range of staff who are invited to share their knowledge, experience, and practical strategies with the beginning teachers. We strongly believe in providing professional development with not only a boys' education focus, but within a specific Westlake context; always asking the question: how best can we teach our boys at Westlake?

Tuesday morning sessions this year have covered everything from Digital Technology Best Practice to Supporting Students Emotionally, from Report Writing to Behaviour Management, and everything in between. Providing a wrap around service that both supports our beginning teachers and ensures the best possible learning outcomes for our students is key to the success of the programme.

We are now in our sixth year of group mentoring our beginning teachers, with Jude Arbutnot, Joe Cachopa, Kelly Easton and Casey de Wit on hand as mentors. Each mentor group meets once a week in the centre to set goals, discuss practical strategies and celebrate successes. The beginning teachers are also encouraged to not only observe experienced teachers but to observe one another and learn in a collaborative environment.

This year we had eighteen beginner teachers, with some becoming fully registered half way through the year. The majority of the group were second year teachers and we are so very proud to have witnessed their progress in the classroom, and truly believe they are ready to succeed.

We asked a few of our beginning teachers to reflect and share their teaching journeys so far.

Saira Amad, Science

Embarking on the Provisionally Certified Teacher (PCT) Programme at Westlake Boys High School has been an immensely enriching journey that has solidified my passion for education. The decision to become a teacher was driven by a desire to inspire and guide young minds, and this programme has provided a nurturing environment for me to cultivate that aspiration.

Throughout the year, I encountered various challenges, from adapting to diverse learning styles to managing classroom dynamics. My biggest challenge as a first-year teacher was classroom behaviour management; more specifically practising gaining attention from students by not allowing them to talk over me! However, with the invaluable support of the group mentoring at Westlake, I learned to navigate these hurdles effectively, drawing on the collective wisdom and experience of my colleagues. The mentoring sessions not only enhanced my pedagogical skills but also fostered a sense of camaraderie among fellow educators, creating a supportive network.

The highlights of the year were witnessing moments of genuine understanding and curiosity in my students, affirming the profound impact teachers can have. As I reflect on the past year, my key takeaways include the importance of setting boundaries, classroom expectations and collaborative learning. Looking forward to the next academic year, I am excited to continue honing my teaching skills and fostering a positive learning environment that empowers students to thrive academically and personally.

Mikayla Scarlet, Biology

I decided to become a teacher following my experience coaching hockey to a secondary school team during university. I enjoyed the leadership and relationships formed with these students during this time. It was a rewarding way to give back to the community and I wanted to continue to have purpose in my career.

One of my biggest challenges this year was learning the content I needed to teach for year 13 Biology. To help me through this challenge I asked for expert teachers to show me how they teach specific learning objectives I was unsure of. During my free time, I would also learn information from both Heads of Department on how to approach marking and assessment criteria.

Highlights of this year for me were the zoo trip with 13 Biology, the Tanner Cup with the Junior Premier Hockey Team (students bonded, became better players, and learned how to work as a concise unit), and getting to coach the Junior Development Side. There were a few hurdles to overcome but by the end of it, the students had grown in confidence and so had I.

Throughout my mentoring sessions over the past two years, I learned sometimes it's better to listen than try to fix someone's problem. Everyone is going through similar experiences at the beginning so don't be so hard on yourself. Through failure you learn, and chocolate brownie is always a crowd-pleaser. Next year I am looking forward to continuing to learn through experience and reflection.

Jeremy Richards, Design and Innovation

After earning a fine arts degree in design from university, my aspiration to teach persisted. Following twenty-four years in the design industry, I finally decided it was time to make the leap. This journey led me to my role as a PCT 2 at Westlake this past year, where I found immense joy in guiding young men on their learning paths.

While this year presented challenges with an increased workload and unexpected obstacles, the rewards have mirrored the effort invested. I take pride in my students' accomplishments and cherish the time spent with them. A notable highlight has been refining my teaching methods in collaboration with fellow PCTs through the mentoring program at WBHS. This programme has not only contributed to my professional growth as a teacher but has also enriched me personally. Anticipating the upcoming year, I am eager to continue evolving into a fully capable educator.



Liv Jackson, Physical Education and Outdoor Education

I have always wanted to be a teacher since a very young age. After three years of undergraduate studies however, I couldn't bear the thought of one more year to become a teacher. During the 2020 lockdown, I was made redundant from my job as a travel agent which turned out to be a silver lining, and that was just the push I needed to return to my goal of becoming a teacher.

The biggest challenge this year has been lots of time out of school with outdoor education trips and not seeing my other classes as much. I've overcome this by being crazy organised and having all of my tasks/deadlines on my wall in bright colours so I can't miss them! Whilst being out of school has been a challenge, it has also brought many highlights including being at the top of the Pinnacles as the sun rose with my year 12 Outdoor Education class.

Throughout the year, Kelly, my mentor, has helped me to understand that I can't just expect to become an excellent teacher without experiencing hard days in and out of the classroom, and that all teachers have been along this journey too. It is good advice to hold on to on those "bad days".

Next year I will enter my third year of teaching and I am looking forward to taking on more responsibility in the Outdoor Education department and teaching Junior Science.



Literacy and Numeracy



Numeracy: Penny Weakley

A big part of my Community of Learning inquiry was to lead, develop and formulate a comprehensive numeracy programme at Westlake. This included work with the coherent pathway group to learn how and what was being taught in the intermediate and primary schools.

These ideas were used to formulate a comprehensive and inclusive programme within the Mathematics department. Resources were sourced, developed and amended to fit our department. All staff were allocated a lesson starter that was directly related to the numeracy standard. These starters were relevant, linked to students learning as Māori and allowed for discussions around the literacy involved in Mathematics. Teachers were encouraged to use a different starter every day. This would allow for conversations around being a New Zealander, as well as developing ownership of numeracy skills. These starters were then used to guide teaching. Conceptual errors in understanding were picked up and remedied. Regular work with students around how to answer questions and, most importantly, to explain why their answer is correct was woven into everyday lessons. Our teaching structure for the year was amended to reflect the preparation required for the Numeracy co-requisite.

Literacy: Jude Arbutnot

My Community of Learning inquiry continues to evolve with the ever increasing demands and changes on literacy across the curriculum. Throughout this year, I have continued to meet regularly with the COL Literacy Hui which is comprised of teachers across the COL from Primary to Secondary. The

Westlake Cross-Curricular Literacy group has continued to meet each term and huge progress is being made in all curriculum areas to further support and develop the literacy skills of our boys. This was especially important this year as 2023 was the first year that our year 10 students attempted the co-requisite standards for Reading and Writing. In term 2, our year 10 extension students sat the tests with very pleasing results. The remaining students sat the co-requisites digitally in term 4 and, as I type, we wait for the results.

What became increasingly apparent throughout the year is how literacy and numeracy are intrinsically linked across the curriculum, and the work that Penny and I embarked on together this year will hopefully have a positive impact on teaching and learning across the school.

Late Start Professional Development: Literacy and Numeracy across the Curriculum

In July of this year, Penny and I were able to present the key changes to Numeracy and Literacy to the whole staff. Our aims were to make the information clear and concise, and for our colleagues to walk away with practical ideas as to how they can support our students with the required skills in their subject areas. The key message was that literacy and numeracy are not just the work of the English and Mathematics departments; as teachers we are responsible across the curriculum.

Literacy, numeracy, key competencies, and values are explicitly integrated within each learning area. While English and mathematics and statistics anchor literacy and numeracy, each learning area describes the discipline-specific literacy and numeracy practices that enable ākonga to make connections, think critically, and communicate their ideas. – Te Mātaiaho, the refreshed New Zealand Curriculum (2022)



Taking the Lead

As an established programme, there are key components that are central to its success, but every year we ask for feedback from previous participants and adapt the programme where necessary. This continual 'reflect, refine and grow' process has ensured we are keeping up to date with the needs of our teachers and the ongoing research that occurs in this field.

This year our Aspiring Middle Leaders were Sara Caplain, Liv Jackson, Keryn McAlpine, Connor Murphy, Gareth O'Brien, Chris Okey, and Jessica Pawley Copping. All participants recently shared their leadership inquiries with the group, and the depth of reflection and development was very apparent. Westlake is fortunate to have such positive new leaders within its staff. We congratulate them all on their graduation from the programme.

Thank you also to all the staff who volunteered their time to be shadowed by the participants or those who were Growth Coaches in the programme.

If you would like to participate in the 2024 programme, this will be launched at the start of term one.

Gareth O'Brien, Physical Education

I signed up for the Middle Leadership Programme as I aspired to enter leadership positions early in my time at Westlake. Despite having experience as a leader in the United Kingdom, I wanted to gain a greater understanding of the theoretical and practical values that Westlake attributed to leadership and sharpen my toolkit.

I have enjoyed the process of learning new practices, such as open to learning conversations, and communicating past experiences and future practices with a wonderfully eclectic mix of fellow staff members. I have greatly valued learning about how I can improve the way I present myself to others, how difficult conversations can be steered to positive experiences and how to vary my interactions to suit others' personality styles.

With two new roles starting in January, this programme has been most timely and will be greatly beneficial in helping me lead and collaborate with others.

Our Aspiring Middle Leadership Programme ran in the second half of the year following the IBSC Annual Conference.

Chris Okey, Mathematics

When I applied to The Aspiring Middle Leaders programme, I had not given much thought to my leadership style and the flow on effects from my leadership. This programme gave me the tools and opportunity to critically reflect on my leadership and where I am in my journey.

Overall, it was a great experience which let me learn from the experienced team in the Centre for Excellence but also from my colleagues participating in the programme. It was inspiring to see how the others, in a similar stage in their teaching career, tackled challenges, and the similarities and differences across faculties.

For anyone who aspires to take on a leadership role within the school, the opportunity to shadow experienced leaders was invaluable. Rarely are you able to see the ins and outs of a role before committing to it. I would highly recommend this course to anyone who is interested in taking on a leadership role within the school.

Keryn McAlpine, Social Studies

As someone looking to develop my leadership skills and advance in my teaching career, the Aspiring Middle Leadership Programme was the right choice. Being fairly new to teaching and taking on a couple of extra projects, this was such a valuable course to help me understand my strengths and areas for development as a leader.

This experience has also helped me to think more clearly about the choices I'll make in the future regarding my career and how to better manage my priorities to fit my goals. In my current leadership roles, I have learned how to stand firm in the decisions I make, and how to navigate difficult conversations. This course has taught me the value of being prepared and proactive in my approach.

The Aspiring Middle Leadership programme was also a fantastic opportunity to have deeper conversations with other aspiring middle leaders from across the school, and I enjoyed making some excellent connections and sharing ideas with others.



Balanced Boys

Promoting Healthy Masculinity Beyond the Classroom



This year, Carla Boniolo (English Faculty) was selected to participate in Action Research through the International Boys' School Coalition programme. Carla began her journey in July at the annual conference held at Westlake, and she will travel to Harrow, United Kingdom in July 2024 to share her findings. Here, she shares her experiences.

It was an absolute privilege to be selected as part of the 2023-2024 IBSC Action Research cohort. The theme for our cohort is 'Balanced Boys: Promoting Healthy Masculinity Beyond the Classroom'. This theme resonated with me, as I liked how positively framed it was. Additionally, I was excited by the focus on how teachers can make an impact within the context of extra-curricular activities.

After several email threads and a zoom call, I finally got to meet the eight teachers in my research group just before the official opening of the IBSC conference that Westlake hosted. The teachers in my group work all over the globe (as far afield as Texas, USA and Johannesburg, South Africa). It was electrifying to connect with them and share our experiences of working in boys' schools. Over the course of the two days dedicated to Action Research before the conference began, my group became very close. I left the conference feeling like I had truly made some international friends.

During several brainstorming sessions with my group, I decided to focus my research on the Premier Junior debating squad that I

coach. This squad is comprised of 12 elite debaters in Years 10 and 11. Divided into three even teams, they compete against myriad other schools in the Auckland regional debating competition. Throughout the regular season of the competition, the teams received consistent feedback from adjudicators that their individual speeches were excellent, but the overall team argument lacked a sense of cohesion. I naively assumed that boys who are grouped together with their peers naturally have the requisite skills to work together. However, feedback from the debating adjudicators suggests that this might not be the case. Thus, is teamwork a skill that we innately possess or perhaps one that we must be taught? I began thinking about how I could explore this through my action research project.

After reading some literature on teamwork and collaboration, I decided to centre my action research on investigating how we can equip boys with the communication skills necessary for effective teamwork. I devised a series of drills and skill development sessions that I led during our weekly training sessions in Term 3.

These sessions focused on:

- Co-creating a 'Team Box', whereby the boys identified behaviours that a team player would exhibit (inside the 'box') versus behaviours that would mark someone as not being a team player (outside the 'box'). This activity was based on a study entitled 'The Man Box: A Study on Being a Young Man in Australia' (The Men's Project & Flood, M. 2018).
- Explicit teaching of the behaviours associated with active listening and a drill that forced boys to be silent whilst their teammate shared ideas on a topic. They found this drill particularly difficult and uncomfortable!
- Co-creating a list of scripted phrases to use when agreeing and disagreeing with ideas raised by teammates.
- Co-creating a debating-specific strategy to implement during the one hour preparation time before a debate begins.



During these sessions, I gathered a large amount of data. The boys completed questionnaires at various points in the research and, during some drills, their conversations were recorded. The boys were asked to reflect on the importance of teamwork and their own teamwork skills. I am now in the process of analysing the data that I have gathered. I am looking for emergent themes and hope to draw some conclusions about how boys perceive teamwork and collaboration. Some interesting comments from the boys in the final questionnaire were:

- "I have become better at listening to others' feedback. Prior to debating, I feel I was often quite harsh and negative in my feedback. As the season has continued, I think I have become better at remaining positive."
- "Working as a team means being able to cooperate and contribute collectively with diverse ideas and suggestions."
- "Debating has definitely helped me to build on my collaboration skills. Being able to combine a pile of 'stuff' on the table into a coherent argument to present as a team is the essence of successful collaboration. I think that I do that a lot better now."

As I code my data, I am hopeful that I will be able to identify some insights into how the explicit teaching of teamwork skills can have a positive impact on how boys collaborate with each other. I am interested in exploring how this communication and collaboration might have an impact on the prosocial bonds that boys form during their teenage years. My research has the potential to influence other groups or extra-curricular pursuits that centre around teamwork. There is the potential to implement a school-wide teamwork training module for all boys, so that they are equipped with the necessary skills to participate as effective team members in a plethora of contexts.

After my research is finalised in a report, I will share this with all Westlake staff. Additionally, I am excited to present my research findings at the next IBSC conference that will be held at Harrow School in London in July 2024. Being a member of the 2023-2024 Action Research cohort has been a professional development experience unlike any other. It has been equal parts challenging and rewarding. I would highly recommend the experience and welcome any questions about my project or the experience.



Exploring Boys' Education



Following the IBSC conference, Kelly, Casey, Jude and Andrea were invited to share their reflections with Bruce Collins, Director of Membership Engagement at the IBSC, for his podcast, "Exploring Boys' Education."

Episode 10 of Season 4 captures the voices of a range of delegates from around the world as they share their experiences and what they learnt during their time.

The key theme running through the reflections was how it was an absolute privilege to have the opportunity to connect with so many likeminded educators of boys and be inspired to make changes in our own teaching as a result of what we learnt.

Our connection with the IBSC has always been present, but this year the strength of that bond exceeded our expectations. We look forward to continuing to build relationships with our colleagues around the world, and be involved in future IBSC opportunities both online and in real time.

The podcast can be found on Spotify.



Education Hub Webinar



In May, the Centre for Excellence Leaders of Learning were interviewed by a team from the Education Hub. The Education Hub was launched in 2017 with a mission to bridge the gap between research and practice in education in order to improve educational opportunities and outcomes for children and young people.

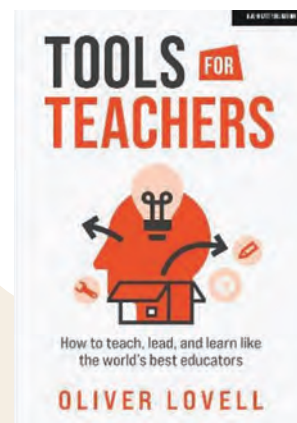
Their work is focused on providing early childhood and school teachers and leaders with access to high quality, reliable, and practical evidence from both research and practice to support them to enact meaningful change in their contexts of practice. The Centre has worked previously on projects with the Education Hub but this was an opportunity we were very excited about.

Education Hub are establishing an online professional development course for teachers about responding to the needs of neurodivergent learners. We were asked about what we are doing in the space of supporting students with neurodivergent needs, including our approach to Universal Design for Learning. It was great to be able to take the time to reflect on the work we have been doing and to share our ideas, experiences and strategies that are leading to positive outcomes at Westlake Boys.

Hit the Books

Another Year of Book Club

This year our Book Club has once again achieved success, with a robust participation of 55 staff members.



This year we have had three books in our rotation. 'Tools for Teachers' by Oliver Lovell, 'Boys don't Try?' by Matt Pinkett and Mark Roberts and 'Boys do Cry' by Matt Pinkett.

The first one in our reading list was 'Tools for Teachers' by Oliver Lovell, a book acclaimed for its practical, hands-on approach that can be readily integrated into classroom practices. This book was received with great enthusiasm by our staff, as it offered practical strategies and feasible methods to engage students effectively. Staff members have shared numerous key takeaways from this book, highlighting its impact on their teaching methodologies.

Kelly Easton:

I think this book should be a gift to all beginning Teachers...so many gems on how to get the basics right in the classroom, with exemplars of how to do this, yet permission to adapt it to your style. For experienced teachers, it provides evidence to back-up why we do things the way we do and alternatives to strategies we have been using for years – like the 'hovering' of the whiteboards as an indication of being finished, for me. I particularly liked the chapter on Educational Research and the concepts of 'Lateral Reading' and the 'Mechanisms' of measurements in research.

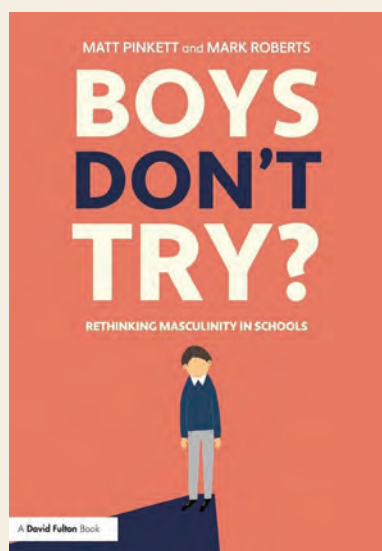
Carla Boniolo:

I really enjoyed this book. There was nothing particularly revolutionary about its content or approach – rather, it was a very validating read. It reminded me of why I do certain things in the

classroom and prompted me to reflect on my practice. I am a self-confessed fan of cold calling but I know that it is a controversial practice. I enjoyed reading Lovell's discussion on 'warm calling': the idea that you can prime students before you call on them. He gives the example of saying 'in 1 minute I'm going to ask somebody to tell me... (insert question here)'. Students then have a minute of dedicated thinking time to develop their own idea before being called to share their answer with the class. I liked this approach and plan to use it in my teaching going forward.

Molly Smith:

I enjoyed the chapter on "Explicit Instructions" because it provided practical strategies for designing and delivering clear instructions. The chapter offered insights and examples that although not always relevant to Digital Technologies they still helped remind me of ways I can improve my teaching and increase student engagement and have a positive effect on learning outcomes. By reading this chapter, I started the year with a refreshed focus on how to plan and deliver instructions that are explicit, systematic, and engaging, which I have already seen lead to more effective and deliberate teaching in my own practice. I really like the way the book is well-organised and easy to read, making it a useful resource to keep going back to in the future.



Carolyn Phillips:

This book is a must read/must have for every teacher, no matter how many years you have been teaching. The good things that you already do will be affirmed, with explanations as to why they work. For those aspects of your practice that need deeper consideration, there are plenty of small/next steps that will make a difference and move you towards becoming a better practitioner. The section on Behaviour Management was invaluable, resetting how I bring my class in at the start of a lesson and reinforcing how I end a class. I particularly enjoyed the idea of delivery through "I Do, We Do, You Do", having 'bulletproof definitions' available throughout the period, and using 'non-examples' as well as examples to identify where taught concepts will NOT work while reasoning why.

Joshua Adams:

Tools For Teachers is a book that is true to its name. I never read the book cover to cover, instead, I used it like a toolbox. If I need ideas for how to approach a certain situation, I open the book to the contents page, find the relevant section, and flip to it. Every section provides a range of methods to take from, and the book encourages you to not be set to one methodology, since the classroom is ever-changing. It is not a prescriptive, "one set of rules you must follow in this situation" approach, rather, it provides you with modulated options, allowing you to very easily structure your own personal approach by taking points from potentially every approach they cover. A must have in your kete for those wanting to expand their classroom management skills to deal with new challenges.

Penny Weakley:

Considering the work we need to do for Y11 curriculum planning, it is worthwhile having a look at the three big mistakes. I immediately realised we were falling into the "Activity Orientation" error of trying to solely dictate the curriculum around learning activities that are fun in an effort to increase engagement. This approach omits taking into consideration the skills needed for in depth understanding of key concepts. This chapter also gives homage to moving away from being standard orientated. The most useful part (for me) was the Five Curriculum Design Principles – these are having a huge impact on how I look at and work through the planning for 2024.

Melany Dunn:

I really liked section three which was all about Motivation as well as regulation and relationships. As others have said above, a great book that you can easily dip in and out of. I really liked the flow charts at the start and the end of the sections that showed in a visual sense how everything in the chapter related and interconnected.

Following this, we explored 'Boys don't Try?' by Matt Pinkett and Mark Roberts, and 'Boys do Cry' also by Matt Pinkett, both of which offered profound insights into understanding and addressing the unique challenges and needs of male students in educational environments. These books have been instrumental in enriching our teaching practices and understanding of student dynamics at Westlake Boys High School.

Take a Bite

Sometimes a quick spot of Professional Development is all you need, and we are fortunate at Westlake to have many gifted and talented staff who are willing to share their expertise and knowledge.

This year, Bite Size PD made a big comeback with Casey organising 20 minute slots (either before or after school) in the Centre with a range of topics and skills covered. Here is an overview of all of the sessions that ran this year:

Molly Smith: Microsoft To Do.

Microsoft To Do is an ideal tool to help you manage your workload and stay organised. In this bite-size professional development session, we had the opportunity to learn how to use Microsoft To Do to manage tasks more effectively and increase our productivity.



Becky O'Gram: OneNote.

Becky focused on using OneNote to track progress on assignments as a means to counter the potential impact of AI.

Daisy Huang: Chinese Pronunciation.

Daisy shared some cultural facts about Chinese names and helped teachers to improve their pronunciation in saying some common Chinese last names.

Casey de Wit: Artificial Intelligence.

Casey led a round table discussion in how we can effectively use AI in a educational context. It allowed teachers to discuss how to use AI in the classroom and share sites that we may already be using.

Tara Heta: Career Central.

The session focused on how staff can support students when they access the Career Central programme to help with career research and planning.

Connor Murphy: Supporting LGBTQ+ students.

This interactive workshop explored immediately accessible strategies teachers can use to make their classrooms a more inclusive space for LGBTQ+ ākongā.

Conor Pearson: Of Morals and Masculinity.

Conor shared his year-long action research with the IBSC. This project looked into how we can increase our boys' understanding of social responsibility by analysing morally complex scenarios in Virtute time. A version of this will soon be introduced into our own VTPI programme.

Carla Boniolo: Course design.

Carla will walked staff through how she significantly changed the Level 2 English course at the end of 2022 by: getting staff feedback, strategically placing marking deadlines to alleviate staff pressure, and aligning internal and external content more intentionally.

Andrea Dawber: How to teach multi-level within one class

Andrea shared her experiences and strategies for teaching multi-level classes. Multi-level teaching within the one class can be daunting but after teaching Level 2 and Level 3 Art History in this way for 3 years Andrea has implemented relationships, technology, planning, time management, flexibility, and reflection in the hope of creating a positive learning experience for both students and teacher.

Anna Ankersmit: Incorporating mātauranga Māori into new curriculum design.

Change 2 of the NCEA Change Programme requires giving equal status, resourcing, and support to mātauranga Māori (often translated as Māori knowledge) within the refreshed curriculum.

Anna has been rewriting the Year 10 Social Studies curriculum following both the Te ao tangata | Social Sciences refreshed curriculum and the Aotearoa New Zealand Histories Curriculum. She shared resources and ideas for incorporating mātauranga Māori into all curriculum areas.

Tim Hardie: Classroom Screen.

Tim shared how to use Classroomscreen. He described it is what your students need when they don't know what they need. It's the online whiteboard that helps keep your classroom on task.

Kelly Easton: Supporting Behaviour.

Kelly provided some practical strategies for supporting positive behaviour management in Junior classrooms. She also shared student voice she had collected about how the boys perceive a positive classroom.

Ruth Pearson: Te Reo Māori.

Ruth shared some pronunciation tips for te reo Māori with a focus on common greetings and polite expressions.

Casey de Wit and Molly Smith: AI Prompt Engineering.

Casey and Molly shared some effective prompt engineering for AI and went over useful platforms to use in your planning and classrooms.

Becky O'Gram: Excel.

Becky shared some of the ways Excel can help in everyday circumstances for teachers. We went over some basic formulae and functions that help with storing, sorting and using data to make your tasks more efficient and save you time and effort.

Jude Arbuthnot: Literacy.

Jude shared how to encourage students to develop their answers with connectives and sentence starters across all levels and areas of the curriculum.

Carolyn Philips: OneNote.

Carolyn shared some tips about how to use OneNote when preparing and delivering lessons, and how best to use it in conjunction with Teams.

Shereen Le Fleming: KAMAR.

Shereen shared tips and tricks to use KAMAR effectively on a day-to-day basis.

We are always keen to hear from anyone who would like to share their knowledge and expertise. If you have an idea for Bite Size PD in 2024, please email cdw@westlake.school.nz

Trainee Teachers and Training Mentor Teachers



Auckland Secondary Teachers' Training Programme 2023

Kelly Easton, Specialist Classroom Teacher:

The Centre for Excellence Team have supported the Auckland Secondary Teachers' Training Programme again in 2023. We have facilitated Professional Development for both the Mentors involved in the Waikato programme, as well as the Trainees themselves.

This was the second year providing professional development for new Mentors within the Waikato Teacher Training Programme and is an area we are incredibly passionate about. Attracting and maintaining new Teachers to the profession is vital to continue to ensure successful outcomes for our students. Hence investing in Mentors who will work with and guide these new Trainees to be the best Teacher they can be, is in all our interests as educators. We run a successful Mentoring programme within Westlake, so we feel well-placed to deliver this PD and share best practice to other schools in our community. Our PD provides a comprehensive overview of what and why mentoring is important, and how Coaching and Open to Learning Conversations may need to occur alongside Mentoring. All the while, we back this up with our own professional experience as well as educative research and tailor the context to fit within the parameters of the Waikato University Trainee Teacher programme.

"I thought you hit the perfect balance of information & discussion. You allowed us time to interact with other schools as well, which was great".

"The course was superb today! I know all our staff really enjoyed the day and Kelly and Jude are so professional!"

We are now in our third year of hosting Professional Development on Universal Design for Learning to the Waikato University Trainee Teachers. The support we provide to the Trainees is tailored to meet their needs as beginning teachers. Importantly, we always design and model our professional development to incorporate practical strategies that can be implemented in a classroom, regardless of context, immediately. New teachers have not yet had a chance to develop their own resources, hence through our Professional Development we can help provide these so that they feel more confident in their classrooms. We deliberately focus our lens on inclusivity as every classroom in NZ regardless of location will have a diverse range of students, hence preparing and designing for this should be at the forefront of all teachers' minds when planning lessons and schemes of work for their classes. We provide the framework and exemplar tools to enable the Trainees to confidently apply these in their own practices in their own context.

"I found this session incredibly useful. I found myself nothing loads of ideas to try in class and am excited to put them in action".

"Today was outstanding thank you, I enjoyed the link between theory and practical and the stories Kelly had about her students".

"The workshop was great! It provided us useful information, resources and tips we can immediately put into practice".





Natalie Stettler, University of Waikato Postgraduate Diploma in Secondary Education, Class of 2023:

Joining the ASTTP programme this year has been an incredibly rewarding and exciting step to take. The programme has consisted of full-time immersion in school life as a training teacher, kaiako, at Westlake Boys High School, as well as full-time study at the University of Waikato. Somehow though, the two "full time" roles overlapped and complemented each other eloquently, and I managed to find space and brainpower for both in equal measure.

The combination of the theoretical and practical aspects of the teaching profession, along with invaluable mentorship by two of Westlake's finest teachers (there are many here, so that was not luck), have made this year engaging, challenging (in a good way) and a lot of fun.

The opportunity to grow as a teacher, alongside colleagues on the same programme, has been another highlight. Regular co-labs, group projects, professional development days at kura around Auckland, and online group chats for motivation and sharing documents (their weight in research mahi gold), has further guided my learning about what it means to be a teacher. The conversations and shared time with others heading in the same direction while each bringing our own tools, previous life experiences and perspectives has been hugely beneficial to me as well.

The "full" time aspect of this program is really just that – filling up aspiring teachers with knowledge, valuable experience in the classroom, support, inspiration and room to grow into the kaiako that are needed to help young people in turn grow into their own best versions of themselves.

Pink Ribbon Breakfast

The staff in the Centre for Excellence decided to give back to our wider community this year by organising and hosting a Pink Ribbon Morning Tea for the whole Westlake Staff on the 26th March.

Our aim was to raise at least \$1,000 on behalf of the Breast Cancer Foundation to enable them to support research programmes, promote awareness and education for women with breast cancer in New Zealand. Our incredibly generous staff exceeded our fundraising expectations and our total raised was \$1592.20.

It was a lovely event to bring our school community together in pink, and something that we hope will become an annual event in the Westlake calendar. A special thank you to David and the Board of Trustees for supporting this, and to Toasted Espresso for their beautiful pink-themed cupcakes and coffee.

Rob Turvey, University of Waikato Postgraduate Diploma in Secondary Education, Class of 2023:

Departing a 20-year career in Graphic Design proved to be a daunting experience. As someone who cherishes solitude and identifies as an introvert, relinquishing the tranquillity of my private office to join six other ASTTP students, alongside classrooms filled with teenage boys, came as a shock to most who knew me.

In the midst of the teacher strikes, I encountered numerous opinions asserting that "teachers already earn enough." However, when initially sharing my intentions of transitioning to the profession, the common response involved a sense of disbelief, a shake of the head and the declaration, "I certainly wouldn't want to do it."

Being part of the ASTTP has been a unique experience. Immersing myself in the daily rhythms of classroom life provided a platform to refine teaching techniques and build relationships with students in a way a standard Teaching degree would not. Though balancing University expectations with life at school was challenging at times, the support I was given by my mentors and fellow participants has been invaluable. Being stationed at Westlake, amidst an exceptionally talented cohort, has been a privilege - one I would recommend to anyone looking to escape their overly quiet office.





The Future is Now

Artificial Intelligence

In witnessing the rapid growth in Artificial Intelligence, David Ferguson saw a need to have positions of leadership within school that would foster, grow, and nurture Artificial intelligence for curriculum.

From this, myself and Molly Smith have gained positions doing just that. I am 'Leader of AI Innovation' focusing on the direction of AI in schools and Molly is 'Teacher in Charge of AI Curriculum Development' focusing on integrating AI into Digital Technologies and assisting departments in using AI.

In response to the significant advancements in Artificial Intelligence, our school has taken a proactive approach to ensure that our students are not just observers but active participants in this technological transformation. Recognising the pivotal role AI plays in shaping our world, Molly embarked on a mission to empower her Year 9 and 10 students with a foundational understanding of AI in

Digital Technologies. Responding to the positive engagement from students, next year we embark on cross curricular learning for AI. Through this refined program for 10 Digital Technologies, 10 Media and Society and Virtute students will gain insight into how AI functions, its profound impact on various aspects of our lives, and the potential it holds for future innovations. This initiative is not just about imparting knowledge; it is about igniting curiosity and fostering a deeper understanding of the world they are growing up in. As we look towards the future academic years, we are set to take our AI curriculum to the next level by integrating cross curricula learning opportunities.

Our positions offer an exhilarating and forward-thinking opportunity, challenging our current comfort zones and readiness to embrace change.

Casey de Wit



IBSC Middle Leaders in Boys Schools

An Online Panel Conversation Featuring Middle Leaders in IBSC Schools: October 30 – November 6, 2023

The IBSC community recently held an online professional development session on Middle Leadership, featuring insights from Jason Lange, St. Mark's School of Texas (United States), Jennifer Liu, Town School for Boys (United States), Luke Pearson, St. Stithians Boys' College (South Africa) and myself, Casey de Wit. The focus of this PD was on the crucial role of middle leaders in schools and the importance of being visible models of effective teaching practice. The PD was recorded over zoom and then a follow up Q & A session followed.

During this PD, Luke Pearson emphasised the growing need for strong interpersonal and communication skills in middle leaders. Jennifer Liu highlighted the importance of understanding adult learning in the context of leadership. The concept of vulnerability in leaders and the necessity for continuous improvement were key points of my presentation. Bruce Collins discussed how middle leaders should interact positively with boys, particularly in handling sensitive issues like bullying and body shaming. We also addressed the resistance to change, especially from senior and entrenched faculty members. It was suggested that

backing up changes with clear facts and research, setting clear goals, and considering the best people in the process were crucial. Bruce shared his experiences with leading change, focusing on the importance of listening to those who are sceptical. Luke proposed action research projects and the influencer model of change leadership as useful tools, while Jennifer stressed understanding the narratives behind resistance and the importance of relationship building.

The panel also delved into the importance of teachers' involvement in decision-making processes and the maintenance of relationships with colleagues. Regular communication, weekly meetings with the team and line managers, staff surveys, and feedback from faculty heads were highlighted as essential tools for understanding different departments' perspectives. Jennifer and Luke emphasized the value of leveraging relationships and seeking input from various sources, including teachers, students, and colleagues. The significance of creating a culture of reflection and learning from mistakes was underscored.

The professional development session proved to be an enriching experience, offering insights into the practices of middle leaders from various schools around the globe. As a presenter, I gained substantial knowledge not only from the perspectives shared by my co-presenters but also through my own reflective journey during the process.

Casey de Wit

Perfecting the Prefect

The professional development programme for our prefects has, for the second consecutive year, marked a trail of success.



Collaborating with the student leaders of 2023 has been an enriching experience. We tailored this year's curriculum to enhance various competencies such as presentation abilities, achievement of prefect-specific objectives, mentorship for Year 9 students, strategies in growth coaching, initiatives in prefect-led fundraising, and the compilation of prefect portfolios.

Our professional development workshops have been met with great enthusiasm and dedication, establishing the groundwork for an innovative leadership culture. The objective of these gatherings is to foster and amplify the inherent leadership qualities our young men possess.



The tangible results of this developmental initiative have been mirrored in the effectiveness with which they've undertaken their prefect duties. This year's group of prefects has been exceptional; achieving their objectives with significant impacts on various school domains including house events, junior school engagement, cultural celebrations, and student support. It has been an absolute delight to guide and witness the growth of the Prefect cohort of 2023.

In the upcoming year, we anticipate continuing our journey to propel our leaders towards success, nurturing their leadership potential, and unlocking new initiatives and abilities.





Westlake Boys High School
Te Kura Tuarua o Ngā Taitamatāne o Ururoto