



FLEXIBLE LEARNING SPACES

The What & Why of Flexible Learning Spaces (FLS)

Designed by the Ministry of Education, Flexible Learning Spaces (FLS) are where the teaching and learning environment adapts and evolves in response to learning needs. They are designed to ensure good quality acoustics, access to natural lighting, ventilation, heating, and provide easy access to indoor and outdoor learning spaces. While they promote collaboration, they also allow opportunities for independent learning and places for quiet reflection. These factors are known to improve student's learning outcomes.

In a world where we need to equip our ngā kaimanawa for an unpredictable future, we must support them to be able to learn anywhere and anytime. Research indicates that the most effective learning environments ensure that a wide variety of needs are catered for and include:

- collaboration and independence,
- whole class, small group, paired and individual discussion and self talk as well as reflection,
- instructional teaching and practice,
- practical hands on activities, and
- spaces to be able to show and share learning.

Flexible learning spaces provide opportunities for ngā kaimanawa to:

- Observe, imitate and copy
- Work collaboratively
- Actively drive their own learning
- Have the autonomy to choose which environment will suit their learning at any particular time
- Learn in a variety of contexts; for example, maker spaces, COLA
- Work independently
- Be hands on
- Receive explicit teaching
- Show and share

The Role of Kaiako:

- Provide explicit teaching at many levels
- Facilitate and guide personalised learning experiences
- Notice, recognise and respond to ngā kaimanawa
- To utilise the environment as "the third teacher"
- Encourage and promote self-determined learning
- Adapt learning spaces depending on resources required to support learners needs and passions
- Structure the environment at different times to enhance independent, small group, and large group learning

If we believe that everyone brings different prior knowledge to a topic and no two people learn the same thing in the same way or at the same speed, then it doesn't make sense to have a classroom set up with everyone facing the front doing the same thing at the same time.

OSBORNE, M. (2016)

What it is not:

- Spaces where ngā kaimanawa will be lost
- Disorganised and out-of-control chaos
- Randomly designed
- Fixed for 'age and stage'
- Teacher directed
- A noisy 'barn'
- Freedom to roam

Links to Research:

- [Mark Osborne - Innovative Learning Environments](#)
- [Ministry of Education - Innovative Learning Environments](#)
- [Tony Grey - Te Ao Mārama](#)

Ignite

Navigate

Thrive