

MAGIC PLAY BOX

Turning junk to joy.©

"It's not what is in the box that is magic. It's what the children do with it."

Report on Henderson Valley School Trial



Introduction

- Magic Play Box (MPBox) trialed from the 10th June to the 5th July 2019.
- Placed next to Room 17 on concrete path to turf.
- Break time use of the MPBox was open to all years.
- Some classes years 1-6, utilised the MPBox during curriculum time.
- Play.Sport Activator(s) undertook observations on the 10th, 13th and 19th June during lunchtimes, and had discussions with some students and Duty Teachers.
- Had a group of senior students responsible for uncovering and packing up MPBox, feedback recieved verbally from some of the student leaders.

Summary of Main Points from Observations and Survey Feedback

- The Activator(s) observed on average 15-25 students at any one time playing with the Large Loose Parts (Junk) over two lunchtimes.
- Teachers in the Juniors reported very positive feedback from parents after MPBox images and stories put on Seesaw. One parent said their child didn't normally play with others so was happy to see him playing with the junk with others.



- Students were observed naturally getting into groups and cooperating, helping each other, sharing, working/playing together and taking turns.
- The teachers that provided feedback also mentioned positive behaviours such as sharing, turn taking, negotiation, team work, dealing with and resolving conflict.
- One staff was surprised at "The range of students playing from all year levels at the same time."

Students playing in large and small groups.

- Students using their imagination, creativity, ingenuity, thinking and problem solving skills were observed by the Activator.
- Staff also mentioned there was imagination, adaptation, problem-solving, creativity, curiosity, experimentation, sharing and combining ideas.
- One teacher was surprised by "The ability to make something out of nothing."



Students played with anything and everything.



- The general comments from the students was that they liked playing with all the junk and that there needed to be more of everything.
- When asked what stuff they liked playing with, two Year 3 girls said "All of it, because you do not have to play with the same thing over and over again."

Summary of Main Points from Observations and Survey Feedback

- Some students said where the MPBox was location was fine as it had a little hill. Others mentioned the field/edge of the field near trees. Some mentioned the Turf, top court and Harekeke Green (near Hall).
- It was noted that many students wanted the Junk to play with in places they normally play in or closer to their classrooms i.e. in Senior part of school. What ever the location the main consideration would be storage or containment of junk.



The MPBox between Room 17 and the Turf.



Things to be thought about:

- Teachers mentioned the need for more junk to play with.
- Management of the junk, identifying and removing broken unsafe bits.
- Using equipment safely and using parts as weapons.
- Several Teachers mentioned having a MPBox or junk play area permanently and the benefits or learning opportunities it provides.

References

- Otaki School Play Shed video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PW7nvjXnpzs&feature=share>
- Video of play pod (container) in the UK: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nqi1KyJJJeKg>
- On line article on weapons play: <https://www.todayparent.com/family/is-playing-with-guns-normal/>

Further Information

If you want a copy of the full responses to the staff and student surveys, summary report of the Activators' observations, want to discuss any of this report, undertake a further trial and/or plan to introduce large loose parts play as a permanent play opportunity, please contact:

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