



SCOOT AND SKATE PARK AT HIGHFIELD SCHOOL

July 2016

The Student WAVE Team (with support from Josh South, WAVE Facilitator) wanted to come up with a solution to the issue of not having a suitable place in the school for students to scooter or skate, as this was an activity that was increasing in popularity. The only place they could use their scooters or skateboards was the courts, but with the increase of sports practices during the winter and summer it meant that there wasn't anywhere suitable to scooter and/or skate board.

Sophie Lyons, WAVE Lead Student for the skate park project, said "There were so many scooter and skateboarders we felt they needed an area of their own as it was becoming unsafe with them going around the basketball court while others were playing other sports."

The students approached the Principal, saying that they would like to do a survey of the whole school to find out if there was support for the development of an area for skateboard and scooter use. The Principal was 100% behind the project as he believed in student-led initiatives.

"At Highfield we have a focus on student voice. We want students to come forward with suggestions for improving learning at Highfield. This fosters a sense of belonging. It also reflects our Highfield Learner values and provides authentic context for student learning, and the skatepark is a prime example of this" said Shayne Gallagher, Principal.

The survey results showed overwhelming support for the idea. At the time of the survey (end of 2013), nearly half the students were using scooters or skateboards on a regular basis. Of the 273 students surveyed, over 98 per cent supported the idea the skate area.

Once the survey was completed there was ongoing discussion with the Principal, WAVE Lead teacher, Josh and the student team. It was decided that they would create an area in the school, and that they would create a mini scooter track and skate park.

The team had to work out costs and how they would do any fundraising needed for the project. The project really gained momentum in 2015 when Highfield Home and School organised a school fair to raise funds specifically for the project.

Josh's Healthy Workplaces Coordinator colleague from Community and Public Health arranged for Fulton Hogan to provide the digging of the track as part of their WorkWell initiative.

"The guys at Fulton Hogan need a big thanks as they sorted all the cutting out of the track and the laying of the concrete. They saved the school a lot of money and really did go out of their way to support this project," said Josh.

Other sponsors to the project have been WAVE, Highfield School Home and School, LID, The Warehouse, Hardie Building, Allied Concrete, Riders HQ, Chris Broadhead Building and All About Signs.

Robyn Cooper, WAVE Lead Teacher said, “The involvement of the whole community has been a wonderful aspect to the project. It is awesome to have people like them in our community that support such endeavours.”

Josh South, WAVE Facilitator worked with the team from 2013 when they first approached him for guidance and support on how to move the project forward.

“My role throughout was to support the students and teachers link in the other organisations. The students then did a lot of the work, approaching potential sponsors,” he said.

The scooter and skate park was officially launched in April 2016 and has had a great response from students and families.

“Before the children used to skate around the hall area and on basketball court. Around the hall led to mishaps and was concerning as taxi’s were sometimes coming in to pick up children from Te Whare Maru, our special needs unit. Now the children have a designated area which they really enjoy,” Robyn said.

Supervision and safety of the students on the skate park is managed by the teachers as part of their routine duty area and all children are required to wear a helmet.

Richard Boulton Branch Manager from Fulton Hogan said “It’s great and it was good to be involved, we enjoyed being a part of it all. As a business the idea was great and the fact that we could do “work in kind” rather than parting out with cash works well for our business. We look for ways to get involved in community projects and this ticked all the right boxes. As a parent I think a project that the kids can benefit directly is also great and could work at any school. I have taken my kids up to Highfield for a play”.



Sophie Lyons (former WAVE lead student) and Robyn Cooper (WAVE lead teacher) at the opening of the scooter and skate park



Sophie Lyons and Richard Boulton (Fulton Hogan)



Finn Clark speaking on behalf of the Student Council at the opening

