

A photograph of four students in a science laboratory. They are wearing white and light blue striped shirts. They are focused on building electrical circuits on a lab bench. Several small light bulbs are connected to the circuits and are glowing. The background shows a window and other lab equipment.

EMPOWER  
TO EXCEL



PROSPECTUS

**MISSION STATEMENT**

# EMPOWERING EACH LEARNER TO EXCEL IN A FAST MOVING WORLD.

**LOCATION**

Albany Junior High School (AJHS) is located on the North Shore of Auckland on a large campus of 15 acres with sports grounds, social and garden areas. It is close to the North Shore Golf Club, spacious parklands, and one of the largest shopping malls in New Zealand. It is serviced both by public transport and by buses that are specifically organised to access the school.

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# Welcome

Albany Junior High School (AJHS) is unique. AJHS is the first purpose built, junior high school in New Zealand and is designed, both philosophically and structurally, to cater for the needs of the adolescent learner.

Many schools have a philosophy but we are a philosophy that has a school built around it. Our philosophy is based on the firm belief that our Year 7 to 10 learners have far greater skills and abilities than society generally give them credit for and, with the support and guidance of parents and staff, they have the ability to manage and drive their own learning.

We utilise sound, well researched teaching and learning practices, supported by a strong curriculum, relevant to the needs of adolescent learners in years 7 to 10. In addition to rigorously learning core subjects, our learners have the freedom to explore their interests, in depth, in what we call Make A Difference sessions (MAD) and twice-weekly extra curricular clubs. Personal agency leads to exceptional levels of engagement and achievement.

We also work closely with parents and caregivers to identify the potential that is within every learner, providing them with the means to succeed as lifelong learners.

Our vision pervades every aspect of what we do as a school in terms of catering for individual learning and improving teaching and learning. It is therefore vital that staff, learners, and parents are able to articulate our vision, ***“Empower Each Learner To Excel In A Fast Moving World”***, by helping the learners to manage their learning and turn their goals into reality.

Our vision is an ideal. We also acknowledge that being human means that we will not meet it at all times, and so we continually strive, individually and collectively, to bring the school ever closer to the vision.

**STEPHEN KENDALL-JONES**  
PRINCIPAL



“Many schools have a philosophy but we are a philosophy that has a school built around it. Our philosophy is based on the firm belief that our Year 7 to 10 learners have far greater skills and abilities than society generally give them credit for...”

TUI MAKOMAKO KIWI RURU

## Whanau

“It’s the best feeling when we dress in our whanau colours and parade our whanau flags. It makes me really proud to belong.”

Central to our philosophy of meeting the needs of emerging adolescents is the whanau structure. ‘Whanau’ is the Maori word for family. Upon starting at Albany Junior High School learners are placed in one of four whanau; Tui, Makomako, Kiwi or Ruru (these are Maori names of birds native to New Zealand), where they will stay for the four years at AJHS. The learners and teachers are grouped in whanau classes, each with a vertical range of learners, i.e., from Year 7 to 10, that meet three times a week for academic and pastoral care. Each Whanau Hub has a senior teacher as the Whanau Leader and around 300 learners who look out for each other and form a real community. Community spirit is engendered with each whanau having their own identity through and leadership, peer support and assemblies. The sense of pride is tangible: each has its own colour and we have even replaced school bells with the appropriate birdsong.



## Student Achievement

Learners at AJHS engage in learning that produces achievement at the highest levels. We consistently exceed National Standard targets in reading, writing and mathematics and regularly produce learners in the top 1% in international assessments such as ICAS. Every learner, teacher, and parent has access to the content learning progressions for every curriculum area, both in hard copy and online through the school's app. This means that we share expectations for achievement and progress with learners, and both teachers and parents, together, can help them to identify their next learning steps and achieve preset goals. Teachers are focused on creating assessment capable learners who understand where their learning currently stands, what their next steps are, and what success will look like when they achieve their learning goals. This 'learner centred, teacher driven' approach is evident in the engagement of learners at all levels in the school.

6/20

7/20

## Albany Learning Pathway

Learners in the Albany area are able to immerse themselves in a unique learning pathway. Local schools and Board of Trustees meet regularly to ensure that the primary, Junior High and Senior High Schools are not seen as separate entities but as steps on one continuous learning pathway. AJHS learners mingle regularly with primary students from our local schools who visit AJHS for the Science Roadshow, Experience Days, Maths Week, the school production and many other annual events. During the year Albany Senior High students are engaged in Impact projects at both the Junior High School and primary schools; teaching, assisting and mentoring younger students. In addition, Albany Junior High School learners visit the Senior High School in Year 10 to take part in lessons, and to watch a special performance of the school production.

*“Empower each learner to excel  
in a fast moving world”*



## Learning at AJHS

When a Year 7 first starts at AJHS, they go into a Homeroom Class, comprising 26 learners, where we get to know the learner and their needs extremely well. The learners will spend about two thirds of their time together as a learning community, working on an integrated curriculum, learning through authentic rich tasks and solving real world problems and being exposed to a variety of activities and real-world contexts. At AJHS, we co-create the knowledge needed for lifelong success and the deep understanding of both the learner and the knowledge is one reason why our school stands with the elite. The learning, of course, meet the requirements of the New Zealand curriculum and covers English, Social Studies, Physical Education, Health, and Drama. We also have specialist teachers and facilities for Mathematics, Science, Performing Arts, Visual Art, Technology, and Languages.

The key to this phase, though, is that we also develop independent learning skills, problem solving, co-creation work, leadership, teamwork and presentation skills. Working as part of a close homeroom group is a great opportunity to make friends, get to know their way around the school, and build their personal learning plan (PLP) before moving into the Flexible Learning Environment (FLE).

“Our teacher gets to know us really well in a homeroom; it helps me to learn when someone knows who I am.”



## Flexible Learning Environment (FLE)

The learners transition to a more flexible but specialised environment in Years 9 and 10. Students in the FLE all have a detailed PLP that sets out a student's intended goals for the next two or more years. As we know that young people will change their interests over time, our learners can modify their PLP at any stage. Students generally select six subjects per year, from the elective grid. Any significant changes must be approved by parents and a principal or deputy principal to ensure that it represents a realistic and workable plan for the future.

In our classes, the learners have chosen to be there because they want to participate in that subject, so the classroom atmosphere is expected to be focused.

Students are able to undertake National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) studies, provided they have a realistic chance of successful completion at merit or excellence level. We also offer vocational pathways and qualifications.

Students in their final year at AJHS are referred to as 'Graduates' and take part in a number of focused programs, such as study skills, in addition to normal subjects to assist them in preparing for life after AJHS.



## Science & Technology

12/20

We have a proud tradition of moving learners from a basic understanding of Science to having a deep understanding in the four years they have at AJHS. Science is an integral part of our lives and culture and it is becoming even more so in modern times. It stretches the intellect, imagination and creativity of young people. AJHS has created a programme of study describing the subject knowledge, skills and understanding that learners are expected to develop in fast moving - and increasingly technological - world. The key ideas of Cells, Interrelationships, Particles, Matter and Energy are developed into key concepts. Key concepts are the big ideas and understandings that will remain with our learners long after they have left AJHS and allow them to contribute to society and understand the world around them.

The application of Science overlaps with the Technology learning provided at AJHS. We use our specially equipped Technology Hubs to empower our learners in hard materials, soft materials, and food technology (we have a commercial grade kitchen). Recently, two of our learners had their dress designs (produced in soft materials) on display at the Globe Theatre in London.

Hand in hand with the traditional technologies, we also offer robotics, 3D printing, and digital technology whilst working on developing biotechnology.



"The way we learn Science at AJHS makes it understandable and interesting. I never thought I would be a scientist but now I think I will be."

## Visual and Performing Arts

14/20

The Arts are a vital part of life at AJHS, with learners performing regularly both at school events and in the community. In the Performing Arts of music, drama and dance, learners are able to receive tuition in a variety of musical instruments, learn drama skills with 'Shakespeare's Globe, New Zealand' in Wellington (the local and regional finals of the Sheila Winn Shakespeare Festival are held at AJHS each year), and perform in showcases. In music, learners learn to play and to notate. In dance, we offer opportunities in all styles and our dance teacher co-teaches with two winners of 'Dancing With The Stars'. Visual art learners work with visiting artists and produce work for the community. Photography as an art form is very popular with our learners.

Learners of all the arts compete in a variety of national competitions. School productions bring together all strands of the Arts every two years. Learners take lead roles in all facets of the show – choreography, backstage management, lighting, sound, marketing, direction and performance.



"Whatever level you are at – beginner to high level – AJHS will push you to the next level. Opportunities to perform are always there and the school helps give you the confidence to do it."

## Outdoor Education & Sports

16/20

Taking learners beyond the classroom walls to learn has always been part of the AJHS philosophy. All year levels take part in an annual camp. This could be camping in tents at Shakespear (sic) Regional Park, tramping in the Waitakere Ranges, or experiencing life on a Marae. Our aim is to provide a vehicle for the learners to learn more about each other and to understand and tolerate our differences. As a result of these camps, relationships are forged, leaders are discovered, risks are taken, and memories are made that last forever.

Class groups regularly leave the school on day trips around Auckland, as well as more extensive field trips for Social Studies, Science, a sports exchange to Australia and a cultural/ historical exchange to France.

AJHS also provides a rich and stimulating Physical Education and Health programme. In doing so, we utilise the superb facilities within the school as well as taking regular trips into the community. Our list of school resources includes a full size Gymnasium, a full range of fitness equipment including spin bikes, rowing machines, cross trainers and treadmills, a multipurpose Astroturf turf, six tennis courts as well as sand based, all weather playing fields.



"I played football and rugby for the school, as well as athletics at a national competition, but I've been able to try sports that I would not have tried at any other school. I even got to try diving and was coached by an international judge!"

## International Students

AJHS openly celebrates that our campus comprises some 40 different nationalities and cultures. We regularly host visiting school groups from Japan, China, Thailand, and Korea who experience schooling in New Zealand and we also warmly welcome students from all over the world for long term stays. Our International Team is here to support the students, with staff who have the ability to speak Mandarin, Korean, Japanese, Spanish, French, and Thai. We pride ourselves in developing a nurturing and caring environment for our students and provide excellent support for our international students, in terms of academic achievement, ESOL programmes and pastoral care. The well-being and happiness of our international students is paramount to us.

### HOMESTAY PROGRAMME

The International Student Programme runs a homestay programme for students who have come to Auckland on their own and have no family here. We match students with the available homestay families we have from the community.

For further information, please email our International Department Director, Ms. JuYoung Kim, at [juyoung.kim@ajhs.school.nz](mailto:juyoung.kim@ajhs.school.nz)

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE TUITION

The school has an English Language Centre and offers intensive English language tuition on campus. On arrival our international students are assessed to determine their language proficiency and they complete an individual programme, in the Language Centre, in addition to immersion in the classroom. An orientation programme, tours and excursions are part of the learning and integration process. We believe that tailoring the programme to individual needs is important so that English skills can develop more quickly.



“AJHS has changed the course of J’s future... J can now enrol at prestigious universities.”

## Pastoral Care

20/20

### LEARNING MENTORS

As well as a Whanau Leader (as mentioned in the Whanau section) each learner also has a Whanau Teacher who act as a learning mentor. The mentor has a small group of learners to care for, whom they have also agreed to make a personal commitment to helping in their learning and personal development. This teacher is a parent's key link to AJHS. The Learning Mentors will act as an advocate for the learner in all school matters. Learners will meet with mentors during the timetabled mentor session, twice weekly, to discuss learning, wellbeing, goals, personal learning plans, and other areas as required. Whanau Teachers are reviewed annually but learners may have the same Whanau Teacher for many years, or conceivably their whole time at AJHS.

Should learners need any additional support, we have counsellors, a school nurse, and the Senior Leadership Team, who are also available.





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