

THE ULTIMATE TRANSFORMATION

TRANSFORMING AN UNDERUTILISED SCHOOL POOL INTO A MULTI-PURPOSE PLAY AREA.

“I would give them my highest recommendation, if you’re looking for a company that is going to listen to your brief, listen to what you want, provide you with their years and years of experience and what they know works and what doesn’t work, then really look no further than Park Supplies & Playgrounds”.



Remuera Primary School is a large urban primary school with a diverse cultural mix of over 650 students ranging from New Entrants to Year Six. Steve King, Principal, engaged Park Supplies & Playgrounds to assist with transforming an underutilised space in the school into a purpose-built play area for their middle school students.

Like many State schools in New Zealand who had pools installed in the fifties, Remuera Primary School found that their pool had been installed in the wrong part of the school and was being severely underutilised.

Steve commented, *“What we were finding with our pool area, was that it was too deep for our younger students and too shallow for our older students. Over the course of time, we also found the pool was hardly being used. Most of our families were seeking external professional swimming lessons and didn’t see the school as the port of call for providing targeted instruction in swimming. The issue was, we had an asset that was worth quite a lot but only being used about eight or nine weeks of the year”.*



After consulting with the community, the School Board made the difficult decision to remove the pool and replace it with a purpose-built play area that could be used every day of the year.

Steve emphasised, “After making the difficult decision to remove the school pool, we had to think about ‘if there is no pool in this space, what is going to go there?’. We looked at a variety of options but quickly settled on replacing the pool with a purpose-built play area for our middle school (years three and four) students”.

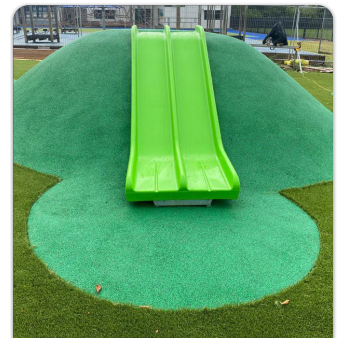
Having collaborated with her on multiple playground installations at Remuera Primary School, Steve met with Jenny, Sales Manager at Park Supplies & Playgrounds to discuss his ideas.

“We’ve found that Park Supplies & Playgrounds are a really great company to work with. They listen to what you’re trying to achieve and what your goals are with the play area and they add their own layer of expertise and come back with some stunning designs. The brief I gave Jenny was ‘I didn’t want just a playground, I wanted multi-use spaces within the area, and I wanted it to be reflective of our local community’. Little did I know that the design that they would come up with would far exceed the brief and far exceed our expectations”.

The design for the new purpose-built play area included a river made out of artificial surfacing that runs through the play area, designed to represent the Tāmaki River and a small maunga (mountain) to one side of the play area that represents Ōhinerau/Mount Hobson, both key landmarks for the school and its local community. A shaded amphitheatre was also built to accommodate 70-80 students. The play area also included a traditional playground, Lillypad swings, Orex Spinner, a fale (house) and balance activities.



The new middle school playground, a hit with students.

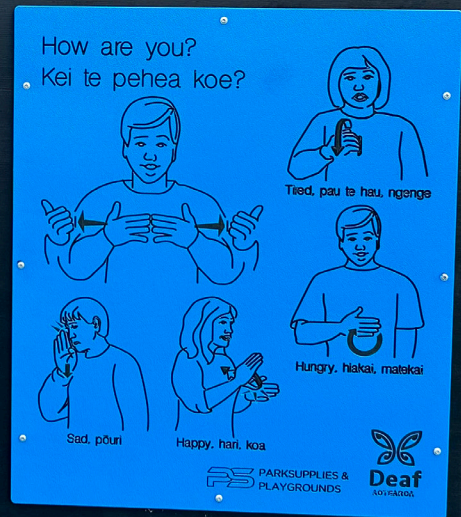
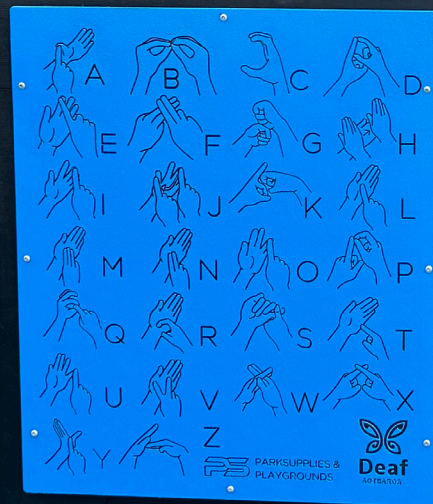


A maunga (mountain) with slides was incorporated into the play areas design to reflect local landmark Ōhinerau/Mount Hobson.

“Park Supplies & Playgrounds’ response to my broad ‘this is what we’re looking for’ brief really blew our minds. We were so impressed with their ability to listen to what we wanted, deliver on what we wanted but also take it to the next level as well” Steve comments.

In terms of feedback from students, Steve said, “Every year, three students get to be a Deputy Principal for the day and during Term Four of 2023, we were able to take them on site in their hard hats and Hi-Viz and let them have the first sneak peek at the new play area. Their feedback was ‘wow this is amazing’, and we even had our year five and six’s say ‘we want to have a playground like that as well’. When students are clamouring to get onto it, it’s a good sign that the design has ticked all of the boxes”.

The shaded amphitheatre incorporated new Park Supplies & Playgrounds inclusive play products: Communication Board and Sign Language Panels.





A fale (house) was incorporated into the design to encourage dramatic play.



Orex Spinner, a popular choice for junior and middle school playgrounds.



The amphitheatre that can be used for large groups and dramatic play.

The new play area opened in February 2024 to the delight of all the students who had been patiently waiting and watching behind the safety fence.

“They’re [the students] just over the moon and we’re just thrilled as a school that we now have a purpose-built area for our middle school students and one that’s got a combination of challenges. On the day it opened, I went down to check it out and there were students pushing the boundaries in terms of their own resilience and their own kind of risk which is what we wanted. I also noted at the top of the amphitheatre was a boy reading his book quietly which I thought ‘now that’s a playground that ticks all the boxes for everybody” Steve said.

On working with Park Supplies & Playgrounds on this project, Steve said, *“Ben Seales who was the Project Manager, was just absolutely first-class, he was brilliant to work with, and his communication was outstanding. It was his attention to detail that ensured we ended up with this amazing playground”.*

The new purpose-built play area for Remuera Primary School middle school students marks another successful collaboration between Park Supplies & Playgrounds and Remuera Primary School.

“The benefit of working with a company like Park Supplies & Playgrounds is that they know our school, they built our Year One playground, our Year Two playground and they’ve built a dedicated balance area for our little ones as well. The only playground they haven’t done is our Year Five and Six one and in hindsight I wish they had. They know our needs and they’ve been able to walk alongside us and make sure our students from Year One and up are well-catered for”.

“I would give them my highest recommendation, if you’re looking for a company that is going to listen to your brief, listen to what you want, provide you with their years and years of experience and what they know works and what doesn’t work, then really look no further then Park Supplies”.

Contact us today so we can help transform your underutilised spaces into new, exciting play areas!



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