

Circle Time

What is Circle Time?

Circle Time is not a subject, it is a tool, an active teaching strategy. Circle Time can be designed by teachers in a planned way to promote positive behaviours in the classroom and across the school. Circle Time is a “no-blame” conference where everyone works together to solve problems and learn appropriate social skills and positive behaviours. It is done in an inclusive way where every student has the opportunity to participate.

Why do we use Circle Time?

Circle Time promotes our **tikanga / values**. For example:

- **Manaakitanga:** caring about others, uplifting them, supporting them, making them feel at home and cared for
- **Whanaungatanga:** relationships, class culture, sense of connection
- **Rangatiratanga:** self-determination over your choices and action

Circle Time gives an opportunity to the teacher and class to communicate with each other about issues which promote self-esteem and positive behaviour. It provides a structured framework for solving problems, in which all participants have an equal footing.

Some Types of Circle Time:

Responsive/Unplanned Circle Time:

Circle Time can be used to address class issues such as unkind behaviour in the playground or in the classroom. Although responsive, the format is the same, with a particular focus on the positive behaviours that should be seen, the school's expectations, and how we can “make it right” to move forward.

Check-In Check-Up Check-Out Circles:

This is one way teachers may use circle time in their classroom:

- **Check-In:** Monday of each week – Monday circles welcome all participants back to school after a weekend or extended holiday.
- **Check-Up:** Wednesday of each week – Wednesday circles bring participants together to discuss how the week is going and where each participant is at with goal accomplishment.
- **Check-Out:** Friday of each week – Friday circles bring participants together to review the week, discuss accomplishments and/or setbacks and to look forward to the following week.

For more information about how your teacher uses Circle Time, check in with them!