



# Schools set positive rules

**Kimberley Crayton-Brown**

Schools throughout Southland have been making positive changes to their school culture and environment through a government initiative.

Eleven Southland schools are signed up for the Education Ministry's Positive Behaviour for Learning (PB4L) programme, with three more expected to join next year, a spokesman said.

Aurora College principal Robyn Hickman said focusing on three main rules at the Invercargill school had been "really positive".

Posters around the school list the three "rules" – be respectful, be responsible, be safe.

Senior teacher and PB4L coach Rob Williams said it had started the programme two years ago, and the whole school had been taking part for about a year.

The classrooms had become more settled, and although there was always a positive atmosphere around the school, that had increased, Mr Williams said.

The programme was expected to take three to five years to fully implement, but it was working well so

far, he said.

"I think it sets the right tone for learning around the school and it will . . . have an impact on academic results."

Earlier this month Northern Southland College held a celebration of its achievements after two years in the programme.

Teacher in charge SeYe Chan said the school had clearly defined expectations around the "three Rs": respect self, respect others and respect for property.

The three Rs were used in all aspects of school life including classroom expectations, expectations on the buses, and expectations in outdoor education, he said.

"We believe our school already has a very strong and positive family-oriented culture in terms of how the students relate to each other, to the staff and to the community," he said.

"This family culture has led to not only a safer environment but also one that allows students and staff to take on more risks and challenges . . ."

During the celebration, London

2012 Paralympic triple medallist Laura Fairweather and Southland Stags captain Jamie Mackintosh reinforced the programme's messages. Both athletes spoke about how attitude and respect were crucial in getting them to where they were today, Mr Chan said.

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## MOTIVATED LEARNERS

### What is positive behaviour for learning (PB4L)?

■ A school-wide programme focused on improving academic and behaviour outcomes for students by making positive behaviour in school the norm.

■ The focus is on preventing problem behaviour, developing students' social skills, reinforcing desired behaviour, consistently addressing and reducing inappropriate behaviours.

■ The Education Ministry contributes \$10,000 to each participating school a year, for the first three years. Leadership training is provided.

■ Source: Education Ministry





**Classroom expectations:** Aurora College senior teacher and Positive Behaviour for Learning coach Rob Williams.

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