



## Innovative Learning Environments and Flexible Learning Spaces

### ***Learning environments – the learning ecosystem***

- It is up to each school to decide how they deliver the curriculum. As a school decides to shift their teaching and learning practices, the Ministry can support them and help with the design of their classrooms.
- The Ministry of Education shares the OECD's holistic view of learning environments as an ecosystem that includes learners, educators, families/whānau, communities, content and resources like property and technology. It's about everything working together to support teachers and learners and ensure our young people are confident, connected, actively involved, lifelong learners.
- Innovative learning environments are about much more than just property. They are learner-focussed, encourage collaboration and inquiry - both for learners and teachers - and allow teachers to teach in the style that best suits the needs of diverse learners.
- While the Ministry does not require schools to become innovative learning environments, we highly recommend considering the shift to student-centred ways of teaching and learning.
- School leaders considering a transition to innovative learning environments should also think about how to bring students, teachers, and the wider school community along with them on the journey. Teachers and students should be well prepared for the new environment.

### ***Physical spaces – creating flexible spaces to support teaching and learning***

- The Ministry supports the way schools deliver the curriculum in many ways, one of which is through the property we provide. Many schools are opting to create flexible learning spaces to support their teaching and learning practices.
- Flexible learning spaces are made up of many different sized spaces so they can support different ways of teaching and learning and be used for different types of activities. They can often accommodate more than one class and several teachers.
- The Ministry prioritises the core elements of flexible learning spaces (acoustics, heating, ventilation and lighting) when upgrading or building learning spaces. The evidence shows that getting these elements right can be linked to student outcomes.
- Teachers and leaders with flexible learning spaces comment these spaces allow the power of teacher collaboration to be maximised in ways not possible in traditional classrooms.
- Flexible learning spaces also offer a school the chance to easily reconfigure their property as teaching and learning practices evolve, which helps to future proof the investment in property.