

## Yearbook 2024

### Welcome to our 2024 Online Yearbook

*Use the tags or article index at the top right corner of this page to browse. Once you've chosen an article, click back on tags, article index or go to the top left-hand corner and click on the school's logo. This will take you back to the main menu where you can select your next article.*

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We hope you enjoy viewing our 2024 memories of Ko Taku Reo - Deaf Education New Zealand.

**To keep the authenticity of our learners' voices, we have not edited their work.**

For a **PDF** version, click to view and download.

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### Message from the Acting Executive Principal

Mā te huruhuru ka rere te manu | Adorn the bird with feathers so it may soar.

Tēnā koutou katoa,

Welcome to a reflection of what has been an incredible year at Ko Taku Reo! This yearbook celebrates the vibrant tapestry of memories woven together by our amazing students, dedicated teachers, and supportive community. 2024 has been a journey of growth, discovery, and countless moments of joy, and I am so proud of everything we have achieved together this year.

From the excitement of Keep in Touch (KIT) Days and cultural festivals to the quiet triumphs in the classroom, every experience has contributed to the unique story of our students. We've seen friendships blossom, talents shine, and dreams take flight. Each story is a testament to the hard work, creativity, and spirit that defines Deaf Education in New Zealand.

As you go through these articles and photos, I hope you are reminded of the laughter, the challenges overcome, and the milestones achieved. As I said initially, this yearbook is a source of pride and inspiration and a reminder of the incredible potential within each of us.

Here's to the memories we've made and the bright future ahead. Together, we are stronger, and together, we will continue to achieve great things.

I trust that the holiday season enables you to spend time with the people most important to you. To those of you who are leaving at the end of this year, we wish you well in whatever your next adventure brings. For everyone else, see you back in 2025!

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## Message from the Commissioner

Kia tau ngā manaakitanga, o te tau kua pahure, me te tau e tū mai nei. He mihi, he mihi, he mihi. Haumi e, hui e, tāiki e! | Let the blessings flow for the year that has passed and for the year ahead. With gratitude, with appreciation, with thanks. Joined together as one!

I have chosen to start my review of the year with this as for me, there is so much that has happened in 2024 that we can be thankful for and so much that we can look forward to in 2025.

As we wrap up the year, it's a perfect time to reflect on the significant progress and achievements we've made across Ko Taku Reo in 2024. Thanks to the hard work and dedication of each of you, we've reached important milestones that strengthen our ability to support students, whānau, and staff.

Congratulations to all students on your hard work and achievements this year! You have worked hard, and it has paid off; we are so proud of everything you've accomplished. Keep working towards your goals, and remember to celebrate your successes! Well done!

We know that we are a complex, nationwide school that requires hard work and dedication, coupled with passion, to improve the academic achievement for our Deaf and hard of hearing students. As a school and staff, we have what it takes and are continuing this mahi. So, thank you to every one of you.

### **A few highlights from the year to reflect on include:**

#### **Launch of Deaf Studies Guidelines**

One major achievement was the launch of the Deaf Studies Guidelines in term four. This valuable resource provides staff with tools to support Deaf Studies, marking an important step forward for our educational practices.

#### **School's Implementation Plan**

This year saw substantial progress on our School's Implementation Plan, aligning closely with our Strategic Plan to guide our initiatives and ensure we're moving forward in a unified direction.

#### **ERO Evaluation Report**

Working closely with the Education Review Office (ERO) on the first Ko Taku Reo evaluation report since our merger has been a collaborative milestone. The reports were released and shared with our staff and parent community. These reports play a pivotal role in guiding the work of a school by providing an external, independent evaluation of its strengths, areas for improvement, and overall performance. The school will be using the ERO reports to shape and guide its work, which will support us in creating a responsive, effective learning environment that meets the needs of students and prepares them for future success.

## **Enrolled School Philosophy Framework**

Throughout the year, we've advanced the Enrolled School Philosophy Framework, incorporating valuable feedback from parents. This framework continues to evolve, shaping a shared understanding of our educational values and goals.

## **Executive Principal recruitment and establishment of a board**

We have continued to work with the Ministry of Education (MoE) to shape the executive principal role. The complexities of this role, the breadth of our educational services, and our unique structure have meant that the process has taken time. We will be consulting widely with our stakeholders to ensure the role description and attributes align with the needs of our school. This will then lead to the establishment of a board.

Thank you to our hard-working students and staff, and I wish you all a happy and safe holiday period.

Enjoy reading this year's yearbook.

Noho ora mai,

Mike Rondel

Commissioner – Ko Taku Reo Deaf Education New Zealand

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## Message from the Director of Education Services

Our school values of *Belong*, *Grow*, *Choose*, and *Excel* have truly been at the heart of everything we've accomplished this year.

Kia ora koutou,

What a fantastic year 2024 has been for our Ko Taku Reo school community. As we reflect on the year in this yearbook, it's heartening to see how much our students have achieved, how far they've grown, and how much joy they've brought to our school whānau. I would like to congratulate our students for their incredible dedication and resilience and our staff for their hard work and commitment to supporting our students throughout the year.

Our school values of *Belong*, *Grow*, *Choose*, and *Excel* have truly been at the heart of everything we've accomplished this year. We have created a place where our students feel they *belong*, supported by their peers, staff, and families. We've seen them *grow* in confidence and ability, taking on challenges and learning new skills. We celebrate their choices, reflecting their independence and taking ownership of their learning. Most importantly, we're proud of how our students have *excelled* in their journeys and reached new academic and personal heights.

This year has been full of memorable moments, and none of it would have been possible without the support of our families. Thank you for your involvement, encouragement, and ongoing partnership in your child's school journey. Your contributions have been vital in making 2024 a success.

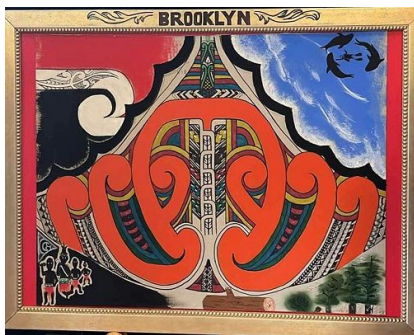
Our digital yearbook allows us to tell the story of these achievements in a vibrant and accessible format, celebrating the big milestones and the everyday victories. I'm excited to see the stories and photos that will bring this special year to life, and I encourage everyone to take the time to explore and celebrate the successes of our students.

Ngā mihi nui

Ginny Neal

Director of Education Services (Acting)

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## A Space to Develop Identity, Independence and Deafhood

Tū Kōkiri provision 2024 has been its usual hub of activity. At the start of term 1, we welcomed Holden from the Kelston Boys' High School Deaf provision and Talib from the mainstream in Wellington. We recently welcomed Destyn, who was formally in the Kelston Boys' High provision, back to school. Courtney and Thando left this year with aspirations of full-time employment. Also, one of our fabulous interpreters, Frances, left us at the end of term 2; they will all be missed.

### Identity and Deafhood

The Tū Kōkiri students have excelled as role models and ambassadors for Ko Taku Reo this year. They are regularly called upon to speak to teacher groups, parents of Deaf children, and other professionals in the Deaf Education field. Their recounts of their Deafhood journeys to date are impactful and leave a lasting impression. They contribute with confidence and have a clear sense of their own Deaf identity. Opportunities to meet and hear the life stories of a diverse range of Deaf adults through the Deaf Lives aspect of the programme enable the students to make new connections and explore their own Deaf identity. They lead in whakatau and pōwhiri to welcome visitors to Rūaumoko Marae, where their Turi Māori identities come to the fore.

### Independence and Work readiness

Tū Kōkiri is a great place to study and learn the Road Code theory needed to pass a New Zealand Learners Drivers Licence through NZSL. Holden gained his Learner Licence early in the year and his Forklift Licence. Holden and Destyn also completed their Site Safe Passport, allowing them to work safely on a building site. Students have gained valuable work experience through the support of local employers who willingly provide authentic work placements. Brooklyn is completing an online Certificate in Youth Work to prepare for further study and to become a social worker.

As we finish the 2024 school year, we farewell Holden, Brooklyn, Kaylee and Jasonta, who will move, well-prepared for the next chapter of their lives beyond school. We wish them well.



## Sumner Residences Had an Active Year in 2024

We have had an active year with various walks and adventure activities.

One of the students' favourites was surfing, an incredible day that all involved would love to repeat.

Students also went blo-karting, drift-biking, go-



karting, swimming, and walking and played mini and disc golf.



Residential students got to go to Hanmer Springs Hot Pools for a day.

Students have taken part in many competitions throughout the year. Term 1 students played in the Sumner touch rugby tournament every Wednesday night; in Term 2, all students played indoor netball weekly; and in Term 3, the students were involved with indoor soccer.

During evenings and weekends, the students had competitions in Table Tennis, Pool, Darts, Minute Challenges and a firm favourite soon to be repeated, the Master Chef competition.

Lots of games on the field, tee-ball and soccer, but Rummikub remains the most played board game; Just Dance is the most popular electronic game.

From time to time, we were fortunate to be able to use the common room set up at the beginning of this year, especially with a table tennis and pool table installed.



Early in the year, we were fortunate to have fun with archery every week for five weeks. It was a little more challenging than we expected, but it was an experience we greatly valued.

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## Action-Packed 2024 at Auckland Residential Campus

It's time to reflect on our year at the Auckland residence, where we've supported 18 Deaf students this year.

We have witnessed Deaf students embark on an incredible journey of growth in self-esteem, learning, overcoming challenges, and active involvement in events, activities, and so much more. We have encouraged them to reflect independently to foster growth.

Our residence feels like whānau full of staff and students; it's a social Deaf space, rich in Deaf culture, with fluent communication through NZSL. This whare is a special place that provides a warm and welcoming environment for all of us.

### **In 2024, we welcomed nine new students:**

- Mason Abraham (Kelston Intermediate School)
- Andre Hesp (Kelston Boys' High School)
- Max Durrant (Kelston Boys' High School)
- Shanalia Shaw (Kelston Girls' College School)
- Mikaila Shaw (Kelston Girls' College School)
- Tiana Petre (Kelston Girls' College School)
- Talib Prime (Tū Kōkiri)
- Jasonta Poki (Tū Kōkiri)

### **Weekly Activities:**

Reflecting on our weekly activities throughout 2024, I've chosen three standout highlights that truly made this year memorable.

### **Matariki**

During Matariki week, we celebrated the Māori New Year in an amazing way. We saw Deaf students enthusiastically learning how to prepare and cook boil-up meals, showcasing their teamwork and preparation skills. I taught one of my colleagues how to make Māori Fried Bread, and together, we showed the students how to prepare and fry this traditional bread.

I want to honour all the students for their hard work in preparing the hāngī the evening before, ensuring everything was ready for the next day. It was heartwarming to witness this as a whānau coming together, highlighting the

importance of fostering their learning, developing skills, and working together as a team.

We welcomed a guest who joined us to share insights and help us better understand the meaning of Matariki. The students thoroughly enjoyed the celebration and look forward to celebrating it again in 2025.

### **Paris Olympics**

The Paris Olympics sparked interest among Deaf students, particularly in learning about the Deaflympics and how Deaf individuals can actively participate in sports. We invited Deaf guest Suzanne Ovens to share her inspiring experiences at the Deaflympics. The students were deeply engaged, asking numerous questions and enjoying the discussion. They felt inspired and encouraged, realising that as Deaf individuals, they can achieve great things in sports and beyond.

### **Deaf Youth Hui**

It was a busy week during the Deaf Youth Hui, where we welcomed five students from outside Auckland to stay at the residence alongside our regular students. They were amazed to see so many residents using NZSL fluently. These interactions provided valuable learning experiences, with our resident students and Deaf staff serving as strong role models within the Deaf community.

The Deaf Youth Hui focused on learning NZSL and exploring Deaf culture, with the residence serving as a central hub for a rich Deaf space. The students also delved into Deaf history, engaged in NZSL games, and built connections. It was an incredible week of growth and discovery with these five students.

### **Weekend Activities**

On weekends, the resident students regularly participate in various activities vital for their social connections and overall wellbeing. Among their favourite weekend activities this year, three stand out.

#### **Hot Pools**

The students are always excited about swimming in different locations, and they especially enjoy combining the experience with a delicious BBQ meal.

#### **Mall Visits**

The students enjoy going to the mall as it provides a relaxing environment where they can explore a variety of shops, including those offering clothing, accessories, and much more.

#### **Fishing**

The students always look forward to fishing trips, eager to develop their skills in using fishing gear and learning how to catch fish.

#### **Fitness and Sports**

We offer various sports activities for students to participate in, including weekly netball sessions every Friday evening, where they train and play alongside



members of the Deaf community. This has been a fantastic opportunity for the students to socialise while enjoying the game.

Additionally, they have been involved in Touch Rugby, training and learning the sport to build their confidence and skills as they prepare for the Australia Deaf Games in 2026. This provides an incredible opportunity for our resident Deaf students to be actively engaged and inspired and to look up to other Deaf individuals as role models.

## **Students**

### **Callan**

Kia ora everyone, my name is Callan.

I play rugby league and have been attending league for a long time on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The team is hearing, but they communicate well. The coach is great too, we can talk and they always clearly tell me where to go and what to focus on. I always listen to the coach, it's been great. Win or lose, it doesn't matter it's about the game. I hope I can keep playing next year.

### **Diamond**

Kia ora, hello.

My name is Diamond, and this is my sign name. I'm involved in sports. I play netball at school, with Kelston Girls' College. I'm the only Deaf player on the team. I enjoy practising with the team on Tuesdays and Thursdays. When we had our game, I felt confident because of all the good training we'd done. We didn't win, but we placed second.



## **We farewell the following students in 2024**

- Brooklyn Teaurere - West – 7 years
- Holden Tangiwai Spencer – 7 years
- Jasonta Poki – 1 year

## Farewell messages

- [Brooklyn's goodbye](#)
  - [Holden's goodbye](#)
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## Inspiring Youth Through Theatre

In its third year, the theatre project ended with another wonderfully successful performance, full of laughter and tears.

Enrolled School's 'Toi Turi Youth Theatre Project' was an 11-week-long initiative funded through the Ministry of Education, Creatives in Schools funding scheme. The project is in its third year, following successful projects in 2022 and 2023. Each year, we have partnered with Tim Bray Theatre Company.

Twelve Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland-based ākonga from Years 9 – 13 and Tū Kōkiri participated. This year, our Ōtautahi Christchurch ākonga were able to take part; they created advertisements that were recorded and played in the intermission of the theatre performances.

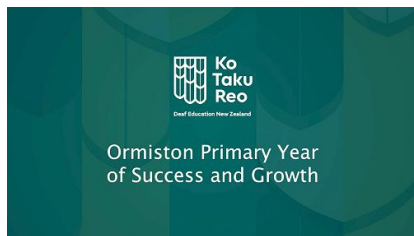
The highlight of this project was three very successful performances titled 'Deafland Street' at two different venues. The Ko Taku Reo community, whānau and staff, the Deaf community and members of the public attended this. It was a great success and ended with laughter and happy tears.

Our ākonga performed with supreme confidence and presented an entertaining, funny show using theatrical techniques specific to Deaf theatre and Deaf culture. This year, in a real sense, we were able to showcase a Deaf performance to a broader audience and celebrate and share this part of our culture.

We hope to be able to embrace drama and share Deaf theatre again in the future. We are looking forward to seeing the skills gained in this project, the confidence, Deaf identity, and the sense of belonging for our ākonga continue to develop.

Well done to our ākonga and our partners at Tim Bray. This was a phenomenal highlight of our year. A big thank you to everyone who supported this project, including Selwyn Village and Kelston Intermediate, who shared their spaces. May these connections continue long into our future in drama.

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## Ormiston Primary Year of Success and Growth

Ormiston Primary continues to model Ko Taku Reo's values of Belong, Grow, Choose and Excel.

Our sense of belonging deepens each day as we continue to develop our Deaf identity through our growing knowledge of our language and our many cultures. Our students are at different stages on this journey, but we work together to support each other. We have had several opportunities to share this new learning with our whānau, school leaders and partner schools.

Ormiston Provision continues to grow. As our numbers grow, our teachers continue to create engaging learning programmes to support our needs. This year's highlight was our swimming lessons, which Field of Dreams gifted. We learned swimming skills, but more importantly, we were taught about survival skills should we ever get into trouble in the water.

Choose is our third value, which is important to all of us. We choose to be advocates for our Deaf Culture and share these with others, especially the students in our mainstream school, as we encourage them to "raise their hands high and give it a try."

Finally, we strive for excellence in all that we do. Everyone has different strengths, and they excel at various times. We have amazing artists, dancers, readers, writers, scientists and engineers. It is a team effort.

As we come to the end of 2024, we have to farewell five students as they end their time with Ormiston Primary. Thankfully, they are only going to Ormiston Junior College next door, so we will see them often.

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## The Deaf Youth Take on Australia

Deaf Sports grow from the passion of Deaf youth.

In January 2024, New Zealand's Deaf athletes showed incredible talent at the Australia and Pacific Deaf Games in Newcastle and Lake

Macquarie, New South Wales. Among the 84 athletes, many were Deaf youth from Ko Taku Reo, highlighting the exciting opportunities for students to engage in Deaf sports and connect with the wider Deaf community.

The Games showcased the success of young athletes like Diamond-Eve Johnston and Te Maire Smith-Dunlop, who excelled in netball and touch rugby. Competing like seasoned pros, they inspire others with their confidence and skill. Holden Tangiwai-Spencer also stood out in touch rugby, demonstrating passion and dedication. For many, this was their first experience of Deaf sports, opening doors to new opportunities and connections.

New Zealand competed strongly across various sports. In Futsal, we saw great performances from students like Ryley Yates, part of the NZSL@School programme, ex-students like Harry Jeon, and staff members. These teams brought home medals across men's, women's, and mixed grades, celebrating their success and camaraderie. In lawn bowls, Adam Baillie, an ex-student and reigning World Singles Lawn Bowls Champion, added to his impressive record by winning bronze in the Men's Singles and silver in the Men's Fours.

For our students, the Games were about more than sports. It was an opportunity to explore their Deaf identity, connect with the Deaf community, and experience the unique culture of Deaf sports. For some, it was their first chance to feel part of something bigger, inspiring them to stay involved and aim higher.

The event also highlighted New Zealand's growing presence on the global Deaf sports stage. At the upcoming World Deaf Basketball 3x3 Championships, eight players will represent the country, supported by coaches and staff. Impressively, 75% of the group has ties to Ko Taku Reo, reflecting the school's role in fostering talent and providing pathways for its students.

The 2024 Games are a reminder of how much is possible for Deaf athletes, whether competing locally or representing New Zealand internationally. They also show students and the Deaf community that opportunities like the Australian Deaf Games and global events are within reach.

Looking ahead, the 2026 Australia Deaf Games will be held on the Sunshine Coast of Queensland, presenting another chance to get involved, whether as an athlete, supporter, or volunteer. For more information, visit [www.deafsports.co.nz](http://www.deafsports.co.nz).

From youth stars to seasoned champions, New Zealand's athletes proved Deaf sports offer something for everyone. Whether you're discovering sports for the first time or aiming for the world stage, the possibilities are endless. If you've been inspired, now is the time to get involved - you never know where it might lead!

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## Inspiring Minds, Building Futures!

Kelston Primary Provision has experienced significant growth this year, starting with just six students; now we have eleven.

We welcomed the lovely Elizabeth, followed by the energetic duo of Viha and LaShali earlier in the year. Alexia and Tehreem have recently joined us, and we anticipate further growth next year.

To accommodate our growing student numbers, we experimented with different classroom arrangements in term 4 to maintain small-group teaching.

Mandy has embarked on a two-year part-time Teacher of the Deaf course, studying on Thursdays and Fridays. Esther has joined the provision on these days to provide additional support.

We were fortunate to attend numerous Tim Bray shows this year and actively participated in our partner school's events, including cross-country, athletics day, Kiwi Can, assemblies, and special occasions.



Te Aroha continues to support our students at Rūaumoko Marae, where they learn about Te Ao Māori.

As we look toward 2025, we are grateful for all the parent support, especially our teacher aides, Ash and Bronte.

Teamwork makes the dream work!

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## **A Year of Growth, Inclusion, and Participation at Ormiston Junior College**

This year, the Ormiston Junior College (OJC) provision has grown to ten students, fostering inclusion, participation, and a vibrant community

where Deaf students are empowered to thrive.

Our commitment to inclusion ensures that Deaf and hard of hearing students receive support and are empowered to participate fully in all aspects of school life.

Inclusion at OJC is about creating a sense of belonging; our team of teachers, interpreters, and support staff have worked to make learning accessible, ensuring Deaf students actively engage in classroom discussions, sports and cultural events.

Participation is key to our success. With the help of educational interpreters and hearing technology, Deaf students have contributed their perspectives in lessons, enriching the experience for everyone. These students have built strong relationships with their peers by participating in school events, fostering understanding and mutual respect.

Looking ahead, we remain committed to fostering a culture of inclusion and participation, ensuring every Deaf student at OJC feels empowered and ready to succeed.

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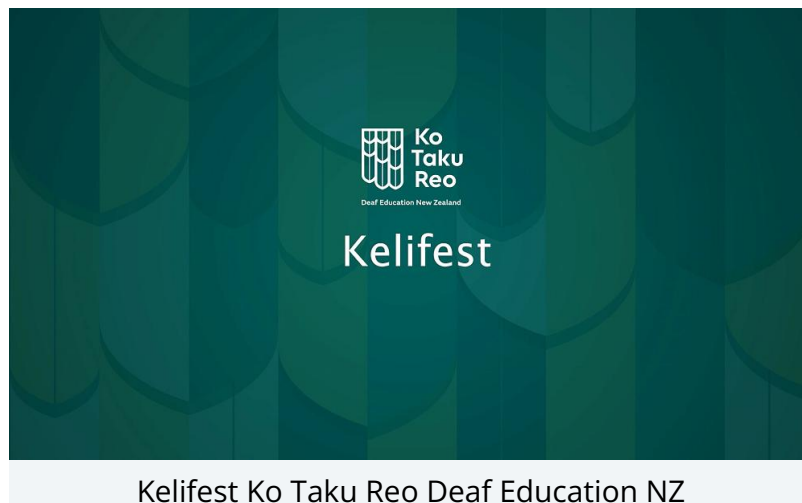
## Celebrating Vibrant Cultural Performances

Kelston Primary Provision loves supporting cultures in our community, and we are proud of our own culture too.

Kelston Intermediate School hosted Kelifest in term 4. This annual celebration brings together students from various schools in the area to showcase their cultural performances.

Our senior girls participated in the cultural groups, with Elizabeth representing the Cook Islands and Briann and Alana representing Samoa. After weeks of dedicated practice, they delivered impressive performances and looked fantastic in their costumes.

All Kelston Primary Provision students attended the event to support their peers. We were fortunate to have prime seating near the stage, allowing our younger students to enjoy the performances and dance with the cultural groups.



Kelifest Ko Taku Reo Deaf Education NZ

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## Another Thrilling Year for Kelston Intermediate Provision!

*Ko Kerehana ko au. Ko au ko Kerehana – I am Kelston. Kelston is me.*

Kaori Kobayashi and Esther Duncan took over after Yvonne Lee's departure at the end of term

two.

At the beginning of term three, we went on an adventure trip. We explored the local park and library and had lunch at the local shopping mall. We had fun, and learning more about our local community was a great day.

During term 3, we held a mini-Olympic day. We were allocated the friendly Island of Tonga. We decorated our classroom with Tongan flags and cultural decorations, which the rest of the contestants admired. We wore the National Costume of Tonga. There was a catwalk to show off the costumes at the beginning of the Olympic day, and the mainstream staff joined us to support our team!

We have a weekly topic option class, which includes an NZSL class. Once again, many mainstream students selected the NZSL class. We invited these mainstream students to the Tim Bray Theatre Company's NZSL interpreted performances.

Term 4 started with Kelifest, where our students were involved in performing cultural dances. Kaya and Shannon were in the Tongan group, Enayah was in the Samoan group. It was a fantastic day; everyone, from students to whānau, celebrated this day together. Other West provision students also came along to support their peers and celebrate this special day.

At the end of this year Shannon will be leaving Kelston Intermediate. We wish Shannon all the best as she embarks on her journey of learning into her future.

We have thoroughly enjoyed this year and wish everyone all the best for 2025!

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## Fostering Commitment and Culture

Kelston Girls' College provision has shown an outstanding commitment to learning and actively participating in various activities in 2024.

We had an exciting and memorable year. This year, we had thirteen students from Years 9 to 13.

All have shown an outstanding commitment to learning by following the school guidelines. Our students have embraced all cultures and participated in different cultural activities at school and in the wider community.

In terms 1 and 2, Deaf provision staff and students led Deaf Awareness and NZSL sessions with Kelston Girls' College staff, fostering a supportive and inclusive environment.

Three of our junior girls, Jireh, Diamond and Tere, participated in the Turi Māori Theatre Project for ten weeks in terms 1 and 2, in a captivating performance, Deafland Street, adapted from the Shortland Street TV series in June.

Year 12 Liwen has moved to Australia, her last day was at the end of term 3. We had a wonderful party for her, filled with both joy and bittersweet emotions.

Najad, an ex-student, was invited to the Kelston Girls' College Career Graduation Event on 23 October. She shared her journey, recounting the challenges she faced after becoming deaf at the age of five and the valuable lessons she learnt along the way. Najad, currently pursuing a Bachelor of Arts at AUT, highlighted the importance of team work, time management, and resilience. She encouraged students to follow their passions and embrace new opportunities.

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## Wellington Student Achievements!

Wellington students have achieved amazing things this year, from performances in Hutt Fest to sports achievements and school awards.

Chap Ma and Dakota from Rata Street School performed in Hutt Fest this year. It was the first year their school had entered, and they looked extraordinary on stage. Chap Ma performed a NZSL solo in front of hundreds of people, which brought more than one person to tears. We are super proud of these girls.

Zilon has achieved NCEA level 1! Congratulations Zilon. He also received two awards from Naenae College for resilience and diligence. What a great year!

Te Aio from Whitby Collegiate has been selected for Wellington Under 18s rugby team. Congratulations, Te Aio, on your outstanding skills and application in developing them!

James, 13, is a CI user and Year 8 student at Kapakapanui School in Waikanae. He was selected to play for Wellington in a representative tournament earlier this year, where Wellington was in the finals and came second. From that tournament, James was then selected by the International Softball Academy to represent New Zealand in the U13 Australian competition. Fifteen players throughout New Zealand were chosen to attend the competition, which took place in September of this year. He embarked on this exciting journey to Sydney with the support of his family and team. The tournament was for one week. New Zealand won four of their six games, including James hitting a home run in his last game. This was an amazing achievement for a team that had been together for only a week.

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## Linden Primary Provision in Action

We are looking back on a year filled with both fun and learning.

2024 has been another year filled with action, art, activities, learning, and laughter. In term one, we learned about places that are special to us, and we created collaborative art using various art materials. In term two, we learned about sleeping and its importance to our bodies. We needed it because we had swimming lessons that term too.



Matariki Art

We celebrated Matariki and made art inspired by waitā. Term three was all about electricity and printmaking. We had a visit from Wellington Electricity and put on our own art showcase. Term four is shaping up to be very busy, learning about our whānau histories and the places we call home. Along with all this exciting learning, we have still found time to work in groups to solve math tasks, learn about English grammar, join in with our partner school for Tuakana Teina fun (EPro8, rakau, make a waka), join with Wellington Outreach team for Keep in Touch (KIT) Days, and read (or pretending to sleep under) a good book in the school library.

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## A Year of Opportunities for Our Senior Students

2024 has been a year of opportunities for senior students, from work experience and career expos to tertiary provider visits.

Throughout the year, students have gained work experience across various fields in Christchurch and Auckland, including hospitality, retail, healthcare, trades, education, floristry, government departments, and youth work. These placements were selected based on each student's interests and career goals.

Through these experiences, students have achieved many positive outcomes, including:

- Developing independence and confidence by travelling to and from work experience, often using public transport like buses or taxis.
- Building self-assurance when meeting new people and learning to work alongside them effectively.
- Embracing feedback from supervisors and making active adjustments to improve their skills.
- Enhancing communication in different settings, using tools like Roger Pen technology and clearly expressing their needs to work effectively.
- Growing more confident and self-reliant in the workplace by articulating what support they require and don't require.

A particular highlight was seeing students confidently attend work experiences independently.

This year, students also attended Careers Expos in both Auckland and Christchurch to explore various career pathways. These events provided valuable opportunities for face-to-face engagement with employers, industry professionals, government departments, and training providers.

Two Hillmorton students visited the University of Canterbury's Discovery Day, where they could attend lectures in subjects of their choice and experience a taste of university life. Their favourite session was a biochemistry lecture, in which the lecturer captivated them with an experiment and real-life applications, like how hand sanitiser works.

Additionally, several students participated in hands-on taster days and short courses, exploring fields such as barbering, welding, plumbing, electrical "sparky for a day" building, barista training, painting and decorating, forklift licensing, scaffolding, health and safety. They also toured tertiary institutions such as the Manukau Institute of Technology and Ara Institute of Canterbury.

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## An Action-Packed 2024 at the Early Years Whānau Centre

Dive into our action-packed year at the Early Years Whānau Centre, where every moment was filled with excitement, discovery, and meaningful connections.

2024 in the Early Years Whānau Centre (EYWC) has been another action-packed year with highlights including continuing to work with our beautiful tamariki and whānau.

Lydia started the Virtual Preschool, and we've welcomed 20 visiting whānau from around the country for our Preschool Residential Courses.

Matariki celebrations at four Christchurch libraries, a virtual visit from Emma Memma, planting at the Sumner Community Gardens, showing our agility at Tumble Times, delving into our history at Sumner, and, of course, visiting the cute animals at Arion Farm have all enriched our learning.



Story time at Lyttleton Library

Enrolment numbers rocketed to 35 children and families visiting us at locations in Sumner and Prebbleton. We have had fun together, immersed in rich language experiences, connecting with other children and families, and accessing resources.

Transitions to school and fond farewells have included Jonah, Jonty, Imogen, Evie, Miliama, Ellie, Hailey, Leo, and our fantastic NZSL Tutor Jorja. It's been a privilege having you as part of the EYWC.

We've welcomed new tamariki and their whānau, including Georgia, Beatrice, Juliet, Noah, Connor, Anthony, Theo, Arthur, Oscar, Addison, Paisley, Brooklyn,

David, and Pablo. Asinate from Hagley College joined us in terms 2 and 3 for work experience, and Benazir, an NZSL tutor, returned from parental leave in term 3.

As we round off 2024, a special thank you to the amazing team– Hayley, Lydia, Olivia, Benazir, Beth, Victoria, Angela, and Tina, who keep the cogs turning behind the scenes and consistently strive to do our best for you all. We are incredibly proud to walk alongside you, our beautiful ākonga and whānau. Go well, and we'll see you all in 2025!



## **An Amazing Year for Whangārei and Northland!**

Outstanding work, fabulous experiences, and vigorous learning have happened throughout the year in Whangārei and Northland!

What a fantastic year it's been for Whangārei and Northland! We've had so many joyful experiences that if the Resources Teachers of the Deaf shared them all, it would take hours to read and wouldn't fit on a single page. The best way to showcase our learners' achievements has been through a video. It was challenging to narrow it down, and we could have easily created a much longer version. To help us remember those precious moments and celebrate individual successes, our 2024 yearbook video highlights various Language Days activities and some one-on-one teaching moments for everyone to relive and enjoy.

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## Rūaumoko Marae

Tēnā koutou e ngā ākonga, ngā whānau, me ngā kaiako mō tō koutou awhi me ō koutou tautoko i a Rūaumoko tenei tau. Nā tō koutou kaha, māia, me te aroha, kua puāwai te mātauranga ki roto i tēnei whare. Kei te tuku mihi au ki a koutou katoa

mō te wairua mahana, me te manaaki i roto i ngā mahi ia rā. He hōnore nui ki ahau te tū hei Kaiwhakahaere Marae me te arahi i tēnei kaupapa mātauranga i raro i te korowai o Rūaumoko.

### **Marae Education at Rūaumoko this year**

Term 1: Our focus was on pepeha. From Early Childhood Education (ECE) to Tū Kōkiri, ākonga and kaiako explored the deeper meaning of pepeha, realising it's more than just an introduction; it's an expression of identity, whakapapa, and the unique connections that define us.

Term 2 and 3: These terms were filled with the spirit of Matariki, a special time for connecting with our whenua and whānau. At Kelston Base, Matariki celebrations included a memorable hāngi, supported by our ākonga and their whānau. We were privileged to have our kaumātua, Whiti Ronaki, share his knowledge in preparing the hāngi, a cherished tradition. I deeply thank Whiti, Carol, Eric and Milton for their ongoing support.

Term 4: Our focus is on waiata, adding to our kete of knowledge and supporting the paepae at Rūaumoko. Older students are exploring tuakana/teina relationships, collaborating with Ormiston Primary for fortnightly visits, spending time with our ECE centre, and deepening their understanding of these important relationships.

Additionally, Outreach students attended three Keep in Touch (KIT) Days, celebrating te ao Māori on their own tūrangawaewae. KIT Days are wonderful opportunities for students to embrace their Deaf identity and connect culturally within the welcoming space of their Marae.

Looking ahead to 2025, we are excited to build on this year's learning, strengthening our relationships and leading kaupapa in Rūaumoko while extending this spirit into the wider Turi community.

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## Early Years – Amazing Mahi across Aotearoa

Amazing Early Years teams work with our youngest learners and share their practices.

Our Early Years teams are spread across the country, from our Preschool in Auckland, Playgroups in Wellington and Dunedin, and our Early Years Whānau Centre in Christchurch in two locations – Sumner and Prebbleton.

We continue to run very successful Preschool Residential Courses in both Christchurch and Auckland, with the Auckland team working hard to increase the numbers of families supported – we are pleased that we are on track to achieving a total of 30 families we have supported this year!

We also started trialling a virtual preschool group – early responses from the whānau members attending indicated they are enjoying the new format, particularly the informative presentations such as Theory of Mind, as well as seeing new books and songs in NZSL.

As the Acting Head of Early Years for the past year, I have had the privilege of witnessing the fantastic team's mahi firsthand within the few opportunities I had to visit Early Years Whānau Centre in Christchurch, as well as continuing to support Auckland Preschool, albeit in a different role. I look forward to visiting the Dunedin playgroup later in term 4. I am very proud of our Leads, Tina and Susan, as they always continue to seek to improve our services and support our wider Ko Taku Reo colleagues, particularly the Resource Teachers of the Deaf (RTDs) and the Integrated Services team, as well as with external partners such as Advisors on Deaf Children (AODCs), First Signs leaders, facilitators and early intervention agencies.

Early Years is such a small area of Ko Taku Reo but critically vital to the success of our learners now and into the future, as we build the foundations for their future successes. Thank you to all the whānau who have connected with the Early Years teams this year, whether that be through our Auckland Preschool, Early Years Whānau Centre, our playgroups in Wellington or Dunedin, through our new virtual Preschool group, or our Preschool Residential Courses. You and your child are the reasons for our mahi. Thank you for partnering with us to support you and your child in growing, choosing, belonging, and excelling.

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## At Auckland Preschool, we have jumped into Deaf Studies this Year!

Although the students in our preschool are young, that doesn't mean they cannot start their Deafhood journey.

All year, we have been learning about 'Who am I?' Through learning to introduce ourselves to our classmates, teachers and visitors to our preschool, we've been practising using our own and other people's sign names. We've also started trying to fingerspell and write our names on paper, linking fingerspelled letters with print.

Recently, we took this idea of introductions to another level and practised presenting our pepeha at Rūaumoko Marae!

Introducing ourselves by using our sign names, fingerspelling, and pepeha helps us link Deaf and Māori culture, as well as phonetic awareness, and it starts to build our individuality and identity as young Deaf learners.

Ka pai Auckland Preschool!

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# Empowering Connections in Outreach School 2024

Kia ora koutou whānau,

Wow, this has been an eventful year for students and staff who are part of our Outreach School

services.

With Covid years behind us, most Deaf and hard of hearing students nationwide have returned to school and have resumed a sense of routine and normality! We note that some students choose to access their education through their local school in combination with Te Kura (Correspondence School). We recognise the need for the customisation of student programmes, and we can work with students in a variety of different contexts.

This year, I've had the opportunity to observe students and their learning in a significant number of schools across Aotearoa.

It's heartening to witness student engagement and progress at your local school and the multiple opportunities for inclusion every day. Every week, students have a sense of achievement - be it independently reading a book at a new reading level, improvements across the curriculum or being part of the school sports team, drama club or similar. If your child receives direct service, their Individual Educational Plan (IEP) needs to reflect progress with what priorities you and your child decide are important to you at that time. We promote the development of student voice and agency with their learning.

We are excited about the value that our new Deaf Studies curriculum will add to your child's educational experience. It's essential that Deaf and hard of hearing students have access to Deaf knowledge, history, culture, community, language and identities to empower them on their journey towards Deaf adulthood.

All the best for a happy and safe holiday season. Enjoy your children while you have them at home!

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## A Rising Rugby Star!

Nevaeh is the youngest NZTFI Junior Oceania Aotearoa Māori U11 Kōhine winning team member.

Nevaeh is an outstanding all-round athlete. This year, she competed with the Māori U11 Kōhine tag rugby team in the Junior Oceania Aotearoa Indigenous Invitational Cup, where her team claimed victory in their division. Nevaeh was the youngest player in her team, turning nine shortly after the March tournament. She regularly earns recognition as Player of the Day at her Maraenui Club and was awarded the Most Improved Player in the Under 10 group this year. In December, Nevaeh was selected to compete at the Junior Tag Nationals and is again the youngest player in her Under 11 team.

The Hawke's Bay team couldn't be more proud of Nevaeh and all she has accomplished!

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## Highlights from our Invercargill NZSL Immersion Day School

As we wrap up an incredible year at our Invercargill NZSL Immersion Day School, we're excited to share some fantastic experiences and accomplishments that have shaped our year.

We are proud to have welcomed 19 learners from around Invercargill and Southland each Thursday for a day of immersive learning. We thank Wallacetown Primary School for their warm hospitality and for including us in their Matariki celebrations and Book Week festivities.

In term 1, we began learning about "Ko Wai Au" (Who Am I?). We provided learners with an opportunity to explore their personal identities and culture, enriching their understanding of themselves and each other.

Our next learning focus for term 2 moved to digital citizenship. Online safety is crucial as digital interactions become increasingly central in our lives. We were fortunate to host John Parsons, an expert in digital safety, who provided our students with essential knowledge and skills to navigate the online world safely and responsibly.



In term 3, we dedicated our efforts to participating in the Murihiku Polyfest.

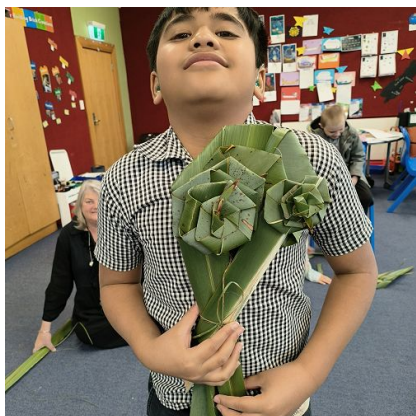
In term 4, our focus shifted to science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) learning activities, encouraging our learners' scientific thinking. Additionally, we gave back to the community by visiting a local rest home, where we shared the joy of the season through singing and signing Christmas songs, along with sharing some baking. We also donated to the Salvation Army.

One of the year's highlights was our participation in the Murihiku Polyfest! This lively celebration allowed our students to showcase their talents, connect with friends, and dive into a mix of cultural experiences. The enthusiasm and dedication from our learners' made it an unforgettable event!

Reflecting on this year's successes, we anticipate another exciting year in 2025. With the continued support of our community, we are committed to fostering an environment where learning, growth and cultural appreciation thrive. Thank you for being a part of our journey.

We look forward to sharing more achievements and milestones with you in the coming year!

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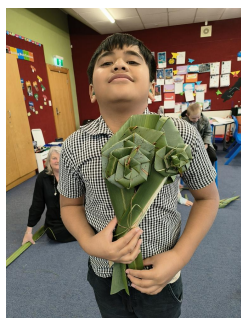
## Otago's Deaf Students Leading the Way in 2024

This year our students have embarked on an unforgettable journey, breaking barriers, fostering inclusivity, and achieving milestones in education and community engagement.

2024 has seen our Otago students experiencing rich and inclusive learning experiences.

Teachers in Otago have been focusing on improving literacy skills. They have completed structured literacy training and university courses. They are now using what they learned to help students build strong literacy foundations with the help of visual and hands-on tools.

Using the [Duck song](#) as an example, we designed a writing task for the electronic assessment Tool for Teaching and learning (e-asTTle) assessment. Before the task, students watched videos, used visual cues, and had the chance to sign or retell the story. The students created some great versions of the Duck song. By using hands-on activities, visual aids, and interactive experiences, our students can better understand concepts. The First Sign programme has also greatly supported our younger students in their learning.



This year, the Otago One Day School has remained committed to fostering an environment where students can confidently express who they are. We have emphasised the importance of positive role models and leadership within our group.

Senior students, staff, and community leaders have all played a crucial part in mentoring and guiding younger learners. We have found that this leadership model has benefitted the students being mentored and helped the role models grow in responsibility, identity and empathy.

Dunedin Playgroup has seen some changes this year, as we have both changed days and moved to a new location. It has been a positive change as more parents have been able to attend, and as a result, our community has grown rapidly. The new venue is a beautiful space with many exciting toys and more space to run around. It's been a great year for building relationships and growing connections.

Overall, 2024 has been dynamic and inclusive, supporting students through literacy, practical experiences, and solid cultural foundations in sign language.

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## Building Connections at Our Hawke's Bay Immersion Day School

Each week, our Deaf and hard of hearing students come together to strengthen their New Zealand Sign Language skills collaboratively, immersing themselves in engaging activities and meaningful shared experiences.

Every week, our group of 12 amazing Deaf and hard of hearing students, aged between 6-17 years old, come together filled with enthusiasm and excitement. The first thing they do is challenge each other at board games. They have learned many games and enjoy starting with this social element.

Our students love coming together to learn and catch up with each other. They have been actively learning how to communicate in New Zealand Sign Language (NZSL), practising new vocabulary and learning how to communicate with each other. All of the students love playing NZSL games and are very competitive.

Some highlights of this year include students practising being weather reporters, which encouraged teamwork and creativity as they shared the weather in different but entertaining ways. We also learned about people who support our community, such as the Police and Fire Service; we enjoy it when they come and share. Additionally, we explored places in our community, discussed family, and engaged with Turi TV.

We are proud of our students' achievements and their growth in confidence, communication, and NZSL. Thank you for your ongoing support with transporting students and working with us to ensure students attend our Immersion Day School regularly. The Hawke's Bay teaching team loves being a part of this community and looks forward to 2025.

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## Making A Positive Difference For Our Learners in 2024

The Bay of Plenty East team is embracing another busy, rewarding year filled with fun, engagement, and challenges for our learners.

We are incredibly proud to celebrate our diverse learners' progress and personal achievements in their mainstream schools. From participating in sports, learning through sign, and deepening their understanding of Deaf culture to embracing their unique cultural identities, demonstrating community spirit, and growing their literacy through dynamic and engaging activities — our learners continue to inspire us every step of the way.

### Mercury Wonderful Energy Award



Jack represented Tauranga Intermediate School in Indoor Bowls at the September Zespri AIMS Games held in Tauranga.

Jack's 'Act of Kindness' earned him a Mercury Wonderful Energy Award, which celebrates a great attitude and positive energy, and five awards were given each day. Jack went out of his way for a fellow indoor bowler he'd never met.

"I just helped her and made sure she wasn't lonely," he said. When he saw a first-time bowler hiding in the corner, all upset and overwhelmed, Jack wanted to help. Although the girl was from another school, Jack wouldn't leave her side until she calmed down and laughed again.

Jack loves meeting people and making new friends. Jack was nominated for the Mercury Award by the girl's mother.

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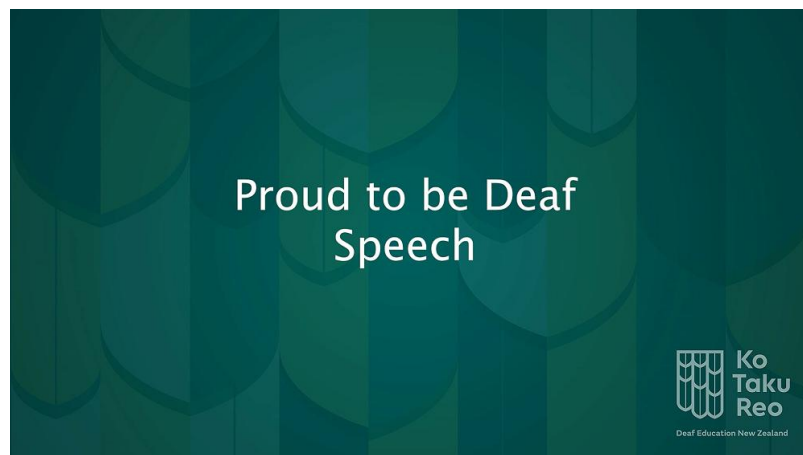




## Year 8 Student Inspires with 'Proud to be Deaf' Speech!

Year 8 Signing Student Delivers Powerful Speech on Isolation, Inclusion, and Deaf Pride.

After moving to New Zealand from the Philippines a year ago, Eleana has been learning NZSL as her third language. She delivered a speech to her class at the end of term three. Eleana speaks about being proud to be Deaf, feeling isolated in her school as no one talks to her, and that she will teach other students if they want to learn. Eleana has improved significantly with her signing over the past year and is gaining confidence in communicating with other Deaf students and adults. This progress is due to her perseverance and work ethic.



Proud to be Deaf Ko Taku Reo Deaf Education NZ



## Celebrate the Spirit: Olympics Theme Day!

Redwood Day School and Wharenuhi Provision join forces for an Olympic themed day.

In term three, the Redwood Day School joined Wharenuhi Provision to have an Olympic-themed day. The Redwood Day School students shared their inquiry research on famous deaf athletes. The students participated in activities that matched a country's special dish with its flag. We finished with the students creating an Olympic game for their peers. It was a great day with the students reconnecting with each other.





## Food, Fur, and the Thrill of Flying Balls!

A day packed with farm animal cuddles, feeding time, and a round of mini golf fun!

Our term one Keep in Touch (KIT) Day in South Canterbury was held at The Shearers Quarters in Temuka. Students from all over South Canterbury to North Otago caught up to reconnect and share holiday stories while petting and feeding pets and farm animals, having lunch, and playing a round of mini golf. The students encouraged one another to give things a go and try new skills. They had a wonderful day together, and new friendships were formed.

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## Celebrate Connection and Fun at Keep in Touch Days!

Check out the fun, whanaungatanga and ako our Waikato students have had attending the Keep in Touch (KIT) Days in 2024.

This year, our learners had the opportunity to get together for exciting events. Students love these days, building on their connections with others and making new friends. Many of the younger learners are seeing others 'just like me' for the first time too.

For our KIT Days in 2024, we spent a day exploring the Hamilton Gardens; we checked out the new Magical Bridge Sensory Playground and went on a bushwalk; we travelled to the Space Centre for a Matariki-themed day full of new learning and a fantastic Virtual Reality trip through space; the older students had a creative day exploring and sharing their deaf identity journeys; and the younger students attended the A&P show for a fun-filled day of games, animals and rides. We finished the year with a whānau day at the Hamilton Zoo in November.

We have some exciting days in the works for 2025 already!

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## Manawatū Highlights for 2024

It's been a fantastic year here in the Manawatū, with our ākonga achieving successes at school, on the sports field and in extra-curricular activities.

Our Manawatū team covers a wide area, including Palmerston North, Horowhenua, Whanganui and

Tararua.

During term two, our students came together for our first Keep in Touch (KIT) Day of the year at Awapuni School in Palmerston North, focusing on our Language, Identity and Culture. What a great day we had. We learned about science through bubbles, NZSL, storytelling, printmaking, leaf rubbing, and cooking delicious pikelets, with an awesome basketball game to finish the day. Seeing our older high school students connecting with and supporting our younger ākonga in each group was fantastic.

Families and schools have shared many highlights throughout the year. As we come to the end of the year, it is always wonderful to celebrate the successes of our students who attend mainstream schools around our region. These successes include receiving certificates for academic progress, being selected for representative teams and achieving success in their passions outside of school.

Ka mau te wehi, everyone! We are very proud of you all.

The photos below represent the highlights and achievements of some of the ākonga in the Manawatū area.

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# Celebrating Growth, Achievements, and Friendships in South Canterbury

It's been an incredible year in South Canterbury, with students and teachers teaming up to try new things and celebrate progress across many areas.

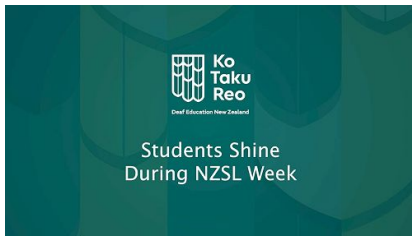
Keep in Touch (KIT) Days have been a highlight, featuring exciting activities like Lego Masters challenges, visits to the Shearers Quarters, and YMCA adventures. It's heartwarming to see friendships grow, with Benji and Phaegan even planning to write letters between KIT Days to stay connected.

Here are some standout moments from the South Canterbury region.

- Grace started school and embarked on an exciting new chapter.
- Maddison moved to Timaru, while Alice relocated to the North Island.
- Phaegan shone brightly in athletics yet again, showcasing talent and dedication.
- Sio contributed significantly to NZSL activities, sharing skills and enthusiasm.
- Tasman has been fully immersed in Glenavy School's busy calendar, participating in theatre productions and camps, and hosting friends in Haast. Glenavy School remains one of the liveliest in the area!
- Dannii impressed everyone with her star performance in netball.
- Kingsley has been exploring technology and is keenly awaiting the day he might catch a rat or possum in a trap.

It's lovely to reflect on the growth, achievements, and friendships in South Canterbury this year - here's to more success and connection in the future!

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## Students Shine During NZSL Week

During this year's NZSL (New Zealand Sign Language) Week assembly, Northcote College's Year 12 students truly shined, showcasing their

impressive NZSL skills and inspiring everyone in attendance. This annual celebration isn't just about raising awareness of NZSL. It's also a meaningful platform for students to connect with the wider community, celebrate Deaf culture, and highlight the unique beauty of sign language.

Two standout Year 12 students, passionate learners of NZSL at the NCEA level, proudly represented Northcote College and the Deaf community in Auckland. These young advocates have dedicated time and effort to mastering NZSL, not only as a subject but as a bridge to inclusivity and understanding. Their journey reflects their dedication and pride for being a part of the Deaf community, and they embraced this moment to demonstrate how language unites us all, no matter the medium.

The assembly, brimming with excitement and support from students and staff, served as a reminder of the value of learning and sharing NZSL. It was a testament to how empowering it can be to see young people lead the way in promoting awareness, connection, and inclusivity. Northcote College's NZSL Week assembly left everyone inspired, reminded of the importance of accessibility, and eager to continue supporting NZSL initiatives year-round.

As these two remarkable students took the stage, they didn't just perform—they invited the entire school into their world, leaving a lasting impression on the audience and setting a powerful example of how NZSL can bridge communities and foster understanding.

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## Westies Are Besties

West Auckland shares their rich experiences from Keep in Touch (KIT) Days at Rūaomoko Marae and attending the awesome Tim Bray Shows at the Pumphouse Theatre.

Wow! What a fantastic journey we have had this year! Three new team members started in January, and two fabulous team members left over the year. Three KIT Days at Kelston and four plays, thanks to Tim Bray's fantabulous supporters gifting us seats. However, the numbers don't do justice to the incredible moments we have experienced throughout the year.

Pōwhiri at the start of the year set the tone for the whanaungatanga that followed over the year. We made connections that were built on and developed. The anticipated second KIT Day at the base was another success thanks to the behind-the-scenes planning and preparation done by a very talented pool of Resource Teachers of the Deaf (RTDs).

Rain did not halt play at KIT Day number three. We made massive headway in completing our visual whakapapa. Most were able to take theirs home at the end of the day. As always, the free time and whanaungatanga time were a huge hit with the learners, solidifying friendships made at the start of the year.

For some, going to the first play, 'The Great Piratical Rambustification', was the first time seeing an interpreter in action. 'Five Go on an Adventure' was the next play we went to, and although the actors were very talented and the interpreter was fantastic, the dog puppet stole the attention and hearts of our attendees.

'Mrs Wishy Washy' and the muddy madness on her farm were another delight for all who could attend the play. The audience participation - "he's right behind you!" and the cast signing 'thank you' to the students who went backstage for a chat - was heartwarming. We ended the year by going to Tim Bray's Santa Show. A great end to a fantastic year!

We had a wonderful year celebrating and learning together. Thank you, and farewell to two of our fantastic Resource Teachers of the Deaf in the West Auckland Team, Lara Shackleton and Jenni Boulton. Thank you for all that you have done to awhi and support all your tamariki, whānau, and kura. We will miss you!

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## Artistic Inspiration

Discover which inspiring artist Romy selected to create her very own masterpiece!

Romy is a Year 7 student from Bluestone School in Timaru. Her Year 7/8 class have been studying different artists throughout term three and looking at similarities and differences between their styles. Romy chose an art piece from Hundertwasser. First, she sketched using a pencil, reviewed the outline in vivid detail and completed the piece with watercolours. As seen in the photo, Romy is very proud of her artwork.

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## Abram Turns Five and Embarks on His Exciting School Journey!

Discover all the wonderful milestones Abram has achieved in his first two terms at school!

Abram started school at Timaru Christian School in July 2024. He only said a few words when he started and was very shy. Abram has been making good progress. He can count to 12, write most letters in his name and some of the alphabet, speak using 3-4 word phrases, knows all the colours except one, follows classroom routines, enjoys learning and best of all, Abram has learned to skip. He is so proud of himself.

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## Celebrating the Success of Our Parafed Keep in Touch Day!

Celebrating the success of our first ever co-led Keep in Touch (KIT) Day with Parafed at Edgecumbe Primary.

At the end of term 3, we collaborated with Parafed to run a KIT day based in Edgecumbe. Parafed is a not-for-profit organisation encouraging and supporting people with diverse abilities to participate in Sport, Recreation and Play in the Bay of Plenty region.

Jo Jackson from Parafed is an absolute legend. Through Jo's connections, Vernei from Bay of Plenty Sport and Siobhan from the Halberg Foundation came on board and provided incredible support on the day, helping to make this event such a huge success.

Throughout the day, our ākonga enjoyed a variety of Boccia, badminton, target games and inclusive play activities. The inclusiveness of the day ensured that they all had an opportunity to shine and grow in confidence and self-belief as they learned to work as a team, hone their target skills, practise perseverance, and demonstrate Tuakana-Teina skills.

A highlight for our ākonga was the opportunity to wear Jo's Gold medals from the Paralympics and the Great Britain World Championships. We hope our ākonga have learnt that everyone has talents, is special, and can achieve. Within Te Moana a Toi Bay of Plenty we have some gifted athletes and, who knows, potentially some future Olympic medal winners.

Sometimes, the hours of hard work needed to make a KIT day happen can seem quite daunting. However, the connections that are made between ākonga and the smiles on their faces are what make it ALL worth it. After all, they are the centre and the HEART of everything we do.

E hara taku toa I te toa takitahi engari I te toa takitini

My strength is not individual but collective.

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## Challenge Day at Central South's Keep in Touch (KIT) Event!

The South Canterbury Outreach team tested their physical skills and teamwork at a Keep in Touch (KIT) Day run by Central South Island.

Students from the South Canterbury region took part in physical challenges on their KIT Day in August.

The Central South Island staff led students and staff in various activities that focused on participation, trust, and teamwork. The students proved pretty good shots with even a few 'bulls eyes' in archery. The support for peers showed in Bubble Football as older, more confident students supported their teammates. It was wonderful to see old friends reconnect and new friendships made and continued well after this fun day out.

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## Outreach Students Excelling Across Manawātū

### Leo

Leo is in Year 3 at Manakau School. He is talented at running and playing squash and enjoys tramping. Leo represented his school and region for cross country running this year. In class, Leo works hard in all areas, including enthusiastic participation in various activities to keep growing his spoken language. This has included guessing and describing to the class the objects he feels within a Countdown bricks surprise pack and using voice-to-text as a tool during his story writing.

### Rory

Rory is in Year 2 at Levin East School. He enjoys socialising, dancing, and his weekly Education Outside the Classroom (EOTC) visits to the farm. At school, Rory has been working on descriptive language, positional language, and nouns. Also, Rory's letter formation in both his signing and handwriting is developing. Rory engages very well in NZSL learning songs, and especially enjoys "hands-on" learning activities like baking and measuring with a builder's measuring tape.

### Braxton

Braxton is in Year 6 at Roslyn School. Braxton's knowledge and confidence in maths have grown, and he has also worked hard in reading, developing good accuracy and fluency. Braxton also shows a flair for adding expression to his voice in reading-out-loud activities. Braxton has been writing a weekly dialogue journal between himself and fellow student Maddox, competing for grammar points, asking and answering questions, and tidiness.

### Maddox

Maddox is in Year 11 at Feilding High School. He is keen on a career with big

engines and has secured an afterschool job at a local farm-vehicle business through his own door-knocking initiative. Maddox has shown leadership skills and inclusion of others through sharing weekly dialogue journal activities with a younger student, Braxton, and as one of the senior students that supports our local termly Keep in Touch (KIT) Day. Maddox's exemplary work ethic has been evident in school, with his attempts at all the online assessment tasks of the national Level 1 Literacy and Numeracy assessments. We wish Maddox all the best in getting his results for those assessments.

## **Emerald**

Emerald is in Year 12 at Feilding High School. She is always polite and friendly. Unpacking Achievement Standard vocabulary has been Emerald's focus this year. She has attained the credit amount required to gain NCEA Level 2. Emerald tells me she is in line for recognition at the school prizegiving for both her work in vocational studies and her sporting achievements. This talented young sportswoman's accomplishments this year (with national team announcements for sevens rugby and touch rugby to come soon) include:

- NZ Māori Under 18s in rugby union
- NZ touch rugby camp program, Under 16s
- Manawatū Under 18s for touch rugby
- RKR Māori league national team, Under 19s
- Captain of Mid-Central Under 16s league team.



## **Outreach Manawatū Students Shine in 2024**

**Edwin** is in Year 8 and attends St Peter's College in Palmerston North. Edwin wrote an informative report on endangered animals and enjoys using

Canva on his laptop to create visual reports. Edwin's writing also recently progressed to the final stage of the 'Writer's Ribbon' competition at school, where he used great language features, vocabulary, and sentence structure in his writing. He enjoys running and plays Futsal at school.

**Te Peehi** goes to Taihape Area School and is in Year 2. Te Peehi received a certificate at a recent assembly for excellent writing on Matariki. Ka pai!

**John** goes to Mangatainoka School and is in Year 3. John is developing his literacy skills through the Fingerspell Our Way To Reading program and is making fantastic progress. He enjoys writing down the words he has learned by looking at the picture, the sign, and then the fingerspelling.

**Jeron** goes to Cornerstone Christian School and is in Year 7. Jeron did a report writing about the effects of the ozone layer on our planet. While doing this, he learned new concepts and vocabulary that he now uses in his other writing projects.



## Tairāwhiti ki Wairoa - Incredible Year

Wow, what an incredible year it's been for our amazing learners! Look at some exciting, action-packed moments and learning highlights they've experienced.

### Nash

Nash's final year at Makarika School and his mahi with Resource Teacher of the Deaf (RTD) has been jam-packed with amazing learning achievements and experiences. These include connecting with Deaf and hard of hearing (DHH) at Keep in Touch (KIT) Days, moving two years in reading, writing to two pen pals and visiting their kura, bone carving, cooking and art at trades, NZSL zooms and a remote microphone trial. The kura held a Matariki market to raise funds for the end of year trip to Hawke's Bay. Nash made 20 packs of Play-Doh for the market and raised \$100.

### Te Rangitawaea

Te Rangitawaea loves school and enjoys hands-on activities such as reading, drawing, dancing, kapa haka, and building with Lego. Te Rangitawaea's oral language and vocabulary has developed significantly over the year. For his 'I am...' sentence, he said, "I am having an amazing childhood!"

At the school's Matariki market, Te Rangitawaea made frozen cookie dough and raised \$80 for the school trip.

### Primrose

Primrose has had a fantastic year, showing her enthusiasm for school and a love for learning. She has particularly enjoyed her lessons with her NZSL tutor and Communication Education Support Work (CESW), and her participation in KIT days has led to new friendships. A highlight for Primrose was attending the Matariki session, where she thoroughly enjoyed her visit to the Star dome. This year, she has also learned to ride her bike without trainer wheels. She proudly represented Uganda in the Special Olympics, excelling in jumping, climbing, skipping, and celebrating her country.

### Nemiya

This year, Nemiya has had an empowering journey of setting ambitious goals and successfully achieving them. He is learning the importance of perseverance, planning, and positivity. Nemiya has set long-term goals for the year as well as short-term goals each term. Nemiya has had a lot of fun with short-term goals: making stop-motion videos, building a birdhouse, making his own Jenga set, learning new games and many cooking challenges. His long-term goals were in kapa haka, basketball and producing a cookbook to gift his whānau for Christmas.

### Kingston

Kingston transitioned to school in term one and has embarked on an exciting independence journey at his new school! Every day is filled with new discoveries,

from zooming in on his scooter to making new friends. Kingston is learning the value of teamwork and the joy of connecting with others. He has enjoyed getting to be a tuakana, by sharing the new signs he learns with his classmates. In term three, Maia Rose (a Year 2 HA wearer) joined us for part of our sessions, and Kingston took it upon himself to teach her some signs; he patiently waited for her to give them a go before moving on. It has been so lovely watching his confidence grow this year.

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## **A Day of Connection and Fun at Christchurch Keep in Touch Day!**

Christchurch students attend Keep in Touch (KIT) Day with a focus on print-making art at the Art Gallery.

During 2024, Christchurch students had the opportunity to attend a KIT Day at the Christchurch Art Gallery in the city centre.

This KIT Day involved a tour of an exhibition by Cora Allan at the gallery. Her artwork depicted her travel around various bodies of water within New Zealand. It explored the initial encounters between Māori and Pakeha around Aotearoa. While looking at her artwork, students were allowed to sketch patterns that they found interesting from Cora Allan's work.

Students were then taken to the education centre, where they could create their artworks using watercolour paint, pens and light-sensitive paper based on the pieces they had seen in the exhibition.

The last part of the day involved Deaf, blind artist David Choi (a previous student at van Asch) telling his story of how he became a well-renowned artist. He shared his experiences as a young boy and gave students advice on striving to reach their dreams. We were all so lucky to see some of his fantastic pen drawings, which the children loved; the detail in his work was incredible. David then allowed the students to ask him questions about his learning, art, and experiences. It was a precious experience for our students, and they thoroughly enjoyed listening to David and hearing about how his art developed.

The students had a fantastic time during this KIT Day; lots of connections were made, friendships developed, and new experiences occurred, alongside meeting David, who was an inspirational guest for the day.

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## Getting Creative with Lego at Keep in Touch Day

A chance for Outreach students from Ashburton, Timaru and Oamaru to use Lego to build a range of creations and set challenges.

This year, Lego Masters came to Timaru as the Outreach students from the North Otago, Mid and South Canterbury region took on set challenges to display their creativity and teamwork.

Various creations were built throughout the day as students raced against the clock to complete challenges like creating something with one hand or blindfolded, building a boat or a tower or bridge for a goat (a wooden block), or writing their name in Lego.

The masterpieces created ranged from tiny to tall; some floated while others sunk, and some raced while others crashed. A lot of fun and laughter filled the room as everyone, including adults, immersed themselves in the world of bricks.

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## Embark on a Town Adventure!

A Keep in Touch (KIT) Day to Remember.

We had a successful KIT Day in Nelson. Sue and Angela, the two Resource Teachers of the Deaf (RTDs), took six young people into town for an urban experience. For some, this was a day of 'firsts' - new experiences.

We met at the office, then caught a bus into the town centre. There, we did some urban orienteering activities, ate our lunch in a central park, went to a cafe where we enjoyed drinking hot chocolate, and then caught the bus back to our office.

Watching the children connect and enjoy each other's company was the highlight of the day. As was seeing the thrill they felt in riding on a bus and enjoying a cafe experience for the first time. As the children said 'Goodbye', they asked when the next KIT Day would be, an indicator of a great day.

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## Silver Glory for New Zealand in Men's Coxless Four at the 2024 Paris Olympics!

Get to know my family friend, Tom Murray, who played a key role in these medal-winning performances.

Tom Murray is a friend of my family. He is a New Zealand Olympic Rower.

My name is Flynn, and I go to Redwoodtown School in Blenheim. My class is called Korimako.

Tom rowed in the New Zealand Mens Coxless 4 at the Olympic Games in Paris 2024 and won a Silver Medal. He also rowed in the New Zealand Mens Eight in Tokyo 2020 and won a Gold Medal.

I am wearing the Gold and Silver Olympic Medals. The medals are very big and heavy. They are made of gold and silver.

"My favourite medal is the Gold Medal.

I want to win my medal playing Football for New Zealand, COOL!".

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## Overnight Adventures

Jah-Lee had a fantastic experience on a class trip to Dunedin, marking a memorable moment as a senior student!

Jah-Lee, a Year 6 student at Pembroke School, Oamaru has been enjoying senior class adventures this year.

One of these was an overnight adventure to Dunedin with her class.

The trip included a range of exciting experiences, such as climbing, ice skating, and a trampoline park. The class also slept the night at the museum, including a unique night walk.

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## Bay of Plenty Central Keep in Touch Days 2024

Keep in Touch (KIT) Days are a highlight for students and teachers alike. The focus has been on our local curriculum and legends in the Rotorua and Taupō regions.

During term two, the KIT Days focused on the Past, Present and Future at Te Amorangi Settlers Museum. We learned how the early settlers lived, what their homes might have looked like, how they cooked food, listened to music, shopped, and spent their time.

We used water pumps, saw a working forge and steam engines, and learnt about the history of local timber. The students were fascinated with the era's technology but admitted that modern technology makes life much easier.

After lunch and some old-fashioned games, it was time for some hands-on activities. We sent messages using Morse code and made butter from cream, which we enjoyed on freshly made pikelets. We experienced how our ancestors had to heat the water, hand scrub on washboards, and wring out all the washing before hanging it out to dry. Our students were pleased to have automatic washing machines at home.

In term three, the KIT day was a guided educational tour organised by the Taupō Museum staff to experience some of the heritage sites in the Taupō town centre.

The three sites we visited were the Museum, where we looked at and discussed Māori artefacts and Marea carvings and completed a treasure hunt about these items. We then made our way to the interactive playground - Te Papa Takaro o ngā Maunga Toa, where the story of the "The Battle of the Mountains" was explained. Next, we walked to Te Ātea, following closely behind our guide, who was playing his ukulele and singing waiata as he went. At this site, our guide talked about the meanings and symbolism of the carvings at Tapuaeharuru reserve, and he described it in a way that made sense to the children.

We would like to say thank you to Jeffrey Addison, the Museum Programs and Engagement co-ordinator who made the day educational and interesting for our students and teachers.

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## Ātea a Rangi and Waka Hourua

Visit Ātea, a Rangi Educational Trust Park, and the Waka Hourua (docked in Inner Harbour) to learn about traditional navigation using the stars.

On March 19, 2024, fifteen Deaf and hard of hearing students gathered at Ātea a Rangi Educational Trust Park in Waitangi Regional Park, Hawke's Bay, for our Keep in Touch (KIT) Day.

Ātea a Rangi is a star compass based on the traditional knowledge from ancient times in the Pacific. It is used to teach traditional navigation and tracks the movement of the sun, the moon and stars.

We worked in small groups and had booklets to look at and identify different pou associated with the signs of the Māori New Year. They could connect their prior learning about the compass points when they saw the four pou.

After lunch, we went to Napier's inner harbour to board the Waka Hourua. There, we learned about the names and different parts of the waka and the traditional navigation practices used to sail double-hulled waka to and around New Zealand in ancient times.

The highlight for all students was to handle the hoe and move it back and forth in the water while it was moored. They also liked seeing where the crew slept and the toilet! The crew members explained what is involved when the waka sets sail around New Zealand and to the Pacific Islands. We heard that the waka was heading out the next day to Nelson for Easter celebrations.

This KIT Day was about connecting with our local curriculum and learning about stories and Māori way of life in our local area.

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## A Year of Connection and Mahi in Southland

The Southland region has again had an unforgettable year of mahi and connection. While engaging with ākonga in their schools, we also shared local experiences at our Whānau Nights, Keep in Touch (KIT) Days and our weekly 1-Day School.

### Whānau nights

We were lucky enough to hold two whānau nights this year. Holding these evenings allowed students and their whānau to meet other families of Deaf and hard of hearing children. We had a great turnout, and students enjoyed playing games and making ice cream sundaes for dessert. We have had requests from whānau to plan another evening, as they enjoyed seeing their children engaging with others and having fun.

### Emergency KIT day

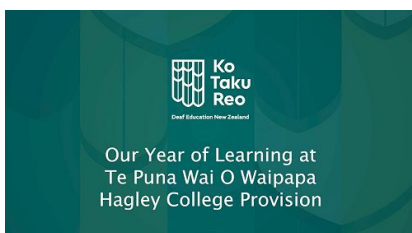
Students enjoyed a fun day learning how to keep themselves and others safe. The different sessions run by various public service organisations encouraged resilience and confidence through hands-on experiences.

### Art Appreciation KIT Day

We came together again for another day of learning. Our focus for the day was around Art appreciation. We were fortunate enough to have local artists donate their time to speak and engage with our learners. These artists were Lisa Benson who worked for Arts Murihiku and Melanie McKenzie from 'The Penny Drops'. We spent the day exploring a variety of artist's work, having a go at creating with dots, ink and chalk and also exploring our own local 'He Waka Tuia' - art gallery and museum space. We loved a chance to explore something a bit different and to connect as a Deaf community.

### Olympics KIT Day

Many of our students met Alena Saili, Olympic Gold Medalist in their schools. Alana let students hold her two gold medals, which were heavier than expected. The students rotated around five activities, including archery tag, golf, indoor soccer, indoor basketball and Boccia. Active Southland hosted it, and each student returned with a gold medal.



## Our Year of Learning at Te Puna Wai O Waipapa - Hagley College Provision

Students are excited to celebrate their achievements from 2024 and share their aspirations for the future as they embark on their

next pathways.

## **Jayden**

*My achievements in 2024:*

- I passed my driver licence this year.
- I had work experience in plumbing, which I really enjoyed.
- I completed many Ara taster courses.

*In 2025, my goal is:*

- Ara level 2 part-time course in plumbing.
- New life experience flatting.
- Get my restricted driver licence.
- Complete a forklift course.
- More work experience.
- Aim to pass Level 3 NCEA, getting as many credits as possible.

## **Liberty**

*My achievements in 2024:*

- Doing work experience at Margaret Stoddard, a retirement village.
- Finishing at Ko Taku Reo this year, after 7 years (I started 2018 at van Asch). Why? Because I am now 21 years old.

*In 2025, my goal is to:*

- I have applied to go to Ara and do the Health and Wellbeing Level 4 course in 2025.
- Flatting in Christchurch.

## **Asinate**

*My achievements in 2024:*

- Work experience as an NZSL tutor, teaching staff NZSL at the Sumner campus.
- Work experience at the Early Years Whānau Centre at Sumner campus. Working with young Deaf and hard of hearing preschoolers and their whānau.

*In 2025, my goal is to:*

- Attend a course at Victoria University in Wellington, studying as a NZSL tutor.
- Get my driver licence.
- Read with Karen.

## **Tanisha**

*My achievements in 2024:*

- Achieved a Merit for Level 1 Child and Family Studies.
- Completed my printmaking portfolio. I improved my art skills.

*In 2025, my goal is to:*

- I have applied for a part-time course in 2025 at Ara - Dual enrolled Hospitality Level 1 on Mondays and Tuesdays.
- School of Culinary Arts Level 3 at Hagley Community College.

### **Aimee**

My achievements in 2024:

- I passed Design and Photography subjects at Hagley Community College.
- I cooked lots of different kinds of food in Culinary Arts class.

*In 2025, my goal is to:*

- Attend the Supported Learning course at Ara.
- Be more independent.

### **Kiean**

*My achievements in 2024:*

- I successfully achieved the Level 3 Bakery course at Ara. I enjoyed being at Ara, making new friends, and learning new skills.
- I had work experience at Thrive Bakery every Wednesday, which I really enjoyed.
- I will be starting work experience at Woolworths Bakery for five days.
- I was very focused and completed my Ara assessments.

*In 2025, my goal is to:*

- To complete the Level 4 Bakery course at Ara and get a part-time job in a bakery.
-





# Ormiston Senior College Shines in 2024

The strong academic focus of Ormiston Senior College students made 2024 an extraordinary year of growth and achievement.

The students proudly share their achievements from 2024.

## **Jona:**

My biggest achievement for 2024 was completing all my assessments. I received some Merits and Excellence grades, a big improvement from 2023. My aim for 2024 was to earn at least 60 credits NCEA Level 2, and thanks to my hard work in all my subjects, I'm on track.

## **Tautoga:**

My greatest challenge and highlight of 2024 at Ormiston Senior College was understanding the differences between each NCEA level as I pursued my dreams. I gained all available credits and have significantly improved compared to the previous year. I'm proud of my hard work this year, with my mindset of "I can do it".

## **Taylor:**

This year, I worked incredibly hard on my subjects and gained valuable NCEA credits. I also gained experience and credits in the Low Scaffolding Project and Health and Safety. I am truly grateful to my teacher, interpreter, and friends for helping me get working.

## **Angelena:**

My highlight of 2024 at Ormiston Senior College was achieving five Excellences, a big step from last year. I worked hard in all my subjects. This year taught me the value of hard work and growth in myself. I'm grateful for support from my teachers, interpreters, and friends, who helped me stay motivated.

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## Discover the Enrolled School Year in Review

This year has flown by with many new initiatives across the Enrolled School. As Head of the Enrolled School, I take pride in reflecting on the work and opportunities our ākonga have experienced this year. I am proud of the creativity, success, and accomplishments our students have achieved this year.

We have implemented a new 'Towards Independence programme' for our senior students in the Enrolled school. This new initiative supports our students as they transition into, between, and beyond. Seeing this initiative in action is exciting, offering our students valuable work experience opportunities at Hagley and Tū Kōkiri, building relationships with partner school careers advisors, and connecting with Geneva Health and Deaf Aotearoa. Our senior students also had the chance to attend Career Expos in Christchurch and Auckland.

We are also very excited about announcing our new partnership with Tawa College, which will provide bilingual education options for secondary Deaf and hard of hearing learners in Wellington starting in 2025. The Ministry of Education has supported us in establishing this relationship and securing space at Tawa College. We've diligently prepared for our Year 9 and 10 students to attend next year.

One of the highlights this year was the Toi Turi Youth Theatre project. This project was led by Deaf staff and students who crafted a storyline that highlighted Deaf culture and sign language through drama. Students have been empowered to lead and share their creations at the art showcase, celebrating cultural identity through Arts, NZSL Week, and the Matariki event.

As a school, we gather every term for our National School Hui, where we connect across Ko Taku Reo provisions in Auckland, Christchurch, and Wellington. This event provides an opportunity to share and celebrate our students' learning successes and achievements. Each provision showcases their students' incredible work, reflecting our core values of Belong, Grow, Choose, and Excel. Students are recognised with awards for attendance, achievement, and academic progress.

A heartfelt thank you to the Enrolled School leadership team, support staff, and teachers for their dedication to ensuring our students feel successful, with a sense of belonging and pride in their identity as Deaf individuals at Ko Taku Reo Enrolled School.

We look forward to more exciting school events and planning for next year. Best wishes to everyone for a safe and happy holiday, and we look forward to reconnecting again in the New Year!

Ngā mihi nui  
Lisa Sharman

Head of Enrolled School

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## Empowering Deaf Students in 2024

Kelston Boys High Provision brought lots of fun and success.

This year, we had seven students and four staff in our Deaf Provision. Andre, a Year 9 student, joined us from Linden School in Wellington and Max, a Year 10, from Hillmorton High School in Christchurch.

The year has brought about a lot of fun and learning for students in the Deaf Provision at Kelston Boys' High School. In the classroom, we saw successes and hard work rewarded. Frank was awarded a certificate for extremely high attendance this year at school.

Frank and D'Sharn presented at mainstream assembly for NZSL week. Teachers loved it and said it was both entertaining and educational. Both boys were awarded a certificate for their excellent contribution during NZSL week.

Max and Andre were awarded certificates and book prizes during term three hui. Max won his award for improved participation in all subjects and excellent reading skills, while Andre won his award for having a positive attitude towards learning and his enthusiasm for learning multiplication tables.

Outside the classroom, students returned to drama classes with the Tim Bray drama school and furthered their learning in drama. Hearty learnt all about being pregnant in this year's production, which they performed several times. Andre's class learnt about horticulture and the importance of how to grow food that will nourish us in the Kelston Boys' High vegetable patch.

Kelston Boys' High School provision purchased a broom this year, and the students took on the new responsibility of keeping the provision clean outside their classrooms. They learnt the importance of looking after our environment, which all students and staff appreciated.



Deaf Provision Staff and Students

Zen and Callan went on two trips to explore careers in art. They visited The School of Media Design and the Auckland Art Gallery, where their creativity was put to the test in making a collage that represented them, Elam, and the AUT Design School. Hearty and Andre also went on two trips with their classes to watch two dramas. One was "Pring it On", and the other was "Red, White and Brass" shows at ASB theatre at the Waterfront.

Hearty represented the juniors on the sports field in a tug-of-war. Zen and Frank both represented Kelston Boys' High, playing in the school's top team in volleyball and basketball, respectfully. Max learnt about weightlifting and its benefits for our bodies and minds.

On the academic side, the senior students have been working hard to finish their internals and recently submitted their Art and Design folio boards for moderation. Frank and D'Sharn have successfully completed their Level 1 NZSL assessments this year.

Finally, I wish Callan all the best as he intends to attend Massey Building Academy for the Carpentry course starting next year. Callan has been an outstanding student in the deaf provision.

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## Good Times at Wharenui Primary Provision

Students have been learning about sewing, cooking, drama, visual arts, swimming, Matariki, indoor games, and cooperative activities in addition to academic subjects.

In 2024, Wharenui Primary School provision had an exciting year filled with memorable activities and events. In terms 1 and 4, students enjoyed swimming sessions at the Wharenui Community Pool. Senior and middle students also took part in hands-on learning, sewing aprons for their cooking lessons and having fun playing indoor games.

A highlight of the year was Matariki, where all students collaborated to create a large Matariki star. They spent a memorable afternoon with students from the other provisions, engaging in crafts, drama, and seed-planting activities. The day concluded with shared kai, celebrating Matariki with whānau.



Matariki Star

The New Zealand Fire Service visited the school, giving a valuable talk on fire prevention and safety. Another standout event was the camp for our Year 6 to 8 students, where Lyla, Betty, Maraia and Wish joined their Wharenui School peers for two nights at Living Springs Camp on Banks Peninsula.

Our younger students learned and developed skills engaging in different learning activities such as dressing up, making playdough shapes, playing number games and completing measuring tasks.

We farewell Lyla, who is moving to Upland at Hillmorton High School next year. We wish you all the best Lyla, for your next adventures.

It was a year of learning, teamwork, and unforgettable experiences at Wharenui Primary School Provision.

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## A Year of Memorable Moments at Hillmorton High Provision

It's been another positive year for students and staff in the Ko Taku Reo Deaf Education Hillmorton Provision. We appreciate all the support and opportunities that have come with being based at Hillmorton High School.

### Some of the highlights this year

Students and staff thoroughly enjoyed participating in the Hillmorton High School Athletics Day in term 1. Students competed in many events such as sprints, long jumps, discus and javelin. All competed positively and enjoyed the day at Ngā Puna Wai.

Our students have been taking the lead in running our weekly NZSL Club. Staff and students are invited to participate every Wednesday to learn our beautiful language through games and activities!

In term 1, our Year 9 students attended the Hillmorton High School Camp and enjoyed the opportunities available to them. These included sleeping in a tent, mountain biking, bush walking, cooking on a camp stove and kayaking. This is a positive way to start the year and connect with students and staff as they begin their journey at Hillmorton High School.

This year was the first time Ko Taku Reo Provision students performed in the Hillmorton Drama Production. It was wonderful to see our students perform, and they worked hard to learn their lines. Two wonderful interpreters interpreted one of the shows, and many staff made the most of this opportunity to attend the show and support the students.

In term 2, a group of students visited a rest home in the local area. The Events Coordinator had reached out to Ko Taku Reo to ask if we could visit the residents and teach them some NZSL. Our students practiced and performed two signed songs, taught the alphabet in NZSL and some signs which the residents had requested. We all thoroughly enjoyed visiting and hope to return soon.



Rest Home Visit



In term 3, a group of students attended an outstanding play at The Isaac Theatre Royal, 'Where Our Shadows Meet'. It was performed by Deaf and hearing actors and combined New Zealand Sign Language with spoken English. We also had the opportunity to be involved in a Theatre Workshop with two of the people from the Theatre Company. We learned many valuable skills, and it was an excellent experience for the students to explore their Deaf identity.

We also had all staff and students from the Provision participate in creating a work of art for our Arts Showcase. Everyone had some time to reflect on their own identity from different perspectives. We discovered what patterns or icons were important to those cultures. Then we made it into a cardboard print, which we printed onto fabric. The prints were sewn together into a beautiful Korowai to resemble all our identities coming together in our place to stand – Tūrangawaewae.

During the end of term, our talented dance students, Jannah, Aquila and Lily, were involved in the Hillmorton High School Fearless Dance Show. There were various different performances and dance genres, including Ka Hura (Māori Poi Dance), Hip-hop, Fosse Jazz & Contemporary. This was an incredible show, and the audience thoroughly enjoyed seeing all the hard work that the students had completed throughout the year!

We are all looking forward to 2025 and the opportunities that we can enjoy!

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## **A Rising Star in Sports and Culture!**

With immense pride, Jaylen continues to excel in his decoding skills while showcasing his passion and talent in kapa haka.

This year Jaylen has made impressive strides in his decoding skills and he's making a conscious effort to read at least three times a week at home. He particularly enjoys graphic novels. On the

sports field, he shines brightly in basketball and rugby. His basketball team won the school competition for Years 7 and 8; Jaylen's contribution and commitment to basketball include bringing his basketball to school daily to share and play. This year marked Jaylen's first Kapa haka performance, which was genuinely moving. His mana and courage radiated from the stage, and he was immensely proud to represent his Māori heritage. Watching him perform was invigorating and inspiring for everyone!

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## Thomas at the Year 7-8 School Speech Competition

In term 3, at St Joseph's, Stratford saw the school's annual Year 7-8 Seniors Speech competitions.

Thomas's speech topic this year was something he felt passionate about. As a boy with double cochlear implant, Thomas worked hard to research and create a three-and-a-half-minute speech about "Why Sign Language should be taught in schools". Thomas progressed through the school's qualifying round to the final evening competition with students, staff, whānau and supporters in attendance. Practice at school with his teachers, Resource Teacher of the Deaf (RTD) and family at home paid off, with him speaking clearly and confidently and winning a well-earned second place overall. Thomas was thrilled and rightly very proud of himself and his efforts.

Congratulations Thomas!

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## The Boss and Entrepreneur!

The most sustainable product wins the prize!

Mia and her partner started 'Build a Business'. They decided they wanted to sell 'Cat Scratchers'. They came up with a business name and

proposal, surveyed potential customers and sales, borrowed money from 'the bank', designed their product, made it, sold it at market night, made a profit and gained a prize for the most sustainable product! Well done Mia, you worked hard on all the different elements of this project. Sometimes it was a challenge but you kept trying your best. You're awesome.

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## School Journey Reflection

Mackenzie has had support from a Resource Teacher of the Deaf (RTD) for all of her schooling days, and now, as she leaves school, she looks forward to a blossoming career in floristry.

Mackenzie, it has been a pleasure to walk alongside you and your whānau for most of your schooling years. Watching you grow and achieve academically and personally has been a privilege to be a part of. You strive to do your best, being respectful, caring and empathetic to those around you, while remaining true to who you are. Watching your confidence and identity develop as you navigate life, friendships, school, and life beyond school has been fantastic. What a journey! From Sand Saucers to Queen of the Ball, gaining your Learner License, NZSL Level 1, NCEA Levels 1, 2, 3, and a potential career in floristry. I'm so proud of you, Mackenzie, and I wish you all the very best in the future.

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## Kymani's Journey Through Kapa Haka

Kymani's journey through Kapa haka showcases the impact of knowing and celebrating one's language and culture as a success.

On the Kapa haka stage, Kymani radiates confidence and joy as she twirls the poi, sings waiata, and engages in the actions. Kymani's performance reflects success, celebrating her sense of self and who she aspires to be. Kymani is at her best while she is in kapa haka, a true reflection of how she is living and breathing in the Te Ao Māori world, which strengthens her identity and fulfils her because she knows who she is. It was a privilege to watch Kymani stand in her mana and pride herself in an image of mana motuhake that is empowering and self-resilient. Haere tonu Kymani haere haere!

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## Developing a Business Project

A Year 8 student at Stratford Primary takes on an exciting business project.

Kobe and two of his peers developed a pest control trapping business as part of a school-wide project called Build a Business.

They put together trapping kits, provided information, and set up a stand where they could explain how these can be used at home.

Kits could be purchased at the 'Build a Business' school launch.

Well done!

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## A Year to Remember!

A year of outstanding achievements!

Honey changed schools last year, and that has been a positive move for her! This year, she has achieved leadership roles in Road Patrol, Sports Monitor, Vice President, and now President of her class. Honey enjoys Kapa Haka and Touch Rugby. She's the first one to put her hand up to help in class and is willing to give anything a go. Honey, you have gained so much confidence at your new school and made some lovely friends. You have put in a lot of time and effort this year; well done. Wow off to Intermediate next year!

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## Navigating her World with Determination and Resilience

Ella's inspiring achievements and resilience through life and undergoing eye surgery.

Ella's last year of primary school has been extraordinary, marked by impressive achievements that showcase her spirit and determination. She proudly won the Spragg Swimming Cup, reflecting her continuous hard work in the pool. Ella has embraced new challenges this year by participating in her first Kapa haka performance and shining in the school production. She also ventured into touch rugby, quickly displaying impressive skill and even outpacing her coach in a recent run!

Navigating her world with determination, Ella proves that challenges only deepen her passion for life and sports. After recently undergoing eye surgery, she demonstrated incredible resilience and grit. Not letting anything hold her back, she continued to run the cross country and achieved an impressive 4th place in the school cross country. This remarkable accomplishment speaks volumes about her strength and willpower.

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## Teenagers Ventured to Deaf Youth Hui and Left Craving More!

Thirteen Outreach School students travelled far to meet others like them and to discover more about themselves and the heritage of Deaf people while immersed in Deaf spaces.

Deaf Youth Hui programmes are based on the themes of Deaf Studies, uniting Outreach School Deaf and hard of hearing students on the journey within Deaf spaces to discover themselves and the knowledge, history, culture, arts and language of Deaf people. Through interactions, games, visits, research, history, and visual and performing arts with others like them, rangatahi can share what it means to be deaf and grow their Deafhood towards self-acceptance and confidence.

The first programme, "Who am I? | Ko wai au?" was held at the Sumner campus, where seven teenagers focused on identity, Deaf identities, Deaf role models and pepeha. The following programme, "Deaf People and Deaf Spaces | Tāngata Turi me Wāhi Turi" held at Kelston campus, saw six adolescents learning about Deaf culture, Deaf communities, Turi Māori, Deaf View Image Art (De'VIA), Deaf sports, Deaf education and Deaf history at various Deaf spaces, including Rūaumoko Marae.

### **Feedback from the hui:**

*Student age 13:*

Deaf and hard of hearing youth should come to Deaf Youth Hui ... because you have fun learning about who you are, your identity, meet new people who are also Deaf and hard of hearing and make new friends. I would be keen to come to Deaf Youth Hui again.

*Student age 13:*

I liked the activities and doing fun things that still related to the topic. I met lots of other deaf kids and learned more about who I am as a deaf person. You meet new deaf people who are your age and actually understand what it's like to not be able to hear as much as other people and just it's a community of Deaf people that understand.

*Student age 16:*

It helped me make good friends. Great for communication and get confident in that.

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## Time to Celebrate Eden's Achievements

Leaving the familiar behind and stepping into the big wide world can feel daunting, but Eden faces each new challenge with confidence and grace!

Eden, being your Resource Teacher of the Deaf (RTD), has been a pleasure over the years at your different schools. You have a 'give it a go' attitude and a positive energy that inspires others. I love your kindness, confidence and determination to succeed. You have certainly filled your last year at school with many opportunities - Teaching NZSL at preschool and Summerset Retirement Village,

Halberg Games, sailing, cooking and learning the road code at Literacy Aotearoa. You are a sports fanatic, a fantastic communicator, cheeky but respectful, and an awesome friend, sister, daughter and granddaughter. You had Outward Bound in November and Parafed Athletics, and you continue to succeed in everything you do.

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## New Zealand Deaf Futsal Tournament

Dylan proudly represents the Southern Deaf Futsal Men's Team, showcasing his skills and passion.

### Dylan

This year, I was part of the Southern Deaf Futsal men's and mixed teams, which involved playing and training throughout the year to get us match-ready for the New Zealand Deaf Futsal Tournament in Hamilton.

At Hamilton, we played against New Zealand and Australian Deaf teams. It was a great challenge with some very close games. We had some great results.

A big thank you to Cory and Fyfe for inviting me to play. I liked how welcoming and inclusive everyone made me feel. I returned home proud of my community and the wonderful team I played with.

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## Flourishing in Franklin during 2024!

It was a year of growth and discovery for our wonderful ākonga as they explored, learned and flourished in their unique journeys.

This year, Franklin has been a place of vibrant learning and connection. Our children have embraced individuality while building solid friendships and sharing unforgettable experiences. With each challenge, they've shown resilience and learned valuable lessons about kindness, empathy, and the importance of community. We've seen remarkable moments of growth as children engaged in hands-on activities, learning about growing plants and themselves.

Importantly, our children have embraced their Deaf identities with pride. They've learned to communicate confidently and celebrate what makes them unique. They've built a strong sense of belonging through storytelling, arts, and shared experiences. Each child's voice is valued, fostering an inclusive environment where everyone feels seen and heard.

As we reflect on this incredible year, we celebrate the growth, friendships, and memories created within our Franklin family.

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