



Kōwhai
SPECIALIST SCHOOL

SCHOOL PLANNING 2024-2025





Kia ora, Tālofa lava, Mālō e lelei, Kia Orana, Hello, Fakaalofa Atu, Namaste

Kōwhai Specialist School is an exciting and innovative school for ORS-funded students aged 5-21 years with specialist learning needs.

Kōwhai Specialist School was opened in 1975 as a state, co-educational specialist school. Our students mainly live in the greater Hastings and Central Hawke's Bay areas. Our kura currently comprises a Base School (3 reception and 1 senior class), and 6 satellites located at Hastings Central School (2 classes), Te Kura o Kimi Ora (2 classes), Heretaunga Intermediate (2 classes), Raureka School (2 classes), Flaxmere College (4 classes) and St Peter's Church (TEC). Kōwhai TEC classes are transition classes focusing intensely on post-school preparation for 18-21 year old students.

In 2025, we expect our school roll to fluctuate between 132 and 138 students. Approximately 58% of our students identify as Māori being their first ethnicity, 30% as being of New Zealand/European descent, 8% as Pacific Peoples, and 4% as Asian.

Our tumuaki leads all seven of our sites, with the support of experienced, professional, dedicated Teachers, Therapists, support staff, administration and grounds staff. Teachers, Teacher Aides and whānau work closely with our Occupational Therapists, Psychologist, Physiotherapists, Music Therapist, and Speech and Language Therapists to support students in their learning. Our Specialist Teacher Outreach Service (STOS) supports the teaching and learning of ORS-funded students enrolled in local mainstream schools and Te Kura Pounamu.

Kōwhai Specialist School is part of the Hastings East Kāhui Ako (Community of Learning), along with Hastings Boys' High School, Hastings Intermediate, Poukawa School, Hastings Central School, Raureka School and Parkvale School. Our Kāhui Ako has shared goals that recognise priorities for the young people in our schools.

SECTION 1: *Ko wai tatou? Who are we?*

Our Motto

Celebrating our students

Our School Vision

***PRIDE IN UNIQUENESS
STRENGTH IN COMMUNITY
EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION***

Our guiding whakataukī

***Ko te ahurei o te tamaiti hei ārahi i ā tātau mahi
Let the uniqueness of the child guide our work***

School Values

Whakawhanaungatanga



Respect

We look after each other

We are kind



Partnership

We work together

We help others



Participation

We join in

We have a go

The Kōwhai Way

*Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi, engari he toa takitini
My strength is not as an individual, but as a collective*

At Kōwhai, our learners and their whānau are at the heart of our specialist school. We provide an environment for our students that is full of respect, happiness and friendship. We want our students and their whānau to have a sense of whanaungatanga and community in partnership with Kōwhai Specialist School. From this stable foundation, we can all work together with kotahitanga or unity to help our tamariki nurture their mana and meet their potential. The principles of partnership, participation and protection guide us as we work together to support the wellbeing of our ākonga and their whānau.

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

At Kōwhai, we provide an environment for our students that sparks engagement, joy, curiosity and fun. With a focus on strong relationships, communication, and hauora, our students are ready to take on the challenges they may face with the skills, strength and support that they need. Our staff pride themselves on their auahatanga and creative thinking to entice their students to learn. Learning extends beyond the four walls of the classroom and into the local community where our students are supported with opportunities to develop life skills, independence in everyday settings and pathways for their future. Through these innovative and practical approaches we hope to foster students who are motivated to learn and excited to come to school every day.

*Ko te ahurei o te tamaiti arahia ō tātou māhi
Let the uniqueness of the child guide our work.*

At Kōwhai, learning is intently shaped around who ākonga are as unique individuals. We truly believe that students are capable of anything, and it is our responsibility to discover ways to provide opportunities for them to achieve their potential. These achievements are measured on a personalised pathway, and each step forward, no matter how big or small, is celebrated. Teaching weaves together student interests, abilities, and culture with the curriculum, teaching principles and latest research. With our small class sizes, high staff to student ratios and specialist therapy support, students experience a truly individualised learning programme.

*Whaowhia te kete mātauranga
Fill your basket with knowledge*

At Kōwhai, we encourage our school community to grow, seek out knowledge, discover new things, innovate and challenge themselves. Every day we learn from our ākonga, our whānau and each other, as well as from new research and ideas. We learn with openness, we think deeply and together we support each other to apply new learning for the benefit of our students and our kura.

Kōwhai Graduate Profile

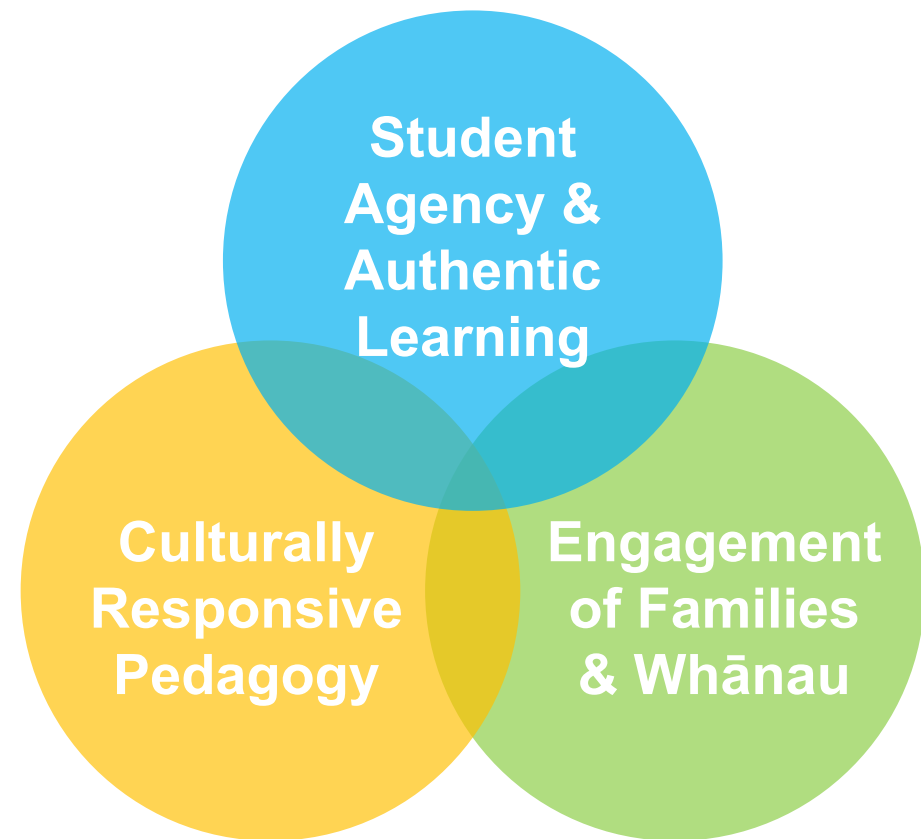
What does a Kōwhai graduate look like?

What sorts of knowledge, skills and attributes do they need?

What kind of person would they be?



Our Kahui Ako Levers of Change



Te Tiriti o Waitangi

One of the purposes of the Education & Training Act (2020) is to establish and regulate an education system that honours Te Tiriti o Waitangi and supports Māori-Crown relationships. Section 9 sets out the main provisions of the Act in relation to the Crown's responsibility to give effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi. These provisions include obligations in relation to Te Tiriti o Waitangi for school boards, tertiary education institutions and education agencies.

A primary objective of the Board of Kōwhai Specialist School is to give effect to te Tiriti o Waitangi. We do this by:

- working to ensure our plans, policies, and local curriculum reflect local tikanga Māori, mātauranga Māori, and te ao Māori
- taking all reasonable steps to make instruction available in tikanga Māori and te reo Māori
- achieving equitable outcomes for Māori students
- providing opportunities for learners to appreciate the importance of te Tiriti o Waitangi and te reo Māori.

Partnership

Kōwhai Specialist School aims to work in partnership with our local Māori community to support rangatiratanga/self-determination. We actively seek the guidance of our local Māori community to help us better meet the needs of our ākonga Māori and ensure they experience educational success as Māori.

We consult with our local Māori community on the development of our charter/strategic plan to make sure it reflects and upholds appropriate tikanga Māori and te ao Māori. We seek opportunities to collaborate with Māori to invest in, develop, and deliver Māori-medium learning (NELP Priority 2).

Protection

Kōwhai Specialist School actively protects and upholds mātauranga Māori, te reo Māori, and tikanga Māori, and ensures they are meaningfully incorporated into the everyday life of our school (NELP Objective 5). We actively engage with Ka Hikitia Ka Hāpaitia.

We take all reasonable steps to make instruction available in te reo Māori and tikanga Māori.

We support our teachers to build their teaching capability, knowledge, and skills in te reo Māori and tikanga Māori. We provide opportunities for teachers to develop their understanding and practice of culturally responsive teaching that takes into account ākonga contexts (NELP Priority 6).

Participation

Kōwhai Specialist School has high aspirations for every student. We encourage the participation and engagement of students and their whānau in all aspects of school life.

Our relationships with our school community help us meet the needs of all students and sustain their identities, languages, and cultures. The participation of whānau and our wider Māori community actively informs the way we design and deliver education to ensure ākonga Māori experience educational success as Māori (NELP Priority 2).

SECTION 2: Our Strategic Plan 2024-2025

The following strategic goals are the priorities for our school in 2024 and 2025. They have been carefully developed by consulting with and gathering feedback on what is important to our school community. Our strategic goals reflect current best practices in special education, both nationally and internationally. They reflect current Government priorities in Structured Literacy and Maths and build a strong foundation for good school attendance, engagement and achievement. Our goals support the implementation of our School Vision and Values including the ongoing high expectation that Kōwhai Specialist School will continue to be a centre of excellence focused on the best possible outcomes for our ākonga.

Strategic Goal 1: ĀKONGA and KAIKO LEARNING	
<i>Providing a personalised learner-focused education that supports the unique needs of every learner within a family-like context.</i>	
<i>Building staff capability for continuous improvement by embedding evidence-based research and best practice.</i>	
Aspirations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students experience a Relationships First approach (Teaching to the North East) to enable staff to meet the individual needs of each student using best pedagogical practice and strategies.• Staff strive to know each learner through strong partnerships with whānau and other providers with regular communication, collaboration, and consultation.• Kōwhai will continue to incorporate the Refreshed New Zealand Curriculum to inform the review of our school curriculum ensuring that it is relevant and tailored to meet the learning needs of our unique learners.• Ensuring students have the prerequisite tools, strategies, and resources to engage successfully in their learning.• Teaching to the North East is being embedded in the practice of all staff. The criteria for best practice have been carefully tailored to the specific needs of our unique learners and include:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- High expectations- Relationships first- Agentic thinking- Learning focused relationships- Rejecting deficit thinking- Well-managed learning environment- Providing an extended family-like context• Clarifying a school-wide understanding of literacy learning pathways for students.	

- Introducing a structured maths curriculum
- Professional development to ensure effective use of literacy and numeracy assessment tools to inform teaching and learning.

Supporting documentation:

[Action Plan for Pacific Education 2020–2030](#)

[Ka Hikitia – Ka Hāpaitia - Ministry of Education](#)

Russell Bishop - Teaching to the North East

[The Statement of National Education and Learning Priorities \(NELP ...](#)

Sir Mason Durie - [Te Whare Tapa Wha](#) and Fuimaono Karl Pulotu-Endemann - [Fonofale](#)

[Action Plan for Pacific Education 2020–2030](#)

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Russell Bishop - Teaching to the North East and Leading to the North East

[The Statement of National Education and Learning Priorities \(NELP ...](#)

Sir Mason Durie - [Te Whare Tapa Wha](#) and Fuimaono Karl Pulotu-Endemann - [Fonofale](#)

[Te Mātaiaho - Curriculum Refresh - Ministry of Education](#)

[Pacific Educators Speak - Valuing our Values](#)

Jane Farrell [WWATC](#)

[Structured Literacy](#)

[New Zealand Curriculum](#)

Strategic Goal 2: HAUORA

Promoting a school culture that values our students' uniqueness, enhancing their social, spiritual, emotional, and physical wellbeing through strong connections between whānau and school.

Aspirations

We will ensure all learners and their whānau have a strong sense of belonging within our kura.

- Immersing our ākonga in a culturally rich environment
- Students experience a range of cultural opportunities
- Creating a family-like context within our kura

Staff to develop an understanding of Te whare Tapa Whā and Fonofale to support the wellbeing of students.

Trial individualised future pathway for target learners (PATH).

All students are attending school at least 90% of the term.

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SECTION 2: Our Annual Plan 2025

Goal 1: *ĀKONGA and KAIKO LEARNING*

Providing a personalised learner-focused education that supports the unique needs of every learner within a family-like context

Building staff capability for continuous improvement by embedding evidence-based research and best practice.

Actions	Who is Responsible?	Resources Required	Timeframe	How will you measure success?
Relationships First				
WSL appointed and trained as RF leader	SR	Time	T4 2024	Data analysis of both individual progress and school-wide learning levels will show a decrease in the gap between ethnic group outcomes.
All teachers using RF for their appraisal cycle	SR	Relievers	T1	
Therapists appraisal goal linked to RF	SR	Cost of PLD and release	T1	
TLs trained as IC + WSL	LF		T1	improved teacher/ therapist practice to improve outcomes for all ākonga
Ongoing moderation for IC	LF		T1	Evidence of reflective practice using the Teaching to the North East program
1 x SS meeting per term on RF plus PLD with Cognition	SR/LF		T1-4	
Cognition PLD- Coaching and mentoring - Aliese	GC		TBC	Impact Coaches' moderation will show an increase in a common understanding of the model and coding
Staff meetings - revisit part 2 of the profile with supporting data	LF		From T1	
	GC		T2 & T4	
Collect, analyse and prioritise next steps based on data				
Support systems in place for SS as they build confidence and				

capability in coding & coaching	AS & KH		2025	SS increasing in confidence of RF systems and feel ready to move to using RF for team appraisals by the beginning of the 2026 school year.
Literacy Roll out of new assessment - Staff training in LLLL, The Bridge, Unseen decodable text, Jane Farrall reading and listening comprehension Assessment tool created on HERO to monitor progress (Stage rather than core - pg 42) Twice a year. Structured literacy - Scope and sequence confirmed (including Jane Farrall) Ordering of resources - LLLL - All levels and age appropriate. PD - Linking Assessments to next steps, Scope and Sequence, WwATC moderation, Predictable writing chart Update Assessment, English procedures, (AP/DP) New staff training and offering of classroom observation - WwATC, predictable writing chart, Assessment School Entry Kete or progressions for Literacy - New cumulative records for reading, communication and writing (pending frameworks from SEPANZ) Communication - how are we collecting data - HERO (SLT) WwATC - Continue to support staff to maintain the fidelity of the program - Individual support and check in with teachers once a term. Quality circles with teachers in Charter target group.	KH/VB/AP KH VB/AP/KJ VB/AP KH/VB/AP KH/VB/AP/AS /AD KH SLTs/ KH KH	Time Extra release for Curriculum leads if needed Cost of readers and LLLL text books	T1 T1 T1 T1/T2 T1-T4 T2 T1-T4 T4 T4 T1-T4	Increased teacher confidence and ability in using and analysing reading assessment to inform clear next steps and improve student outcomes for reading. Data available on HERO, easy to monitor progress at a class and school wide level. Scope and sequence finalised/ linked with New Zealand sounds and shared with staff. Clear school wide procedures to support staff in keeping with the fidelity of the assessment tools. Clear steps how to follow the explicit teaching of the Little learners love literacy structured literacy program 2026 Next steps in communication identified All students have a personalised writing program (Except TEC and individual students discussed with CLT)

Maths				
Growing staff capability in new Maths curriculum - Staff Only Day (11 April?)	JS AS	Time		Staff are introduced to Structured Maths (starting with Numicon)
Investigating a progression of maths levels/ resources across our kura	JS	Staff Only Day funding - venue hire; kai		Teachers confident in assessing students using Breaking Barriers
Beginning to use new MOE resources to support structured Maths across our kura	JS	Reliever for JS		Breaking Barriers mid and end-of-year assessments begin to show an improvement in maths knowledge school-wide (filling gaps).
Numicom/MNP/Prime PLD	JS AS	Classroom resources budget		
Teachers confidently use the Breaking Barriers Numicon Assessment	JS AS			
Update Maths procedures to align with new requirements	JS AS			
Introduce and trial new Indicators from SEPANZ when they are available	JS/AS			Moving towards alignment across NZ for Specialist Schools in the way we teach and assess Maths.

Goal 2: *HAUORA*

Promoting a school culture that values our students' uniqueness, enhancing their social, spiritual, emotional, and physical wellbeing through strong connections between whānau and school.

Annual Target/Goal:

We will ensure all learners and their whānau have a strong sense of belonging within our kura.

- Immersing our ākonga in a culturally rich environment
- Students experience a range of cultural opportunities
- Creating a family-like context within our kura

Staff to develop an understanding of Te whare Tapa Whā and Fonofale to support the well being of students.

Trial individualized future pathway for target learners (PATH)

Continue to grow our responsibility to nurture Papatūānuku through our Kaitiakitanga programme

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[Ka Hikitia – Ka Hāpaitia - Ministry of Education](#)

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[The Statement of National Education and Learning Priorities \(NELP ...](#)

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[Te Mātaiaho - Curriculum Refresh - Ministry of Education](#)

Actions	Who is Responsible?	Resources Required	Timeframe	How will you measure success?
<p>Baseline data collected for PATH- who is interested.</p> <p>All students 14 and up have transition plans in place. Starting within our senior HS students</p> <p>IEPs- Te Whare Tapa Whā trailed Te Whare Tapa Whā IEP</p> <p>Pasifika - plan to celebrate different language/cultures week as relevant to satellite students</p> <p>Tutira Mai- actions - all staff know</p> <p>Marae visit rescheduled</p>	<p>SC</p> <p>SC, AS, KF</p>	<p>Data will be collected at HS Transition information evening.</p> <p>Katherine Frame- consultant as facilitator. Kōwhai staff to observe and be the artists.</p>	<p>Term 1</p> <p>2025-2028</p>	<p>Staff have a deeper understanding of what our young people and whānau want in the future, and are able to set specific meaningful IEP goals from data collected.</p> <p>Targeted students will have a PATH plan that is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- functional- future-focused- inclusive- collaborative- binding <p>Te Whare Tapa Whā and Fonofale are included within our practice.</p> <p>Pre-requisites to learning are clarified for all students so students feel safe, happy and</p>

Welcoming new staff				engaged at school.
Student Attendance is closely monitored				Senior students are participating in Kōwhai Kapa Haka and perform internally and externally.
				Staff development and implement in practice a deeper understanding of Mātauranga Māori
				Lift in student attendance rates

Charter Target Goal 2025

Baseline data (from 2024 end-of-year data analysis)

- By the end of the year data collection point, 60% of students had made at least one descriptor of progress (meeting the goal). 25% of students had stayed on the same descriptor (when comparing the beginning and end of the year data) and 15% of students had made backward movement.
- There likely continues to be some data infidelity present, as there was at the mid-year data collection point as it is not usual for such a large group of students to make a backward movement (14 students), usually, the group of students who make backward movements would have had long periods away from school due to medical needs or something similar. In this case, it is likely due to teachers incorrectly levelling students at the beginning of the school year or providing ‘dirty data’. This is possibly also the same case for students to make such large gains- 2+ levels (39 students). Although we do not disregard the hard work staff have put into place this year in implementing the new tool and resources and hope that over time we continue to see such large gains for our students!

Progress made	2024 end of year		
	Māori 59 students	Pasifika 7 students	European/ Pākehā 26 students
Number of students who made backward movement	7 students (12%)	1 student (14%)	6 students (23%)
Number of students who remained on the same descriptor	16 students (27%)	2 students (29%)	6 students (23%)
Number of students who made 1+ descriptor/s of progress (have met the end-of-year goal already)	36 students (61%)	4 students (57%)	14 students (54%)

2025 Goal

By the start of Term 4 2025, all focus* students will have made at least 1 descriptor of progress on the Writing with All Tools continuum.

*2025 focus students are all students who did not make 1 indicator of progress in writing in 2024

Action	Who	When	How will we measure success?
Teaching staff			
- Termly meeting with target students' teachers to work on personalising writing programs.	AP	Term 1 - 4	Increased teacher confidence in analysing literacy data to inform clear next steps and improve student outcomes for literacy.
- 1:1 work with TA's to demonstrate the guidelines for writing.	AP	Term 1-4	All students have a personalised writing program (Except TEC)
- Individual PD for WWATC for new staff.			

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of understanding of Co-construction of language - helping students to use AAC to build their narrative skills - Modelling of literacy activities e.g. word wall, onset rime, sequential phonics. - Video library of teaching each group 	<p>AP SLT</p> <p>Curriculum leads</p>	<p>Term 1 Term 2</p> <p>Term 1-4</p>	Individual progress on the Writing with all tools Continuum.
<p>Assessment</p> <p>All staff 2x collection of writing samples</p> <p>Target students have an additional mid-year collection point.</p> <p>PD for staff on how to collect writing samples - Create Video for teachers to show TA's</p> <p>Update assessment procedures</p> <p>Update English procedures</p>	<p>Teachers</p> <p>Target teachers</p> <p>AP</p> <p>CLT</p> <p>CLT</p>	<p>Term 1 and 4</p> <p>Term 3</p> <p>Term 1</p> <p>Term 1</p> <p>Term 1</p>	<p>All students have 2 WaATC assessments in Term 1 and Term 4 and the results are uploaded to HERO.</p> <p>Data collection comparison from Hero Beginning, middle, and end year.</p> <p>Clear expectations and guidelines on explicit literacy teaching and assessment</p>
<p>Staff meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Writing with all Tools moderation x3 - Predictable writing charts - Termly meeting of target teachers - problem solve, share ideas, concerns 	<p>AP</p> <p>Curriculum leads</p> <p>Target students</p>	<p>Term 1, 3 and 4</p> <p>Term 1</p> <p>Once a term</p>	<p>Less discrepancies among moderation of Assessments</p> <p>Predictable writing chart running in classes if appropriate</p> <p>Movement along the WwATC for focus group</p>