



Annual Report
2023

Elsie Street Kindergarten | Tamariki exploring in nature at Nui Ferns, our nature discovery programme.



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Board Members



Board Chair
Victoria Sinclair



Deputy Chair
Charlotte Murch



Board Member
Mike Wyeth



Board Member
Lisa Shaw



Board Member
Chris Kennett



Board Member
Erin Cross

Life Members

Gaynor Logan

Karen Purdue

Wendy McArthur

Winy van Rossum

Robin McCall

Gil Wikstrom

Diane McWhirter

Pauline Smith

Leadership Team

Senior Teachers - Robyn Leckie and Wendy McLachlan

Lead Administrator - Sheryl Harrison

Finance Manager - Annemey Everson

Property and Maintenance Manager - Joseph Sanginiti

General Manager - Patrick Edwards

The Year in Numbers



Over
160
Staff

24
locations across
Southland

including the addition
of Northern Southland
Kindergarten in
Lumsden

20
Kindergarten's now signed
to the Enviroschools
programme

We have over
8000
tamariki
within Southland



A message from the Board

This year has been another exciting year for Kindergarten South. We have continued to stabilise our Association, our team, and our operations.



Some of the many exciting growth points for our organisation during the 2022 year have been:

- Progression towards the purchase of our new Kindergarten South House – a space for our leadership team to work from, and also a place to connect with the many elements of our Kindergarten South whānau/community.
- Ongoing culture development – we are excited about the direction of travel for our team. While this can at times feel uncomfortable, it is important to stop and appreciate how far we have come together.
- Continued growth within the Leadership Team (and in 2023 the recent employment of Catherine Frost as our HR Manager).
- The continued transition across the Association to a full-year model. This is providing ongoing financial sustainability for our association, with minimal change for our whānau/community. Thank you to our staff who have approached this change with courage and strength.
- Engaging Peer Review Business Consultants to work with the Board as they develop a strong strategic plan for the 10-15yr growth of Kindergarten South.
- Ongoing implementation of professional and personal development for all of our Senior Leadership Team.

It is important to note that our financial performance has also continued to improve, due in no small part to the willingness of our team to adapt and change to new proposals, and work in new ways for better overall outcomes. A special thank you to Mark Hamilton and the team at Findex, providing support over and above contractual obligations – thanks for keeping us on the straight and narrow!

In education, the landscape continues to change. As a primary teacher, I can attest to the constant morphing of our pedagogy and philosophy as we learn more about how tamariki learn best and how we can deliver our curriculum more effectively. This can at times be very challenging and confronting – we have got to be prepared to release some of the things we have held tightly in order for positive change and opportunities to arise.

Kindergarten South has a rich history of being leaders in Early Childhood Education, and on many occasions has led the way in significant changes to the ECE landscape.

I am proud to lead this organisation as we continue to look forward to the exciting changes ahead, and encourage all members of our Association to embrace new opportunities and be open to positive changes as they are presented to us. Who knows what great things may be achieved when we work together for the good of our collective communities?!

We are making a difference in the lives of each and every child (and their whānau) in our care – what an incredible impact we have across Southland. Our amazing kaiako, and our surrounding support staff, are change-makers for these little lives. This work is of utmost importance, and I wish to acknowledge that each and every day, our Kindergarten South team bring their very best to the kindy floor – truly providing a home away from home for our tamariki.

The Cottage Kindergarten | Community walk.



Fiordland Kindergarten | Tamariki looking for fish in Lake Henry.



Glengarry Kindergarten | Kenzie and Zach watering the vegetables.

I wish to acknowledge our current Board members, Erin Cross, Chris Kennett, Lisa Shaw, and Charlotte Murch.

You have worked hard to ensure our ship is steady, and forward-moving. Your commitment to Kindergarten South is appreciated, and your experience and expertise in governing our Association is outstanding.

I also acknowledge Mike Wyeth, who has been part of the Board for the past 2 years and is now taking a step back. Thank you Mike for all you have contributed to our team, specifically your financial and business acumen. We wish you well for the future.

We have a wonderful Senior Leadership Team. Wendy, Sheryl, Nikki and Joe, you provide outstanding support to our tamariki in all of the ways you work with our Kindergartens. I appreciate your passion and commitment to the Association, and also to our tamariki. You have been willing to come on this change-journey with us, and although it isn't always smooth sailing, I am incredibly proud and grateful that you have shown strength of character as we work through the exciting challenges that are presented. I am looking forward to the next year, and all of the possibilities that lie ahead.

Kindergarten South is fortunate to have a team of staff who are committed and loyal to our tamariki and our Association. There are a large number of staff who have been with us for extended and significant periods of time. I wish to acknowledge each of these outstanding kaiako, and especially those who have come to the end of their working careers or felt it time to move on. Thank you for all you have done for the tamariki in your care, and the whānau/communities you have influenced.

During the past year, we farewelled two of our Senior Team members. Firstly, Annemey Everson our Financial Manager moved to Christchurch to be closer to family. Thank you Annemey for your extremely challenging work as you set-up our financial management in-house systems. We wish you well.

We also farewelled Robyn Leckie from the team. Robyn worked to support and advocate for both kaiako and tamariki within the Association. We will miss Robyn's expertise and passion, and wish her well for the future.

And finally, I wish to thank Patrick, our General Manager. I am extremely proud of your willingness to step up and face the challenges of your role head on. It isn't always straightforward, and more often than not, the road is a bumpy one. But you have allowed yourself to reflect and grow, and you have continued to lead this Association with passion and vigour. Thank you for always being positive and forward-thinking. I hope you can look back at the past year and be proud that the overall direction of travel is very positive – a great platform for the year to come.

In a world where so often life isn't stable for our tamariki, I consider it a great privilege to lead an organisation that has a direct impact on the lives of so many Southlanders, both little ones and big ones!

The possibilities for Kindergarten South in 2023 are endless – let's remain open-minded, positive and passionate about the incredibly important mahi we are part of and take every opportunity to make a difference in the lives of the little people we serve.

Victoria Sinclair
Board Chair
Southland Kindergarten Association

Longbush Kindergarten | Deep in concentration, creating a masterpiece.



Lindisfarne Kindergarten | William excited to join his friends for Kapa Haka.

From the General Manager

Ngā mihi mahana kia koutou katoa.

Hello to everyone and thank you for taking the time to read our annual general report for 2023.

When I write these reports, I reflect back on the year gone by, however, this time I reflect much further than 12 months and I look at SKA as an association within our community, and the different areas our Kaiako and support staff have dealt with. I am proud to be part of the association and to support our staff in their role with the community which extends way beyond our operating hours and way beyond the gates to our centres.

Like many, I looked at covid-19 each year with the hope it was behind us, but I believe it has merely become our new normal as we accept this as a new challenge for all our staff and our association on a daily basis. Covid-19 has continued to impact us through 2023 and I wish to extend my appreciation to our staff, support staff and whānau for their flexibility and understanding during these times.

Over the past 3 years, our association has been on a journey of stability and sustainability. I am proud of the work our teams have carried out in this space and I am pleased with the way this has impacted our association positively in 2023. Once we have a stable foundation for our association, we have the ability to build and grow and reach deeper into our community and further support them.


During 2023 our association relocated its support office to Victoria Avenue after many years at Forth St. This positive change has created a welcome space for our staff and I hope the building will be seen as the supportive trunk to our centres that branch out across Murihiku.

We have welcomed and farewelled many staff during the year and I would like to thank everyone for their support and input over the past 12 months.

We have some exciting times ahead of us for 2024 as we continue to morph into shapes that our communities need and to meet any new regulatory changes that are implemented into ECE.

Finally, to our Board of Governors, I wish to thank them for their governance, leadership and support. With their support, we are able to move through the year with a strategic mindset for our association.

Patrick Edwards
General Manager

Opposite Page: [Elsie Street Kindergarten](#) | 
Caring for vegetables growing in the tunnel house.



Enviroschools



Longford Kindergarten | Celebrating Chinese New Year, Dragon Dancing.

The number of Kindergarten's, now signed to the Enviroschools programme has risen from 17 to 22, and these Kindergartens are supported by two active Kindergartens South facilitators.

The holistic and non-prescriptive nature of our Early Childhood curriculum, Te Whāriki, supports the successful integration of the Enviroschools kaupapa of "creating a healthy, peaceful and sustainable world through learning and taking action together". This kaupapa reminds our kaiako about teaching tamariki to love, care for and respect themselves, their peers, and the environment.



Northern Southland Kindergarten | Dairy farm visit.

Professional learning for 2023 included two workshops with Mark Oster. The first one titled "What lives here?" was about creating a foundation for nature projects in kindergartens.

- A history of Aotearoa/New Zealand's intriguing natural history and balance.
- How to set up and use the app "iNaturalist NZ – Mātaki Taiao."

The second one titled "Let's Get Practical!" included practical activities to help kaiako create and use resources as well as building their confidence.

- Setting up and using Trail Cameras.
- Creating and using Tracking Tunnels.
- Creating our own resources.
- Care of ourselves and nature.

We have continued to work closely with the Regional Co-ordinator at Environment Southland, as well as Toimata (Enviroschools Foundation). This has enabled us to provide interesting informative workshops/webinars for our kaiako and to continue to grow our connections within the wider Southland community.

Kindergartens South holds the Enviroschools kaupapa in Early Childhood Education in Southland and we are proud to have this as a key point of difference for our Association.

Taiao Tūhura/ Discovering Nature

When young tamariki learn about the concept of Kaitiakitanga, and learn to be kaitiaki, they learn to respect, care for, and protect people, places and things that are important to us all. .

All tamariki who partake in Taiao Tūhura are supported to develop then demonstrate a sense of responsibility for the living world and knowledge about how to care for it (Te Whāriki Page 47)

We are so lucky to be able to access spaces in our communities where tamariki can go and experience an unhurried, atahua environment. From Myross Road to Ivy Russell Reserve; from Dolamore Park to Ivor Wilson Park to Mores reserve. We are truly fortunate to have so many exciting spaces for our tamariki.

“Must we always teach our children with books? Let them look at the mountains and the stars up above. Let them look at the beauty of the waters and the trees and flowers on earth. They will then begin to think, and to think is the beginning of a real education”.
(David Polis)

Kindergartens South continues to value the learning tamariki experience when they are out in nature.

“Must we always teach our children with books? Let them look at the mountains and the stars up above ... They will then begin to think, and to think is the beginning of a real education”
(David Polis)



Clarendon Kindy | Tamariki inspecting their worm farm in a jar.

Kindergarten Highlights



Bluff Kindergarten | Tamariki peeking at the manu in a local garden.

Bluff Kindergarten

Bluff Kindergarten continued to celebrate and cherish the uniqueness of its location and strengthening strong relationships in the community.

Tamariki and Kaiako had an action-packed year at Bluff Kindy. We went on a Te Reo Journey, learning phrases and kupu weekly to uphold Te Reo. It was a collective journey where whānau could learn the phrases at home as well from recorded clips on Story Park. We are continuing this mahi as part of our 'ways of being' here in Motupōhue.

We also spent the year out into the Community every Friday with our Tuakana. Tuakana Fridays meant we could venture all over the tāone connecting with our community, whenua and moana. Learning the stories of Motupōhue from the information centre, the whakapapa of the Marae, picking rubbish up and being kaitiaki, trips to the library, sharing manaaki to the people along the way.

We had many groups from the schools and community visit and engage with our tamariki this year and we worked hard on being visible and strengthening these relationships to ensure they continue every year. Whānaungatanga is so important to us here at Bluff Kindergarten.

Mā roto I ngā piringa, I ngā whakahaere I waenganui o te mokopuna me te katoa, e whakatō te kaha ki roto I te mokopuna ki te ako



Clarendon Kindergarten | Setting up their new compost bin.

Clarendon Kindergarten

2023 was another year of growth in many areas, our kindergarten community continued to increase, our rolls have steadily expanded with new tamariki and their whānau joining us in our journey. Our curriculum design of “he kaha ahau, he miha ahau! I am capable, I am amazing!” supported Tamariki to strengthen their mana, self- confidence, and a positive sense of identity as a learner. The kindergarten environment and intentional teaching strategies used by kaiako promoted a strong sense of turangawaewae, manaakitanga and whanaungatanga. The environment and kaiako empowered and supported the growth of independence, interdependence, and an innate desire to achieve success in their learning, tamariki seeing themselves as confident and capable contributors to the kindergarten community.

Targeted funding was used to ensure success for tamariki, creating and maintaining strong and collaborative relationships with whānau and removing barriers to attendance and learning. The targeted funding was used to provide breakfast and morning tea for tamariki and resources to support tamariki learning and development.

Our Enviroschools journey continued with tamariki developing a respect for Papatūānuku and establishing lifelong skills and strategies to care for their natural world. Tamariki have spent the year establishing gardens, planting, harvesting, and sharing crops with their whānau. They set up a compost bin, created new systems for reducing waste, investigated worms, and found solutions to catching kai to keep the poraka well fed and thriving. Throughout our Enviroschools journey kaiako and tamariki are exploring and learning together (ako) and we look forward to meeting the criteria for the bronze award soon.

Drummond Kindergarten

E iti noa ana, nā te aroha.

The tamariki, Kaiako and whānau of Drummond Kindergarten this year have spent a great deal of time celebrating whanaungatanga and the importance of being active contributors to their wider community. Getting back to celebrating together and engaging in Murihiku wide events that empower us to build Hononga / Connections and empower our tamariki to value the vital roles that they bring to their whenua.

Community events such as Murihiku Polyfest, sharing our culture and identity of our Kura; creating the Haast Eagle for the Matariki event at Queens Park; hosting our local Matariki lights celebration; creating a Christmas door and then attending Moore’s Reserve Christmas event; as well as our famous Pet Day, celebrating our rural outlook! Offering opportunities for tamariki to actively engage in these events provides experiences that they may not get outside of Kindergarten, something we deeply value.

Connections with the wider community are celebrated and encouraged. We hold atuaahua relationships with local schools, and the Heddon Bush enviro leaders are active contributors to our curriculum and supporting and guide our enviro school journey. We value the connections we have built with them and the Rangatiratanga they provide our tamariki.

The rural atmosphere and sense of Turangawaewae here at Drummond evokes many positive partnerships developed between tamariki, Kaiako, whānau and our wider community.

Elsie Street Kindergarten

One of our highlights for 2023 was being named a finalist for the Environment South, 'Environmental action in education award'. We were extremely proud of this achievement recognising the mahi of our tamariki, kaiako and whānau. Our mahi was woven through our Enviro-schools' journey and become part of our everyday programme, as we enhanced our sustainability with growing our own produce from seedling to plate. Tamariki learnt to be great Kaitiakitanga of their place of learning, with watering, weeding, recycling paper to make paper briquettes, and feeding kai scraps to our chickens that were gifted to us last year. We became a silver accredited Enviro-school reflecting the growth of our mahi, and teaching and learning that is woven through our programme.

Our Taiao Tūhura – Nui Ferns continued to be highly valued amongst our community. Tamariki were always so excited to join adventures of learning in nature, with nature, and about nature. Last year we had the support of Lois Bishop, Hokonui Rūnanga Taiao Volunteer, with pest trapping. We learnt together about the trapping tracks which we now check while on our adventures and we have greater knowledge of pests in our environment. Our programme is very well supported by our whānau.

We had a fantastic kindergarten committee who supported us with family events and raising funds to purchase items for our kindergarten. In this past year our committee and whānau raised funds for us to purchase a 5-meter-long tunnel house. We were fortunate to also receive large cash donations from Southland Farm machinery, Silver Fern Farms, and the Maitāura Licensing Trust. These funds have been used to purchase veriface covering for our walls which we are looking forward to having on the walls in the near future, to enhance the aesthetics of our indoor learning environment.

Our 2023 year was completed on a high note with being named the winner of best float in the Gore Christmas parade, education section, with our Gore themed float. We won a \$250 gift card that was put toward the purchase of a new macrocarpa picnic table for tamariki. The outstanding float mural is now proudly displayed on our ceiling.

Elston Lea Kindergarten

The biggest highlight for our tamariki in 2023 was our return to ILT Stadium Southland to perform at Polyfest. The learning and conversations around this are still evident as tamariki revisit pictures of themselves dressed up and on the big stage. Our whānau nights were a great success, with the favourite one being the Drive-in movie night where the tamariki made their cardboard cars/trucks/buses and watched a Paw Patrol movie and then enjoyed an ice cream sundae as a treat.

Many of our outdoor garden areas were better utilised over the last 12 months, we had surplus peas, broccoli, spinach, carrots, and apples for our whānau to share. Gardening also provided rich opportunities for us to link in with the wider community. We had new fruit plants, cranberry, blueberry, raspberry, and some lavender plants donated by whānau who left. The tamariki like to be kaitiaki of these and it is a good talking point about transitioning to school.

We farewelled a few tamariki as they moved on to school, towards the end of 2023. This opened spaces for new enrolments and allowed some of our tamariki to attend full days, which they are enjoying. With the new tamariki starting there is a lot of tuakana teina and reminding of the kawa at Elston Lea.

Taiao Tūhura continued to be a highlight for our older tamariki and kaiako. The learning from this was deepened at kindergarten as we focused on our children's understanding of being kaitiaki and developing their relationship with the natural environment, with a strong focus on rākau, especially the Totara.




Elston Lea Kindergarten | Drive in movie night.




Fiordland Kindergarten | Tamariki and Kaiako going to visit the school chickens.

Fiordland

2023 was a fun filled community centred year where we were involved in several local events such as the local flower show, interschool pet day and agricultural show, the Wearable arts show and the Christmas Parade where our float won first prize. (Third year in a row!) 

Nature Discovery continued to be an integral part of our programme with ngā tamariki eagerly awaiting the time when they got to start. Parent involvement contributed to make each week a unique learning experience with many hidden talents and knowledge coming to the forefront from our whānau.


Our relationship with our two local primary schools continued to be strengthened through school visits to Te Anau Primary and Mararoa School visiting Kindergarten and their leaders helping at Nature Discovery. 

2023 brought a change of dynamics to the mix with 14 two-year-olds attending which meant tuakana teina and ako were strong within the kindergarten.

Our Kindergarten community organised a shared breakfast kai and celebration for Matariki and a Christmas Party that brought our whole whānau together to end the year on high!

Glengarry Kindergarten

It was a busy year at Glengarry kindergarten with lots of new family's starting. We said goodbye to our older tamariki as they continued their learning journey at school. Our main focus at Glengarry last year was Polyfest. Tamariki and whānau alike, put a lot of time and effort in with regards to learning the words and actions of the various songs that were performed on the day. Hard work and determination that was shown throughout the term was evident, as the tamariki put on an amazing performance. We could not have achieved this without the support of our community and the wonderful whānau that attend our kindergarten. We celebrated back at the kindergarten with a shared kai.

Last year the tamariki also spent a substantial amount of time preparing the soil in our planter boxes and in the greenhouse prior to planting. The tamariki grew and planted their own seedlings and were kindly donated lots of plants from our whānau. It was amazing to observe the tamariki learn and cement their knowledge about food cultivation and the different processes involved. Once the food was fully grown, it was kindly donated to our community. 

At the heart of everything we do at Glengarry kindergarten is Manaakitanga and the respectful relationships that flow from this. Through this shared understanding, empowering and respectful relationships between tamariki, kaiako, whānau and the wider community become an integral part of the Glengarry learning environment. We are looking forward to this year with the same passion and excitement.

Grasmere kindergarten

Over the last year, we were delighted to welcome many new tamariki and whānau to Grasmere Kindergarten. Kotahitanga, respecting all that is around us, was our curriculum focus with tamariki learning to extend their knowledge of caring for themselves, and others.

We encouraged our tuakana (current tamariki) to awahi/support our teina (new tamariki) to help them settle into kindergarten, learn our kaupapa, form relationships, and feel a sense of belonging. Kaiako have also showed this manaaki/kaitiaki towards the whānau of all tamariki.

We plan to continue to build a greater sense of community this year by having regular whānau nights, community outings, participating in Polyfest, and encouraging whānau involvement at kindergarten.



Grasmere Kindergarten | Tamariki showing Manaaki to each other.



Grasmere Kindergarten | Whanaungatanga in action, welcoming new friends.

Kew Kindergarten

Kew Kindergarten highlight for 2023 was getting to plant our Kōwhai trees, which we had grown from seed, at Panton Street Park. Panton Street Park has been our adopted park for over 5 years. We ensure it is rubbish free, work alongside South Alive to look after the orchard and have so much fun utilising the playground.

Getting to plant our home grown Kōwhai (we have had this Kōwhai project at Kew since 2016) was really a huge milestone. We had South Alive, the City Council and a huge amount of whānau support to help celebrate this occasion. We hiko down to our park as much as we can to check on our Kōwhai, water them and see what goodies the orchard has for us.

Looking after Kōwhai is really important at Kew – every graduate takes one with them when they leave so they always have a little piece of Kew with them. Learning about the life cycle process is an ongoing part of our enviro-schools kaupapa, we collect the seed pods from the ground, open the pods to get the seeds, let them soak for over two weeks then plant them. Tamariki favourite part is gathering the seed pods or watering the seedlings.



Kew Kindergarten | Planting at Panton Street Park, a collaboration with South Alive and ICC.

Lees Street Kindergarten

One of our inquiries in 2023 at Lees Street Kindergarten included tamariki being interested and intrigued by letters, shape and form, the names of letters, and the sounds they make. Kaiako supported our community of learners in developing knowledge and understanding around upper and lower case letters through the lens of literacy and writing our names. Learning that our first letter in our names is usually always a CAPITAL/UPPER CASE letter and the letters in the rest of our name are lower case letters. At the same time knowing or learning to recognise the letters or sounds in our names. Tamariki were engaged in various art processes to strengthen and consolidate their learning.



Lees Street Kindergarten | Literacy recognition.

Kaiako consistently use teaching strategies such as questioning and providing different resources as provocations for tamariki to develop further knowledge regarding letters. Understanding that letters not only have names, but they also make sounds, (up to 44 sounds in English in comparison with 26 letters of the alphabet.) e.g, the sound “h is for hat, b is for box, c is for cat, z is for zip.” Tamariki consistently practised recognising and matching sounds to objects during group experiences, and individually.

Literacy learning opportunities such as these support ākonga to develop and tautuko one another to understand this difference between speech and writing. Language comes instinctively, but writing requires nurturing through various learning processes and experience.

Te manu e kai ana i te miro, nōna te ngahere; te manu e kai ana i te mātauranga nōna te ao./The bird who partakes of the miro berry owns the forest; the bird who partakes of education owns the world.

Lindisfarne Kindergarten

There were many highlights of 2023, one being the continued wonder and joy our kindergarten garden offers tamariki, our whānau and our community. Tamariki happily arrived at Kindergarten with great enthusiasm waiting to see if their plants have grown over night ready for harvesting. The smiles and gleeful looks in their eyes was priceless, especially when they got to savour the taste of something they had helped nurture and care for. The ongoing support and sense of Kotahitanga, unity, vision, and cohesion was seen throughout all aspects of the programme. This was made possible through the collaborative efforts of kaiako, tamariki, whānau and the Lindisfarne wider community, by participating in and assisting us with excursions, events, working bees, fundraising, family nights, term cleans and coming into share their talents and expertise.

Kapa haka was another highlight that stood out, as everyone came together and ngā tamariki sang their little hearts out, all our families and kaiako watching with exhilaration, admiration, and pride.

The growing sense of Manaakitanga and Whanaungatanga supported the amazing items donated daily to the sharing shed. These items were taken home to be reused and re-purposed. This is an aspect we value being an EnviroSchool, advocating and instilling into our tamariki and whānau the importance of caring for Papatūānuku, and supporting their endeavours to be great kaitiaki, carers of the land.

Lindisfarne Kindergarten | Tamariki reaping the rewards of their hard work.



Longbush Kindergarten

Longbush Rural Kindergarten is situated just 15 minutes out of Invercargill. Families travel from far and wide to attend our beautiful rural kindergarten to access high quality teaching and learning in an unhurried environment, rich in natural spaces.

In addition to the main kindergarten area, we have our own 'farm' and edible garden area to explore. Our philosophy is grounded in mahi tahi where we value working together to provide a community hub rich in manaaki and whanaungatanga.



Longbush Kindergarten | Harvesting potatoes to share with whānau..

Longford Kindergarten

"He oranga ngākau, he pikinga wairoa"

Positive feelings in your heart, will raise your sense of self-worth.

This whakatauki embraces our learning journey - the different ways that we are growing our hauroa (health and well-being) at Longford Kindergarten. Kaiako were exploring their teaching practices to support tamariki through their emotional learning. From yoga, belly breathing, feelings talk, positive affirmations, co-regulation, laughter and fun, kaiako and tamariki have been nourishing our taha hinegaro!

We loved connecting with our whānau and community through celebrating cultural events such as Matariki, Diwali and recently Chinese New Year! We joined in with our friends from Elsie Street and Oxford Kindergarten's to perform at the Hokonui Culture-Feast and we once again entered a float - "Christmas at Dolamore Park" in our local Christmas Parade!

Our Taiao Tūhura (Bush Kindy) programme and EnviroSchools mahi continued to support our kaitiakitanga learning. Our Bush Kindy and Kindergarten spaces have inspired tamariki to become curious of the world that they live in and to take care of Papatūānuku.



Longford Kindergarten | Miles carefully holding onto his discovery - a yabby!

Newfield Kindergarten

Newfield kindergarten had a fantastic year of events and outings in 2023. Polyfest was again a major highlight of our year, there was fantastic parent support before, during and after our performance.

In August our whānau enjoyed an Owl hunt at dusk through Queens Park with Lloyd Esler. This was very popular and sparked lots of discussion and creative ideas about owls and the night.

'Bush kindy' continued to be a valued part of our programme and curriculum. Our tamariki attend for a full day once a fortnight. In 2023 there were some visits to Newfield primary school on the alternate weeks.

Our family committee arranged some popular events for everyone to join us. We held a games night, a disco and our Christmas event was held at the train park.

Our curriculum focus for the second half of 2023 was around social competency and working in partnership with whānau. Our kaitiaki kaiako process pairs new whānau and tamariki with one key kaiako who is their go to person. This is to support the transition into kindergarten and begin the development of strong working relationships. The support this offers whānau and tamariki is evident throughout our interactions.

Our community involvement was evident in our breakfast programme. Breakfast was available to all tamariki when they arrived at kindergarten. Food for this is kindly donated by the Seventh Day Adventist church, for which the kindergarten community are so very grateful.



Newfield Kindergarten | Fun for all at Bush Kindy.

Finally, after many, many years of planning, construction and development our Kaitiaki Pou are in place in our playground and garden. Each pou was placed with thought into where the kaitiaki are present in our place and these will be treasured for many years to come.



Newfield Kindergarten | Owl hunt at Queens Park.



Northern Southland Kindergarten

Over the last year Northern Southland Kindergarten underwent a number of staffing changes as Head Teacher Sarah Nicholson left in March, to be replaced by Lisa in August and also Kaiako Loren who moved to Australia and was replaced by Cheri.

The new team put a lot of effort into improving the physical indoor environment and establishing routines to provide tamariki with structure and predictability to their day. Other Kindergartens helped us to boost puzzles and construction equipment by donating or lending these to us. Outside we continued to investigate gardening, composting, and our worm farm.

Highlights from 2023 included Farm visits as the team investigated origins of our kai where the things we eat and drink come from, as well as visits to other community sites like the Fire and Police stations, the community garden and the Lumsden School Pet Day.



Northern Southland Kindergarten | Mabel holding a carrot on a visit to the community garden.

Otatara Kindergarten


At our kindergarten we are very proud about our amazing community connection we have.




Otatara Kindergarten | Celebrating Father's Day.

Here in the first photo is one of our Granddads, "Gussy", who brought along his BBQ and his tunes for our "Blokes Breakfast". This was how we celebrated Fathers Day. It was a great hit, and many dads got to have a nice snack when dropping off their children. Many then stayed and had a play while interacting with the children.



Here in the second photo we are at our local hall. We go here for jump jam with the school weekly. We are lucky enough to be able to use this when ever we need to. 

We really value our uniqueness and understand how lucky we are with our community, by having the school over one fence, local hall over the other fence, and the bush at our doorstep.

This allows us to be involved in many different experiences and opportunities, such as using the school's premises when we need to. We are lucky that we get invited to many different activities such as 



Oxford Kindergarten

Here at Oxford Kindergarten learning is steeped in social and emotional competence. This is achieved through fun and laughter as we learn together. Learning about how our brain works and how to be the boss of it has seen our tamariki thrive in our inclusive learning environment.

We are a bucket filling kindergarten; this means we fill our own and others imaginary buckets with kindness, empathy and respect for people, places, and things. At Oxford Kindergarten we believe that bucket filling and brain learning are the foundation of learning for everyone; today, tomorrow and into the future. This learning has been intentionally filtered out to our community.

Ranui Kindergarten

As we reflected on our past year, it reminded us that life is “like a box of chocolates”, as Forrest Gump said. Change and challenge can be a good thing, as it brought lots of fun, strong relationships and miharo tamariki (amazing children).

What a joy it was to return to Polyfest. We came away from our time on stage, feeling elated and very proud of our tamariki. We will definitely be a part of this important celebration in 2024.

Matariki was another great celebration of whanaungatanga, manaakitanga and a coming together of our kindergarten community. We have an amazing whānau surrounding our amazing tamariki and centre. There are always people willing to help with working bees, laundry, looking after the hens during holiday breaks, whanau-help at Nature Discovery and the myriad of other things that need done. Nga mihi to you all.

Our curriculum design focus ranged from Learning Alongside Others, to Expressive Minds. We were very fortunate to have Library Lyn from the Invercargill Library visit us each month with stories that support our curriculum design focus.

Manākitanga has been shown to our community supporters such as the Salvation Army, Nattering Knitters, Gore Freight and Storage and our Public Health Nurse as our tamariki learn that it is not only important to receive Manākitanga but to give. Being a part of the biggest celebration of the year, the Gore and Districts Council Christmas Parade was another great fun example of showing kindness to our community as we celebrated the end of the year.

He tangata, he tangata, he tangata.
'tis the people, 'tis the people, 'tis the people.



Oxford Kindergarten | Gore Christmas Parade.

We organised a couple of alternatives to our Friday programme. We visited Rimu School to take part in the morning's activities. This was so successful that we planned a second such visit to Tisbury School. Links were established through these visits, and with the upcoming Transition Hui with our primary colleagues taking place this month, we are keen to continue forging these links and relationships.

Back in April of 2023, we were invited to pop in to Murihiku Marae on the way back from Taiao Tūhura to have a look at the amazing transformation that the marae has undergone. Each Friday, for months, as we passed the marae on our way back to kindergarten, we had been watching with interest the construction taking place there. To be invited to visit the completed complex was humbling and left us with the feeling that we would definitely want to take the rest of the learning community back at some point.

We have been on a journey of exploring te ao Māori, and how effectively we are implementing this within teaching and learning, this has been an exciting – shifting our confidence and extending our use of te reo Māori.

Waiho i te toipoto, kua i te toiroa – Let us keep close together, not wide apart.



Ranui Kindergarten | Tamariki on stage at Polyfest.

Riverton Kindergarten



2023 was a year of reflecting back while moving forward as we celebrated the 40th anniversary of the kindergarten in Riverton. We collected as many group photos as we could from the community and collated their memories. We celebrated with our tamariki in true birthday style with party games, balloons and cake!

September isn't the best month to come together in a rural community, so we held over our community celebration until the end of November. We had an amazing night with past teachers in attendance, members of the first committee as well as many present-day families who many had been through as past pupils as well. Our runaka donated us some native plants to commemorate the occasion which we planted at the front of the kindergarten. Roll on the next forty years!



Riverton Kindergarten | Tree planting.



Rockdale Park Kindergarten

At Rockdale Park Kindergarten we value partnerships and ūkaipotanga with our hāpori/community of learners. We develop a strong sense of mana, wairua, mauri, social justice, ecological identity, respect, and kaitiakitangi. Our hāpori/community of ākonga view themselves as confident, competent explorers, problem solvers, and decision-makers. Our hāpori experiences an unhurried environment that treasures wonderment, curiosity, imagination creativity, and laughter.

A highlight for our hāpori last year was the mahi and work that went into the pieces that we entered in this year's Miharo art exhibition. Our philosophy and curriculum design supports and values an unhurried approach where mokopuna have the opportunity to come to know a concept or idea. Kaiako introduce provocations or ideas for mokopuna to come to know the idea or concept we are investigating.

Once mokopuna skills and confidence grow we then extend their knowledge. For our Miharo artwork, this meant coming to know how to work with clay, understating and interpreting pūrākau and retelling the narrative using dye and pastel, taking an unhurried approach to learning new skills and techniques, revisiting these and coming to know new concepts before producing our final product. These skills also contributed to our Matariki manu tukutuku creation where mokopuna took time to come to know each of the Matariki whetu and produced 10 amazing manu tukutuku which were showcased to our hāpori and the wider community.

We are committed to ensuring we meet our responsibilities under Te Tiriti ō Waitangi, Te Ao Māori, and draw inspiration from the 100 languages. Through the 100 languages mokopuna develop an awareness of what it means to be kaitiaki in our kindergarten space.

Rockdale Park Kindergarten | Mokopuna taking their working theories and bringing them to life through the creation of the matariki manu tukutuku of Waipunarangi.





Waikiwi Kindergarten | Our very own pump track at kindy!

The Cottage Kindergarten

2023 was a busy year at The Cottage Kindergarten where we welcomed new whānau, tamariki and staff within our community and the support of our whānau has been fantastic.

Our curriculum design and focus has been around how whanaungatanga looks, feels and sounds in our environment. This has brought our whanau community closer together creating a strong sense of belonging here. Tamariki have also embraced our sense of whanaungatanga and become amazing tuakana within the environment, supporting new tamariki and making them feel welcome and taking on the responsibility of looking after the Kindergarten.

We have started on our Enviroschools journey and have been exploring and investigating new ways to become sustainable in our kindergarten environment and becoming Kaitiakitanga of the place we live, learning about caring for and protecting the people, places and things in our community.

We were also very excited to participate again at Polyfest, having opportunities for our tamariki to be part of an amazing cultural event and show pride in being part of the Cottage Kindergarten whānau and creating some amazing stars for the annual Matariki celebration. We have had so many new learning opportunities out in the community as tamariki embark on Taiao Tūhura (nature discovery) and community walks, where we have visited, sung to, and delivered Christmas cards to the residents at Rose lodge. We look forward to continuing these amazing learning opportunities for the coming year ahead.

Waikiwi Kindergarten

We enjoyed a busy year at Waikiwi Kindergarten and had a difficult time picking our highlights for 2023.

We saw our tamariki grow in so many ways, developing great social competency skills as they played, that we know will be so important in the years to come as ngā tamariki move on to primary schools and work closely with others in the future.

Polyfest was one of the highlights of our year. We were so proud of the hard mahi that all of our tamariki put into practices and the performance on the stage. Seeing the confident way that everyone performed makes all the mahi that goes in behind the scenes, so worthwhile.

Our main highlight was the way that our community banded together, formulating a plan for a new bike track here at the kindergarten and then working together to get it done! With lots of generous community support, with a monster raffle and a grant from the Aotearoa Gaming Trust we were able to make this dream a reality! Our tamariki now have their very own pump track here on site and we can happily report that it is getting very well used.



Waverley Kindergarten

Over the last year we worked on reconnecting as a community after covid. One way we did this was by fundraising for new equipment sheds.

One of the highlights of our year was the Art Exhibition that we held at He Waka Tuia. Several of our whānau were involved in putting together our art exhibition; from coming in to show tamariki different artists interpretation of self-portraits, framing the artwork, donating goods to be auctioned at our auction and helping on the night. Each tamaiti produced a self-portrait that reflected them over several days. Tamariki were proud to share their achievements with their whānau. We also made an exhibition area at kindergarten that gave everyone a chance to share their work with their friends.

Our internal evaluation was centred around the concept of manaakitanga (caring for each other).

During Term Four we had an inquiry into What is a Friend? Focussing on the dispositions that we need to have to build and maintain friendships with those around us. A book was made for tamariki with photos of examples of tumeke, friendship skills, used within our programme. A class from James Hargest College made books for our tamariki about friendship and came to read them and gift them to us. Our tamariki made friendship bracelets to give them in return. Tuakana teina was evident everywhere.

We also introduced the Engage Programme, which promotes self-regulation. The programme introduces group games that can be extended upon, which also integrated well with our inquiry as self-regulation is needed to build relationships with others.

Waverley Kindergarten continues to be a fun, busy learning environment for all.



Waverley Kindergarten | Penny's self portrait.



Waverley Kindergarten | Eddy and Amelia participating in the engage programme.





Winton Kindergarten | Tamariki performing at Polyfest.

Winton Kindergarten

Each year the Winton Teaching team go above and beyond to create a curriculum design that is holistic, supportive with the ebs and flows of our year, a rich normality and one that encompasses interconnectedness.

We celebrate our success of 2023, as my success is not mine alone, it is the success of the collective. Ehara taku toa I te toa takitahi, engari he toa takitini.

Where would we be without our teams? The Winton Team has had a wonderful year of accepting awards from annual flower shows, and Polyfest art exhibitions. We are grateful for our community support, and we now have a new art piece that hangs proudly in our Kindergarten that reflects our connections to and with our Winton community – The heart of Southland.



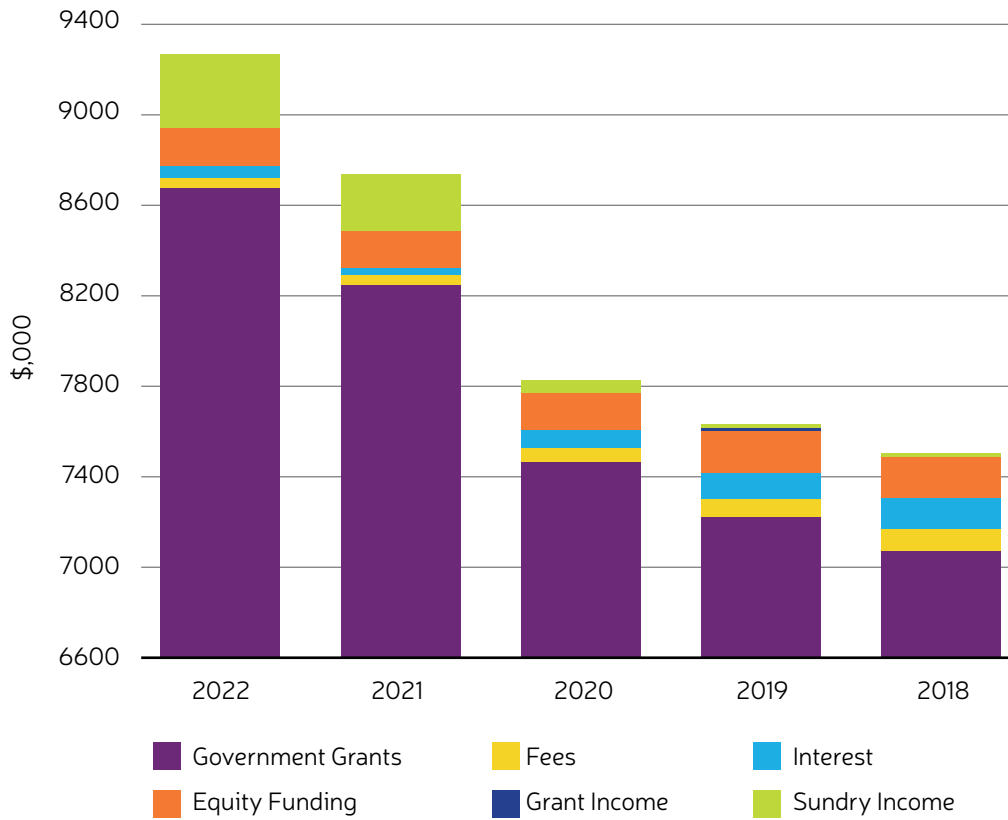
Winton Kindergarten | Art exhibition.

Financial Performance

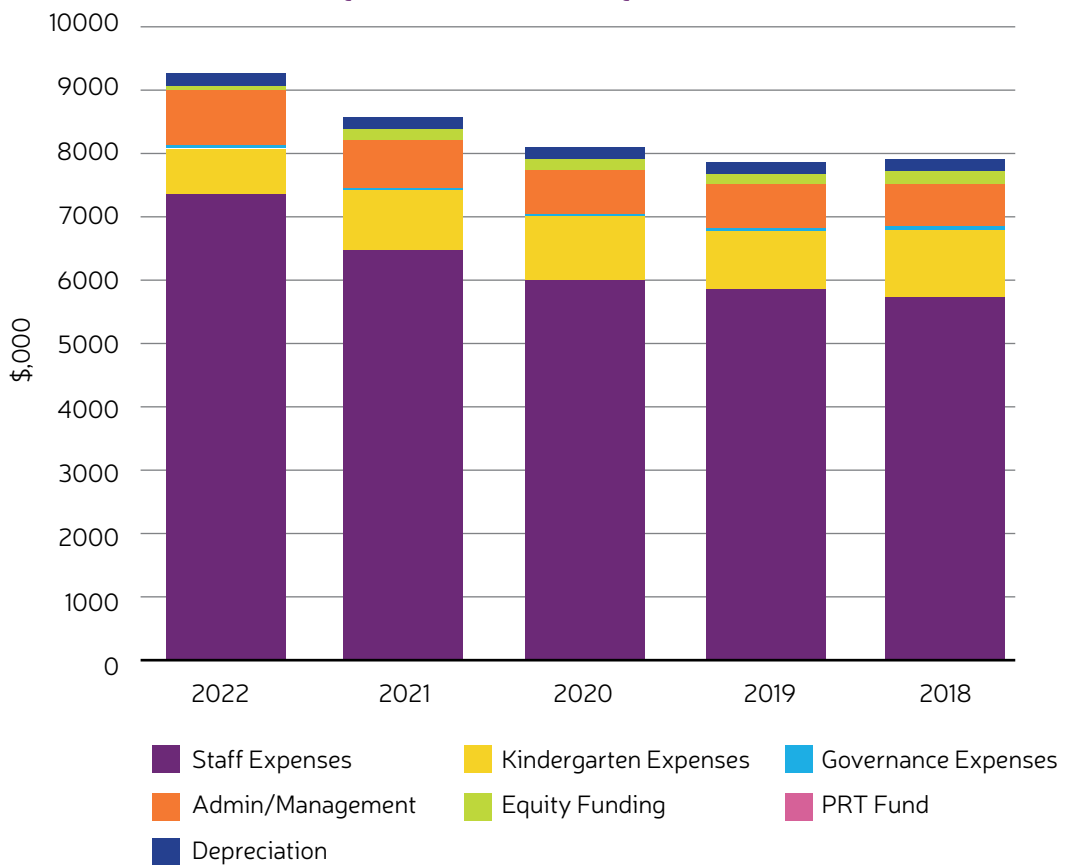
Southland Free Kindergarten Association Financial Information 2018-2022

	2022 \$'000	2021 \$'000	2020 \$'000	2019 \$'000	2018 \$'000
Financial Performance					
Income					
Government Grants	8674	8248	7468	7228	7080
Fees	39	35	56	78	90
Interest	61	36	80	121	143
Equity Funding	167	166	178	181	182
Grant Income	2	0	0	14	0
Sundry Income	317	250	49	14	6
Total Income	9260	8735	7831	7636	7501
Expenses					
Staff Expenses	7366	6515	6047	5892	5759
Kindergarten Expenses	715	953	1004	911	1049
Governance Expenses	50	37	26	39	36
Admin/Management	901	747	712	696	729
Equity Funding	60	166	143	173	179
PRT Fund	0	0	0	1	10
Depreciation	194	149	145	151	150
Total Expenditure	9286	8567	8077	7863	7912
Net Surplus/Deficit before Transfer from Reserves	-26	168	-246	-227	-411
Plus allocation from Reserves	0	0	0	0	0
Total Comprehensive Income for the Year	-26	168	-246	-227	-411
Financial Position					
Current Assets	4887	4551	5011	4636	4526
Fixed Assets	2634	2608	2568	2688	2812
Total Assets	7521	7159	7579	7324	7338
Liabilities	2293	1900	2488	1986	1773
Net Assets	5228	5259	5091	5338	5565
Ratios					
Net Surplus to Income %	-0.28	1.92	-3.14	-2.97	-5.48
Staff Expenses as a % of Bulk Funding	84.92	78.99	80.97	81.52	81.34

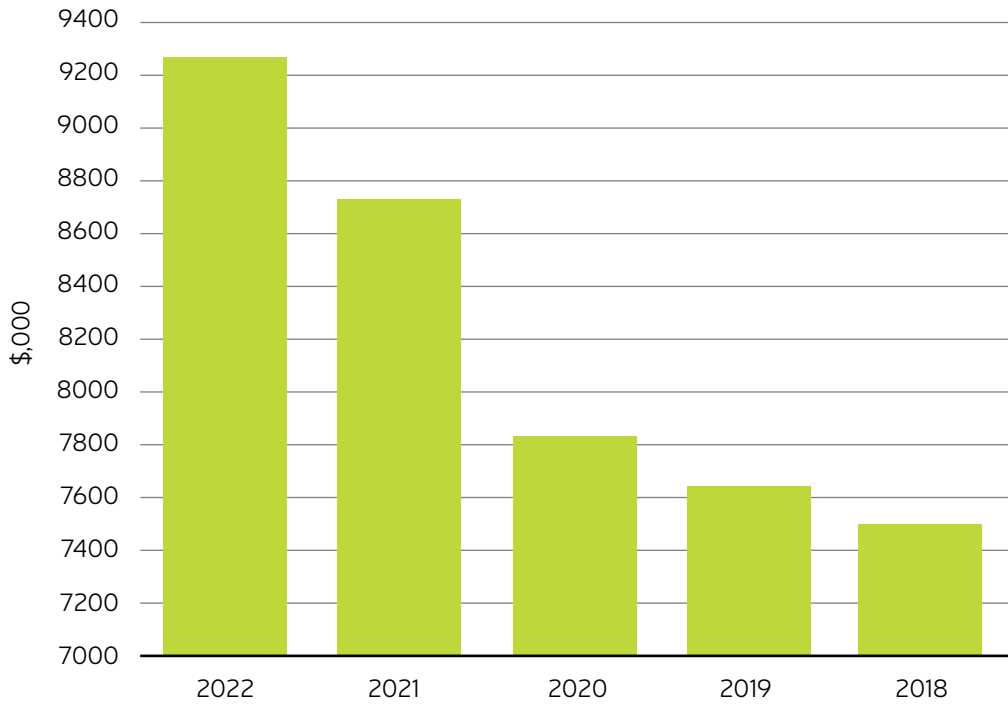
Components of Income



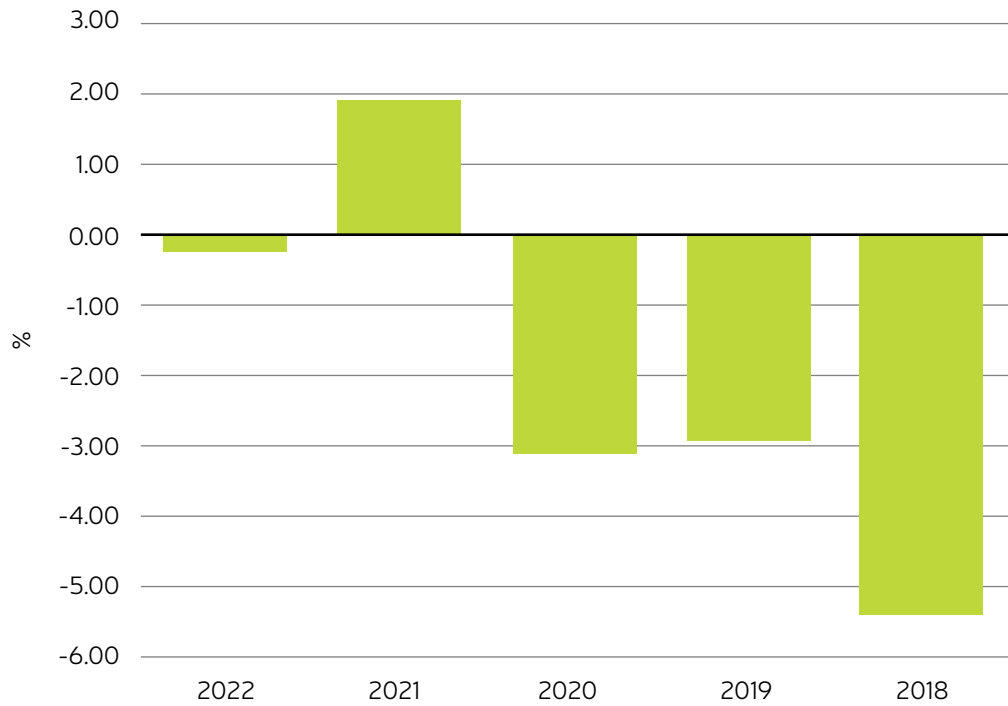
Components of Expenditure



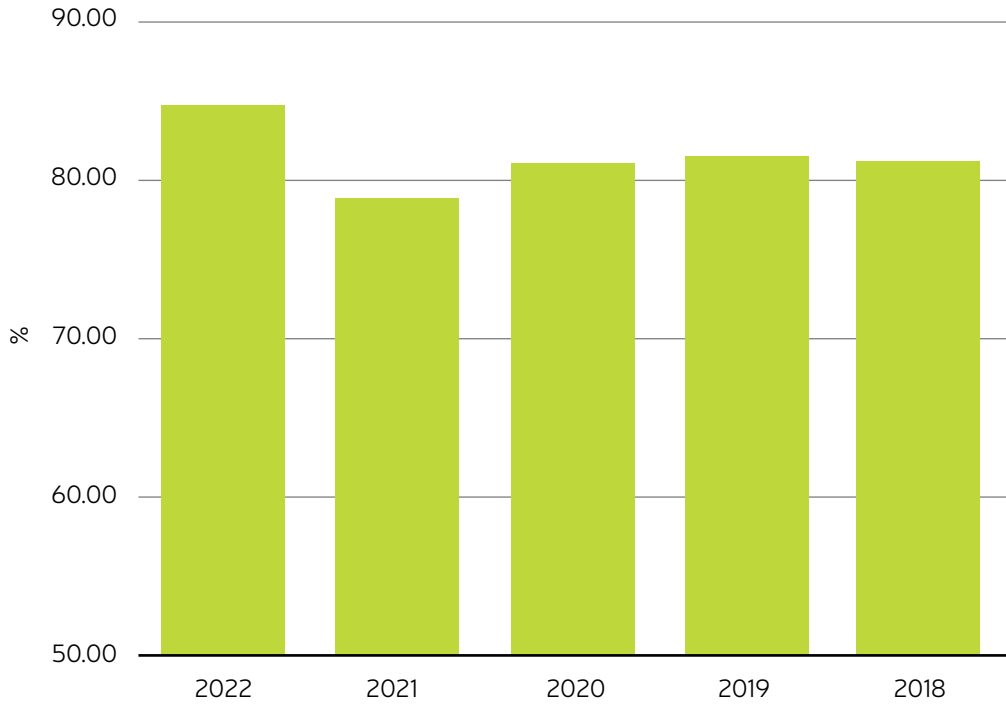
Total Income for the Year



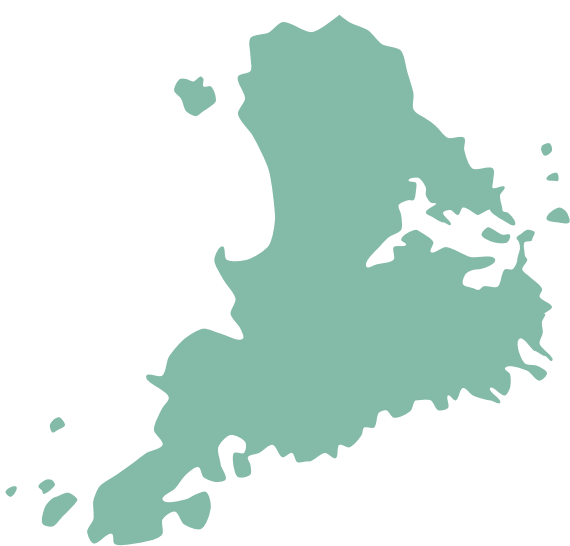
Net Surplus to Income %



Staff Expenses as a % of Bulk Funding







Our Kindergartens

Invercargill

- Clarendon Kindergarten
- Elston Lea Kindergarten
- Glengarry Kindergarten
- Grasmere Kindergarten
- Kew Kindergarten
- Lees Street Kindergarten
- Lindisfarne Kindergarten
- Newfield Kindergarten
- Otatara Kindergarten
- Ranui Kindergarten
- Rockdale Park Kindergarten
- The Cottage Kindergarten
- Waikiwi Kindergarten
- Waverley Kindergarten

Gore

- Elsie Street Kindergarten
- Longford Kindergarten
- Oxford Kindergarten

Rural

- Bluff Kindergarten
- Drummond Rural Kindergarten
- Fiordland Kindergarten
- Longbush Rural Kindergarten
- Northern Southland Kindergarten
- Riverton Kindergarten
- Winton Kindergarten

Opposite page: 1. Bluff Kindergarten: Discovering ataahua around Motupöhue, 2. Oxford Kindergarten: Manākitanga recieved from the community, 3. Waikiwi Kindergarten: Polyfest performance, 4. Kew Kindergarten: Tamariki going to plant Kōwhai at Panton Street Park, 5. Longbush Kindergarten: Creating a birthday card, 6. Longford Kindergarten: "Hā ki roto, hā ki waho" - Indie and Lisse practising belly breaths, 7. Longford Kindergarten: Exploring Dolamore Park, 8. Northern Southland Kindergarten: Prepping for community garden visit, 9. Bluff Kindergarten: Pukapuka time with our tuakana from St Teresa's School, 10. Rockdale Kindergarten: Creating artwork for Matariki.

kindergartens
Pūtahi Kura Pūhou o Murihiku SOUTH

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