



Annual Report 2024



Contents

Key Personnel	1
The Year in Numbers	2
Message from the Board	4
Overview from the General Manager	8
Taiao Tūhura / Discovering Nature	10
Our Kindergartens	12
Financial	36

Our Board



Louise King
Board Chair 2024



Vic Sinclair
Board Member



Michaela Bekhuis
Board Member



Chris Kennett
Board Member



Ryan Lester
Board Member



Jay Coote
Board Member

Leadership Team

General Manager - Patrick Edwards
Finance Manager - Nikki Stodart
Lead Senior Teacher - Wendy McLachlan
Senior Teacher - Heidi Boniface
HR & Culture Manager - Catherine Frost
Operations Manager - Debbie Tynan
Property Manager - Joseph Sanginiti

Life Members

Gaynor Logan
Wendy McArthur
Robin McCall
Diane McWhirter
Karen Purdue
Winy van Rossum
Gil Wikstrom
Pauline Smith

The Year in Numbers



**24 Locations
across Southland**



232 Staff

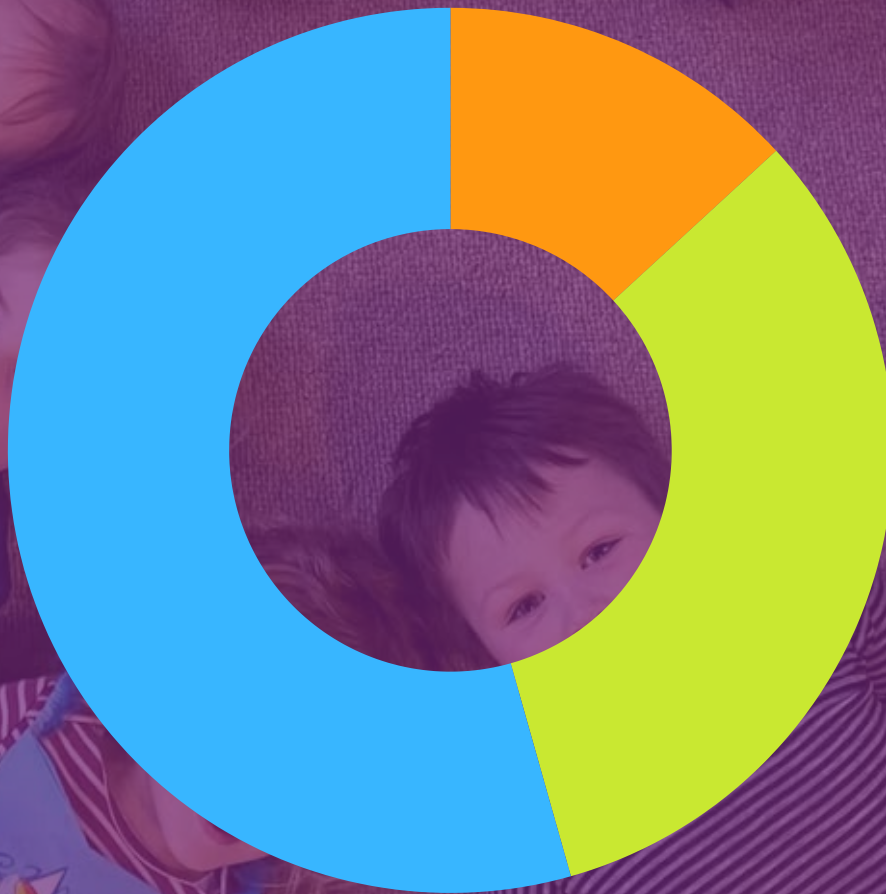


We have
800+
Tamariki enrolled
across Southland

2 - 3 Years old
114

3 - 4 Years old
281

4 Years & up
471



A message from the Board

"E kore te tōtara e tū noa i te pārae, engari me tū i te wao nui a Tāne."

"A tōtara tree does not stand alone in an open field, but in the great forest of Tāne."

As we reflect on 2024, it is with great pride that we share the incredible mahi our association have been part of.

2024 has been a year of emerging growth, a year of strengthened connections, and a year of deepening our community engagement.

At the heart of our mahi is a commitment to our Kindergarten whānau and their tamariki, ensuring our kindergartens remain places of learning, belonging, and aroha. This year, we have embraced new ways of working to support the evolving needs of whānau, making our kindergartens more accessible and responsive. These shifts reflect our dedication to maintaining the strong foundation of kindergarten philosophy while adapting to the changing landscape of early childhood education.

One of the many highlights of the year was the opportunity for members of our Board to attend our NZK Hui, where we engaged in vital discussions about the future of kindergarten's in Aotearoa. These kōrero reinforced the strength of our movement and the importance of collective advocacy to ensure the continued growth and sustainability of kindergartens across New Zealand.

We were also fortunate to attend the all staff Hui at Windsor North Church with Lisa O'Neill, who was nothing short of vibrant, fabulous, and inspiring—her insights and energy left a lasting impact.

This year, our Board has worked on consolidating and strengthening as a team, with a great balance of diversities and perspectives sitting around the governance table. Our experiences and knowledge base includes finance, Te Ao Māori, HR, community, and health. A thriving board mirrors the community it represents and I believe strongly that our current team does just that. Our team has valued chatting with our wider kindergarten whanau at hui and events and looks forward to more moments of connection and conversation in 2025 and beyond.



Drummond Kindergarten/ Polyfest

Of course, none of our successes would be possible without the dedication of our people. He mihi nui, he mihi aroha to our senior leadership team for their unwavering commitment to the growth of our association, their tireless mahi, and their leadership in shaping a strong future for kindergarten in our region. To our incredible kaiako, your work on the ground is the heartbeat of our kindergartens. Every day, you bring passion, skill, and care to your tamariki, shaping their bright and wonderful futures with manaakitanga. Ngā mihi nui ki a koutou—our kindergartens thrive because of you.

Finally, we say a heartfelt farewell and express our deepest gratitude to Vic, who has served as both a Board Member and Board Chair with wisdom, dedication, and unwavering support for our kindergartens. Your contribution has been invaluable, and we wish you all the best in your next chapter.

As we look ahead, we do so with optimism and excitement for the future of Kindergarten South. We remain committed to the Kaupapa of high-quality ECE, community connection, and the enduring strength of the kindergarten movement.



From the General Manager

With another year closing, I am proud to provide an update on the exciting journey our Association has undertaken in 2024, and the progress we have achieved.

Firstly, I would like to extend my thanks and admiration for the mahi our staff have carried out through the year and the outcomes that have been achieved. Our Association continues to adjust to meet our communities' needs in what has been a politically challenging environment. It is through the commitment from all those involved that is being achieved. I would also like to thank our kindergarten whanau for their support, dedication and hard work they provide our Association on a regular basis.

With this collective approach our roots and foundation remain firmly embedded in the Southland community as an ECE provider of choice.

Highlighting some of our successes is not an easy task due to the extensive achievements carried out. However, some of the key areas that stood out for are:

- Clarendon become our first full day (7.30am – 5.15pm) kindergarten. This has meant they have gone from strength to strength.
- SKA consolidated its teacher only days to bring our staff together for training and connecting, achieving some fantastic outcomes. This was supported through the involvement of Lisa O'Neill providing us with some excellent mentoring and direction.
- Our Association adopted an 'in house' payroll system, allowing us to better support our staff.
- 86 Victoria Avenue was named 'Te Whare Rakau'. This name is a perfect fit for its role in the Association.
- Some of our Head Kaiako attended a National Hui presenting different areas of our Associations journey and approach. This was accepted widely by many other Associations who are now looking to mirror what we have achieved.
- Enhanced professional learning delivery focusing on the needs of our Kaiako and tamariki.
- 12 of our kindergartens were assessed under ERO using the new governance model. This produced outcomes that we should be proud of and a foundation from which to work from going forward.
- Ranui and Kew Kindergarten selected for free meals from Kids Can.

The above areas are just a few of the great achievements we have carried out, but which provide a good overview of the work carried out to support our whanau and their tamariki.

Our financial position continues to remain a focus for our Association. This essential business element is key to our ongoing sustainability year on year, especially with the political changes we are adapting to. While this year will see a positive result for our Association, the outcome is not in the region we aimed to achieve. Under a new auditing team, we have made changes to the way we measure parts of our operating costs. The end of 2024 was the realignment phase of this adjustment meaning we are set for the years ahead.

In 2025 we will continue to see our Association focus on adapting to the needs of our community by assessing the political and regulative changes presented, and implementing as required.

A key focus will be to ensure we remove any barriers to access ECE within our Association. We are fortunate to have many kindergartens in Southland, all of which provide a fantastic environment for our tamariki with qualified kaiako. This is further enhanced with our Nature Discovery and Enviroschools programs which enriches our tamariki on a regular basis.

As an Association we operate at approximately 90% capacity. A goal over the next 12 months is to see this capacity increase showing our excellent kaiako, kindergartens and programs are being experienced by more tamariki.

It is important to note that the successes of 2024 could not have been achieved without the support from our Board of Governors. I would like to extend my thanks and gratitude to them all for their mahi and support of my role along with the governance and strategic direction they provide our Association. These roles are an essential element to our achievements, and I am looking forward to working with our Board in 2025 again in 2025.

I would like to conclude this report with again thanking everyone for their mahi and support in 2024. We should all be proud of what has been achieved in 2024. I am looking forward to building on this foundation over the next 12 months and working with everyone to achieve more exciting outcomes.

Drummond Kindergarten





Taiao Tūhura/ Discovering Nature

Taiao Tūhura/Discovering Nature is a programme provided by Kindergartens South, giving tamariki the opportunity and space to grow their ecological identities and to explore their connections to the earth through unhurried time in nature.

Ecological identity refers to “one’s attitude towards nature-related issues and corresponding behaviour in the natural environment.” (Thomashaw)

While at our Taiao Tūhura programmes tamariki, kaiako and whānau can build a relationship, an understanding, respect, and aroha for Papatūānuku. Our tamariki experience rich outdoor areas that provide irresistible stimuli, contexts for play and exploration, and contact with the natural world.

Through outdoor play tamariki can learn the skills of social interactions and friendship, how to care for living things in the environment, how to be curious and fascinated, while experiencing joy and wonderment.

Myross Rd, Mores Estate, Ivor Wilson Park, Dolamore Park and the Ivy Russell reserve are the amazing spaces our tamariki visit. We are so fortunate to have nature at our back door.



Winton Kindergarten



Elsie Street Kindergarten



Kindergarten Highlights

Bluff Kindergarten

Bluff Kindergarten continued to celebrate and cherish the uniqueness of its location and strengthening ngā hononga in our hāpori.

Another ātaahua year at Bluff Kindergarten. Our tamariki and kaiako embarked on a Te Reo Journey this year challenging each other and the whānau to speak, learn and sing more te reo. Kaiako committed to role-modelling more te reo phrases daily as well as single kupu. The whānau joined in supportively and we all continue to grow as te reo champions.

Tōku reo, tōku ohoo, tōku reo, toku mapihi maurea

Whānaungatanga and manaakitanga are at the heart of all we do here in Motupōhue so having a flourishing maara kai to feed our hāpori is something we enjoy doing with our tamariki every year. This year our maara is producing a lush crop of huawhenua that the whānau have been taking home weekly. With our tamariki learning around tending to the maara and acknowledging all the Atua that help our huawhenua grow.

Bluff Kindergarten became a "Enviroschools Kindergarten" this year so we have been learning all about the Enviroschools Kaupapa, the whenua, ngā Atua and our connection to it all. We conducted a research of collecting the rubbish from our lunch boxes over a couple of weeks to see how much rubbish we were creating that would end up in the belly of Papatūānuku.

Tamariki were very concerned with what they discovered but thanks to "Waste Free Wanda" have learnt that there are things that they can do to awhi Papatūānuku. We are excited to delve into this Kaupapa more in 2025.



Bluff Kindergarten/ Bubbles



Bluff Kindergarten/ Puzzles

Clarendon Kindergarten

We continue our journey of growth, with our rolls continuing to increase, our focus shifted to meeting the needs of the wider community and the socio-economic challenges facing our community.

Clarendon kindergarten took on an innovative haerenga (journey) of changing our operating model to meet the needs of the community. We have increased our hours, offering an early and late session as well as our standard full day operating model. With this model we can provide flexible hours to support whānau.

We have increased our rōpu whakaako (teaching team) and look forward to maintaining a high quality model with hours that support the ever changing needs of whānau and community.

We continue our enviroschools haerenga making meaningful changes to our practice and environment that reflect our commitment to sustainable and respectful ecological practices.

A part of this haerenga was to establish a pāmu noke (worm farm) at kindergarten with tamariki leading the project, as a group we set up the pāmu noke and learnt how to care for and feed the noke to ensure they produce waste materials we can give back to papatuanuku.

We ended our 2024 haerenga with a bus trip to the Invercargill Fire Museum, Queens Park and Stadium Southland deepening our connections to the community. A fitting way to celebrate our 2024 haerenga as a learning community.



Clarendon Kindergarten/ Bus Trip



Clarendon Kindergarten/ Tuatara



Clarendon Kindergarten/ Worm Farm



Drummond Kindergarten/ Performing in Polyfest

Drummond Kindergarten

At Drummond Rural Kindergarten, we are proud to be a vibrant and welcoming hub for our community, fostering strong relationships with local whānau and organisations. Throughout 2024, we've continued to celebrate and build these connections through various events and initiatives that bring our community together, all while promoting our commitment to te reo Māori and kaupapa Māori.

One of the highlights of the year was our Annual Pet Day, a cherished event where tamariki brought their pets to share with the kindergarten. This provided valuable learning opportunities around the responsibilities of caring for animals and reinforced concepts of kaitiakitanga (guardianship). The day was filled with laughter, whakawhanaungatanga (building relationships), and shared learning between our tamariki, whānau, and the wider community.



Drummond Kindergarten/ Pet Day

Our involvement in the Miharō Polyfest was another key moment of the year, where tamariki had the opportunity to showcase their learning in te reo Māori and explore a range of cultural expressions. This event celebrates diversity, and it was wonderful to see tamariki performing and learning about the importance of whakawhanaungatanga and te ao Māori, as well as strengthening their understanding of our multicultural world.

We also continue to develop and nurture meaningful relationships with local schools, Heddon Bush Primary and Drummond Primary. These connections help support tamariki in their transition from kindergarten to school, with a strong focus on continuity of learning and whānau engagement.

As a community hub, we are grateful for the ongoing support of our whānau, who actively engage in all aspects of kindergarten life, ensuring our tamariki are well-supported to thrive, learn, and grow.



Drummond Kindergarten/ Polyfest

Elsie Street Kindergarten

2024 has been another successfully fun year of learning at Elsie Street kindergarten. Our teaching team had a change mid-year as Nicki Munday relocated to Longbush Kindergarten. We were fortunate to have Gemma Sloper join our dedicated team. Our role has been full this year, and as mokopuna have left for school we have been able to fill spaces from our healthy waiting list.

Teaching and learning at Elsie Street has a strong emphasis on whānaungatanga which brought about fantastic whānau investment in learning for their tamaiti. Mokopuna have been able to make many great connections between people, places, and things, where learning has been shared between home and kindergarten. Whānau have brought along many of their pets, including kunekune pigs, goats, lambs, chicks, dogs, and puppies. We were also provided the opportunity to incubate and hatch chicks. We have had whānau events throughout the year with kai together and a mini concert to end the year.

Our journey as an enviro school/ kindergarten has flourished with mokopuna learning to be awesome Kaitiakitanga of their environment. Our vegetable garden has evolved over the year with more growing spaces, a special resource for mokopuna to learn about seed planting, watering, weeding, and harvesting. Our nature discovery program is a treasure to our community, providing many rich learning opportunities. We have been fortunate to work alongside Hokonui Runaka this year as we take care of the environment by helping to check pest traps while on our adventures each week.

We have been fortunate to have great adventures in our local community this year including the fire station and library. We value being a member of the wider community, where we took part in community events including Matariki, Hokonui Cultural Feast performing on stage, and our float entry in the annual Christmas parade.



**Elsie Street Kindergarten/
Nature Discovery**



Elsie Street Kindergarten/ Gore Santa Parade

Elston Lea Kindergarten

A key highlight for our tamariki this year was the Christmas party at Model Engineers, where Santa arrived on the train. The tamariki enjoyed a fun-filled time on the trains, followed by performing our Christmas waiata for their whānau, and finishing off the day with a delicious Mr Whippy ice cream before heading home. Another memorable moment was our Halloween disco, where all the tamariki embraced the opportunity to dress up. Fostering a sense of community and strengthening our relationships.

Over the past 12 months, our outdoor garden spaces have been utilised more effectively, with broccoli, spinach, tomatoes, and apples harvested and shared with our whānau. We have also replanted more tomatoes, courgettes, lettuce, and carrots. Gardening has provided valuable opportunities for us to engage with the wider community. This has sparked meaningful conversations about the importance of kaitiakitanga guardianship, and this work is closely linked to Enviroschools and its five guiding principles. With a stable team, there has been more continuity in the work being done.

This consistency has not only improved the overall quality of the work but has also made it easier to plan for long-term goals. Each staff member has had the opportunity to contribute meaningfully, allowing the team to grow together and build a deeper understanding of each member's strengths. This knowledge enables better collaboration and more effective decision-making. Most importantly, this stability has created a more consistent and supportive environment for the tamariki.

As we approach the end of the year, one tamaiti will be heading off to school in the new year, with a couple of others following in February and March. With the arrival of new younger tamariki, we have seen a lot of tuakana-teina relationships, where older tamariki guide the younger ones, reinforcing the kawa (protocols) here at Elston Lea.



Elston Lea Kindergarten/ Greenhouse



Elston Lea Kindergarten/ Meet Santa

Fiordland Kindergarten

2024, what a year! The biggest achievement this year was fundraising and finally getting our new carpet and vinyl. We have been working towards this for many years so to finally get this project across the finish line was amazing. The dedication of our committee especially Rachel applying for and getting grants from Meridian and Kepler Trust saw us achieve the amount we needed. The kindergarten is warmer and more inviting for our Kindergarten community.

We held many whānau events that were well supported, a highlight being the return of our 'Welcome to Spring' event. Tamariki enjoyed walking up the candlelit path and sharing stories around the fire. Face painting was a highlight.

Our goal this year was to strengthen connections with our community, and we have certainly walked this path, and we will continue this journey next year. We attended the local Pet Day, the Spring Flower Show, held an excursion to visit Mararoa School, Mararoa School coming to Nature Discovery to help out, a trip to the movie theatre to see 'Ata Whenua', Fiordland College visiting Nature Discovery, involvement with Zac Marsh and his soft plastic recycling project, Diana and her beehive, Learning all about Fiji with Stella and Tema's whānau, just to name a few.

We have been so lucky to have Rachel and Elaine filling in while we were a Kaiako down. Laura and Tracey have appreciated their dedication and support. They have made the last half of the year seamless and the tamariki have developed strong relationships with both. We are also excited to have our new Kaiako starting next year so we can continue to build on the mahi of this year.



Fiordland Kindergarten



Fiordland Kindergarten/ Fiji Learning

Glengarry Kindergarten

We have had a very busy year at Glengarry Kindergarten this year and the year has flown by, our mokopuna have thrived and loved their days at Glengarry Kindy and had many wonderful experiences along the way.

We started the year off with an excursion to Diack's Nursery and Anderson Park as part of our Waitangi celebrations. This was a wonderful weather day, we released our goldfish into the pond at Diack's as they had grown to big for our tank and we all pick out our new fish Glen and Garry.

The bush walk at Anderson's Park was lovely and we enjoyed our outside kai. We loved making our whetu for Matariki and each panel had an atua in it, we are super proud of our mokopna efforts that were on display.

Our shared kai and Disco night was a huge hit and we loved the SIT concert. Polyfest was another highlight for us and we loved performing on the big stage, once again we had an awesome shared kai with our whānau to celebrate. Wig Wednesday was a blast.

We had an amazing kindy swap with Ōtātara kindy and had lots of fun experiencing their environment and visiting Jim. Jim moved to Ōtātara kindy in July and we have had our floating kaiako Allison join us as our new team member. We finished the year off at the Train Park with our whānau.

We have had an arborist in to trim our trees and this has opened up and lightened the playground. We have been busy with our mara kai and the mokopuna are taking huge pride in our glasshouse and veggie beds. We have focused on our creek area and transplanted grasses around it and we are looking forward to the installation of a bridge.

What a fun filled wonderful year.



Glengarry Kindergarten/ Releasing the fish



Glengarry Kindergarten

Grasmere Kindergarten

This year at Grasmere kinikātene, there has been a change in the teaching team, so the ngā kaiako have been doing a lot of learning, as well as the mokopuna. The new kaiako matua, head teacher will begin in February, and she seems as though she will fit in well to this kindy and the community.

Some highlights this year have been some of our environmental changes. We purchased some new movable foam couches for the inside environment that are open ended, and able to create quiet spaces. This new purchase is awesome, as they spark the imagination of the mokopuna, because they can make many different movable structures using their imagination. The mokopuna are loving this new resource and are exploring its many uses, such as tents, beds, houses, garages, jails, and the list goes on.

Another great part of this year has been getting out and about. The 10 oldest mokopuna got to visit the local kura and build a connection while exploring this new environment. We got to meet the new entrant kaiako and learn some things the mokopuna needed to know, for when they start kura. We also got to visit another kinikātene and explore their learning environment and notice similarities and differences between our kindy and the one we were visiting. We are fortunate to be able to use the kindy van for such excursions, where exploring and learning can be endless.



Grasmere Kindergarten/ School Visit



Grasmere Kindergarten/ Park Trip





Kew Kindergarten/ Nature Discovery

Kew Kindergarten

2024 Has see some big changes here at Kew Kindergarten. We farewelled our Kaiako Alana and Mel, and welcomed our new Kaiako Jena, Kerrie, Suzy and Leanne. Since forming our new team, Kaiako have come in and really engaged ourselves in creating strong relationships and learning all about the Kew Kindy Kawa. It's bucket filling, it's kaitiakitanga, and its kindness – within our kindergarten walls and out into our community with our relationships with South Alive, local groups and our neighbours.

Kaiako, whānau and tamariki have collaboratively organised many fun events and excursions together whilst growing connections and strengthening relationships.

We came together and celebrated Matariki, we have had pyjama days and teddy bears picnics. We practiced waiata and sang proudly with mana at Polyfest, we went on the bus to the library to visit Mel and have stories and crafts, we had a disco and farewelled the Kew 'stage', and we came together as a roopu and celebrated Christmas.

We are excited to continue growing connections and strengthening relationships within our roopu and hapori in 2025!



Kew Kindergarten/ Community Garden

Lees Street Kindergarten

Partnership with our community sits at the forefront of all that we do at Lees Street Kindergarten. Lees Street Kindergarten continues to work closely with our community to provide opportunities of learning and engagement, both during and after sessional hours.

In collaboration with members of the committee group “Winter Warmer packs” were gifted to each tamaiti who attend our kindergarten. These packs were provided by fundraising within our community, so all contributions could go directly back into our immediate cohort of tamariki attending our kindergarten. This was to support our families through the winter months and it strongly reflects to mana atua/well-being and mana whenua/belonging for whānau & their children.

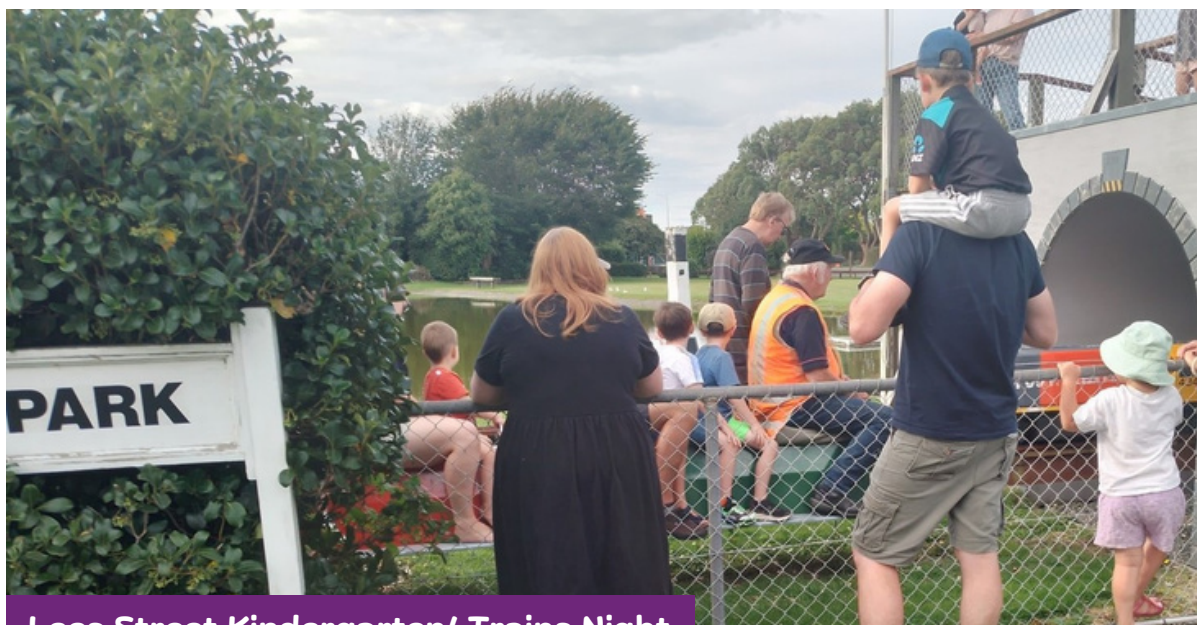
It also gave our community the opportunity to work in partnership with each other for outcomes they wanted to achieve. Celebrating the shared sense of mana tangata/contribution for all who were involved.

Alongside this, our community came together each term for a whānau get together. Over 2024 our kindergarten community connected by attending the “Ride the trains” – night, Disco at Waihopai, Drive in Movie night and a Sunflower walk to gift flowers as Christmas presents within Gladstone.

Through the partnership of our committee and the kaiako, these experiences bring our community together. Supporting connections and strengthening relationships further with all who are involved at Lees Street Kindergarten. The wider world of family and community is an integral part of our daily early childhood education and experience.



Lees Street/ Sunflower Walk



Lees Street Kindergarten/ Trains Night

Lindisfarne Kindergarten

Wow what a fun, busy, reflective, and inspiring year we have all had at Lindisfarne Kindergarten. It amazes us how fast time always goes, and it is nice to reflect and look back on what 2024 brought with it. We are so lucky that we get to celebrate big and small accomplishments throughout the day and Kindergarten year with our tamariki, we watch as they grow, learn, and thrive in all aspects of their play, friendships, and learning journey. We had a fun packed year, with many experiences provoked by many different aspects of what might have been from interests at home, within our Kindergarten and also the wider community.

We had a great year of fundraising, with all the past and present whānau kind efforts and contributions over last year and previous years, we were able to purchase our new playground equipment. This was also made possible with the kind contribution from Community Trust Southland. Ngā tamariki have had a great time expanding on their courage and physical capabilities as they have fun, explore and play in playground.

Our implementation of looking after Papatūānuku still a strong aspect as we advocate and instil into our tamariki and whānau the importance of caring for Mother earth. As Kaiako we continue to be passionate in fostering and implementing strategies, play experiences and resources that assist in our tamariki building on their sense of belonging, self-worth, self-management skills and self-resilience skills. Ngā tamariki have been doing great mahi around being amazing bucket fillers, being kind and using kind hands, working through natural conflicts of play and how to best solve them amicably.

The growing sense of Manaakitanga and Whanaungatanga continue at Lindisfarne and we are humbled by the kindness and generosity offered throughout the year.



Lindisfarne Kindergarten/ Outdoor Play



Lindisfarne Kindergarten/ EnviroSchools

Longbush Kindergarten

Our Curriculum Design for 2024 was 'Tūrangawaewae' – embracing the Māori concept making kindergarten a place where people feel empowered, connected and have an authentic sense of belonging.

With this at the forefront it was a fun, busy exciting year for all of the Longbush Kindergarten community. Two bus trips into Invercargill to enjoy the SIT Concert, visit He Waka Tuia and the Waste Free Wanda Show were highlights for everyone! Following our visit to He Waka Tuia, we established our own sensory room. This space offers opportunities for quiet reflective learning, self-regulation and nourish tamaiti wairua. Waste free Wanda provided learning for tamariki about sustainability and supported our Enviroschool mahi. Tamariki have continued learning about waste and composting, and we have established a new garden full of wildflowers for tamariki to experience and all the learning opportunities that grow from this.

Through utilising the KS Van ngā tamariki were able to visit the local schools and enjoy a pet day reconnecting with past kindergarten tamaiti. The visit also provided an opportunity to strengthen tamaiti transitioning from kindergarten to school.

Throughout the year there were many opportunities to connect with whānau through special events and open days, including a duck-shooting day celebrating a tradition of our rural community, a Matariki focused evening and an evening at Super Bowl.

Our farm space was renamed Arowhenua and continues to offer a unique space for ngā tamariki to develop a deep connection with the whenua. We also adopted Lamb lamb and Bam bam (sheep), along with Beau and Flo the turkeys! We purchased 4 hens as well to add to our menagerie. Community input and support continue to be the foundation of our strong vibrant learning space where whakawhanaungatanga and mahi tahi are embedded into our ways of being.



Longbush Kindergarten/ Outdoor Play



Longford Kindergarten

Whakawhanaungatanga -connection is important to our hapori and we are proud of the meaningful relationships that are the heart of our teaching and learning at Longford Kindergarten.

2024 saw us exploring the different ways that we can nourish our Taha hinengaro -emotional well -being through our Engage mahi. We grew the ways that we can express our feelings and emotions through belly breathing and yoga, connecting with Papatūānuku and practicing our social skills through co-operative games!

We connected with our wider community through taking part in the Cultural fest with Oxford and Elsie Street Kindergartens. We also took part in the Santa Parade where our float won the "Jingle Bell Award" for Best Education Entry with our community helpers theme!

Chinese New Year, Matariki and Diwali was celebrated with tamariki and whānau. We embrace learning about the cultures of our whānau and the ways that we can reflect within our programme.

2025 sees us growing our whakawhanaungatanga through exploring a place based approach encouraging our tamariki to explore, connect with and understand their local stories and history.



Longford Kindergarten/ Diwali Celebration

Newfield Kindergarten

Kaiako noticed the tamariki taking a real interest in our trees, blossoms and flowers during spring. This led to the introduction of learning about our Living Landscape. The tamariki loved learning about nga Atua in our Kindergarten environment and the story of creation where Tāne Mahuta pushed his parents apart to form a day and night. The Pou in our outside environment has helped create links to Papatuanuku and the Living Landscape.

The tamariki became involved in growing seeds that were germinating in our locker room. They were then planted out in our new refurbished vegetable garden that our Family Committee helped redesign earlier in the year. When our crops are ready we will use our vegetables to make tomato sauce, courgette chocolate cake and courgette fritters (tamariki choices). The Family Committee has also organised numerous family nights throughout the year including our Matariki disco, Play Pods and supported us with Polyfest. We also had a fabulous whanau night with food, fun and a good time had by all.

Recycling our rubbish and plastics from our lunch boxes generated interesting and thoughtful discussions from our whānau. Tamariki were being encouraged to put their rubbish in relevant bins and compost, feed the worms or take the rubbish to the red wheelie bin. This is excellent mahi for saving the planet that the tamariki are taking pride in. Protecting Papatuanuku is very important to us here at Newfield Kindy.

Tamariki expressed an interest in making their own food at Kindergarten which created many learning opportunities through making our own yogurt and bread. Our Taiao Tuhūra tamariki collected pikopiko during Bush Kindy which we cooked up for our annual Thanksgiving celebrations in honour of our American whanau. On our Thanksgiving learning journey, we discovered Native Americans had some similarities to Māori as we made connections to nga Atua. We combined the two cultures together by feasting on traditional food such as mac n cheese, mashed potatoes and pumpkin pie from America and pikopiko from New Zealand. It was a wonderful celebration that was shared by our whānau.

Newfield Kindergarten is thankful for another great year of fun and learning and can not wait to see what 2025 brings us.



Newfield Kindergarten/ Painting



**Newfield Kindergarten/
Nature discovery**

Northern Southland Kindergarten

It’s been a big year for Northern Southland Kindergarten! We extended our role to a 30/30 model and had further staffing changes. In May we farewelled Cheri and welcomed Ellie into the Kaiako teaching team. As our role grew Alice joined us as our regular lunch cover. The addition of Ellie (from Lumsden), Alice (from Riversdale) and Taylor (our Teacher aid from Lumsden) greatly increased our engagement in the local community as these kaiako brought their experience and local contacts to the fore.

This year we have been very focused on getting out and about in the Community to participate in local events and ensure our tamariki learn about the local area.

We introduced regular excursions to the Lumsden Community Garden and Community Playground. We went to Northern Southland College to see their Polyfest performance, participated in a REAP Move to Learn Session at the Lumsden Community Hall and went to see a Primary School production. We also visited the Lumsden Primary School Pet Day, local cafes and explored the main street of Lumsden!

The introduction of transition to school visits for our older tamariki saw future School pupils ride on a bus to Mossburn School. We visited the playground of the Lumsden school during the holidays to become familiar with this and joined in on a morning matt time in the new entrants class in Term 4.

Having a stall at the Lumsden Community Fun Day and opening the kindergarten gates for an Open Afternoon expanded our visibility and hopefully raised awareness of our service within the Community.

We have been very grateful to a proactive and hugely supportive parent committee and parent helpers who have volunteered their time to make our excursions program possible and undertaking a range of fundraising activities for new resources for nga tamariki.



Northern Southland Kindergarten/
Out in the Community



Otatara Kindergarten

Learning to care for Papatuanuku and all living things is part of our learning programme. These past few months Otatara Kindergarten tamariki have been learning all about Saving the Bees. The tamariki have been learning how we can do this by understanding the importance of having Bees in our environment. We started looking at the habitats of bees, which then led onto investigating what type of flowers bees like the best.

We now have started creating our own special Bee Garden. This has created a lot of interest and curiosity around Bees. Empathy was developed and less fear around Bees was learnt from many learning experiences the tamariki engaged in, for example, creating Bee artwork, honeycomb tasting and plants were planted in our special Bee garden. Thank you to one of our whanau donated plants to start our Bee Garden. There were lots of mahi tahi and showing manaakitanga during the planting process.

The tamariki were proud of their efforts and showed the whanau the mahi they had done. We also had a whanau come into share their knowledge and teach us about beekeeping. The tamariki had fun trying on the Beekeeping suit. I wonder how many future Beekeepers we will have.

Sunflowers were also planted in respect of the Bees. Each tamaiti got to plant their own sunflower seed to nurture, once again, empathy and taking ownership of their own plant to ensure its growth was demonstrated. This is a start to our project as we have lots more to ako together about caring for the bees on Papatuanuku, mother earth.



Otatara Kindergarten/ Sunflowers



Oxford Kindergarten

This year to further support our learners with social and emotional competence we introduced The Power of Yet. The power of yet is about switching our language from “I can’t do this” to I can’t do this YET”, this establishes a growth mindset; a meaningful asset that is integral to development.

This learning has been intricately woven throughout the programme and we can hear mokopuna say “I can’t do it YET,” and we see them act like superheroes as they encourage their peers by yelling “THE POWER OF YET”. For some mokopuna this could be learning to zip up their own jackets, for others it’s leaping from the log.

Our whanau have reported that this learning is being shared at home with siblings. Mary one of our Mums said, “The Power of Yet has been such a powerful concept.” Beaudy told us that he liked The Power of Yet because now he can do his zip up on his coat. Sarah said, “I can shoot basketball hoops now.”

The unexpected learning from The Power of Yet has been harikoa / joy. Mokopuna are joyful when they overcome the challenges, they set themselves. Sharing these stories of harikoa/joyfulness with whanau has been a real privilege.



Oxford Kindergarten/ Outdoor Play



Ranui Kindergarten

Ranui Kindergarten have created lots of memories over 2024, reflecting on the year that was we can celebrate many achievements and treasured moments.

Nature Discovery is eagerly looked forward to by tamariki. Nga tamariki are often asking "How many more sleeps to bush kindy?" This programme means tamariki can connect with the whenua and enjoy the benefits of unhurried, unstructured outdoor play. The changes of the seasons allowed for different types of activities - blackberry hunting, fruit harvesting and even enjoying a campfire in Winter!

Ranui's most recent curriculum design focus was "Our World", where we explored whakapapa – what people, places and things are shaping our tamariki. On our journeys back and forth from Myross Road, tamariki were pointing out familiar landmarks which prompted a City Landmarks tour. This strengthened links between kindergarten and home.

We supported Little Hearts Day which created opportunities for creative expression. Ngā tamariki used various art forms to create items to sell as a fundraiser, giving their mahi a real sense of purpose, mana and ohaohanga (pride). All of the mahi was done collaboratively with a common goal of contributing to our community. The Little Hearts mascot came to celebrate with us on the day!

Our excursion to the library to see Wastefree Wanda was the springboard for some deep thinking and korero around how we can do "simple swaps" to be better kaiatiaki of Papatūānuku. Ngā tamariki grasped the concepts readily and created a display of simple swaps at kindergarten. We made Wastefree Wanda vests to wear when contributing to this kaupapa, and as a lasting reminder of the entertaining, educational and relevant take-home messages from the show. Te korero has continued throughout the year and is something we would definitely do again.



Ranui Kindergarten/ Out in the community



Riverton Kindergarten

Our local curriculum is really important to us here at Riverton Kindergarten. One of the ways we celebrate this is our weekly adventures at bush kindy at Mores Reserve. Here our tamariki have the opportunity to have time in nature, exploring and investigating, challenging themselves and others. They are the leaders, the decision makers up here, and together as a group, have autonomy over the learning.

Our tamariki really look forward to their opportunity to attend this. They have had some awesome opportunities this year including being part of Aparima community that welcome kiwi from Raratoka (Centre) Island that were being transported to a new home. They felt so much ownership of this that they now call it kiwi island!

We also met up with Dave from the Pest Busters group who shared their mahi with our tamariki, giving them a greater understanding of the protection work carried out in our area. We look forward to more of these great opportunities in 2025.



Riverton Kindergarten/ Fairy Doors



Riverton Kindergarten/ Dave from Pest Busters



Riverton Kindergarten/ Meet a Kiwi

Rockdale Park Kindergarten

Rockdale Park Kindergarten awhi mokopuna and whānau to develop a true sense of belonging and partnership. Alongside whānau, we aspire for ākonga/learners to develop a strong sense of mana and become confident and competent communicators, explorers, problem solvers, decision-makers, creators, and kaitiaki. Discovering the extraordinary in the ordinary fosters a sense of wonder, curiosity, and creativity.

We participate in local cultural events such as Polyfest and value the contribution of whānau to enhance our performance and our art installations. When we cannot participate in local community events, we use initiative and celebrate mokopuna mahi in other ways. This year we had a wonderful opportunity to have mokopuna mahi recognised and displayed in the Miharo Art exhibition. These opportunities highlight what happens here and how te ao Māori concepts and pūrākau are embedded and gifted to mokopuna.



Rockdale Park/ Reading books



Rockdale Park/ Chalk Drawings

We are committed to ensuring we meet our responsibilities under Te Tiriti o Waitangi and draw inspiration from a te ao Māori lens and our view of mokopuna as capable, and competent, with knowledge and experiences to share.

This year mokopuna and kaiako were inspired by Wayfinding Journey. The Wayfinding mahi, inspired mokopuna as they revisited the Matariki cluster and gifted their working theories, which were considered concepts for our garden art pieces.

This year mokopuna also explored and were curious about the Olympics. Mokopuna participated in many events over this period.

To learn more about our ataahua Kindergarten please feel free to pop in anytime, 18 Farrar Street, Heidelberg, Invercargill.

The Cottage Kindergarten

2024 has been a busy year at The Cottage Kindergarten where we welcomed new whānau and tamariki within our community and the support of our whānau has been fantastic with fundraising efforts seeing the purchase of new outdoor equipment. Having some amazing whānau nights with great turnouts where whānau can get to know each other and for Kaiako to strengthen our sense of belonging.

Our curriculum design and focus has been around kaitiakitanga as we move into becoming an EnviroSchools kindergarten. Learning about caring for and protecting the people, places and things in our community. Our focus has seen some great changes to our program in many areas as we have been investigating and exploring new ways to reduce, reuse and recycle to become more sustainable.

We have continued to strengthen our community involvement with our tamariki excited to participate at Polyfest, creating some amazing whetu for the matariki celebration at the stadium, getting out into the community to visit the residents at Rose lodge and participating in Taiao Tūhura where tamariki are learning to be creative in nature and learning to take care of Papatuanuku and Tane’s creatures. We are looking forward to continuing these amazing learning opportunities for the coming year ahead.



The Cottage Kindergarten/ Polyfest



The Cottage Kindergarten/ Out in the Community



The Cottage Kindergarten/ Christmas Night

Waikiwi Kindergarten

Waikiwi Kindergarten has enjoyed an action-packed year filled with lots of learning, fun and laughter. We value strong relationships with tamariki and whānau and these have shaped the path that our kindergarten has taken over the past 12 months.

Our planning focusses across the year have been Ngā Hononga/Relationships, Kotahitanga/Holistic Development, Kaitiakitanga/Guardianship/Kinship, Exploration and Tūrangawaewae, having a place of belonging.

We have investigated how we care for ourselves, care for others and for the environment. There has been lots of interest in growing sustainable practices here at the kindergarten, with our tamariki taking a lead role in caring for our māra kai/garden spaces.

One of our highlights has been the support of our wonderful kindergarten community. This has enabled us to go on numerous excursions to various locations. Polyfest was an example of this where we had the best support crew who were rewarded by the most amazing performance from their tamariki.

Building with Grandad Dave remains a firm favourite experience here at Waikiwi Kindy. Each Wednesday Dave comes in with his tools and wooden offcuts, helping tamariki to make creations. We are so blessed to have Dave as a part of our kindergarten.

We have also enjoyed learning from each other, and this year we learnt all about Diwali from one of our whānau who were open to sharing their cultural celebrations with us. We look forward to celebrating other events of cultural significance for tamariki in the future.



Waikiwi Kindergarten/ Building



Waikiwi Kindergarten/ Polyfest

Waverley Kindergarten

At Waverley Kindergarten we have been exploring the ways that whānaungatanga is evident within our kindergarten. Based on research we know that connection and relationships support learning that is meaningful for our tamariki.

As part of our investigation, we have been exploring what whānau means to us.

We have been connecting with our hāpori by inviting whānau to come into kindy to share their job, part of their culture or a special interest they may have. This has led to a connection between home and kindy, promoting language, developing working theories about our how our world works and curiosity. It also has brought a sense of pride for our tamariki whose whānau have shared.

Visits have included a police officer, a midwife and Mum and a firefighter.

Our Tamariki often revisit these visits through their dramatic play. Kaiako have also been mindful of how sensory play is important in supporting ngā tamariki to build on a sense of connection and belonging at kindy.

We have been reviewing what we provide for Tamariki to support them to learn through the senses. Part of this review was to incorporate a Sensory Station, where our tamariki can go to feel a sense of calm within their busy day.

These are just some of the ways we support whānaungatanga at Waverley Kindergarten to ensure everyone knows that they are a valued part of our community.



Waverley Kindergarten/ Sensory Station



Waverley Kindergarten/ Buddie & his dad

Winton Kindergarten

In 2024 Winton Kindergarten officially signed up to Enviroschools, what an incredible journey it has been so far. We began looking at our outdoor environment and thinking deeper about the flora that was thriving and some that were only surviving!

With the help from ABLime Oreti Catchment group we got to learn about native plants that we knew would do well in our Southland climate. From here we received a generous donation of native plants to encourage a healthier Kindergarten outdoor environment.

From learning about native rakau, Kaiako noticed nga Tamariki showed an invested interest and passion for the kōwhai trees. At our local reserve, Ivy Russell we have an important section named Kōwhai corner, this is a much loved and valued space where our eldest 10 tamariki have been collecting fallen pods and successfully potting seeds with the younger Tamariki back at kindergarten. We have been gifting baby kōwhai trees to whanau. Its quite the magical process!

From there we invited councillor Margie Ruddenklau – aka Grandma Margie come in to teach us all about Kōwhai Reach, did you know there is a difference between the North Island and South Island Kōwhai? Grandma Margie gave us incredible insight as to where we could take our Kōwhai seedlings journey. Winton Kindergarten have loved learning about Nga Rakau!

We have loved learning about our Local legend the Takitimu waka! What journey we have been on, we used the taonga of knowledge to create a beautiful art installation here at Kindergarten so we can keep the legend alive and living and a vital part of our local curriculum. This year our Art projects won us the Polyfest Innovation Award.

And we can't forget to mention our annual trip to the Polyfest big stage in Invercargill, what a highlight it is for the Winton Tamariki, for many of our Tamariki this is their first time on a bus! Nga Tamariki showed dedication and commitment, and their performance showed their hard work!



Winton Kindergarten/ Nature Discovery

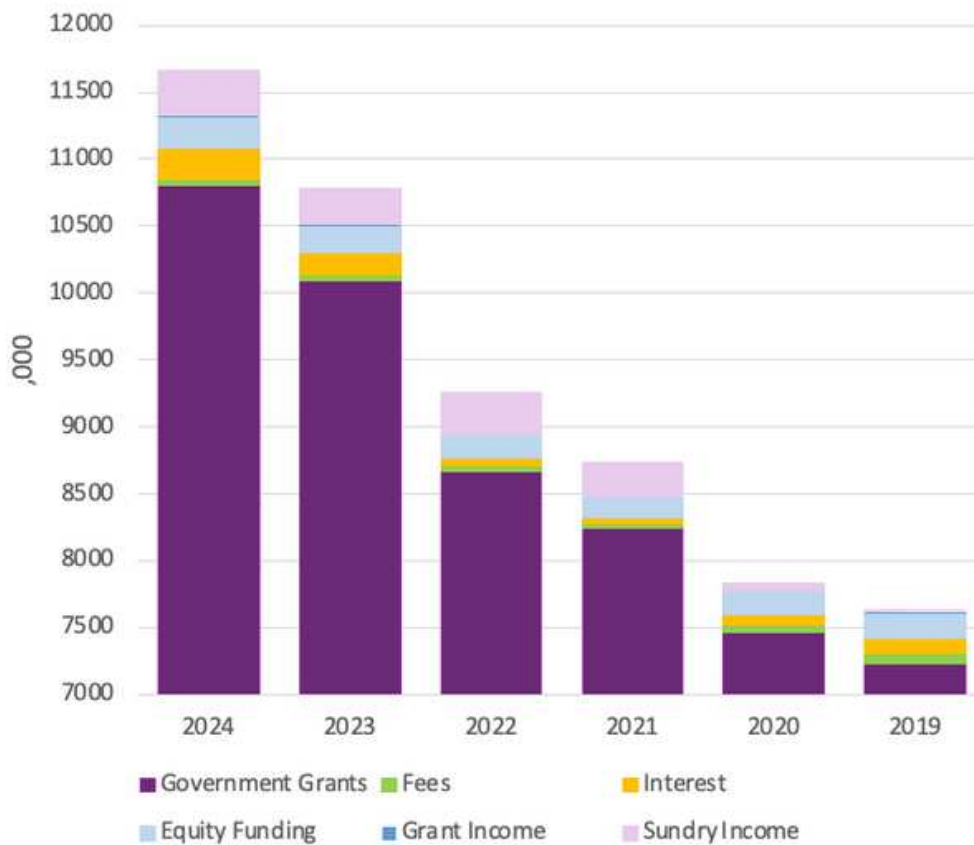


Financial Performance

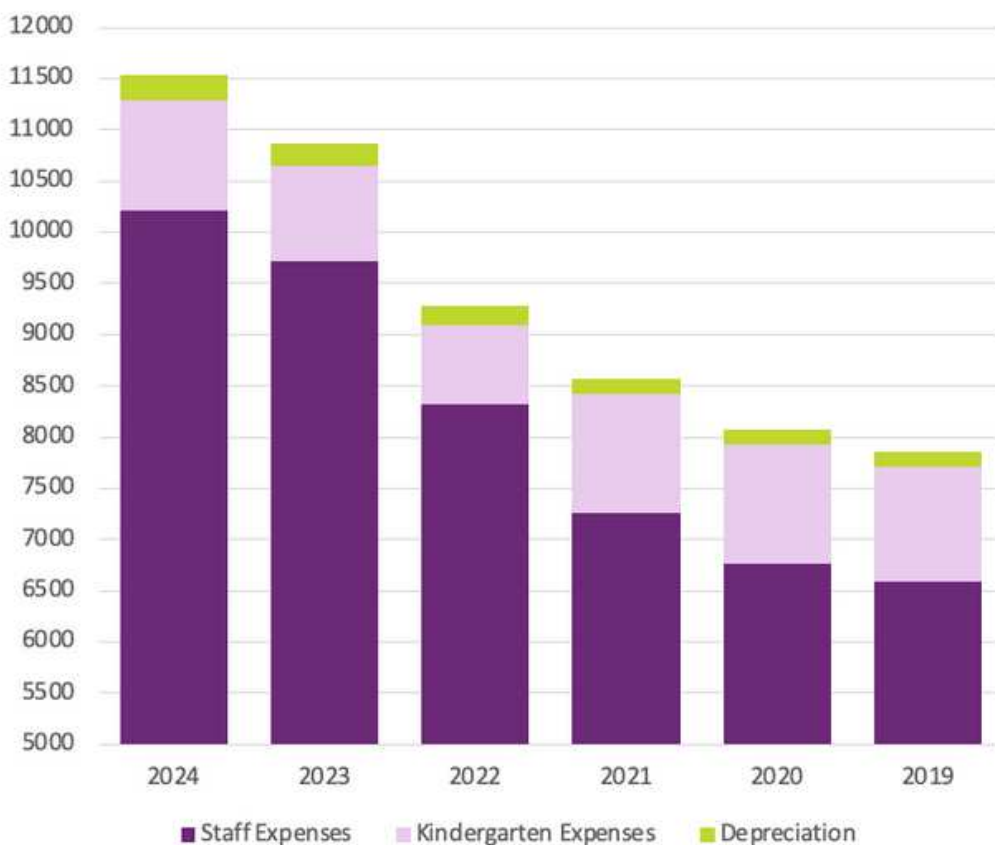
Southland Free Kindergarten Association Financial Information 2019-2024

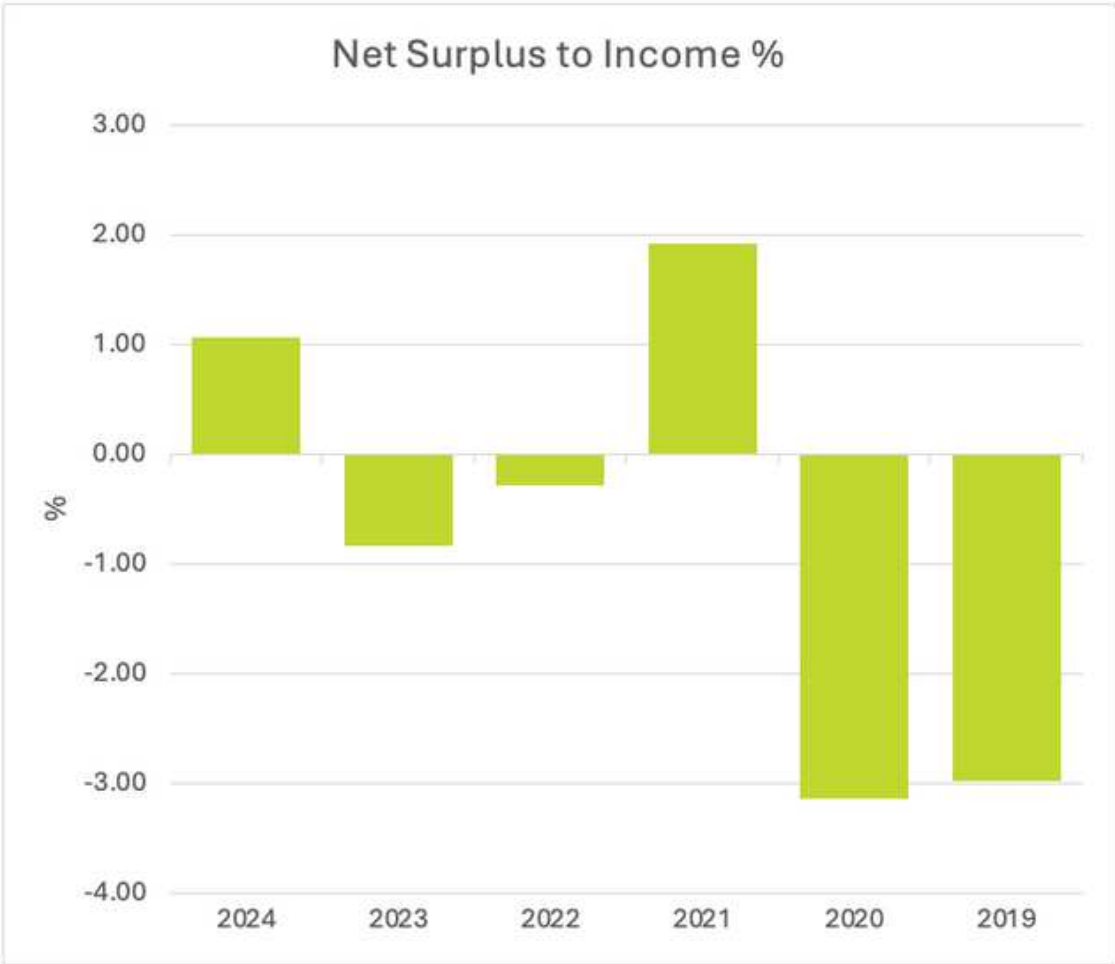
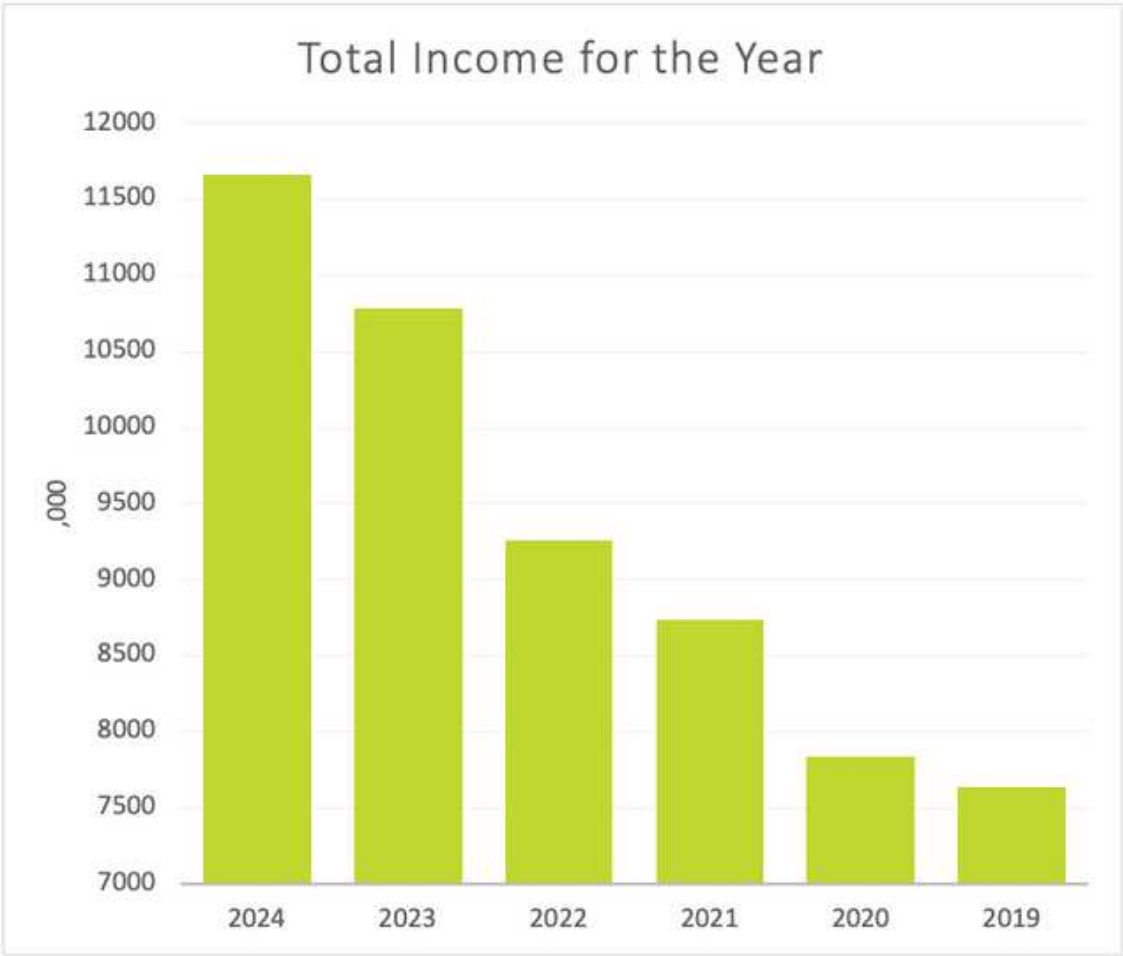
	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
Financial Performance	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Income	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
Government Grants	10807	10097	8674	8248	7468	7228
Fees	41	42	39	35	56	78
Interest	239	167	61	36	80	121
Equity Funding	220	189	167	166	178	181
Grant Income	24	23	2	0	0	14
Sundry Income	336	263	317	250	49	14
Total Income	11667	10781	9260	8735	7831	7636
Expenses	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
Staff Expenses	10210	9714	8327	7262	6759	6588
Kindergarten Expenses	1074	933	765	1156	1173	1124
Depreciation	259	223	194	149	145	151
Total Expenditure	11543	10870	9286	8567	8077	7863
Net Surplus/Deficit before Transfer from Reserves	124	-89	-26	168	-246	-227
Plus allocation from Reserves			0	0	0	0
Total Comprehensive Income for the Year	124	-89	-26	168	-246	-227
Financial Position						
Current Assets	5436	5080	4887	4551	5011	4636
Fixed Assets	2848	2984	2634	2608	2568	2688
Total Assets	8284	8064	7521	7159	7579	7324
Liabilities	3022	2936	2293	1900	2488	1986
Net Assets	5262	5128	5228	5259	5091	5338
Ratios	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
Net Surplus to Income %	1.06	-0.83	-0.28	1.92	-3.14	-2.97
staff Expenses as a % of Bulk Funding	94.48	96.21	96.00	88.05	90.51	91.15

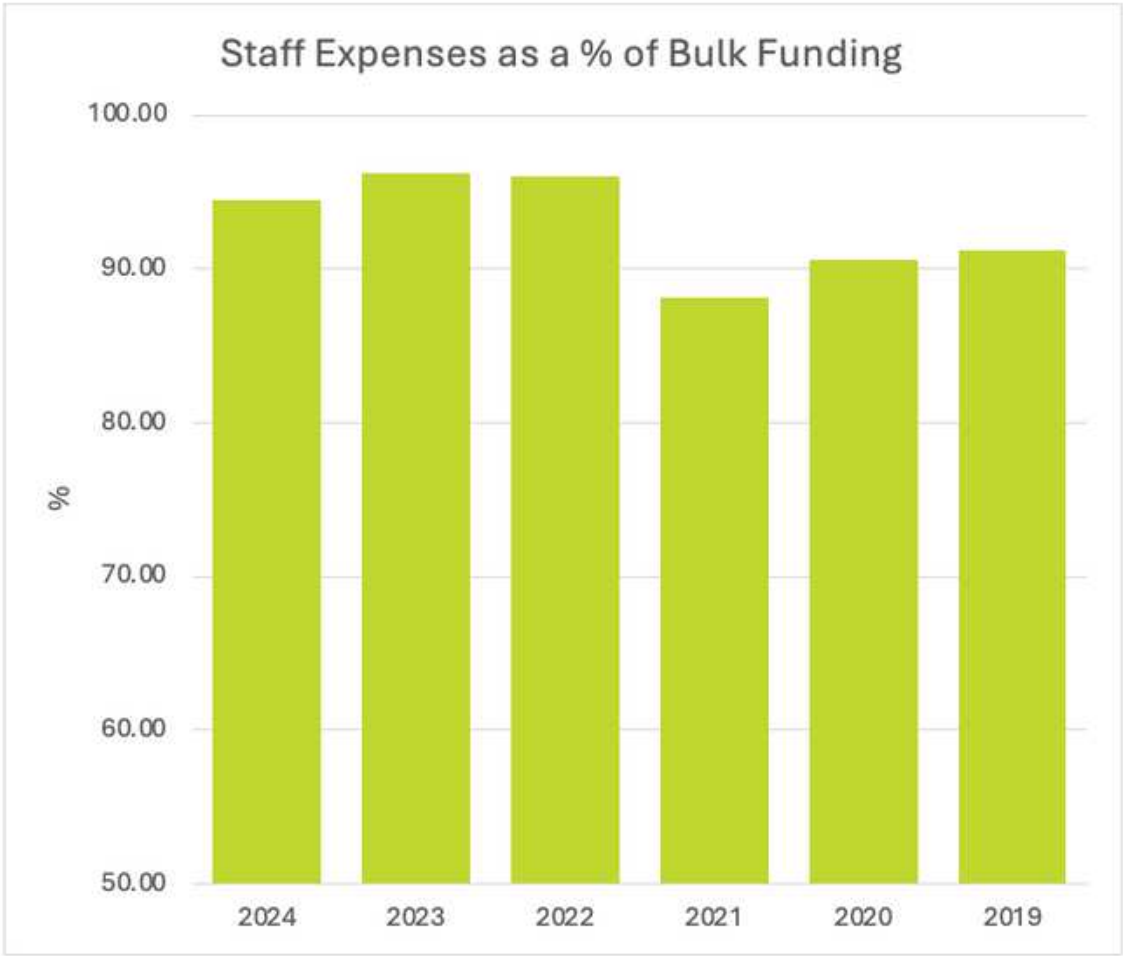
Components of Income



Components of Expenditure









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 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

24
 Kindergartens

kindergartens

SOUTH

Pūtahi Kura Pūhou o Murihiku

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