



Marlborough
Kindergarten
Association

NGĀ WHARE
KOHUNGAHUNGA
MAI WAIRAU KI WAITOHI

Annual Report 2025

Our Kindergartens

Board Chair's Report

General Managers
report

What we did this
year

Contents

Our Kindergartens	3
Awatere Early Learning Centre.....	3
Mayfield Kindergarten.....	4
Redwoodtown Kindergarten	6
Renwick Kindergarten	8
Seymour Kindergarten	10
Springlands Kindergarten	11
Waitohi Kindergarten.....	13
Witherlea Kindergarten.....	15
Board Chair's Report	17
General Manager's Report	18
What we did this year	22
Summary.....	22
Statement of Service Performance.....	23
Financial Summary	24
Our Supporters	25
Te Reo used throughout this report	28

This annual report is an interactive document. Navigate through the document using the arrows on the left and right of your screen, or jump to one of the sections using the four buttons at the top of the page.

To download this document, press the download button on the bottom right of the screen.

Our Kindergartens

Awatere Early Learning Centre

Over the past year, our collective journey has been marked by growth, collaboration, and cultural enrichment.

A highlight was our celebration of Matariki which was an engaging and meaningful experience, weaving together kaupapa Māori with hands-on learning. Tamariki and kaiako embarked on shared learning that connected cultural wisdom with everyday experiences. Through intentional teaching, group activities, exploring the pūrākau 'Te Ika a Māui', sharing personal fishing stories and crafting waka scenes, cultural understanding flourished. Stories and collaborative play sparked curiosity and developed working theories about the world, nurturing our aspirations for tamariki to grow into capable, resilient learners with a strong sense of identity and belonging.

Our learning culminated in a community breakfast, which included a hautapu ceremony (supported by our amazing whānau group) enabling us to celebrate not only the learning of Matariki but also the partnerships that root us within our community.

"I liked the Matariki breakfast, I liked the steam!"

– Tamaiti voice

"Yummy kai and great education on what kai comes from each star."

– Whanau voices

"We are going to celebrate Matariki with a hangi for the first time, choosing to prioritise this celebration over Christmas."

– Whanau voices

We are immensely proud of our 'Manu Taki', tamariki leadership group.



The strong relationships we have built with Seddon and Ward schools have continued through regular hui, supporting our tamariki to confidently transition from AELC to school life.

We would like to thank our whānau group who have brought fresh energy, insight and enthusiasm, supporting us to provide a rich and inclusive learning environment for our tamariki.

Awatere Team

Mayfield Kindergarten

Taiopenga took place in October, and this year we tried something different by performing in the afternoon. This change meant every child had whānau supporting them in the audience. We began learning our waiata in term two and tamariki started going home singing and sharing them with their whānau. The actions and words were posted on Storypark, allowing whānau to support learning at home. This generated strong interest and enthusiasm for the event. As tamariki grew in confidence, natural leaders emerged and stepped up to lead waiata. It was inspiring to see them show their mana, be brave like Māui, and lead with confidence in front of a huge, supportive crowd.

Professional learning around Tapasā has been a significant learning journey for kaiako over a six-month period, proving to be invaluable. All teachers have upskilled as a result and are committed to weaving this learning into our curriculum. Most importantly, our tamariki who identify as Pacific learners are affirmed as individuals and celebrated for who they are.

Tamariki led their own learning through waiata, language, pictures, playthings, dance, hand games, and cultural identity resources. They engaged enthusiastically with Pasifika play areas, exploring familiar contexts such as church life, family gatherings, and fishing.

Our new Pasifika dresses and headgear gave tamariki the opportunity to proudly wear traditional clothing. They showed their peers how to wear it correctly, taking pride in their appearance and enjoying the familiarity of their culture.

Whānau feedback has been heartening. One parent shared that their child has gained the confidence to embrace, lead, and speak Tongan. They were even able to lead and speak confidently in front of their church group on White Sunday—a huge milestone.

We have continued to make the most of opportunities to explore our local community. A real highlight was contributing tamariki voices to a poem about the Ōmaka River, a place tamariki connect with during regular hīkoi. Kaiako read aloud the poems already along the awa, which included works by whānau members and former Mayfield tamariki. Our tamariki were excited to recognise these names, and they learned that the awa can speak to us in many ways. As kaitiaki, they explored what helps or hinders the awa health, forming strong views and connections. The unveiling of an MKA poem, which they contributed to, was a proud moment for our kindergarten. It has now become a destination point during hīkoi, especially at Matariki when tamariki walk along the awa to read this poem together.



Te Awa o Ōmaka – Our Awa Makes Us Happy

*Tama-nui-te-rā twinkles on the Taylor River
I can see it reflecting on me
I love seeing the eels, like wiggly snakes
They swim fast and jump to eat the bread
I like watching the fish swim in the whirling water*

*The river makes me feel happy
I go there with my whānau
So much to discover and it's always exciting*

*Seeing rubbish in the water makes me feel sad
It makes the fish feel sick
Leave it alone, don't waste it, it might dry up
Keep it safe and treat it with respect*



One of our curriculum priorities, Ūkaipōtanga, is about being grounded to the land, finding our strength and energy, and having a place where we belong. This resonates strongly with tamariki. Through their mahi in the māra, tamariki developed responsibility and knowledge of how to keep Papatūānuku healthy and happy. They explored the importance of bugs, worms, and soil health, and discovered the natural cycle of the seasons:

- **Ngāhuru / Autumn** – harvesting and feeding the soil
- **Hōtoke / Winter** – resting the soil
- **Kōanga / Spring** – planting and refreshing the soil
- **Raumati / Summer** – watering and harvesting

Each season brought new anticipation and learning. Tamariki learned that being kaitiaki of the māra means caring for its wellbeing throughout the year. They also engaged in sustainable practices such as upcycling leaves, making nettle tea, and creating seaweed scrubs. This deepened their understanding of giving back to Papatūānuku and showing aroha for the natural world.

Ngā mihi maioha,
Mayfield Team

Redwoodtown Kindergarten

At Redwoodtown Kindergarten tamariki are encouraged to explore, grow, and develop essential skills, which lay the foundations for future success.

Diversity is at the heart of our programme which reflects the different cultures, languages, traditions, and cultural celebrations of our community. Children and their whānau are encouraged to share their own cultural backgrounds, which strengthens understanding and acceptance amongst peers and the wider community. We promote respect, empathy, and kindness, ensuring every child feels valued and included.

Kaiako adopt a strength-based approach that fosters curiosity, creativity and critical thinking. The teaching team is strong in its commitment to ensuring equitable outcomes for all and attends regular professional development which positively impacts their practice and pedagogy. Assessment shows that tamariki are experiencing positive learning outcomes, which are driven by intentional teaching and learning experiences which are both relevant and meaningful.

Redwoodtown Kindergarten continues to play an active role in supporting our community. Our Matariki event brought together children, whānau, and other members of our learning community. Together, tamariki and kaiako spent the day preparing shared kai which was then presented to the community at a celebration which included waiata and dancing.

Partnerships with local businesses, such as Woolworths, enable us to give whānau access to kai which in turn reduces barriers to attending Kindergarten.

We continue to integrate the Enviroschools programme into our daily practices, fostering a culture of sustainability and environmental responsibility among children, kaiako and the wider community.



Our Kindergartens

Board Chair's Report

General Managers report

What we did this year

This has seen positive outcomes such as waste-reduction strategies, recycling, composting food scraps, planting and development of a mara kai and a worm farm. The integration of these sustainable practices has enriched children's learning and strengthened connections with the wider community.

Last year saw the development and creation of a community garden. The garden boasts two large seven-metre-long raised garden beds which are surrounded by pear, apple, mandarin, and feijoa trees. With the support, funding and donations received from Bunnings Blenheim, our dreams and plans of a community garden were brought to fruition. This garden has created a sustainability journey for our tamariki who planted seeds, nurtured the soil and seedlings and protected growing plants from frosts and bugs.



The development of our garden has provided hands on opportunities for our tamariki to grow, harvest and taste fresh produce both at kindergarten and in their home environment. This has also strengthened their connection to nature and understanding of healthy eating. We want to thank MDC environmental education for supporting us with this.

We are immensely proud of the comments from whānau in a recent questionnaire when asked to describe our Kindergarten:

- *"Its always so warm and welcoming."*
- *"We love the whole environment."*
- *"We love the trips into the community, the science experiments, the gardening and outdoor play."*
- *"We love seeing our daughter engaging in other cultures."*

Ehara toku toa I te toa takitahi e ngā re he toa takanini – My strength is not that of an individual but that of a collective.

Redwoodtown Team

Renwick Kindergarten

Ka whakaute tatou te taiao, ka tākaro tatou pena ki he hoa tapui, kia kaha, kia māia, kia manawanui – respect and care for the environment, play together as a good friend, be strong, be brave, be steadfast.

At Renwick Kindergarten, we believe that true sustainability goes beyond just reducing our carbon footprint; it involves creating a culture of respect, inclusion, and practices that enhance the mana of people, places, and things.

Over the past year, we have started a Nature Connection programme. Every term two teachers take a different 20 children and walk to Rousehill Reserve to spend a couple of hours exploring and being with nature, taking learning out of the kindergarten and exploring our local community. This mahi continues to reflect our deep-rooted commitment to sustainability and environmental stewardship.

Taiopenga was another stand out for us last year. We were gifted funds by our local Fresh Choice supermarket specifically to invest in kapa haka uniforms. After consultation with mana whenua, we purchased some maro for our tama and made tipare in session with the tamariki using the kindergarten sewing machine. One of our grandmothers made costumes for our kōtiro. We have just purchased two kākahu specifically for our kaea to wear during performances.

We have been very fortunate to maintain our connection with a former whānau, Tawhiri and Somer, who led us for Kapa Haka, after leading another awesome performance at Taiopenga the previous year.

Matariki was once again a highlight of our year and became a huge focus within our programme. Each week we had a deep dive into the nine stars of Matariki, sharing the learning with whānau and offering learning opportunities for our tamariki to explore connections to te ao Māori. Our learning culminated with the much-anticipated Matariki breakfast.





Celebrations commenced at Rousehill Reserve at 7.30am where the children led our karakia, followed by our annual Hautapu ceremony – a traditional Matariki offering that combines foods that represent the stars. As the lid is lifted from the pot, the rising steam nourishes the stars. We followed this with a waiata and star hunt, returning to kindergarten for a breakfast of waffles and hot drinks. We had fantastic support from our whānau, more than 30 families, devouring over 140 waffles!

"Ka rawe kaiako o Renwick Kindy, I loved your Matariki celebration. I especially loved your hautapu and Karakia from the kids, ka pai tō mahi!"

"Such a memorable experience for the kids, amazing learning! Thank you for including the whole whānau!"

"Loved learning the star meanings via the children."

"A beautiful morning meeting whānau and making new connections. New tradition for us."

Whanau voice

"Thank you to our whānau, tamariki and community for making our kindergarten the amazing place of fun and learning that it is."

Kia kaha, kia maia, kia manawanui
Renwick Team



Seymour Kindergarten

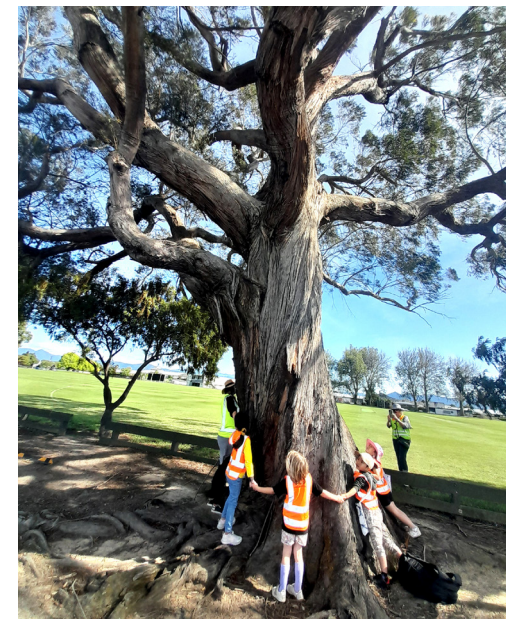
One of our priorities as a Kindergarten is to be out in the community building strong relationships of learning for our tamariki and whānau.

The year at Seymour has been a whirlwind of special experiences for our tamariki. The local streets of Blenheim have been our classroom through our Nature Connection hikoi. While on our walks we have explored the many areas of science and our tamariki have led this aspect of our curriculum acknowledging and respecting te taiao, taking on the role of being kaitiaki, and bringing this learning back into our Kindergarten environment. These regular hikoi have enabled us to engage with members of the community who have invited us into their gardens, and shared their produce and knowledge of the different plants they have growing.

Our adventures have taken us on a pahi (bus) to our local community gardens to grow knowledge around being sustainable, especially composting. We were able to ramble through the gardens experiencing the different smells and textures, tasting fresh fruit and vegetables and bringing home produce to put in our Hautapu ready for Matariki.

We were able to visit Ngā Puawai Kohunga Reo who welcomed us with a mihi whakatau –giving our rangatahi the opportunity to take on leadership roles to greet them with a hongi. Our visit to Ngā Puawai Kohunga Reo was also an opportunity for our kaiako to meet with other educators and experience an environment where tamariki are immersed in te reo Māori. We shared waiata, karakia and kai building a sense of whānaungatanga and manaaki two concepts which are valued at Seymour.

Ngā mihi
Seymour team



Springlands Kindergarten

We continue our journey to become a nature kindergarten with regular trips out into the surrounding community to explore and make connections. We are nearing the two-year anniversary of starting the Nature Connection programme at Sheps Park and this programme has gone through quite a few changes over the last year as ngā tamariki become more confident and competent in their exploring, questioning, and developing theories of what is happening in the environment. We no longer take teaching resources and focus on free exploration and collection of loose parts in and around the park which prompts play and learning when the group re-joins to share what they have discovered throughout the morning.

Ngā tamariki took on the role of Kaitiaki of Shep's Park earlier this year by inviting the Council Parks and Open Spaces team to join us on site so they could point out the hazards they had identified. As a result, the council organised for these to be removed. A Council Parks and Services Team member remarked "we'll look at park audit changes because of these kids which is really cool". This is a great example of how our students feel empowered to look after their community and their environment.

"Thank you for all the trips to Sheps Park, for helping me do the monkey bars so well, ALL the water in the sandpit, for the painting and drawing and playdough fun. I will miss you all."

—Tamaiti voice

We continue our weekly trips to McKendry Park and have added a few new experiences there. Ngā tamariki have discovered the tuna/eels who live in Murphy Stream and with close observation from kaiako, ngā tamariki are able to approach the waters edge and feed the eels. We are also using the hill over at the park to slide, roll and run down – much to ngā tamariki joy and amusement.



Tamariki and kaiako are all really enjoying having the Kids Edible Gardens Programme here at kindergarten. Ngā tamariki have loved learning the process of seed to harvest and seeing what their mahi in the mara can accomplish. They have enjoyed trying the produce that we harvest – including kale chips (roasted in the oven), hot buttered new season potatoes, peas out of the pod, beans, cauliflower florets and freshly pulled carrots (that are barely rinsed under the hose).

Menz Shed Blenheim kindly built a greenhouse/seedling house for us. This has added to our planting and seed cultivation efforts, and we are now mostly using plants in our garden straight from our seedling house.



The materials used to build the house were kindly donated by Mitre 10 Marlborough – ngā tamariki and kaiako are very grateful to both these organisations.

Our Taiopenga performance in Term 4, 2024 was again a highlight of our year. This year our repertoire was based around Papatuanuku and our tamariki enjoyed learning and performing the waiata. We walked down to Marlborough Girls for the performance before staying and watching what other ECE and primary schools were showcasing. It was a great morning out for our older tamariki while our youngest stayed at kindergarten. We are hoping to take the whole kindergarten for our next Taiopenga – making a day of it by heading to Pollard Park for some of the day – lunch, checking out their eel population and exploring the different areas of the park.

"Thank you so much for the kindness, care and support you've given our son during his time at kindy. We've felt incredibly lucky to have him surrounded by such a wonderful team. It's been special to see him grow in confidence, feel included and truly enjoy his time with you all."
–Whanau voice

Our programme this year also included Box of Birds puppet show (a Christmas gift from the kaiako to tamariki), a visit from Amby the Ambulance, Dog Safety with Jackie, Leanne helping us with our sign language knowledge training and REAP Ninja Lines.

The kaiako wish to thank all our wonderful tamariki and whānau for their amazing support. Without you our kindergarten wouldn't be the great place that it is.

Springlands Team

Waitohi Kindergarten

Tēnā koutou katoa,

What an incredible year it has been at Waitohi Kindergarten! Our learning journey has been full of excitement, exploration, and achievement. With our curriculum priorities firmly embedded into our programme, tamariki, kaiako, and whānau have worked together to create rich, meaningful learning experiences. Here are some highlights of 2025 and the ways we are meeting our priorities.



Kaitiaki ki te taiao – Caring for our Environment

Being a seaside community, it's only natural that our learning embraces the moana and whenua around us.

- Exploring the sea and shore: At Shelly Beach, tamariki discovered the wonders of the rocky shore, while our trip to Lochmara Lodge gave us the thrill of travelling by boat, exploring the underwater observatory, and learning about marine life up close.
- Family adventures: Our kai and whānau day at Waikawa Bay was a highlight – sharing a meal, feeding stingrays, swimming, and even catching spotties on fishing lines made at kindergarten.
- Community action: On our many walks, tamariki became passionate rubbish collectors, and we took the next step by sorting soft plastics and delivering them to Envirohub and Picton School.
- Special partnerships: Our connections with Marlborough King Salmon and Queen Charlotte College opened up new learning, as tamariki observed live fish tanks and explored the salmon life cycle.
- Wild Waikawa magic: Our partnership with Mish and Nige at Wild Waikawa – Protecting Papatūānuku continues to inspire. Whether identifying fungi, mastering tricky terrain, or learning about pest trapping, tamariki have been developing confidence and pride as kaitiaki. A huge celebration was shared in the Marlborough Environment Awards, where the Wild Waikawa team won the Landscape and Environment Category – and we were right there cheering them on.

Our Kindergartens

Board Chair's Report

General Managers report

What we did this year

Whakaako pāpori me te wairua – Social and Emotional Learning

This year, our focus on aroha, manaakitanga, and keeping ourselves and others safe has been woven into everything we do.

- Building friendships: Tamariki practised joining play, asking for help, and navigating tricky feelings such as disappointment with aroha and resilience.
- Matariki celebrations: For the first time, we held a hautapu ceremony, preparing and sharing kai linked to the four whetū (stars) of kai. Tamariki learned new waiata, haka, and karakia, and experienced the joy of 'feeding the stars' with the steam from our feast. We extended our celebrations at Waikawa Marae, where tamariki shone in their kapa haka performance.
- Transitions and confidence: Our strong connections with Waikawa and Picton schools have supported tamariki as they prepare for new adventures. From joining school assemblies and sports days to racing on the Picton School bike track, tamariki are gaining confidence, learning to take turns, and thriving in new environments.



Ngā pūke ngā tūāpapa ā-reo, ā-pā ngā rau hoki – Foundation Skills in Literacy and Numeracy

The foundations of literacy and numeracy are woven seamlessly into our daily programme.

- Oral language growth: With the support of speech-language therapist Carleen, tamariki have been extending vocabulary and speech sounds, while our use of sign language and visual supports has strengthened communication for all.
- Music and movement: Local music therapist Anna has enriched our learning with rhythm, song, and movement, giving tamariki fun and creative ways to grow their oral language.
- Hands-on design projects: From building a whare pepeke (bug hotel) to designing bird feeders, tamariki have been researching, problem-solving, and creating. These projects sparked curiosity, with tamariki asking questions, seeking answers in books and online, and sharing their ideas through drawing, writing, and kōrero.

Wrapping Up – A Year to Remember

From the rocky shore to the classroom, from kapa haka to hautapu, from the ngahere to the bike track – 2025 at Waitohi Kindergarten has been unforgettable. Our tamariki have embraced challenge, curiosity, and kaitiakitanga with enthusiasm, growing into confident, capable learners.

We could not do this without the aroha and support of the Marlborough Kindergarten Association, our whānau, and the wider community who walk alongside us in this learning journey.

Arohanui,
Waitohi Team

Witherlea Kindergarten

It has been another wonderful and eventful year at Witherlea Kindergarten, filled with growth, creativity, and meaningful learning experiences for our tamariki.

We are proud to have developed two new outdoor play spaces this year, designed to spark curiosity and support imaginative play. Our new 'quarry' area—complete with small rocks, dump trucks, diggers, and excavators—has proven a favourite across all ages and genders. This space has invited hours of rich, open-ended play. In contrast, our whimsical fairy garden under the peach tree has inspired a different kind of wonder. Tamariki wrote letters inviting the fairies to visit, weaving storytelling and early literacy naturally into their play.

Our Nature Connection programme continues to flourish, consistently offering rich, unintended learning outcomes. Through our participation in the Maataa Waka Dog Safety programme, tamariki learn essential safety skills—practising 'be a tree or a rock' when approached by unknown dogs and repeating the mantra "if a dog is on its own, leave it alone." These lessons help empower our tamariki to feel confident and informed when exploring the wider world.



A highlight remains our visits to the tuna (eels) at McKenzie Street, which are now further enriched by the stunning resource developed by Ngāti Apa ki te Rā Tō. We are deeply grateful for this taonga and the connection it strengthens with te taiao and mātauranga Māori.

KEGs (Kids Edible Garden's sessions) with Joy in the māra kai continue to be a treasured part of our weekly programme. We've now journeyed through all four seasons alongside her—tending to our garden, nurturing the soil, and planting, harvesting, and enjoying our hua rākau and hua whenua. A standout success was our kūmara harvest, which we turned into delicious kūmara chips—an experience thoroughly enjoyed by all. Our tamariki have also taken great pride in reinvigorating our compost and worm farm systems; they delight in transferring newly found worms to their new home!

This year's Matariki celebration took a new and deeply meaningful direction. Instead of our usual evening event, we gathered in the morning for a hautapu ceremony followed by a shared breakfast—and a pyjama day! We recited a karakia before unveiling a pot of kai representing the whetū: Waitī, Waitā, Tupu-ā-nuku and Tupu-ā-rangi. The steam was released as an offering to the stars, symbolising our hopes for the year ahead. The response from whānau was overwhelmingly positive, and next year we plan to build on this, creating a space to remember and speak the names of loved ones who have passed.

Following recent MKA professional development, we placed renewed focus on our physical development programme. We recognise the importance of building strong, capable bodies as a foundation for later formal learning. This year we incorporated a wide range of gross and fine motor activities: handwriting readiness, ball skills, tee-ball, frisbee golf, balance challenges, tunnels and more. These experiences support coordination, confidence, and physical literacy—essential for all aspects of tamariki wellbeing and learning.

Our Kindergartens

Board Chair's Report

General Managers report

What we did this year

Taiopenga 2024 was a true highlight and became even more special thanks to a generous whānau donation, which enabled us to create our very own kapa haka uniforms. Our tamariki are immensely proud of these and are rehearsing enthusiastically ahead of our upcoming Taiopenga performance. This year, we are proud to be taking all of our tamariki to Taiopenga, ensuring everyone has the opportunity to participate, perform, and celebrate together as a kindergarten whānau and be a part of our wider community.

To better meet the needs of our community, Witherlea Kindergarten transitioned from a 40:30 to a 40:40 model—allowing 40 tamariki to attend all day, four days a week. This change has brought many benefits: a more settled flow to our day, less disruption during transitions, and happy tamariki who no longer need to leave at 12.45pm if they don't want to!

Our connection with Witherlea School remains strong and continues to offer a smooth transition into kura. The New Entrant class visits us each term, and we reciprocate with visits of our own – circumstances permitting. These excursions are invaluable: tamariki spend an entire morning (9.00am–11.30am) in the New Entrant classroom alongside familiar kaiako. This allows them to explore their future learning environment with confidence and security, often before their own formal transition visits begin. Whānau regularly share how much they value this connection, noting how it helps reduce anxiety and builds readiness. These visits are offered to our oldest eight tamariki each time, regardless of their intended school, and even those moving on to other kura benefit greatly from the experience.

In closing, it has been a vibrant and fulfilling year at Witherlea Kindergarten. We are continually inspired by our tamariki, uplifted by our whānau, and grateful for the support of our board, iwi partners, and wider community.

Witherlea Team



Our Kindergartens

Board Chair's Report

General Managers
report

What we did this
year



Board Chair's Report

"Take care of our children.

Take care of what they hear, take care of what they see, take care of what they feel"

Dame Whina Cooper

It's a pleasure to write the introduction to this year's Annual Report for Marlborough Kindergarten Association.

Marlborough is lucky to have such a wonderful and committed team in the Marlborough Kindergarten Association, which is deeply committed to long-term impact for tamariki, whānau and community through a holistic approach to education.

Since the NZ Kindergartens Board has been working with the Association, we have been consistently impressed with the dedication shown by kaimahi in ensuring tamariki have what they need to thrive – whether it is a recognition or deepening of cultural connections, additional support for their wider whānau, or longer hours to enable parents and carers to meet their own work or study commitments, the Association is on the watch for ways to support each child to succeed.

In the last 12 months, the Association has shown its commitment to connection with te taiao, with te iwi ō te Tauoho, and this has been an enriching experience for tamariki, whānau and kaimahi. This shared mahi has led to opportunities for greater understanding of the rohe in which the Association operates as well as exciting adventures and pūrakau for tamariki to learn about.

Prudent financial management has also been a feature this year, and I acknowledge the way the Association has supported community across kai, health and connection with additional services in a year that has had many whānau facing tougher budgeting themselves. This is another way in which the Marlborough Kindergarten Association continues to put 'the child at the centre' every day.

The talent and skill of kaiako, and the support of the wider team means that Marlborough has become a magnet for children with diverse learning needs. While this benefits these specific tamariki and whānau, the benefit of this mahi is clear across the Kindergarten community, with increased understanding, learning about the strengths of difference and building confidence in tamariki.

I'd like to congratulate the Association on a wonderful year, and thank Corina, the team and the Marlborough community for all the extra effort that is put into making Kindergarten, and community a place for everyone.

Ngā, mihi nui,

Sarah Tocker
Board Chair
New Zealand Kindergartens



General Manager's Report

Kia ora koutou

E kī ana te kōrero, ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi, engari he toa takitini – My strength is not mine alone, it comes from the collective.

It is with great pleasure that I reflect on the achievements of the last 12 months at Marlborough Kindergarten Association (MKA). We have been part of the community since 1949 when the first kindergarten was opened on Seymour Street – this Kindergarten later relocated to Redwood Street but retained the name Seymour Kindergarten.

Over those 76 years there have been numerous changes in governments, in societal expectations and in the way that the education of our youngest learners is viewed. However, through the years, and through these changes our kindergarten association has continued to deliver quality early childhood education to the tamariki within our community. I am incredibly proud of the association we are today, and the work we continue to do within our wonderful, diverse Marlborough community.

I hope you have had the opportunity to read through each individual kindergarten report, as it's an opportunity for each team to highlight what they are most proud of. Having read these you will see that it has been another busy year for MKA.

Getting children out into the local community and connecting to nature at local parks continues to be a weekly occurrence in most of our kindergartens. Teachers have noticed an increase in confidence, friendships, and ability to explore and play in nature without any props. You will have read in the Springlands Kindergarten report how our tamariki advocated for changes to be made at their local park after they identified some risks on their regular visits.



Care of our local environment is a theme running through all the kindergarten reports, our youngest learners are already taking responsibility for, and caring for the places they live.

Iti te matakahi, pangāia ki te tōtara pakaru ai – The wedge may be small, but it will split the greatest tōtara.

Environmental Education (Enviroschools) continue to support us, and this year have funded three kindergartens to be part of 'Kids Edible Gardens'.



This has allowed us to employ a facilitator (Joy) to work with children every week, planting, caring for and harvesting produce, which is either used in the kindergarten, or shared with whānau. Through this programme children have been developing skills around gardening and knowledge about plants, insects, and seasons. We are incredibly lucky to have such a supportive Council, and the support of Annie and Ramona from Environmental Action who work alongside us to connect to and explore our local environment.

We are grateful to REAP who have provided music therapy for small groups of children at some of our kindergartens. They have also continued to provide facilitated visits with a Ninja slackline – this supports tamariki to challenge their physical and emotional confidence, as well as being lots of fun. These innovations and collaboration demonstrate the strong relationship MKA has with REAP and our wider community.

As an organisation, we prioritise provision of professional learning opportunities to staff, so they have up to date knowledge to offer learning experiences for our tamariki. We are grateful to Sue Hone, (Ministry of Education (MoE) Curriculum Lead) who has provided regular professional learning opportunities to support teachers to continue to strengthen their planning, evaluation and assessment processes. This means that our programmes and teaching are intentional to ensure children's interests and challenges are identified, and teachers are providing opportunities for learning to progress and be achieved. This is guided by Te Whāriki – our Early Childhood curriculum.

Our focus on embracing diversity and inclusion means we see an increasing number of children with complex learning support needs, including speech and behaviour. Teachers receive support from Early intervention (MoE), who offer language programmes, and put specialised plans in place to keep everyone safe, having fun and learning. We are lucky to have a local, and very supportive Ministry of Education staff in our region who work alongside us to ensure the best possible outcomes for tamariki.

Our Kindergartens

Board Chair's Report

General Managers report

What we did this year

A bespoke te reo course provided by Te Ahu o te Reo Māori was attended by 21 staff, including teachers and management; this was a term long initiative and culminated in an overnight marae stay. Alongside this mahi, Jo Huntley, our Kaiārahi Māori has continued to provide reo workshops and kindergarten visits to support teams. This has been very successful with a noticeable increase in confidence and use of te reo Māori in everyday conversations within the kindergarten environments.

In turn this supports us to meet some of the expectations in Ngā Kawatau me ngā Tūmanakotanga e Te Taihū/ the Aspirations and Expectations of Te Taihū, and recommendations from ERO.

MKA has been an active partner in the local Kahui Ako (Communities of Learning) for many years. As part of this collaboration, in January we joined the Marlborough primary and secondary schools for a teacher only day where our teachers were able to engage with national and international acclaimed speakers around culture, learning and wellbeing.



This was also an opportunity for staff to build and strengthen relationships with colleagues in the compulsory sector.

Two Kindergartens participated in in-depth professional development to increase their knowledge around supporting our Pacific children and whānau (Tapasa). We celebrated with an afternoon tea for the Pacific community where learning was demonstrated through displays, activities, and children's performance. This was a great opportunity to strengthen community connections.

As an organisation we are focussed on ensuring our community has a qualified workforce. This year has seen us collaborate with Open Polytechnic to offer our teacher aides reduced course fees to study for a Diploma in ECE. We have four teacher aides currently in training to qualify as teachers, as well as one teacher who has received an MoE scholarship to attain a Postgraduate Diploma in Specialist Teaching (Learning and behaviour) – building teacher capacity from within our organisation.

Being governed by the New Zealand Kindergartens Network Board' continues to evolve and support us as an organisation. The relationships that have been built across the kindergarten associations that form NZK have strengthened, and we gain benefit from being part of a larger organisation, while still maintaining all the benefits of being a locally run kindergarten association. This has included the opportunity for two of our Head Teachers to attend national hui with their colleagues in the kindergarten sector, to build skills and relationships. Jill Bond, NZK CEO, has been providing regular leadership training for our Head Teachers, and this has also enabled her to visit kindergartens and experience the Kaupapa of MKA.

This year has seen us make a financial surplus, due in part to having full rolls. As a not for profit all funds we receive are put back into our organisation and the community we serve.

Our Kindergartens

Board Chair's Report

General Managers report

What we did this year

For the first half of 2025 we have trialled having an additional teacher in our three all year' centres which has provided continuity for tamariki, and supported staff to take leave and professional time without having to negotiate around staff shortages. This has also meant at times we have an additional trained teacher on the floor to provide tamariki with one-on-one or small group support. Additional funds have also enabled us to continue to provide teacher aide cover in all our kindergartens, increasing the child: adult ratio and providing support where required. Our reserves continue to slowly grow with the intention that in the future we will be able to rebuild one of our existing older centres or build a new centre in Marlborough. Reserves also enable us to have a rainy day' funding for any initiatives required within our community.

There are so many people we need to thank for their support that we have a dedicated page for this in our report. However, I would like to take the opportunity to thank all MKA whanau for choosing us to educate their tamariki, and the amazing staff (teachers, teacher aides, administrators, management team, our handy man, our IT support, Joy our amazing kindergarten gardener) at MKA who work so hard to ensure we meet our vision – that every child attending MKA will reach their full potential.

E tio te tūī, e ketekete te kākā, e korihi te kokako – It takes many instruments to make a symphony (there is strength in diversity).

Corina Naus
General Manager

Photos circa 1956 – Seymour Kindergarten



What we did this year

Summary

1,388 hours

of professional development were
provided for our teaching staff

We maintained

100%

registered and certificated
teachers in every kindergarten

90

of first aid training was undertaken

There were

14

special (planned) excursions and

239

regular excursions into our
community during the year.

352,209 hours

ours of Early childhood education
was funded by the ministry of
education

2,839 hours

of additional support were
provided to support children
with diverse needs

Our Kindergartens

Board Chair's Report

General Managers
report

What we did this
year

What we did this year

Statement of Service Performance

	Output	Output Measure	Prior Year
Leading Education best practice	Continuous improvement through professional learning and development	1388 hours of professional development were provided for our teaching staff	1344
		90 hours of first aid training was undertaken	180
Supporting children to thrive	Number of ECE hours funded by MoE	352,209 hours of ECE was funded by the MoE	339,694
	Providing quality education and care for all children	We maintained 100% registered and certificated teachers in every kindergarten	100%
	Providing additional teacher and teacher aide hours to support children with diverse needs	2,893 hours of additional support were provided to support children with diverse needs	3,144
Engaging with the community	Community involvement in the kindergarten programme	There were 8 special (planned) excursions and 239 regular excursions into our community during the year	8 special (planned) 171 regular

[Our Kindergartens](#)

[Board Chair's Report](#)

[General Managers report](#)

[What we did this year](#)

Financial Summary

To view the full financial report, [click here](#).

Revenue

Increase of \$268,672



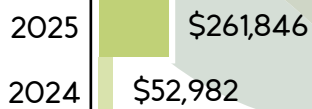
Expenditure

Increase of \$59,808

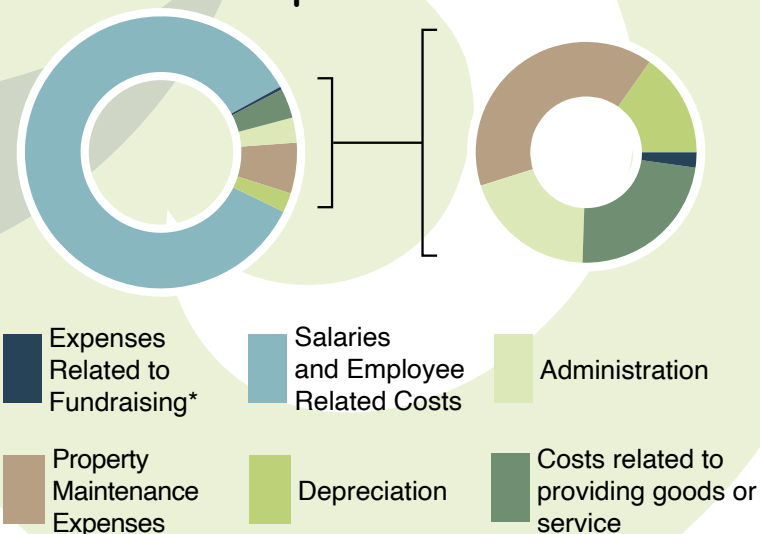


Surplus/Deficit

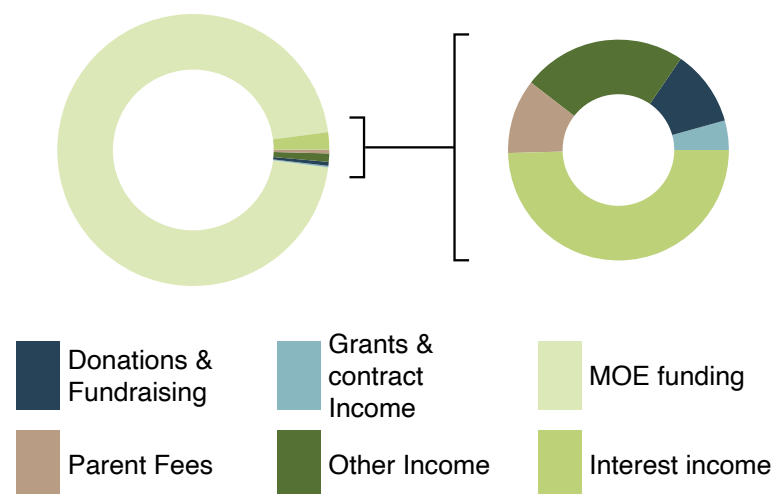
Increase of \$208,864



Expenditure



Revenue



Our Supporters

We are extremely lucky in the Marlborough community to have so many individuals and groups who support us.

Management team thanks:

- NZK Board for striving to find ways to connect with MKA and support us through strong leadership and governance.
- Jill Bond (NZK CEO) for always being available to assist us, for regular visits to kindergartens, and for providing ongoing and practical leadership professional development for the Head Teachers, Senior Teacher and GM.
- REAP for their ongoing support in so many ways, providing PLD opportunities for staff, Ninja line visits, Music Therapy sessions, collection of food as part of our partnership with Woolworths, and for generally being there ready to partner with us to provide what our community needs.
- Our local MoE office, who are always available with practical advice and support. Particularly to Stacey Gerritsen who supports us in the compliance space and is always ready to help us to find solutions, and Jane McKinnon and her team for their advice, specialist support, and open and welcoming kaupapa enabling us to work together in the best interest of the tamariki.
- Annie McDonald and Ramona Millen, the Environmental Action Team at MDC who support us with financial support, practical advice, and resources. They are always available to work with us to ensure our tamariki experience can nature and the local environment.
- Piritahi Kahui Ako who have made us welcome despite there being no ongoing funding to do so. Inviting us to all staff professional learning opportunities, invitations to regular hui, and enabling us to make ongoing relationships in the compulsory sector.

Awatere thanks:

- The local butcher
- William's Grocer
- Meaters
- Mayfield thanks:
- Alice Wilson
- Anna Woods
- Casey Paynter
- Kat Duggan
- Kelly Collins
- Marlborough Food Bank
- Mayfield School
- Penny Curr
- Pōura Mackie
- School Start First Impressions
- Tom and Sarah O'Connor
- Woolworths Blenheim Supermarket

Our Kindergartens

Board Chair's Report

General Managers report

What we did this year

Redwoodtown thanks:

- Bunnings Blenheim for their support in funding and creating our community garden.
- Joymarie Mehlhopt for her continued learning in our gardens/outdoor space.
- Ramona Millan (Environmental Educator) for her on going support with our Enviroschools program.
- Woolworths Springlands/Redwoodtown for helping us to feed our community.
- The amazing team in the Marlborough Kindergarten offices for their continued guidance and support.

Renwick thanks:

- Garden super stars – Watering over the summer break
- Jamie – Speech and Language (MoE)
- Jo Huntley – Kaiārahi Māori
- Pip, Chris & Team – Fresh Choice Renwick
- Ramona & Annie – Marlborough District Council
- Santiago Vadilli – Photography
- Shandon Road Christmas Tree Farm
- Sharon Ashby – Sewing of Kapa Haka uniforms
- Somer & Tawhiri – Kapa Haka
- Whānau Group – Fundraising
- Our awesome whānau and wider Renwick community

Seymour thanks:

- Bed bath and Beyond
- Ben Noble
- Bikes and Scooters Marlborough
- Dana Wiblin
- David Shoemark
- Herenui Jenkins
- It's All Good Brew–Michael Boyd
- Marlborough Motorcycles– Amanda and Daniel Morton
- Meaters Marlborough
- Mitchell Sports–Mike and Holly Mitchell
- Mitre 10 Mega
- Phil Josling
- Rod Shoemark–Woodworkers Guild
- Ruth Josling
- Scott and Amy Glendinning
- Subway
- The Local Butcher
- The Mortgage Room
- The Warehouse
- Our many relievers and MKA management and staff

Our Kindergartens

Board Chair's Report

General Managers report

What we did this year

Springlands thanks:

- DK Handy for the great job they did installing our new locker room windows and for painting the exterior of our building.
- Jefferies whānau for their kind donation of a gift card for plants for the garden.
- Laurie Campion for building our new stepping stone fence around ngahere
- MENZ shed
- Mitre 10 Mega for their \$100 donation towards plants for the garden

Waitohi thanks:

- All of the kindergarten whānau who donate time, money, and resources to our kindergarten. This includes doing laundry, fundraising, baking and whānau help on excursions.
- Anna Moore from Creative at Heart – Music Therapy
- Bunnings Blenheim
- Carleen Phillips – Speech and Language therapist
- Lochmara Lodge
- Maata Waka – Dog Safety
- Marlborough School Start – First Impressions
- New Zealand King Salmon
- Picton Community Early Learning Centre – Van and car seat hire
- Picton School
- Queen Charlotte College – Mr Garbes, Di Huntley and the Kaitiaki Group
- Rochelle – Early Intervention
- St Vinnies Picton
- Sherri Smith from Kiwi Holiday Tours and Shuttles
- Stenchmen Whānau
- The Picton Flower Ladies
- Waikawa Bay School
- Waikawa Marae
- Whaea Rita and Whaea Ally – Te Taiopenga

Witherlea thanks:

- Mitre 10
- Mitchell Sports
- Parents/whānau members who give up their time to support our reading group
- TH Joinery for their donations of wood
- Rapaura timber
- Rebecca Halliday for sourcing wood for our carpentry
- Whānau for their donations each term

Te Reo used throughout this report

(Translations using Te Whaake: Te Aka Māori–English, English–Māori Dictionary)

aroa	.....	to love (v), affection (n)
awa	.....	river, stream, creek
hiko	.....	step, stride, march, walk
hua rākau	.....	fruit bearing trees
hua whenua	.....	vegetable garden
kaea	.....	leader (of a haka)
kai	.....	food/meal
kaiako	.....	teacher
Kaitiaki	.....	trustee, custodian, guardian
kākahu	.....	cloak, garment
karakia	.....	pray, recite a chant
kaupapa	.....	topic/plan/policy
kōtiro	.....	girl
kōrero	.....	to tell, say, speak
mahi	.....	work, perform, make
mana	.....	prestige, authority
manaaki	.....	to support, take care of
manaakitanga	.....	integrity, kindness
mana whenua	.....	territorial rights
māra	.....	garden

māra kai	.....	food garden
maro	.....	apron, a type of short kilt or loincloth worn by males and females
mātauranga Māori	.....	Māori knowledge – including the Māori world view and perspectives
mihi whakatau	.....	speech of greeting, official welcome speech
moana	.....	sea, ocean, large lake
ngā	.....	the
ngahere	.....	bush, forest
pahi	.....	bus
Papa tū ā nuku	.....	earth mother and wife of Rangi nui
pūrākau	.....	ancient story, legend, myth
rangatahi	.....	younger generation, youth
tama	.....	son, boy, nephew
tamaiti	.....	child
tamariki	.....	children
taonga	.....	treasure, something prized
te taiao	.....	the world, earth, environment
tinana	.....	body, trunk, the main part of everything
tīpare	.....	band worn around the head, headband

Our Kindergartens

Board Chair's Report

General Managers
report

What we did this
year

tunaeel
waiatasong
whānauextended family/family group
whare pepekebug hotel
whenua.....land, country, ground
whetū.....star, celestial bodies
whakapapagenealogy
whakatauki.....proverb
Taiopenga.....Māori Cultural Festival
Ūkaipōtanga.....Deep fundamental connection to ancestral land

[Click here for more information about Matariki](#)

[Click here for more information about the Hautapu ceremony](#)