

# WHĀNAU MANAAKI

*For Whānau, not for profit*

Whānau Pānui #7

April, 2026



Featured image: Mud Kitchen at Devon Kindergarten, New Plymouth

## **Nau mai, haere mai. Welcome to our Whānau Manaaki Parent & Whānau Pānui | Newsletter**

Autumn is well underway as we head into the colder months, and it's time to share what is happening in our organisation.

This pānui is produced by Whānau Manaaki. Although we know you receive regular communication from your child's kindergarten or service, we decided to produce a regular newsletter that is published every 3 months or so, to provide you with information that impacts our network and Early Childhood Education in general.

Previous editions of our pānui can be found on our website.

### **In this issue we talk about:**

- Kindergarten Taranaki Joins Whānau Manaaki
- Kahurangi (Lady) Tilly Reedy Remembered
- Election Year – Enrolling to vote
- E Tū Kaha Campaign
- Teaching and Learning
- Around the Regions

## **Mō Matou | About Us**

Whānau Manaaki Kindergarten Association operates the service that your tamariki attends. Whānau Manaaki pays staff, provides professional and pastoral support, and maintains properties of our kindergartens and home-based services.

We offer high-quality teaching and learning with our 100% qualified teachers and trained educators. We also provide transport, and support from social workers and community workers in some regions.

As you know, Whānau Manaaki tamariki get a great start in a caring community-focused environment.

Each kindergarten offers its own individual programme, based on Te Whāriki - our world leading early childhood curriculum.

**We provide up to 20 hours free  
ECE for all children –  
regardless of age!**



**WHĀNAU MANAAKI**

Visit us to find out more  
[www.wmkindergartens.org.nz](http://www.wmkindergartens.org.nz)



## Kindergarten Taranaki Joins Whānau Manaaki

On 2 March 2026 Kindergarten Taranaki joined with Whānau Manaaki.

Kindergarten Taranaki has 24 kindergartens throughout Taranaki, from Pātea to Waitara.

The Taranaki Kindergartens join more than 112 other Whānau Manaaki kindergartens based in the lower North Island and in South Otago, creating the largest not-for profit early childhood organisation in Aotearoa.

This follows a long process of consultation, meetings, and voting by Taranaki families last year. While behind the scenes there will be administrative changes, what happens each day at kindergarten hasn't changed. The teachers, support staff, and the families remain the same, and the conditions for teachers and all other staff continue to be covered by the same national collective agreements.

The outgoing Chief Executive of Kindergarten Taranaki, Dawn Osman, says the move will strengthen the kindergarten movement in Taranaki.

*“It provides an opportunity to join a strong organisation that will be better for tamariki in our region.”*

The amalgamation process confirmed that there is strong alignment between the two associations that share the same core values.

Whānau Manaaki's board chair Kath Cooper says:

*“It's an exciting time for the kindergarten movement, and Whānau Manaaki is honoured that the Taranaki Association has chosen to join.”*

Kath says the merger supports Whānau Manaaki to give a voice for children. “We can have a louder advocacy voice - we are stronger together.”

“This is what working collectively looks like – combining our strengths to ensure kindergartens thrive and remain resilient”.

He waka eke noa. We're all in this together.

## Kahurangi (Lady) Tilly Reedy Remembered

Whānau Manaaki acknowledges the passing of Kahurangi (Lady) Tilly Te Koingo Reedy on 11 March 2026.

Tā (Sir) Tamati and Kahurangi (Lady) Tilly were two of the writers of the world leading NZ ECE Curriculum Te Whāriki, and they also gifted Whānau Manaaki its name.

As educationalists and academics, Lady Tilly made a significant contribution to Māori Education, Kohanga Reo and curriculum design in Māori Medium.

Lady Tilly's contribution to the view of the child from a Te Ao Maori perspective was significant, and her work concerning the domains of mana underpinned and inspired the work of thousands of kaiako/teachers over the years.

In her groundbreaking “Rangatiratanga nā te Mana Mātauranga: Knowledge and Power Set me Free” Lady Tilly emphasised that the aim of Te Whāriki is to ensure that “children are empowered in every way possible, particularly in the development of their mana. They are nurtured in the knowledge that they are loved and respected, that their physical, mental, spiritual, and emotional strength will build mana, influence, and control; that having mana is the enabling and empowering tool to controlling their own destiny”

*Moe mai ra e kui, moe mai ra e te māreikura*



Image: Lady Tilly Reedy

## Election Year - make sure you're on the roll to have your say

2026 is election year, and election day is November 7. This year, people won't be able to enrol and vote at the same time, with the electoral rolls closing earlier than for the last two elections. The last day to enrol will be October 25.

The date to switch to or from the Māori roll closes on August 6.

Whānau Manaaki is encouraging everyone to get on the roll and to vote.

We are working with the Electoral Commission, to encourage enrolments from our families and communities. Talk to your family and wider community about voting this year.

We encourage you to think about children, education, and the wellbeing of families when you vote.

Look out for information in our kindergartens.

It's easy to enrol - enrol or update your information online at [vote.nz](https://vote.nz).



**Enrol. Vote. Be heard.**

**vote.nz**  
0800 36 76 56

**ELECTORAL COMMISSION**  
TE KAITIAKI TAKE KŌWHiri

800-800-0242

# E Tū Kaha

STAND UP STRONG



E Tū Kaha is a Whānau Manaaki campaign that encourages our staff and kaiako to advocate for early childhood education (ECE) as a public good and a right for all tamariki in Aotearoa.

## Families Speak Out

Families from Island Bay Kindergarten in Wellington gathered recently to explain what they value about kindergarten, and their concerns about possible reduced qualifications for teachers in our sector, and about reduced funding.

The government is currently considering changing the qualifications for teachers from a university level qualification to a lower-level certificate type training.

This is a real concern across the sector, and particularly for kindergartens which have always employed qualified teachers. We remain committed to this policy.

At the same time, a ministerial advisory group is considering funding, and it is feared that they may recommend reduced funding for kindergarten as one of the options.

All the kindergarten parents who came forward to speak valued degree or equivalent qualified teachers and an affordable service.

Sasha McLeod is parent to four-year-old Milo.

She says early childhood teachers are the first to recognise that some children need extra support.

She says it's unbelievable that government is considering lowering the qualification requirements "making children inherently less safe."

Helen Hodgins is parent to Luigi aged four and Phoenix aged two. She is really concerned about the government's gradual removal of Te Tiriti o Waitangi from legislation, including education legislation. She says she was drawn to Whānau Manaaki because of its commitment to Te Tiriti and honouring Te Ao Māori.

Helen sees the government's approach to early education as driven by profit, and says it doesn't recognise the investment in society that she says is worth every cent.

Flynn Salter is dad to Alby aged four. He says it's incredible that the government is even thinking about lowering qualification requirements.

He says other parents he knows whose children attend some other ECE services pay much more in fees for a lower quality education. "I think I take for granted how cheap this is for us, really how affordable it is for families."

Anita Patel's daughter Jiya is now at school. She speaks highly of how well kindergarten prepared her child.

***"We see the impact qualified teachers has for those early years at school."***

"We were very lucky to have qualified teachers in our space, to be able to teach our children about the world



Anita Patel



Flynn Salter



Helen Hodgins



Sasha McLeod



# Teaching and Learning

## Supporting tamariki through scaffolding

Tamariki learn by doing things with us first and then for themselves as confidence and skills develop. Our role is to model and support them.

Scaffolding is when we help just enough, without taking over. It's being alongside as they learn and build confidence. We want tamariki to feel capable, supported, and willing to keep trying.

## Everyday Strategies

Notice what your child is already trying.

- Break tasks into steps – (instead of “get dressed,” try “let’s put your arms in”)
- Give just enough help to get started, then pause (begin the zip, then let them finish)
- Use simple prompts instead of doing it for them

“What could you try next?” or  
“That’s stuck, how could we fix it?”

- Give your child time
- Stay nearby and be available, without stepping in straight away

Children learn through trying, practising, and finding things tricky. Mistakes allow for learning.

## Finding the Balance

Too much help can make children feel they can't do it on their own. Not enough help can feel overwhelming. Scaffolding sits in the middle.

Step in more at first, then step back as your child builds confidence.

*Image: Sunshine Kindergarten*

## Learning Can Be Hard

It's normal to feel frustrated. You can support by:

- Acknowledging the feeling (“That’s tricky, you’re working hard”)
- Staying calm and encouraging
- Offering a hint or starting point

This helps children build problem solving, persistence and resilience, and skills.

## Growing Independence Over Time

As children practise, they need less support, and can do more on their own, asking for help when needed, and feeling proud of what they can do

Independence grows slowly. Modelling and repetition are the key.



## Key Message for Whānau

Scaffolding involves supporting, not taking over.

Support helps build confidence, problem-solving, persistence and independence. It's okay if things take longer, learning needs repetition.

Your presence, patience, and encouragement make a powerful difference.



# Teaching and Learning

## Recipe

### Banana Oat Pikelets

These banana pikelets are quick to make and kids love them.

The pikelets contain no added sugar, as they are sweetened with fruit, and made with nutritious oats. They are great for breakfasts, snacks and lunchboxes, and are freezable!



### Ingredients You Will Need

- 1 Mashed banana
- 1/2 cup rolled oats
- 1/2 cup wholemeal flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- Pinch cinnamon
- 1 egg
- 1 cup milk
- butter or oil for cooking

**Note:** You may not need the full cup of milk

### How to Make Banana Oat Pikelets

Step one: Whisk egg.

Step two: Add dry ingredients (I sort of sprinkle them in, but don't bother sifting them), whisk/mix.

Step three: Add half of the milk, mix.

Step four: Add mashed banana, mix to combine.

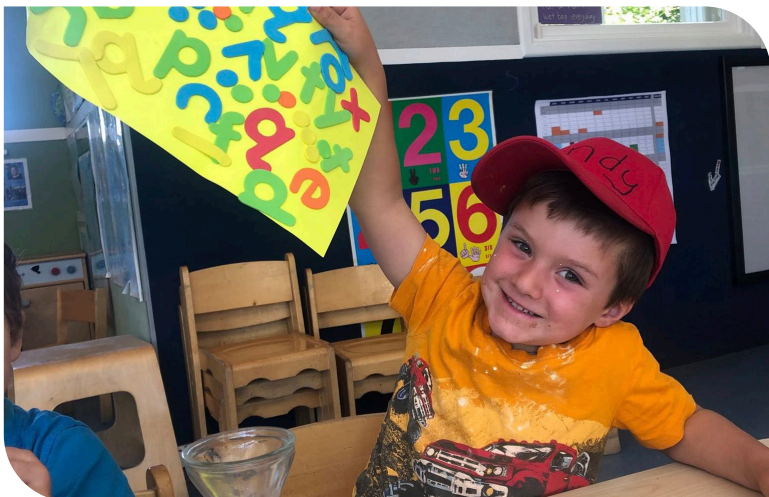
If needed add more milk, continue to add milk until you have a thick pancake like batter.

Step five: Heat a frying pan, (medium heat), and grease with a small amount of your fat/oil preference (butter, rice bran oil, coconut oil etc).

Step six: Drop in spoonfuls of the batter. Cook until small bubbles pop on the surface, flip over and cook the other side.



# Around the Regions



## South Otago

Literacy in action at Balclutha Kindergarten.



## Porirua

Learning to be kaitiaki of their environment at Paremata Kindergarten.



## Wellington

Sharing the swing with friends at Te Ō Newtown Kindergarten in Wellington.



## Wairarapa

Foraging for apricots at Kahurangi All Day Kindergarten.



## Horowhenua | Kāpiti

Art making at Taitoko Kindergarten.



## KARAKIA O TE RĀ

Tiaki Taiao | Tiaki Tanga  
 Ko au ko koe, ko koe ko au  
 I am you, you are me,  
 Te waioira o Papatūānuku  
 The life-sustaining waters of m  
 earth  
 Te hauora o Ranginui.  
 The life-sustaining air of fathe  
 Ko te taiao ko au, ko au te ta  
 Nature is me, I am nature  
 He kākano i ruia mai i Rangia  
 A seed sown from creatio  
 E kore e ngaro  
 Never to be lost  
 Tihei mauri ora!  
 The breath of life

## Taranaki

Eltham Kindergarten buried a time capsule to commemorate the merger between Kindergarten Taranaki and Whānau Manaaki Kindergartens.



## Whanganui

Creating for the whānau wall at Marie McFarland Kindergarten.



## Central Plateau

Tamariki at Ohakune Kindergarten acknowledged purple poppy day to honour animals who served in war time.



## Hutt Valley

At Birchville Kindergarten tamariki blended creativity and science watching crayons melt on to canvas.