



A message from  
the Principal

Natalie Todd

## Tēnā koutou, e te whānau o Wairau Valley Special School,

A warm welcome to the 2026 school year. It is a pleasure to greet our returning students, whānau and staff and to extend a special welcome to those joining the WVSS whānau for the first time. We are excited to begin another year of exploring, learning and succeeding together. The positive energy across the school has already set a strong tone for the year ahead.

Each new year brings fresh opportunities to grow, challenge ourselves and celebrate progress—big and small. Supporting your child's success remains a shared partnership. Consistent routines, regular attendance and open communication with your child's team all play a vital role. Staying connected through IEPs/ITPs, HERO updates and school events helps ensure learning is meaningful.

Our school roll continues to grow and we are proud to be a school of choice for our community. This

reflects the expertise, passion and dedication of our staff, as well as the strong trust of our whānau.

The quality of therapy, teaching and support at WVSS remains a core strength. We have strengthened our structures to better support our learners and their class teams. This year, we have introduced Team Leaders to provide focused support for teaching and learning. Our Assistant Principals will continue to lead pastoral care and wellbeing, ensuring consistent support across the school.

We are also excited that the pool, multipurpose room and outdoor education area are on track to open this term. These facilities will further enrich learning opportunities for our learners.

The year ahead is full of promise and we look forward to another positive and successful year together.

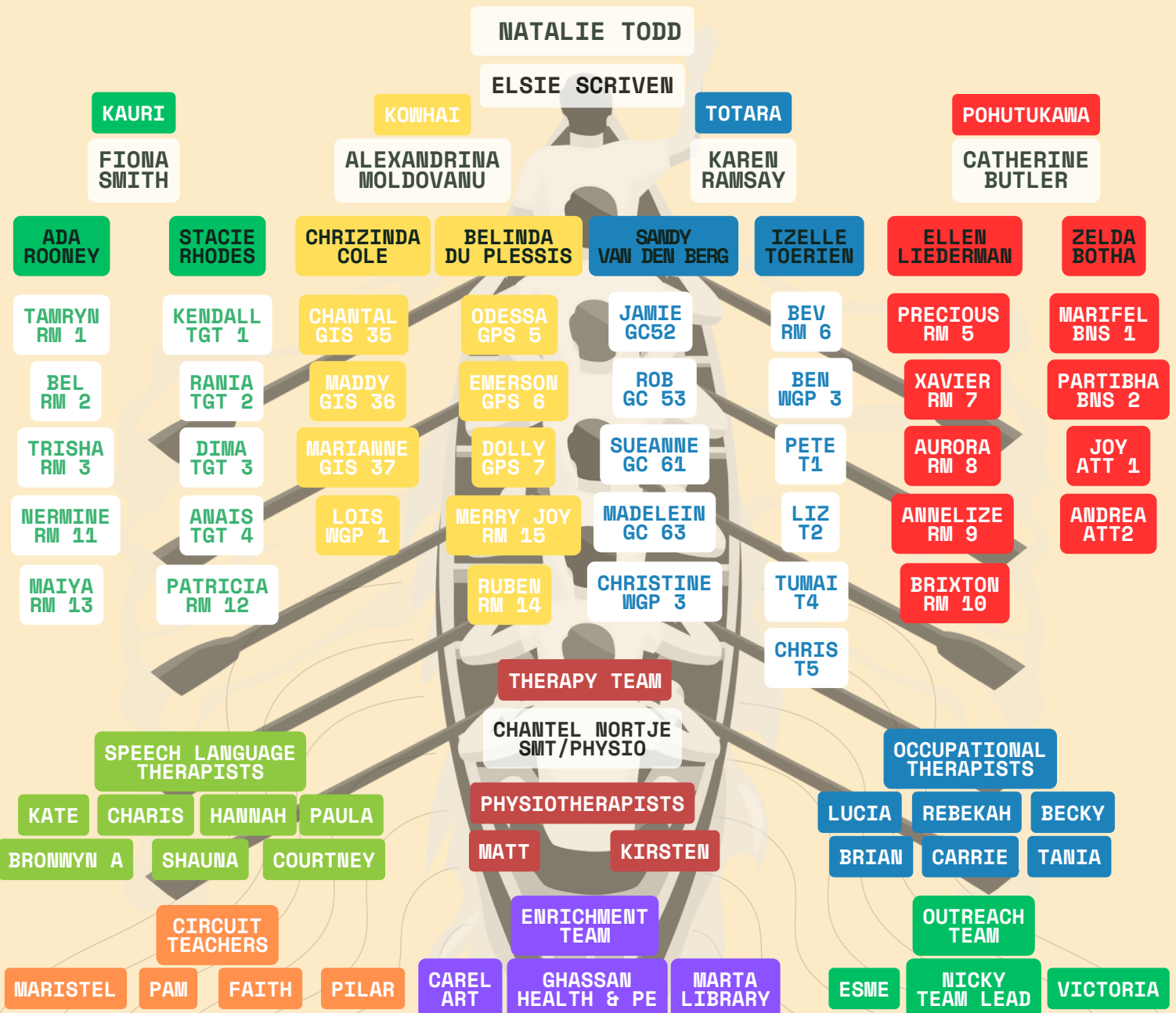
# School Leadership Update

We're pleased to share our refreshed leadership structure, designed to strengthen collaboration, clarify roles, and support every classroom. The **Principal** provides overall strategic leadership, supported by the **Deputy Principal**, who oversees day-to-day operations. Our **Assistant Principals (Syndicate Leaders)** guide teaching and learning across year levels, supported by **Team Leaders** who work closely with **Teachers** to provide coaching, coordination, and daily guidance.

Across the school, our **Therapists—Speech Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists, and Physiotherapists**—continue to support all classrooms, enhancing learning and student wellbeing.

To streamline communication, the intended pathway is:

**Teacher** → **Team Leader** → **Assistant Principal** → **Deputy Principal** → **Principal**  
 This ensures questions, needs, and decisions are handled at the right level while keeping everyone aligned.



# Important Update

## School Donations Scheme 2026

We are pleased to announce that for the 2026 school year, our school has become eligible for the government's **School Donations Scheme**. This scheme is designed to alleviate financial pressure on families by providing the school with additional government funding in exchange for us not seeking voluntary school donations.

### What this means for you:

- **No Annual Donation**: We will not be asking for the usual annual school donation for the 2026 school year.
- **Curriculum Costs**: You will no longer be asked to pay for curriculum-related activities or resources. This includes items such as class trips (as part of the curriculum) and basic teaching materials.

### What remains the same:

While the scheme covers most educational costs, there are still some items that parents are expected to cover:

- **School Camps**: Schools in the scheme are still permitted to ask for voluntary donations toward overnight school camps.
- **Extracurricular Activities**: Optional activities outside the core curriculum—such as weekend sports teams, the school ball, or after-school cultural groups—will still require payment.
- **Goods and Services**: You will still need to provide your child's stationery and uniform. You also remain responsible for purchasing optional "take-home" items (e.g., a project made that your child keeps).

We are excited that this funding will help ensure all our students have equal access to learning opportunities. If you have any specific questions about how this affects your family, please email [admin@wvss.school.nz](mailto:admin@wvss.school.nz). Thank you.

[Click here for more information on school donations](#)

# Welcome to our new staff

## Teachers



### Precious Viloría

Kia ora e nga matua me te whanau!

I will be joining Wairau Valley Special School and teaching wonderful children in Room 5! I am so excited to get to know all of you.

I am grateful to be part of Wairau Valley Special School's amazing team and I look forward to building positive and meaningful relationship with you and all the tamariki.

### Maristel Paciencia

Kia ora.

I previously worked as a primary school teacher in the Philippines for seven years before moving to New Zealand with my family to continue my teaching journey as an Early Childhood Teacher in Wellington.

I am excited to join the whānau at Wairau Valley Special School and look forward to building meaningful relationships with the wonderful tamariki and their whānau.



### Nermine Kholeif

Kia ora,

I am Nermine, I have been a proud member of the WVSS whānau and I am excited to continue as part of the teaching team this year. Being a Girl Guides leader and having a multilingual background, have shaped who I am and how I connect with tamariki, making sure every learner feels included and supported. There is nothing more fulfilling to me than celebrating our students' successes!

### Maiya Richmond

Kia ora!

My name is Maiya, and I am excited to be returning to Wairau Valley Special School this year. I have been a special education teacher for the past six years. I love creating a supportive and engaging learning environment for my students and bringing them new experiences. In my free time, you can find me crafting, cooking, or exploring different activities out and about with my 2-year-old son and partner.



## Therapists



### Tania Slavin

I'm a paediatric occupational therapist with a sensory integration background and have recently returned to New Zealand after 14 years working abroad. I enjoy working alongside children, families and school staff to help children feel regulated and enjoy learning. I love getting to know children as individuals and finding meaningful and practical ways to support their development. I'm excited about joining WVSS, meeting you all and being part of a community that values inclusion, care and working together.



### Courtney Parish

Hi, my name is Courtney and I'm excited to join the team at Wairau Valley Special School. I have many years experience as a Speech Language Therapist working in the Child Development Service at North Shore Hospital. I love supporting children with their communication and feeding journeys and get such joy when they begin to express themselves; whether it's spoken, sign or AAC! I can't wait to continue to support children in their schooling years at WVSS.

### Bronwyn Allison

Kia ora, my name is Bronwyn and I'm looking forward to joining the team at WVSS. Previously, I worked at Arohanui Special School in West Auckland and with AutismNZ's early intervention team. I'm excited to now be working within my local North Shore community. I've lived in Glenfield for over 10 years and have three children who attend local schools. Outside of work, I volunteer as a Scouts leader and enjoy camping with my whānau, reading, and spending time with family and friends.



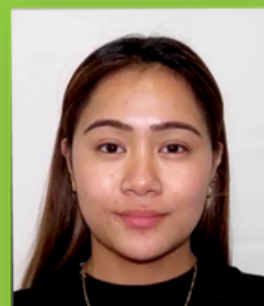
## Teacher Aides



Carol Wamsteker (GC 52)



Jessica Mclean (WGP 1)



Jan Reyes (GIS 37)



Grace Colebourn (R 3)



Debbie Halpin (TGT 2)

### What's on at WVSS

**6 Feb, F**

Waitangi Day  
School Closed

**9 Feb, M**

EOTC Transition Cafe/ Mini Woolies - GC53

**19-20 Feb, Th-F**

Staff only days (School closed for instruction)

**28 Feb, Sa**

Whānau Kaiako- Golden Jubilee Day

# WHĀNAU KAIAKO DAY GOLDEN JUBILEE



**ALL ARE WELCOME!**  
**Saturday, 28 February 2026**

**12:00 - 3:00 pm**  
102 Hillside Road, Glenfield  
More details to follow.