



2024 Thorndon School Annual Report to the Community

Thorndon School's aspirations of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, Progress and Achievement in Reading, Writing and Mathematics are represented in the Strategic Plan through the goals of Poutama, Kaitiakitanga, Whāngaitia, Whānaungatanga, and Hanga Whare.

This document showcases the progress our school has made in 2024 based on these aspects and the future direction. Included within this document are:

- **Te Tiriti o Waitangi statement**
- **Strategic Goal progress**
- **Progress and Achievement in Reading, Writing and Mathematics**

Te Tiriti o Waitangi statement

Thorndon School gave effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi in several meaningful ways, aligning with the principles of partnership, protection, and participation. These ways include:

1. Curriculum Integration: Thorndon School has begun the journey to embed Māori perspectives and Te Ao Māori (the Māori worldview) across learning areas. This includes using the Aotearoa New Zealand Histories curriculum to teach local iwi histories and the impact of colonisation based on Te Taurapa.
2. Cultural Competency and Professional Learning: Teachers at Thorndon School are engaging in ongoing professional development, such as Kura Ahurea, to build cultural competence and reflect on how their practice honours Te Tiriti.
3. Strengthening Relationships with Whānau and Iwi: Thorndon School actively builds reciprocal relationships with local whānau, involving them in decision-making, school events, and curriculum design.
4. Student Voice and Leadership: Thorndon School has created opportunities for Māori students to lead, contribute to school activities, and express their identity and aspirations in authentic ways such as participation in the Kapa Haka rōpu, performances across school clusters, visual arts and oratory displays.

Looking to 2025, the Thorndon School Board will be looking to develop authentic connections to local iwi and hapū to strengthen the mana whenua and mana tangata understanding of our children and community. We will continue our journey with the support and guidance of the Māori Achievement Collaboration.

Strategic Goal progress

Each Strategic Goal contributed to supporting student progress and achievement in the following ways:

- **Poutama: This goal is about Ākonga striving for personal excellence and succeeding as who they are. It is connected to "Learners at the Center", "Barrier Free Access", and "Quality Teaching and Leadership".**

Actions within the Poutama goal directly targeted improving learning in Reading, Writing, and Maths. Teachers were provided professional learning opportunities in the principles and pedagogy of Mataiaho (NZ Curriculum Refresh), Structured Literacy and Writer's Tool Box. Explicit teaching for one hour in Reading, Writing, and Mathematics was been implemented across spaces and reporting to parents included relevant learning examples annotated against curriculum progress indicators.

Improved assessment practices were introduced, including "real-time" snapshots and effective moderation in writing. The school also used standardised assessments like EasTTle Reading, PAT Maths, PAT Comprehension, PAT Vocabulary, and PAT Listening to monitor progress. A Common Practice Model is being introduced and unpacked to focus on intentional teaching actions.

Poutama also involved helping students understand what it means to be a learner, to know what they need to achieve, to use the necessary skills to demonstrate learning, and to support themselves to achieve their goals.

The evaluation of this goal acknowledges the need to implement explicit teaching and develop targeted support for students making insufficient progress earlier in the school year.

- **Kaitiakitanga - This goal is about the Guardianship and Protection for future generations celebrating our culture, identity and whakapapa. It is linked to the "Future of Learning and Work" NELPS.**

Actions within the Kaitiakitanga goal included providing learning opportunities that build creative thinking, problem-solving, and critical thinking, through inquiry-based learning on real-world issues within a cultural context. This involved integrating cultural learning across subject areas, including language arts, social studies, science, and the arts.

The evaluation of this goal acknowledges the willingness of teams to create a culture of learning that fosters critical thinking, creativity, and a strong sense of identity and belonging.

- **Whāngaitia - Enriching the learning environment by acknowledging and responding to our diverse community. This goal is connected to "Barrier Free Access" NELPS.**

Actions within Whāngaitia involved acknowledging the unique place of Mana Whenua through school kawa and tikanga, respecting and teaching te reo me nga tikanga Māori, and supporting the development of a culturally competent teaching staff. Kaiako are encouraged to use Te Reo in everyday speaking and instruction. This includes kaiako using the learning environment innovatively to personalise learning and meet diverse needs, implementing culturally responsive pedagogy that values diversity, promotes inclusivity, and respects cultural backgrounds.

This goal also directly supported the development of a programme where all students, including English Language Learners (ELL) who showcased priorities in reading and writing, were supported.

The evaluation of this goal acknowledges equity at Thorndon School and the need to design timely and durable engagement and enhancement programmes for all students. As well as this, we need to develop an authentic approach to integrating Te Ao Māori across our learning programmes

- **Whānaungatanga - Nurturing reciprocal, trusting connections and kinship to strengthen ties between individuals and communities. This goal aligns with "Learners at the Center" and "Quality Teaching and Leadership" NELPS.**

Actions within Whānaungatanga focused on establishing consistent, coherent approaches to positive relationships for learning (R4L). This included professional learning for the staff in the Positive Behaviour 4 Learning (PB4L) methodology. A framework was developed where all behaviours aligned to requirements in particular spaces and places across the kura. The Zones of Regulation were introduced to ensure that children are supported when dysregulated. The school is working to ensure teachers, students, and families share a common understanding of rights and responsibilities in their relationships.

The evaluation of this goal has identified that developing community trust and support through open communication is crucial to progress and success. This includes forums for voice and contribution for students, teachers, and families.

- **Hanga Whare - Strengthening our systems process and physical environment to support quality teaching and management. This goal is linked to "Quality Teaching and Leadership" NELPS.**

Actions within Hanga Whare included improving the quality of core classroom resources and interventions, particularly for special needs students, through assessment, professional development, and tailored instructional strategies. This involved implementing a Special Education Needs Coordinator (SENCO) framework that supports regular engagement with families. As well as this, improving access and availability to digital enabling resources (including robotics, electronics, Bring Your Own Devices, and a pool of devices). Effective frameworks to manage school resources were identified, including strategic funding allocation and securing external funding, to support initiatives to increase the positive impact of student learning outcomes. The maintenance of buildings, facilities, and grounds created a safe, secure, healthy, and engaging learning environment. These systemic and environmental supports provided the necessary tools, spaces, and interventions to enable effective teaching and learning in Reading, Writing, and Mathematics, especially for students with diverse needs.

The evaluation of this goal identified the positive impact that the reallocation of learning assistants has had on teaching and learning. As well as this, the need to assign spaces to specific teaching and learning activities not included in the regular learning programmes and the provision for differentiated learning support for students not making expected progress and extension for those working above the expected level in Mathematics.

Progress and Achievement in Reading, Writing and Mathematics

Reading Progress and Achievement - Evaluation

Several key factors have contributed to the variance between the reading goal of 90% of students working within/above the expected level and the actual outcome of 81% at the end of Term 4, 2024.

Here are the identified factors:

- The change of teachers during the year impacted learning. Teacher transitions can disrupt the consistency of instruction and the established learning environment for students, potentially hindering their progress in reading.

- Students moving school within a year impacted their learning and the class dynamics. Mobility can lead to gaps in a student's learning and can also affect the overall progress and focus of the classroom.
- While explicit teaching of reading for 1 hour has been implemented this year, it's possible that the full benefits of this change have not yet been realised within the 2024 data collection period. New initiatives often require time to embed and demonstrate their full impact.
- Similarly, Structured Literacy was started this year for Years 0-3, and the code was introduced this year school-wide. These are significant shifts in teaching approaches, and their impact on overall reading achievement may take more than a single year to fully materialise across all year levels. The fact that these were newly implemented suggests that their initial impact may not have been sufficient to reach the ambitious target.
- While ELL received support from 0.6 teachers dedicated to this area, it's possible that the needs of these learners still presented a challenge in reaching the overall school-wide target. The data doesn't specify the achievement levels of ELL.
- The reallocation of Learning Assistants across teams, while intended to meet student needs, was not always for writing support. This suggests that reading support might have been prioritised differently or that other areas of need were also significant, potentially impacting the focus on reading improvement.
- Despite all staff being supported with Professional Learning Development (PLD) for structured literacy/spelling teaching, the effectiveness and consistent implementation of these new strategies across all classrooms and year levels may have varied, contributing to the gap between the goal and the outcome.

Next steps:

- Organise a parent engagement evening focused on how parents can support their child's reading development at home. This suggests an initiative to involve families in fostering reading skills outside of the school environment.
- Implement a consistent assessment method to measure reading comprehension across the school. This indicates a need for a standardised approach to evaluate students' understanding of what they read.
- Register all classroom teachers for Ministry of Education (Moe) funded structured literacy professional development. This highlights a commitment to further upskilling all teachers in structured literacy approaches.
- Year 4-8 Teachers are expected to undertake professional development for structured literacy. This extends the structured literacy training beyond the initial focus on Years 0-3.
- Implement a school-wide system to teach advanced reading skills. This system should include comprehension strategies, critical thinking, and vocabulary building, and will be implemented once students have mastered basic reading abilities. This indicates a tiered approach to reading instruction, building upon foundational skills.

Our target for 2025 is:

- **84.7% of all children working At/ Above the expected curriculum level for Reading.**

Writing Progress and Achievement - Evaluation

Several key factors appear to have contributed to the variance between the 2024 writing goal of 85% of students working Within/Above the expected curriculum level and the actual outcome of 61%.

Here are the identified factors:

- **Decrease in Achievement:** The percentage of students working within or above the expected achievement level in writing decreased by 11% from Term 2 (72%) to Term 4 (61%). This indicates a negative trend throughout the year.
- **New Students:** A significant portion of students new to the data (45%, or 20 out of 44) were working towards the expected achievement level in writing. This influx of students performing below expectations likely impacted the overall percentage.
- **ELL:** Over a third of students between Years 3-7 who are ELL (36%, or 33 out of 92) were working towards the expected achievement level in writing. This suggests that language acquisition may be a barrier to achieving the writing standards for this group. The source notes that there is a ".6 teacher to support these students" in the reflections, which may indicate insufficient support.
- **Students in Years 3-5:** A substantial proportion of students in Years 3-5 (29%, or 32 out of 110) were working towards the expected achievement level in writing. Furthermore, 17 of these students will require targeted support as they will still be working in Phase 1 of the curriculum for 2025, indicating significant learning gaps.
- **Attendance Levels:** Low attendance appears to be a contributing factor for some students working towards the expected level in writing. Specifically, within the Years 3-5 group working towards the expected level, 21% (23 out of 110) had low attendance. This includes 8% (9 out of 110) with attendance between 0-80% and 13% (14 out of 110) with attendance between 81-91%.
- **Student Progress:** While 10% of students made accelerated progress and 44% made expected progress between Term 2 2023 and Term 4 2024, a significant portion (46%) were working towards the expected level. Of these, while some (36%, or 41 out of 114) were at or above the expected level for this time of year (potentially consolidating knowledge), 45 students made insufficient progress.
- **Change of teachers during the year.**
- **Students move schools within a year.**
- **The reallocation of Learning Assistants across teams, meaning their support was not always focused on writing.**

Next steps:

- It's important to note that despite these challenges, the school implemented explicit teaching of writing for one hour this year, and all staff received PLD for Writing. The steps indicate an awareness of the need to review planning and pedagogy and provide targeted teaching and learning.

Our target for 2025 is:

- **70.2% of all children working At/ Above the expected curriculum level.**

Mathematics Progress and Achievement - Evaluation

Several factors appear to have contributed to the variance between the 2024 Mathematics goal of 85% of students working Within/Above the expected curriculum level and the actual outcome of 81%.

Here are the identified factors:

- **Change of teachers during the year impacts learning.** This disruption to the learning environment and consistency of instruction could have hindered some students' progress towards the expected level.
- **Students moving school within a year impacts on learning for themselves and the class dynamics.** Mobility can disrupt a student's learning trajectory and also affect the overall classroom environment, potentially impacting the progress of other students as well.

- While explicit teaching of mathematics for 1 hour was implemented this year, the impact of this change on overall achievement reaching the target isn't explicitly stated as fully successful. It was a positive step, but perhaps not enough to reach the ambitious goal.
- Kaiāwhina have been reallocated across teams to meet the needs of students, this time not always supporting maths. This change in support structure might have meant that some students who could have benefited from additional mathematics support did not receive it consistently, potentially affecting their ability to reach the expected level.
- 19% (55/290) of students were working towards the expected achievement level, which was 3% higher than in term 2. This indicates that while some progress was made, a significant portion of students were still below the expected level at the end of the year.
- Of the 246 students with progress data, 32% (78 students) made insufficient progress between term 2, 2023 and term 4, 2024, requiring targeted support. While some of these students might still be working within the expected level, a lack of sufficient progress over a longer period likely contributes to not meeting the end-of-year target for all students.
- 16% (7/44) of students new to the school since term 3 were working towards the expected achievement level for mathematics. Integrating new students and addressing their learning needs within a short timeframe can present challenges to overall achievement data.

Next steps:

- Implement structured maths using PR1ME maths resources ordered from the Ministry of Education for consistency and good practice at Thorndon Primary School.
- The Mathematics Curriculum Lead will hold PLD sessions to support teachers in delivering the new maths curriculum and addressing progress levels.
- The Mathematics Curriculum Lead will host a parent evening to share the curriculum changes to Phases and provide examples of the progressions expected at each year level.

Our target for 2025 is:

- **83.1% of all children working At/ Above the expected curriculum level.**