



RIVERSDALE SCHOOL  
Inspiring Excellence

## Statement of Variance 2024

School Name

Riversdale School

School Number

4007

Strategic Goal 1

That all ākonga (learners) will be given the opportunity to be **responsible** for their learning and to achieve their highest potential through high quality teaching and student engagement through Te Mataiaho, the New Zealand national Curriculum

Annual Goal

Review and refine teaching strategies for foundational literacies of writing in relation to the phases of learning

Target

That 100% of the “below” students who are judged below make accelerated (as compared to the individual child’s baseline) progress during the 2024 school year.

Baseline Data

At the end of 2023, 34% of our students were judged to be below the expected curriculum level for their age group using the teacher's overall judgements against the NZC.

### Actions

#### *What did we do?*

In 2024 we engaged Lauren Latimer from the University of Otago as an expert to work with the teachers on developing their pedagogical knowledge of writing. Lauren came in twice per term, observed in every classroom and had time with teachers to discuss the lessons and next steps. Initially the main focus was on correct sentence structures across the school so that consistent language was being used. Unfortunately Lauren finished her contract with us at the beginning of Term 3 as her position at the University of Otago ended. The work done in the first 2 terms was enough to help teachers develop their understanding and then inspire them to look further afield. In terms 2 and 4 we engaged in

moderation across the school using pieces of writing that students did for e-asttle assessments. The discussions during these moderations showed the development in teachers' understanding of the writing process.

In June the teaching staff attended the Kahui Ako teachers only day. Lauren presented and then as a kahui ako the teachers split into their age groups with other teachers from across the kahui ako to share writing, resources, ideas together. This day sparked another afternoon workshop for the senior primary teachers to work with the high schools on starting the preparation for the Literacy and Numeracy prerequisites that students will sit in years 10 or 11. This was incredibly worthwhile for our senior school teachers to know where the students are heading.

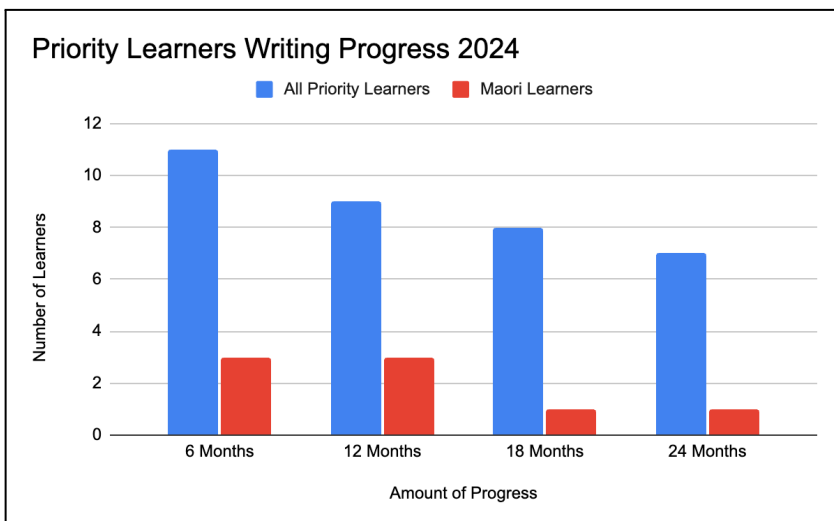
In terms 3 and 4 teachers introduced ALL groups (accelerated literacy learners) to work with in classes. This is where small groups had extra time spent in lessons where information or skills they may need for the writing topic were pre-loaded to give the students feelings of success.

The senior school also introduced a phonic based spelling programme called Catch Up Your Code. Unfortunately we were not able to access extra professional development for this programme as the PD provider (Lauren) was no longer able to provide it. (We have managed to secure professional development for the senior school teachers for 2025).

Room 5 engaged the RTLB service and a Tier 2 programme, for selected students, was put in place using a combination of Catch Up Your Code and Stepsweb (an online programme).

## Outcomes

### *What happened?*



At the end of 2023 we set a target of 100% of our priority students to make accelerated progress (compared to their baseline data) during 2024.

This group of priority learners (47 in total) are who we have reported on. 12 of the students have left the school during the year so we now have a group of 35 students. 15 out of 35 of the students have made 18-24 months progress in the 2024 academic year, with a further 9 having made 12 months progress. All of these students have made excellent progress compared to their previous baseline. 9 students of this group are now achieving at the expected level for their age. Of the 11 other students who made only 6 months progress there are 3 that this is significant for as they have quite specific learning needs see them receiving additional help for (some MoE funded, some school funded).

Room 5 students' end of year spelling testing using the Schonell test showed that 71% made accelerated progress of over 12 months on their spelling age, as a result of the Tier 2 intervention. With students having a better grasp of spelling rules and conventions their writing fluency improves and they can concentrate on the deeper features of writing.

### **Reasons for the variance** *Why did it happen?*

Teachers have a greater understanding of the writing process and expectations. Their pedagogical understanding has improved which in turn has had a positive effect on students progress.

Interventions put in place in Room 5 have had an effect in terms of surface features.

Whilst we were hoping for 100% of our priority students to make accelerated progress, 77% have made the progress against their baseline. The others have all still made progress from the end of 2023, some have neurodivergence issues, some are ESOL.

### **Evaluation** *Where to next?*

We have a group of students who are potentially Tier 3 learners and may need some specialist intervention. When the RTLB has been in she has trained one of our teachers aides in the Orton Gillingham programme which has shown to have good effect for Tier 3 writers. We have also added extra money into the English budget area so that we can access some online programmes that support classroom learning and give students who need to “over learn” the space to do this naturally in the classroom.

### **Planning for next year**

With the new English curriculum now published we will take time regularly next year to do more writing moderation using both the e-asttle rubric and the curriculum outcomes (at this stage we only have the curriculum up to year 6. The year 7&8 phase will come out sometime next year).

Professional development for the senior teachers (Years 5-8) in the Catch Up Your Code programme has been locked in to have 2 sessions per term for 3 terms with Lauren Latimer. The year 4-6 teachers have been accepted in the BSLA Year 4-6 trial. Whilst this is a reading programme there are large areas of crossover to writing and spelling.

If needed we will still be able to access some time with Lauren across the whole school to further upskill in writing and the Curriculum as a whole.

Strategic Goal 2	That all ākonga can learn in an environment where inclusiveness, respect, resilience and collaboration are explicit, allowing all to achieve to their best potential
Annual Goal	Continue to build resilience and connection for all ākonga through teaching on emotional regulation
Target	<i>That the 31% of students who are able to show resilience in classroom and playground situations at least doubles during 2024.</i>
Baseline Data	<p>At the beginning of 2024, during parent teacher interviews, a number of parents mentioned the lack of resilience in their children. The teachers made overall teacher judgements using their knowledge of the students and 69% of all students showed limited or some resilience.</p> <p>Students were then surveyed about their emotional well being across 6 questions. 30% of the students felt they did not know what to do when faced with a problem.</p>

## Actions

Reinforce the Pause Breathe Smile programme throughout the school

Introduce Play Is The Way

Introduced a second duty teacher at lunchtime

## Outcomes

We have had a year of ups and downs with behaviour, mostly across the senior part of the school. The staff have worked really hard to be consistent with behaviour expectations and consequences. There have been a number of conversations as a whole staff, and between individuals. In term 3 we instituted a second teacher on duty at lunchtimes which has helped students to modify their behaviour and give support to those that need it.

At the beginning of the year the teachers made an overall judgement about the resilience of the students in their class. This was recorded as part of our baseline data. In November the teachers did the same exercise with the same students, excluding those who have left the school, and we have had an improvement from only 31% of students able to show resilience consistently to 47.5% now showing consistent resilience.

Whilst this is not the double we had in our target, it is still a significant increase.

**Analysis of the data: Based on Overall Teacher Judgement (OTJ) February**

<b>Whole School Data</b>	Room 1	Room 2	Room 3	Room 5	Room 6	Room 7	<b>Whole School</b>
Shows limited resilience	21%	32%	17%	33%	18%	31%	<b>26%</b>
Sometimes shows resilience	57%	48%	56%	41%	37%	27%	<b>43%</b>
Usually show resilience	21%	20%	26%	26%	44%	42%	<b>31%</b>

**Analysis of the data: Based on Overall Teacher Judgement (OTJ) November**

<b>Whole School Data</b>	Room 1/4	Room 2	Room 3	Room 5	Room 6	Room 7	<b>Whole School</b>
Shows limited resilience	20%	12.5%	10%	24%	8.5%	16.5%	<b>15%</b>
Sometimes shows resilience	40%	54.5%	65%	24%	29%	21%	<b>37.5%</b>
Usually show resilience	40%	33%	25%	52%	62.5%	62.5%	<b>47.5%</b>

We also collected some student voice using the same questions as in February. The results were remarkably the same across the questions.

**Reasons for the variance**

The second teacher on duty has had a great effect on playground behaviour. The students know they will easily find a duty teacher, and also modified their behaviour as they were never sure when a teacher would appear.

The introduction of Play Is The Way on a Friday afternoon has begun to make a difference during terms 3 & 4. It is giving the teachers a common language to use in the classroom and playground. At this stage we have just been using the resource as it appears in the book. We have not been able to access professional development this year as the only trainer in New Zealand has been completely booked.

## Evaluation

Having 2 teachers on duty will continue on in 2025. The positive effect this has had has been huge. Any small incidents can usually be dealt with quickly and on the spot before they become huge. Students are more able to deal with any issues confidently as they know there is more support available.

The beginnings of Play Is The Way are positive, especially in the senior end of the school. Using the “Life Rafts” values as a basis is clear for students about expectations of behaviour. To be more consistent across the school will give it more power.

Pause Breathe Smile still has a part to play in teaching students to self regulate. Daily sessions provide practice in a controlled way so that it becomes more natural when faced with a situation needing that regulation.

## Planning for next year

A full day Play Is The Way Professional Development session for all staff has been booked in for early February before school starts.

Daily practice sessions for Pause Breathe Smile will continue in some form in 2025.