Tauranga Special School

Learning together

Newsletter 15 Week 2 Term 4 22/10/2026

Kia ora whānau

Welcome to this edition of the Tauranga Special School newsletter! In this issue, you will find helpful advice from our school physiotherapist on accessible summer beach adventures around Tauranga, sensory tips for walking on sand, and water safety considerations when selecting swimwear colors. The newsletter also highlights important school calendar dates—including Labour Day, the end-of-year School Concert, and Term 1 2027 start dates—along with key contact details for general inquiries and attendance reporting.

If you have anything to add to future newsletters please email: pipj@taurangaspecialschool.nz

Important dates

Monday 26 October
Labour Day (School Closed)

Saturday 31 October
Pasifika Festival in the Bay

Monday 14 December
School Concert

Tuesday 15 December
Last day of Term 4
(12:00pm finish)

Key Contacts

School Landline:
07 578 4424

Attendance phone (call/txt):
027 558 5917

A message from our Principal



Kia ora e te whānau,
Isn't it great to have warm and sunny weather to begin Term 4? We always know summer is on the way when water play and sprinklers become part of everyday fun at school!

Pasifika Festival
Our Pasifika group has been practising hard over the past few weeks in preparation for the Pasifika Festival on Saturday 31 October. This year's event will be held at Tauranga Girls' College, with the pōwhiri starting at 9:00 am. Performances begin at 10:00 am, and ours is usually one of the first, so please arrive early to support our students! It is a fantastic event with amazing food- definitely a fun day out for the whole family.

Diwali- Festival of Lights
Continuing on from our very successful Multicultural Day last term, our school will be celebrating Diwali within learning spaces this year. Our staff are planning lots of fun activities for students during Week 4. We encourage all students to wear Indian attire or colourful clothing to celebrate Diwali on Monday 9 November.

Strategic Plan (2027/28)
Earlier this week, I shared a survey via email regarding our strategic planning for 2027/28 — we would love your input into the future direction of our kura! The survey will remain open for two weeks, and everyone who completes it will go into the draw to win 1 of 3 $100 Woolworths vouchers.

Key Dates & Reminders

2026

- **Monday 26 October:** Labour Day (School closed)
- **Saturday 31 October:** Pasifika Festival in the Bay
- **Monday 14 December:** School Concert- to be held at Tauranga Boys College 10.30 - 11.30am
- **Tuesday 15 December:** Last day of Term 4 (12:00 pm finish)

2027

- **Friday 29 January:** Wā Whakakotahi / Learning Partnerships (1-hour meeting with your class teacher)
- **Wednesday 3 February:** First day of Term 1 (School open for all students)

We hope everyone has a safe and happy long weekend enjoying the beautiful weather!
Ngā mihi nui,
Dale Megson

Physiotherapy

Summer, Sun & Accessible Bay of Plenty Adventures!



As the warmer weather arrives and we head toward the long summer break, our minds naturally turn to outdoor fun, family trips, and enjoying the beautiful beaches and parks across Tauranga Moana.

1. Hitting the Coast: Accessible Tauranga Beaches

We are lucky to have fantastic beach accessibility right on our doorstep! Tauranga City Council provides beach access mats across several popular spots, making it much easier to roll wheelchairs, buggies, and walkers down near the water.

Where to find Beach Mats: Look out for blue mats laid out at Mount Maunganui Main Beach, Pilots Bay, Cutters Cove, and Papamoa Coastal Reserve.

Free Beach Wheelchair Hire: Tauranga has all-terrain Hippocampe beach wheelchairs available for hire. You can book them via Hibiscus Surf School on Mount Main Beach (Phone: 027 279 9687 or 07 307 1447 Email: info@surfschool.co.nz) or by contacting Tauranga City Council.

Accessible Changing Facilities: An accessible changing facility (part of the Changing Places New Zealand network with an adult changing table, shower, and a hoist with a 200kg weight limit) is located near Hopukiore (Mount Drury).

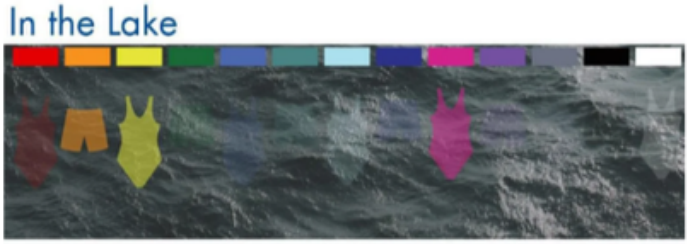
Local Resource: Explore the interactive Tauranga Access Map online to locate accessible parking, ramps, and beach mats across the city.

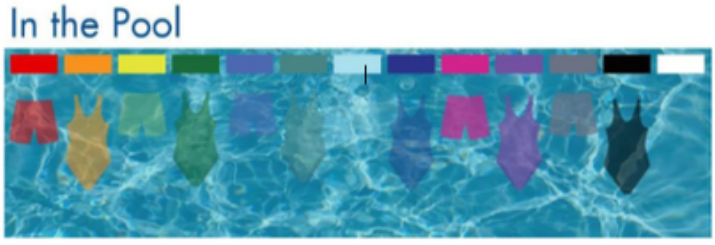


<u>Physio tip for the sand:</u>

Walking barefoot on damp, firm sand near the water line provides rich sensory input to the feet and strengthens foot arch and ankle muscles!

Remember if you're getting new swimwear for the summer, think about the colour! I know I have shared this visual before, but I find it so useful.





Physiotherapy

2. Getting Involved: Halberg & Bay of Plenty Adaptive Sports

If your tamariki loves to move and sport and wants to try something new this summer, adaptive sports are a fantastic next step!

The Halberg Foundation works closely with families in the Bay of Plenty to connect young people with physical disabilities to inclusive sport and recreation.

Try something new: From adapted cycling and trikes to wheelchair basketball, boccia, and adapted sailing programs, there are options for every movement style.

Connect Locally: You can reach out directly to our local Bay of Plenty Halberg Adviser via Halberg Foundation or check out the Sport Bay of Plenty Active Directory or Special Olympics Tauranga Facebook page for inclusive sports clubs in Tauranga.

3. Easy "Home Physio" Ideas for the Backyard

You don't need fancy equipment to keep motor skills active over the holidays. Here are three simple backyard activities that build strength and balance while feeling like pure play:

Grass Rolling & Tummy Time: Rolling sideways down a gentle grassy bank (like the ones at Kulim Park or Ferguson Park) is great for core strength, head control, and spatial awareness.

Water Play "Heavy Work": Carrying small watering cans or pushing a wheelbarrow filled with garden toys gives muscles a deep resistance workout (proprioceptive input), which helps calm and regulate the nervous system.

Seated Backyard Cricket: Adapt a game of cricket by using a large foam ball and a wide plastic bat, or play from a seated position so the whole family can join in at the same level.







Need help planning accessible summer outings?

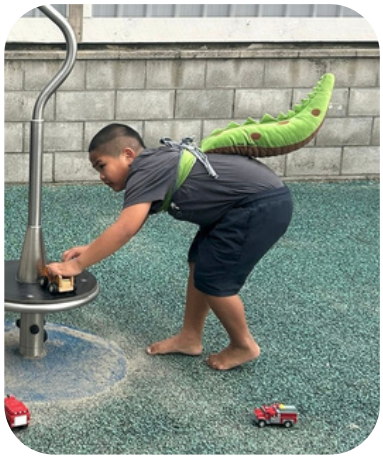
If you'd like advice on positioning gear for travel, stretching routines for long car trips, or recommendations for accessible Tauranga parks, get in touch!

Wishing all our students and Whānau a safe, active, and sun-filled summer!

— Your Physio Team

Room 4 Hayley

We've had a lot of fun with our play and engagement challenge set for the week which was dress up and music.
Music is alway a big hit in our class, the students enjoy using different musical instruments and a couple can pick up and follow the beat very quickly.
Dress ups is quickly becoming a class favourite, lots of different things to try on or even just feel the different textures, who can resist a bit of role playing while being dressed up! We've had dinosaurs, super heroes and pilots to name a few.
We also uncovered a few animal puppets so our class has sounded like a interesting petting zoo with cows, frogs and the odd dinosaur.









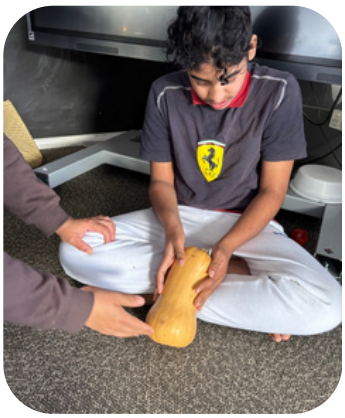


DRC, Yasumi, Vicky, Nicky

It's been a lovely start to the term DRC!
At the end of last term, we enjoyed celebrating Multicultural Day at Base, proudly representing Chile. For our shared kai contribution, we made sopaipillas (pumpkin fritters), pebre (a traditional Chilean salsa), and completos (Chilean hot dogs).
The students enjoyed exploring the different ingredients and being part of the preparation. It has been wonderful to welcome everyone back this week, with all our students happy to be back at school and ready for another great term of learning, exploring and having fun together!








Community notices



Flying Kites

FREE

"Need help navigating the disability support system"

Flying Kites is now offering free 1:1 online Support Sessions to help you get unstuck on one specific issue — with guidance from an experienced disability advisor.

These focused online appointments give you:

✨ Clarity
✨ Expert advice
✨ A practical plan you can take forward

Current Support Topics:
New to Needs Assessments
Individualised Funding (IF)
Work and Income
Community Options
Leaving school (transition support)

If you're in the ***Auckland, Bay of Plenty, Hawkes Bay or Christchurch*** and need support in one of these areas, you can register your interest through our short form below.
We'll match you with the right expert and send you a link to book.

Flying Kites Support Sessions (online) – Fill out the form
https://forms.office.com/r/TLPcBystrW

You don't have to navigate the disability system alone — we're here to help

Special thank you to Foundation North, Kingdom Foundation, Acorn Foundation and Christchurch casino for their support on this project.

www.flyingkites.org.nz

All Abilities Amazing Race Rotorua



Redwoods Whakarewarewa Forest, Longmile Road

Saturday Oct 31st
10.30am-1.30pm

Register now!!



A fun inclusive event for all, collect stamps from activity stations along the Mokopuna Tracks. Choose from 1km or 2.9km. If you like, come in your best Halloween Costume!
Register with the QR code, or contact Jo.





Email: jo@parafedbop.co.nz **Text:** 027 716 2085

The Tauranga City Sunrise Lions Club World Festival of Magic brings you amazing magic, dazzling illusions, music and audience participation!
Monday 16th November - Bethlehem College Performing Arts Centre - 5:00 pm
BEST OF ALL — IT'S FREE!
Thanks to the generosity of the Tauranga City Sunrise Lions Club and local businesses, less fortunate children and their families can enjoy this magical experience together.
BOOK YOUR FREE TICKETS ONLINE NOW!
https://WFOMTauranga.eventbrite.com



MONDAY 16 NOVEMBER / 5PM / FREE

Tauranga City Sunrise Lions Club World Festival Of Magic Show 2026

Bethlehem College Performing Arts Centre, Tauranga

Get Ready to Be Amazed! The Tauranga City Sunrise Lions Club World Festival of Magic brings together an exciting mix of world-class magic and entertainment for a spectacular 90-minute show designed to delight children, families and the young at heart.

Enjoy the incredible talents of Mark Bennick and Erica Vanlee, with Classic Rhi joining the fun, taking you on a magical journey filled with mind-boggling illusions, hilarious moments, incredible surprises and plenty of audience participation.

Best of all, it's ABSOLUTELY FREE!
Thanks to the generosity of the Tauranga City Sunrise Lions Club and local businesses, less fortunate children and their families can enjoy this magical experience together.

GET YOUR FREE E-TICKETS NOW!

Get Tickets

Tickets are limited, so to ensure you don't miss out we've made it even easier for organisations and families to secure tickets by booking directly online.

Click above to get your FREE e-tickets now and get ready for a magical experience the whole family will love.

You're welcome to forward this Eventbrite invitation to your families and clients so they can book for this special, FREE magical family experience.