Tauranga Special School

Learning together

Newsletter 17 Week 6 Term 4 19/11/2026

Kia ora whānau,

Welcome to our Newsletter! As we enter the final few weeks of 2026, this issue brings together a message from our Principal, Dale Megson, alongside key end-of-year reminders, important dates for starting back in 2027, and essential school contact details.

Grab a cuppa, catch up on what's coming up for our school community, and enjoy the read! Happy reading!

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

Important dates

2026

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)

Key Contacts

School Landline:
07 578 4424

Attendance phone (call/txt):
027 558 5917

A message from our Principal



The year continues to race by- we now have less than four weeks until the Christmas break!

Looking Ahead to 2027

Over the next few weeks, you will receive a letter with everything you need to prepare for the start of 2027. This will include information on Wā Whakakotahi / Learning Partnerships Day (and how to book your meeting), stationery, swimming, and next year's term dates. It will also outline who your child's class team will be, including their teacher, therapists, middle leader, and leadership team member.

School Management System - Hero

In 2027, we are transitioning to Hero as our new school management system. This change brings us in line with many local schools as well as special schools across the central region of New Zealand. By adopting Hero- a much more user-friendly platform- we can streamline our updates and make communication and reporting between school and home easier for everyone. As part of this transition, we will no longer be using EDGE or Storypark. Keep an eye out for more details in the coming weeks, and we encourage you to download the Hero app as soon as your setup information arrives.

Transitions for 2027

All students moving to new sites for 2027 have begun their transition visits, and these are going very well! Visits will continue for the remainder of the school year to ensure students and staff feel well prepared for next year. We will log all school location changes with SESTA (School Transport) for students changing sites, so you do not need to worry about organising this. However, if you are moving house, please let us know so we can update those transport details as well.

Key Dates & Reminders

2026

Thursday 10 December: School reports and IP/Ara updates shared with whānau
Monday 14 December: School Concert at Tauranga Boys' College (10:30–11:30 am)
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 enjoys the last few weeks of 2026!

Ngā mihi nui,

Dale Megson
Tumuaki/ Principal

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY PLAY & ENGAGEMENT











Our focus for Term 4 has been to support our classes to explore a range of fun play ideas with our ākonga.







OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY
SUMMER SENSORY SURVIVAL

Sensory Grab Bag

Noise-cancelling headphones
Chewy
Crunchy snacks
Sunglasses/hat
Fidget toys
Stressball
Scented item - lip balm, putty

Routine

Organise Day
Create Sensory Space
Ask for Help with Chores
Bedtime Routine

Applying Sunscreen

Develop a routine
Demo on self
Sensory activity first
Trialling unscented/oil free/spray
Distractions
Warm sunscreen
Timer/countdown to manage transition

Activities

Sensory Friendly Venues

Swimming Pools - quieter times of day

Beach - be prepared for sensory overwhelm with sand, quiet spot, time of day, buckt for water, take breaks

Neoprene is great to support warmth, but also proprioception as it acts like compression clothing

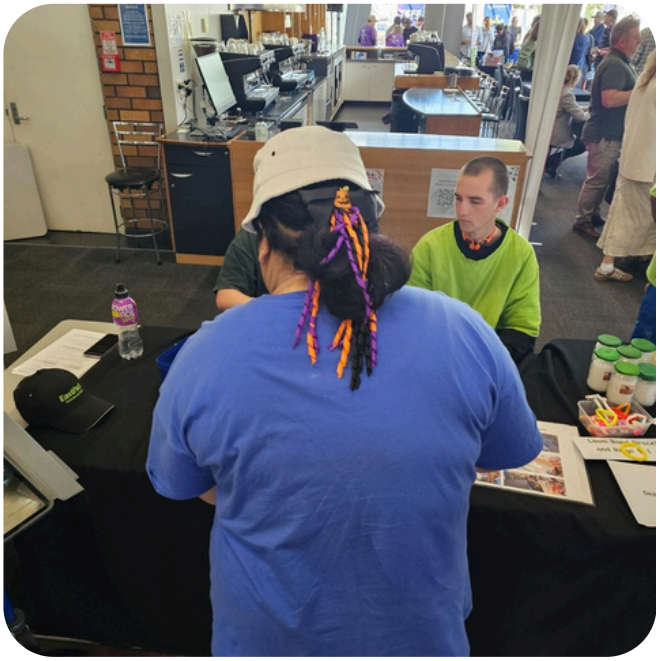
Keeping Cool

Cool location
Plan early morning/late afternoon
Sun protection clothing
Canopies/umbrellas
Cool drinks
Gel packs & fans
Monitor temperature & hydration

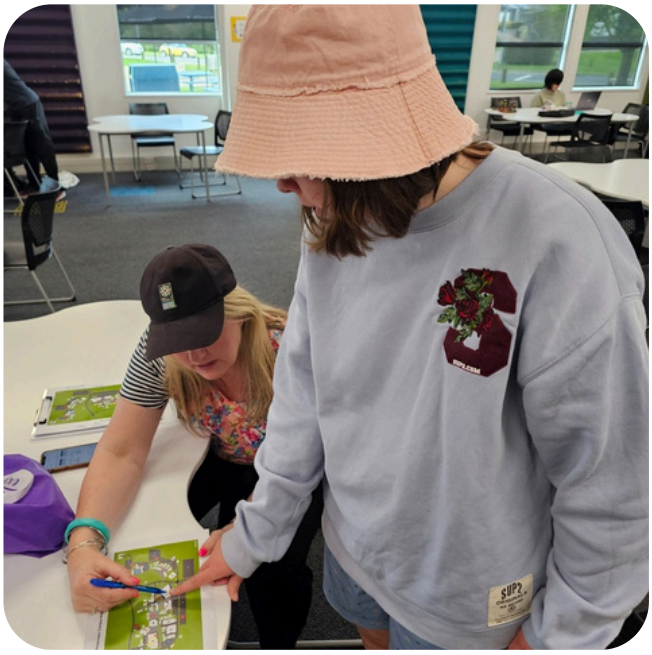
TC3 Nicola and Shane

With our SPEC Work wrapping up at the start of the term, we've shifted into high gear with our Senior Curriculum, focusing on real-life skills through plenty of fun, hands-on learning in the classroom and out in our community!





We've had so many wonderful highlights this term. Our students have loved spending weekly sessions with the Whanaungatanga Ora program, learning all about building strong relationships, social skills, consent, and staying safe online. Students also got to shine on stage showing off their dance moves at Pasifika by the Bay, and the senior students had an inspiring trip to the Toi Ohomai market day to explore exciting options for life after school. On top of all that, our students have stayed super busy with their regular community outings and daily routines.





TC3 Nicola and Shane

As the end of the year approaches, it's so special to look back on all the amazing adventures and progress we've made together. Our students have accomplished so much, and they should all feel incredibly proud of themselves!









Te Kura O Manunui Jays class





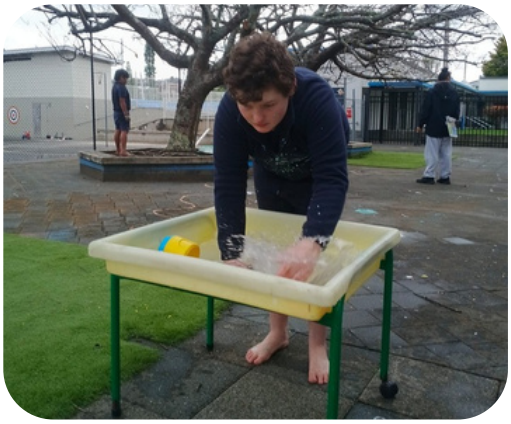


This term at Te Kura o Manunui we've been been busy, learning playing and regulating! We've enjoyed trying new regulation tools, water play, exploring patterns, and finding out more about Diwali. Art, cooking and horse riding are still firm favourites and we are still enjoying learning through our BSLA and Numicon programmes.











Te Kura O Manunui Cathryns class









We've had a fantastic term filled with fun, learning, and play! Highlights included reading wonderful stories, creating colorful artwork, learning new board games, and expressing ourselves through dancing, singing, and collaboration.









Community notices

UNSEEN HEROES

#SeenHeardFound

A free six-month programme for young people aged 13-24

For young people who have a loved one with a disability, illness, mental health challenges, or addiction, or who support siblings or whānau at home.







NEXT INTAKE

19-21 FEBRUARY 2027

THREE-DAY CAMP

WHAT YOU'LL GET

CONNECTION & SUPPORT

A three-day camp where you can relax, have fun and connect with others who understand what life is like for you.

HOLISTIC HEALING

Support for your mental health, confidence and resilience.

ASPIRATIONAL PATHWAYS

Support to explore what's next, whether that's school, training, work or figuring out your next step.

EXCURSIONS & FUN

Time away from responsibilities to unwind, recharge and just be a young person.

WHO CAN JOIN?

Young people aged 13-24 who:

- have a loved one with a disability, illness, mental health challenges, or addiction
- support siblings or whānau at home
- feel they carry more responsibility or worry than most people their age.

YOU'RE NOT ALONE

Many young people grow up supporting others without realising there's support for them too.

At Unseen Heroes, we see you - and we walk alongside you.

INTERESTED OR WANT TO KNOW MORE?

Visit:
www.unseenheroes.org.nz
info@unseenheroes.org.nz

Scan the QR Code

parafed Bay of Plenty | Takutai adventure company | Salt Spray | Dream Beans Coffee | WHAKATĀNE District Council Kia Whakatāne au i ahau

Adaptive Surfing & Paddle Boarding - Ōhope 2027

Beach Wheelchair Available

Whānau Fun Day

Play Zone & Games



Paddle Boarding

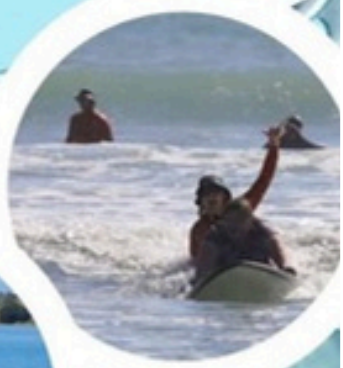
Sun Jan 17th
Sun Jan 31st

Surfing

Sun Feb 21st
Sun Feb 28th
Sun March 14th

Registrations Open Soon!







For those with a physical disability, blind & low vision, deaf & hard of hearing

Registration will be essential.

ADAPTIVE SURFING & SUNDAY SPLASH

MOUNT MAUNGANUI 2027

TECT



Registration essential - spaces are limited!

ADAPTIVE SURFING

Opposite Mount Drury

9am - 11am on the following **Friday's**:

- 22nd January
- 5th February
- 19th February
- 5th March
- 19th March

HIBISCUS MOUNT MAUNGANUI

SUNDAY SPLASH

Pilot Bay

4-6pm on the following **Sunday's**:

- 24th January
- 21st February
- 14th March



FREE FOR PARAFED BOP MEMBERS

Beach Wheelchair available

Any queries please contact
sarah@parafedbop.co.nz

parafed
Bay of Plenty

YOU'RE INVITED TO THE PARAFED BOP

CHRISTMAS PARTY

- Festive Kai provided
- Lawn Games
- Family Fun

DEC 3RD 2026

4:30-6:00 PM

Kulim Park, Otumoetai, Tauranga

Weather dependant.
Back up date Weds 9th Dec.

For more info or to RSVP contact sarah@parafedbop.co.nz





TAURANGA LAUNCH

Inclusive strength, movement and confidence for all abilities aged 6 to 82+.

OFFICIALLY LAUNCHING
WEEKLY
ON SATURDAYS AT 11AM

STARTING
17TH OCT 2026

THE LAB ATHLETIC CLUB
14 ST JOHN STREET,
TAURANGA

PROUDLY PARTNERING WITH

parafed Bay of Plenty

THELAB ATHLETIC CLUB

*WE WALK **ALONGSIDE** PEOPLE, NOT IN FRONT OF THEM.*


Christmas
IN THE Park
Saturday 5th December
Lions Santa Parade
3pm From Katikati Primary School carpark, along Carisbrooke Street to Moore Park
Christmas in the Park
3.30pm - 5pm at Moore Park
Food Vendors & Craft Stalls
Kid's Entertainment
Live Music
Jump in Taylor Bros Truck!
Helicopter rides!
Thanks to Adventure Helicopters
TAYLOR
SUPPORTED BY