



Te Whānau o Ōtūmatua

PROSPECTUS

Whakarangatirahia
Be the best you can be

www.otumatua.school.nz



KUPU FROM THE TUMUAKI | PRINCIPAL

Nau mai, haere mai.

Thank you for considering enrolment at Te Whānau o Ōtūmatua (OTM), a name gifted to us by the late Dr Terry Ryan. Our name connects us with a spur on the western section of Ngā Kohatu Whakarakaraka o Tamatea Pōkai Whenua/the Port Hills, overlooking the Christchurch suburb of Halswell.

OTM is a small co-educational school with highly trained kaiako dedicated to working with young people who have complex learning and behavioural needs and experience neurodiverse challenges. This may include ASD, intellectual impairment, specific learning disabilities, ADHD, or other neurodevelopmental conditions.

Our dedicated kaiako choose to be part of the OTM whānau because they are passionate about making a positive difference in the lives of young people. Each ākonga (student) is supported by the wider team to set and work towards individualised goals through our All About Me (AAM) process, in a safe and nurturing environment where they feel a sense of belonging and are empowered to reach their full potential and whakarangatirahia/be the best they can be.

For many, the simple act of making a friend or receiving an award can be the first experience of confidence, connection, and purpose. This unique setting provides common experience, camaraderie, friendship, and trust between children and adults. Because they are surrounded by others learning similar skills, they often claim this is the first time they feel like they 'fit in'.

Both kaiako and ākonga are encouraged to be enthusiastic, reflective, resilient, and empowered to make meaningful choices. These goals become all the easier because the work is undertaken in a fun, therapeutic environment, and with heart.

With our small roll, high kaiako numbers, and our 24/7 approach, we can facilitate meaningful interactions with increased teaching moments and opportunities to identify and build on the strengths of our rangitahi.

At OTM, living is learning. Our residential curriculum encourages independence and responsibility. This provides the ideal preparation for the challenges of adult life. Graduates and whānau often tell us we have made a significant difference in their life. We hope we can make a difference for you too.

Whakarangatirahia. Be the best you can be.

Stephen Evans, Tumuaki



PHILOSOPHY OF CARE

WHANAUNGATANGA | RELATIONSHIPS

- We will create a relationship-based therapeutic milieu which is responsive to the needs of each ākonga.
- We will involve ākonga, whānau, and referrers in creating ākonga learning goals.
- We will recognise and build on the unique interests, strengths, and motivations of every ākonga.
- We will intentionally create environments where ākonga feel physically, emotionally, and culturally safe.
- We will respond to ākonga with respect, curiosity, and restorative practices, even during times of challenge or distress.
- We will uphold the mana and privacy of every ākonga.
- We will have professional and collaborative partnerships to best meet ākonga needs.

MANAWA-ROA | RESILIENCE

- We will recognise the strengths and potential of every ākonga and support them to be the best they can be.
- We will provide a range of activities where ākonga can relax, play, learn, and have fun.
- We will create a culture where mistakes are valued as part of learning, growth, and discovery.
- We will respond to and nurture the physical, emotional, social, intellectual, spiritual, and cultural wellbeing of each ākonga.
- We will maximise everyday opportunities for learning, growth, and connection.
- We will model calmness, persistence, and resilience.

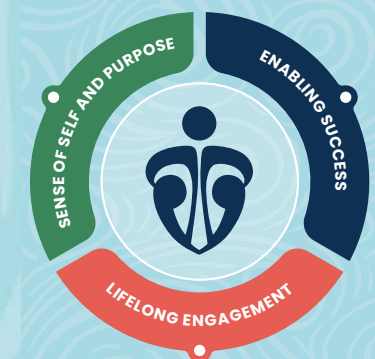
WHAIWHAKAARO | REFLECT

- We will reflect on our practice and take purposeful steps to strengthen what we do.
- We will ensure ākonga experience and celebrate success.
- We will support ākonga to learn from their experiences, reflect on their choices, and develop strategies for future success.
- We will use the collective ākonga voice to improve our practice.
- We will provide opportunities for ākonga to ask for help or advocacy.
- We will provide a programme that is consistent and responsive to individual ākonga needs.
- We will give ākonga an opportunity to be part of decision-making that affects them.
- We will support ākonga to express their thoughts, feelings, and ideas.

OUR VISION

WHAKARANGATIRAHIA
Be the best you can be

OUR PURPOSE



To empower ākonga with a sense of self and purpose, to enable success and lifelong engagement within their local communities.

OUR VALUES



Every interaction by every staff member
with **every child** has the potential to make a positive difference.



OUR KURA

Modern Facilities

Nestled amongst the trees, our grounds boast expansive green spaces, playgrounds and sensory zones, a swimming pool, and a bike track.

During 2016, a \$9-million rebuild of the kura was completed which included family-style houses to accommodate up to 32 ākonga, a multi-functional learning space (Te Mapua), and upgrades to ngā ākonga whānau accommodation and conference room.

There is a high-tech sensor security system which helps to keep ākonga safe.

SCHOOL | WHARE AKO

The whare ako operates with small class sizes supported by a teacher and at least one teacher assistant. Ākonga have individualised programmes as well as opportunities to work together as a class and also with the whole school.

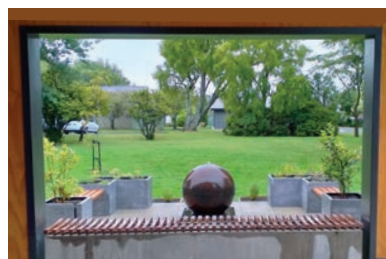
The school day runs from 9am to 3pm, and ākonga return to their whare for the midday meal.

HOUSES | NGĀ WHARE

There are four houses, each containing eight individual bedrooms, offering ākonga their own private space which they can personalise with their favourite items.

Whare Tauawa: a whānau house for male ākonga who opt for immersion in the Māori culture.

Whare Owaka, Makonui & Huritini: separate whare for our male and female ākonga offer individualised programmes to best meet the needs of the current ākonga cohort.



24/7 INTERVENTION

At OTM, we offer an intensive 24/7 therapeutic intervention where learning happens through relationships, shared experiences and everyday life, underpinned by trauma-sensitive, evidence and relationship-based, and culturally responsive approaches that foster belonging, meaningful relationships and empowerment.

The All About Me (AAM) Plan is a learner-centred approach that is individualised for each ākonga with input from the ākonga, whānau, and referrer, and guides personalised goals, successes, wellbeing, and safety throughout their time at OTM. The AAM programme includes 6-weekly monitoring and reporting on achievement throughout the intervention.

24/7 CURRICULUM

Each ākonga individualised goals are drawn from 12 domains:

- Health and Safety
- Self-Awareness
- Communication
- Skills for Learning
- Connectedness
- Culture and Identity
- Social Skills/Relationship Skills
- Engagement and Community Skills
- Self-Management
- Approach to Learning
- Problem Solving and Responsible Decision Making
- Functional Living Skills

We provide cultural-specific goals for ngā ākonga who choose to live in our whare focused on kaupapa and tikanga Māori, and we provide age-specific goals for our senior ākonga where relevant.

Learning across the 24/7 Curriculum assists our ākonga to:

- interact with their environment as independently as possible,
- become a participating member of society,
- develop a sense of wellbeing and worth,
- solve problems appropriately and responsibly in life situations,
- manage their own personal affairs.

While many goals are shared across both settings, each provides a different context for learning and growth.

Whare Ako/School

Through responsive teaching, supportive relationships and adapted learning experiences, we develop the foundational skills for learning that enable ākonga to engage with others, make choices, express themselves, develop independence and take an active role in their learning and their world.

Ngā Whare/Residential

Learning in our residential whare is grounded in living life together. Everyday routines, relationships, challenges and successes become opportunities to develop independence, communication, wellbeing and functional life skills.

SPECIALIST SERVICES

We have a service contract with a local medical centre.

All ākonga are enrolled for treatment at our local dental centre.



"You make friends at OTM."

former student



CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Te Whānau o Ōtūmatua aims to reflect New Zealand's cultural diversity by:

- providing a positive learning environment that will enhance the self-esteem and identity of all ākonga.
- promoting ākonga te whare tapa whā (a Māori model of wellness): taha tinana (physical health), taha hinengaro (mental and emotional health), taha whānau (family and social health), and taha wairua (spiritual health).
- providing ākonga with varied opportunities to understand and respect tikanga Māori (Māori values, attitudes and behaviour).

Te Tao Kokiri, our Māori caucus, has operated for a number of years.

This group serves our kura by addressing issues pertaining to Māori, by Māori, and drives OTM on our commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi partnership.

We are proud of the learning experiences provided for the ākonga who choose to live in our whānau whare, Te Whare a Tauawa; a whare focused on kaupapa and tikanga Māori. It enhances, maintains and protects the customs, values and knowledge of te reo and tikanga Māori. The kaupapa includes teaching and developing the skills of each individual at a level relevant to their learning ability. Te Whare a Tauawa is also open to non-Māori rangitahi.

Our Pasifika staff have incorporated cultural practices, including a college-wide umu, into the OTM programme. Our Pasifika ākonga are encouraged to worship with the local Pasifika community.

"I am the happiest I have ever been. This school has changed my life."

former student



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15 Nash Road, Aidanfield, Christchurch 8025
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BECOMING PART OF OUR OTM WHĀNAU

All RSS enrolments are made by entering into a Specialist Education Agreement (SEA) with the Ministry of Education (MoE).

There are two referral pathways:

RSS-ONLY PATHWAY

The RSS-only pathway is for ākonga aged 8 to 15 years (in Years 3 to 10) who will benefit from an educational intervention but who don't require Te Kahu Tōi: Intensive Wraparound Service (IWS).

A parent/caregiver, educator, or learning support provider can request that enrolment into a residential specialist school (RSS) be considered.

Applications are only able to be made by the young person's learning support provider in their home region. This could be an RTL, MoE specialist, or a day specialist or ORS fund-holder school.

TE KAHU TŌI, INTENSIVE WRAPAROUND SERVICE (IWS)

IWS is a wraparound support programme for young people aged Years 0 to 10 who have highly complex behaviour, emotional, social and/or learning needs. These ākonga need support not just at school but also at home and in their community.

SELECTION CRITERIA

Further information on the selection criteria for each pathway is available on our website, or by searching 'residential specialist schools' on the MoE website.

If the young person does not currently access any learning support please contact our student co-ordinator to discuss the next step.

For more information, please visit our website or contact our student co-ordinator:

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