

St Leonards School

Annual Report 2025

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Principal's Report 2025

2025 was a year of strengthening and deepening our sense of community, both within the student community and amongst the parent and whānau community. Our well established classroom routines meant we were able to start the year with our feet running, straight into meaningful learning and growth.

Property

By March, the classroom opening project was finished and we were able to settle into our refurbished learning space. It has been a joy to teach and learn in the opened rooms this year. We celebrated the project's completion with the wider community with a Classroom Warming that attracted good coverage in the Otago Daily Times.

We had window transfers and blinds installed in the classrooms to reduce the glare from low winter sun. We had some carpet and vinyl installed as part of the Small and Rural Schools programme.

Great Learning Opportunities

All our tamariki participated in some enriched learning experiences, both in the classroom and away from school.

- In Term One, we visited Otago Polytechnic to look at compost/worm farms and edible gardens.
- Our trip to the Marine Science Centre in Portobello was a great opportunity to deepen our learning from the term so far. Our mokopuna were able to share a lot of prior knowledge with the educator.
- Our year 5 and 6 students attended the Enviroschools Primary Hui at Orokou with the focus on taking action.
- In Term 4, we started Unplugged Fridays, which was very well received. I was encouraged by the way our tamariki were able to articulate why we were doing it, relating back to Te Whare Tapa Whā.
- The Ukulele Jam was a highlight - our tamariki worked hard towards being ready for it and thoroughly enjoyed participating.
- Our Noho Marae as part of camp week was a hugely significant experience for our whole community - tamariki, staff and whānau alike.
- Hannah from the Marine Studies Centre visited with VR headsets and we experienced life under the ocean.

Staff Meetings, Professional Development and Projects

As well as our regular Professional Growth Cycle Staff Meetings and attending Ministry provided professional development to support the refreshed curriculum. Alice and I engaged in a number of other opportunities to enrich our curriculum and practice, including Health and P.E. conferences and workshops, Enviroschools Hui, Māori Achievement Collaborative hui and more.

During our end of year reflection, we identified these areas of growth and strength:

- Graduate Profile - specifically embedding it into morning meetings
- Using end of term ASPIRE reflections to inform teaching the following term
- Implementing structured literacy across the school and embedding it in the junior programme.
- High veracity teaching practices have been intentional and done well (sharing learning intention, self testing, reducing cognitive load, providing access to models)
- Peer teaching has started to happen naturally

- Classroom wall displays - especially having children's writing and artwork on display - we get comments from parents who enjoy it
- Gained momentum in learning - less interruptions, still a work in progress
- Individual blackboards working very well
- Continued to develop culturally responsive practice (adding new karakia, waiata, pūrākau, more commands)

Kā mihi nui,
Sarah Thompson
Principal, Tumuaki

Board Members

Ali Hill (Presiding Member)

Sarah Thompson (Principal)

Julie Kearns (Staff Representative)

Paul Turner

Antonia Wood

Penny Keirle

Statement of Variance

1. Empower and develop skills for learning, relationships and well being, both now and in the future with resilience, critical thinking and confidence.

Initiative	Actions <i>What did we do?</i>	Outcomes <i>What happened?</i>	Reason for the variance <i>Why did it happen?</i>	Evaluation <i>Where to next?</i>
1a Identify Acceleration ākoka	We used end of 2024 assessments to identify students that are below, well below, or have decelerated progress for more than 2 terms. We continued to update this document throughout the year.	This document became the starting point for conversations with staff and with RTLB and LSC regarding next steps for individuals requiring acceleration.	This process worked well and was sustainable.	Continue to use this process for 2026;
1b Acceleration Interventions	Actions varied based on individual needs, but included utilising tools in the Graduate Profile; a common action was to give a, “preview” of new material with teachers prior to group work, and additional opportunities to practice. We had a group referral with RTLB to support Graduate Profile implementation. We made adjustments to the classroom routine to ensure we have regular additional time for acceleration students.	Acceleration for some students. Confidence to have a go at challenging learning has increased across the board.	Confidence in learning and risk taking reflects the work we have done through the Graduate Profile. Available teacher and teacher aide time fluctuated over the year due to staff changes and budget limitations. Whilst we were mostly able to mitigate disruption, this may have been a factor in limited progress.	Continue to reevaluate the timetable to ensure we maximised learning time for acceleration students; Provide professional development for teacher aide for structured literacy..

<p>1c Professional Growth Cycle for Teachers</p>	<p>Teachers and Teacher Aides participated in PGC staff meetings 2-3 times per term; Continue to work through St Leonards School Quality Practice Document, which outlines the ways in which we demonstrate the Standards for the Teaching Profession in our unique context; We identified up to 3 practices to embed or enhance;</p> <p>To complement our Quality Practice Document, we spent a staff meeting creating a "Quality Practice Routines" doc which provides a synthesis of our practice in each learning area. Our student teacher confirmed that a document like this would be very beneficial to work from the beginning, and it would also be useful for any new staff or long term relievers.</p>	<p>This process became central to the ways in which we all work in the school. It brought clarity and shared language. It helped to focus our efforts so we weren't easily distracted by other growth opportunities, but focused on the areas that had the biggest impact.</p>	<p>Our PGC process worked because we were all on board, including our teacher aide and student teachers.</p>	<p>Continue this effective practice in 2026.</p>
<p>1d Embed Graduate Profile</p>	<p>We embedded the ASPIRE Graduate Profile throughout the school, making it an accessible tool for ākonga as they develop their skills for learning, relationships and wellbeing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Daily focus during our Hui Ata - Used information from end of term reflections to identify needs and plan the next term. - Made posters to support each area - Created questions for each area to support conversations - Utilised a Minecraft Project to focus on co-operation and other social skills 	<p>The language we taught ākonga to use in our Hui Ata became second nature in the way they talked about and engaged in their learning.</p> <p>End of term reflections were interesting, as they often revealed that ākonga thought themselves less capable in areas we had been focusing on.</p>	<p>Engagement was encouraged through the Minecraft Project - it was a meaningful context to refer to our values in.</p> <p>Ākonga likely judged themselves more critically in areas they better understood.</p>	<p>Continue this effective practice in 2026.</p>
<p>1e Unpack Te Mātaiaho Mathematics Curriculum</p>	<p>We spent the curriculum days and some staff meetings unpacking Mathematics in Te Mātaiaho</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unpack progressions - Unpack acceleration 	<p>We intended to align our assessment schedule, but that remains incomplete.</p> <p>We also intended to align</p>	<p>We withheld progress on developing our assessment schedule until we received clarity from the ministry</p>	<p>Next year, we will be collaborating with other small schools to develop a scope and sequence that will</p>

	<p>- Align assessment schedule</p> <p>While this work has been happening, we have continued to teach and accelerate ākongā through PR1ME.</p> <p>We updated our delivery statements according to the 2024 curriculum release.</p>	<p>PR1ME with the progressions in the curriculum. This work remains incomplete.</p> <p>We did plan and successfully teach non-number topics across the school.</p> <p>We identified that Basic Facts is missing from our current programme, despite evidence of its importance, , so we began to find ways of ensuring students achieve mastery.</p>	<p>about what would be expected.</p> <p>Much of the work we were partway through has to be redone due to the re-release of the curriculum in September.</p> <p>At the PR1ME Maths Roadshow there were conflicting messages about which scope and sequence to follow (NZ Curriculum or PR1ME). More work needs to be done here to ensure that what we are doing with the “number” strand of the maths curriculum is met at each year level.</p>	<p>set appropriate pacing in multilevel classrooms.</p> <p>We will then use this pacing to plan PR1ME across the year.</p> <p>Evaluate the SMART tool and identify whether or not other assessments are needed to inform next steps and acceleration needs.</p>
<p>1f Unpack Te Mātaiaho English Curriculum</p>	<p>We spend some staff meetings and holiday time unpacking English in Te Mātaiaho (2024 release)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unpacked progressions - Unpacked acceleration - Aligned assessment schedule <p>Alice undertook BLSA training for years 3-6.</p> <p>We created a delivery statement for the implementation of the 2024 release.</p>	<p>We aligned our Spelling Rules scope and sequence with the new doc. We intend to cover all of phase 2 spelling rules and sentence structure objectives over the course of the year, meaning that our learners get a minimum of three opportunities to have focused learning for each over their senior years.</p> <p>We have looked at ways that our integrated curriculum (everything except reading,</p>	<p>We made significant progress in this area are confident that we are teaching the English Curriculum (2024 release) at expected year levels.</p> <p>Much of the work completed earlier in the year needs to be reassessed in light of the October release.</p>	<p>Spend time understanding the changes in the October 2025 release;</p> <p>Rewrite our delivery statement to align</p> <p>Reevaluate our scope and sequences to ensure they align.</p> <p>Evaluate the SMART tool and identify whether or not other assessments are needed to inform next steps and acceleration needs.</p>

		writing and maths) uses the learning progressions in the refreshed curriculum. We found that a great deal of the oral language learning area is regularly met in our daily ASPIRE focus.		
1g Implement Readers Theatre	Evidence shows Readers Theatre improves reading outcomes. The approach targets fluency, comprehension and general communication skills. We intended to supplement our Read Along programme with Readers Theatre.	This did not happen in 2025.	The workload of BSLA and implementing the new curriculum left no time to do this initiative justice.	We could implement this as an acceleration initiative if time allows.
1h Dual Factor Reading	Text projected on board during class novel; explicit teaching around vocabulary and comprehension.	We finally did this in term 4 during our senior novel. It was hugely successful for most learners. Our acceleration students, however, did not engage with the projection on the board.	Confident readers were able to confidently engage, those who are not yet confident may have been overwhelmed by text on the board, and opted to listen.	If we continue to use this approach, we must find ways of engaging acceleration students to ensure it reaches its full efficiency.
1i Better Start Literacy training	Alice underlook 4 Week trial starting in February and then the training in term 3 and 4. It included structured literacy approaching in the senior school, focusing on advanced morphology, fluency and deeper level comprehension.	All learners were very engaged in this and most of the content was new to all. It became business as usual by the end of the year. Assessments showed progress in most areas.	BSLA is very time consuming and reduces time for other areas of the curriculum. As the year went on, we were able to select texts relevant to other areas of learning.	The pedagogical approaches in BSLA are effective, and we will continue to integrate in our programme.
1j Topic Coverage Plan	Plan triannual coverage of all areas of the curriculum (other than English and Mathematics) to ensure content knowledge is delivered at each phase	We completed this over the summer holidays and have begun to implement it. We were able to cover all areas scheduled for the year.	In the second half of the year we kept teaching the areas to Friday to ensure we can get the “5 hours per week” of uninterrupted reading, writing and maths,	Continue to integrate other areas of learning into English and Maths.

Time for areas other than English and Maths is limited, so we need to be creative in the ways we integrate them. and integrating the topic into maths and English where relevant.

2. To embed a healthy sense of community, by engaging Whānau and the wider West Harbour community, promoting roll growth.

Initiative	Actions <i>What did we do?</i>	Outcomes <i>What happened?</i>	Reason for the variance <i>Why did it happen?</i>	Evaluation <i>Where to next?</i>
1a Gathering Community Voice	Parent survey to enquire into the level of connectedness and engagement our families experience;	We sent out a survey through the newsletter. We also gathered community voices at our Matariki celebration.	We had the most feedback from our community at the Matariki celebration.	Continue Matariki reflections; look at utilising assemblies for gathering parent and whānau feedback for curriculum reviews.
2b Friday Shop	Develop our Friday Shop with the focus on feeding and engaging our community.	We worked with Enviroschools to have a permanent stall built. We “rebranded” to School Gate Greens. Production and supply was intermittent in term 4.	Seeing the edible gardens at the Polytech helped with a vision for where we can go.	Plan how we can build momentum with School Gate Greens.
2c Open Days	We planned two Sunday Morning open days targeted at families with preschool children.	The first open morning attracted two local families. For the second, we had a Teddy Bear Picnic.	There are a limited number of young families in the area.	We want to make sure we stay connected to the young families in the area, so are planning Sunday morning coffee and playtimes to create low-key opportunities to connect.

2d Fundraising Events	We planned events to be spread across the year with a range of target audiences including St Leonards locals, wider West Harbour residents, plus a range of age groups.	We successfully ran all the events we planned, but are at the limit of what we can ask families to do.	Small number of families mean the pool of volunteers is small, but we still need to actively create opportunities for people to visit our school if we wish for it to grow.	We have created a similar plan for 2026 with a breakdown of how many volunteers are required so we can be transparent about how much time is needed.
2e Community Working Bees	Working Bees followed by shared kai each Sunday prior to the term starting; The Hall Committee and wider community will be encouraged to attend.	Hall committee didn't attend any. We had a very successful two-weekend working bees to get the playground done.	Our parent community really care about our school!	Reaching out to volunteer organisations to do some of the working bee work;
2f Review Motto and Vision Statement	We intended to review our Motto and Vision statement to reflect the values of our school, in particular, community and belonging.	This did not happen in 2025	The board was focused on a number of other priorities.	This is on the agenda for 2026. It will be done in conjunction with consultation about adopting a dual name.

3. To create an inclusive environment that values diversity and gives effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Initiative	Actions <i>What did we do?</i>	Outcomes <i>What happened?</i>	Reason for the variance <i>Why did it happen?</i>	Evaluation <i>Where to next?</i>
3a Māori Achievement Collaborative	Sarah participated in MAC; Unpacking Te Tiriti o Waitangi	<p>Attended a number of hui, including Hui-a-tau in Kirikiriroa</p> <p>We had a staff meeting to talk about Te Tiriti o Waitangi, and its importance for ākonga Māori as well as non Māori, making it incredibly relevant to our context</p> <p>We took a number of small steps towards increasingly giving effect to Te Tiriti</p>	Participating in MAC has enriched our kura in more ways than we anticipated through the relationships we cultivated, and the local narratives we learned.	Investigate the opportunity to participate in MAC with the new user-pays model.

- Seeking permission to use our gifted name (Te Umukuratawhiti)
- Learning Pepeha
- Noho marae
- Learning local cultural narrative
- New karakia
- Mihi Whakatau

<p>3b Navigating the Journey</p>	<p>- Intentionally address specific learning steps identified through ASPIRE Graduate profile by integrating Navigating the Journey activities into our Hui Ata. - A week each term where we break into age groups to cover age relevant content.</p>	<p>We have integrated a number of activities from NtJ into our morning meetings to support the graduate profile. These proved to be meaningful and enjoyable.</p>	<p>The content in Navigating the Journey reflects the aspirations of our community for our tamariki.</p>	<p>Continue to implement.</p>
<p>3.c Whānau additions to the Graduate Profile</p>	<p>Whānau have the opportunity to share cultural values that they aspire to see their tamariki grow in as they progress through our school.</p>	<p>We found that all the specific goals and aspirations that our current whānau have for their tamariki are already reflected in the Graduate Profile. This still, however, remains available should it be needed in the future.</p>	<p>This confirms that our Graduate Profile reflects the aspirations of our current school community.</p>	<p>Continue to use whānau hui to invite whānau to share specific aspirations for their tamariki that aren't included in the Graduate Profile.</p>

Attendance

Term 1 Attendance was 86%, compared with 68% in term 1 last year.

Term 2, 78% of students were in “regular attendance” category (90% or more)

Our average attendance for Term 3 was 96.8%. We have no students over the threshold for unjustified absences. I received a call from the ministry to congratulate us on perfect attendance for term 3.

Term 4 was 89% regular attendance.

Evaluation and Analysis of Achievement

Data over time	Mid 2025			End 2025		
	Reading	Writing	Maths	Reading	Writing	Maths
All						
At or above %	66%	78%	78%	78%	67%	78%

Please note that for privacy reasons, we can not identify gender or ethnicity in our achievement data in this report.

Reading

Note: a trend shows below children are at or above for decoding and fluency, but below in comprehension.

What is the data telling us?

Our structured literacy (The Code and Spelling rules) are effectively teaching most learners. Some of our learners had previously been below in the structured literacy aspect, and are now achieving at expectations. The area of comprehension that most of our learners struggle with is retelling, and this has been clearly identified through the Better Start Literacy Approach (BSLA) assessments that we used. BSLA has seen acceleration in achievement, however, comprehension still lags behind.

How is this data informing teaching (next steps) for individual children?

We will refine our interventions to support those who are not accelerating in comprehension, as well as the small groups who are still struggling with decoding.

What assessment practices (tools and judgements) support this data?

Reading Skills record, BLSA assessments

How does this data and analysis drive your strategic planning and what are your goals for student achievement and progress going forward?

We need to prioritise comprehension and retelling for the group, and prioritise timetabling additional structured literacy practice for some.

Writing

What is the data telling us?

Whilst overall the data is encouraging, there is a small group (mainly girls) who haven't made expected progress. We have observed that in the classroom, these learners avoid independent writing, probably due to fear of risk taking.

How is this data informing teaching (next steps) for individual children ?

For our acceleration students, we will make a plan to support working independently and take risks.

What assessment practices (tools and judgements) support this data?

This data was triangulated based on e-asTTle evaluations of both fiction and non-fiction as well as spelling assessments and other observations.

How does this data and analysis drive your strategic planning and what are your goals for student achievement and progress going forward?

We will regularly incorporate risk taking and classroom tools to support independent work during our Hui Ata. The group who have not made expected progress (mainly girls) will have individual plans in place to accelerate their progress.

Mathematics

What is the data telling us?

Our maths programme is effective for our current group of boys, but not for our girls. Those who have made decelerated progress are also below in reading and/or writing and require more time to get through their work.

How is this data informing teaching (next steps) for individual children

We have identified our acceleration students, and will prioritise staffing to ensure they have the additional support they require. Again, risk taking in independent work remains a challenge, so we will address that individually.

What assessment practices (tools and judgements) support this data?

We used Maths Snapshots and basic facts assessments.

How does this data and analysis drive your strategic planning and what are your goals for student achievement and progress going forward?

We are working on an annual coverage plan to ensure pacing is appropriate, and that ākongā are working on content similar to their peers so they have many exposures to their current content, revise previous content, and are extended in future content to support their learning.

Giving Effect to Te Tiriti o

Waitangi

- This year, we participated in the Māori Achievement Collaborative, which has supported us to further develop our practice.
- We held our first Mihi Whakatau to welcome a group of teachers to our kura. We used the process again later in the year to welcome another school.
- We continue to be dedicated to integrating te reo, matauranga me te tikaka Māori in our daily routines (waiata, karakia, korero Māori during the morning roll, and relevant integration in topics). We further expanded our repertoire of these in 2025.
- We attended a Noho Marae, and spent time learning about tikaka involved in the weeks leading up.
- In mathematics, we have intentionally planned to include matuaranga Māori in each topic.

Statement of Compliance with Employment Policy

Compliance with Education and Training Act 2020 requirements to be a good employer for the year ending 31 December 2025

The following questions address key aspects of compliance with a good employer policy:

Reporting on the principles of being a Good Employer	
How have you met your obligations to provide good and safe working conditions?	Health and Safety Policies and procedures in use for example ensured workspaces, classrooms, toilets and staffroom are regularly cleaned daily for hygiene; Building Warrant of Fitness routinely completed.
What is in your equal employment opportunities programme? How have you been fulfilling this programme?	Policy and procedure that complies with Union and MoE guidelines
How do you practise impartial selection of suitably qualified persons for appointment?	Not applicable in 2025
How are you recognising, - The aims and aspirations of Māori, - The employment requirements of Māori and - Greater involvement of Maori in the Education service?	As we currently have no Māori staff or students, we do not have the opportunity to implement these aspects.
How have you enhanced the abilities of individual employees?	Professional development opportunities that align with the school's target areas and also employee aspirations.
How are you recognising the employment requirements of women?	All staff members in 2025 were women.
How are you recognising the employment requirements of persons with disabilities?	All rooms are accessible via ramps; staff toilets are accessible. We are open to ensuring equitable access for all, and are committed to providing relevant support as and when the need arises with employees.

Good employer policies should include provisions for an Equal Employment Opportunities (EEO) programme/policy. The Ministry of Education monitors these policies:

	yes	no
Do the St Leonards School Board and Principal:		
Support development and training for all women employees.	✓	
The school offers appropriate support for employees with disabilities.	✓	
Encourage employees from ethnic groups to look for and to take up opportunities for leadership and promotion.	✓	
Recognise and reward (where appropriate) specialised skill of Māori employees, including fluency in te reo, interpreting skills, and knowledge of Māori culture.	✓	
Make a range of school responsibilities, such as timetabling, taking assemblies, and organising outdoor education, available to all teachers on an equal basis.	✓	
Encourage all employees to undertake training and development.	✓	
Encourage all employees to seek promotion and to take advantage of career development opportunities.	✓	
Recognise, in recruitment and selection procedures, skills and knowledge acquired in paid employment, in the home, and in the community.	✓	
Discourage sexual harassment in the school.	✓	

Grants successfully applied for

- Port Otago continues to cover the costs of swimming instruction, pool entry, and the West Harbour Sports Day.
- Tū Manawa Active Aotearoa; \$4981.77 for fitness and integrating physical activity into other areas of the curriculum by painting lines in the playground and purchasing digital Jump Jam kits.

Kiwi Sport Funding, Sport and Physical Education

Our Kiwi Sport funding of \$139.96 contributed towards paying for our fortnightly Kelly Sports lessons. Here are some other highlights:

- We participated in the Healthy Active Learning programme with Sport Otago. We have an advisor, Georgia, who met with us throughout the year to support us with curriculum planning, innovative thinking, skill development, pedagogical approaches, strategy, and policy. We looked at the Health and PE curriculum and identified that we cover most of the curriculum already. We made some small changes to address most of the gaps;
- Georgia worked with fitness leaders to plan the Fun Run, as well as gave them some new games to play to help the children get their fitness up.
- The Fun Run was successful, all students were highly engaged and all beat their previous records. We have a good number of children participating in summer sports at other schools. Everyone who wants to participate is able to.
- West Harbour Sports Day - the first undercover in the stadium - was very successful.
- We had 12 over 4 weeks in Term 4, and saw progress in all our swimmers.
- We received a grant from Tū Manawa to add to our fitness kete -digital Jump Jam kits and line markings for the playground.