



Appendix 2: Information about Ko Taku Reo

Ko Taku Reo Deaf Education NZ (Ko Taku Reo) is New Zealand's sole provider of education services for Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) learners. Ko Taku Reo is a bilingual, bicultural organisation using New Zealand Sign Language (NZSL) and spoken languages on a communication continuum from administration to the classroom. Ko Taku Reo is officially classified as a state specialist school (English medium). Over 3200 learners receive specialist services which include:

- **Early Childhood Centre (ECE):** Ko Taku Reo operates an ECE facility at the Auckland campus and offers a bilingual environment predominantly using NZSL, characteristic of the Deaf Community in which these children live. The centre provides coordinated and specialist early childhood teaching for DHH children under 6 years of age. These are currently for children enrolled in or referred to the early childhood centre and their families/whānau. Children enrolled must be under 6 years of age, not enrolled in school, and be DHH, siblings of DHH children or children of deaf adults (CODAs). Number of ECE students: **23**
- **Early Years Playgroups:** Ko Taku Reo operates an Early Years Whānau Centre in Christchurch and playgroups in Dunedin and Wellington. Like the ECE components above, playgroups are located at existing ECE facilities. The service takes a family-centred, integrated team-based approach, working collaboratively with other services including the Ministry's Advisers on Deaf Children, First Signs (Deaf Aotearoa), Cochlear Implant programmes, and parent groups. Number of learners: **54**
- **Enrolled school:** DHH students enrolled in Ko Taku Reo attend school at Deaf bilingual provisions (or satellite/unit) located at host schools either in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch. DHH students are taught by Ko Taku Reo staff in the provisions. Number of enrolled students: **121**
- **Outreach service:** Ko Taku Reo provides a range of regional teaching and specialist services to DHH students not enrolled at Ko Taku Reo. The services are for students enrolled in their local schools/kura or other specialist schools. Ko Taku Reo provides direct and indirect specialist teaching including literacy, assistive technology, and communication support to the students in their enrolled school by Resource Teachers of the Deaf, Specialist Resource Teachers and NZSL Tutors. Number of outreach students: **2980 (direct 947, indirect 2033)**
- **NZSL Day School Hubs:** NZSL Day Schools are complementary to the Outreach service, providing Deaf and NZSL immersion spaces for primary aged DHH children to enrol one day a week. The purpose is to enhance educational outcomes for DHH students by increased access to instruction in NZSL. They are set up around Aotearoa in partnership with host schools, particularly Wellington, Christchurch, Dunedin and Southland. This supports students' learning, social networks, Deaf identity, culture and wellbeing in the students' primary or preferred language. Number of day students: **59**
- **Residential accommodation:** Ko Taku Reo has two residences (licensed hostels) available for students aged 10 to 21 while they attend school or vocational training. The residential programme promotes learning and independence through an integrated educational and residential programme. The residential services provided are in accordance with any Individual Education Plans and/or Individual Transition Plans. Students receiving long-term residential services may receive their education services from Ko Taku Reo or from another provider or school/kura.
 - **Sumner, Christchurch:** residential houses for students, access to independent flats for students who are ready to learn independent skills, and access to a shared house for those who are learning to live with others.
 - Students can attend Deaf bilingual provisions at Hillmorton High School or Hagley College. They can also be enrolled in another school/kura.
 - **Kelston, Auckland:** shared residential where.
 - Students can attend Deaf bilingual provisions at Kelston Intermediate School, Kelston Girls' College, Kelston Boys' High School, Ormiston Junior and Senior Colleges, Tū Kōkiri programme based at the Kelston provision, or Massey High School Trades Academy. They can also be enrolled in another school/kura.Number of residence students: **27 (18 Auckland, 9 Christchurch)**





Information Update: Deaf Education contracts managed by Learning Support

To:	Hon Erica Stanford, Minister of Education		
Date:	16 October 2024	Priority:	Medium
Security Level:	In-Confidence	METIS No:	
Drafter:	Darryl Alexander	DDI:	9(2)(a) [Redacted]
Key Contact and Hautū Deputy Secretary:	Sean Teddy	DDI:	9(2)(a) [Redacted]
Seen by the Communications Team:	No	Round Robin:	No

Request

Following the line-by-line meetings, you have requested additional information in relation to services included within the Deaf Education portfolio, namely:

- New Zealand Sign Language (NZSL) @ School
Out of scope [Redacted]

Alignment with Government priorities

This advice aligns with the Governments priority of stronger learning support: targeting effective learning support interventions for students with additional needs.

Background

Ko Taku Reo Deaf Education New Zealand

Ko Taku Reo Deaf Education New Zealand (Ko Taku Reo) is the only provider of educational services for Deaf and hard of hearing (Deaf/hh) children in New Zealand. With over 400 teaching and specialist support staff, the organisation operates nationwide, with school provisions in Auckland, Wellington, and Christchurch. Ko Taku Reo receives additional funding of \$12.8 million which is paid via the annual Resourcing Notice. The Resourcing Notice records the grants provided to Ko Taku Reo in recognition of its specialised services that are separate from and additional to the Operational Grant and Staffing Entitlement Funding.

The organisation serves over 3,200 Deaf/hh students across New Zealand, providing access to a wide range of educational services, including audiologists, specialist support teachers, and NZSL tutors.



As a specialist school for Deaf/hh students and their families/whānau, Ko Taku Reo operates:

- Bilingual provisions in enrolled schools, in partnership with host schools
- Outreach services for mainstream Deaf/hh students
- Regular NZSL immersion day schools in select regions
- Two residential facilities
- Early Childhood Education (ECE) services in Auckland and Christchurch
- Rūaumoko Marae on the Kelston campus, the only Deaf marae in the world

NZSL@School - \$4.7 million annually

The Ministry contracts Ko Taku Reo to deliver the NZSL@School service to Deaf/hh students in the mainstream school environment who best access their learning in NZSL. The goal is to provide access to education in NZSL and to increase the frequency of use and fluency of NZSL by these students.

NZSL@School is available for students who:

- are Deaf or hard of hearing.
- best access their learning in NZSL
- are enrolled in a mainstream school, kura kaupapa, Māori medium school, or a specialist school other than Ko Taku Reo.

This funding provides students with regular access to fluent language and role models to support the development of age-appropriate language proficiency and fluency levels. This can occur in several ways, including but not limited to:

- specialist Deaf education advice and support staff to students, school staff and whānau
- in-class support to Deaf students through a Communication Education Support Worker (CESW) and/or Educational Interpreters
- NZSL tuition to Deaf students, their parents and whānau, and the wider support team.

142 students are currently supported by this service. This includes:

- 115 students receive part time CESW support.
- 15 students receive full time CESW support.
- 12 students receive full time Educational Interpreter support.

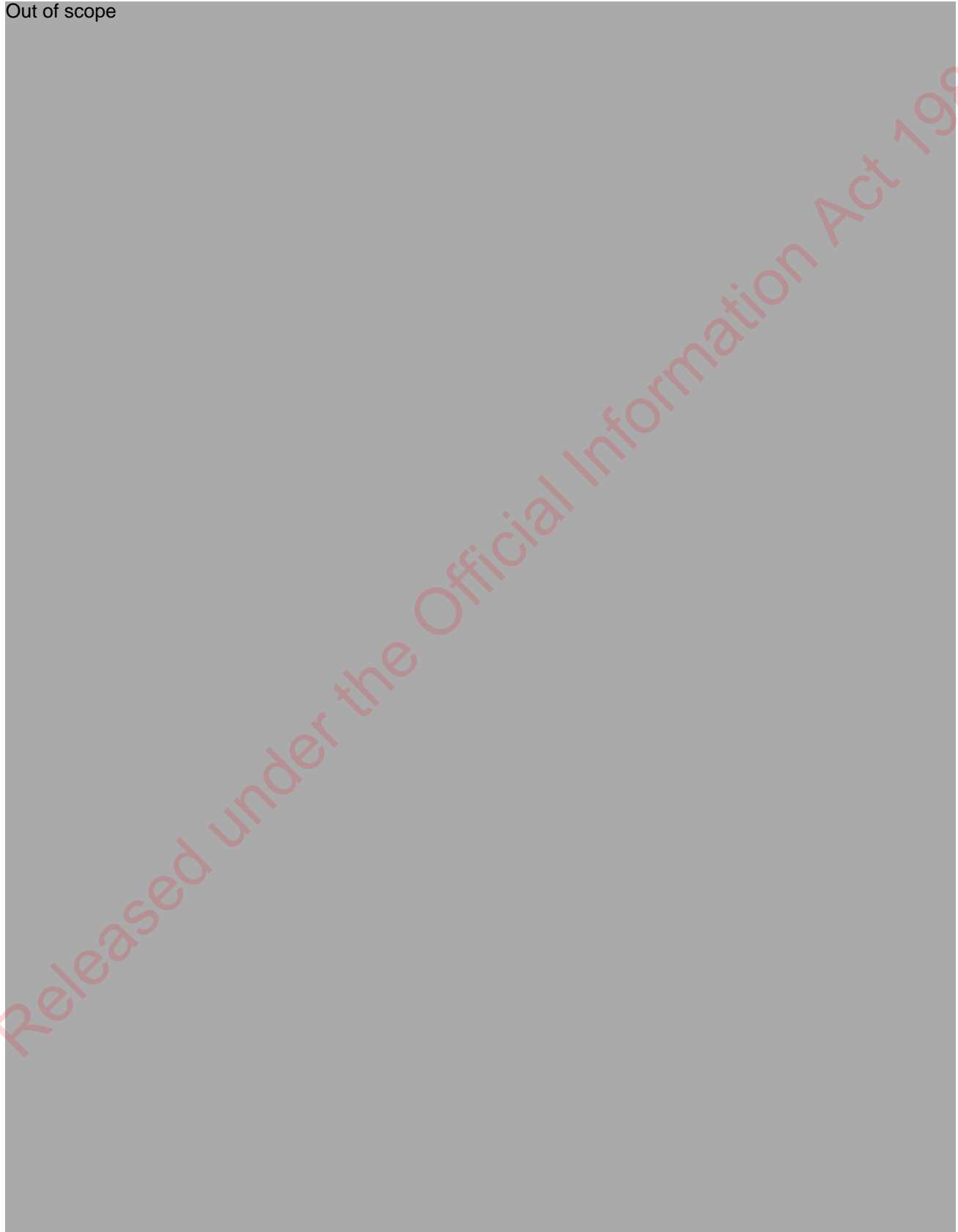
Ko Taku Reo is responsible for implementing NZSL@School services with students, parents and whānau, and schools, to create and maintain effective bilingual learning environments, with NZSL as the primary language of communication and learning.

Issues associated with NZSL@School service

- **Funding**

Since this service commenced in 2014, the demand and the cost to provide this service has significantly increased. However, funding is capped which means some students are missing out and not fully able to access the curriculum.

Out of scope



Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Out of scope

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Out of scope

- **Playgroups for families**

9(2)(g)(i)

Establishing NZSL-rich learning playgroup environments throughout the country will create a learning space that bring families and Deaf children together to develop networks, share experience, and exchange skills.

- **Transitioning to primary school**

The current service stops when the child turns five years old. 9(2)(g)(i)

9(2)(g)(i)

Out of scope

Out of scope

Interpreters for Deaf staff at Ko Taku Reo - \$800,000 annually

Ko Taku Reo is a bilingual, bicultural organization that embraces both New Zealand Sign Language (NZSL) and spoken languages.

Currently, the Ko Taku Reo employs 91 Deaf and hard of hearing staff, an increase of 47 percent since 2018. This has led to an increase in the number of interpreters and infrastructure support required to facilitate communication between those who know NZSL and those who have lower levels of NZSL fluency.

Ko Taku Reo is working to develop an inclusive and accessible workplace, for example by undertaking translation work to ensure that all writing or spoken communication are available in NZSL for Deaf and hard of hearing staff.

For those hearing staff who have little NZSL knowledge, Ko Taku Reo are committed to growing staff NZSL fluency, to mitigate the need for interpreters in the long-term. However, in reality, functional language skills take several years to develop and staff turnover creates further challenges to achieving this goal. In light of this, the need for interpreter services will remain for the foreseeable future.

In recent years, New Zealand has experienced elevated levels of inflation and wage growth. The hourly rate for interpreters and staff interpreter salaries have increased over this period as much as 35 percent (including the impact of Pay Equity and Collective Agreement settlements). Despite this, the funding received for interpreters has not increased and is at risk to ensure the sustainability for the service to find effective ways to communicate bilingually within the organisation.

Issues associated with NZSL access to education for Turi Māori

The significant and ongoing shortage of trilingual NZSL interpreters continues to be a barrier to Turi Māori accessing education services, Te Ao Māori and Te Reo Māori. This impacts on all Deaf and hard of hearing children but most critically on Turi Māori mokopuna and their whānau.

The provision of Turi Māori spaces will support Turi Māori to access and engage in social, cultural, and educational experiences as a community. Many Turi Māori may struggle to participate on their marae; with hapū/iwi, at kapa haka, sporting events etc due to a lack on NZSL and communication access.

Rūaumoko Marae is the only Deaf marae in the world. It is based on Kelston campus at Ko Taku Reo. The Māori Deaf community reports that their access to the marae is increasingly limited by educational policies, which are administered by Pākehā hearing people and pay no regard to tikanga or the wishes of Turi Māori.



Information Update: Statutory Intervention data since 2017

To:	Hon Erica Stanford, Minister of Education		
Cc:	Sean Teddy, Stephanie Ramirez		
Date:	6 March 2025	Priority:	Low
Security Level:	In-Confidence	METIS No:	1342436
Drafter:	Suhanya Green	DDI:	9(2)(a)
Key Contact and Hautū Deputy Secretary:	Sean Teddy	DDI:	9(2)(a)
Seen by the Communications Team:	No	Round Robin:	No

Request

The Minister would like some information on schools that have had interventions in place over the last seven years. She would like to know for each school what level of intervention was in place – including if it moved between the intervention levels (e.g. LSM, Commissioner, LSM). This should include all low-level interventions. It needs to include what the intervention was put in place for and the length of time it was in there. It'd be helpful if this was a standardised list – things like “Finance”, “Employment”, “Curriculum” etc.

Alignment with Government priorities

This aligns with Priority Area 3: Implementing consistent modes of monitoring student progression and achievement.

Information

Please see attached appendix for requested data. Please note:

- Data was extracted on 13/02/2025 and is subject to change.
- Data quality is dependent on timely, accurate information being entered into the Statutory Interventions Management System.
- Data has been sorted by “School Name” to show whether schools have moved between interventions.

Background information about Statutory Interventions

- Statutory Interventions are our primary regulatory lever in managing the governance performance of school boards.
- Historically, Statutory Interventions have been used as a last resort where informal support measures have not been successful in achieving the desired outcomes.
- We currently have work underway to develop additional guidance for our staff around using lower-level Statutory Interventions, with the intent that governance issues be dealt with earlier, reducing the requirement for higher-level Statutory Interventions.
- All Interventions are reviewed within one year, at which time they are either extended or ended, based on whether the desired intervention outcomes have been met.
- Through performance reporting and more consistent practice and procedures across regions we have reduced the average length of time Interventions are in place.



List of statutory interventions from 2017 to current (as at 13/02/2025)

School_ID	School_Name	Area
Out of scope		

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Out of scope

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Out of scope

903 Ko Taku Reo - Deaf Education New Zealand	Tāmaki Herenga Tāngata
903 Ko Taku Reo - Deaf Education New Zealand	Tāmaki Herenga Tāngata
903 Ko Taku Reo – Deaf Education New Zealand	Tāmaki Herenga Tāngata

Out of scope

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Out of scope

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Out of scope

Released under the Official Information Act 1982



Information Update – Meeting / Invite Assessment:

Meet with Ko Taku Reo Deaf Education New Zealand

To:	Hon Erica Stanford, Minister of Education		
Date:	2 April 2025	Priority:	Medium
Security Level:	In-Confidence	METIS No:	1344367
Drafter:	Darryl Alexander	DDI:	9(2)(a)
Key Contact and Hautū Deputy Secretary:	Sean Teddy	DDI:	9(2)(a)
Seen by the Communications Team:	No	Invitation Reference	ESINV1478

Your office has received an invitation from Ko Taku Reo Deaf Education New Zealand for Minister Stanford to meet with the Commissioner and the Acting Executive Principal. Your office has asked the Ministry for its assessment of whether the Minister should accept this invitation.

Visit Assessment

Visit Assessment	
Name and location of school, early learning service or organisation:	Ko Taku Reo Deaf Education New Zealand (Ko Taku Reo)
Key People / Participants:	Michael Rondel, Commissioner Dr Denise Powell, Acting Executive Principal
Date and Time:	TBC

Venue:	Subject to the Minister's preference: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite Minister Stanford to visit and meet Michael Rondel and Dr Denise Powell in person at one of the school's sites, either Auckland or Christchurch: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ko Taku Reo – Kelston site 3 Archibald Road New Lynn Auckland 0640 ○ Ko Taku Reo – Sumner site 38 Truro Street Sumner Christchurch 8081 • Meet in the Minister's office in Wellington, or online.
Purpose of meeting / invitation:	To discuss governance and leadership of Ko Taku Reo.
Organiser's/contact's Details:	9(2)(a) [REDACTED] EA to the Commissioner and Acting Executive Principal 9(2)(a) [REDACTED] @kotakureo.school.nz 9(2)(a) [REDACTED]
Background information:	<p>Ko Taku Reo is a specialist school that provides education services for deaf and hard of hearing (DHH) students across New Zealand residential schools and satellite classes; and regional services including outreach and NZSL@School, in local schools and kura.</p> <p>Following the triennial elections in September 2022, no parent nominations were received, and the Board indicated that it did not want to remain in office post 28 September 2022. Because of this, Michael Rondel was appointed as the Commissioner on 27 September 2022, with all functions, powers and duties of the Board, in accordance with the Education and Training Act 2020 (the Act). When applying an intervention, the Secretary (or the Minister) must apply whichever intervention they consider reasonable to deal with the risk without intervening more than necessary in the affairs of the school. With any intervention, the aim is to return the school to self-governance.</p> <p>The Commissioner has been working with the school and its community to address any risks to the operation of the school. Once the risks have been addressed sufficiently, then the Commissioner will work with the Ministry to set a date for Board elections. Ongoing conversations between Ministry</p>

	<p>and the Commissioner indicate that this is likely to align with the school board triennial elections to be held in September 2025.</p> <p>The composition of the Ko Taku Reo Board is made up of the following membership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Six representative parents or caregivers of students; • The Executive Principal; • One staff representative; • Two student representatives; and • Up to four members co-opted on the basis of experience, expertise, skill or leadership that in the opinion of the board will assist the Board in advancing the students of Ko Taku Reo. <p>Recruitment for a permanent executive principal is underway, and Ko Taku Reo are aware of the salary level and the concurrence provision which enables the Commissioner (or Board) to compensate for the service provided to students that are enrolled in their local school and who participate in some level of learning with Ko Taku Reo, whether that is in a day school (NZSL immersion) or via online classroom learning.</p>
<p>Any achievements that make the meeting/invite worthwhile:</p>	<p>Ko Taku Reo is the only exclusive DHH school that teaches the curriculum to students with Teachers of the Deaf who use NZSL. Apart from the two locations in Auckland and Christchurch, Ko Taku Reo also has 14 satellite provisions throughout New Zealand where DHH students participate in classes, for up to five days a week.</p> <p>The Ministry is funding \$13.4 million in 2025 to Ko Taku Reo to provide educational services for DHH students. This is additional to the 2025 operational grant and staffing.</p> <p>The Ministry has entered a Memorandum of Agreement with Ko Taku Reo NZ to undertake the New Zealand Sign Language Professional Learning Development (NZSL PLD) initiative to increase access of the acquisition and use of NZSL among registered teachers of DHH students within their school community/kura whānau.</p> <p>The Ministry continues to work closely with Ko Taku Reo to implement the NZSL in Education work programme.</p>

Link to key education priorities:	Minister's priorities and themes: Priority five: Targeting effective learning support interventions for students with additional needs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing a network plan for specialist and alternative provision. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Improving access to provision of New Zealand Sign Language.
Any matters that may make the meeting/invite problematic:	The Ministry is ensuring we agree to outcomes that are grounded in practical, deliverable actions with a manageable scope, and within the current funding available. It is likely that sector service expectations will be greater than current funding available which would require either a re-prioritisation of current spend and/or future budget bids.
Relevance to the Minister's delegations and how this organisation might support their work programme:	Deaf Education is a key portfolio in the delivery of Learning Support. The Ministry has an ongoing relationship with Ko Taku Reo as a regular contributor to the Ministry's stakeholder engagement and provider of the specialist educational services for DHH students and their families.

Should the Minister consider this invitation?	Yes
If yes, what priority should be afforded to the invitation?	Medium
If the Minister is unavailable, would it be appropriate to forward the invitation to another Minister (whose delegations more closely align with the invitation) or for a Ministry representative to attend instead?	Yes
Ministry representative on behalf / in lieu of the Minister:	9(2)(a) [redacted] GM Learning Support 9(2)(a) [redacted] 9(2)(a) [redacted] @education.govt.nz