



New Zealand Foundation for **CONDUCTIVE EDUCATION**

MAXIMISING THE ABILITY IN DISABILITY

P.O. Box 9230 Tower Junction, Christchurch • Phone 0277 169 323

Web: www.nzfce.org.nz • Email: rebecca@nzfce.org.nz • Facebook: www.facebook.com/NZFCE/

From the National Coordinator, Rebecca Courtney



Welcome to the June edition of news from around the motu. As we head into the middle of the year, it's been fantastic to see the continued energy, collaboration and commitment across our Affiliate Centres supporting individuals and their whānau throughout Aotearoa.

Annual General Meeting

A real highlight for this year was the opportunity for our NZFCE community to come together in person for our Annual General Meeting. The AGM

is always a special time for connection, a chance to reflect on the year that has been, share ideas, and strengthen the relationships that support the work we do. While we connect regularly online, nothing quite replaces being together face-to-face, and we enjoyed meaningful conversations, shared learning and plenty of laughter along the way. Thank you to Michael Patterson and his team at The Commodore Airport Hotel for their continued support.



Tailored Workshop

Alongside the AGM, we were delighted to offer a unique professional development opportunity for our affiliates. Life Member Sir Wayne Smith and mental skills coach Gilbert Enoka delivered a tailored workshop, *"Creating & Maintaining High Performing Team Culture"*. It was a privilege to have



two outstanding leaders share their knowledge and experience with our people. The insights gained from the workshop are already being applied across our centres, helping to build stronger team culture and better support for the individuals and whānau we serve. Heartfelt thanks to Wayne and Gilbert for generously giving their time.

Changes to funding

Unfortunately we are navigating some challenges within the wider education environment. Recent changes to Ministry of Education funding, particularly in relation to therapy and specialist support within schools, are already having an impact on the students and whānau we work alongside. These services play a critical role in supporting participation, learning and independence for children with additional needs. NZFCE has been engaging with the Ministry to highlight the importance of maintaining access to these supports and the potential unintended consequences of funding reductions. We remain committed to advocating for equitable access to services and will continue to work constructively to ensure the voices of our community are heard.

Wheelie Awesome Wheel-a-thon

This August, we would love to see our affiliates, families and supporters get behind the **Wheelie Awesome Wheel-a-thon** by taking on an individual challenge, group challenge or running an event. Whether you choose to raise funds for your local centre or support NZFCE so that all affiliated centres benefit, every effort will make a difference. It's a lovely way to come together, build awareness, and help ensure more children, adults and whānau can access the support they need. More information is included in the newsletter.

Thank You to our Donors

On that note in these challenging times with funding cuts and philanthropic funding becoming harder to access as so many charities are vying for the same donations, we are just so incredibly grateful for the ongoing support from our funders, partners, and wider community. Thank you to our current funders, **NZHL Canterbury Metro, IND Investments, Lotteries, Kiwi Gaming, Commodore Airport Hotel and Upstream** your contributions make a tangible difference.

I encourage you to take some time to read

through the updates from our affiliates in this edition—they truly reflect the passion, creativity and dedication that exists across our network.

Ngā mihi nui,
Rebecca



Harakeke Unit at Addington Te Kura Taumatua – Christchurch

Kia ora koutou

The first half of the year has been a busy and exciting! We've welcomed new students and staff, farewelled others, and jumped straight into lots of wonderful learning experiences.

Our tamariki have loved exploring our environment during science afternoons, learning what plants need to grow. We were lucky to receive some donated Little Garden kits—despite being a few years old, many seeds sprouted beautifully! It's been so exciting to check on them each day and watch them grow. We've also been caring for our school garden by weeding, composting, and planting our seedlings, as well as creating a small worm farm—such a fun way to see how food scraps can be reused. A highlight was our visit to the Addington Park Community Garden, where we explored through our senses and enjoyed being out in nature.

Some of our students have also been taking part in weekly Riding for the Disabled sessions, definitely a highlight of the week! Participating students attend RDA for four school terms, giving them plenty of time to practice and develop their skills. This also allows spaces to open up each year, so new students can enjoy the experience too. The sessions follow a familiar routine, helping build independence and confidence, from checking their horse to getting helmets on. Once riding, students enjoy a range of fun activities while developing balance, coordination, and communication skills. There are always smiles, laughter, and proud moments along the way.

We are so proud of all our tamariki for their enthusiasm, courage, and hard work! It has been a fantastic start to the year, and we look forward to the next 6 months.

Harakeke Team



Conductive Education Taranaki – New Plymouth



Kia ora koutou, from the CE Taranaki team.

The past few months have been filled with unforgettable moments, generous community support, and incredible opportunities for our tamariki and whānau.

We started the year with our annual camp, Club R&R, an opportunity for our Conductive children and their siblings to come together, build confidence, friendships and independence while having loads of fun trying new activities as well as old favourites.

We spent the first day at TOPEC–Taranaki Outdoor Pursuits and Education Centre–where the incredible staff adjusted everything to the needs of our children–this meant we saw flying wheelchairs and boat swings with the biggest smiles you ever did see from the children. Climbing walls, bush walks, ropes courses, we wish everyone could experience the vibe that was felt at TOPEC–electric smiles, clapping for our teammate’s successes, shouts of excitement and a few tears from adults watching the incredible achievements.

After two days at home base–Westown School–avoiding the rain with bottle boat building, bug hotel making, tinkering with creations, swimming (in the rain) and loads of other fun activities we headed out to Waitara for a special family day. Excitement levels were high as everyone got to take the train down the Waitara line and back! And then we got to jump, roll, swing, balance, bounce and hide in the parachute at Gymnastics Waitara – a wonderful day of making memories.

Our camp would not be possible without the generous donation from our Fairy Godmother, the Taranaki Foundation and all the staff and volunteers that come together for the joy of the children.

Another special highlight was our unforgettable Wish4Fish trip. We were extremely spoilt by an anonymous donor who funded a weekend getaway for 15 of our families to Mount Maunganui, to go on the amazing Wish4Fish boat. A fully accessible boat run by a charitable trust to help individuals with health and wellbeing limitations get out on the water and enjoy the freedom and pleasure of our ocean waters. Families could choose whether to go out fishing on the Saturday or for a harbour cruise on the Sunday, the weather was fantastic and everyone had an amazing time.

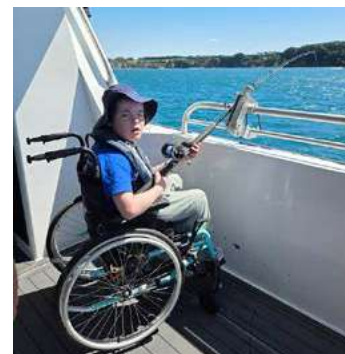
For many of our families, these experiences are about more than just the activity itself–they are about inclusion, possibility, and creating moments that might otherwise feel out of reach.

Another highlight was our annual The Best Darn Charity Golf Day, where 25 teams came out for an epic day of Ambrose at Ngāmotu Golf Course. Thanks to the overwhelming generosity of our community through registrations, raffles, auctions, sponsorships, and donations, we raised an incredible \$20,788.57. These funds will directly support our ongoing work helping local children with disabilities maximise their abilities. Events like this simply wouldn’t be possible without the kindness and commitment of our supporters, and we are deeply grateful to everyone who played a part.

We are incredibly proud of what we have achieved so far this year and excited for what’s ahead. Thank you to everyone who continues to stand beside us and make these moments possible.

We wish you all a safe and happy Term.

Ka Kite anō, The team at Conductive Education Taranaki



GlowKids – Auckland

*Tēnā koutou from GlowKids in Tāmaki Makaurau,
He toka tū moana, he ākinga nā ngā tai.*

Like a rock standing in the sea, buffeted by the tides.

Here at GlowKids, we have been enjoying the calm that has followed many months of positive yet busy change. As we move into the colder months, we take time to reflect on the many challenges and opportunities our kaimahi and tamariki have faced. This moment of rest is especially welcomed, and we are grateful for the sense of stability that our collective hard work has delivered.

One of the most exciting adventures our tamariki have been on recently was a trip to Auckland Zoo back in March. We would like to sincerely thank Auckland Zoo for providing free entry to all our attendees through their *Wellbeing in Nature* programme—we are extremely grateful for their generosity. Our kaimahi love creating opportunities like this for our whānau, as they allow all groups within GlowKids to come together, share stories, and strengthen our sense of community. It's wonderful to see parents and caregivers supporting one another, connecting through shared experiences, and watching the tamariki explore their surroundings with such curiosity and excitement.

Another significant achievement for GlowKids is that MusicHelps has approved our grant application to fund two terms of Music Therapy, delivered by Raukatauri Music Therapy Centre. We are absolutely thrilled by this support and so excited to continue offering this valued service to our tamariki. Music Therapy is always a highlight of the week and provides a meaningful opportunity for both our Conductive Education Kindy and Sensory Kindy to come together.

We are also currently awaiting the outcome of our Early Intervention Contract application. Fingers and toes



are firmly crossed for good news! Our Centre Manager, Rhiannon Schroder, and Head Teacher, Luseane, have worked incredibly hard—putting in many extra hours to meet the deadline—and we are very grateful for the ongoing support provided by NZFCE throughout this process. Adding to this, Rhiannon has begun her first semester at Massey University, studying towards a Postgraduate Diploma in Specialist Teaching (Early Intervention), supported by a Ministry of Education Study Award. It has truly been a busy start to 2026.

All our tamariki are well settled and making positive strides in both their learning and personal independence. Our Sensory Kindy roll continues to grow steadily, and our Conductive Education Kindy students have been enjoying the addition of our visiting Conductor, Ildi, who joins the classroom on Thursdays. Ildi has returned to GlowKids in a mentor role to support our fulltime Conductor, Bianka, as she continues her professional growth and learning.

Only onwards and upwards from here!

*Ka kite anō,
The GlowKids Team*



Conductive Education Woodstock Primary – Hamilton

We've had a fantastic start to the year. As always, our focus remains on supporting all of our tamariki in their learning and engaging them in fun and meaningful ways

Over the summer period, our CEU was fortunate to receive some refurbishments, and our new spaces are looking wonderful. We were excited to welcome our children and whānau back into these refreshed classrooms, and everyone has settled in beautifully.

We have had plenty of sunshine to enjoy this term, and the children have enjoyed swimming in term one. A group of students has been attending our local equipotential on a weekly basis, where the students and their families have enjoyed equine therapy.

We have now completed this term's IEP meetings.

While this is always a busy time, it is incredibly valuable to connect with families - celebrating successes, setting goals, and sharing ideas to support ongoing learning.



Conductive Education Wellington Trust – Wellington

It has been another busy and rewarding period at Conductive Education Wellington Trust, with our tamariki continuing to engage in a wide range of learning opportunities and community experiences. We are also incredibly grateful for the generous support of King Toyota, and our tamariki loved helping to create a special thank-you video to show our appreciation for this valued partnership.

Over recent weeks, our tamariki have been actively involved in creative and sensory learning experiences, including painting, colour mixing, texture play, and hands-on exploration activities that support both curiosity and fine motor development. We have also enjoyed celebrating cultural occasions such as St Patrick's Day and Easter, which brought plenty of fun and meaningful learning into the programme.

A special highlight was our Easter Egg Hunt, where tamariki worked together outdoors in search of hidden treats, while those learning indoors enjoyed a sensory-



based hunt using coloured rice. Experiences like these continue to encourage cooperation, confidence, and joyful participation.

Our local community excursions also remain an important part of our programme, giving tamariki the chance to explore the wider world, build confidence, and participate in a variety of environments beyond the centre.

We have also had some important staff changes recently. We warmly welcome Annemarie Bezuidenhout into her new role as Centre Manager and look forward to her connecting with our whānau. At the same time, we farewell Ali Sullivan, with sincere thanks for her leadership, warmth, and dedication to our centre. We are pleased that Ali will continue to support us through her role on the Board of Trustees.



Neuro Connection – Auckland

The start of the year has absolutely flown by here at Neuro Connection, and it's been a busy and heartwarming few months.

We were honoured to recently welcome for the first time Sir Wayne Smith, All Blacks legend and NZFCE Ambassador along with the lovely Rebecca. It was a very special visit, a chance to share more about the work we do and introduce Wayne to some of our wonderful Client Council members. There were great conversations, plenty of stories, and a real sense of connection around the impact Conductive Education continues to have in people's lives. Moments like these make us incredibly proud of our community.



We also enjoyed a lovely in-house Easter fundraiser *Buns, Bakes & Bids*. It was a relaxed and cheerful afternoon filled with connection, laughter, and (of course) plenty of delicious treats. From sharing tea and hot cross buns to browsing the bake sale and silent auctions, the room was buzzing. We were thrilled to raise \$1,309, but just as importantly, it was a chance for our clients, families, and supporters to come together and enjoy some social time.

A real highlight for us this quarter was celebrating a very special milestone one of our wonderful clients,

Brian, turned 90! Brian has been part of the Neuro Connection whānau since February 2022, and his continued commitment is a lovely reminder that Conductive Education can support people of all ages to stay active and engaged.

These moments of connection are such an important part of what we do, and we're so grateful to everyone who continues to support our little community.

*Warm wishes,
The Neuro Connection Team*



Te Pukenga News – Cashmere Christchurch

Te Pukenga akonga continue to explore new learning, movement, exploration, challenges, and do this with the support and encouragement from their kaiako and kaiawhina kaiako.

Our young people have taken part in the annual Athletics Day at Cashmere with their friends cheering them on and encouraging them to try new skills. A number of students tried Javelin, long jump, shot put and discus before the rain came tumbling down on us all.

Bori Toth, our Conductor, has settled so well in the team, and has added so much to our young people's programmes. She brings enthusiasm and joy to classes and the students love the zest she brings. Recent lessons around Football have been a blast. The students get to try on a real footy kit, experience the sounds of being the crowd, waving the team flags, warm-up drills, having a game, scoring a goal, demonstrating good sportspersonship, and warming down after a big game. The engagement is high, the laughter is contagious, and the students are blossoming. Next is Cricket—Look out Black Caps!

With changeable weather about to begin, we reflect fondly on being able to get out and about with friends for a hikoi around our school grounds, meeting and greeting people, and maintaining fitness and activity goals. We're hoping for some beautiful Winter days to continue this when possible.

Ngā mihi - The team at Te Pukenga



Adult Conductive Education Trust – Christchurch

It has been a fantastic start to the year at ACET, with sessions well underway and everyone settling back into their routines. It's been wonderful to see familiar faces return and to welcome the energy that a new year brings.

We would like to take a moment to acknowledge Nichola McGuire's resignation late last year after 13 years as our Team Manager. Nichola has been an integral part of ACET from the start, providing strong support, dedication, and care. She will be greatly missed by both our board and our team. We also extend our thanks to Meagan Duston, who resigned from her Speech Language Therapist (SLT) role last year after a valued contribution over the past couple of years.



At the same time, we are pleased to welcome Clarissa Robert J as our new Team Manager, alongside Ruth Chiam who has joined us as our new SLT. Both came on board at the beginning of the year, and we are excited to have them as part of the team as we move forward.

March was a busy and successful month for fundraising. Our Bingo Night was a hit once again, bringing together our community for a fun evening. Our Easter raffles were also well supported. We would like to sincerely thank everyone who contributed, attended, and supported these efforts. Your generosity makes a real difference.

Looking ahead, we are beginning preparations for Wheelie Awesome Wheel-a-thon in August. We are excited about the opportunity to connect with local cycle and car clubs to help support this event and raise further awareness.

We acknowledge with sadness the passing of our dear friend and participant, Luke. He was a valued member of our community and will be greatly missed. We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to all of our generous contributors: our staff, board members, volunteers, ACET whānau, Lottery Community Fund, Rātā Foundation, and Pub Charities. Your continued support enables us to provide the services we do, and we are truly grateful.



Naenae – Lower Hutt

2025 ended with several trips to Ta Papa and going on a bush walk with Conductive Education Pre School as well as our annual whole school trip to Wainui Pool where some of our tamariki were brave enough to go down the big outdoor waterslide for the first time. Some loved it so much that they went again and again and again.

Te Pa Harakeke have had a great start to 2026 by moving into our newly renovated old space. We now have two classes of students and everyone is much more settled with more space and the rooms being quieter due to less people within a classroom. We also have new students, TAs, a new Kaiako and a full time Conductor.

A new addition to our space is a dark room that is well

used by a variety of our students.

We continue to swim three times a week and go to RDA twice a week which are highlights for the children as well as great physical exercise for them.

Last year our outside school assemblies and Monday morning karakia were moved to beside our classroom so that all of our children can participate, on fine days this year it has continued and it is lovely having a kura that is onboard with ensuring that everyone feels included and can participate at their own level, as much as they want to or can in a safe and supportive way.

As our new Kaiako is also a trained music therapist, our regular music therapist is taking groups of students and children from across the rest of our Kura in the same group. This has proven to be a great way to have children from across the school working together in a different way.



Wana Tamariki – Hamilton

Wana Tamariki has had a great 2026 so far. We had a number of our tamariki head to school and start their primary school journey. We miss them but the celebration that comes with their graduation from Wana Tamariki is wonderful and the next part of their journey is super exciting. We made the most of the weather with lots of water, gloop and sand play and we had fun with the toys from the CCD Disability Action Toy Library on a beautiful deck. We also enjoyed heading to Woodstock School to use "the big kids" playground - thanks Woodstock School!

Apart from the many graduations we have had, we have used arts and crafts to explore the Hamilton Balloon Festival, Easter and Mother's Day. The tamariki are so creative, as are the team working with them.

Thanks to a grant from Lion Foundation, we have been able to purchase a Galileo Vibration Plate to use in the work we do with tamariki. once we have fine tuned how we use this, we will also offer this to our wider community for use as it is too valuable a tool not to share.

We have been focusing on building our centre to create the best outcomes we can for tamariki and whaanau. We have created

and updated lots of policies, tools and resources to streamline how we work and to support us to focus on the things that matter most for whaanau. The team have had lots of professional development to support their hands on work and to strengthen the impact we have. Thank you to NZFCE for supporting our professional development through the PD Fund.

We have a busy time coming up over the next few months as we celebrate Matariki and do some wheely fun activities for Wheelie Awesome Wheel-a-thon in August to promote Conductive Education alongside Woodstock School Conductive Education Unit.



Conductive Education Canterbury – Christchurch

It's hard to believe how quickly the first term has gone by. It has been a productive and positive start to the year for Tamariki and for the organisation as a whole. A significant milestone was achieved with the successful completion of our Incorporated Societies reregistration, an important piece of work now behind us and something we are very proud to have completed.

This year we have a strong focus on expanding activities and experiences for our Tamariki, and we are excited to see this already taking shape. We recently began with a taster session delivered by *Jolt*, a wellknown national and international mixedability dance organisation based in Christchurch. The session was a great introduction to creative dance and movement, offering children opportunities for expression, connection, and fun in an inclusive environment.

Jolt will be visiting us again this term to set up an eightweek creative dance and movement experience for our Tamariki. This programme will support movement, confidence, creativity, and participation in a way that celebrates each child's abilities. We are really looking forward to embedding this into our programme and seeing how children respond over the coming weeks.

After 23 years with Conductive Education Canterbury, we said farewell to Nichola McGuire and acknowledge the huge contribution she made to the organisation. Over that time, she held a range of roles including Early Childhood Teacher, Early Intervention Teacher and Team Leader. Nichola has been an important part of how our services have developed and grown, and a trusted source of support for both colleagues and the wider NZ Conductive Education community.

Nichola is known for the way she connects with tamariki and their whānau—working alongside families with care, respect, and practical support. She also contributed significantly behind the scenes, particularly through funding grant writing and fundraising, as well as strengthening systems, policies, and review processes across the organisation. Her impact will continue to be felt in the work we do every day. We thank Nichola for her dedication over many years and wish her all the very best in her work with the Ministry of Education.



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NZ FOUNDATION FOR CONDUCTIVE EDUCATION

N.Z. Foundation for Conductive Education (NZFCE)

Chairperson Craig Nielsen
National Coordinator Rebecca Courtney
P.O. Box 9230, Tower Junction
22 Brougham Street, Christchurch, 8024
Ph: 0277 169 323
Email: rebecca@nzfce.org.nz
Web: www.nzfce.org.nz
Facebook: www.facebook.com/NZFCE

Conductive Education Southern

(all ages)
198 Esk Street, Invercargill 9810
Ph: 03 218 8766
Email: manager@cesouthland.org.nz
Web: www.cesouthern.org

Addington Te Kura Taumatua Conductive Education

(primary school children)
22 Brougham Street, Christchurch
Ph: 03 366 2909 Fax: 03 365 8940
Email: principal@addington.school.nz
conductive.education@addington.school.nz
Web: www.addington.school.nz

Conductive Education Canterbury Early Intervention Unit

(pre-school children)
22 Brougham Street, Christchurch
PO Box 9230, Tower Junction
Ph: 03 372 1399 Fax: 03 372 1499
Email: cecanterbury@xtra.co.nz
Web: www.cecanterbury.org

Cashmere High School Conductive Education

(secondary school aged students)
172 Rose Street, Christchurch 8024
Ph: 03 332 9129 Fax: 03 332 9126
Email: wbj@cashmere.school.nz
Web: www.cashmere.school.nz

Adult Conductive Education Trust (ACET) Christchurch

(Conductive Education for adults)
PO Box 9329, Tower Junction, Christchurch
Ph: 021 080 11222 Email: office@acet.org.nz

Wellington Conductive Education Early Childhood Centre

(pre-school children)
PO Box 35 078, Naenae 5041
Ph: 04 577 3480 Fax: 04 577 3480
Email: cewt@xtra.co.nz
Web: www.cewellington.org.nz

Naenae Primary School Conductive Education

(primary school children)
Wheatley Street, Naenae, Wellington
Ph: 04 567 8117 Fax: 04 567 8771
Email: conductive@naenae-primary.school.nz
Web: www.schoolground.co.nz/naenaeprim

Conductive Education Taranaki

(pre-school and school age children)
Westown School
Sanders Avenue, New Plymouth
Ph 06 929 3504
Email: enquiries@conductivetaranaki.org.nz
Web: www.conductivetaranaki.org.nz

Wana Tamariki

(pre-school children)
Fairfield Road, Hamilton 3214
P.O. Box 12066, Chartwell Sq., Hamilton 3248
Ph: 07 855 7013 Mob: 027 855 7014
Fax: 07 855 7014
Email: admin@conductiveeducationwaikato.nz
Web: www.wanatamariki.nz

Woodstock Primary School Conductive Education

(primary school children)
Fairfield Road, Hamilton 3214
Ph: 07 855 6686 Fax: 07 853 7056
Email: bronwynn@woodstock.school.nz
Web: www.woodstock.school.nz

GlowKids

(pre-school children)
13 Coyle Street, P.O. Box 16291
Sandringham, Auckland 1351
Ph: 09 845 8070
Email: info@glowkids.org.nz
Web: www.glowkids.org.nz

Neuro Connection Foundation

(Conductive Education for adults)
2 Claude Brookes Drive, PO Box 21 504
Henderson, Waitakere City 0650
Ph: 09 836 6830 Fax: 09 836 6832
Email: admin@neuroconnection.org.nz
Web: www.neuroconnection.org.nz