

# The future shape of the greater Christchurch Special Schools Network

## A brief summary of the Education Report

*This document provides a summary of the proposals for future provision of special education in greater Christchurch. It is a brief outline of the background to the proposals; key points for consideration; the engagement undertaken to date and future engagement opportunities for the community.*

*More information can be found in the full **Education Report: The future shape of the greater Christchurch Special Schools Network**, available online at: [www.shapingeducation.org.nz](http://www.shapingeducation.org.nz)*

The Government's 2010 review of Special Education confirmed the ongoing need for special education provision. This engagement process builds on that, with a view to further enhancing equitable access, inclusive practice and supporting the success of students with special needs.

**We are engaging on:** where special schools could be co-located and where satellites could be located. We are **NOT** reviewing whether special schools are needed in the network, nor any other aspects of their operation.

### Background:

The government is investing \$1.137 billion in education renewal in greater Christchurch. This, coupled with a nationwide Review of Special Education undertaken in 2010, provides a timely and unique opportunity to consider the region's current special education network.

The greater Christchurch schooling network includes three special day schools:

- Allenvale Special School and Resource Centre
- Ferndale School
- Waitaha School

The Ministry's vision is to ensure equitable access to special schooling in greater Christchurch. There has been some discussion already with special schools that their present locations and their existing network of satellites may not best serve the current and future demographics or community needs.

The Ministry has therefore proposed that each base school be re-located and co-located with a regular school within one of three geographic catchments across greater Christchurch.

Each co-located school would serve as a base from which satellite provision and itinerant specialist teaching would extend across clusters of schools within each catchment.

### Key points:

- The government is investing \$1.137 billion in education renewal in greater Christchurch. This provides a timely and unique opportunity to consider the region's current special education provision with a view to designing a network that best serves our community.



- The end goal of this engagement process is to create a special schooling network in greater Christchurch that increases equitable access to the network, enhances inclusive practice and supports the success of students with special education needs.
- Special schools would continue to operate as separate entities with their own Boards and Principals; they will continue to complement and provide a genuine alternative to regular schooling.
- Satellite provision supports inclusive practice, both in terms of physical presence, but also by providing learning, social and cultural opportunities for students from both schools when resources, classes, activities and free time may be shared.

### **Initial Engagement:**

Engagement has already occurred within the sector (specifically with the Education Advisory Board and Boards of the three special schools). Summaries of their submissions can be found in the full Education Report.

### **Opportunities for engagement:**

The Ministry is now initiating a further and final engagement process to determine the future network of special education provision for greater Christchurch.

The timeframe for engaging is challenging. This is because the greater Christchurch Education renewal programme is already underway, meaning some of the proposals for re-location and co-location need to be considered now.

Engagement will commence immediately; with a range of activities targeted to the following stakeholder groups:

1. Special Schools (including Boards, principals and staff; parents and whanau)
2. Satellite hosts (this will be sector- wide to capture existing and potential host schools)
3. Education Stakeholders (this will include the Education Advisory Board, Principals' Associations, Ngai Tahu, Unions etc)
4. Disability sector (providers, NGO sector and other representative organisations)
5. Wider community

Engagement activities will include meetings (for both sector and community); Public Notices and media articles; newsletters; targeted presentations (disability and sector networks) and an online survey.

A timeline detailing opportunities to engage will be available at:  
[www.shapingeducation.org.nz](http://www.shapingeducation.org.nz) from Tuesday 13 May.

