

## **Education Report: Proposals for the future shape of the greater Christchurch Special Schools Network**

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### **Executive Summary**

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1. This report provides you with information about the proposed plan for the future of the greater Christchurch special schools network. This plan builds on the Government's Review of Special Education undertaken in 2010 which focussed on students with the highest special education needs. The Ministry has engaged with the Boards of the three Christchurch day special schools and the Education Advisory Board to help shape and consider the developing plan.
2. The greater Christchurch schooling network includes three day special schools, which are Allenvale Special School & Resource Centre (3275); Ferndale School (3339); and Waitaha School (3554). The present locations of these three schools and their existing network of satellites are not best placed to serve current and future demographics and community needs, or to support inclusive practice.
3. The Ministry's proposals for the future of the special schools network would see each base special school relocated and co-located with a mainstream school within one of three geographical catchments across greater Christchurch. Each co-located base school would serve as a base from which satellite provision and itinerant specialist teaching would extend across clusters of schools within each catchment.
4. These proposals aim to increase equitable access to the network of special education provision for students with special education needs, while supporting the government's vision for inclusive practices in schools. The proposed co-location of the three base special schools, together with the extension of satellite provisions for these schools in mainstream schools, would support the development of inclusive education practices in schools and education facilities across greater Christchurch.
5. Property place-holders for proposed base/satellite options are currently marked in the Greater Christchurch Education Renewal Plan (GCERP). Based on the estimated costs of the proposed reshaping of the special schools network, \$14.128m has been set aside for the provision of special education property.
6. The three Boards have now made informal submissions about the proposals. There is general agreement across the Boards of the three day special schools in support of the development of geographical catchments, the development of a network of satellites, and the continued development and expansion of the Specialist Teacher Outreach Service.

7. The Board of Allenvale School has indicated that it is supportive of the proposal that its school be relocated and co-located with a mainstream school. The Board of Waitaha School opposes the relocation and co-location proposal for its school. The Board of Ferndale School advises that its preference is to remain on its current site, but that it would consider relocation to an acceptable new site.
8. The Ministry recognises that the benefits of co-location will only be realised if there is support for this from the Boards. However, we also consider that all of the Boards and their communities should have another opportunity to engage with these proposals before any decisions are made, to ensure that the proposals have been fully considered before opportunities are dismissed. As we view support from the Boards as being vital to the success of co-locations, following this further engagement, the Ministry would not recommend that you progressed any of the proposals for which there was no support.
9. While many of these discussions and the progression of some elements of the plan will be ongoing, it is recommended that a more formal process of engagement about the proposals for relocation and co-location of the special schools now be undertaken. This is necessary to enable timely decisions about these proposals to be made, ensuring that opportunities for co-location as a planned part of new builds and rebuilds are not missed.
10. Although there is a need to achieve certainty soon about whether or not these specific proposals will be progressed, the Ministry remains open to investigating any further options or proposals that may arise during the next phase of engagement with the special schools and the wider disability sector.

## Recommendations

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We recommend that you:

- a. **note** the information that has been provided to you about the developing plan for the future of the special schools network in Christchurch, and the feedback that has been received on this so far;
- b. **note** that \$14.128 million was provided for Special Education in the Greater Christchurch Education Renewal Programme Business Case agreed by Cabinet in 2013;
- c. **agree** to the Ministry undertaking a further process of engagement with the Board of Trustees of Allenvale Special School & Resource Centre about the relocation and co-location of the base school onto a site to be identified in Northern Christchurch;
- d. **agree** to the Ministry undertaking a further process of engagement with the Board of Trustees of Ferndale School about the relocation and co-location of the base school onto the Aranui Community School site;

 AGREE / DISAGREE

 AGREE / DISAGREE

- e. **agree** to the Ministry undertaking a further process of engagement with the Board of Trustees of Waitaha School about the relocation and co-location of the base school onto the site of either Rolleston Secondary School or West Rolleston Primary School;

  
AGREE / DISAGREE

- f. **note** that if you agree to further engagement on the co-location proposals, the Ministry will start incorporating the special schools into the Public Private Partnership Output Specifications for the new Aranui and Rolleston schools. If you then decide that the proposals will not be progressed, these will be removed from the Output Specifications;

- g. **note** that a facilitator would be appointed by the Ministry to undertake consultation directly with the communities of the schools, and may assist the Boards in undertaking their consultation if the Boards wished to receive this support;

- h. **agree** that, subject to Board agreement, there will be special education satellite provision included as part of the new builds for Aranui Community School (Ferndale School), and the new Rolleston primary and secondary schools (Waitaha School), whether or not the base special schools are also co-located on these sites;

  
AGREE / DISAGREE


- i. **note** that if the Boards of Ferndale or Waitaha School do not agree to provide satellites at these locations, the Ministry will work to identify other schools that could provide satellites on these sites;

- j. **note** that the current network plan for the special schools also includes a wider extension and reorganisation of satellite provision, and consideration of shared governance across the three day special schools. These elements of the vision will be subject to ongoing engagement with the Boards and will be progressed on separate timelines to the engagement about relocation and co-location;

- k. **sign** the attached letters to the Boards of Trustees of the three day special schools; and

- I. **agree** that this report be provided to the Boards of the special schools and be made publicly available after this.

AGREE / DISAGREE

  
Katrina Casey  
Deputy Secretary  
Sector Enablement and Support

Encls



Hon Hekia Parata  
Minister of Education

23.4.14



## **Education Report: Proposals for the future shape of the greater Christchurch Special Education Network**

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### **Purpose of Report**

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1. This report provides you with information about the Ministry's proposed plan for the future of the greater Christchurch special schools network, and feedback that has been received about the proposals so far.
2. It asks you to agree to the Ministry continuing to engage with the communities of the three day special schools in Christchurch (Allenvale Special School & Resource Centre; Ferndale School; Waitaha School) about proposals for the re-location and co-location of these three schools onto mainstream school sites.

### **Background**

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#### **Greater Christchurch Special Schools Network**

3. The greater Christchurch network of schools includes three day (non-residential) state special schools. These are Allenvale Special School and Resource Centre ("Allenvale School"), Ferndale School, and Waitaha School. Each of these schools provides education to children and young people from ages 5 – 21 in a co-educational setting. The current locations of these schools and their satellites are shown on the map attached as Appendix 1.
4. Allenvale Special School and Resource Centre is a decile 5 special school located in Bryndwr, in the Ilam electorate. It had a 1 July 2013 roll of 128, which included 92 European (71.9%), 14 Māori (10.9%), 14 Asian (10.9%), 6 Pasifika (4.7%) and 5 (3.9%) students of other ethnicities.
5. Ferndale School is a decile 4 special school located in Merivale, in the Ilam electorate. It had a 1 July 2013 roll of 99, which included 72 European (72.7%), 18 Māori (18.2%), 3 Pasifika (3%), 4 Asian (4%), and 2 students of other ethnicities.
6. Waitaha School is a decile 5 special school located in Templeton, in the Selwyn electorate. It had a 1 July 2013 roll of 40, which included 34 European (85%), 3 Māori (7.5%), 2 Pasifika (5%), 1 Asian (2.5%) and no students of other ethnicities.
7. Special schools principally enrol students who are identified through a verification process as being in the highest 1% of those with special education needs (Ongoing Resourcing Scheme (ORS) High/Very High Needs). As a result these students are additionally resourced in terms of teachers, specialists and therapists, and support staff such as teachers' aides.