

Annual Report 2026

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Principal's Report

As we reflect on 2025, it has been a year of both progress and clarity for Opihi College. While there is much to acknowledge and celebrate, this has also been a year where our data has sharpened our focus and strengthened our commitment to improvement.

Throughout 2025, we continued to build the foundations for high-quality teaching and learning. Our staff engaged in professional growth aligned to evidence-based practice, and we saw early shifts toward more consistent, structured approaches in literacy and mathematics. There have been positive gains in Year 11 literacy and numeracy, and NCEA Level 1 and Level 2 achievement showed improvement, indicating that when students are engaged in learning pathways, they are capable of success.

At the same time, our achievement data makes it clear that we are not yet where we need to be. Across Years 7–10, fewer than half of our students are achieving at expected curriculum levels in reading, writing, and mathematics. In particular, writing and mathematics remain areas of significant concern, especially in Years 9 and 10. This reinforces the need for a deliberate, school-wide approach to lifting foundational skills and ensuring every student has access to consistent, high-quality instruction.

Attendance continues to be a critical focus. In Term 4, 2025, only 51% of students were attending regularly, with 15% of students classified as chronically absent. While many absences are linked to legitimate reasons such as illness, there remains a proportion of avoidable absence that requires earlier intervention and stronger engagement with whānau. We also know that attendance patterns are not consistent across the year and vary across student groups, particularly in the senior school. This tells us clearly that improving attendance is key to improving achievement.

Despite these challenges, there have been important shifts in how we support our young people. We have strengthened our pastoral systems and begun embedding a more relational and proactive approach to behaviour and engagement. Our focus on building strong, respectful relationships continues to sit at the heart of our kura, alongside our commitment to ensuring that every student feels a sense of belonging and connection.

We have also continued to strengthen our commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi. This includes working more intentionally alongside whānau, embedding te reo Māori and tikanga into daily practice, and ensuring that Māori learners can see themselves, their identity, and their aspirations reflected in our school.

Looking ahead, 2026 is a pivotal year for Opihi College.

Our priorities are clear:

- **Lifting Achievement:** We will take a structured, evidence-based approach to improving outcomes in reading, writing, and mathematics, with a particular focus on Years 7–10 as the foundation for future success.
- **Improving Attendance and Engagement:** We are targeting an increase to at least 60% regular attendance, alongside a reduction in chronic absence, through earlier intervention and stronger partnerships with whānau.
- **Strengthening Teaching Practice:** Through structured literacy, mathematics acceleration, and the development of a shared instructional playbook, we will ensure consistency and clarity in what effective teaching looks like across the school.

- **Embedding a Trauma-Informed Approach:** Through Collaborative & Proactive Solutions and our Student Support Model, we will continue to build a school where behaviour is understood, supported, and responded to in ways that promote long-term success.
- **Building Strong Partnerships:** We will continue to strengthen relationships with whānau, iwi, and our wider community to support engagement, belonging, and success for all learners.

At Opihi College, we remain grounded in a simple but powerful belief: every student can succeed when they are known, supported, and challenged.

While 2025 has highlighted the work still ahead, it has also given us a clear direction. We are building the systems, capability, and collective commitment required to make sustained improvement.

Thank you to our staff, students, whānau, and community for your continued support and belief in our kura.

Ngā mihi mahana,
Kirsten Stevens
Principal | Tumuaki

List of all school board members

Board members	Date that the board member term expires
Andrew Williams (Presiding Member)	Triennial Election 2028
Trish Smith (Parent Representative)	Completion of Project April 2026
Vaughan Tarrant (Parent Representative)	Mid-Term Election 2026
Jamie Skeats (Parent Representative)	December 2025
Kylie Millar (Parent Co-opted)	Triennial Election 2028
Raquel Busson (Staff Representative)	Triennial Election 2028
Lachlan Stratford (Student Representative)	Election Sep 2025
Payton Raj (Student Representative)	Election Sep 2026
Kirsten Stevens (Current Principal)	
In Attendance: Sharyn Patrick (Minute Secretary)	

Statement of variance: progress against targets

Strategic Goal 1: Improve overall student achievement across Reading, Writing, and Mathematics, with a specific focus on increasing literacy and numeracy rates at Opihi College to meet or exceed Government targets. The goal is to raise achievement levels across all year groups, with a particular emphasis on Year 7 to Year 10, and improve NCEA performance for senior students

Annual Target/Goal: By the end of 2025, Opihi College we target 80% achievement in Reading, Writing, and Maths for Year 7 and Year 8 students, 60% in Reading, 60% in Writing, and 50% in Maths for Year 9 students, and 50% in Reading, 60% in Writing, and 50% in Maths for Year 10 students. This is a stepped improvement towards the Government's target of 80% or above achievement in these key areas. We are committed to significantly improving student achievement with realistic and achievable targets. Additionally, we aim to improve Year 11 literacy to 70% and Year 11 numeracy to 65%. For NCEA results, our targets are 55% achievement at Level 1, 65% at Level 2, and 75% at Level 3 for students at Opihi College who participated in a full assessment programme towards NCEA Level 1 (entered for 80+ credits), 2 or 3 (entered for 60+ credits).

Actions	What did we achieve?	Evidence	Reasons for any differences (variances) between the target and the outcomes	Planning for next year – where to next?
<p>Action 1 Implement the Relationships First Framework Impact Cycle 1</p>	<p>Limited progress in 2025. The framework was largely placed on hold and not implemented at scale.</p>	<p>No Evidence</p>	<p>National direction shifted with the disestablishment of Kāhui Ako (May 2025), removing access to support structures and expertise that underpinned this work.</p> <p>Competing priorities emerged, particularly the urgent need to address declining literacy and numeracy achievement.</p> <p>Leadership capacity was redirected toward building internal systems (attendance, curriculum, and structured approaches).</p>	<p>Do not continue with Relationships First as originally designed. Replace with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative & Proactive Solutions (CPS) framework • Student Support Model (trauma-informed, relational practice) <p>Maintain the intent (relationships matter) but embed it through behaviour, engagement, and pastoral systems, not a standalone reform.</p>
<p>Action 2 Engage with Te Manu Ka Rere - Literacy and numeracy targeted support for secondary schools.</p>	<p>Successfully implemented the Te Manu Ka Rere action plan, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff PLD focused on literacy and numeracy across curriculum areas • Targeted support for identified learners, particularly at Year 11–12 • Increased use of formative assessment and clearer learning intentions <p>There has been a significant improvement in senior literacy outcomes, with all targeted students achieving literacy requirements. There are early signs of improved student engagement and ownership of learning, particularly in Year 10.</p>	<p>Year 11 literacy increased (Reading 79%, Writing 82%)</p> <p>Whole school (Years 10–13): Reading 72%, Writing 74%, Numeracy 64%</p>	<p>Literacy gains were strong due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted teaching and clear pathways for students <p>Numeracy was less consistent due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gaps in foundational skills • Intervention occurring later (Years 11–12 rather than earlier) <p>Junior data continues to show lower achievement, indicating the need for earlier and more consistent intervention.</p>	<p>Shift from targeted senior intervention → earlier, preventative approach</p> <p>Key next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embed structured literacy and maths approaches from Years 7–10 • Develop and implement clear readiness indicators across Reading, Writing, and Mathematics • Strengthen student agency: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Students able to articulate “where they are at and where to next” • Continue targeted pathways for senior students, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Alternative numeracy programmes (e.g. financial literacy pathways) ○ Flexible literacy pathways (e.g. EAP, achievement standards) <p>Strengthen consistency by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing a school-wide instructional approach (Playbook) • Aligning teaching practice with science of learning <p>Increase whānau engagement through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear communication of progress • Home learning supports (particularly in mathematics) • Weekly Wednesday Wānanga (After-school Tuition)
<p>Action 3 Implementation of Structured Maths Approaches.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed two of three planned Maths PLD sessions, with the final session scheduled for 22 May. • Built teacher capability in high-impact mathematics teaching practices, aligned to the refreshed Mathematics and Statistics curriculum. • Strengthened staff understanding of key mathematical concepts and teaching progressions, supporting more consistent programme design. 	<p>Early indicators show:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 9–10 numeracy progress between 60–66% in some areas 	<p>Implementation still in early stages — impact not yet fully realised.</p> <p>Achievement data shows: Only 20–33% at expected level in Years 9–10 maths</p>	<p>Move from PLD → targeted acceleration</p> <p>Implement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 7–8 Maths & Pāngarau Acceleration Programme (5 cohorts) • Continued Y9–10 PLD (algebra, statistics, reasoning) <p>Expect measurable acceleration (10–15% lift targets set in AIP).</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Began translating PLD into practice through classroom implementation and targeted support for learners. 			
Action 4 Implementation of Structured Literacy	Successfully secured PLD and began implementation. Built initial staff capability.	PLD Application approved 13/052025 with Tātai Aho Rau completed by two staff in September 2025.	While initial Structured Literacy PLD was completed, staff feedback indicated that the training did not sufficiently build confidence or capability, with many reporting they felt underprepared to implement the approaches effectively in the classroom. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation not yet school-wide Junior school data still low (30–48% writing, reading below 50% in many year levels) 	Full implementation of Structured Literacy (Liz Kane Literacy) in Year 7 & 8.

Strategic Goal 2: Opihi College aims to increase student attendance by ensuring that 80% of students are present for more than 90% of the term by 2026. This aligns with the national target and reflects the College's commitment to improving attendance through the implementation of the Stepped Attendance Response (STAR) framework, enhanced data collection, and strengthening accountability. Opihi College will also foster positive changes in attitudes towards regular attendance by utilizing targeted communication strategies and will continuously review and enhance

Annual Target/Goal:

Opihi College is committed to progressing toward the Government's target of 80% of students attending regularly (90% or more of the time) by 2030. For 2024, the school aims to achieve a 70% regular attendance rate, laying the foundation for sustained improvement in the years ahead. Additionally, we aim to reduce chronic absence to below 12%, ensuring more equitable access to learning opportunities.

Actions	What did we achieve?	Evidence	Reasons for any differences (variances) between the target and the outcomes	Planning for next year – where to next?
Action 1 Engage in the Ministry of Education campaign to support efforts to increase attendance rates.	Ongoing engagement across all terms, regular reporting and awareness building.	Termly Every Day Matters Reports Attendance across 2025 remained below expectations, with 51% of students attending regularly (90% or more) by Term 4. Attendance varied across the year, dropping in Term 3 before recovering later, highlighting the need for more consistent engagement. Chronic absence remains a concern, with around 15% of students attending 70% or less of the time. While many absences are due to illness, there is still a group of students with avoidable absence. New systems, including our Attendance Management Plan and stepped response processes, are now in place, and we expect these to support improved attendance moving forward.	Campaign raised awareness but did not significantly shift behaviour alone Barriers include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Illness (50–57% of absences) Chronic Absence (13–18%) Lack of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong internal systems early in the year Consistent whānau engagement 	Move beyond awareness → targeted intervention Embed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance Management Plan Whānau partnerships Early identification systems
Action 2 Implementation of Stepped Attendance Response (STAR) utilising KAMAR SMS. (Implementation of Attendance Management Plan)	Attendance Management Plan developed and implemented.	(Continued from previous row)	Introduced during 2025 → impact not yet fully realised Cultural shift required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance seen as shared responsibility Stronger whānau engagement needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A key focus for this year has been strengthening the consistent use of our attendance processes across all staff. This work is being fully integrated with our Student Support Model and the Collaborative and Proactive Solutions (CPS) framework to ensure a coordinated and responsive approach to student engagement. This is our first full year of implementation, with clear targets set to lift outcomes for our ākonga. We are aiming to increase regular attendance to 60% and reduce chronic absence to below 12% by the end of the year. Alongside this, we are placing a strong emphasis on improving communication with whānau, strengthening our use of attendance data, and ensuring timely, targeted interventions to support students to re-engage in learning.

Evaluation and analysis of the school's students' progress and achievement

Reading, Writing and Mathematics (2025 Analysis): The baseline data for 2025, as presented, shows that Opihi College is not yet meeting the Government's priority of 80% of learners achieving at or above the expected curriculum level across all year levels.

- **Year 7:** 36% in Reading, 37% in Writing, and 28% in Maths are at or above expected level.
- **Year 8:** 46% in Reading, 48% in Writing, and 43% in Maths are at or above expected level.
- **Year 9:** 46% in Reading, 34% in Writing, and 20% in Maths are at or above expected level.
- **Year 10:** 42% in Reading, 30% in Writing, and 33% in Maths are at or above expected level.

In summary, achievement across all year levels remains significantly below the 80% target. While there is some consistency in reading across Years 8–10, writing and mathematics remain areas of concern, particularly in Years 9 and 10. The data indicates a need for a more consistent, structured approach to teaching and learning, with a strong focus on foundational skills.

NZQA Analysis: The NZQA result analysis includes all students enrolled in each Year Level, regardless of their participation in a full assessment programme. It does not reflect the number of students who were actively entered for NCEA Level 1 (with 80+ credits), Level 2, or Level 3 (with 60+ credits). Therefore, the data may not fully represent the performance of students engaged in the comprehensive assessment pathways leading to NCEA certification.

Literacy (2024 - 2025 Analysis):

Year 11 Literacy rates at Opihi College increased from 61.9% in 2024 to 74.3% in 2025. This represents a significant improvement and reflects a positive shift following previous declines. While this remains 4.5 percentage points below the national average, it is now 1.6 points above schools in the same equity band. This upward trend aligns with national and equity band improvements and suggests that targeted interventions are beginning to have an impact.

Numeracy (2024 - 2025 Analysis):

Year 11 Numeracy achievement at Opihi College increased from 50.0% in 2024 to 65.7% in 2025. While this is a substantial improvement, it remains below the national average (78.1%) and equity band schools (72.4%). Additionally, achievement has not yet returned to the 2023 level of 76.1%, indicating that while progress has been made, further sustained focus is required.

NCEA Results (2024-2025 Analysis):

- **Level 1:** Achievement increased from 40.5% in 2024 to 64.5% in 2025, returning to levels similar to 2023 (64.7%). While still below the national average (72.1%), results are now slightly above equity band schools (62.5%).
- **Level 2:** Achievement improved from 54.1% in 2024 to 70.0% in 2025, approaching national levels (72.7%) and exceeding equity band schools (66.9%).
- **Level 3:** Achievement declined from 63.6% in 2024 to 40.9% in 2025, significantly below both national (70.4%) and equity band (67.3%) averages. This represents a key area of concern.

University Entrance (UE):

UE attainment increased from 9.1% in 2024 to 18.2% in 2025. While this reflects improvement and a return to levels similar to 2023 (18.8%), it remains well below national (49.0%) and equity band (32.4%) averages, indicating ongoing challenges in supporting students into academic pathways.

Engagement (2024-2025 Analysis):

Attendance in 2025 remained inconsistent, with 51% of students attending regularly (above 90%) in Term 4. Attendance dropped to 40% in Term 3 before recovering, indicating variability across the year. Chronic absence remained a concern, with 15% of students attending 70% or less of the time.

Illness or medical reasons accounted for approximately 50–57% of absences, while unexplained or trivial absences accounted for 13–18%. Attendance patterns varied across student groups, with senior students showing higher levels of chronic absence.

While systems such as the Stepped Attendance Response (STAR) and the Attendance Management Plan were implemented in 2025, their full impact is not yet reflected in the data. Continued focus on early intervention, consistency of practice, and stronger engagement with whānau will be critical moving forward.

How we have given effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi

At Opihi College, we recognize the importance of Te Tiriti o Waitangi in shaping our educational approach and are committed to aligning with the principles outlined in Ka Hikitia and Ngāi Tahu's Education Strategy. Our targets and actions reflect the following key areas:

- **Te Whānau:** We will ensure that Māori learners and their whānau are supported with the right information, at the right time, through appropriate channels. This enables them to make informed decisions about their education and ensures their voices are heard and acted upon. We will offer facilitation and brokerage support for Māori learners, ensuring that we work with whānau in ways that meet their needs. This approach aligns with our commitment to partnership and engagement with Māori communities to foster strong, productive relationships.
- **Te Tangata:** Opihi College is dedicated to eliminating racism, discrimination, and stigma within our education system. We will set clear expectations for staff and students to actively engage in creating an inclusive environment. Our professional development will focus on equipping our staff to work effectively with Māori learners and whānau, ensuring that every learner is free from discrimination. We will create a culture where everyone is empowered to "call out" racism, and we will model professionalism that prevents and addresses racism.
- **Te Kanorautanga:** We acknowledge the diversity of Māori learners and their varied aspirations. Our curriculum will be responsive to the diverse needs of Māori students, respecting and celebrating their lived experiences. We will provide early and intensive support for learners who need it and will maintain high standards for teachers to work effectively with Māori learners. This support will empower Māori students to achieve their educational goals and aspirations.
- **Te Tuakiritanga:** Māori identity, language, and culture will be central to our educational approach. We will ensure high-quality Māori language education is offered, and Māori perspectives are embedded throughout the curriculum. Opihi College will support Māori learners to actively participate in te ao Māori, Aotearoa, and the wider world by creating an environment where their language, identity, and culture are valued and promoted every day.
- **Te Rangatiratanga:** We are committed to enabling Māori learners, their whānau, and Māori communities to exercise their authority and agency in education. Opihi College will provide opportunities for Māori whānau and iwi to lead and participate in educational pathways and governance decisions. We will support Māori participation in the leadership of the school and ensure that Māori perspectives influence school policy and practice.

Statement of compliance with employment policy

Reporting on the principles of being a Good Employer	
How have you met your obligations to provide good and safe working conditions?	Site hazards are reviewed a couple of times a year, this is combined with an ongoing hazard register. Hazards are addressed asap and this is up to date. All have the ability to use EPA services or in house councillor for support. Complaints and responsibility policies are there if staff do have issues.
What is in your equal employment opportunities programme? How have you been fulfilling this programme?	Shows commitment to equal opportunities in all aspects of employment including recruitment, training, promotion, conditions of service, and career development. We select the person most suited to the position in terms of skills, experience, qualifications, and aptitude. We recognise the value of diversity in staffing (for example, ethnicity, age, gender, disability, tenure, hours of work, etc.) and the employment requirements of diverse individuals/groups. We ensure that employment and personnel practices are fair and free of any bias.
How do you practise impartial selection of suitably qualified persons for appointment?	All applicants are reviewed by SLT, the BOT chair and the HoF. Applicants are selected based on their qualifications, experience and availability.
How are you recognising, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The aims and aspirations of Māori, - The employment requirements of Māori, and - Greater involvement of Māori in the Education service? 	We work with our Māori staff, community, iwi, and support agencies to develop a greater understanding and use of tikanga, Te Reo Māori and aspirations of Māori into everyday activities within our working practice.
How have you enhanced the abilities of individual employees?	We work with individuals and groups of employees to support both their ongoing and future development needs. This is done by both internal and external professional development and support. We have a budget to cover the costs.
How are you recognising the employment requirements of women?	We support and value all staff within our employment as equals, and support is based on needs of the individuals. Where possible we have flexible working arrangements with a number of staff and we support women returning to work after a career break.
How are you recognising the employment requirements of persons with disabilities?	We work with individuals to put in place supports or alternative working arrangements to support staff who have disabilities.

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

Reporting on Equal Employment Opportunities (EEO) Programme/Policy	YES	NO
Do you operate an EEO programme/policy?	X	
Has this policy or programme been made available to staff?	X	
Does your EEO programme/policy include training to raise awareness of issues which may impact EEO?	X	
Has your EEO programme/policy appointed someone to coordinate compliance with its requirements?	X	
Does your EEO programme/policy provide for regular reporting on compliance with the policy and/or achievements under the policy?	X	
Does your EEO programme/policy set priorities and objectives?	X	