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WAITAHA SCHOOL
Excellence in Specialist Education.

Job Description: Specialist Education Teacher

Position: Specialist Education Teacher
Reports to: Principal
Direct report: DP (Junior/Middle School), AP, (Junior/Middle School) DP Senior School, AP (Senior Sch),

School: Waitaha School
Sites: Base-12 Lemonwood Drive Rolleston, Te Pa Harakeke- West Rolleston School Te Tupu Harakeke- Knight Stream School,Te Kōrari - Ararira Springs School. Te Rito Harakeke- Rolleston College
Ngā Pakiakia - Community Hub- Rolleston School.

Our Mission and Values: At Waitaha School, our mission is for our young people to **grow, thrive, and succeed** in learning and in life. Our values are **aroha** (love, compassion), **mana** (integrity, respect), and **mahi tahi** (collaboration, working together). We are committed to upholding the principles of **Te Tiriti o Waitangi** and ensuring our school is a culturally safe and responsive environment for all learners.

Position Summary: The Specialist Education Teacher is responsible for planning, delivering, and assessing individualised educational programs for students with special educational needs. Teachers are compassionate, skilled, and highly adaptable educators who create a positive and stimulating classroom environment. This role requires a deep understanding of various learning disabilities, developmental delays, and behavioral challenges, as well as the ability to work effectively as part of a multi-disciplinary team. A strong knowledge of the **New Zealand Curriculum** and a commitment to integrating **Te Tiriti o Waitangi** principles are essential. We focus on the **Whare Tapu Whā** model of wellbeing to support the development of the whole student.

Key Responsibilities:

1. Curriculum and Instruction

- Develop and implement individualised learning plans (ILPs), or Good Life Plans (GLP's) for each student based on their unique strengths, needs, and goals, aligning with the principles and key competencies of the **New Zealand Curriculum**.
- Adapt and modify the **New Zealand Curriculum** to make it accessible and relevant for students with diverse learning needs, ensuring an inclusive approach.
- Employ a wide range of teaching strategies, including multi-sensory, hands-on, and technology-assisted methods, to engage students.
- Integrate therapeutic goals (e.g., speech and language, occupational therapy) into daily classroom activities in collaboration with support staff, reflecting the four dimensions of **Whare Tapu Whā** (Taha Tinana, Taha Hinengaro, Taha Whānau, Taha Wairua).
- Weave **Māori perspectives and values** into teaching and learning, reflecting the principles of **Te Tiriti o Waitangi**. This includes incorporating **te reo Māori**, tikanga, and a bicultural approach where appropriate.

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2. Assessment and Reporting

- Conduct ongoing formative, narrative and summative assessments to monitor student progress against their ILP/GLP goals, using a variety of culturally responsive assessment methods.
- Maintain accurate and detailed records of student performance, behavior, and development.
- Write clear and comprehensive reports for parents/guardians and other professionals, outlining student progress and future goals.
- Participate in regular meetings (6 monthly) to review and update student ILP/GLP's.

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3. Classroom Management and Student Support

- Implement positive behavior support strategies to foster a safe, respectful, and inclusive classroom culture.
- Manage challenging behaviors effectively and with empathy, using de-escalation techniques (Team-Teach) and proactive strategies.
- Collaborate with support staff (e.g., teacher aides, therapists) for daily organisation and to specific and appropriate learning support to students.
- Follow school protocols and procedures, ensuring paperwork is completed in a timely manner.
- Ensure the physical and emotional safety of all students at all times, upholding a **mana-enhancing** approach to student wellbeing.

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4. Professional Collaboration and Communication

- Work collaboratively with a multi-disciplinary team, including the Principal, Leadership, other teachers, and therapists, to support students according to the **Whare Tapu Whā** model.
- Communicate regularly and effectively with parents/guardians, demonstrating an awareness of and respect for their cultural backgrounds.
- Participate in professional development opportunities to stay current with best practices in special education and **Te Ao Māori** (the Māori world).
- Contribute to the positive and collaborative culture of the school community, actively participating in discussions about culturally responsive pedagogy.
- Very regular communication with whānau - phone calls, messaging, HERO posts, face to face.

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5. Other Duties

- Supervise students during non-instructional times, such as breaks and lunch.
- Participate in school-wide events, meetings, and professional learning communities.
- Undertake other duties as assigned by the Principal.
- Engage with external agencies.

Principal: B Mulcahy-Bouwman	
Date: updated 17 February 2026	**Review Date**: 2028
Teacher:	