Sommerville | MORE THAN A SCHOOL

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Occupational Therapist

June 2026

Sommerville School
Sommerville is a large specialist school, catering for students aged 5 to 21 years with a wide range of educational challenges. Our catchment area stretches across Auckland's eastern corridor from the Ōrākei Basin to Maraetai and includes our base school in Panmure, satellite classes in 14 mainstream schools, a community programme for 18-21 year olds and an Outreach Service. We have 380+ ORS funded students and employ approximately 300 staff including teacher aides, specialists, teachers and support staff.

Position Purpose
The main purpose of the occupational therapist role is to assess students' skills and abilities to participate and engage in learning tasks and optimise their independence in activities of daily living in a school environment; develop individual and groups programmes; liaise with teachers, whānau, health care professionals; provide therapy and monitor progress; consult with whānau and school team when implementing or adapting programmes.

Our Vision and Values
Mā te iwi e manaaki ka puāwai. Together, learning to live our best lives. Our school and community values: ● Kia Hono/Be Connected ● Kia Māia/Be Courageous

Leadership
This role has leadership responsibilities – as leaders of self. Occupational Therapists will have the following competencies as defined in the Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand's Educational Leadership Capability Framework: 1. Building and sustaining high trust relationships 2. Ensuring culturally responsive practice and understanding of Aotearoa New Zealand's cultural heritage, using Te Tiriti o Waitangi as the foundation 3. Building and sustaining collective leadership and professional community 4. Strategically thinking and planning 5. Evaluating practices in relation to outcomes 6. Adept management of resources to achieve vision and goals 7. Attending to their own learning and their own wellbeing 8. Embodying the organisation's values and showing moral purpose, optimism, agency, and resilience 9. Contributing to the development and wellbeing of their professional practice beyond their organisation.

Specific Responsibilities of this Position	
Responsibilities of the Occupational Therapist role are expected to change over time to respond to changing needs. You will need the flexibility to adapt and develop as the role evolves.	
Key Accountabilities	**Indicators of Success**
Carry out formal and informal assessments of the student and of their school environment in order to ensure the appropriateness of each student's therapy programme.	● Students in therapy have an appropriate programme to support them in their development.
Provide occupational therapy to those enrolled at Sommerville School who have occupational therapy needs.	● Students in therapy feel supported and they and their families know the treatment plan/s.
Assess and advise on the need for an equipment solution, apply for funding, refer to other agencies, monitor and review equipment use.	● Advice is appropriate to the student in therapy and suitable for the school and/or home environment.
Keep up-to-date and accurate records of students who receive occupational therapy.	● Records are kept up-to-date.
Provide occupational therapy recommendations to teachers and parents as required.	● Recommendations are appropriate for each student.

Provide written therapy reports, programmes and recommendations for teachers, families, other professionals, as well as school records as required seeking input from other professionals as necessary.	● Written reports, programmes and recommendations are appropriate for each student in therapy.
Provide in-services to teachers and support staff when requested.	● Teachers and support staff receive assistance when requested.
Regularly attend meetings with the school leaders and the school therapy team.	● Regular attendance. ● Contributions at the meetings are positive and add value.
Build positive relationships and networks with staff, students, specialists and whanau at our school and other schools and external agencies.	● Feedback on relationships are positive. ● Specialist practices continually improve.
Be future-focused, and an innovative thinker with the ability to both inspire and lead change in a large special school with a diverse staff and community.	● Show commitment to the change outcomes in our school.
Communicate effectively with a variety of audiences both orally and in writing.	● Oral and written communications are appropriate to the audience. ● Written communication is simple and clear so that the audience can understand.
Use IT confidently and creatively to develop robust systems and procedures.	● Systems and procedures are simple and clear. ● Users of the systems and procedures are trained and able to use them.
Develop own professional skills including resilience and wellbeing practices and keep up-to-date professional knowledge.	● Grow your own professional capability and maintain professional ethics, work, and conduct. ● Participate in the Sommerville Professional Growth Cycle ● Own wellbeing resilience is developed.
Ensure culturally responsive practice and understanding of Aotearoa New Zealand's cultural heritage using Te Tiriti o Waitangi as the foundation.	● Understand what culturally responsive practice means and why it is important. ● Develop and maintain cultural competencies. ● Therapy plans are reflective and culturally responsive to all students in therapy.

Support our school's wellbeing, health and safety requirements.	● Actively promote and comply with all wellbeing, health and safety requirements of our school.
Other specific responsibilities will be delegated to fit with the successful applicant's strengths.	

Personal Specifications
Skills, experience and qualifications needed: ● Occupational Therapy degree or equivalent qualification ● Eligibility for membership with the OTBNZ and ongoing adherence to occupational therapy competencies and professional standards of practice ● At least two years' experience working in special education ● Strong interpersonal and communication skills ● Ability to work autonomously and as part of a team to manage caseloads ● Adhere to Ministry of Education Specialist Service Standards ● Have, or working towards, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Education equipment accreditation ● An understanding of Aotearoa New Zealand's cultural heritage using Te Tiriti o Waitangi as the foundation ● Innovative and reflective practitioner ● Willing to participate in ongoing professional development ● Use IT confidently ● Current and clean drivers' licence