



Keep up to date with TCS news at www.correspondence.school.nz

Inside this issue

Gateway is open for business 2

Staying connected 3

Learn another language 4

ERO update 5

New Deputy Chief Executives 6

New regional structure taking shape 7

Early start in early childhood education

Tasha Ashmore of Tauranga was the first student from TCS to sign up for the work experience programme, Gateway. The year 12 student now spends four hours every Thursday looking after the youngest children at a nearby Bethlehem childcare centre.

Tasha's keen to pursue a career in early childhood education. She had already worked with under twos at a childcare centre on Waiheke Island, where she lived until last year, and got to know quite a lot of children that way. Her job is fun and she reckons the experience she's getting now is valuable.

"I'm 16. When I'm 17 I can get a job at a childcare centre while I'm studying," she said. She plans to enrol with the Open Polytechnic for a certificate in early childhood education. The three unit standards she's working on through Gateway are actually part of the National Certificate in Early Childhood Education and Care. Through Gateway, she's also done a first aid certificate.

Tasha is finding that all childcare centres are not alike. Something that surprised her was the size of the Bethlehem centre. "It's really big!" she said. First Class Education and Care caters for up to 50 children, divided into three age bands. The centre also had different arrangements for serving meals.



Tasha Ashmore and Flynn

Photo: Pam Osborne

"They eat at a table, not in highchairs. There's these one year olds all sitting at this little table," she said.

Asked why she was keen to sign up with Gateway, she said, "It just sounded like a good idea. This way I can earn credits for going to the childcare centre. Other people have gone in through Gateway and they're now working there."



You can get experience and earn standards while you're still at TCS, through Gateway.

For information, go to www.correspondence.school.nz, click on Study with us, Full-time students and Gateway-work experience, or ring the Gateway co-ordinator, Kathryn Smith, on 0800 65 99 88 extension 8552.

Gateway is open for business



wanting to do automotive engineering are also being finalised.

Gateway is a work experience programme for students in years 11 to 13, who work half a day or a day each week in an industry they're keen to explore. They earn unit standards along the way and find out about the world of work.

This is the first year Gateway has been offered through The Correspondence School. There are 40 places available, but the School can apply to the Tertiary Education Commission for more places if there is greater demand.

Gateway co-ordinator Kathryn Smith says that while there has been a lot of interest from students, some places are still available. Interest has been particularly high in Northland, the location for five of the first 15 Gateway placements. To find out more, go to www.correspondence.school.nz, go to Study with us, then Full-time students and click on Gateway-work experience. You can phone Kathryn on 0800 65 99 88, extension 8552. She's also keen to hear from employers who are interested in offering a Gateway placement.

The first Gateway students are already at work. Four are getting work experience in early childhood centres, two are in electrical trades and one is getting a taste of dairy farming. Placements for eight students

A powerful experience

Soldering is one of the new experiences year 13 student Lisa Trim has been gaining through her Gateway placement. She's rewired a welding machine too. At Kaikohe, in the Far North, Lisa has been working a day a week with an electrician friend of her father's.

One of her challenges has been "trying to suss out satellites". She explained that when installing a satellite dish, the electrician uses a device that screams when the signal is strong, but goes quiet when the connection is lost, so she had to work out how to adjust the aim of the dish to get the best signal.

The electrical industry was a natural choice for Lisa. She did a few courses last year that involved electrical work and really enjoyed it. She's hoping her Gateway experience will help her into an apprenticeship.

"I had applied for an apprenticeship last year, but they only take twenty out of 500 applicants. I was number 36." She thinks her lack of work experience then was against her.

The unit standards she'll be doing will also be useful. They're about using and maintaining hand and power tools for electrical work, and health and safety in that environment.

Lisa has no hesitation in recommending Gateway to any students who are thinking about it.

"Definitely, come onto Gateway. It's a lot of fun and you get a lot of work experience. You can choose the industry you go into.

"The whole lot's been fun!"



*Lisa Trim cuts soldering wire before working on a switchboard.
Photo: Margaret Sullivan*

Staying connected

Research shows that students who stay connected with a school community do better academically, have more positive life outcomes and are less likely to get into trouble. With this in mind, TCS has set up a pilot project with schools and colleges in Palmerston North and Feilding to provide early assistance for students who are at risk of becoming alienated or excluded from education.

“The aim is to keep these students in a learning environment,” said project co-ordinator Sue Spiers. “This will improve their educational progress and achievement, and enhance their wellbeing.”

Students invited to join the Manawatu Project pilot will have a personal programme of learning. Sue says they will study some (or all) subjects through The Correspondence School while keeping a link with their Manawatu school, perhaps through classes, sports teams or cultural groups.

Come to the conference!

The Correspondence School Parents’ and Supervisors’ Association (TCSPSA) is holding their annual conference on 14–16 May 2008 at the Kingsgate Hotel Portland, Wellington. This year’s theme is *How to keep humour in the family and classroom* – how to get the work done and still laugh together. The keynote speaker is Lance King from The Art of Learning.

The conference is an opportunity for parents and supervisors of TCS students to learn, share ideas and network with one another. This is the last year that the conference will be held in Wellington.

Courses have been organised for secondary and intermediate students. Those for primary and early childhood are in the planning stage.

For more information or to register phone 03 579 9252 or email aldridge_kulak@xtra.co.nz



Pick of the Crop Careers in Horticulture



Pick of the Crop Careers in Horticulture CD cover.

Check your DVD collection

If you were sent a DVD last year called *Pick of the Crop: Careers in Horticulture*, please return it to the Science Department. You can send it back in a green posting bag to Freepost, The Correspondence School, Private Bag 39992, Wellington Mail Centre, Lower Hutt 5045. Any other resources no longer needed should also be returned to TCS. Doing this lets other students make use of these resources.

Learn another language

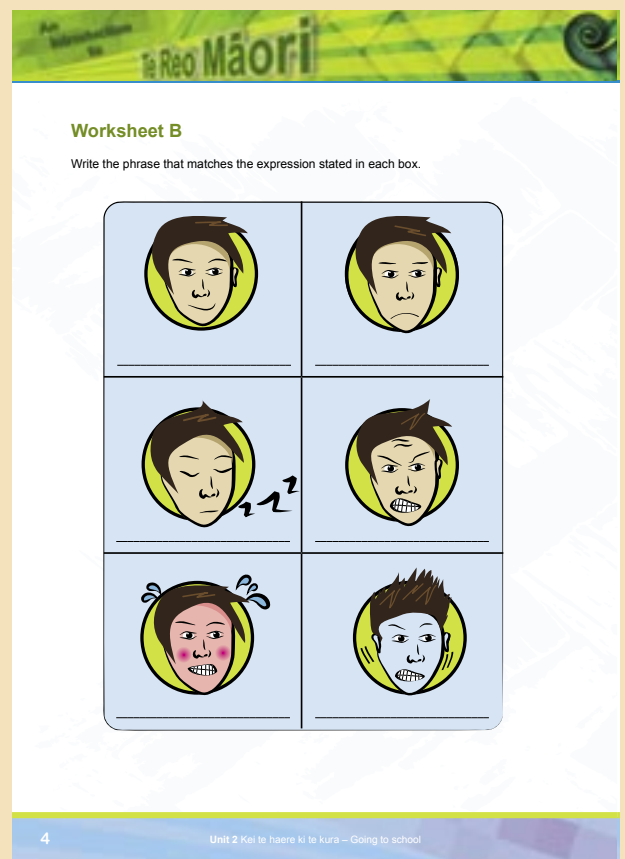
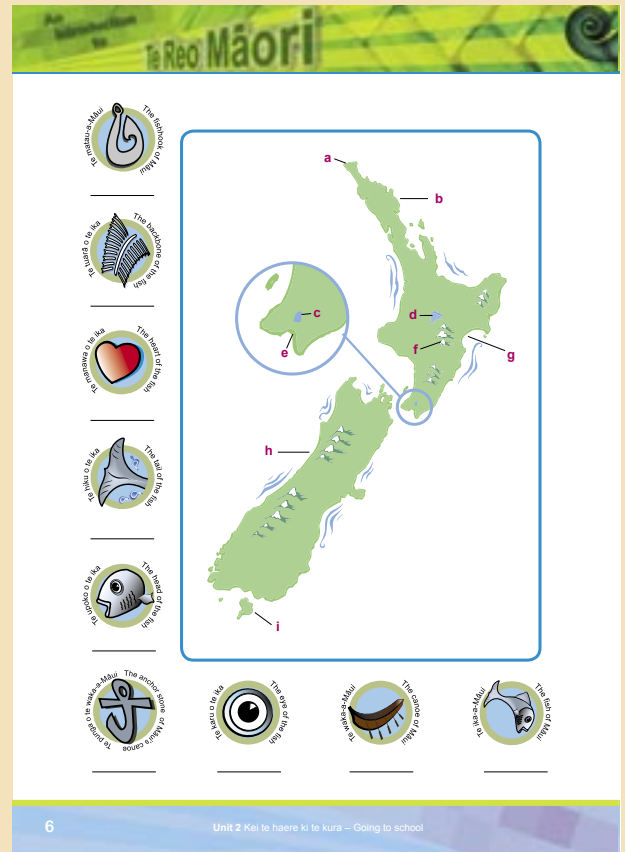
Modern language courses will be available for full-time year 7 and 8 students from term 2. Initially, students will be able to choose from Te Reo Maori or Spanish. An introduction to Te Reo Maori will be available online or in booklet form with an accompanying DVD and CD. Primary Spanish will be offered online only.

Primary team leader Diane Wilkins has been managing the development of both resources, which have taken months of work by teachers and TCS Media Services staff. She's very pleased with the finished products. The resources introduce students to the languages in the social and cultural contexts in which they are used. The beginning of each unit clearly states the expected learning that will take place and the expected outcomes for the students.

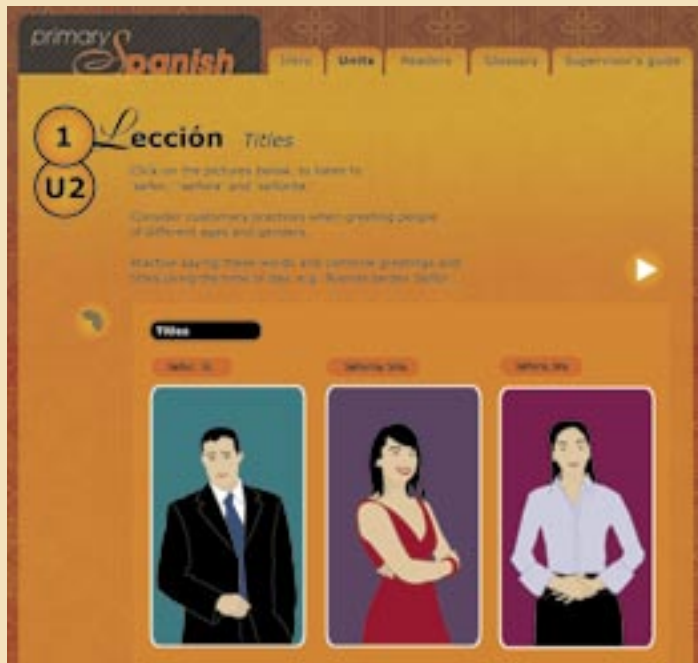
The Te Reo Maori course is based on a teaching resource produced by the Ministry of Education in 2007 called *Ka Mau te Wehi!* This kit was produced for face-to-face schools and has been adapted, with permission, for distance learning. The resulting material comprises 10 units of work. Each has a different theme and teaches a limited number of new concepts and vocabulary. Aimed to be used by students and their supervisors, the course has easy-to-use instructions.

The Spanish language course is based on a much older paper-based language kit and required a lot of work to be reproduced as a web-based course. The Spanish course has 11 units, covering everyday Spanish usage, such as introductions and greetings, talking about family members, expressing dates and times and following instructions. There are also guides to basic grammar and correct pronunciation. Each unit has a set of activities for students to complete. These will include listening to music or dialogue, reading online books and playing interactive games. Students will also learn about Spanish culture, Spanish-speaking countries, Spanish festivals, food and customs.

Under the new New Zealand curriculum, all schools will offer courses in a language other than English to students in years 7 and 8. Through learning languages, students learn how to communicate in another language, and find out how language and culture shape us as individuals, groups and countries.



Te Reo Maori course



Primary Spanish website

ERO update

The Education Review Office (ERO) has released a report of its findings following a special review of The Correspondence School (TCS) earlier this year.

The special review is the result of an agreement between ERO and the Board that ERO will provide evaluative information to complement the School's self review of progress toward bringing about improvements identified in previous reports. The terms of reference for this year's special review were to evaluate progress, taking into account the School's action planning, in addressing the findings, actions for compliance and recommendations of the May 2007 reports.

ERO found that TCS has a well formulated action plan to address those findings, which demonstrates its active and systematic response to bringing about the improvements identified by ERO. The report also notes a number of other initiatives underway at the School that will contribute to improving our responsiveness to students and supporting them to gain success.

ERO intends, in agreement with the Board, to continue to provide evaluative information to TCS through special reviews during the period before the next regular review.

TCS Chief Executive Mike Hollings says he welcomes the findings of the special review. "We look forward to our ongoing involvement with ERO during the period before the next review, to help us improve the way we deliver teaching and learning to all of our students."

A summary of the findings is included with this newsletter. You can also review the full report on the Education Review Office website at www.ero.govt.nz.

TCS Board reappointed

The Minister of Education, Chris Carter, announced in January that the School's Board of Trustees has been reappointed until September 2009, to allow it to complete the organisational changes now underway.

"The current board of TCS has governed the School in a highly competent manner," Mr Carter said. "The financial management of the school has been very good, and the general high quality of leadership was recently highlighted in an Education Review Office review."

In September 2009, a new board will be appointed from a representative pool of candidates with the skills that the School

requires. Parents and other representatives from TCS's community will be invited to apply for membership on the Board. Mr Carter said the proposed appointment process would ensure the School's Board had the right mix of talents and representation to run the School effectively.

Update: Shortly before this newsletter went to print Education Minister Chris Carter announced that Carol Moffat, Nori Parata and Wayne Bainbridge will join Trish McKelvey (chair), Russell Ballard, Roger Taylor and Roger Drummond on the TCS Board, following the retirement of Ian McKinnon, Claire Hague and Polly Schaverien. More information about the new Board members will be published in the next School newsletter.

New Deputy Chief Executives



Bryce Pedersen

Photo: Knorriey McFarlane

Two Correspondence School staff have been appointed Deputy Chief Executives in the School's new structure.

Bryce Pedersen, formerly Director of Primary, Early Childhood and Special Education, has been appointed Deputy Chief Executive for the Learning Delivery wahanga (directorate). This wahanga includes all teaching staff.

Bryce brings a broad and diverse background in education to this role, having worked in education in New Zealand and overseas, including long periods in the United Kingdom and also in Europe, Africa and Asia. His work has been entirely in the state sector, in urban, multicultural, low decile schools. Bryce has taught early years, been a SENCO (Special Educational Needs Coordinator) and has had a range of working associations with secondary schools on projects such as transitioning students from primary to secondary schooling, urban regeneration, truancy and attendance, community health projects, professional development and career services. During this time Bryce held a variety of roles including school principal, researcher, assessor, trainer, coach, mentor and teacher.

"Bryce is looking forward to working with all of us to help raise student achievement and make a difference to our students' life chances," said Chief Executive Mike Hollings.



Te Rina Leonard

Photo: Knorriey McFarlane

Te Rina Leonard, formerly acting manager of the Office of the Chief Executive, has been appointed Deputy Chief Executive Design and Quality. This wahanga is responsible for the design and development of high quality curriculum and teaching resources and their distribution, as well as assessment and qualification services.

Te Rina has a breadth and depth of experience relevant to her new role, having been involved in a variety of education roles during her career. A trained educational psychologist, Te Rina has led professional development initiatives for teachers and specialist teachers. She has managed national evaluations of quality of teaching in schools across key curriculum areas and has worked in education policy and evaluation at the Education Review Office.

"Te Rina's enthusiasm and passion for improving opportunities for students and Maori provide a great foundation for leading the Design and Quality wahanga," Mike said.

A third appointment, for the Deputy Chief Executive Capability Service, was announced shortly before this newsletter went to print. Viv Rogers took up the role at the end of March. You can read more about Viv in the next newsletter.

New regional structure taking shape

The Correspondence School's new regional structure for teaching and pastoral support is taking shape thanks to the work of a dedicated group of teachers.

During January a team of teachers from across the School began working on a detailed plan to put the new structure in place. Working with a project manager they developed detailed proposals for student support, in-region delivery, integrated teaching for students in years 7 to 10, and how the regional teaching teams will operate.

The regional structure is based around three wahanga (directorates) that replace the current directorates (Secondary; Early Childhood/Primary/Special Education; and Corporate Services). The largest wahanga is Learning Delivery, which brings all of the teaching staff together. Teachers will be grouped in four regional teams corresponding with the four regional groupings of the Ministry of Education — Northern, Central North, Central South and Southern.

The first of the regional teaching teams will come together in term 2, focusing on students living in the Central South region. This group of approximately 35 teachers covering the lower North Island includes a team of six teachers who will work primarily with full-time students in years 7 to 10. This team is already working together and with students and their supervisors to develop an integrated learning programme that covers a range of subjects and can be personalised to the needs and interests of individual students.

In the meantime, students have been allocated to teachers according to the region where the student lives. This has meant that some students have new class or form teachers (now called Learning Advisors) whose students mostly come from the same geographical area.

From Term 2, TCS will be employing extra staff in the regions to give help and support to students, supervisors and whanau who need it. An in-region manager called a Kaiarahi will be employed in each region to work with communities, schools and government agencies, coordinate regional initiatives and ensure in-region teaching staff – such as liaison teachers – have the support they need. Kaiarahi will also oversee the organisation of camps and events in their region and provide ongoing support for supervisors.

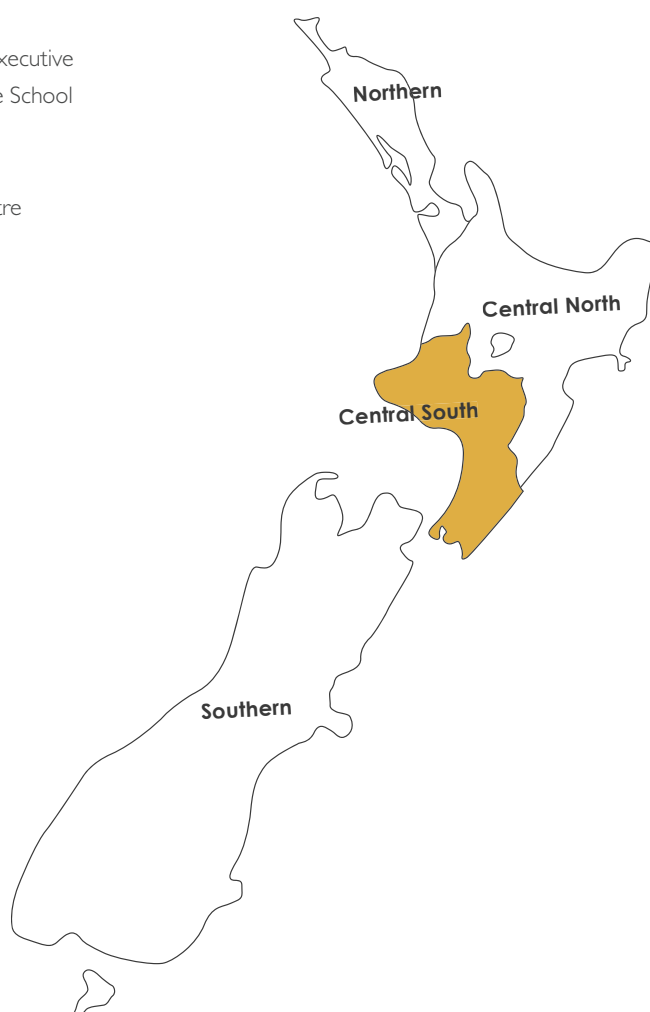
CEO Mike Hollings says organising teachers into regional teams and beefing up in-region support will help to improve student engagement and achievement.

“We need to deliver learning in a way that excites and engages interest, and that is personalised to our students’ individual needs, interests and aspirations.

“By changing the way we deliver teaching and learning, providing better support, developing stronger connections with students and their families and putting a stronger focus on curriculum, we can become more relevant, more responsive and more effective for all our students.”

Visit our website at www.correspondence.school.nz for more information. If you have any questions or concerns about the changes that are happening at your school, you can email us at info@correspondence.school.nz, talk with your teacher, or write to us at:

Office of the Chief Executive
The Correspondence School
Freepost 10010
Private Bag 39992
Wellington Mail Centre
Lower Hutt 5045





New appointments

The first appointments have been made to the new Design and Quality wahanga, one of three directorates in The Correspondence School's new structure.

The Design and Quality wahanga will be responsible for the design and development of high quality curriculum and teaching resources, and assessment and qualification services.

Kerry Whelan-Jones has been appointed e-Learning Manager, responsible for managing, developing and implementing TCS's e-learning strategy across the curriculum.

Kerry was previously head of the Art Department, where she was an active champion of online learning, overseeing the development of the visual arts website.

Chris Lawrence has been appointed Manager, Media and Distribution Resource Services, responsible for the production and dispatch of student resources and the provision of library services. He has an extensive background in publishing, digitisation and warehousing, and has recently been acting Manager of Media Services.

Striking silver at the Winter X Games

Skier and TCS student Jossi Wells became the first New Zealander to win a medal at the Winter X Games at Aspen, Colorado, in January. Jossi just missed out on the gold in the slopestyle event. He was leading the event with a score of 90 until the last competitor, Norway's Andreas Hatveit, got a near-perfect 94. At 17, Jossi was also the youngest person to win a medal in the Winter X Games. As well as the silver medal in slopestyle, he was placed fifth in the superpipe event.



More camps coming

By now, some of you will have been abseiling or orienteering at one of the three School camps being held in term 1 at Hastings, South Auckland and Nelson.

If you missed out on those ones, don't worry. There will be other camps as well as one-day events later in the year. From now on, these will be organised by staff in the regions. We'll be in touch to let you know what's coming up. Information will also be included in future newsletters and on the TCS website.



Reaching the top. These TCS students from Tu Toa climbed Mount Ngauruhoe as part of a four-day camp at the Sir Edmund Hillary Outdoor Pursuits Centre in February. The students also went rafting and did a high ropes course. Photo: Nathan Durie

You rock!

You've got until 7 May to enter Smokefree Rockquest. In this competition, bands or individuals under 19 years old perform original songs in front of an audience in regional heats and finals, with the top picks going on to a national final. The national winner gets to record a single in Auckland. As a Correspondence School student you are eligible to take part. Entry form, rules and details of all prizes are online at www.smokefreerockquest.co.nz.

