

PRINCIPAL'S PĀNUI #1

ARISE to a hope and a future

"Everyone needs someone to believe in them."

During my third year of teacher training, our lecturers encouraged us to reflect on our teaching philosophy. If you're unsure what that means, you're not alone—our entire cohort looked around, familiar with the words but uncertain of their collective meaning. In essence, a teaching philosophy is the set of principles, values, and beliefs that guide you as an educator.

This question resurfaced throughout my career, and over time, I came to a simple yet profound conclusion: **everyone needs someone to believe in them**. This belief has shaped the way I teach, the way I lead, and the way I connect with our ākonga. I have witnessed firsthand the transformative power of recognising the wonder and beauty within each child, drawing it out of them, and instilling in them a deep sense of pride and admiration for who they are.

At Elim, our values-driven framework, ARISE, is the heartbeat of this philosophy. It provides a platform for us to not only educate the mind but also nurture the heart—because true education is about more than just knowledge; it's about character. To ensure this is deeply embedded in our kura, we take a structured approach. Each term, we focus on a specific aspect of ARISE, defining its application within our akomanga (classrooms) and intentionally incorporating these values into our daily practices in a visible and meaningful way.

We want all students to achieve their personal best as lifelong learners.



We want all students to be self-disciplined, diligent, and responsible citizens.



We want all students to be inspired thinkers who have fun learning and celebrate success with an attitude for excellence.



We want all students to be highly skilled collaborators who are equipped to make creative and innovative contributions to society.



We want all students to have a foundation of Biblical knowledge expressed vibrantly in Christian values and distinctive character.



Last year, we laid the foundation by focusing on the first four components of ARISE. This year, our focus shifts to **Elim Character**. This involves exploring what it means to live out our values—**courage, diligence, kindness and respect**—in the way we speak, act, and think. Our focus for Term 1 is **diligence**.

Diligence is a **steady and persistent effort toward achieving a goal or completing a task**. For our ākonga, it means working hard, striving for excellence, and seeing things through even when challenges arise. This aligns with Colossians 3:23:

"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for people."

We'll know we've succeeded when your dinner table kōrero is filled with stories of courage, diligence, kindness, and respect—when your tamariki beam with pride as they share how they've demonstrated these values. **These qualities form the foundation of our Elim Character, guiding us to live and learn in a way that honours our Creator.**



We are deeply committed to fostering a school culture where every child feels a sense of belonging, pride, and purpose—where they are not only equipped to strive for excellence but also to **live out their Christian values and explore their God-given potential to achieve personal excellence for God's glory.**

But we have more than just the desire and vision. At our kura, we believe that **what we praise and honour shapes what we value.** That's why we actively recognise and reward diligence—through house tokens, weekly certificates, and termly awards. Our goal is to see our ākongā embody this value, not just at school, but in their everyday lives in these ways:

YEAR 1 & 2

- Completes simple tasks to the best of their ability without giving up.
- Follows routines and instructions with care.
- Takes responsibility for cleaning up after themselves.
- Begins to show focus during class activities, even if it's challenging.

YEAR 3 & 4

- Perseveres with tasks, even if they are hard or take time.
- Shows care and attention to detail in work, checking it over before handing it in.
- Completes tasks without reminders, showing responsibility.
- Begins to set small personal goals and works towards achieving them.

YEAR 5 & 6

- Shows initiative in planning and completing long-term projects.
- Puts effort into areas of difficulty, seeking solutions rather than giving up.
- Is responsible for personal organisation, maintaining a tidy workspace.
- Demonstrates a commitment to learning by consistently striving to improve.

YEAR 7 & 8

- Demonstrates resilience and tenacity in challenging tasks or projects.
- Completes tasks to a high standard and encourages others to do the same.
- Sets and reviews personal goals, demonstrating reflection on progress.
- Models diligence, helping others understand the value of hard work and consistency.

Blueprints & Beyond

Every kura has both a strategic plan and an annual plan. The former sets the direction for a few years while the latter details the intricacies of how you'll work toward the objectives and outcomes set in the strategic plan. For our kura, we have three arenas we want to work in: culture, community and curriculum.

CULTURE

To deliver an empowering educational experience that honours our special character by igniting curiosity, nurturing confidence and instilling a sense of belonging, enabling success for all

COMMUNITY

To establish impactful partnerships that celebrate and cherish our cultural and spiritual heritage by championing respect, welcome collaboration and valuing unity, enabling us to reach, serve and influence

CURRICULUM

To advance progress and achievement that promotes students to reach their highest standards of learning by providing clarity and direction, adapting a robust teaching and assessment practices and creating optimal learning conditions, enabling collective ownership

While our main goals and direction remain consistent, the how we achieve and priority of each changes from year to year. In 2024, we aimed to give equal importance to all areas. With the introduction of two new curriculum documents, nationally, and more on the way, our main focus this year is the curriculum itself. We want to make it clearer and more defined to aid both kaiako and ākongā to understand what they are learning and the best ways to progress in their educational journeys.

Toward the beginning of March, our annual plan will be available on our website. This "living document" will detail the mission for the year ahead and the actions we wish to take to really define and clarify both our curriculum overview and approaches to learning.

Until then, please head over to our [website](https://www.elimhenderson.school.nz) to stay up to date with previous pānui, newsletters, handbooks, policies and plans. I am always available to kōrero should you wish to connect and hear more about the heart behind our vision and strategy.

Noho ora mai


