



Outcome 1 - Education



Brianna and Brayden

“We get an excellent education and achieve our potential throughout our lives”

New Zealand Disability Strategy, 2016-2026

The education system, at every level, needs to support personal, academic and social development. Supports, and different modes of language, should also be available to those who need them. Teachers and educators need to be trained and treat disabled people with dignity and respect.

Strategy In Action

Inclusive education in practice

Brianna is totally blind and Brayden has severe low vision. Both attend Ōtorohanga College and are making great progress. Their story and success illustrates what an effective inclusive education looks like in practice. Skilled teachers, supportive peers and learning support adaptations, all enable good educational progress and the development of non-academic skills such as resilience and independence.

Since early childhood both Brianna and Brayden have had the support of a specialist teacher, referred to as a Resource Teacher Vision (RTV), employed by the Blind and Low Vision Education Network NZ (BLENNZ). An RTV works with teachers to ensure that students have equitable access to the curriculum and learning opportunities. Teachers think ahead so that learning materials can be available to all students at the same time, allowing time for them to be adapted as necessary.

Assistive technology also helps. Brianna uses a braille notetaker, an iPad with voiceover software, and a standard laptop with screen reader software. She is able to use Google Docs on each of these devices, as is Brayden, who works on a laptop with screen reader and magnification software, and an iPad with voiceover capabilities.

Brianna's and Brayden's RTV, Kathryn Beer, says that Ōtorohanga College has been extremely supportive.

“The College has been absolutely fantastic. Their attitude has always been ‘what can we do to help these children reach their potential at our school?’”

The 13-year olds have developed a passion for learning.

“I enjoy being able to work more independently than I was able to at primary school, because I'm able to bring all my skills and tools together now,” says Brianna.

Brayden would like to train as a secondary school teacher, and Brianna would like to be an author or physiotherapist.

Kathryn says.

“It's a real pleasure to be working at a school that is so open to giving all students the access they need to the curriculum and ensuring they can join in all of the school activities, wherever possible.”

Resources and Guidance

Inclusive Education – guide for schools

The Inclusive Education website provides New Zealand educators with practical strategies, suggestions and resources to support the diverse needs of all learners.

→ website inclusive.tki.org.nz

Special Education Online

Special Education Online (SEOnline) supports school and early childhood educators who work with children and young people with special education needs.

→ website seonline.tki.org.nz

New Zealand Curriculum Online

This Ministry of Education website has a section on inclusive practices that supports teachers to adapt and differentiate the curriculum.

→ website nzcurriculum.tki.org.nz/Inclusive-practices

Ministry of Education

The Ministry of Education has an extensive list of resources on its website, including information on the support and services available, as well as an email address and a phone number to request further information.

→ website education.govt.nz/quick-links/special-education/

→ email special.education@education.govt.nz

→ phone **0800 622 222**

Financial Resources

The government funds a range of services and supports for educating children with additional support needs. This includes funds going both directly to schools, and early childhood education centres, and the Ministry of Education. For example, in the last financial year (2016/2017) this funding totalled an estimated \$632 million.