

## Introductory Information about our Class 9 (Year 10) Farm Experience Programme

Monday 7 September to Friday 18 September

Kia ora,

For over 20 years, Raphael House Rudolf Steiner School in Wellington has proudly run the highly valued Class 9 Farm Experience Programme as part of the Waldorf/Steiner Curriculum.

Each year, our Class 9 rangatahi/youth spend two weeks living and working on rural properties throughout Aotearoa, learning through practical experience, meaningful work, and immersion in rural life. Over the years, this programme has become a treasured and transformative experience for many young people.

We are continually inspired by the generosity and hospitality shown by farming families who open their homes and share their knowledge with our rangatahi. We are fortunate to have several host farmers who have supported the programme for more than 20 years.

### Purpose of the Programme

The Farm Experience provides rangatahi with authentic, hands-on learning opportunities within rural life and agriculture. During their placement, rangatahi develop confidence, responsibility, resilience, practical skills, and independence while contributing meaningfully to daily farm life.

Placements are generally in pairs or small groups, with rangatahi assisting with farm and household tasks for approximately 5–7 hours each day.

### Rangatahi Selection & Farmer Support

Considerable care goes into matching rangatahi with farms. They complete surveys outlining their interests, strengths, and goals for the experience, and a staff team carefully select placements to ensure positive outcomes for both rangatahi and host families.

Our Farm Co-ordinator, Jared Keighran, works closely with host farmers and the school throughout the process. Prior to the placement:

- Rangatahi write an introductory letter
- Families make contact with host farmers
- Rangatahi receive guidance regarding expectations and farm safety



The safety and wellbeing of all participants is a high priority. Measures include police vetting of host families, farm safety discussions, ongoing communication, and a designated 24/7 emergency contact person during the farm placement period.

Host farmers are also provided with a koha to help contribute towards accommodation and food costs during the placement.

### **Timing of the Farm Experience Programme**

The 2026 Farm Experience placements will run from Monday 7 September to Friday 18 September, with many rangatahi arriving on Sunday 6 September.

Following the placement, rangatahi return to school to prepare and present a community presentation for the parent community, reflecting on their experiences, challenges, and learning from their time on the farm.

### **An Invitation**

Our placements include a wide range of farming and rural settings including dairy, beef and sheep, orchards, poultry, cropping, agroforestry, and community-based rural enterprises.

Whether your property is large or small, traditional or alternative in approach, we would warmly welcome the opportunity to discuss becoming involved in this long-standing and highly valued programme.

This year we have a particularly large Class 9 cohort compared with previous years and **are actively seeking additional farms to help support the programme**. Even hosting one pair of rangatahi can make a significant difference and help ensure this valuable experience continues to thrive.



We understand prospective host farmers may have questions, and our Farm Co-ordinator would be very happy to speak with you further at a convenient time.

The first step is simply to email **Grant Rossiter at [grant.r@raphaelhouse.school.nz](mailto:grant.r@raphaelhouse.school.nz)** and he will connect you with our Farm Coordinator.

Ngā mihi nui,

Grant Rossiter

Deputy Principal

The Class 9 Farm Experience Team