



**Te Tāhuhu o
te Mātauranga**
Ministry of Education

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Tēnā koe Tyler

OIA: [GEMS 48421] – Budget 2026 - writing workbooks for Years 4-5 students and associated digital writing tool

Thank you for your email of 28 May 2026, and subsequent clarification of 9 June 2026, to the Ministry of Education (the Ministry) requesting the following information:

I am primarily interested in advice, briefings, Cabinet material, implementation papers and research summaries relied upon in developing and supporting the Budget 2026 initiative providing writing and tuhituhi workbooks for Years 4–5 students and the associated digital writing tool. I am particularly interested in material describing the educational problem being addressed, evidence relied upon, concerns regarding writing achievement or implementation, and alternative approaches considered.

Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act).

As these initiatives have been developed as part of the broader Foundational Learning Action Plan, there is no discrete or self-contained set of *advice, briefings, Cabinet material, implementation papers and research summaries* that address the Year 4-5 workbooks and the writing tool in isolation. Rather, relevant information is embedded across a range of planning, design, and research materials associated with the wider work programme, further information on which is outlined below.

The Foundational Learning Action Plan sets out a structured, system-wide approach to strengthening foundational learning in reading, writing and maths. This includes actions to:

- provide high-quality, structured literacy resources aligned to the refreshed curriculum to support consistent teaching practice
- support the use of evidence-based approaches to teaching writing, ensuring students build strong writing knowledge and skills over time
- equip teachers with practical tools and guidance to support effective delivery of writing instruction

- strengthen the implementation of the curriculum and monitoring of student progress and achievement

If you are interested, you can read more about the Foundational Learning Action Plan here:

<https://www.education.govt.nz/our-work/strategies-policies-and-programmes/attendance-and-achievement/foundational-learning-action-plan>

The need for these types of supports is reflected in findings from the Curriculum Insights and Progress Study (CIPS). The 2025 foundation assessment results show that writing achievement remains low across primary and intermediate years, with only 38% of students meeting or exceeding curriculum expectations by Year 6, and lower proportions again by Year 8.

More broadly, the writing results indicate that additional support is needed to strengthen foundational writing skills. The findings also show a decline in achievement and engagement as students move through the system, reinforcing the importance of strengthening teaching and learning in the middle years. If you are interested, you can read more about the CIPS, and its findings, at the links below:

<https://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/publications/series/curriculum-insights-and-progress-study>

<https://newzealandcurriculum.tahurangi.education.govt.nz/cips2024-reports>

Taken together, this evidence highlights the importance of targeted supports at Years 4–5, as students transition into more complex writing demands and build the knowledge and skills required to meet curriculum expectations at higher levels. The Year 4–5 workbooks and associated writing tool contribute to this by providing structured, curriculum-aligned resources and practical supports to assist teachers in delivering effective writing instruction.

As indicated in our email of 9 June 2026, further information about Budget 2026 initiatives will be proactively released on the Ministry's website in the coming months. To the extent that this information relates to the writing and tuhituhi workbooks for Years 4–5 students, and the associated digital writing tool, your request is refused under section 18(d) of the Act, as the information will soon be publicly available. Once released, you will be able to find this information on the Ministry's website here:

<https://www.education.govt.nz/our-work/information-releases/issue-specific-information-releases>

While not intended for proactive release, the Ministry's budget template summarises the purpose of these initiatives. As provided for under section 16(1)(e) of the Act, the relevant information is extracted below:

Universal writing supports for years 4-8

Providing writing supports for Years 4–5 through well-designed workbooks gives students clear, practical guidance at a stage where they are building the foundations of fluent writing. The workbooks offer structured models, planning templates, vocabulary prompts, and short practice tasks that help students organise their ideas and strengthen sentence-level skills. Teachers can use them flexibly across subjects, and students can revisit the materials independently as they gain confidence. This initiative lifts student achievement by giving all learners access to consistent, easy-to-use supports, that build writing stamina and reinforce key skills.

A universal digital writing tool for Years 6–8 gives every student a single, structured space to plan, draft and revise their writing. It guides students with clear prompts, step-by-step scaffolds, vocabulary support, and real-time feedback that helps them strengthen ideas, clarity, and accuracy as they write. Teachers can customise tasks while still benefiting from consistent frameworks and smart analytics that show where students need more support. By giving all learners access to high-quality writing support and regular practice, the tool lifts confidence, improves writing fluency, and helps improved student achievement.

Thank you again for your email. You have the right to ask an Ombudsman to review my decision on your request, in accordance with section 28 of the Act. You can do this by writing to info@ombudsman.parliament.nz or to Office of the Ombudsman, PO Box 10152, Wellington 6143.

Nāku noa, nā



Antony Harvey
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Te Poutāhū | Curriculum Centre