

CASE STUDY: Dannevirke South School

Nov 2021



About the school

Dannevirke South School (Primary) focuses on inspiring growth, passion and success in their tamariki.

Dannevirke is situated in the Tararua region of the North Island.



Dannevirke South School students range between 5-13 years of age and use StepsWeb in small groups.

Their ethnicities consist of: NZ European/Pakeha, Māori, Chinese, African, Indian, Cook Islands, Cambodian, British, Sri Lankan, Vietnamese, Japanese, Samoan.

Why StepsWeb?

StepsWeb was first introduced to Dannevirke by an RTLB (Resource Teachers: Learning and Behaviour) after identifying a small group of students who were achieving below the expected literacy level. After reviewing the programme, the staff felt StepsWeb offered a way for students to develop their literacy skills effectively while also having fun.

Initially the RTLB funded the computer-based program and the teacher aide (TA) hours to implement it. Seeing the gains the students were making, the school decided to purchase licences on the web-based program and supporting workbooks and games.

Objectives:

- Build confidence and restore student self-belief that they can learn.
- Improve literacy skills for students identified as needing further support.
- Offer differentiated instruction to students with the help of teaching support staff.



“We have been using StepsWeb for over 3 years now and we have seen **amazing progress across all year levels.**”

Caroline Gyde – Deputy Principal



Student - Yr 6

“Helps me to spell and it’s fun when we have game day.”



Student - Yr 3

“I like doing the challenges and the word search is fun. StepsWeb helps me to get my ‘b’ and ‘d’ around the right way.”



Key Insights:



Ensure students have dedicated time each day to spend on StepsWeb.



Display students’ certificates so they can be reminded of their success.



Having a dedicated space for students to do StepsWeb.



When passion is promoted from the teachers the students are more engaged.

What worked well

- Celebrating student success regularly made a huge impact on how students engaged with the program seeing their success daily displayed on the wall so they can visually see their progress.
- Student’s certificates are given out to students during weekly assemblies as well as printed and put on the wall of success. Medals are also displayed for students to see how many medals they have received to motivate and remind them they are capable of success.
- Having full access to 8 new computers in a separate computer room encourages students to concentrate and not get easily distracted by their peers.
- Having dedicated StepsWeb staff to implement and monitor student progress who work alongside the teachers is a must. Having staff oversee the students’ progress ensures any errors are quickly picked up and addressed through assigning work from the programme to allow further support in specific areas.
- Game Day – once a week, if the students have successfully earned 4 gold medals, they are allowed to play the games. Students are competitive when it comes to playing the Blocks game. The teacher aides get involved too!

Success stories

- **Seeing every child on StepsWeb succeed.**
- Students who were previously disengaged in learning **reignited their confidence and reengaged** due to seeing themselves succeed.
- Seeing students' smiles, laughter and **being proud of themselves.**
- Dannevirke South School uses StepsWeb Spelling Test as one of the measures for success and have seen **consistent gains.**
- Working in small groups – **progress is seen in months** as the course differentiates content based on the student's level.
- The **medals are the big draw card** and being in a quiet room away from distractions is beneficial to many students.

Student - Yr 4

"StepsWeb helps me to learn to spell words and it makes my reading better because I know the words. I like getting the gold medals and putting them on the wall, My golds can go all the way up the wall sometimes."



"The main thing that I just **love** about StepsWeb is that the students think that they are playing 'games' but they are **actually learning!!**

Also it doesn't matter what level the students are on, the program looks the same. So for the students, **there is no discrimination between the levels.**"

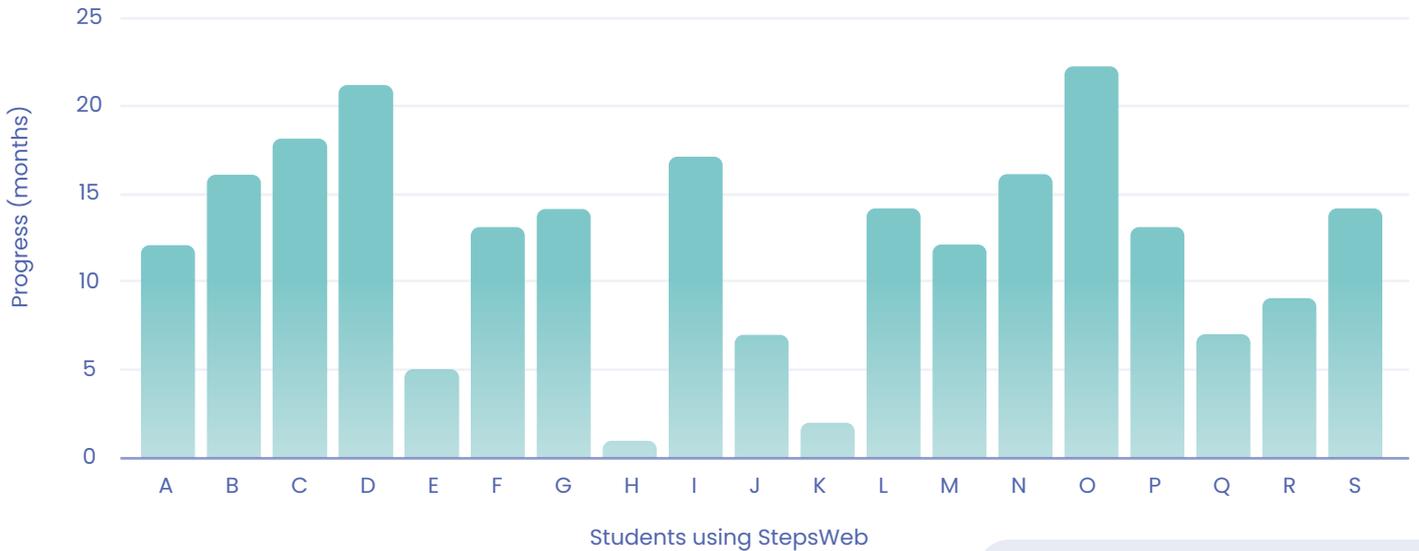
Phillipa Parfitt - Lead Teacher Aide

Features we like

- Students enjoy the gamified aspects of the programme, in particular **being able to earn medals and certificates for doing well**, the animations, and having a personal account with their own login.
- Ability to **check student progression instantly**, either as individuals or as a group.
- **Flexibility** in purchasing student licences. Licences are not tied to a child for the length of the licences.
- Seeing students real time errors in their logs and being able to assign work that will **help with those specific errors.**
- **Ease** of adding new/deactivating students, adding students to groups.
- Educator Portal - **very easy to navigate** and can instantly see where students are at, medal achievement and progression in the course.

Results

Dannevirke South School Spelling Progress



NOTE: Not all students on this graph spent the same amount of time using StepsWeb. Refer to table.



Student	Current Age	Length on StepsWeb	Initial test spelling age	Recent test spelling age	Progress
A	8 yrs 2 m	12 weeks	6 yrs 1 m	7 yrs 1 m	12 months
B	7 yrs 5 m	20 weeks	5 yrs 10 m	7 yrs 2 m	16 months
C	7 yrs 11 m	20 weeks	5 yrs 6 m	7 yrs 0 m	18 months
D	7 yrs 7 m	20 weeks	5 yrs 9 m	7 yrs 6 m	21 months
E	8 yrs 6 m	20 weeks	6 yrs 4 m	6 yrs 9 m	5 months
F	9 yrs 4 m	12 weeks	8 yrs 10 m	9 yrs 11 m	13 months
G	9 yrs 4 m	14 weeks	7 yrs 5 m	8 yrs 7 m	14 months
H	8 yrs 11 m	10 weeks	7 yrs 7 m	7 yrs 8 m	1 month
I	8 yrs 5 m	10 weeks	7 yrs 3 m	8 yrs 8 m	17 months
J	8 yrs 7 m	10 weeks	6 yrs 2 m	6 yrs 9 m	7 months
K	9 yrs 2 m	10 weeks	6 yrs 8 m	6 yrs 10 m	2 months
L	9 yrs 0 m	20 weeks	6 yrs 3 m	7 yrs 5 m	14 months
M	10 yrs 2 m	20 weeks	7 yrs 5 m	8 yrs 5 m	12 months
N	9 yrs 8 m	20 weeks	7 yrs 0 m	8 yrs 4 m	16 months
O	10 yrs 1 m	20 weeks	6 yrs 2 m	8 yrs 0 m	22 months
P	9 yrs 5 m	10 weeks	7 yrs 0 m	8 yrs 1 m	13 months
Q	11 yrs 0 m	7 weeks	6 yrs 0 m	6 yrs 7 m	7 months
R	10 yrs 8 m	20 weeks	6 yrs 8 m	7 yrs 5 m	9 months
S	10 yrs 9 m	20 weeks	7 yrs 3 m	8 yrs 5 m	14 months

Student - Yr 3

"StepsWeb helps me to spell my words. It is fun because it's like I am playing games but I know that I am not really. I love seeing my gold medals and when I pass my level I get a certificate to take home and another one goes up on the wall in the StepsWeb room."



“As a team leader, I am involved in the discussion around the learners that are chosen to participate on StepsWeb. Our learners tend to stay on the program for at least 6 months to a year where we then see a positive gain in progress and achievement.

Our learners are keen to go to StepsWeb and have become highly motivated in other areas like literacy, math, and inquiry as they are becoming more successful risk takers. I believe having a longer time on the intervention helps them build security and trust relationships with the teacher aides. The learners also know that they are not going to be pulled from StepsWeb at the end of the following term.

Therefore, the gains and bonuses around StepsWeb are not just academic. The gains for the child are as a whole- social, emotional, academic, and physical.”

Julianne Jackson – Senior Teacher

“I used StepsWeb with my whole year 6 class in 2020. The students each had a 20-minute slot to complete their online activities and 20 minutes to work on their workbooks. Students were engaged and only a few Tier 3 students needed some extra assistance to complete activities. As students learnt their spelling words, their writing engagement improved with more attempts to spell, and longer more interesting stories developed. **I found StepsWeb the easiest programme to use** as the teacher portal allowed me to see at a glance how much time a student was spending on an activity, any issues they may have been having and the progress they made daily. “

Donna Heaps – Former Yr 6 Teacher



Conclusion

The school identified students achieving below the expected literacy level and needed to investigate intervention programs to support these learners to ensure they were not left behind.

Differentiated instruction to allow students needing extra support in literacy was paramount for students to succeed at their own level and build their confidence to see that they too can achieve. StepsWeb has been the program to achieve this and Dannevirke South School will continue to use StepsWeb with small groups moving forward.

Caroline Gyde – Deputy Principal

“We have been using StepsWeb for over 3 years now and we have seen amazing progress across all year levels. We have two very committed teacher aides who run the programme and track student progress and achievement closely. They have an excellent relationship with the children and this certainly has helped. The students are excited to be able to track their progress and always like to receive the certificates when they finish a level. We have seen accelerated progress for the majority of students who are selected for the programme.

It is lovely to see the learners’ self-esteem grow and their drive to achieve. It is important to use the whole programme including the workbooks and games, especially for the neurodiverse children.

StepsWeb has an amazing support network and are very easy to work with. As a result of the children’s enthusiasm and the progress we are seeing, we will continue to use StepsWeb.”

Student – Yr 3

“StepsWeb is challenging. Game day and playing blocks are fun. I have learnt how to use a keyboard. It also helps with my spelling and concentration.”

