



### Whanau Information - February 2023

As part of our trauma-informed journey we are introducing 'Ukeru', a restraint free crisis management system to Westbridge. We are the first school in New Zealand to introduce this cutting edge system which is used in over 400 institutions in North America.

We believe that all interventions — educational and behavioural — should be built on an approach of comfort versus control. To help make this a reality, we are utilizing new training on the conceptual ideas — such as trauma informed care and conflict resolution — as well as physical techniques that eliminate the need for restraint. Conceptual training of Ukeru includes verbal and nonverbal communication, managing and de-escalating conflict by converting/diverting aggression, building an environment focused on comfort versus control, and recognizing the traumatic experiences of tamariki. It also involves a system of blocking techniques to protect kaimahi and ākongā during behavioural episodes including physical aggression.

The Ukeru training will be completed by all kaimahi at Westbridge during term 1, 2023. A social story will be provided to all ākongā so that they have a full understanding too.

We are very proud of having avoided the use of physical restraint at Westbridge for well over a year. The Ukeru system will support us in continuing to operate a restraint free environment by enhancing our culture of care and strengthening the comfort versus control approach.

For further information regarding Ukeru, visit [www.ukerusystems.com](http://www.ukerusystems.com)

For any other questions please contact Debra Ross or myself.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Bagwell'.

David Bagwell - Principal