

13 August 2026



Kia ora

Christmas Cards for the Local Community

Sending Love Ōtepoti and the Dunedin Christmas Charitable Trust are working together on an initiative to bring Christmas cheer to the wider Dunedin community.

Sending Love Ōtepoti focuses on providing rest home residents with Christmas cards created by local school children and community groups. The Dunedin Christmas Charitable Trust hosts a Christmas Day lunch, in the Town Hall, for around 600 guests and features locally made Christmas cards as part of the table decorations. In each case, the effort made by the community brings cheer and feeling of inclusion to many folk who are otherwise often alone at this time of year.

Both organisations have been operating for many years and have heard untold comments about the impact such a simple gesture can have. The children's love and joy contained in these cards brighten the lives of so many.

We would like to invite your school/centre to join us to make this year another successful one, by having your children make and decorate cards for our two organisations to then distribute. We are looking for around 1,600 cards in total, being 1,000 for the rest homes and 600 for Christmas lunch.

If you would like to contribute, please email Esther (event@christmas.org.nz) to let us know. It would be useful to know how many cards you might be able to contribute – whether it's 5 or 50, we are grateful for all of them and know that each one will make someone in our community feel special at Christmas.

Please see next page for further information.

We look forward to hearing from you and are happy to answer any queries you may have.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa Russell".

Lisa Russell
Sending Love Ōtepoti
sendingloveotepoti@gmail.com

A handwritten signature in green ink that reads "Esther Gilbert".

Esther Gilbert
Dunedin Christmas Charitable Trust
event@christmas.org.nz

Our notes / recommendations

- **The Cards:** we welcome any Christmas-themed card, regardless of size. Hand-made cards add a special touch, however it is also okay to use store-bought with hand-written messages.
- **Resources:** we may be able to supply some of the resources required (most likely card stock to make cards).
- **Addressing the card:** please use a generic start to the card, such as with 'Dear friend' 'Dear special person' 'To someone special' or simply just 'Merry Christmas'.
- **Signing off on the card:** having your children personally sign the cards add individuality. Our recipients love to see the child's first name, age and school. Please **do not** include any other information (surnames, phone numbers etc) to maintain privacy; please also use your school's guidelines on what information is appropriate to use.
- **What to include:** Encourage your children to be creative: use pictures, craft items, jokes to decorate the card; and include a message to the recipient which may also feature a favourite Christmas memory or treat.
- **Suggestions to help our youngest contributors:** consider using type-written messages on behalf of the class and stuck it into the cards that the children then decorate.
- **Distribution:** we mix up the cards received so different rest homes and the Town Hall receive cards from different schools/centres.
- **Getting the cards to us:**
 - Cards can be dropped into any one of our libraries by 11 December 2026; please ensure these are addressed to either one of our organisations
 - We are happy to collect cards and would do so during the penultimate week of term 4 (7-11 December) at a time that suits you.
 - If you are based outside Dunedin, we will liaise with you to ensure the cards arrive here in good time.
- **Other contributors:** if you know of any other groups (e.g. Scouts, sports teams etc) that might be able to help, please email their contact details to Esther. We welcome contributions from adults as well.