



Weekly Learning Log

Weekly Extras.

Week 1: Dev Environment & Setup

- Explored WordPress file structure: wp-content, themes, plugins, and uploads
- Compared local dev tools: chose **XAMPP** for compatibility with team setup
- Understood backup formats: .zip for files, .sql for database
- Navigated Hostinger dashboard and reviewed site status
- Reviewed Figma design and Trello board to understand project scope

Side note:

I've found a good rhythm with my mahi by working in **focused 2-hour blocks**, followed by **15-minute snack and stretch breaks**. This structure has really helped boost my productivity and energy.

I'm slowly building a routine that supports both my learning and wellbeing during the internship

Week 2 – PHP Basics & WordPress Structure

- Practiced PHP syntax: echo, variables, arrays, loops, and functions
- Explored how WordPress loads templates via index.php, single.php, and functions.php
- Identified dynamic content areas and how themes interact with the database

- Began Beginner WordPress Developer Course to reinforce PHP and theme structure
- Started troubleshooting SQL upload issues and explored SSH via PuTTY

Side notes:

This week I'm actively pushing my growth mindset every day. I've built a strong connection with my mentor Jai and I feel confident asking questions, seeking feedback, and learning through challenges. This mindset is helping me grow faster and staying open to new ideas throughout the internship.

Tues AUG 5th

Side note:

Over the last couple of days I focused on getting the site back up and running after a database connection error. I fixed the MySQL password in wp config and then imported the backup database using SSH. I ran into some SQL errors but used the force flag to skip duplicates and keep the good data. Once that was done I confirmed that all the content and users were restored. I then checked the homepage setup and found it was pointing to a published static page but the layout still looked basic. I updated the homepage to point to the right content and fixed the site URLs. Right now I am logged into the dashboard and ready to dig into the theme files to make sure the homepage layout matches what it should be.

Next Steps – Homepage Layout & Theme Customization

1. Inspect Theme Files

- Locate and review front-page.php, home.php, and index.php in your active theme folder (wp-content/themes/[your-theme-name])
- Identify which file is controlling the homepage layout
- Check for hardcoded content or default loops that might be overriding your "Latest News" page

2. Match Layout to Figma

- Compare the current homepage output with the Figma design
- Note key sections: hero banner, news highlights, events, and navigation
- Prioritize elements Jai confirms are most important

Homepage Build Checklist // Wednesday & Thursday Session

Prep & Setup (Est. 30–45 min)

- ✓ ~~Open your theme folder → twentytwentyfive/templates/~~
- ✓ ~~Create or confirm home.html exists view file~~
- ✓ ~~Clear out the default query loop (commented out section)~~
- ✓ ~~Add a basic block layout starter~~

Phase 1: Confirm Site Health

- ☒ Log into WP Admin and confirm no errors
- ☒ Check that the homepage is set to “Latest News” or the correct static page
- ☒ Confirm site URLs in wp_options are using https://fgs.alankan.net

Phase 2: Fix Homepage Layout

- Inspect theme files: front-page.php, home.php, index.php
- Clear out default loops or hardcoded content
- Add block layout using `<!-- wp:group →`, `<!-- wp:query →`, etc.
- Match sections to Figma: hero, news, events, temple map, tea house

Phase 3: Style and Polish

- Add images, text, and links to each section
- Use dynamic queries for News and Events
- Test responsiveness on mobile and desktop
- Create reusable patterns for consistency

Week 3 Summary (Aug 4–8)

Got the FGS site running by fixing a database connection error, importing the full backup via SSH (16k+ posts, all admin users restored), and setting the homepage to latest news.

Tracked down and removed a rogue MySQL string that was hardcoded in wp-config.php big debugging win.

Currently rebuilding the homepage layout based on the Figma design: added hero banner, news query, events section, temple map, and tea house.

Feeling much more confident with WordPress structure and troubleshooting.

Week 4: Layout Mapping & Visual Wins

Quick Admin Checks

Knocked these out fast before diving into layout work

- Logged all installed plugins via Plugins > Installed Plugins
- Confirmed active theme in Appearance > Themes (screenshot saved)
- Updated Trello "This Week" column with today's targets

Content Mapping & Missing Stuff

Mapped out what's missing and started tracking layout bugs

- Compared Figma homepage to current site — listed exact sections that are missing or broken
- Created a rough sitemap (Home > About > Contact > ...) based on Figma and current content
- Started Notion "Issues Log" with:
 - Missing plugins
 - Layout bugs
 - Missing images

Quick Theme & Layout Wins

Made visual tweaks that gave instant progress

- Styled nav bar and header using Figma palette (colours, font weights)
- Added placeholder content and images to homepage anchor sections
- Cleaned up footer layout to match Figma
- Tested anchor scrolling (still needs smooth scroll or WP menu fix)
- Checked mobile responsiveness for header/footer (padding and font size tweaks pending)

Small Feature Build

Ended the day with a small win

- Added a notification bar with custom widget/shortcode ("Temple Hours")
- Used functions.php to enqueue a small custom CSS file for tweaks

Side Note

This week I started connecting design decisions with actual layout logic. Mapping content and styling sections helped me see how structure and visuals work together. I'm building confidence in tracking bugs, styling with purpose, and logging everything clearly. It's starting to feel like I'm shaping the site, not just fixing it.

Week 5: Debugging and Backend Cleanup

Debug Log and Error Tracking

Started tracking errors and cleaning up backend clutter

- Found memory exhaustion and max user connection warnings in debug log
- Deactivated heavy plugins like FooGallery Owl Carousel and Hostinger onboarding tools
- Installed WP CronControl to view and manage scheduled actions
- Deleted failed cron jobs from removed plugins like Elementor tracker and email automation
- Added rule to .htaccess to block public access to debug log

- Error still showing but site load is lighter and more stable

Scheduled Action Cleanup

Cleaned up background tasks to reduce clutter

- Found 38 failed actions and 2 past-due ones
- Error said no callbacks were registered
- Deleted all failed actions
- Left past-due ones alone and will monitor

Hosting Support and Limits

Reached out to Hostinger for help with server limits

- Max user connections is capped at 25 on shared hosting
- Memory limit is 1 GB on current plan
- CDN not available on this plan
- Flushed cache and activated browser caching using .htaccess

LiteSpeed Cache Setup

Installed caching plugin to improve performance

- Turned on CSS JS and HTML minify
- Enabled lazy loading for images and iframes
- Checked frontend and everything still looks good
- No layout shifts or broken styles

Side Note

This week felt like a real developer moment

I understood why the errors mattered and how to fix them

Learned how to secure debug logs and manage site health properly

Started connecting plugin behavior scheduled actions and server limits

Even though the error is still there I've reduced the load and isolated the issue

Feeling more confident in backend decisions and documenting clearly

WEEK 6-7

Last week and a half I took off to support my son who has been experiencing bullying and suicidal thoughts. I kept Chandni, Alan and Jai and Jojo informed and stayed in touch, so they knew my situation. My focus was on being there for my son and making sure he had the support he needed. I am now back on track and restarting Week 6 this week with a renewed focus. Also, I am so very grateful for the support and awahi during these stressful times. Thank you to my mentors and Alan.

Media Library Restoration & FTP Workflow

Tasks Completed:

- Identified broken Media Library and failed browser uploads
- Unzipped wp-content backup locally to access media folders
- Installed FileZilla and located FTP credentials in Hostinger
- Reset FTP password and successfully connected to server
- Navigated to public_html/wp-content/uploads via FileZilla
- Dragged and dropped all media folders into server
- Installed Media Sync plugin and scanned uploads directory
- Imported all media files into WordPress Media Library
- Confirmed images are restored and loading across pages

Process

- Used FTP instead of browser upload to avoid timeouts and crashes
- Maintained folder structure for clean media registration
- Verified file transfer success before syncing in WordPress
- Used Media Sync to reconnect files without re-uploading
- Logged each step and outcome in Notion for future reference

Learnings

- FTP is more reliable for large media sets than browser upload

- FileZilla auto-resumes and handles thousands of files smoothly
- Media Sync is essential for restoring visibility in WordPress
- Folder structure matters year/month hierarchy must be preserved
- Resetting FTP credentials can instantly resolve login blockers
- This workflow is scalable and repeatable for future site restores

Side Note

I felt so proud cracking this. I understand the why behind each step and I can do this again if I ever need to.

Front-End Rebuild

Tasks Completed:

- Recreated hero section using Cover block with intro text and CTA button
- Embedded Google Maps iframe for live location view
- Built Opening Time section with icons and structured layout
- Styled each facility row with icon + paragraph block
- Matched layout to wireframe using nested Group, Row and Stack blocks
- Previewed and adjusted for mobile responsiveness
- Logged reusable block structure for future temple pages

Learnings:

- Cover block is perfect for hero sections with background image and overlay text
- Google Maps iframe adds interactivity and matches wireframe expectations
- Row blocks are essential for side-by-side icon and text alignment
- Spacer blocks and padding help polish layout and improve readability
- Saving reusable blocks speeds up future page builds and keeps design consistent

Side Note:

This was my first time building a full section from wireframe to live layout. I now understand how to structure nested blocks and style them to match design specs. I'm building like a dev and thinking like a designer.

Closing Reflections for Week 6-7

This week reminded me that growth isn't just technical it's emotional too. I showed up for my son when he needed me most and came back to this project with clarity and strength. I cracked backend blockers and built front-end layouts from scratch. I asked for help when I needed it and celebrated every win. I'm proud of how I've balanced mahi and whānau and how I've turned a tough week into a powerful one.

FGS Events Page — 9 Sept 2025

Session Summary — Filter Bar Build and Plugin Trials

Today I tried to build a filter bar under the navbar for my Events page using Elementor and Royal Elementor Addons. I started with a clear layout plan and mapped out dropdowns for Type Year Month and Location plus a Clear button.

I activated Royal Elementor Addons and Elementor and opened the Events page in the editor. I searched for the Select widget but it never showed up. After checking everything I realized the widget is only available in the Pro version of Royal Elementor Addons. That was a major blocker.

I also tested The Post Grid plugin but it didn't detect my custom post type activities. I confirmed my CPT and ACF setup was correct and visible in the REST API but the plugin's free version couldn't read it. Another dead end.

I spent over 30 minutes chasing plugin features that weren't available. It felt overwhelming and frustrating but I didn't quit. I paused reset and chose to pivot.

I decided to use Elementor's native Form widget to simulate dropdowns visually. I'll style them to match my wireframe and save the section as a reusable block. I'll revisit JetSmartFilters or FacetWP later if I want dynamic filtering.

Wins

- Structured the Events page layout under the navbar
- Activated Royal Elementor Addons and Elementor
- Verified CPT and ACF setup
- Mapped out filter UI and layout strategy
- Documented plugin limitations and pivoted with clarity
- Reset my mindset and turned frustration into progress

Trials

- Select widget missing due to free plugin limits
- The Post Grid plugin couldn't detect CPT
- Elementor UI confusion with multiple plus icons
- Time lost chasing unavailable features

Next Steps

- Build dropdowns using Elementor Form widget
- Style and align the filter bar
- Save as reusable template
- Revisit filter plugins later for dynamic functionality
- Restored layout structure for the Events page using Elementor
- Verified CPT and ACF setup for activities post type
- Activated Royal Elementor Addons and confirmed plugin limits
- Identified missing Select widget and pivoted to native form workaround
- Mapped out full filter bar UI with dropdowns and Clear button
- Documented plugin blockers and reset strategy
- Maintained emotional resilience and turned overwhelm into clarity
- Logged wins and trials for reuse and reflection

Daily Update — 10 Sept 2025

Focus Areas

- Locked the **Current Events** PostX grid to only show the two priority events:
 - *Mindfulness Meditation Classes* (ID 74735)
 - *Great Compassionate Repentance Dharma Function* (ID 74765)
- Confirmed correct **Post Type** (activities) and **Category** filter (featured-events) in **Query Settings**.
- Set **Meta Key** to event_priority with **Order By** → **Meta Value Number** and **Order** → **Ascending** for Figma-aligned sequencing.

Key Wins

- Resolved earlier issue where the Taxonomy dropdown was empty by:
 - Switching Post Type to activities so PostX recognised the category taxonomy.
 - Applying the featured-events category filter directly in Query Settings.
- Verified that the query logic now correctly limits the grid to the two required events.
- Maintained the design and layout exactly as intended while fixing the backend filtering.

Next Steps

- Re-enter and save numeric values for **Event Priority** on both events to ensure sorting works without "No Post Found" errors.
- Add a fallback query condition so future events without a priority number still display at the end of the list.
- Once priority values are confirmed, re-test ordering to match Figma exactly.

Notes

- Current setup is stable and ready for content any missing cards now are due to empty event_priority values, not query misconfiguration.
- This configuration can be reused for future "featured" event sets by simply changing the category filter.

This Week's Progress

- **Hero Section Fixed** – Swapped ACF shortcodes for **Meta Field blocks** so date, time, and location now display dynamically for all activities events.
- **Template Targeting Confirmed** – Single Event (activities) template is correctly linked to CPT and pulling the right data.
- **Featured Image Swap** – Replaced Cover block with Featured Image block in cards for consistent aspect ratio and auto-pull from each event.
- **Card Structure Built** – Inside Query Loop: Featured Image → Title → Meta Row (location + date) → Tags → Button.
- **CSS Styling Started** – Added .event-card class and began applying Figma-accurate background, padding, border radius, and triple-layer shadow via Simple Custom CSS plugin.

Current Focus

- **Finish Card Styling** – Apply exact Figma values for:
 - Background color
 - Border radius
 - Padding
 - Tag pill colors & spacing
 - Typography for title/meta/tags
- **Responsive Grid** – Set Query Loop to 3-col desktop, 2-col tablet, 1-col mobile with correct gaps.
- **Test Across Events** – Confirm all cards look correct and pull the right data.

Next Steps After Styling

1. Lock in card design in template (pixel-perfect to Figma).
2. Build out remaining event pages just fill in fields, add content, publish.
3. QA pass on mobile & desktop.

Core Development

- Built a **custom event system** from scratch (no plugin) for full control over layout, logic, and performance
- Registered a **Custom Post Type** called activities using CPT UI for tailored event management
- Created a **custom archive template** that splits events into:
 - Current
 - Upcoming
 - Past
(based on ACF date fields)
- Developed a **custom render function** for event cards:
 - Includes image, label, location, date, time, and tags
 - Supports both single and multi-date formats
- Connected **ACF fields** to the activities post type for structured backend editing
- Added a **shortcode** to drop event cards anywhere (e.g. Events page) without relying on plugin layouts
- Manually styled the **event grid** for clean, responsive design
 - No plugin bloat
 - No extra assets
- Outcome: full flexibility, scalability, and ownership over how events behave and display

✨ Extra Wins

- Cleaned up hosting server to resolve disk space issues
- Set up WordPress account and access
- Updated activities content with images, dates, and tags
- Fixed broken queries and shortcode logic
- Styled all sections to match Figma layout
- Carousel now working smoothly with **SwiperJS**

🚧 Blockers

- Royal Elementor Addons “Select” widget only available in Pro
- Post Grid plugin couldn’t detect CPT in free version
- Missing event_priority values may trigger empty results fallback logic needed
- Full dynamic filtering postponed (JetSmartFilters / FacetWP)

→ SOON Next Steps

- Finalize **event card styling** and responsive grid polish
- Build **Event Detail page template** and link cards
- Complete static pages and finalize navigation/footer
- QA site on desktop and mobile; fix layout issues
- *(Optional)* Add filters, pagination, and translations

Friday 3 Oct – Tuesday 7 Oct

Completed This Sprint

Art Gallery Page

- Carousel layout built using Group blocks with scoped CSS
- Refactored art-gallery-label styling for modularity and Figma alignment
- FTP media restored and re-indexed via Media Sync
- Placeholder images inserted pending final sourcing
- Regenerate Thumbnails plugin tested and validated for recent uploads
- Shortcode conflicts diagnosed and resolved

Tea House Page

- Block structure finalized: story, promo, menu, and location sections
- “Pickled Vegetables” story styled and published with scoped classes
- Promotional block rebuilt with clean layout and placeholder image
- Menu section structured with location buttons (Auckland & Christchurch)

- Scoped CSS applied: tea-promo-title, tea-menu-location, tea-location-image, etc.

General Site Architecture

- Scoped CSS naming conventions applied across all new pages
- Anchor navigation validated on About and Temple pages
- Media Sync tested and FTP strategy adjusted for legacy image handling
- Plugin cleanup and shortcode validation across gallery and menu blocks
- Status update drafted for Thursday's board presentation

In Progress

- Final image sourcing for Art Gallery carousel
- QA polish for Tea House and Event Detail pages
- Responsive tweaks and anchor link testing
- Walkthrough prep for Thursday's board presentation

Notes

- Legacy media restoration was more complex than expected due to broken thumbnails and inconsistent naming
- Pivoted to placeholder strategy to maintain layout momentum
- Focused on architectural clarity, scoped styling, and scalable block structure
- Rebuilt multiple sections from scratch with no prior documentation