

# AKO

THE JOURNAL  
FOR EDUCATIONAL  
PROFESSIONALS



WINTER 2018 | **THE CURRICULA ISSUE**

*Our world-class learning and teaching*

**ART AND SCIENCE**  
*Rediscovering creativity*

**CULTURAL RESPONSIVENESS**  
*Learning maths a new way*

**TE WHĀRIKI**  
*Wealth of possibilities*



## Case Study



Images courtesy of OfficeMax

## BFX furniture helps inspire learning at Te Waka Unua

**From the devastation of Christchurch's earthquake emerged new opportunities, new thinking and a positive outcome for the teachers and students of the newly formed Te Waka Unua School.**

With the joining of 2 schools came a new school vision – Explore, Innovate, Collaborate and Empower. It was this vision that underpinned the teachers' thinking about children and their learning, and how this impacts on the delivery of the curriculum. It also drove their decisions about how flexible the new learning spaces would need to be to best support their students with their learning, allowing them to adapt and recreate.

These spaces are seen as student owned spaces in which teachers support and facilitate, rather than the "teacher's classroom" of many years gone by. Students come in to these spaces excited to learn and enjoying being at school. "This is having a positive influence on the other students. Seeing the senior role models of the school being excited and enthusiastic about coming to school is the best influence for other students", says Principal, Janeane Reid.

With 160 Year 5–8 students in a space, noise was a fear before moving day, however this has not eventuated. Janeane explains that choosing soft furnishings to support the creation of spaces has assisted in absorbing sounds.

Whilst students are fluid between the whole space, furniture selections such as the BFX 3 Tier Basepoint pieces were made to not only provide gathering space and storage space, but also to differentiate spaces within the block. Finishes and colour choices also help distinguish spaces.

Teaching pedagogy has adapted to ensure teachers are more in touch with individual needs of students, and furniture choices had to support this. Being able to provide quiet spaces at BFX SmarTable™ Jotters™ for those learners who prefer to work alone, or larger spaces for those who prefer to work collaboratively at the Happy Daze Mobile Booth, or Network Setting, was critical to their solution. A key word was flexibility – the furniture needed to be moved easily so that students could create or find a space that works best for them for their current learning.

Choosing BFX furniture and working with their knowledgeable NZ supplier for the completion of their senior Flexible learning spaces at Te Waka Unua School was an easy decision for Janeane and her team.

"The decision came down to quality and functionality as well as looking good. We wanted our students to love being in their spaces and to feel good using the spaces."

Having purchased BFX furniture for their junior school spaces 5 years ago Janeane was impressed by the quality, choice and support from their NZ BFX supply team. She and Deputy Principal Susie Ward are impressed that 5 years on the furniture in the Junior spaces still looks new, and given the 15 year warranty on the Pozzi™ student chairs, they know these will last well beyond their current students.

With teachers giving feedback that students are more engaged in their learning, the future opportunities look bright for students and teachers at Te Waka Unua School.



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QUESTIONING CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate Change is an important issue in today’s world; however the mixed messages and scientific ‘data’ presented can be very confusing and often wrong. Come and join the Space Place education team and explore the science behind climate change, what it means for us, and what we can do to fight against it in our brand new activity based workshop.

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Discover what life was like for women at the dawn of the 20th century and how their position in society began to change. Follow in the footsteps of Catherine Wallis and two further generations of women who called Nairn Street Cottage home. Remember the ordinary women who shaped society by joining together to take action, making a contribution in their own way to emancipation and women’s rights.

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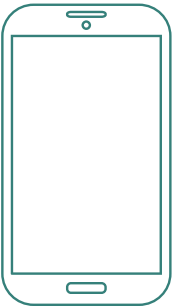


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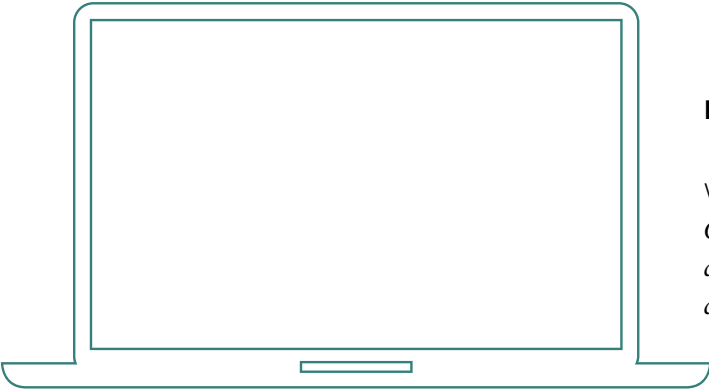
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# EDITORIAL

## *Liberating creative practice*

Kia ora e hoa ma.

Well, what a first half of 2018 we have had. NZEI Te Riu Roa is certainly focused on the future of education in this country. I have been particularly proud of the work that has happened in getting the message out there that there is no replacement needed for National Standards.

NZEI Te Riu Roa, along with the Ministry of Education, has been involved in organising curriculum hui across this country. (There are links on the new *Ako* website and in this journal to some of the inspiring talks at these hui.)

Educators and researchers came together to relaunch the early childhood curriculum with the wonderful Te Whāriki added to The New Zealand Curriculum and Te Mauratanga o Aotearoa. The focus has been on liberating our teachers and enabling them to be inspired and reinvigorated about our wonderful



curricula and the opportunities to be creative in teaching and learning programmes.

We focus on the curricula in this first issue of our new professional journal *Ako*. Educators share their wonderful and innovative practice and some of the thinking behind it. We also see some examples of the concept of ako – where everyone is a teacher and learner. This has inspired the title of this new magazine.

I hope that you will find much to enjoy and use from this new publication as you continue the wonderful work that you do as educators of our nation's children.

Lynda Stuart  
National President, Te Manukura

## NZ PRIMARY EDUCATION ADVISER, NZEI TE RIU ROA CAMPAIGN TEAM

If you're passionate about education, know the primary education sector well, are keen to work in a team in a union context and have a strong desire to be involved in getting teachers, principals, support staff and their communities working together to ensure every child experiences high quality education, this could be the job for you!

This position requires a confident and credible educator who can contribute to our professional, campaigning and industrial work. You'll be at home in a curriculum and assessment conversation and also understand the power of career development for support staff. You'll understand how policy changes at system level impact on teaching and learning in the classroom.

You will work with member leaders working in the primary sector to plan and implement collective actions to make positive change.

You will represent the values and views of NZEI Te Riu Roa members to other stakeholders in the education sector, analyse and develop policy and work within teams to develop effective campaigns to support the NZEI Te Riu Roa goal of quality education for all.

You will need to have generalist strategic, campaigning, policy development and research skills and the ability to work well in teams.

A commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi and to quality education is essential.

If you share our values, have excellent skills, are highly organised, and can work under pressure, then we would welcome your application.

A position description is available on our web site: [www.nzei.org.nz/jobs](http://www.nzei.org.nz/jobs) or email Sue Braggins: [sue.braggins@nzei.org.nz](mailto:sue.braggins@nzei.org.nz)

The position is based in the NZEI Te Riu Roa National Office in Wellington.

Applications in confidence should be addressed to Vacancies, PO Box 466, Wellington 6140, or by email to [vacancies@nzei.org.nz](mailto:vacancies@nzei.org.nz) with "Primary" in the subject line.

Applications close at 5pm,  
August 17, 2018

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# GUEST EDITORIAL

## *Each one, teach one*

We live in exciting times. This adage is often used when nobody really seems to know what is going to happen next.

The new global political order has led many of us to accept that anything can happen. Heraclitus was right: everything changes but change itself. This is a challenge for those in the teaching profession. Again schools are called to help when nations derail from business as usual. Curriculum reforms, higher performance standards and hard evidence-based policies have become routine solutions for governments to combat failing economies and emerging social problems that come with them.

During my travels I am frequently asked where to look at next in school education in the world. Finland, Canada and Singapore have been the main-stage players recently. Indeed, in these countries students learn well and new curricula to respond the needs of the new world order are currently being implemented.

But I have also learnt that interesting things happen in schools everywhere. I've witnessed outstanding public schools in China, Brazil, Iceland and Australia, just to mention a few. When all children come to school curious, ready to explore new ways of learning, and schools engaging in deeper learning, I become hopeful.

In June, I visited New Zealand to learn more about what Kiwi colleagues told me is a much welcomed turning point for teachers and children. Meeting with hundreds of educators and visiting several schools, I found they were full of excitement and empowerment. I am not the only one who is following how this whole-system turnaround will play out in New Zealand. The world is watching.



It is important not just to do right things, but to do things right. Reclaiming the promise of good and purposeful learning for all children by relying more on teachers' collective professional wisdom is the better way than relentlessly pushing for higher standards through competition and accountability.

This first issue of *Ako* celebrates the new era of trust in schools and importance of teachers' voice in moving the profession forward. *Ako*, or learning from one another, is the greatest opportunity we have – as nations and as their citizens – to provide all children with the great school they deserve. I hope you read this inaugural issue and that the stories from colleagues speak to you and leave you inspired as I am after writing these words to you.

Pasi Sahlberg is a Finnish educator and author who has worked as a schoolteacher, teacher educator, researcher and policy advisor in Finland and has studied education systems, analysed education policies and advised on education reforms around the world. He is currently Professor of Education Policy at the Gonski Institute for Education, University of New South Wales in Sydney.



## ALL OVER THE COUNTRY TEACHERS AND PRINCIPALS ARE HAVING THEIR SAY

For too long, they have felt undervalued with not enough time to teach and lead and they have struggled to get the resources for all children to thrive in education.

We have a teacher crisis. There aren't enough young people wanting to be teachers, and many beginning teachers leave within five years of starting. Teachers have to leave some towns and cities because they cannot afford to live there.

And the public are behind you. Research earlier this year showed your communities understand the pressure. They supported more Government spending on public education, including a significant pay rise for teachers and more support for children with additional learning needs.

**THIS IS AN HISTORIC TIME. TEACHERS HAVE VOTED TO STRIKE  
ON 15 AUGUST. THEY HAVE NOT DONE THIS SINCE 1994.**

**NOW IT'S TIME — KUA TAE TE WA**

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# The curricula issue

*Our world-leading  
curricula has been  
given a new lease  
of life. Educators  
from all over the  
country have met  
to discuss the way  
forward.*

This issue celebrates our curricula with  
practitioners and academics exploring new ideas  
in the exciting new environment.







OPINION | THE CURRICULA ISSUE

## Lester Flockton

### Resetting the clock

Before the changeover to Tomorrow's Schools, the Department of Education had a curriculum development unit (CDU) that represented all areas of the curriculum. It was staffed by a team of professionals who had fine track records as classroom practitioners with a depth of practical and theoretical knowledge in their particular areas. Members of the team collaborated with one another across the curriculum to provide quality policy advice as well as curricular leadership across the sector.

When the Ministry of Education replaced the department, the CDU was phased out and its people lost their jobs. Subsequently, the Ministry has placed little value on having a dedicated team of curriculum experts of similar ilk. Does this not seem decidedly odd for a government department whose business is education?

Before Tomorrow's Schools each of the 12 district offices of the Department of Education had an advisory service. All areas of the curriculum were represented in the service, which maintained a direct and ongoing

collaborative relationship with their counterparts in the CDU and with schools. Subsequent to the Tomorrow's Schools reforms, the advisory services were attached to colleges of education and eventually withered away.

Before colleges of education were subsumed into universities, they were staffed by a majority of lecturers who were curriculum specialists. Like the CDU and the district advisory services, these people were recruited because their qualification was a fine track record as classroom practitioners with a depth of practical and theoretical knowledge and resourcefulness in their particular areas. They also collaborated with and often worked alongside members of the advisory service.

NZEI Te Riu Roa itself was also committed to engagement in curriculum development, with curriculum advisory panels for each area of the curriculum. I was privileged to be a member of the arts committee. Subject associations led by professionals were popular among numerous teachers who attended their conferences, seminars and workshops.

These once very active arrangements have also slipped away.

The common ground across all of the curriculum support provisions noted here is that they subscribed to what is called grounded theory; theory and practice were inseparable, and the drivers' seats were occupied not by singular theoreticians, orthodoxy pedants or fee charging consultants and contractors. Together they constituted a powerful, well-qualified, resourceful and highly effective nation-wide collaborative curricula network that served the whole of Aotearoa New Zealand's schools. A very far cry from, and no comparison to, the indulgent fantasies of ideologically conceived communities of learners that currently exist in disparate pockets of New Zealand.

I appreciate that, for some, all of this might seem to be harking back to the good old days – days that a majority of today's teaching profession have little knowledge or appreciation of. Indeed, we live in times when it seems all too easy to completely write off or dismiss what was done in the past, regardless of how good some of it might have been. ► p 62



THE CURRICULA ISSUE

# FEATURES

*In the following long reads, educators talk about their practice and the thinking behind it.*





# Stunning results from culturally responsive maths

Developing Mathematical Inquiry Communities (DMIC) aims to build a sense of safety in both cultural identity and group problem solving. It is showing extraordinary progress in students.



01

“Don’t diss her, man, when she’s taking a risk!” Surprisingly, this quote from a 10-year old boy was taken from a primary school maths class in South Auckland. “Taking a risk” in this case meant that his female co-learner was bravely suggesting a strategy, asking a question or admitting that she was confused.

A new way of teaching mathematics/pāngarau, called Developing Mathematical Inquiry Communities (DMIC), aims to build a sense of safety in both cultural identity and group problem solving, and shows strong evidence of accelerated learning after even just one year of practice in schools.

An early evaluation of two classes in a West Auckland school, mostly Māori and Pasifika pupils, showed “extraordinary progress, representing the equivalent of several years’ progress (compared with business as-usual teaching) in just one year,” says a Best Evidence Synthesis Hei Kete Raukura report, published on-line by the Ministry of Education.<sup>1</sup> Significant changes in teacher knowledge, attitude and practice were needed to achieve this result.

“Teachers are reporting shifts... from a focus mostly on teaching skills in math to really knowing their students as learners and teaching to big ideas, posing better tasks, and supporting student meta-cognition through orchestrating discussions,” wrote international quality assurance expert, Elham Kazemi, professor of mathematical education at the University of Washington. “Students are ... viewing mathematics not just about using four

operations and learning times tables but also about problems, thinking, and ideas.”

Kazemi visited schools using DMIC in Auckland and Porirua East in 2015 and confirmed the evidence of accelerated learning, as quoted above. More recent (2015–16) PAT maths data from a Porirua East school using DMIC show student averages rising from those typical for Decile 1 schools, to much higher than average scores, with one group reaching Decile 8 averages.<sup>2</sup> There is also evidence of an improved sense of belonging and reduced bullying across three schools in Porirua East as a result of the method.<sup>3</sup>

Whānau involvement and support is an important aspect of the approach. In shared parent teacher meetings, the parents work with their children and solve complex mathematical tasks. This allows them to understand how their children are learning maths. But more importantly, teachers listen and learn from the parents about how maths is used at home in their daily life. Examples from the lives of whānau and families of all ethnicities are collected to help teachers appreciate the mathematical activity of the different ethnic groups and create problems relevant to the home lives of the tamariki.

“It’s about making educationally powerful connections to the lives, identities and funds of knowledge the children and their families can bring to mathematics learning,” says Professor Roberta Hunter (known as Bobbie) of Massey University, who did much of the research that

*The method needs to be fully explained to parents because it is so radically different to how their generation was taught.*

<sup>1</sup> Alton-Lee, Hunter, Sinnema & Pulegatoa-Diggins (2003) p 1

<sup>2</sup> Stringer (2017)

<sup>3</sup> Kazemi (2015)



underpins DMIC as part of her PhD (completed in 2007).

“Our Pasifika students, [before using this method] talked about how there’s no maths within their culture. We’ve got quotes, ‘when I’m doing maths, I have to think of myself as palagi’. We’re teaching them that maths is everywhere, we’re using it constantly. All of us from the Pacific nations, we were really good at maths. We navigated by the stars!”

Isabel Harris (aged 12) of Corinna School offers insight into DMIC as inquiry-based learning, which includes her Māori culture: “I like the way that we ask questions, it inspires us to learn more. I feel proud of doing my language in maths. We’ve done some maths in te reo and some in Pasifika (languages). I like to support my reo.”

Hangaia Te Urupounamu Pāngarau Mō Tātou is the translation of the name used by Ngai Tahu for the DMIC method.<sup>4</sup> A Ngai Tahu kaumatua, former educational psychologist Laurie Loper used his brother James Stewart Loper’s bequest to bring the method to Christchurch.<sup>5</sup>

“Education isn’t serving social justice, and we’ve got to change that,” he says in a Ministry of Education video (link below). “I’m delighted that something like this is starting to emerge.” Te Runanga o Ngai Tahu supported the introduction of DMIC at Shirley Primary School, which has a high proportion of Māori and Pasifika children.

Students at the school suffered post-traumatic stress caused by the 2011 earthquakes, and this way of learning lifted their mood, said the school’s recent principal Kylie Piper. “We’ve been working really hard to grow our children, to build that resilience. We see Hangaia Te Urupounamu Pāngarau Mō Tātou as a culturally responsive approach to mathematics, its talking about the whole child.”

Once they learn how to teach this way, with support from mentors who work together with teachers in the classroom, many teachers become passionate about the method. “There’s no streaming in DMIC, which is joyous,” says Michele Whiting, principal of Corinna School, Porirua East. “And its amazing sometimes who can come up with an idea that helps the group move forward.”

4 Former teacher Victor Manawatu developed the name and is happy for it to be widely used (Interview, 25.5.18).  
5 <https://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/topics/BES/hangaia-te-urupounamu-pangarau-mo-tatou/introduction>

*Once they learn how to teach this way, with support from mentors who interact with teachers in the classroom, many teachers become passionate about the method.*

“These group norms, that learning is everybody’s responsibility, and not leaving anyone behind, have been fantastic for all of our learning experiences.” The method is consistent with the curriculum, says Whiting. “The front end of the curriculum is all the principles, values, key competencies, pedagogy, use of technology. That’s the mandate for radically changing the way we teach.” Corinna School, which first used DMIC in 2008, now uses the community of inquiry way of teaching/learning in all subjects throughout the school.

Bobbie and her daughter Dr Jodie Hunter are both of Cook Islands Māori descent – Bobbie’s mother was born on Rakahanga, and their leadership includes cultural expertise. Through their research roles at Massey University, and with Professional Learning & Development funding from the Ministry of Education, Bobbie and Jodie now lead a team of mentors who build the understanding and practice of DMIC in over 80 primary and secondary schools and Kahui Ako Communities of Learning in Auckland, Christchurch, Tauranga, Porirua, Napier and the Gisborne Tai Rāwhiti district.

The Tai Rāwhiti schools are predominantly Māori – Te Kura Kāupapa Māori o Ngā Uri a Māui in Gisborne, Ngata Memorial College at Ruatoria and Tolaga Bay Area School (where the tamariki are mostly of Te Aitanga a Hauiti, Uawa and Ngāti Porou descent).

Evidence shows that, when well implemented, the method benefits all children. Children learn in groups of mixed ability and mixed ethnicity, which builds understanding between ethnic groups and reduces playground bullying, states a BES report, confirmed by Kazemi.<sup>6</sup>

“We use a tivaevae framework, developed by Cook Islander Teremoana Hodges, based on five core values,’ says Jodie Hunter. These are taokotai (collaboration), tuakangateitei (respect), uriuri kite (reciprocity), tu inangaro (relationships) and akairi kite (shared vision).<sup>7</sup> Reciprocity (ako in Māori) means that children understand that teachers also learn from the classes. Students’ ideas are valued and mistakes are seen as learning opportunities.

The DMIC way of teaching is a culturally

6 Alton-Lee (2017) p16–17  
7 Aue Te Ava & Rubie-Davis (2011) p 117–128



“There’s no streaming in DMIC and it’s amazing sometimes who comes up with an idea that helps the group move forward.”

– MICHELE WHITING, PRINCIPAL, CORINNA SCHOOL.



“Our Pasifika students used to say there’s no maths within their culture. We’ve got quotes, ‘when I’m doing maths, I have to think of myself as palagi’”.

– PROFESSOR BOBBIE HUNTER.



*Lifting achievement in primary mathematics has been a priority for Government since 2015 when studies showed our standard of achievement was below the international mean.*

sustaining system that has commonalities with other work aimed at transforming teacher practice and building equity for Māori, such as that done by Poutama Pounamu (a team based at Waikato University), which builds on the earlier Te Kotahitanga and Kia Eke Panuku Building on Success projects.

This work has also been proven effective and is reaching a growing number of primary schools, secondary schools and Kahui Ako or Communities of Learning, says director Professor Mere Berryman. Poutama Pounamu is working in 25 Kahui Ako and 405 schools nationally, she reported.

“This PD is deliberately about disrupting unconscious bias and using the Treaty of Waitangi principle of mana ōrite as a more useful pathway forward for iwi, pākehā and tauiwi respect and collaboration,” says Berryman.

“If leaders are committed to the principle of Māori success as Māori, as outlined in the strategy document Ka Hikitia Accelerating Success 2013–2017, they can also understand why cultural identity is important for other ethnicities, especially our recent immigrant groups.”

Poutama Pounamu’s evaluation of DMIC was positive, and the team sees potential benefits for their own work. “When we are working in Kahui Ako where teachers and learners have had an opportunity to engage in DMIC, as they come to our theory of change they see the connection. So there’s potential for that approach to be complementary across the curriculum,” said facilitator Therese Ford.

And Bobbie Hunter also sees commonalities. She says her team has learnt from the Te Kotahitanga model and related Māori equity work, particularly in using structured collaborative leadership strategies across schools to help spread understanding of transformative methods.

Lifting achievement in primary mathematics has been a priority for government since 2015 when international studies showed our standard of achievement was below the international mean. DMIC is a method proven to work across ethnic groups, supporting greater equity and inclusiveness. It works across all curriculum areas, fits well with the values prioritised in recent Education Summits, and ensures our tamariki and children are well prepared for the future.



02

### Students korero: My “maths smarts”

Prestigious Taankink-Puia (12): “Making sure that everyone has a say on what we do, it’s fun. Saying what the numbers represent.”

Melina Selau (10): “Asking a question when I don’t know what they’re doing, taking a risk, sharing my clever ideas. I don’t argue when I work with the people I don’t usually work with, getting to know them more.”

Eugene Tamatoa-Clarke (12): “Sharing my ideas when I’m in my group, listening to other people’s ideas so I can get an idea from the idea, explaining my ideas and making it clearer or explaining it in another way that other people can understand it.”

Grace Tararo (11), Cook Islands: “Asking questions when I don’t get it; listening to other’s ideas; sharing my maths strategy; and asking for help when I don’t get it.”

*Jillian’s parents gave her feedback on her learning story: “You’re a shining star, you’re becoming a leader, we’re so proud of you.”*



03

Anita Ulugia (12): “I love maths. The way we do it at Corinna School, it inspires me to want to do it and it helps your learning. Miss Adele pushes us and challenges us to go further with our maths, even if we’re struggling and we’ve stopped, she helps us and she encourages us to keep on going.”

Isabel Harris (12), Ngāti Toa, Ngā Puhī: “I like the way that we ask questions, it inspires us to learn more. I feel proud of doing my language in maths. We’ve done some maths in te reo and some in Pasifika [languages].”

Jillian Tupuse (12): “I’m good at including other people in my group ideas so everyone is included and we have more than one option to try so they don’t feel left out. I really need to work on listening to other people.

“What I really find hard about working in a group with people is trying to explain my idea in a way they can understand it. Because it’s really frustrating to keep on explaining it over and over again, but it’s worth trying to make sure everyone understands.”



Relationships and empathy are the key

NZEI Te Riu Roa President Lynda Stuart fought hard to get DMIC into May Road School in Mt Roskill, where she is principal (currently on secondment). The school has a roll of 75 percent Pasifika, 10 percent Māori and the rest a “United Nations”, as she says. “We needed that programme.”

DMIC has helped the whole school become more engaged with the various cultural worlds the children live in. “It’s thinking about their prior experiences and knowledge, their family, whānau, aiga – the importance of engaging the whānau in the learning journey of the child, but also the importance of situating the learning within the child’s own context, what they know and understand. It’s just good teaching practice.”

“I’ve seen children who were quite nervous around maths develop a much higher level of confidence, and I think that’s wonderful. We’re teaching children to be more confident, to

*“We’re teaching children to be more confident, to question, and that questioning’s okay. That’s what we do as adults.”*

question, and that questioning’s okay. That’s what we do as adults.”

Change has been deep and significant. “It’s challenged cross-grouping and ability grouping, and I think rightly so. It’s given teachers the opportunity to think much more flexibly about how they operate with the individual child around learning. That’s very powerful.”

The DMIC way of teaching works for all children, and has extended beyond maths to other curriculum areas at May Road School, Stuart says. With a “slight increase” in funding for professional development (from \$97.014 million in 2017–18 to \$110 million in 2018–19) and the new government emphasising a more holistic curriculum, a ‘whole child’ approach and values such as well-being, diversity and belonging, Stuart is hopeful for the future of both DMIC and Māori equity programmes.

“In teaching, relationships are key, that relationship between the child and teacher, or child and support staff. It starts in early childhood, and continues throughout the child’s learning journey. Loving, understanding, accepting, non-judgmental, empathetic. It makes a huge difference.” ●



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04 Lynda Stuart with students at May Road School in Auckland.



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# Find a network!

Te Whāriki is being used more in the first years of school with positive results and schools forming networks to implement ideas. Some early childhood teachers are moving to primary teaching to take advantage of the change.

Freed from the shackles of National Standards, new entrant and early childhood teachers are seizing opportunities in the revised Te Whāriki curricula.

Taupo kindergarten teacher Angela Palmer has decided to “put her money where her mouth is” and starts a job this term as a new entrant teacher.

“There’s been this perception that somehow a five-year-old will miraculously transfer overnight to school and be academically ready to focus on old-fashioned National Standards,” she says.

Her frustration at the gap between early childhood and new entrant programmes has led to the new job at Waipahihi School, which has a vision of ‘connected and curious learners’ – a vision that is embracing Te Whāriki for new entrants.

“I’m excited about the prospect of being able to teach in a way that’s meaningful and purposeful for these children,” says Palmer.

Parents can be fearful about transition and buy into the idea of getting the child ready for school, she says, “but it’s not the child who should be ready for school, it’s the school which should be ready for the child”.

Palmer wears many hats. Up until this term, she was board chair at Waipahihi School, which her children attend, and she is the local NZEI Te Riu Roa branch chair, and is a recent member of NZEI Te Riu Roa’s early childhood national advisory group. She credits a very supportive husband and parents for keeping it all going.

*“I’m excited about the prospect of being able to teach in a way that’s meaningful and purposeful for these children.”*  
– Angela Palmer



She says research confirms that for new entrants “later is better” when it comes to academic learning.

In high-performing school systems such as Finland’s, students don’t start formal schooling until age seven. Palmer says that a good teacher knows how to weave subject content with programme delivery for new entrants, including foundations for literacy and numeracy.

“But it doesn’t have to be structured – it can be done right across the day in every context.”

The end of National Standards gives teachers more space to innovate, and Palmer is not alone in her enthusiasm for Te Whāriki in schools: it appears to be an idea whose time has come. Throughout New Zealand, clusters, Communities of Learning, Facebook groups, projects funded by the Teacher-Led Innovation Fund and informal groupings are working to improve transitions through adopting Te Whāriki, or aspects of it, up to Year 2 and even beyond.

At Waikato University, Dr Sally Peters, who was part of the writing team that developed the revised Te Whāriki documents released last year, believes the new versions are well suited for weaving into The New Zealand Curriculum and Te Marautanga a Aotearoa.

“If you look at a well-resourced early childhood centre and a well-resourced new-entrants class, the resources are quite similar. The pedagogy doesn’t need to be different.”





Te Whāriki and Te Whāriki a te Kōhanga Reo, which is a separate, but complementary document devised for the needs of kōhanga rather than a straight translation of the English version, are easier to adopt and implement, she says, because their related resources have been simplified and clarified. But she acknowledges that using both curricula can be a big commitment and professional development is ideal. She urges people to “find their network” of local colleagues working on improved transitions.

At Paekakariki School on the Kapiti Coast, new entrant teacher Justine Ward belongs to a local cluster of new entrant and early childhood teachers. “It’s absolutely thriving. We mentor each other on curriculum development and curriculum delivery. We meet termly and there are many informal meetings as well – we pop into each other’s spaces, and it brings it all to life.”

She’s passionate about how the child-centred aspects of Te Whāriki weave into the school’s curriculum.

“My job is to make my classroom the bridge [from early childhood to school].”

Te Whāriki’s strands, in particular mana whenua (belonging) and mana aotūroa (exploration), have relevance throughout the whole school, with exploration being the foundation of science and technology learning, she adds. “They align with the school’s core values.”

It’s a very exciting area to be working in, she says, but having the support of the board and principal is crucial. “Some people can find it quite scary.”

Ward is also positive about Te Whāriki a te Kōhanga Reo. Te Kōhanga Reo National Trust were unable to comment on Te Whāriki a te Kōhanga Reo due to Treaty claim negotiations.

But while enthusiasm levels are high, the reality is still a sector struggling to emerge from a legacy of funding cuts and a hostile policy environment. Emeritus professor and an original Te Whāriki writer Helen May told an NZEI Te Riu Roa curricula hui early this year, “What we need now is resources to support its implementation [the revised Te Whāriki] and redressing of the quality infrastructures and cuts in the centre”.

Te Whāriki resources are available on the Te Kete Ipurangi website, including recordings of 10 Professional Learning and Development webinars that support the rollout of the new curricula. Webinar Nine looks at pathways to school and kura.



### Gender-neutral play wins international award

An Auckland centre’s use of the inquiry cycle to develop a gender-neutral curriculum has led to an international award.

Collectively Kids’ owner Marina Bachman and teacher Zane McCarthy flew out to Prague in June to receive the award and present their work to an OMEP\* conference.

“It started out being teacher-led about climate change – with the idea that we needed action to ensure a safe world for children coming through the service. This has attracted families for whom social justice and environmental issues are important,” says McCarthy.

Gender-neutrality flowed naturally from



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there and was explored as part of professional development with Core Education, using the inquiry process to implement the revised Te Whāriki curriculum.

“It’s been about creating an environment that is free from gender stereotypes and assumptions, one that gives children the space to explore who they are,” says McCarthy.

It includes looking at how resources are set up to promote different ways of playing – ways that allow both girls and boys the opportunities to engage in all kinds of play. Necklaces have been set up alongside dinosaurs and dolls have been introduced to the sandpit, which has led to different groups of children engaging in different ways.

This has led on to McCarthy engaging in “sandpit literacy” – using sand as a medium for drawing and letters as he realised that some in the

group in the sandpit were not often going inside to the tables with paper and drawing materials.

The programme also examined the language used by adults and engaged the thoughts of children about gender in contexts like book reading.

“In storytelling, for instance, we have seen the way children have begun to look for more female characters and consider their representation. They want strong girl characters,” says McCarthy.

Parents have responded positively and it’s given families the power to examine their own assumptions and, in turn, to feedback into the cycle of inquiry, all making clear that the original ideas of Te Whāriki – its versatility and responsiveness – are alive and well in the new version.

For links to resources see this story online at [ako.org.nz](http://ako.org.nz)





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“It’s creating an environment free from stereotypes and assumptions – giving children the space to explore who they are.”

– ZANE MCCARTHY



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OPINION | THE CURRICULA ISSUE

## Peter O'Connor

### Renaissance of the arts

One of the most significant casualties of nine years of focusing on literacy and numeracy at the expense of everything else schools do has been the arts.

In many schools they were effectively killed off or banished to last thing on a wet Friday afternoon. The repeal of National Standards provides an opportunity for schools to resurrect the arts.

The arts are vital for preparing children for the future. The arts by their nature foster creative ways of being. Risk taking, playfulness, collaboration, problem posing and problem solving are among the most valued attributes of employees across all industries. Learning how to be more creative has significant possibilities for growth across the entire economy.

Perhaps it isn't surprising that the more traditional education systems, such as the Chinese, are now embracing the arts in schools to make a more creative workforce to meet the demands of global competition.

Yet the arts offer far more than the merely functional preparation for work. There are many studies showing that a child who enjoys an arts-rich education will learn better in other areas of school, with improvements in students' engagement and understanding within

all areas of the curriculum, particularly social sciences and writing.

More important, I would argue, is that there is much within arts learning that is valuable in its own right. Perhaps what we might value in schools is the way the arts, through their vibrancy, colour, noise and joyful living, manage to disrupt and challenge the ordered uniformity of schooling.

The beauty created through the arts in schools is a reminder of the possibility for beauty in our lives and worlds. By working actively with ambiguity, and in the non-linear forms of learning that characterises the arts, young people reimagine the world as a place where they might be makers rather than consumers.

The arts deliberately deconstruct the notion that learning can be the accretion of discrete skills predetermined by measurable learning intentions. It instead constructs learning as a process in which surprises and unpredictable outcomes are both possible and desirable.

Perhaps our new government might heed Gough Whitlam's words: "Of all the objectives of my government, none had a higher priority than the encouragement of the arts; the preservation and enrichment of our cultural and intellectual heritage. Indeed, I would

argue that all other objectives of a Labor government — social reform, justice and equity in the provision of welfare services and educational opportunities — have as their goal the creation of a society in which the arts and the appreciation of spiritual and intellectual values can flourish. Our other objectives are all means to an end. The enjoyment of the arts is an end in itself."

The arts in schools are not then purely about creating competitive workforces but how we might as a nation become more empathetic, kinder, more collaborative, more genuinely creative. Perhaps we might be able to say the arts in schools matter because they reside in the most sacred part of what it means to be alive. We might say the arts are of value because they remind us of infinite possibilities, that the arts are the training tools for the imagination, individual and social. We might celebrate the return of the arts because a society rich in the arts is rich in possibility.

Professor Peter O'Connor is an internationally recognised expert in applied theatre and drama education. He works in the education faculty at The University of Auckland.



FEATURE | THE CURRICULA ISSUE

Schools are finding new ways to integrate arts and science into the curricula. *Ako* looks at two projects – a student-led photography project in Kawerau and a community gully rejuvenation project in Hamilton.

# Photo project embodies ako



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PHOTOGRAPHER  
Peter Drury

WRITER  
Kate Drury

01 Aalijah Tamatea with her photo  
from the historic photos' project.





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Tamariki at Te Whata Tau o Putauaki decided that they wanted to do a photo project that depicted their tipuna, after studying the work of nineteenth century New Zealand artists C.F. Goldie and Gottfried Lindauer, and the more recent artwork of celebrated New Zealand artist Robyn Kahukiwa.

After studying the artists' work and historic photos for six to eight weeks and having made some observations about the work, such as the seriousness of the subjects and the use of sepia and black and white in the photos, they worked out how to recreate this in a modern setting.

Having been guided at the start of the project by teachers, the students then became the teachers. Student Aalijah Tamatea said they worked in pairs.

"We taught each other how to work together because we all had different skills – how to do the lighting and angles. We had to listen to each other."

They worked on their iPads, taking photos of each other, recreating the feeling and tone of the historic photos and paintings. Preparation for the photo shoots was extensive. They dressed each other and stencilled on moko – and to find the correct moko they looked at photos of ancestors.

Some students brought taonga belonging to their family to use in the photo shoot – including kākahu, patu, taiaha, meremere and pukapuka.

After choosing a photo that best represented the period from 1819 to 1940, it was mounted on canvas. They also took portraits of the teachers and principal.

Tumuaki Ripeka Lessels says when the exhibition showed in the Kawerau town hall, many nans and koru cried.

"The exhibition was on for a week and the students were to invite someone special. There were many tears."







**“The children became the teachers. They dressed me, told me how to look, where to be, and did several proofs until they got what they wanted.”**

– RIPEKA LESSELS

Tamatea says the community was very proud of the students’ work.

“They were amazed that we could take photos like that ... that the photos looked like back in the day ... the staunch looks. [At the exhibition] some of the kaumātua were crying ... they did not know it was us until they had another look.”

All 137 children in the school were eventually photographed as the historic recreation of tipuna, and a collage of photos was displayed at the school and outside the town council offices.

Lessels said that teachers learnt new skills from the children, such as the technical details involved in taking photos and the use of light.

“The children became the teachers. They had a free rein. They dressed me, told me how to look, where to be, and did several proofs until they got what they wanted.”

She said that the older children got children as young as five years old to participate and had to work out how to interview them for the photo and to get them to respond.

Not only did the project produce beautiful artwork but it also engaged a community and exemplified ako.

In te ao Māori, ako recognises the knowledge that both teachers and learners bring to learning interactions, and it acknowledges the way that new knowledge and understanding can grow out of shared learning experiences.

Says Lessels: “It [ako] means both teaching and learning.”

To see a video about the project visit [ako.co.nz](http://ako.co.nz)



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### Forgotten gully becomes focus for science learning

A long-forgotten and disused gully behind a high school in Hamilton has turned into a science project for schools in the area.

Lyn Rogers, who works for the Science Learning Hub at Waikato University, is employed by the Fairfield Project (a restoration project for the gully to develop an ecological and education centre) to provide teachers, children and the community with learning opportunities that fit with the science curriculum. The project is supported by the Ministry of Education.

Many local primary schools and one high school – Fairfield College – whose school field backs on to the gully are involved in the project. “The Fairfield project has created education opportunities for anyone connected with our kaupapa. It is about the experience,” says Rogers.

Rogers has a background in science teaching



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(at Raglan Area School) and as a science advisor with the enviro schools projects.

About five years ago, a feasibility study was done on the restoration of the gully. The gully, known locally as Kukutāruhe gully, has a lot of cultural history and the stream is part of a Niwa project looking at endangered giant kōkopu. There

“What we discovered in the research was that teachers did not necessarily lack the skills in teaching science but sometimes lacked the confidence.”

– LYN ROGERS

is also a community garden, orchard and nursery.

Rogers runs workshops building teachers’ confidence in teaching science and has written workshops for teachers to do with students.

“What we discovered in the research was that teachers did not necessarily lack the skills but sometimes lacked the confidence [in teaching science]”.

The most recent TIMSS report (Caygill, Singh & Hanlar, 2014) showed that about half of New Zealand primary school teachers did not feel very well prepared to teach science topics, and many had less confidence teaching science than their international peers.

The aim with the Fairfield Project was to introduce a range of practical ecology-based activities using everyday materials and focus on building students’ science capabilities by exploring their own school grounds.

“It was also important to model an integrated style of teaching and learning, without losing the explicit science learning outcomes, as can often happen,” she says.

For links to resources see this story online at [ako.org.nz](http://ako.org.nz)

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# Understanding, recognising and knowing

Across the country, teachers report that there are more children with high learning needs and the resources and funding to help these children are overstretched. Education professionals talk here about how they deliver the curriculum to children with learning needs. First up, Newton Central School in Auckland teacher aide Ally Kemplen describes their consistent whole-school approach to helping children.

Learning support professional Ally Kemplen is in her twentieth year at Newton Central School in Auckland, known as an inclusive school, which attracts parents and their children with extra needs. Her passion and strength is working with children with high behavioural, social and emotional needs and children who have experienced trauma or neglect. This may involve post-traumatic stress disorder or attachment disorder, or the child might not have a diagnosis.

She says she has a simple method of approaching her work.

First base is understanding that these children's brains are different because of their experiences, so they will behave differently and it is not in order to annoy people. This is how they respond to these situations. Second base is recognising that when a child is being unlovable that's when they need the most love. Third base is knowing they can't express their needs but they're telling you something. All behaviour is communication.

"Bring it back down to that when you're seeing raging and tantruming and throwing chairs across the classroom. 'You're not feeling okay, you haven't even recognised that in your body before you've reacted and gone to the back of your brain to fight or flight. You might not even know what the trigger has been and this is the quick response, so I need to help you right now. Berating you right now isn't going to help. In fact you can't hear a word coming out my mouth at this point because this part of

*"If a child can't tie their shoelaces we teach them, if they can't count up to 10 we teach them, but if they can't manage their behaviour around other people we growl at them? It just doesn't make sense."*

your brain has completely shut down, so we're going to have to wait. Even when you look calm, you've settled down, you've stopped sweating and throwing things, we know we still have to wait quite a bit longer before we can have a conversation'."

She believes all children should be celebrated and not be seen in a deficit mode. It is important to reward and celebrate achievements, tiny as they may be. This comes from Kemplen's own experience but she has completed the Positive Behaviour for Learning model.

The Incredible Years programmes for parents and teachers now include courses for teacher aides (see [incredibleyears.co.nz](http://incredibleyears.co.nz)).

"If a child can't tie their shoelaces we teach them, if they can't count up to 10 we teach them, but if they can't manage their behaviour around other people we growl at them? It just doesn't make sense. If they haven't learned things, we'll help them learn it. They've all had different ways of learning to behave. We need to decide within these walls this is how we are going to respect and love each other so we are going to teach you specifically."

This is a whole-school approach.

"The adults are all different humans and we're all bringing different skills and gifts and beliefs, but we start considering our language and some kind of consistency across the school. We're seeing such a change for our students. They know if I do this, this will be the response I get; no matter which adult is there it will be similar language.



Her work changes with needs within the school. This year, Kemplen is working across three middle school classes with the priority on learning – her work involving literacy support, one-on-one classroom support, observation. She says she looks forward to schools post-National Standards.

"I think as we come back into a New Zealand Curriculum world where teachers are given an element of trust, that children will continue to work together and will learn from each other more collaboratively, which is something I think we do quite well at this school – I know people often comment on that.

"As we keep moving away from that one teacher aide with one student situation, that will just keep improving."

She points to a wealth of knowledge, research and teaching resources around inclusive education found easily on the Ministry of Education's Te Kete Ipurangi website, [inclusive.tki.org.nz](http://inclusive.tki.org.nz).

Kemplen also refers to strong British research, The Deployment and Impact of Support Staff which provides a 'red, amber, green' self-assessment tool for 'not-so-good' practice, 'ah-getting-there' practice, and best practice, which can be used to find ideas for your school (see [maximisingtas.co.uk/resources/making-best-use-of-tas-eef-guidance.php](http://maximisingtas.co.uk/resources/making-best-use-of-tas-eef-guidance.php)).

Newton Central School, she says, uses "the beautiful thing that is the New Zealand



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*"If you have a fake relationship with colleagues or kids, they know. It's got to be really genuine, really strong, really loving relationships."*

Curriculum" and key competencies for every student, particularly students who have individual educational plans. "That's been the turnaround – whereas we used to have a learning goal and a social goal and an academic goal, we are now looking specifically at the key competencies.

"For example, we'll look at managing self – what are the strengths, what can this child do, what do they need support with, how are we going to do that and who's going to do it? If we want children to be life-long learners, then the literacy and numeracy falls into the key competencies."

This approach can be understood by everyone who is involved with the child, including parents. For example, the child can get to the bathroom but they need some help with the door and they need some help with their trousers.

"We want our kids to be able, especially the ones who have difficulty emotionally regulating, to eventually recognise when they are not okay and ask for help. So if we're not doing that then we're not being very good role models.

"If you have a fake relationship with colleagues or kids, they know. If you you've been really genuine with each other, you've noticed when someone's not okay, or you've given them a little thumbs up when you can see they're trying hard, and those things happen all the time, then when something goes wrong you've got all of that beneath it to figure things out with. It's got to be really genuine, really strong, really loving relationships."





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## Culture before curriculum

The culture of the school has to be in place first, says Donal McLean, president of the Waitakere Area Principals' Association. At Fruitvale School where he is principal, culture encompasses delivery of the curriculum as well as extra-curricular activities.

Sharing the discussion are deputy principal and SENCO Hine Viskovich and teacher aide/learning support professional Heather Bodley, who is the longest serving staff member with 30 years at Fruitvale School.

The first two weeks of the year and each first week of each term, the whole school focuses on values and culture.

Says Bodley, "We bring it into all our interactions, it's part of the way we talk to each other, particularly how we talk to children in terms of behaviour and expectations."

Fruitvale's culture is based on five values. "We call them the 5Rs", says principal, Donal McLean. John Hattie's principles of Visible Learning and Teaching – when teachers see learning through the eyes of students and help students

to become their own teachers – sits inside Fruitvale's values.

When Fruitvale staff talk about how best to deliver the curriculum, they mean to all students. They do not talk of children with additional learning needs separately. In practice, what does that mean for children with extra learning and/or behaviour needs? And how can it be done well?

Best practice, says McLean, comes down to managing culture and teaching support. Teachers and the teacher student relationship is pivotal. It's based on curriculum knowledge and behavioural management skills. It's about collegiality and collaboration.

Says Viskovich, "All those things feed into a teacher with great practice. Sometimes it's respite – the child may find the classroom environment overwhelming and need a break from it. I often say to teachers, if you just want to do something really exciting/challenging with the class and not worry about disruptive behaviour or meltdowns, we'll arrange a parallel



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02 Fruitvale School staff, from left, Hine Viskovich, deputy principal, Donal McLean, principal, Shirley White, associate principal.

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alternative activity so you and your learners have the opportunity to do that.”

Best practice rests on the teacher knowing how best to engage with a teacher aide in class. Says Bodley, “And it’s having a support person who knows what to do, not the teacher having to tell them or support them, or say ‘please don’t clean my art cupboards, can you sit with someone instead’. That’s experience and personality as well as training.”

Says Viskovich, “We’ve done more training than ever in terms of clarifying the Learning Support Professionals roles and being really explicit about what their interactions should look like with the children and discussing that with them. It is important they have a range of strategies to use for a diverse range of behaviours and responses.”

Training is done by Viskovich who is lead coach, by Resource Teachers of Learning and Behaviour or at outside training workshops. Among support staff, there are some specialist roles such as ESOL.

Says Viskovich, “Building the relationship is number one because no matter how many key interventions I might know about, I first need a good relationship or a warm relationship with my high-needs child. That’s the first thing a teacher needs to establish. Then build the relationship so there’s trust and they can look to you to ask questions or seek comfort or whatever. Then you bring in your skills and your pedagogies.”

*“Teacher practice sits inside the culture and rests on collegiality between all staff. It’s people supporting each other to do the best for the children.”*

Children with emotional-behavioural spectrum conditions need a learning support professional like Bodley in class.

Well-being of staff is the school’s current focus – manage yourself first, put on your own life jacket before you help the kids into theirs. Best practice when teaching children with additional learning means working cohesively as a school.

“Visibility is very important to us so that people who are learning support professionals, or kids, parents or teachers or anybody understand why we are doing what we are doing and how we do it.”

Teacher practice sits inside the culture and rests on collegiality between all staff. “It’s people supporting each other to do the best for the children. There’s a lot of pre-conditions to the child’s needs being met,” says McLean.

“We do a lot around coaching, we respect teacher voice, we want teacher feedback. When they say things aren’t working, we’ve got to listen to that. We can’t just think things are happening.”

Sometimes that involves outsiders coming in to get authentic feedback through anonymous surveys.

With a roll of 300, there are five learning support professionals. “Spread within an inch of their lives,” says McLean. “We could do with a couple more and for these guys to be paid properly. But our school continues to run pretty well and that’s only because of the things we talk about around culture and relationships, managing the stresses.”



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## We are all in this waka together

Janice Jones says the most important thing about being a truly inclusive school in which every child thrives is that the whole school is in the waka together.

Jones is SENCO and deputy principal at Karori West Normal School Te Kura o Waipahihi in Wellington and says inclusiveness is enshrined in law and in our New Zealand curricula, but it should also be reflected in an inclusive and kind society.

“All children, including those with learning needs, have a place as adults in our society. People need not to be frightened of difference. Don’t we want a society where everyone is visible, present and participating?”

“Everybody wins when we have an inclusive and kind society. It’s about what we want our society to look like.”

*“Don’t we want a society where everyone is visible, present and participating? Everybody wins when we have an inclusive and kind society. It’s about what we want our society to look like.”*

### The law and human rights

When Jones presented at the NZEI Te Riu Roa and Ministry of Education curricula hui in June this year she said that inclusion was central to the New Zealand curricula. Its principle of inclusion states that the curriculum is non-sexist, non-racist and non-discriminatory, and it ensures that students’ identities, languages, abilities and talents are recognised and affirmed and that their learning needs are addressed.

The Education Act requires that all children be welcomed at their local school and Jones says a community that is truly inclusive benefits everyone. The law reflects this, but there must be goodwill and resourcing to back it up.

At the hui, Jones also outlined the human rights issues underpinning education, including domestically Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the New Zealand Disability Strategy, and internationally the United Nations Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities to which New Zealand is a signatory. Article 24 states that persons with



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disabilities receive the support required, within the general education system, to facilitate their effective education.

She asked if the Ministry of Education in New Zealand was really fulfilling our binding obligation to the UN convention.

#### Practice at Karori West

Jones says Karori West Normal School does everything it can to embrace and reflect these principles.

“Our first principles are the child and their family have a sense of belonging to our school, and that we are in partnership with them.”

And for teachers, it is important that they never feel alone, with a child with learning needs, or any child for that matter. It's all about developing relationships, being solution-focused.

She gives the example of transitioning a child on the autism spectrum to the school.

“His new teacher has taught his brother, so she already has a relationship with the family. She doesn't feel that she has a lot of experience with children on the spectrum, but she knows that this is not a problem because it is not just

her, it is all of us, with our collective wisdom, supporting his transition. We have had two teacher aides in the classroom getting to know him on his visits.

“Sometimes I think teachers can feel the pressure to make a child learn and behave. We don't buy that notion for one minute. It is all about what support we can wrap around the teacher and the child so that we can see the child's strengths and develop the child's potential – and always, always with love and goodwill – I cannot stress that enough.”

To be truly inclusive means being culturally responsive, she says. The school have kaumatua who are actively involved in the life of the school, and te reo Māori me ona tikanga are woven through the school day, in all classrooms.

Jones says the school favours a strengths-based, holistic approach to children with learning needs.

“We often use samples of work and photos of the child in the playground and of their learning. We focus on what they are good at.”

The school also uses a lot of social stories.

“This is about learning pro-social skills, by having them modelled and by practising them.”

*“Sometimes I think teachers can feel the pressure to make a child learn and behave. We don't buy that notion for a minute”*





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We believe that with all the resources we have available, combined with a rich history caring for

children and families, and particularly by listening to the needs and interests of your school community and children, we can tailor an Out of School Care program that will offer a breadth of value like no other provider in New Zealand. We are the largest provider across the Auckland and Waikato region and have over 15 years' experience in this field. We want all our schools to feel safe in the hands of the YMCA, so we work hard to ensure working relationships are easy, value-based and school-focussed.

## Safeguarding Children

We are also New Zealand's first and only accredited Safeguarding Children organisation, which is an internationally recognised accreditation awarded to those who embark on a rigorous safeguarding journey that prioritises the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. We are proud to lead the journey in New Zealand.

She says that the fastest difference that the school can make in this wraparound approach is with teacher aides.

"At our school, we don't ask, 'What is this child funded for?', we ask, 'What does this child need?'"

"Teacher aides make the fastest difference in a classroom." She says they support children to be present in their classrooms, to participate in the programme, to learn and to feel that vital sense of belonging with their classmates.

"Teacher aides can spot early signs of distress or anxiety and can prevent situations escalating."

## Getting alongside

Help from outside specialists is vital in getting the right support and expertise for children with learning needs and for the educators' own learning.

"Every single RTLB, SLT, Ed Psych, OT, PT, moderate needs therapist, special needs advisor, early intervention teacher ... who has walked through our doors has enhanced our practice."

However, Jones, like many other SENCOs and senior school leaders in New Zealand, says that they have to wait too long for help and that early intervention is vital.

Jones told the hui: "We need more professionals, in every area. We have a new speech language therapist beginning work with us - she will run Language Learning Intervention workshops at our school with teachers and parents. Three children were referred, on turning five, from Early Intervention to the school-based communication service, assessed six months later by a very apologetic SLT, and only now are they receiving the support of this very good programme. The children are six years three months old. If you need an educational psychologist for a student in crisis (and often it's urgent) - you just have to manage, doing your 10 best things ... for up to six months. Every school in this room will have similar stories."

The Minister of State Services Chris Hipkins recently announced that the cap had been lifted on the public service, so the hope is that more itinerant MOE specialists will now be employed.

And Jones says that there's another thing that would help.

"Our message to the Ministry of Education is consistent, insistent and unequivocal: the formalisation and resourcing of the SENCO role in every school. This is a role that works for inclusion, no question."

To see Janice Jones at the curricula hui go to [ako.co.nz](http://ako.co.nz)



Isn't it odd? While technology used in schools has changed immensely such as the use of tablets and other digital devices, classroom furniture hasn't seen the same changes with many classrooms still set up with static rows of desks facing the teacher at the front of the room.

Many schools are now taking action, with ILE (innovative learning environment) classrooms gaining momentum globally. More schools are realising the value and improved engagement this type of layout provides. A well-designed classroom is crucial for learning - it's amazing how classroom layout and furniture can affect student learning, concentration and engagement.

Collaboration furniture in the classroom also supports opportunities for peer learning, which is a powerful learning strategy for both parties (the student teaching and the student learning).

Does your classroom currently have a place for students to think, explore and reflect? Soft seating such as ottomans can be used throughout the entire school to provide those treasured spaces which support reflection, without distraction.

## What are the benefits of an ILE classroom environment?

- Improved student concentration and engagement.
- Provides opportunities for peer learning and brainstorming.
- Provides different spaces within the classroom suitable for the multiple activities which typically take place (e.g. large and small group work, working in pairs and individual work).

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[www.ymcaauckland.org.nz](http://www.ymcaauckland.org.nz)

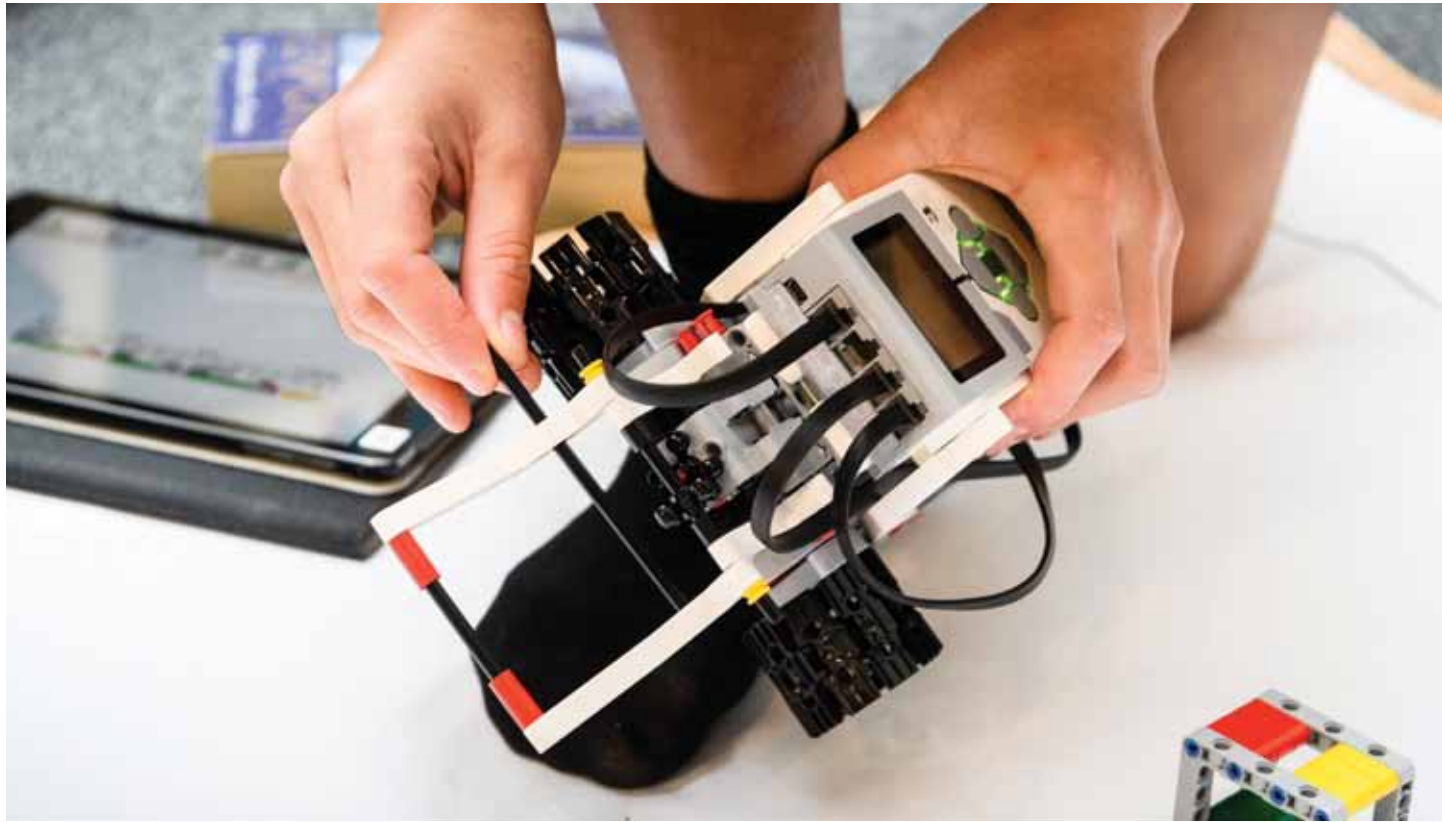




# The art of future-proofing

With just 18 months until schools need to implement the new Digital Technologies and Hangarau Matihiko curricula, how do educators make that transition?





The day *Ako* meets with Liam Rutherford to talk about the new digital technologies curriculum, he's mulling over the implications of the latest announcement from Google.

As a tech-savvy teacher at Palmerston North's Ross Intermediate and recent representative for NZEI Te Riu Roa on the Ministry's Implementation Enablement Group, Rutherford has again been reminded that technology and the teaching of it can't be future-proofed.

The internet technology giant had just announced a new artificial intelligence development that would allow users to send a text asking, for example, that a hair appointment be made at a certain time and place. The phone will call the hairdresser and an artificial intelligence would book the appointment.

"You are then going to get to a point where the hairdressers are employing the same technology, and you've got two artificial intelligences talking to one another, booking me in for a haircut," he says.

"This stuff is being announced now. Where's this going to be in 10 years?"

Into this fast-changing world comes the Digital Technologies and Hangarau Matihiko curricula, designed to "prepare [students] now to adapt to technology and jobs that have not yet been invented – robotics, artificial intelligence, nanotechnology and advances in connectivity".

It's a noble and timely goal, and Rutherford is widely supportive of the changes, which have introduced two new areas to the technology curriculum.

"One is around the kind of logical thinking that has clear links to algebra and patterns and all that stuff. Then the other one is around how you can use a digital tool to solve an outcome. And so, for me, who is really passionate about enquiry-based approaches, I really like it, because it is giving teachers another opportunity to look at outcomes, it has opened up the pathway of using digital ways to do that. So, in practice, it integrates well into the wider curriculum, and this move towards project-based and play-based learning."

Rutherford's role in this year's rollout of the curriculum is on the sector group that considers schools' applications for a share of \$24 million in PLD funding. There have been two funding rounds since the beginning of the year and so far about 150 schools have received funding to run professional development for their staff.

Rutherford urges schools to move quickly to organise an application – it's a simple one-page form that takes about half an hour to complete,

*Rutherford's advice to schools uncertain how to begin incorporating the new curriculum is to seek out other schools that are already part way through the journey and just get started.*

and Communities of Learning can also apply.

"CoLs should be applying for that contestable funding. That would be a really good pathway of building up a core group of people with some knowledge, and then take that out into the individual schools," says Rutherford.

So far, most of the schools that have applied for the contestable funding are already "naturally on this journey" and he's concerned that it may become an equity issue if some schools are slow to take up the offer.

Total funding to support schools and teachers in the rollout of the technology curriculum is \$38 million, which Rutherford describes as woefully inadequate considering schools and kura are expected to integrate the Digital Technologies and Hangarau Matihiko curricula content by 2020. It will be taught from Years 1-10, with the option to specialise from Years 11-13.

An All Equity Fund is receiving \$6 million of the funding, which can't be used to supply computers to students and will reach 12,500 students a year over three years.

"They [the Ministry] wanted discreet learning opportunities for students to do outside of the classroom, and so they put it out for tender. They had two contracts come back in – The Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa (Te Papa) and Karrikins Group.

"Karrikins Group is going to deliver six 45-minute sessions a year over three years. They're based out of Auckland, Hamilton, Christchurch, and as a part of that, 20 percent has to be a roadshow. I could imagine that just being Christchurch and a radius around it," says Rutherford.

The Digital Ignition programme will include robots, 3D printing and coding and emphasise an ability to think digitally. Te Papa will partner with other museums and bring technology-rich learning to students, who will be able to "tell their own stories as they build their knowledge", according to a ministerial announcement.

"What it doesn't do is actually bridge the reality that some kids are disadvantaged compared to all of those other kids that have internet and computers and stuff coming out of their ears. So, the Ministry's idea of equity is one-off learning opportunities as opposed to [addressing] the systemic issues of inequity," says Rutherford.

Rutherford's advice to schools uncertain how to begin incorporating the new curriculum is to seek out other schools that are already part way through the journey and just get started.

"Come to understand that this document here





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sits within the technology curriculum, and so it is not completely new in terms of that technology process that you work through, around designing things. It's talking about some really cool things, around authentic context, the use of defined process to develop, test and evaluate something, and then they consider the social, ethical and end-user considerations. That's the stuff that I think should be at the heart of a good enquiry process."

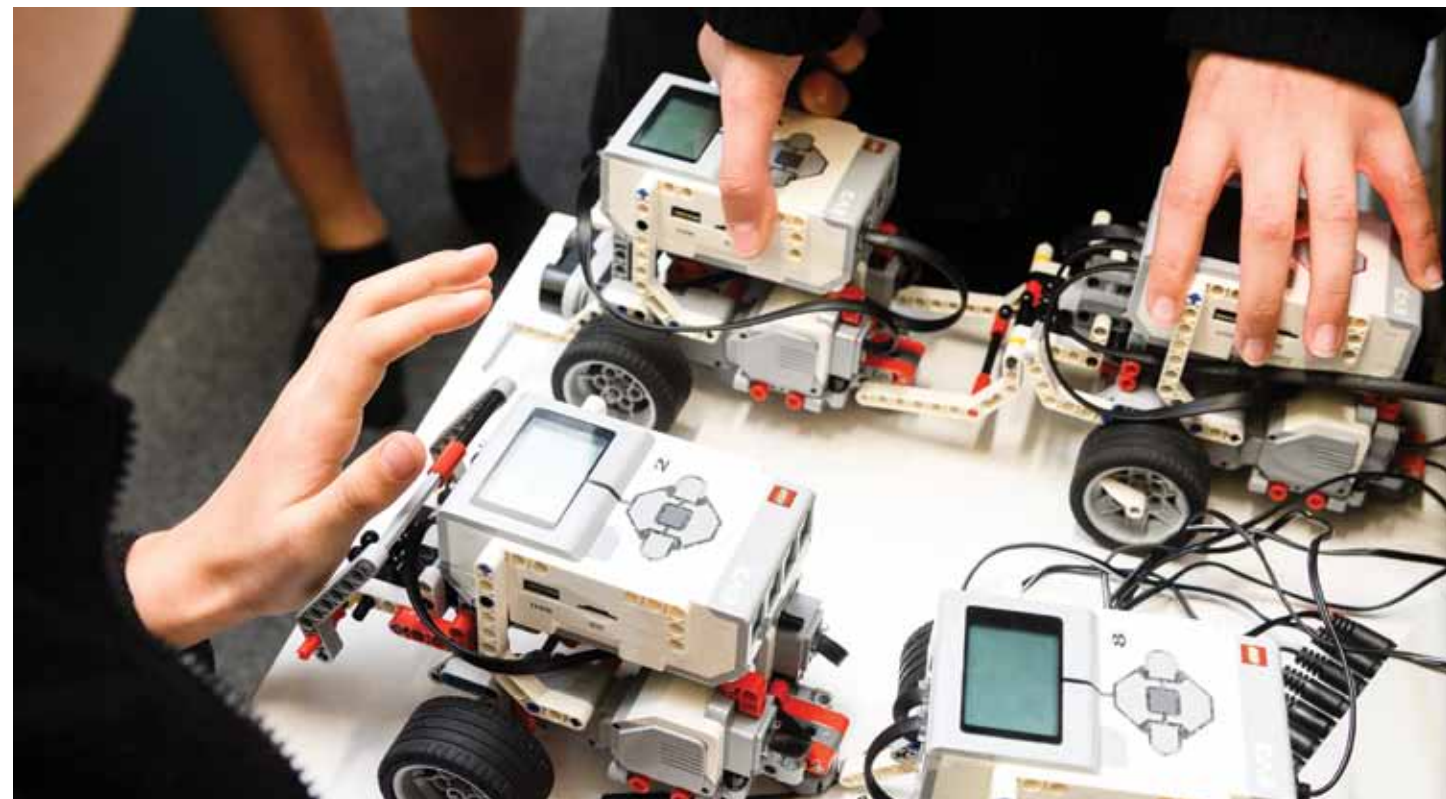
He says that teachers need to understand what the new curriculum is trying to achieve and dispel the myths that every child needs to have a computer and everyone has to learn to code or is going to be on screens all the time.

"Because that's not the case. And actually, see how this strengthens the current technology curriculum and the possible links for integration into what you're doing.

"At its core is that chance to do some real cool stuff, in the way that we think about working with kids, and I think this offers us a really good pathway to have a really integrated curriculum, which is a bit of a personal passion of mine."

**"For me, who is really passionate about enquiry-based approaches, I really like it, because it is giving teachers another opportunity to look at outcomes, it has opened up the pathway of using digital ways to do that."**

- LIAM RUTHERFORD







## Making digital relevant to and reflective of Māori

While the development and vision of Digital Technologies and Hangarau Matihiko began together, it soon became apparent that Hangarau Matihiko needed to develop its own identity.

Initial consultation showed a desire amongst kaiako and tamariki for a stronger connection between te ao Māori and Hangarau Matihiko.

The Ministry of Education’s ELSA (Early Learning and Student Achievement) Te Reo Māori Group senior manager of curriculum design and assessment Glenys Hauiti-Parapara, says part of that Māori worldview is deliberately thinking about the potential impact of digital technology that is being designed.

“What is the impact on people, on the environment, on whānau – and make decisions about whether we should do that or not,” she says.

“Another really important story we want to tell through Hangarau Matihiko is that this computational thinking and designing digital outcomes isn’t new to Māori – that in actual fact, in our whakapapa, in our histories, Māori have always done this type of thinking.

“If you think about navigating from Hawaiki to Aotearoa, there had to be some computational thinking that occurred. We really wanted to encourage that narrative, that actually it’s not a new thing for today – that Māori have always done this. Today there might be different, new tools, but actually the practice of the thinking and the designing isn’t new,” says Hauiti-Parapara.

Hangarau Matihiko has two progressions – Te Tangata me te Rorohiko and Te Whakaaro Rorohiko, which combine both the technical aspects of digital technology progressions, and also have woven through them how to articulate computational thinking and the importance of that through te ao Māori.

“In Te Tangata me te Rorohiko, we’ve really integrated in there the values, principals and tikanga Māori, as you are designing digital outcomes – what are the really important things. So it is a connection between Te Tangata me te Rorohiko, and what do you have to consider. So the whole digital citizen,” says Hauiti-Parapara.

The curriculum has a two-year implementation period, for both English and Māori medium, in acknowledgement that teachers will need time to learn how to use it.

Natasha Ropata, senior advisor Te Reo Māori

*“We want to encourage that narrative, that it’s not a new thing – that Māori have always done this. Today there might be different, new tools, but the practice of the thinking and the designing isn’t new.”*  
– Glenys Hauiti-Parapara.

Group, says many kura have already implemented aspects of Hangarau Matihiko within their Hangarau teaching and learning programme, but are reassured that the Ministry’s new amended curriculum provides additional support.

“There are others saying, ‘oh, we are way ahead of you, come on Ministry, catch up. We have been doing digital technologies for years, but it just hasn’t been identified as such’.

“A lot of Māori medium kura are already and/or heading more towards thematic planning, delivery and assessment. It’s integrated learning, so digital technologies – depending on what the theme is – could be part of a group of subjects supporting a theme. It’s heading that way, so digital technologies definitely can integrate with any theme, subject, and/or learning area of the curriculum.”

Ropata says that, in the new digital world, the challenge for Hangarau Matihiko is to ensure that traditional Māori principles and protocols are retained.

“It’s being able to unpack that for the tamariki to understand, that computational thinking is not a foreign thing, it’s actually a traditional way of thinking.”

### ONLINE RESOURCES

- [education.govt.nz/digitech](https://education.govt.nz/digitech)
- The plan on a page: [education.govt.nz/assets/Documents/dthm/MOE-The-Plan-on-a-Page-Digital-Technologies.pdf](https://education.govt.nz/assets/Documents/dthm/MOE-The-Plan-on-a-Page-Digital-Technologies.pdf)
- [hangaraumatihiko.tki.org.nz/](https://hangaraumatihiko.tki.org.nz/)





# It’s ready to roll

Lead Advisor for the Ministry of Education’s Digital Technologies, Mark Grams is part of the team rolling out the support package to schools and kura during the implementation stage. He says it starts with schools and teachers determining where they are in their confidence and knowledge of what the digital technologies curriculum content is about.

## Getting started

The Nationwide Digital Readiness programme is designed to strengthen teachers’ understanding of digital technologies.

“An online self-review tool ([kiatakatu.ac.nz](http://kiatakatu.ac.nz)) assesses how much knowledge you already have about learning and digital technologies, and it puts you onto a personal learning pathway,” he says.

Grams says that teachers can do this on their own or alongside their peers (with their own individual accounts). Leaders can encourage their staff to take part. Another face-to-face feature of the support is the contestable fund for Tailored Digital Technologies and Hangarau Matihiko Professional Learning and Development (DT & HM PLD). Grams says a “cool feature” of that is that through a few questions, schools are challenged to determine where they are in their digital technologies journey as well as being given recommendations on where to start.

“For example, if your school is not confident using digital technologies to support teaching and learning across the curriculum, digital fluency may be the best place to start, which has been available since 2016,” he says.

“If your school is already quite confident with digital fluency generally, it will recommend you do digital readiness, and possibly the Tailored DT & HM PLD. If you already have a good background in learning in digital technologies, the DT & HM PLD is designed to support schools to integrate digital technologies into their local curriculum,” he says.

## Digital fluency support

If your school or kura needs support so that all teachers can confidently use digital technologies in their teaching and learning programmes across the curriculum, consider first applying for regular digital fluency PLD via your local area office. Digital fluency support is designed

*An online self-review tool assesses how much knowledge you already have about learning and digital technologies, and it put you on to a personal learning pathway.*  
– MOE lead adviser  
Mark Grams

to enable teachers and kaiako to confidently use digital technologies, programmes and devices to support all of their teaching and learning programmes (see [services.education.govt.nz/pld/information-for-principals-and-school-leaders/accessing-centrally-funded-pld](http://services.education.govt.nz/pld/information-for-principals-and-school-leaders/accessing-centrally-funded-pld)).

## Ready to implement

The Nationwide Digital Readiness Programme Kia Takatū ā-Matihiko may be your next step; this programme is an introduction to the new curriculum content and teaching strategies. The programme will be provided through online and face-to-face support directly from the Ministry’s provider Core Education, tailored to the learning needs of individual schools, kura and Communities of Learning Kāhui Ako. Also there is the ability to be able to network face to face with each other to gain ideas and insights, view explanatory videos and train as a digital leader if desired.

Sign up to the programme here: [kiatakatu.ac.nz](http://kiatakatu.ac.nz)

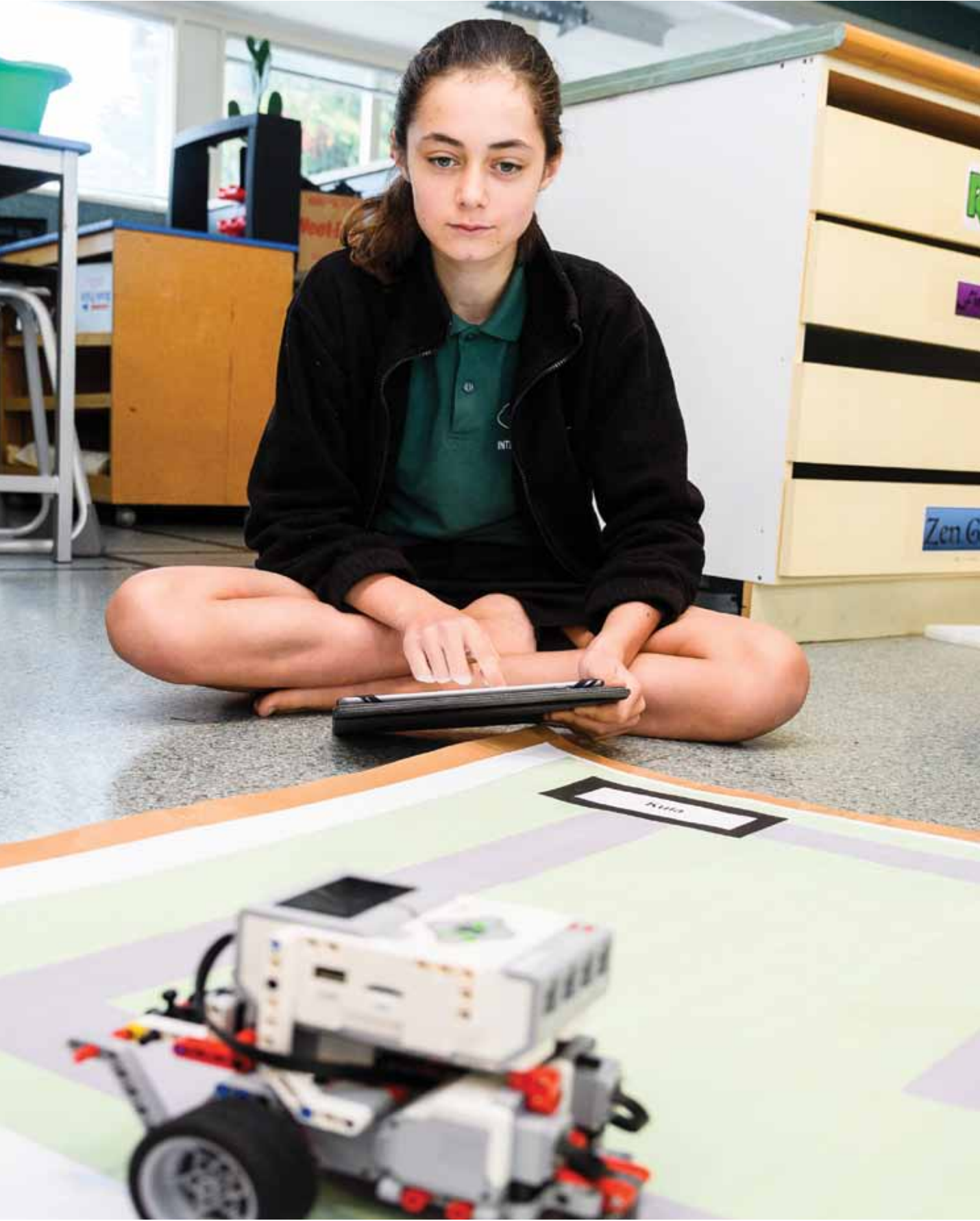
## Once you understand the new curriculum and are ready to implement it

Schools, kura, Kāhui Ako, department heads and school leaders will be able to apply for tailored PLD to assist in integrating the new curriculum content into their teaching and learning programmes. Once an allocation has been made they will be able to work with an accredited facilitator to build a PLD plan specific to their needs.

You can apply here: [services.education.govt.nz/pld/dthm/apply](http://services.education.govt.nz/pld/dthm/apply)

Grams says digital technologies are aiming for a future-focused curriculum to teaching and learning, “and just making sure that the learning our learners experience is meeting the needs of an increasingly digital world.

“You would think with digital technologies changing so fast, that it would be hard [to future-proof the curriculum]. But although devices themselves change really fast, the underlying computer science principles behind them, such as algorithmic thinking, data representation and programming, have remained largely the same. Our curriculum writers were tasked with ensuring the content would be future-proof.”





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## REVIEWS

### Recipes for Messy Play

New Shoots Publishing

What a beautiful reinvention of the ECE staple *Recipes for Messy Play* updated and expanded this is. It is full of ideas for messy play that are easy to create, have clear and simple instructions, provide a great range of experiences and provide opportunities for sustained open-ended play. It is visually beautiful and has a focus on sustainability with suggestions on how to reuse messy play while keeping it fresh and inviting (a particular favourite was the ice chalk from reused gloop). Use of te reo Māori throughout the book gives

handy ideas of phrases and concepts to use while working alongside children.

Along with a great variety of messy play ideas, I appreciated the links to why this is an important part of our ECE curriculum, and the stepping out of the kinds of skills children gain from this play.

It was easy to then make links to Te Whāriki: "Their play is valued as meaningful learning and the importance of spontaneous play is recognised" (Te Whāriki, p 25) and "an understanding that trying things out, exploring, playing with ideas and materials and collaborating with others are important and valued ways of

learning" (Te Whāriki, p 47). This would also be helpful for documentation and public display of learning.

The What Adults Can Do section gives suggestions on how to support children in their exploration of messy play that are open-ended

and authentic. This would be especially useful to adults new to providing these experiences. This book is fun, practical and would be a great addition to any educator/parent library or art room shelf.

– Donna Eden ★★★★★





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## REVIEWS

### Running the Country – A look inside New Zealand's government

Maria Gill

*Running the Country* is a comprehensive guide to the workings of government in New Zealand. Its layout makes it easy to read and there is a great timeline across the bottom of the pages that highlights important dates in New Zealand history.

It's a great guide to how our democracy works and would be a fantastic resource to use to get children interested in their role as citizens, and how they can have their voices heard.

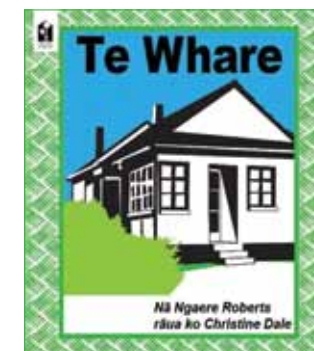
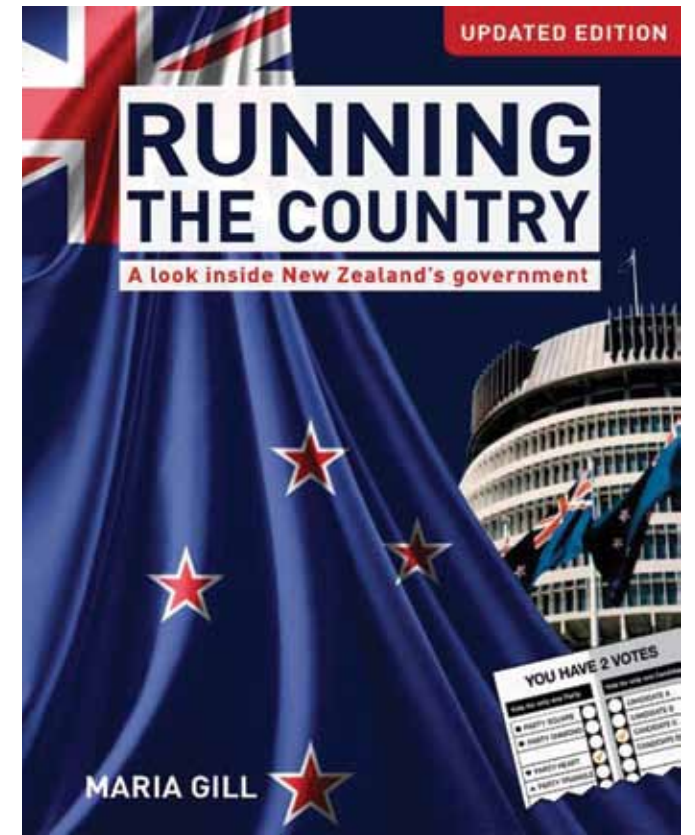
Louis, Year 4 at Te Aro School, said: "This book had lots of interesting facts, like in 1867 four Maori electorate seats were established, and it cost \$18,825,000 dollars

to earthquake strengthen the Beehive. The book is 56 pages long, has good pictures and is easy to read.

"There are very good facts about people and time, and prompts to google different keywords if you want more information. Each section profiles different figures that are important to the topic with a cartoon picture. I especially liked the cartoon of the Queen.

"I think it's called the Beehive because it is sucking information from the computers. The people are the bees and they suck the pollen, which is information."

– Morgan Tresidder-Reed  
and Louis Condra  
★★★★★



### Te Whare

Nā Ngaere Roberts rāua ko  
Christine Dale

This book is suitable for all ages, from pēpi to pākeke. The pēpi is guiding the reader through the whare, on the hunt for something special. The reader will notice the repetitiveness of kupu Māori "kei te taha" (beside).

Good use of simple, basic te reo Māori for the beginner and also for reading to the younger audience. The reader will be able to match the kupu with the pictures, which is very helpful to increase your reo Māori vocabulary. On the last page is an activity that takes you back into the story to find other things,



which would be exciting for the young reader. I think this is a great resource for all kaiako in ECE as well as at primary level. Ngā mihi ki a kōrua e hāpai ana i tō tātou reo rangatira. ★★★★★

### Ko Kiwi mā

Nā Ngaere Roberts rāua ko  
Christine Dale

Another book by the authors using the same format as the first book, *Te Whare*. This keeps the reader consistent with the language being used, and the pictures are easily identifiable. Again, simple and basic but the writers are using this book to support counting in te reo Māori.

The use of creatures from Tane Mahuta and Tangaroa, keeps the essence of the book authentic and related to te ao Māori. Kaiako mā, tamariki mā, tātou katoa e āhei ana te pānuitia i tēnei pukapuka. Suitable for all ages, for kaiako, children and other interested readers. In both books the use of certain colours makes the book easy to communicate with and to connect to. There are a number of ways the kaiako can use this book to extend on counting with the use of te reo Māori. Anō nei te mihi ki a kōrua e kaha tuhituhi ana wēnei pukapuka mā tātou. Haere tōnu, haere tōnu ngā mihi ki a kōrua.

– Manu Pohatu ★★★★★



Resetting the clock

◀ p 14

Yet knowing about the past provides a valuable window on the present and an explanation of the situation we find ourselves in today. It allows us to reflect on questions, such as are we really better off today than yesterday? Has total abandonment been replaced by something that is even moderately superior? The evidence says it would seem not.

Curriculum is the reference point for all teaching and learning. It demands high levels of ongoing teacher support – support that is accessible and relevant to the needs of teachers and their children, support that actually attunes to practice and the day to day practicalities of the classroom. So where should that support come from, in what form and in what order of preference? Ministry booklets? Ministry websites, Ministry contractors and other consultants? Google? Facebook? Or from accomplished professionals on the ground

*Arguably, New Zealand curriculum development and support for countless schools and teachers has been woefully underserved with the various reforms that followed on from Tomorrow's Schools.*

who are respected for being well-grounded in teaching experience in their particular areas of curriculum practice, knowledge, theory, and resourcefulness? Should it be a top-down model of support, or a bottom-up collegial model, or a collaboration that spurns the ‘upper hand’?

Arguably, New Zealand curriculum development and support for countless schools and teachers has been woefully underserved with the unwinding of various reforms that followed on from Tomorrow's Schools. Lockwood Smith's achievement initiative which introduced levels and achievement objectives in curriculum statements written by Ministry contractors, proved chronically problematic and resulted in widespread mechanistic practice that runs counter to imaginative teaching, original thinking and localised initiatives.

Significantly, those levels and achievement objectives linger on – because there hasn't been the wit or will to replace them with something better. The Ministry's National Standards perpetuated the model and drove a fundamentalist wedge between literacy and numeracy and the richness and roundedness of The New Zealand Curriculum.

We can't turn back the clock, but we can certainly reset it. We could make it happen, if only we had bright-minded and willing leadership supported by the right kind of attitude at the top and enthusiastic commitment from the bottom up.

So let's reinvent the wheel that once moved and progressed so well, and get back to nation-wide, professionally led, collaborative curricula networking. It would take time and perhaps modern tyres to get this up and running, but it would be worth it for our schools, teachers, children, and for breathing life into The New Zealand Curriculum.

Let's do it?

Dr Lester Flockton recently presented at the NZEI Te Riu Roa curricula hui – *Taking the Lead – Celebrating Our Curricula*. He has worked on many national curriculum and assessment committees and projects throughout his career, including major roles in the development and writing of The New Zealand Curriculum (2007).

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communicate and collaborate with each other. It provides online and face-to-face networking hubs to share information and resources, communicate and inquire into practice.

The Equity through Education Centre offers opportunities to engage in research and collaborate on projects that promote equity: [www.equitythrougheducation.nz](http://www.equitythrougheducation.nz)

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## BOOKS

**Commentator Kelvin Smythe is giving away five copies of his final publication of *The File*.**

Smythe says: "It is a publication that, with care, can provide a lift to the primary education system and a surer sense of direction. Not because of what I have done on my own, but from the voices I have listened to over the years, and the voices recorded in the writing."

The books are valued at \$50 each.



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