NZEI TE RIU ROA

AKO

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SUMMER 2019

THE INCLUSIVE EDUCATION ISSUE

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Reason for hope?

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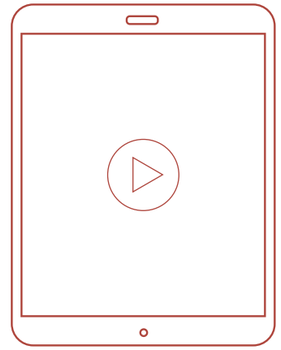

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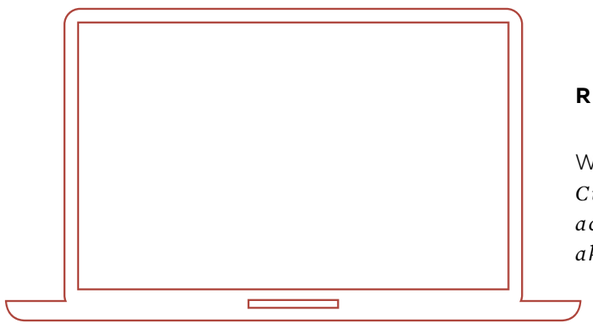

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EDITORIAL

We are responsible for making education inclusive for all

Kia ora e hoa mā

This edition of *Ako* begins our year with a focus on inclusion and what this really means for our tamariki and the adults who work alongside them.

One of the great opportunities that I have in the role of National President of NZEI Te Riu Roa is the chance to talk to many of you over the year. Over last year a topic that seemed to be at the forefront of most people's minds was the need for a level of resourcing that would meet the needs of all of our learners. One of the groups that has certainly been identified as missing out are those students who have additional learning or behavioural needs.

No matter what role we have within education, we all come to this place with a deep and burning desire to make a difference for each and every one of the children who we work with. It is deeply disturbing for us all when we are confronted by the fact that we simply do not have the specialist support, financial support or human resource that is needed for a particular child.

I know that for many of you this is a very deep worry as you try and find the way to provide a learning environment that enables each child to access the curriculum in a safe and positive way. For many of you that involves trying to tap into new learning that will help you to better understand the needs of the child. The time to do this and the professional development needed is often not forthcoming and is certainly something that we as NZEI Te Riu Roa are trying to address currently.

The work with inclusive education is never done – that is the challenge and the reward. When I think of special schools, and their evolution, it shows how far we can travel. Many special schools now act as conduits for the identification and dissemination of good practice models to support diverse learners, for example, offering outreach programmes in their communities. This has been a very positive development.

When I think of inclusion within our education system I also think of the importance of embracing each child's language, culture and identity.

As a teacher and principal this has always been important to me. Knowing and understanding each child and their family, whānau and aiga is absolutely crucial and our education system must have this embedded at its heart.

I believe we have the responsibility and the opportunity to make our system inclusive for all. It is time to stand up and speak out for what really does matter in order to meet the needs of all our learners.

"In diversity there is beauty and there is strength" – Maya Angelou.

Lynda Stuart
National President, Te Manukura

GUEST EDITORIAL

Thinking about what is normal has changed over time and place

When we think about diversity, and who we mean when we talk about diverse people, depends a lot on who and what we think of as normal.

Normal is one of those very powerful words that can be used to bring some people in and push other people out. Normal can be used as a synonym for typical, average, expected. It also often has moral overtones: what is right, healthy, appropriate. Deciding who and what is normal also involves power: people and groups in powerful positions determine who and what is typical, appropriate, acceptable. Decisions about what is normal, and who can decide, are contested and debated, often initiated by members of excluded groups.

Thinking about what is normal has changed over time and place. Some examples of changes in thinking about what was normal include: boys were educated and girls were not; all students lived in families with two parents, one male and one female; values, beliefs and practices common in some parts of the western world were assumed to be shared by all, desired by all.

From the perspective of those members of the groups considered normal, everything was working well (also called "privilege"). From the perspective of those members of groups not considered normal, there could be a number of consequences such as pressure to change and "fit in", subtle or active exclusion, being defined as unworthy, uneducable, unwanted, and being blamed for the consequences of not being the same.

Diverse means varied. Occasionally we might hear "diverse" being interpreted as "not normal" – something along the lines of (according to any particular group) "not (normal) like us". When we are talking about, thinking of, planning for diverse people, we are talking about all of us. We are talking about all of our diverse languages, cultural values, religions, abilities, interests, genders, sexualities, family configurations, socioeconomic status, how long we've lived in Aotearoa, ways of making sense of the world and so on. In our early childhood centres, schools, classrooms, playgrounds, communities we are the diverse students, teachers, families, neighbours, colleagues.

The challenges and opportunities for our current education system require growing a workforce (including teacher education and education support services) that better resembles the diversities in our communities, neighbourhoods and schools. We can choose to shift the focus from managing diversity to understanding and learning from our diversities.

Imagine arriving at a centre or school (as a new student, family or member of staff) and realising that something about you (your religion, language, sexuality) is being managed. This is a very different feeling to being welcomed, supported and feeling part of the team. While not wishing to minimise the complexity of living and working in our diverse communities, how we frame what we are doing shapes our responses to our fellow travellers.

Missy Morton is Professor of Disability Studies and Inclusive Education, Faculty of Education and Social Work, University of Auckland.

The inclusive education issue

Teaching and learning can thrive as educators celebrate and engage with diversity in our rapidly changing communities.

This issue explores how educators are navigating the challenges of inclusivity to improve outcomes for all students.

Ced Simpson

Now is the time for human rights-based education

The trouble with "inclusive education" is that it can become a slogan, a mantra, a label for government policy, that imposes extra burdens on teaching professionals. At the Human Rights in Education Trust, we believe it's helpful to ground the purpose, practices and commitments to inclusive education in more fundamental norms.

In his famous 2006 TED Talk, Ken Robinson told the story of the child identified by her school as having a possible learning disorder at the age of seven or so. Taking her to see a medical specialist her mother explained she couldn't concentrate at school and was very fidgety. The astute doctor diagnosed Gillian Lynne as a dancer; she was sent to a school specialising in dance, and went on to be the choreographer responsible for *Cats* and *Phantom of the Opera*.

Discovering and helping realise the potential in every child is a core responsibility of educators, and goes to the heart of the profession. Going beyond government policy, the mission of teachers and schools is to realise *the human right to education* of every child, with its dual aims of enabling development of their personality, talents and abilities to fullest potential, and their participation in a free society. This is the rationale for inclusive education.

The right to education also involves the right to an education that respects, protects and fulfils human rights in general, from the rights to be treated with fairness and dignity, to be safe, and to have a say, to the rights to work and an adequate standard of living, to benefit from science and the arts, and so on.

New Zealand has obligations in international law to promote human rights through education, but there are distinct advantages to framing education in human rights terms as part of inclusive education.

First, the right to education gives the normative imperative for inclusive education: *every* child has a right to education, and the evidence is clear that the vast majority of children with "special needs" have a greater chance of having their potential identified and realised in an education process designed to accommodate all.

Second, developing a strong school culture explicitly based on the human rights of all creates a community in which diversity is valued, and each person is treated with dignity and respect. Schools participating in the Human Rights in Education initiative have reported significant declines in bullying, for example. A practical primary school learning inquiry in Nelson, into the way children with disabilities might experience school, led to school changes that improved outcomes for children with sight and mobility disabilities, and also taught five and six-year-olds that they could influence school policy – a real citizenship lesson.

Third, a human rights culture becomes not just "the way we do things around here", but a way of acting that relates to cross-culturally negotiated and internationally-agreed standards of global citizenship, and is more likely to be exported into post-school settings. Children learning about human rights and responsibilities, as part of developing classroom treaties, become active citizens interpreting and acting in the wider world based on human rights values.

Inclusive education, if done as part of human rights-based education, not only benefits children who may otherwise languish in schools and society, it can also be part of creating the sort of schools and society we all want.

Ced Simpson is Director of the Human Rights in Education Trust.

Jai Breitnauer

He waka eke noa – we are all in this together

When researching a good kura for our older son, we sought a school with genuine commitment to biculturalism and the environment, a diverse roll with ngā ākonga from a variety of backgrounds, and modern systems for encouraging positive behaviour.

When he was diagnosed with ASD, ADHD and anxiety aged six, we were surprised to find these commitments did not necessarily translate into an inclusive environment for a child with additional learning, behavioural or physical needs.

For us inclusivity is paramount to belonging. When a child has an additional need like ASD, they may feel disconnected to the world around them yet often want to be a part of it. ASD children are at greater risk of self-harm and suicide, driven by that feeling of not having a place. In a school environment, they need to have their similarities to their peers accentuated, not their differences.

Many children with additional needs thrive in the classroom environment when they have access to a passionate and well-resourced teacher aide, and I believe all classrooms should have a TA as standard practice. There will always be a small number of children who will need resource attached to them in name, but most children – with or without additional needs – would prosper with the generalised support of a TA without making one particular child stand out.

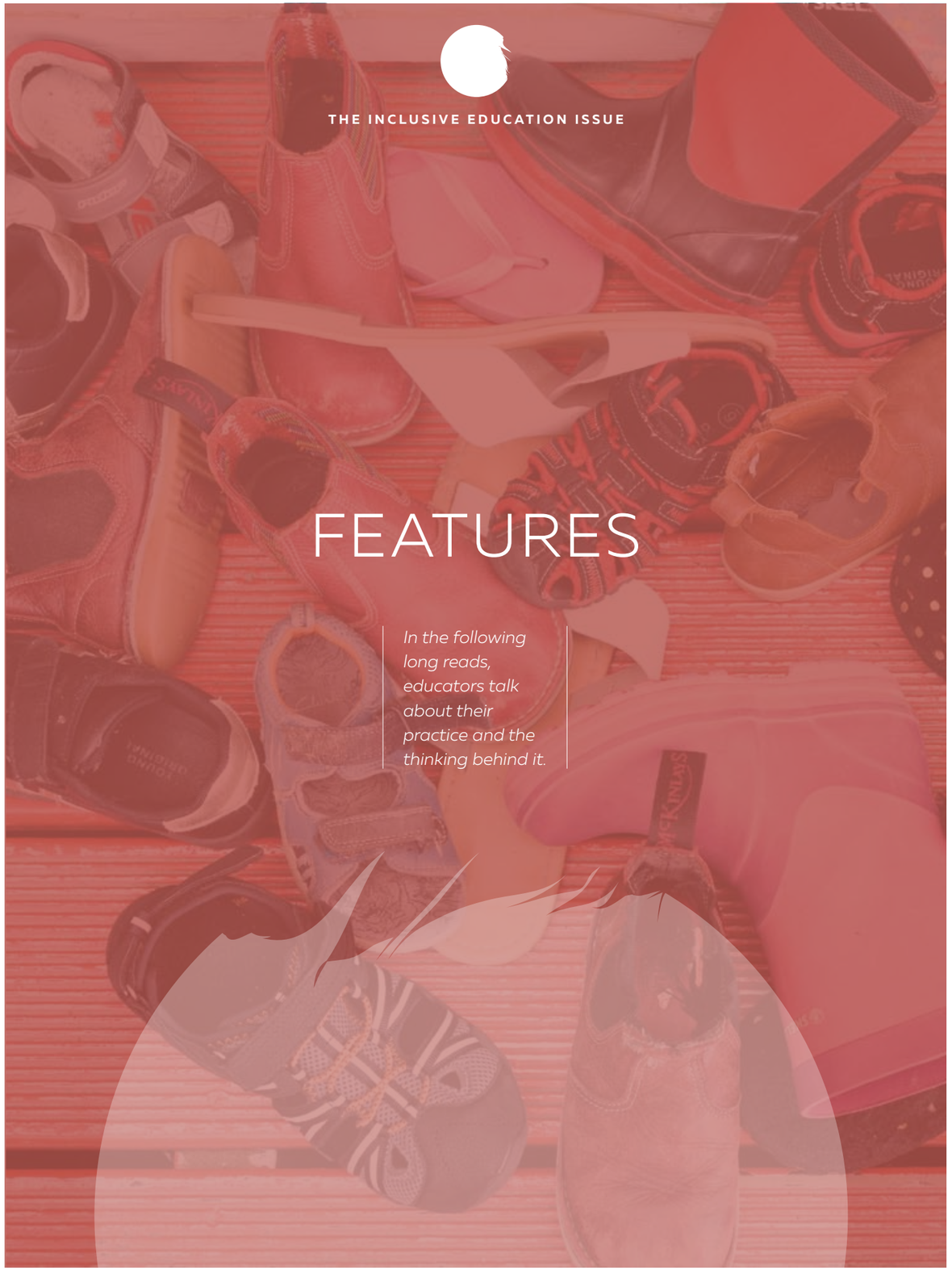
I believe that identifying the highest needs in the classroom and then employing the supportive practices for those needs across the whole student population would be empowering for all tamariki. We spend a lot of time focusing on enabling students with difference, when we could just apply a lens of difference to the rest of the class. My friend's son, an ambulatory wheelchair user, was overjoyed when his school introduced wheelchair basketball.

Not only was he enabled to lead in a context where he previously needed an isolating level of support, but other children learned a new skill, a new perspective, and discovered muscles they were previously unaware of. My own son struggles with worksheets or timed activities to an extent that precludes him from taking part – but it poses the question: what value do these activities add? Is there an alternative approach that would raise up all students?

Finally, kindness and communication need to be the cornerstones of any inclusive approach. Encourage compliments circles among students, praise success within an individual's framework so tamariki can see how it looks different for everybody, and don't assume poor behaviour is wilful – focus on resolving the unmet need rather than the behaviour it led to.

He waka eke noa – we are all in this together: a child with difference is not a burden in this boat, just an opportunity to perfect the boat's design for the comfort of all.

Jai Breitnauer is an Auckland writer and editor with two boys, one of whom has additional needs.



Seeing the differences

Inclusivity in ECE is increasingly seen as an opportunity to improve teaching practices and engage children's learning.

01

PHOTOGRAPHER
Mark Coote

WRITER
Jane Blaikie

It's in early childhood that attitudes to diversity are formed, and teachers see quality education here as the key to children growing up with a positive sense of self that enables them to respond proactively to life's challenges.

The Adelaide Early Childhood Centre in Wellington makes a point of celebrating diversity. "It's about really valuing difference – rather than making everyone feel the same, it's about every child feeling just as great about themselves as the next child does," says Head Teacher Karen O'Leary.

For teachers, it's about being able to reflect on as many differences and experiences as possible. "If teachers have time to reflect, they can challenge their own stereotypes and ways of doing and thinking – this creates opportunities for growth," says O'Leary, who is also known as a comic actor, most recently in the TV series *Wellington Paranormal*.

O'Leary advocates for authentic learning – "you don't want tokenism". The best learning flows naturally from conversations with children and whānau, she says, including positive questions to and from children. She sees the benefits as limitless.

"Young children are building up their sense of self, and if this is positive, then they're more likely to develop positive strategies to meet challenges." Without a positive sense of self, she says, people can struggle. "You see it in adults who are afraid of differences because no one put in the time or asked the questions that suggest different ways of thinking about things that are scary."

The more children see differences, the more understanding and appreciation they have. "It helps that at Adelaide, in terms of gender and family make-up, I'm lesbian – some basically think I'm a man!" O'Leary's son and her partner's son have both attended the centre.

Teachers at Adelaide make an effort to get out and about in their relatively diverse community of Newtown. "We might walk up to the retirement village to sing them some songs – and we might see some people asking for money, or someone talking to themselves. We've had some fascinating conversations with children about poverty."

"If teachers have time to reflect, they can challenge their own stereotypes and ways of doing and thinking – this creates opportunities for growth."

O'Leary acknowledges that tensions around inclusivity, related to escalating culture wars, have worsened in recent years. "It can get really complex. For example, we would always accept people's religion but then there are human rights issues about how some religions treat women and gay people.

"At what point do you draw the line? We did have someone make some comments that were a bit racist and we did have to challenge that." She believes that centres need to be resourced to navigate these minefields.

Long-time kōhanga reo teacher and now professional learning facilitator, Manu Pohatu (Ngāti Porou, resident in the Waikato), acknowledges O'Leary's comments about authenticity and tokenism.

"It's easy to get caught up in the politics of biculturalism – it can sink into dial-a-kaikaranga or dial-a-pōwhiri. If you are the Māori in the house, then you can get picked to do the 'Māori thing'."

She says Māori and Pasifika kaiako are overloaded. For instance, many indigenous language weeks are celebrated at centres and those cultures can be expected to organise them. But Pohatu asks, "Why should they? When centres have indigenous cultures attending, they should at least have some idea of the language."

For Toru Fetū Kindergarten in Porirua, part of the Whānau Manaaki group of kindergartens, engagement is key to inclusivity. Toru Fetū means three stars and the kindergarten nurtures three languages and three cultures – Cook Islands, Niue and Tuvalu.

"It's all about relationships," says Whānau Manaaki senior manager Caroline Mareko.

01 Teacher Shveta Mahadevan with Lyla at Adelaide Early Childhood Centre.

02

03

“It’s about valuing difference – it’s about every child feeling as great about themselves as the next child does.”

– KAREN O’LEARY, HEAD TEACHER, ADELAIDE EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTRE

These include relationships with children, whānau and organisations such as Plunket, the dental hub in a neighbouring school, other health and social services, Oranga Tamariki, the Cannons Creek library and so on.

But Toru Fetū also recognises that parents need help to navigate services, especially learning support services. So Toru Fetū and a neighbouring Pasifika kindergarten share a community liaison teacher. “Referrals need to be made, observations made, and meetings held with parents to clarify information and to help with attending appointments,” Mareko says.

All the teachers are supported by the community liaison teacher. Mareko describes her as “the go-to person if teachers have concerns about a child. She has relationships with families. A teacher can say, ‘this is what we would like to communicate with this family’ and she will work from there.”

Last July, Toru Fetū’s strong links with its communities were recognised with a Prime Minister’s education excellence award. The kindergarten was a finalist in two categories

02 Head teacher Karen O’Leary with Tui.

03 The Toru Fetū community gather to celebrate winning an award for excellence.

> “Learning support and inclusivity are about finding strengths and finding what needs to happen in the physical, behavioural, and language-learning spaces to support strengths.”
>
> – SENIOR HEAD TEACHER CHRISTINA RIZOS

and an overall winner, taking home $26,000. “It recognises that we’ve been doing fantastic work with engagement and we’ve sustained it,” says Mareko.

She says the secret to maintaining strong engagement with families is teachers taking time to develop respectful relationships, teachers who have links to the community, and teachers who care, not just about the children, but also about culture and families and making community connections. It all supports children’s learning.

The service has also had a programme to train its own students who study while working, to help develop qualified teachers with Pasifika language skills.

Training will feature at another Wellington kindergarten, Owhiro Bay, where Senior Head Teacher Christina Rizos also sees inclusivity as a chance to boost adult and child learning. The service has won a $5000 NZEI Te Riu Roa scholarship to run classes of New Zealand Sign Language (NZSL), for teachers and parents from the kindergarten and nearby Owhiro Bay School.

The initiative was instigated by the parent of a child, who is also a teacher at the kindergarten. Her daughter, Frankie, has Down Syndrome, and she, along with a number of children in the school, are using NZSL.

> “As we begin to recognise more forms of difference, it’s even more important for education professionals to meet people on their own terms.”
>
> – THE CO-EDITORS OF *TE AOTŪROA TĀTAKI – INCLUSIVE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION*

“It’s an exciting time,” says Rizos. “Learning support and inclusivity are about finding strengths and about what needs to happen in the physical, behavioural and language-learning spaces to support strengths.”

She says teachers get to expand their practice, and children learn that everyone is unique and that we all have different needs and need different environments.

“Frankie has been teaching older children the names of the animals in NZSL – it’s very exciting for her and a great opportunity for other children.”

However, at the same time as there is excitement and energy in parts of the sector, academics are realistic about the barriers to inclusivity. Diane Gordon-Burns, Alex Gunn, Kerry Purdue and Nicola Surtees are co-editors and authors of chapters in the influential book *Te Aotūroa Tātaki – Inclusive Early Childhood Education*, and in a statement for *Ako* noted, “Unfortunately, persistent structural factors such as working conditions, large group sizes, qualifications, lack of professional development opportunities and funding continue to hinder teachers’ efforts to realise child and family rights to inclusive, high-quality ECE.”

They also say increasing expectations for ECE kaiako to teach in culturally responsive ways, and the unmet need for PLD to help teachers work competently with a diversity of children and whānau, are of concern, as is the dearth of qualified Māori and Pasifika kaiako: “This continues to affect the quality of culturally competent teaching throughout not only the early childhood sector, but primary and secondary schools as well.”

“Better to figure out who these new people are, about the connections that matter to them, and how they want to be known – and to work with that.”

Their book focuses on inclusivity as a form of power-sharing within centres – that centres and services must welcome differences and continually adjust. The work is never done, because each family brings change to a centre. But while it is demanding work, it is also hugely rewarding and vital.

“As we begin to recognise more forms of difference and people continue to contest and resist traditional forms of thinking about personhood and the self, it’s even more important for education professionals to meet people on their own terms.”

Rather than imposing what might be narrow and fixed understandings about ethnicity, wealth, ability, gender, sexuality and the like, it is better to “figure out who these new people are, about the connections that matter to them, and how they want to be known – and to work with that”, they say. A second edition of the book is due for release in 2020 from NZCER Press.

At a systemic level then, significant structural change is needed to overcome barriers to opportunities offered by inclusivity. NZEI members are seeking to drive this in two ways.

First, ECE members are actively pursuing a pay equity claim through the campaign Fair’s Fair – Mana Taurite Pay Equity. A pay equity settlement would recognise that the ECE workforce has been undervalued because it has traditionally been seen as “women’s work”. Improved conditions would relieve the stress that too many educators face, and give them space to develop their practice.

Second, NZEI members have developed Shaping Our Future: Our 10-year strategic plan for ECE, which sets out an ambitious plan to reignite the sector, including better planning of provision, better ratios, better access for families, and immediate reinstatement of funding for 100% qualified teachers. The government has released its own strategic plan, which signals a shift in the right direction, but at a slower pace. Members are urged to provide feedback on the government plan by 15 March 2019 (search “conversation early learning strategic plan nz”).

Education for all

Robert Martin has become the public face of why a human rights take on inclusive education is needed. Born with a brain injury that made his early life difficult, he now travels the world asking hard questions of governments about their efforts to comply with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities.

Earlier this year Martin Martin of Whanganui chaired three sessions of a UN Committee on the Rights of People with Disabilities (CPRD). Yet tell him that you want to chat about special education and he's likely to fire back with a comment that "there's nothing special about being special".

It sounds like an admonishment, but if you know Martin's story, it is really just a statement of fact. Martin's exceptionalism or "specialness" comes from being born with an intellectual disability and it has made much of his life miserable.

Before he was two years old, Martin was removed from his family and sent to live in an institution. His parents Hazel and Jim had been told that their son "suffered from mental retardation and would never learn like other children." He would "always be a child," and it would be best for everyone if the boy went into a facility designed for people like him.

His earliest years were lived at the Kimberley Centre, near Levin, a sprawling collection of buildings and home for close to a thousand disabled people of all ages. He tells of how, from the very start, he pined for his family and for the ordinary world that he'd glimpse when he went home on occasional visits.

From the age of five, because he was one of a few adjudged capable of some learning, Martin attended school at Kimberley. There he remembers using Cuisenaire rods, spelling, reading and what seemed like endless broadcasts from the correspondence school on the classroom radio.

"The teacher on the radio could've been talking about anything and I wasn't taking it in," says Martin. "I learn by seeing and doing, not by listening."

The most powerful learning he recalls happened in the dorm, where he was helped in creating a papier mache world for his friends, the plastic animals he had found in cereal packets.

"We made an African savannah for the antelopes and elephants and then a forest for the monkeys and the leopards. I would play for hours and I learned so much that has stayed with me."

Many of his friends at Kimberley stayed there their entire lives, but for a couple of periods Martin found himself in the wider world, attending regular schools in Whanganui and Ohakune. He was always in a special unit but having come from an institution, he found the classroom environment difficult.

"I always felt I was behind and trying to catch up," he says. "We had about 25 students in the class and no one-on-one assistance. It was hard."

Martin's solution was to wander. He would find a way out of the classroom and look for interesting things to do, frequently involving the kicking of a ball. He would search the playground hoping to find one left outside at the end of playtime and boot it around until someone spied him and hauled him back into class. Sometimes he would sneak into the staffroom to check out whether there had been any biscuits left over from the teachers' morning tea.

WRITERS
John McRae / Kirsten Warner

01

01 Robert Martin – "I learn by seeing and doing, not by listening."

02

But for Martin the hardest part of school was his inability to make friends with other students. He really wanted to join their games at lunch-time, especially the football, but life in an institution had not equipped him with many social skills. The fact that he was in a special unit created an extra barrier and no-one wanted him in their team.

Unsurprisingly Martin and trouble became synonymous. His truanting and pilfering were problem enough, but there was also constant fighting. Martin's only way of dealing with the rejection he felt socially was to lash out and there were plenty in the playground who enjoyed seeing the small red-head lose his rag and would goad him on.

So Martin found himself back in institutions. He returned to Kimberley, spent the worst time of his life at Lake Alice Psychiatric Hospital, and did two stints at Campbell Park Boys Home in the South Island. In those places he experienced loneliness, abuse and violence, so that by the time he was 15 and released from state care and schooling, he was, to use his own term "wild".

"I didn't know how to be with other people," he says. "I'd suffered abuse and of course I'd learned how to abuse others. So that's what I did. I hit and hurt people."

What's more Martin was functionally illiterate. He had hoped, on returning to Whanganui, that he might go to high school but he wasn't given that opportunity. Martin says that he was "too thick".

"My lack of education impacted my life," says Martin. "When I was 15 I went to quite a few places looking for a job but I had no qualifications and I ended up in the sheltered workshops. I thought I was worth a bit more than that but apparently not. I never felt valued.

"I've done a lot in my life, but I've been on a benefit for many years. I always wondered what I could have achieved if I had the chances that other people have had in their lives."

"I've done a lot in my life, but I've been on a benefit for many years. I wonder what I could have achieved if I had the chances that other people have had."
– Robert Martin

It is fair to say that most of Martin's education happened in the years post-school and much of it was self-directed. He is passionate and knowledgeable about the animal world, sport, geography and modern history, and spends much of his leisure-time watching videos and poring over books on these subjects.

Martin's education has also been impacted by a succession of mentors who recognised his potential. He credits an IHC social worker, Alison Campbell, for helping him develop skills to deal with the anger and violence he carried into adulthood. It was she who first showed him how to speak up for himself and others and set him on the path toward leadership. Later, when Martin took up a role in IHC, advocating for those employed in the workshops and living in the homes, Desmond Corrigan played a critical role. A former teacher and later IHC Regional Manager, Desmond worked intensively with Martin helping him develop the vocabulary and communication skills that would eventually carry him on to the world stage.

Martin is quick to acknowledge the support he has received and believes that all over the world people with disabilities underachieve in large part because society does not acknowledge their potential.

"When I was a child, people just didn't think we could learn things," he says. "You kind of felt like nobody really wanted to teach us back in those days."

He desperately wanted to learn, to be alongside other children and live a normal life. The fact that he missed out on those things contributes to his passionate advocacy for inclusive education.

"Education is not a privilege," he says. "It is a basic human right. All people have a right to be educated in a way that suits them and have the assistance that they need – from as soon as they walk in the door of ECE until they finish school at Year 13.

"They should have the opportunity to go to tertiary education too, if that is what they want. To me, education is about lifelong learning. I think I'm a good example of the fact that learning doesn't stop after school. It carries on and if people need that assistance in their lives, they should have it."

It is vital that principals and teachers believe in the right of children with disabilities to a quality education and are motivated and resourced to achieve that. Training in teaching people with disabilities is important "but not the be all and end all." Attitude is critical.

"All disabled people can learn," he asserts, "and people learn at different paces. There needs to be more focus on how we enable people with disabilities to learn, and at their pace."

Martin acknowledges that the current schooling system is under pressure and it's not surprising that meeting the needs of children with disabilities has become a flashpoint.

"To be honest the whole system needs a revamp. We need it designed by people who know about education, but also with the input of disabled people. There has to be a better way to do it. It's not going to be easy but things aren't working at the moment."

He points to Article 24 of the UN CRPD that deals with education. The article states that implementing inclusive education is about making system-wide changes. The system must adapt to the needs of individuals, not the other way round.

"We need school to be somewhere that kids want to go to," says Martin, quickly adding that teachers need to want to be there as well.

"Schools have to be a win-win for everybody. So it's about thinking about how to make that happen."

A discussion of schooling with Martin cannot avoid discussion of special schools. The boy, who spent his childhood in institutions and has spent most of his adult life trying to break down barriers that separate people with disabilities, is not a fan. "I know some families like segregated schools but I have seen lots of people come out of those places and they really struggle in the community, knowing how to be with other people. There is no special community, no special society."

The years of international work, talking with governments and civil society representatives, has given Martin unparalleled insight into the best and worst of practice. The convention has meant that "people all over the world are talking about inclusive education. "Some countries are making real progress but some haven't even attempted to make the change. We've still got people in a lot of countries living in institutions."

When asked about his sense of how New Zealand is progressing in providing inclusive education, Martin says that compared with some other countries we are not doing very well.

"We have ratified the convention but I think we can and should do better. The United Nations CRPD committee that I sit on has published a General Comment to help people and governments to understand the convention[1]. It would be really good if principals and teachers across New Zealand knew about this comment and had read it."

"Education is not a privilege – it is a basic human right. All people have a right to be educated in a way that suits them and have the assistance that they need."

1 www.ohchr.org/en/hrbodies/crpd/pages/gc.aspx

02 Robert Martin (right) relaxes between UN committee meetings in Geneva.

What kind of society do we want?

The Human Rights Commission describes the right to education as one that develops individuals to their fullest potential and prepares them for responsible life in a free society, including development of respect for others and for human rights.

It is not sufficient to provide the same education for all, it is necessary to provide different and additional support. This includes specialist teachers for children with particular educational needs; and ensuring access to good quality Braille, New Zealand Sign Language and other communication assistance.

It also includes indigenous children having access to education in their own culture and language, subsidised transport for rural children to get to school, and additional benefits to attract quality teachers to isolated schools.

Inclusive education is defined as a universal human right, but how well are we doing and what are our obligations? How are schools and teachers rising to the multiple challenges?

When we're talking about inclusive education, it's important that we also look at the bigger picture, says Professor Missy Morton. "I don't think you can talk about inclusive education without spending a bit of time talking about what do we think the purpose of education is? What is it we're trying to include everybody into?

"If you start from that point, you start to ask questions about the relationship between education and society. For example, what is the role of the state in helping people imagine what's possible and to shape conditions so that teachers and schools and families and communities can help reach some of those goals."

Morton is Professor of Disability Studies and Inclusive Education, Faculty of Education, University of Auckland. She has led or worked on a number of Ministry of Education projects focussed on supporting teachers and schools to ensure all learners are welcomed, they are learning and achieving and have a real sense of belonging. Morton is a founding member of the Inclusive Education Action Group, a collaboration of disabled people and their allies, families, friends and professionals. She was part of the writing group for the first New Zealand Disability Strategy.

"I like to think the kind of society that we want values all the ways we are different, values diversity instead of schooling for some kind of mythical normal which has never really existed."
– Missy Morton

Looking at inclusive education from her perspective means asking the big questions rather than only getting caught up in the nuts and bolts. What kind of society do we want? And what is the relationship between school, education and society? Is schooling just about helping people get qualifications for work or do we have bigger aspirations for our education system? "I like to think that some of our aspirations for education include a really informed citizenry who can participate in democracy.

"That's critical participation, people thinking and asking questions that are tricky. I like to think the kind of society that we want values all the ways we are different, values diversity instead of schooling for some kind of mythical normal which has never really existed."

Morton's recent projects and publications look at structures and practices that support teachers and schools to welcome all children, young people and their families and provide a quality education for all students.

The more we understand about the bigger picture, the more we are talking about doing at least some things differently.

"And that means teachers, schools, boards of trustees and communities are constantly facing change. That can be energising but it can also be a bit exhausting if there's too much change."

Some learning areas such as science and social sciences are viewed as constantly developing and changing. But we don't necessarily think about creating the kinds of culture or ethos schools need in order to be comfortable and confident about embracing change and challenges.

Teachers are often seen as having a role as change agents – for example, in helping learn numeracy differently. Or being change agents in helping some children feel more welcome and other children to welcome those who appear to be different. Sometimes this is talked about in terms of social justice.

Educators' roles are complex when it comes to helping themselves and their colleagues through change. "We expect teachers to navigate change, to embrace it, to encourage students to feel comfortable navigating change."

That is a lot to ask, when the common

perception is that teaching is about delivering curriculum, with most people only understanding education through their experience of being a student. "Everybody's an expert on education, we all went to school."

Classrooms are complex ecosystems, she says. It's not a matter of just standing up the front and telling children how to do their times tables. Those days are long gone. But that idea of teaching still seems to loom large in the popular imagination of what's involved in schooling.

Maybe what we need, says Morton, is more discussion, more conversations about what is actually involved in education. "There's been a lot of damage done to the reputation of teachers and teaching over the last 20 years. We probably need to do a lot of work around recovering that."

Like doctors and the medical profession, teachers have had to be careful talking about stresses and difficulties in case it reflected on their competence or school's reputation. It has not been safe to admit mistakes even though mistakes are an important way to learn.

"One strategy to keep a professional group quiet is to make them look incompetent."

The majority of our children are educated in the local school system, with the expectation that registered teachers should feel competent to teach all children. "It's not said anywhere but seems to imply that the rest of that sentence is 'and do it all on their own'.

"One teacher, one classroom, you're everything to all the people all the time in the classroom. That's not to say we don't have different resources coming in and out, but it's still all done in isolation."

"It's more than who's in the classroom, it's also about what do you think the classroom is.

Professor Missy Morton

We might have to re-think why we only have one grown-up in the classroom. And if you're going to put another person in the classroom and call them a teacher aide then we need to give them some professional development, we need to pay them, we need to value them."

One of the rationales for innovative learning environments was to remove isolation, says Morton. That comes with its own complexities but potentially offers the chance to work as a team and for people to take responsibility for leadership at different times for different aspects. We need to be doing more in initial teacher education around consultation and collaboration, she says.

"You don't walk into a classroom and say to the students, 'okay we're going to work using cooperative learning' and expect children to be able to work together without some explicit learning and teaching of the skills for teamwork. Likewise, we can't assume that people come with the skills of maintaining a team, not just getting through the task but actually developing and maintaining the kind of skills that you need."

The same applies to adult students in initial teacher education. How do we support new teachers to be effective team members, inside and outside the classroom? Initially teamwork takes more time, says Morton. "Eventually it does become easier but the first couple of years it's quite a shift."

So how are we going? "I think the learning clusters and then kāhui ako were meant to help achieve greater collaboration between schools. But this is within a context of 15 to 20 years of schools being in competition with one another. It's a big ask for schools to now turn to collaboration when our education system is premised on the idea that the market would decide which were 'good' schools and which were 'failing' schools. Too bad if you happened to be a student or a family or a teacher in a so-called 'failing' school."

Inclusive education requires fundamental reforms. One of these reforms is whether we still think schools being in competition is a good idea, and if not, what instead? "This was part of the bigger conversation we were invited to have with the change of government around what we want to see in the education system, our hopes and dreams. I'm not sure how often the conversation got to that fundamental level of 'is this what we want?' It's hard to think beyond what you know."

Singapore dismantled its rigid system of examination and testing for streaming. The catch phrase there is "learning is not a competition".

Our Schooling Futures: Stronger Together | Whiria Ngā Kura Tūātinitini, the review report of the Tomorrow's Schools Independent Taskforce, has been released for public consultation. A key finding was that unhealthy competition between schools has significantly increased as a result of the self-governing school model. It has also impacted on the ability of some students and whānau to exercise choice (search "conversation tomorrow's schools nz").

Singapore, says Morton, dismantled its rigid system of examination and testing for streaming. The catch phrase in Singapore is "learning is not a competition". Education leader Finland made big decisions around collaborative learning and curriculum in the digital age, moving away from a focus solely on subjects to also include skills and critical thinking. "I'm not saying we should simply emulate the decisions made in Singapore or Finland, but the question could be asked, how did they get to that place? How did they get to the point of deciding their systems weren't working and moving to something significantly different?"

No school system works in isolation and there are a lot of competing pressures and expectations. "I've been talking about education being one of the ways we educate a democratic society, but employers might throw up their hands and say actually we need schools to prepare the kinds of people we want in our workforce. I don't think it is just one emphasis or another, but our system has been out of balance for quite a while."

Preparation for teaching children of diverse abilities, with additional learning needs and behaviour issues, is often identified as lacking in initial teacher education. Morton says there is a need for serious recruitment of variously abled education professionals who are not typically seen. "We need to have them as our colleagues in tertiary education."

In terms of the teacher education workforce, some universities have made significant efforts to recruit in terms of ethnic diversity, as well as gender and sexuality, says Morton.

"We have some way to go in terms of making sure we also represent a variety of ways of communicating, of making your way through the world. Colleagues who might use a wheelchair, or use sign language, for instance, provide evidence for other teacher educators, as well as our student teachers, about who can be our educators and educational leaders."

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This isn't just something you put up on the wall

Bluestone School in Timaru starts each year with discussion about rights and responsibilities. "This does away with the need for school rules," says principal Ian Poulter, because the human rights framework the school works on is human decency.

The Human Rights in Education framework (see page 13), introduced at the school almost 10 years ago, is the lens through which everything is viewed, whether looking at New Zealand history, coming to terms with tikanga, overcoming entrenched views, discussing bullying, child poverty (financial and time poverty) or wellness of staff, school community, class or children.

"We continue to emphasise the importance of citizenship, of giving rather than merely taking or expecting. Rights and responsibilities is a great way to deliver that message and to allow children to see the reasons why we have laws and expectations and what makes for a healthy community."

The framework comes with on-going challenges to self-review, to check the school is still reflecting human rights values. New staff need to understand what Human Rights in Education means for the whole school community and what is expected in the classroom.

"This isn't just something you put up on the wall, this is something you need to live and believe and show in your daily actions."

"If each of us doesn't treat others as we would want to be treated then our world is not going to be a happy one where we feel safe, secure and confident."
– Principal Ian Poulter

Ian Poulter has been principal since the human rights framework was introduced, and stability of school leadership means it is easier to achieve and maintain. Board of trustees buy-in is essential and their knowledge also needs to be constantly updated.

News events children see in media can be used to understand what reality is for many people around the world and help children reflect on human rights, without over-dramatising and making children unnecessarily anxious.

"But much of what we do (especially for our younger children) is about things they can easily relate to. You have rights, but for you to enjoy these rights we all have shared responsibilities – you included!

"This to me is the building block of understanding human rights, for if each of us doesn't treat others as we would want to be treated then our world is not going to be a happy one where we feel safe, secure and confident.

"We need these feelings and understandings to prevent or at least reduce bullying and domestic violence, and improve sharing of wealth so child poverty and health issues are addressed."

John McRae is the author of *Becoming A Person: the biography of Robert Martin* published by Potton Burton. Kirsten Warner is a poet, journalist and musician.

Kura in the Manawatū and Horowhenua are shining examples of inclusivity, in a context of some hope that more resources are coming to support culturally competent practices everywhere.

Let the uniqueness of the child guide us in our mahi

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01 From left, pou-āwhina (learning support teacher) Valencia Poutini, Te Manahau Hautapu-Tamou and his father Kane Tamou.

PHOTOGRAPHER
Mark Coote

WRITER
Heeni Collins

"Nā te Atua, te taonga (ngā mokopuna) hei ārahi i a tātou" (the mokopuna is the gift from God, that guides us in their uniqueness) – this is the phrase used by Denise Marshall, tumuaki of Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Manawatū when asked for words to describe tamariki with different learning needs.

This Palmerston North kura has embraced such children from the time it was set up in 1990. "My daughter Waimarie was a child with spina bifida, in a wheelchair. She was the first child with a physical disability to attend kura kaupapa throughout the country, as far as we know. She brought her own uniqueness to help guide us." The kura has also had children with cerebral palsy, Down syndrome, and behavioural and learning challenges.

"We are very much open and confident in bringing our children into the world that we perceive as unique for us. Ko te tamaiti te pūtake o te ao – the learning centres on the child and what they bring to the table. We look at the holistic nature of the child, and we grow with them."

The purpose-built complex of buildings the kura now occupies was especially designed for children with special needs – with wheelchair ramps, wheelchair access pathways, and toilet and shower facilities for the disabled. "Everything's accessible," says Marshall. "I've been a very strong advocate, ensuring that the kura has that awareness for all our tamariki."

Staff at the kura learn from whānau about how to teach and learn with their child with physical, behavioural or learning challenges. They also employ extra support staff when required.

"It's actually changing the world of our staff and how they think – that a child belongs to all of us, it doesn't belong to the teacher aide. It's inclusive, we all need to support each other – child and whānau – to walk that pathway."

Te Aho Matua, the guiding philosophy of kura kaupapa Māori[1], in its first section Te Ira Tangata, emphasises the need to nurture and care for each child in their uniqueness. It includes the whakataukī – Ahakoa he iti, he māpihi pounamu – referring to the singular beauty and immense value of even the tiniest piece of fine greenstone. Each child has spiritual qualities, including mauri, tapu and mana; and the development of the whole child is important. Te Aho Matua emphasises the creative arts,

1 http://www.runanga.co.nz/Te+256Aho+Matua and https://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/publications/91416/105966/80403/2.-te-aho-matua

> Ahakoa he iti, he māpihi pounamu – the singular beauty and immense value of even the tiniest piece of fine greenstone.
>
> – TE AHO MATUA

such as music and drama, and the importance of whānau and tuakana/teina supportive relationships.

"Our kapahaka group included, and still includes, all our children with special needs," says Marshall. "You can feel their wairua, that confidence that they're standing up and knowing that they belong and feel connected. They're proud to wear that piupiu because they're representing their kura."

Everyone is also included in sports, if they choose to be. Waimarie played netball. Marshall says, "Everybody was taught to run sideways or use their peripheral vision so you knew where the wheelchair was. They're proud to wear their uniform, whether it be sports, or standing on the sideline. You're still wearing the uniform, because you're connected. That's inclusiveness." Planning for school trips also includes all tamariki and their whānau, which helps staff and whānau to get to know one another.

But some of the challenges for Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Manawatū are, and have always been, getting specialist support and extra putea or

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funding for extra support staff, and also for special learning resource materials.

"It took us a couple of years before we started getting any ORS (On-going Resourcing Scheme[2]) funding," says Marshall. "Probably because we wrote them in te reo Māori, and we didn't think of our tamariki as deficits, so we would write to them on what they could do." Marshall felt the emphasis should be on helping the child connect to the kura, rather than literacy and numeracy. "In the end we managed to find someone to come in and help us write to the requirements of that (application) and in English."

And when specialists such as physiotherapists or speech therapists have arrived to help, they are usually unable to speak te reo Māori or understand te ao Māori. "I'd ask what they required, then I'd be doing the translation, talking to the child, at the same time as running a class next door," says Marshall. "Language was a barrier, and culture was a barrier. We had to build relationships with them to help them understand. It worked because we had to make it work so that the child could learn and feel connected."

The kura has regular visits from the local Resource Teacher of Learning and Behaviour Peter Te Rangi (Rangitāne), who has had a long-term relationship with the kura.

The kura is also advised by a parent, an educational psychologist who understands te reo and how the kura operates. Sometimes it takes years for a child to settle in and learn to trust staff. Key components are aroha, patience and tolerance, says pou-āwhina Nancy Keelan-Tibble. "Tiakina ngā mokopuna."

Te Rangi says, "This kura has led the way. They've had children with a range of learning needs, and they've managed to work really well with all of them."

Marshall says, "Our doors are always open, we welcome anyone and everyone who is committed to te reo Māori me te ao Māori. Ko te ahurei o te tamaiti ārahia o tātou mahi – let the uniqueness of the child guide us in our mahi."

2 ORS funding is for students with high needs, and provides for specialists, for example, physiotherapists, psychologists and also specialist teachers or teacher aides.

02 Tumuaki Denise Marshall

03 The puawaitanga or farewell of Waimarie from Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Manawatū.

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04 Pou-āwhina Nancy Keelan-Tibble.

05 Te Manahau has been at the kura for two and a half years – “we’re finally getting him to open up to us – fantastic progress!”

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Lighting the flames of yearning and learning: a whole whānau approach

The most effective interventions for improving the engagement of tamariki with learning are those which build the ability of parents and other family members to support their child's learning, as well as building teacher understanding of the resources within the local community, according to the Ministry of Education's Best Evidence Synthesis data.[1]

In the Horowhenua, a local iwi authority was able to take the lead, engage kaumatua and whānau, integrate cultural knowledge, and build positive relationships between whānau with the school, resulting in strong outcomes.

The Ministry of Education's strategy Ka Hikitia promotes "Māori success as Māori", and this was the focus of the programme led by Muaūpoko Tribal Authority with tamariki at Levin East Primary School, which began and ended at Kawiu Marae.

At its heart was Muaūpoko-tanga (traditional cultural knowledge of Muaūpoko), but it also included Reading Together, which supports parents, aunts, uncles and grandparents to read to and with their tamariki or mokopuna.

Muaūpoko Tribal Authority Chief Executive Di Rump worked in partnership with whānau, school board and management staff, the Ministry of Education and the JR McKenzie Trust to develop the programme. "Reading Together fitted within a bigger 'Tungia te Koingo'[2], named by one of our parents.

"It was based on Ka Hikitia, so we had the opportunity to do the 'as Māori' piece, as Muaūpoko. Tamariki learnt pepeha, visited pepeha and wrote stories about pepeha," says Rump. The children also painted a mural on the wall at their school to represent what they had learnt.

The programme started after the Muaūpoko Tribal Authority approached the Ministry about accelerating achievement for Māori in Taitoko/Levin. Levin East School was also keen to have more input from iwi and whānau at the school, which has a high percentage of Māori children, many of them Muaūpoko. The involvement of Muaūpoko Tribal Authority board member Marokopa Wiremu-Matakatea, who has mokopuna at the school, was crucial because of his leadership and cultural knowledge.

While Reading Together focuses on literacy (reading, writing and numeracy), the iwi decided to support this within a framework of their own tikanga and mātauranga. Because Reading Together is patented and carefully managed, consent had to be sought and gained to modify it.

An extra two weeks were added to the programme to allow for "Mana Monday" visits to Kawiu Marae and other sites of significance – maunga (Tararua), lakes Horowhenua and Waiwiri and the beach. Visits were also made to a donor business, Paper Plus, to choose literacy resources, and to a local library/museum Te Takeretanga o Kurahaupo. "Uncle spoke about some of the history of the artwork and taonga there," says Rump.

Two buses were needed for these outings, as about 60 children and whānau, teachers and board members wanted to attend. The programme included breakfast clubs, attended by parents and teachers, where karakia and waiata were shared. New words were taught and meanings explained.

"Whenever we could, we injected Muaūpoko-tanga into it," says Rump. "It was successful because of being within a wider context." The programme included a bigger trip (haerenga) to Te Papa in Wellington, where more Muaūpoko taonga were seen, and every term a whānau hui was held. "What we provided was the kai and baby-sitters, those were the two key things," says Rump.

Teacher Roni (Veronica) Sayer says, "We wanted to Muaūpoko-ify the programme, and we made sure we let whānau dictate where and how. It was great for building those relationships!"

The confidence of the children has improved enormously, as their sense of belonging within their iwi as well as in their school has been strengthened, she says. "These guys have really stepped up, and learning has been on an upward trajectory ever since."

Wiremu-Matakatea adds, "I think the key to this success was lighting the fire within the mokopuna, because without that, none of the other things would have happened."

He had to consciously simplify his language for the children, and link the cultural knowledge to what they knew, for example, suggesting they give their favourite teacher a tupuna name. As a result they were able to grasp early ancestral knowledge, such as, that Whatonga came to Aotearoa on the Kurahaupo waka and later came to the Manawatū, which interested their parents as well. "They were going home talking about whakapapa, and their parents were saying, where did you learn this from? It was way more whakapapa than they ever knew."

The programme was co-designed by a team including whānau, kaumatua, and others from Muaūpoko with teachers from Levin East School. "We thought, 'what do our kids need?' – it was driven that way." Rump says the iwi authority also negotiated the partnership. "Our role was making sure that our kaumatua and the school were getting all the elements in place to make sure it could be a true partnership."

The programme also included activities with Horowhenua College, which built on an earlier tuakana/teina initiative trialled between Levin East and the Rangatahi Ora rōpū at the college; and a well-attended Muaūpoko three-day school holiday programme led by Muaūpoko teachers from far and wide.

Rump says that the next programmes being planned by Muaūpoko are likely to include both primary and intermediate schools and focus on maths and technology. The iwi is building a repository of digital resources which can be shared with all eight schools in Taitoko/Levin, and is also hoping to open its own kura.

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1 Robinson, V. Hohepa,M. & Lloyd, C. (2009) BES, University of Auckland, Ministry of Education.

2 Lighting the flames of yearning and learning.

06 Muaūpoko kaumatua Marokopa Wiremu-Matakatea reads to his mokopuna Ihakara, along with Summer-Lee (left) and Manaia (right) at Levin East Primary School.

07 Muaūpoko Tribal Authority Chief Executive Di Rump showing a video of their waiata performance to students at Levin East Primary School.

Some hope that training on cultural responsiveness will expand

However, some Māori and Pasifika children are still experiencing racism at school, which affects their trust in their teachers and impacts negatively on their success, according to the Commissioner for Children.[1] There is a 10% difference between Māori and non-Māori achievement across many measures[2], which is one of the causes of New Zealand's poor ranking by the United Nations on scores related to educational equity.[3]

Our education system is still widely failing to meet the needs of our Māori and Pasifika students, hence the need for change. And there is reason for hope. This government has recommended in its Child Well-being Strategy, released by Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern and the Minister for Children Tracy Martin[4]: "That children are free from racism, discrimination and stigma."

Experts in culturally responsive education for Māori, Pasifika and other ethnicities are likely to recommend expansion of culturally responsive teacher training programmes like Te Kotahitanga into the primary and early childhood sectors, as well as secondary.

Before its election, Labour promised to fund "dedicated professional development programmes that have proven success in raising educational achievement for Māori students, such as Te Kotahitanga" and this was supported also by New Zealand First. In 2018 $1 million was budgeted for "strengthening equity and lifting achievement for Māori students" to fund a "design phase which includes bringing together Māori education experts, researchers and education sector leaders to investigate initiatives, like Te Kotahitanga, and evidence of what works well for Māori learners in schools." [5] This group of specialists has been formed and is chaired by Professor Mere Berryman.

Berryman has a background that spans more than 40 years in primary school teaching and educational research in both Māori and English-medium settings. She was also part of the leadership of Te Kotahitanga from inception and when it was implemented in secondary schools between 2000-2013. From her experiences in education she has clear insights into what professional learning focused on equity might look like across the system. However, primary school leaders and teachers who are unfamiliar with Te Kotahitanga might well question what the programme was, what the outcomes were and how a secondary school intervention might be relevant to primary schools.

Our education system is still widely failing to meet the needs of our Māori and Pasifika students, hence the need for change. And there is reason for hope.

What was Te Kotahitanga?

Based out of the University of Waikato, Te Kotahitanga was an iterative research and professional development programme over five phases. The programme drew from kaupapa Māori theory and research undertaken in kura kaupapa Māori and was initially led by Professor Russell Bishop. Te Kotahitanga aimed to improve teaching practice and Māori student engagement in English medium secondary schools.

Researchers began by asking Year 9 and 10 Māori students and others, What would engage them more with learning? The subsequent initiative used what had been learned from these students in the development and implementation of an Effective Teaching Profile.

Te Kotahitanga developers then focused on supporting teachers to examine their values and beliefs and to shift their thinking and pedagogy in order to create more culturally responsive and relational contexts for learning. When contexts such as these were created they found that Māori student engagement increased and subsequently their achievement began to improve.

What were the outcomes?

In Phase 3 and 4 of Te Kotahitanga, about half of the schools increased and sustained successful Māori student outcomes and about half of the schools did not. Te Kotahitanga Phase 5 schools, working with school leaders and a Strategic Change Leadership team, had considerable increases in the number of Māori students who stayed on at school into Year 13, and who achieved more advanced secondary qualifications. An analysis of this data indicated that the number of Māori students who attained UE in Phase 5 schools, for example, was almost double the number of Māori students in the comparison schools.[6] Additionally, Māori students' experiences of schooling in these schools began to change markedly. In one school they reported that their teachers really knew and cared for them and that they experienced "the opposite of racism".[7] Unfortunately, despite improving Māori student success across a range of measures, including at all levels of NCEA, Te Kotahitanga was considered too costly, and was discontinued in 2013.

How is Te Kotahitanga relevant to primary school educators?

Disparities between Māori and non-Māori students continue to exist at both primary and secondary school levels and a pedagogical intervention to address this is needed across both settings. Some of the research upon which Te Kotahitanga was based originated in Māori and English medium primary school settings and was led by Berryman.

Since the funding for Te Kotahitanga finished, Berryman has continued to focus on improving equity and lifting Māori student achievement using an accelerated theory of change with schools across all levels of compulsory schooling. She is currently the director of Poutama Pounamu (based with the University of Waikato), which is a team of researchers, expert partners and professional learning and development (PLD) accredited facilitators.

The team has drawn from the findings of Te Kotahitanga and from the research undertaken by the Poutama Pounamu Māori education research centre (in the 1990s) to refine "what works". Together they have developed a range of responsive, pedagogical support interventions.

Comprising primary and secondary school educators, the Poutama Pounamu team provides specialised teaching and leadership support through centrally funded PLD in the areas of cultural relationships for responsive pedagogy, adaptive expertise, and home, school and

1 Office of the Children's Commissioner, *Education Matters to Me: Key Insights*, January 2018.
2 Māori Education Briefing to Minister, MoE, Nov 2017.
3 Stuff, 30 October 2018.
4 Cabinet Paper: Child Well-being Strategy: Scope and Public Engagement Process. p11, point 59.
5 Reply to questions, Robert Johnson, Press Secretary, Office of Kelvin Davis, Associate Minister of Education, 23 October 2018.

6 Alton-Lee, A (2015). Ka Hikitia, A Demonstration Report, Effectiveness of Te Kotahitanga Phase 5, 2010-2012. Iterative Best Evidence Synthesis (BES) Programme, Hei Kete Raukura, Ministry of Education.
7 Alton-Lee (2015), pp28-29. Comments from William Colenso College.

community collaborations. While this learning and support is predominantly delivered through face-to-face contact, Poutama Pounamu also offers an online blended learning course which enables the almost 300 participants to examine education theories, history, policy and research and consider how this plays out or could play out in their practice with Māori students and whānau. Having completed the online modules, participants receive a certificate in Cultural Relationships for Responsive Pedagogy and also have the option of completing a summer school course to attain the equivalent of two Masters level papers.

While a comprehensive summary of the evolution of Poutama Pounamu over 20 years of iterative research can be found on their website (poutamapounamu.org.nz), in 2018 the team worked in approximately 18 communities of learning/kāhui ako which include ECE centres, and more than 40 individual state and state integrated schools at primary, intermediate and secondary levels.

Therese Ford, a member of Poutama Pounamu, reports that, "As a team what we are continuing to do is ensure that the kaupapa that started in the original Poutama Pounamu, with kuia and kaumatua, with iwi and hapū, with learning on marae, continues to grow and it gets stronger. We didn't come out of nowhere, we came from a whakapapa that is grounded in kaupapa Māori theory, critical theory and research."

Therese says that the team is excited to be working with teachers, leaders, board of trustee members and whānau across the learning pathway – ECE, primary and secondary schools. Poutama Pounamu is finding that there is an appetite for research-based PLD support that enables educators to recognise and address racism and bias (conscious or unconscious). They are finding it encouraging to see a more determined commitment emerging in schools and kāhui ako that is focused on creating more equitable learning environments that promote belonging and wellbeing for all.

Like the wider education community, Poutama Pounamu awaits the outcomes of the various education wānanga and reviews that were undertaken across the education sector throughout 2018. They want to continue their contribution in the coming years to endeavours that seek to strengthen equity and lift achievement of Māori students. Mauri ora.

"Feel the fear, we'll walk with you, let's do it. It's getting people to step out of their comfort zones."
– Hoana Pearson

Passion and collaboration working

Another initiative working towards inclusiveness for Māori in primary schools is the Māori Achievement Collaboratives (MACs), which are under the umbrella of Te Akatea (the New Zealand Māori Principals' Association) and work with principals and other leaders to improve cultural understanding and relationships.

This is done through cluster hui and one-to-one korero as well as through both regional and national wānanga on marae.

"That's our passion, we work with principals. The school won't change unless the principal does," says Hoana Pearson, Te Pitau Mātauranga, national co-ordinator of the MACs. Most principals are non-Māori. "Feel the fear, we'll walk with you, let's do it. It's getting people to step out of their comfort zones."

Te Akatea is the accredited provider organisation for this professional development network and works in association with the New Zealand Principals' Federation. There are four full-time and two part-time accredited facilitators working as regional MAC co-ordinators. About 12 regional cluster collaboratives involving 175 primary and intermediate schools are involved. There are also a small number of secondary schools.

"We've got 43,830 students – out of those 14,972 are Māori, or 34%. And of those, 5883, or 39%, are identified as needing support in their learning," says Hoana. Data shows a 3–4% improvement in children's reading and maths and an 11–13% improvement in writing at schools where the principals are working with MACs, she says.

But kura feel neglected

There is no doubt that kura kaupapa Māori and kura-a-iwi lead the field when it comes to surrounding tamariki Māori with a supportive cultural context and working closely with whānau. Many parents know their tamariki are most likely to succeed in this context and are willing to make the commitment required.

And yet kura kaupapa feel neglected when it comes to funding and frustrated that they are not being supported to build capacity. There is a shortage of Māori medium teachers and demand for places at kura is outstripping supply – long waiting lists are a problem, as parents wait six to eight months for their child to enter kura, says Rawiri Wright, chief executive of Te Runanga Nui o Ngā Kura Kaupapa Māori.

The Ministry of Education[8] acknowledges the success of kura: "NCEA achievement of Māori people in these settings is consistently on par with all in the school population and significantly higher (15 to 20 percentage points) than for Māori in English-medium settings. Furthermore, research confirms that even children and young people presenting with traditional 'risk' factors achieve at levels comparable to other children and young people in Māori-medium education."

But, the MoE continues: "Despite the exceptional results for Māori in Māori-medium kura, fewer than 19,000 Māori currently attend kura. Furthermore, due to retention issues within the pathway, only a small portion of these Māori remain in kura for the duration of their schooling journey. While there are opportunities to stimulate participation in Māori-medium pathways this in itself will not address the significant Māori education challenges."

What is the government doing to stimulate participation in Māori medium pathways? There has been a small increase in the number of Māori medium teaching scholarships offered, from 52 in 2017 to 65 in 2018. And work towards a new qualification, Te Kawa Matakura, for secondary students proficient in "te ao Māori" may make a small difference.

But leaders of the kura kaupapa movement say they're almost "at breaking point" regarding the lack of support for kura. They have already lodged a claim with the Waitangi Tribunal and may take the issue to the United Nations.[9]

After meeting with Rawiri Wright and others last month to discuss funding, Associate Education Minister Kelvin Davis has at least agreed to meet "regularly" with Te Rūnanga Nui, which he describes as a "peak body" along with Ngā Kura-a-Iwi, Kohanga Reo and wānanga.

"I'm interested in hearing their views on how we can achieve our shared goal of providing a seamless pathway for Māori learners from early learning right through to tertiary, " says Davis.

The ministry suggests that mainstream schools also learn from the success of kura: "Insights from its success can be applied elsewhere in the system." Insights include making tamariki feel safe, included and valued; quality, culturally-responsive teaching; and partnerships with whānau, iwi and local Māori communities.

8 Māori Education Briefing to Incoming Minister, Ministry of Education, November 2017.
9 https://www.radionz.co.nz/national/programmes/morningreport/audio/2018647867/kura-frustrated-maori-education-funds-going-to-mainstream

"There is a shortage of Māori medium teachers and demand for places at kura is outstripping supply."
– Rawiri Wright

Kura kaupapa leaders say they are almost "at breaking point" and have lodged a claim with the Waitangi Tribunal.

Extra funding for te reo for teachers

Most primary schools offer either no Māori language or merely the basics ("taha Māori").[10] The government has shown its commitment to boosting teacher knowledge of te reo by promising funding of $11.4 million over the next three years to do so.

Te Ahu o te Reo Māori funding was announced in Budget 2018, and will support early childhood and primary teachers to deliver te reo in classrooms through five initiatives:

- an on-line hub for te reo Māori in education resources
- an event through which te reo Māori will be showcased
- te reo Māori courses designed for teachers
- a teacher network to leverage collaboration as a teaching mechanism
- teacher guidance to support teachers to integrate te reo Māori across the learning environment.

A further $2 million over the next two years has also been allocated to Te Kawa Matakura, to develop a programme and qualification for secondary students who exhibit excellence in te ao Māori. While few details have yet been released, this initiative may support pathways for proficient Māori students into careers in teaching or education.

10 https://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/statistics/maori-education/maori-in-schooling/6040

Fully integrated

One of the most important things for children with additional needs to be able to access the curricula and to thrive at school is having huge support behind them. That includes from the school and whānau communities and from school leaders, support staff, teachers and itinerant staff.

Upper Hutt Primary School prides itself on its inclusive policies. It takes a whole-of-school and community approach to integrate all children into its welcoming orbit.

Summer Kilburn is six years old, and is keen to show her teacher all the k's (for Kilburn) in the poem on the board. She also points out "m" for mummy and "s" for Summer.

Teacher Kirsten Foley has called her to the mat during a literacy session – they are looking at word combinations ick, eck, ack, ock which are plentiful in the poem. Summer is keen, and fast, and the children are all watching and clap. She knows she has done well. Summer has Down Syndrome and is fully integrated into the classroom and works with her peers on most activities as part of the school's commitment to inclusion.

She goes back to sit with her friend Grace, who she often sits beside, along with her teacher aide Fiona Woodhouse. Woodhouse has been a teacher aide at the school for 23 years. She says that Summer is doing well with her communication and reading and loves being in her classroom with her friends.

There are indications all around the school which show that inclusion is seamlessly embedded within its culture – from the ramps to all the classrooms, handrails, self-opening doors and play spaces, to the visual supports and props within the classes; the school's philosophy of PRIDE – Partnership, Respect, Integrity, Determination and Empathy – is for all students.

"At a fully inclusive school, diversity is a given. All students are respected, welcomed and valued. Our school vision is that every learner deserves a positive future."

The school's principal is proud of its inclusive policies. Jo Grant says, "Our belief is that children sit at the heart of everything that we do – we want to support every child to be in an open, welcoming and accepting space that serves its community.

"At a fully inclusive school, diversity is a given. All students are respected, welcomed and valued. Our school vision is that every learner deserves a positive future. Every child brings unique experiences, needs and strengths to their learning and we uphold the curricula around children being confident, connected and actively involved, lifelong learners. Children's identities, languages, abilities and talents are recognised and affirmed and their learning is our focus.

"We are continually building and developing systems that are flexible and responsive to the predictable diversity of children, rather than expecting them to fit around a set system of teaching and learning."

Universal Design for Learning

Underpinning the pedagogy of the school is the Universal Design for Learning (UDL)[1] model – a research-based approach to support the design of more flexible inclusive learning environments "optimised for personalisation".

"We aim for innovative practice that continually pushes the boundaries. Using a UDL

1 http://inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/universal-design-for-learning/

01

PHOTOGRAPHER
Mark Coote

WRITER
Kate Drury

01 Summer working with teacher aide Fiona Woodhouse.

> “Disabled people make up 24% of the population, but disabled children are not getting a fair go in the education system. That is a huge chunk of New Zealanders we are letting down.”
>
> – DISABILITY RIGHTS COMMISSIONER PAULA TESORIERO

02

02 *Miles Chapman and ORS teacher Sarah Cobbum in the school grounds.*

approach, students and staff are able to personalise their learning, in environments where diversity and variability are expected and valued. Our journey with UDL is in its early stages, but we are very committed to the beliefs that underpin the UDL framework,” says Grant.

Through a robust school monitoring system, barriers to students’ learning are quickly identified and supported in partnership with the students and those who know them well. The school has completed the inclusive practices survey[2] which included asking children and whānau for their views on what they would like for their school.

“Everything we do is shaped with, and for, the community we serve,” says Grant.

Personalised support for learning is embedded into the environment and made available to all students, not only to those students with specific learning needs. “It’s a bit like strategies that work for dyslexic students – they often work for many.”

Accessibility and support

The school has created a special sensory room: this is a hut in the corner with cushions inside and stars on the ceiling – a dark and peaceful escape from the emotions that sometimes overwhelm children with additional needs. Cushions, soft toys and blankets can be seen in another corner together with an indoor trampoline which is “especially good for rainy days” when children cannot get outside. There is also a swing chair in the porch outside – the gentle rocking motion soothes children who may be experiencing a sensory overload.

To help children who have mobility challenges, the school has a special trike which is operated by both the student and an adult. Sarah Cobbum – an ORS-funded teacher – takes student Miles out for a ride around the stunning school grounds under oak trees and around the gardens on a warm summer afternoon. The bike allows him to increase mobility and have a break from the classroom.

Needs and funding

However, the issue of funding is never far away, says Grant. “There is never going to be enough money, so we have to continually think outside the square and pull together all the expertise that we (the wider school community) have.

“It is great to see the ministry recognising the huge need for learning support for every school, and I hope this is the start of a significant future investment.” (The Ministry of Education announced in November last year that there would be 600 Learning Support Coordinators employed in schools by the end of 2020.) In the meantime, Grant says that “we will continue to meet with educational providers and planners to push the boundaries of what is possible in terms of supporting the needs of all our students.”

The support of the school’s board of trustees is vital in terms of what the school is able to achieve.

Grant says, “Our board are wonderful and very committed enablers with a high level of social focus and expertise. They trust us to do the very best for our children.” To this end the school has its fulltime ORS-funded teacher as well as investing in a SENCO role.

Grant’s sentiments were reiterated in a recent opinion piece[3] by the Disability Rights Commissioner Paula Tesoriero in which she said that inclusive education meant all children can attend the school of their first choice and receive the support they need to thrive alongside their peers. But many children with additional needs are not getting what they need, she said.

“Disabled people make up 24% of the population, but disabled children are not getting

2 https://www.wellbeingatschool.org.nz/about-inclusive-practices-tools

3 https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=12162766

“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.”

Things that work at Upper Hutt

- Have an ORS teacher and SENCO
- Work alongside teachers, discuss individual education goals
- Constantly talk with teachers about how to adapt
- Allow students to feel success
- Universal Design for Learning
- What is the goal? Identify potential barriers and options, supports and strategies
- Scaffold, make learning accessible, know students as learners (parents are invaluable here)
- Unite the team, co-ordinate the team
- Research: visit other schools, find out what others are doing well
- Reading recovery

To make the job easier we need

- Resourcing and investment, commitment to funding Learning Support Coordinators
- Strong connections across sectors, for example, with health and housing
- Ultimate learning wellbeing hubs
- Teachers who are committed/open and have access to training and support
- Time to explore, trial and research
- Teacher aide in every classroom
- Funding is yearly or committed to children for the time they need it

Shifting the narrative

NZEI Te Riu Roa members have been active in advocating for children with additional needs and the educators whose job it is to support them and help them access the curricula.

Late last year the announcement of 600 new Learning Support Coordinators (LSC) was in part due to members' calling for many years for a formalised role in schools, according to NZEI Te Riu Roa President Lynda Stuart.

In a submission[1] on the Draft Disability and Learning Support Action Plan, NZEI members outlined what the scope, training and responsibilities of the LSC role should be.

Recently, Education International released a report on disability rights and education, Rethinking Disability: A primer for educators and education unions[2]. It discusses barriers to inclusive education and ways to overcome them, and has a strong emphasis on funding and resources.

1 https://www.nzei.org.nz/UploadedFiles/Submission_on_DDLSAP_20181025_V7_(2).docx
2 https://issuu.com/educationinternational/docs/rethinking_disability_-_a_primer_fo?e=3689445/66100655

a fair go in the education system. That is a huge chunk of New Zealanders we are letting down.

"Rather than talking about young disabled people being the problem ... we [need to] talk about how we create an education system that is fit for purpose for all children."

It is through the commitment of schools such as Upper Hutt Primary that children are getting the support they need to thrive.

Putting in the support

Sarah Cobbum, the ORS-funded teacher, is relatively new to the school, having been there for just two terms. Before this role, she had spent 20 years in the classroom.

She currently does a lot of the administrative work connected to the planning and support needed for ORS children. Cobbum works closely with Jackie Lindsay who is the school's SENCO. The role of the SENCO is to ensure that all non-ORS funded students who have additional needs are also well catered for. This includes students with ASD, ADHD, dyslexia, dyspraxia, global learning delays, medical conditions such as diabetes, and children with anxiety problems.

Together Cobbum and Lindsay plan termly IEPs for their "target" students. These IEP meetings include members of the students' families, together with relevant specialists, for example, speech language therapists, occupational therapists, psychologists; the class teacher and the teacher aide; and when possible, the student.

The specialist teachers, class teachers and teacher aides at the school, all work collaboratively on the goals set for the students. Students are closely monitored and there are regular meetings to ensure that the goals set are achieved.

Cobbum and Lindsay both say that teacher aides are crucial in being able to achieve positive outcomes for their students. To this end, teacher aides are included in some staff professional development days. Cobbum and Lindsay also run their own training for teacher aides as well as managing the appraisal system for each teacher aide. Each teacher aide has annual learning goals which they are supported to develop and explore.

Times of transition are critical in any child's life and to this end the school has a well-established transition process for all children starting school. Lindsay, together with the school's deputy principal (junior), runs pre-school afternoons for those children who are soon to start school.

03

Children needing extra support may have additional visits, social stories and Starting School books written for them. Some students may have shortened days to help them cope once they begin school. While carefully transitioning children into school is important, the school also values the importance of transitions which happen when children change classes.

Information sharing days are arranged between the child's current and new teacher. Pen Pictures and All About Me stories are written so that the new teacher is familiar with the child and the journey they have been on since they started school. The child, together with a teacher aide, has repeated visits to their new class and teacher. Social stories and visual reminder cards may be made and use is made of Skype and emails for teachers who will be new to the school.

A similar process is used for children who are transitioning from the school. While there are key components which help to make a school inclusive, true inclusivity cannot be achieved without commitment from all.

"The strategies that work for children with additional needs work for all children."

Special education at the cutting edge

Special education has always been at the cutting edge of thinking in education and has provided an exemplar for what is good for all children's learning and wellbeing.

That is the view of Liz Tomlinson, Ministry of Education special education adviser in Wellington.

Tomlinson talks with great passion and energy about her job, the children, whānau and educators she works with, and says that what works for children with additional needs, works for all children. She fires off some examples.

"All the new innovations that come into the classroom start in learning support (or what used to be called special education), such as the way we use visuals. It was a move away from chalk and talk. Then we saw visual diaries, took photos of things, adapted environments to take account of sensory needs, for example, a quiet

03 Liz Tomlinson addresses the Wellington crowd at the field staff strike last year.

This toolkit was designed by Janet Stowell, an RTLB and highly experienced educator, to help teachers assist students to strengthen their executive functions and streamline their own classroom management through whole class teaching of executive function skills.

Executive functions enable children to be self-regulating, controlling their thoughts and actions in order to succeed in everyday life. Children with difficulties in this area can experience frustration and disappointment but they may simply have a slower rate of developing executive functions skills (response inhibition, cognitive flexibility, working memory, organisation, time management, goal setting, planning and task initiation).

Executive functions develop from birth up to the mid-twenties and can be strengthened with training, which this toolkit supports.

To purchase a copy for $57.50, email: janetmarie@xtra.co.nz

space, movement/sensory breaks; and taking account of how different children learn differently – these have all come from special education.

"The strategies that work for children with additional needs work for all children – such as the concept of differentiation and individualised learning."

Technology, also, can be a great freedom for children with additional needs and a leveller among children. "Most young people have a device nowadays. Even if the child with the additional needs is using the device for a different reason, for example, communicating, they are still part of the group."

She also uses the examples of sign language and gesture, because our hands are a valuable, easy-to-access resource that we always carry with us; and giving children a visual schedule, which is beneficial for all children.

Tomlinson says because of this, children in schools with children with additional needs share a wealth of experience that they may not otherwise have had, and all children and educators have benefitted from the advances in learning support pedagogy.

Tomlinson has been a special education advisor for nearly 15 years, and before this had a variety of roles in the wider learning support area including: teacher in an IHC "pre-school", teacher assistant, teacher in a special school, classroom teacher and senior manager in a mainstream school, SENCO and an ORS specialist teacher.

Inclusive schools – what they look and feel like

She says there are some stand-out things about schools, centres and communities which are truly inclusive.

"The key thing is how every adult in that community values every child. True diversity – whether it is ability, culture, religion – that is the underlying principle of inclusion. No teacher is there for the easy job – they are there for their commitment to children, and when they realise that ... you can see that in their practice. There are clues when you walk into a school or centre.

"The school might have visuals, for example, 'stop' signs, and photos of who is on duty; there might be lines on the stairs [for visually impaired children] and handrails. All this is important, so that they can access property and the staff.

"You can also tell from playtimes – how other children interact with each other and children with different needs – and you can see that has been well-modelled by adults around them."

She says that teachers are very busy in a classroom and for teachers to support the learning of a child with additional needs can feel like a big thing.

"But it is important that every teacher 'owns' every child in the class, they own the programme and give good guidance for the teacher aides and work together on resources, and meet together regularly. That is, taking responsibility for the whole class including the child with additional needs. It can be as simple as greeting the child with additional needs when they enter the class, having a place or desk in a group with peers and talking to them occasionally during a lesson – just as the teacher would do for all the other students.

"I can walk into a class and can tell what it is like for a child with additional needs. I may see all children working together with a teacher aide hovering – I can see how the student fits into the scene. But there may be the teacher aide at a desk with the child at the back of the classroom – the student is present but not belonging to the group, which is not inclusive.

"A great education programme is one where every child is included and the work is suited to the child's needs.

"I like to think about that child in the future, in the community – being with people and what they need – to communicate, to not be isolated because of different interests or behaviour, being able to catch a bus and read the labels on products at the supermarket [that sort of thing].

"This is where the key competencies [Thinking; Relating to others; Using language, symbols, and texts; Managing self; Participating and contributing] come in. They are the overarching principals of our curriculum and they apply to all children."

What the advisors do

Tomlinson says that the goal of the special education adviser is to encourage and support all students to successfully attend their local school, to have a sense of belonging, to participate in the school culture, and be able to access meaningful learning. She says it is not as easy as it sounds.

"There is more diversity among our diverse learners than in the typically developing population. As special education advisers we work on the principle that whānau and teaching staff bring good knowledge of the child and we bring experience-based skills, current research and ministry support systems, knowledge and tools. Together we blend our baskets to develop a deeper understanding of the student's strengths and learning needs in order to tailor the environment and curriculum to match those skills and needs."

She says it is not always straightforward; there is a lot of interpretation and detective work involved – especially for non-verbal students.

"We like to establish effective, positive relationships with whānau and teachers to encompass a holistic approach. We often have to think quite creatively to come up with new solutions, drawing on our own journeys of study and hands-on experience."

> "The people on the ground – whānau, teachers, teacher aides – spend much more time and have the most power to teach the child."
>
> – SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISOR LIZ TOMLINSON

She says working collaboratively with learning support colleagues (speech language therapists, psychologists, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, early intervention teachers and advisers of the deaf) as well as other agencies is important.

"It works best when we all have one shared vision and good communication."

She says it is also about empowerment for those who know the child best.

"The teaching staff and whānau know the child best, and have the strongest relationships with the child, spend the most time with the child and have the most influence over the child. That is why our service is based on advice and guidance and not one-to-one hands on.

"As special education advisers we can observe, give guidance for goal setting, adaptations and strategies, make some assessments and recommendations and even model those. But the people on the ground – the whānau, teachers, teacher aides – they spend much more time with the student and therefore have the most power to teach the child. Therefore we want to empower those valuable people to be confident and capable in their work.

"There is a lot of trial and error – diversity means that there is no one fit to meet all; that is why we value the individualised planning approach. It also means that it's a time-consuming process that relies heavily on strong relationships with all the people around the student.

"The ultimate goal is the same as for typically developing students. When the time comes, we want our young people to go out into the adult community happy in their own skins, with the best skills of self-management, independence and confidence they can muster, and able to make positive contributions to the community they belong to."

A story

She uses the example of a boy who had been excluded from many schools but managed to find a placement in one school. By then he was a young adult. The school persisted in helping him, along with a range of people including the family.

"We came up with programmes to meet his needs. He used to hurt people and destroy property. After an incident, the school took responsibility and had a restorative justice session. In the course of this he apologised, but someone who had also not behaved well apologised to him too and it was the first time that anyone had apologised to him. It made a huge difference. He went on to get NCEA Level 3 with excellences and merits."

How the job could be better

Tomlinson says that there is a lot that could be done to make it easier for special education advisers (SEAs) to do their job well, including getting more professional recognition. This includes recruitment of the most highly skilled specialist teachers who have both proven successful field experience as well as qualifications rather than prioritising qualifications only.

"Schools do respond better to SEAs when the SEA has a deep understanding of how school systems work and the daily stresses and challenges that teachers experience. 'Walking the shoes' contributes to credibility."

Recruitment, however, she says, is not easy and there needs to be a professional body of skilled, trained and experienced specialist teachers with a job title that reflects the role. Getting specialist knowledge and keeping it is problematic.

She says it is partly because of the model of (ORS) funding being attached to the child; well-intentioned but the outcome is that ORS specialist teachers still do not have the benefits of job security (the job is lost when the student leaves that school), nor the benefits that should accompany a highly skilled job working with the most challenging of learners, for example, remuneration, training, travel costs and so on. Ironically, RTLBs who are tasked to work with students with moderate learning and behaviour needs have better contracts.

She says there needs to be extra remuneration for doing a specialised job (newly recruited SEAs are often dismayed by reduced work conditions, for example, less pay, loss of management units) along with qualification or experience requirements for recruitment, and time to do the job. She gives some examples of more time needed that will ring true with teachers and leaders in schools and centres: "Time to address the variety of work required to support quality inclusive practice, including time for teachers to meet with us as needed for planning, individual advice/guidance sessions or just feedback from observations. Time to meet with whānau authentically, time to keep up with current research and updates in the field, time to deliver (and for school staff – including teacher aides – to access) professional development and to do administration, including reports."

She says the combination of these issues has led to a deficit of skilled, experienced specialist teachers in schools, meaning a small pool to draw upon for SEA roles.

"This will be a significant challenge when trying to fill the new 600 Learning Support Coordinators recently announced, and to support the proposals in the Draft Disability Learning Support Plan."

Like other ministry field staff, she says workload is an issue which contributes to how long children and their whānau have to wait for help. "There needs to be adequate learning support staff to do the job with manageable workloads. This has been an ongoing issue for all such field staff for many years."

> "There is a lot of trial and error – diversity means that there is no one fit to meet all."

Global citizens and the role of the teacher aide

Carol Webb has thought a lot about what makes a great inclusive school. But she likes to think a lot more widely than that – to the student's future and their place in the community and how a school is the first step on this journey. Webb is a teacher aide at Hamilton's Fairfield College.

"Students can't learn unless they are engaged, they need to become global citizens. They need critical thinking skills and social skills to know how to work co-operatively. They can't be part of a school culture unless they can understand it and navigate it. This can only happen in an inclusive school where it is safe to ask questions."

She believes that for the student, while academic success is important, the self-esteem and confidence that comes with social skills, which will help them in the wider world, are equally important. She has kept in touch with some of her students after they have left school and is heartened that many have found jobs and a sense of wellbeing.

She gives the example of a student for whom English was a second language being diagnosed with dyslexia.

"The progress was gradual but she became more confident and outgoing and her reading and writing was eventually age-appropriate. She was able to be successful in NCEA."

Webb says a great inclusive school is where all staff are supportive and there are diverse programmes for all children.

"An inclusive school is one where you create an environment where all staff are aware of social and cultural differences and needs of children with additional needs and [the school] runs diverse programmes for all children and the professional development [for staff] to support that."

Staff working together in a school, for all children, is also critical. "We have [in our school] co-construction meetings for all year 9 and 10 classes. All the teachers and teacher aides working with children with learning needs get together once a term and talk about programmes and the progress of the students – what works, how to progress."

She says that this helps the relationships between teachers and teacher aides but even more joint work could be done.

"Combined training would be good because teacher aiding and teaching are different. It could include [for teachers] how to facilitate what the teacher aide does and how you can get the best out of your teacher aide."

04

"Teacher aides are highly qualified and need to be recognised for that. We need job security and a fair wage."
– Carol Webb

She says that teacher aides can help in picking up difficulties in a busy classroom. Webb moves around the classroom to help other students, not just the child she works with, and she can pick up other difficulties sometimes. "A lot of children are not officially diagnosed."

She says many schools could, and do, look more widely for help and support.

"You can reach out to existing cultural organisations that represent people with additional needs. You don't just have to work out inclusion yourself – you can reach out to these organisations for professional development, for example."

Webb has been a teacher aide in primary and secondary schools in New Zealand since 2009. She believes teacher aides have a critical role in contributing to the whole-of-school approach to supporting children with additional needs.

"Teacher aides are highly qualified and need to be recognised for that."

Webb has been part of the NZEI pay equity campaign for support staff. "We need job security and a fair wage." The recent government announcement that an additional 600 Learning Support Co-ordinators will be funded in schools[1] is recognition of the critical role of SENCOs.

"The SENCO role is a critical role – knowing how to set up programmes and how to navigate the funding system."

1 https://nzei.org.nz/NZEI/Media/Releases/2018/11/Government_announcement_on_learning_support_a_big_win_for_teachers_and_students.aspx

04 Teacher aide Carol Webb at Hamilton's Fairfield College.

05

Support staff's vital role in school culture

Lynn Schaefer has been at Opaki School for 28 years. She has been in the office most of that time but as is the wont with support staff in schools, she has also been a teacher aide and filled in various other roles as needed.

She does the finance, payroll, operates the Xero accounting and all other office-related work.

The rural school on the outskirts of Masterton has 204 children. Most are from the surrounding countryside and some come from "town".

Over the years the school has had students with additional needs and Schaefer has been instrumental in their care – pastoral, dispensing medication, treating injuries and medical events and as a teacher aide in their learning.

The role of support staff admin can be underestimated in contributing to an inclusive school – be it in the office, in the library or in a technical position.

The person in the office is the first person who parents, caregivers and whānau meet and is often the person who they will tell their problems to. Lynn says she is a good listener and she has helped many families in their times of trouble.

"I say to parents ring whenever you are unsure of anything. I try to be really welcoming – parents are often nervous and the child is too. It is often just about listening.

"I often think of them [children at school] as my grandchildren. I love the kids."

"A great inclusive school is one where there is good communication from the top to the bottom."
– Carmen Marshall

Carmen Marshall manages the ICT for staff and student computers and accounts at Bohally Intermediate in Blenheim. It is something that she learnt on the job, apart from some training that she received from IT companies which the school has used previously and their current IT provider.

Marshall started out in the school canteen and has had a number of support staff roles in the school but has ended up in the ICT role as there was a need for this.

She says that the devices children use have had an unexpected benefit for children with additional learning needs as technology can be a great leveller.

She looks for ways IT can be adapted and made more accessible for all learners in an inclusive environment. She uses the example of children who do not have English as a first language. "We can adapt email addresses and this makes logging in to their accounts easier."

She says a great inclusive school is one where there is good communication from the "top to the bottom. One that uses people's skills best, for example, having a teacher who is passionate about ESOL working with children who have English as a second language."

See Carmen talking about her role on the *Ako* website, akojournal.org.nz

06

05 Lynn Schaefer – "I say to parents to ring whenever you are unsure."

06 Carmen Marshall manages ICT at Bohally Intermediate in Blenheim.

Students owning success

Student agency is changing the way children learn – enhancing local curricula and parent and student voice. It has particular relevance to individualising learning for children with additional needs.

01

PHOTOGRAPHER
Naomi Madeiros

WRITER
Melissa Schwalger

01 Students at Raroa Normal Intermediate are trusted with a larger degree of independence.

At Raroa Normal Intermediate in Wellington's northern suburbs, teachers have embraced the concept of student agency.

In a flexible learning area that is the central hub of the technology classrooms, students are working, usually in pairs or small groups. Some are designing or researching on computers, two girls are making flowers out of wire and fabric, others are painting or hard at work with glue guns as part of their design project.

Students are moving in and out of rooms connected to the "learning street", depending on the need or specialist teacher required. In the food technology room, two girls are carving up a pastry dessert, a group of boys is doing a pile of dishes, cupcakes are cooling on a bench, and a teacher is in a corner with a handful of students working through their ideas.

Next door is a room that they haven't managed to name because it's so much more than just hard materials. Following the theme from TV show *Design Junkies*, one group is upcycling an old ottoman and figuring out how many strips of wood will be needed to run around the circumference. Another pair is sanding a retro toolbox they bought on Trade Me and others are turning an old planter box into a kennel for a small dog.

Principal Christine Brown says the journey towards greater student agency began in 2013 with a theory-based approach to redesigning the school curriculum. This included the technology area – now called Design Production Education (DPE).

"We spent a lot of time researching, going to conferences, listening to different people, getting people in to talk to us. We put all those things together to develop our local curriculum, and had student and parent voice in there as well."

Deputy Principal Stephen Eames says they wanted to give the students opportunities to work within their strengths and passions, or have an element of choice, so that they had "buy in".

Eames likes the concept of ideas shaping the rooms, rather than the rooms shaping the ideas.

"You're flipping the model, giving students a little bit more agency, where they are not defined by a particular room for a particular project. They can do some art and design in the art room, and then take that on to the hard materials, where they could laser cut it, or develop it further."

Eames believes that students need time to develop the skills to manage their own learning to enable high levels of agency and thrive in modern learning environments.

"So supporting them on that growth is important, and I think everybody falls into that at some point, where they suffer, slightly beyond organised chaos."

"You're flipping the model, giving students a little bit more agency, where they are not defined by a particular room for a particular project."
– Stephen Eames

Because there is such a strong focus on collaboration and communication, ESOL students and others with additional learning needs receive extra support to help them achieve and develop agency in a way that is appropriate to their individual needs. Team teaching and flexible classroom spaces where teachers can adapt to suit the needs of students are features of the school.

It's a commonly voiced concern that such environments could become chaotic and that children may easily get distracted or lost in the crowd, particularly for those with additional learning needs. However, Brown says what they've found is that a number of teachers end up knowing each student really well, which the leadership team from Onslow College had quickly picked up on at a recent meeting.

"One of them was saying when they come over and interview the teachers, they were just so impressed at how well the teachers know the students. So if a teacher was away, another one in that team is working closely, so can sit there and talk about them.

"They have to have really good processes for monitoring the students, and evaluating their progress. But it's a whole team of them doing it together, or it's a pair of them doing it together, and they can all support them on this journey of agency," says Brown.

Teacher Melissa Julian says modern learning environments can work, but teachers just need to think about how it's going to affect children who need extra support, and put things in place that make the students feel they have some control over what they're doing.

"Especially at the start of the year, you're pretty much alongside, showing the process. That independence may not be there, but slowly over time, as they get used to that routine, you sort of edge yourself out.

"I always know that if something new is about to start, you have to start back with that checking in," she says.

"And everything we do, I'm always thinking, how are these guys going to be with this, what can we do to make sure it's going to work for them?

Julian believes increased agency and working in small groups can work well for children with additional learning needs and it also teaches other children to be inclusive of others, not just their friends.

02

Support for students with dyslexia

Teacher Lynne Dunn runs a weekly support group for about 20 students who have been diagnosed with dyslexia. The students receive academic, social and emotional support and she introduces new tools and strategies they might want to try.

A key purpose of the group is to make the students feel good about their strengths and know that they can achieve.

"When they're in a group situation, they know it's great for them to volunteer in the areas of their skills. Not all people in the group necessarily know they have a learning difference, because it's up to the students who they share with.

Teachers also receive professional development training and are open to student requests such as giving reading material ahead of time, using digital copies instead of hard copies or having a maths test read to a student.

"I know that they like being able to do what the rest of the class is doing, and to do it well, and the adjustments they make, or the staff member makes, lets them be able to finish whatever it is they're working on, or take a part, rather than not be doing what everyone else is doing, and be seen to be failing.

"With adjustments, they can still be doing the same learning, it might just be in a different way. Or maybe with a different timeframe. But they feel like they belong. And that's where celebrating their strengths is huge, because that's a way that definitely makes them feel that [sense of] belonging," says Dunn.

Brown says those students go on to college so much more confident in their abilities, because they're taught to see dyslexia as a gift rather than an impediment. College staff have commented on the positive difference they've seen in the students coming through in the five years the programme has been running.

Thirteen-year-old twins Hannah and Jess Stark were diagnosed with dyslexia when they were six and also have dyscalculia. Hannah says that at first she thought having dyslexia was "not really the best thing", but being in the support group has changed her outlook.

"Putting it into a different way and learning there's lots of strengths really helps," she says.

Jess says that being in a support group helps them see that they're not alone.

"We didn't know there were other people around us – even in the same classroom – that struggled with the same things. But in a dyslexic group we talk about our struggles."

Jess says being in charge of their own learning means they can be really passionate about something and implement it, "make it into something that you're really proud of".

"I think doing your own learning really helps you in the real world because a teacher's not always going to be there to help and guide you."

Jess worked with teacher Chris Johnston on designing the school yearbook. He says they went through a process of learning how to use Illustrator, InDesign and other Creative Cloud apps.

"Dyslexia didn't hold her back – it made her particularly good at doing that because of her spatial awareness and creative flair," he says.

Johnston says the classroom can look chaotic on first entering because so much individualised learning is going on. "We trust them with a larger degree of independence, which they in turn respect and show that they can manage. I'm more of a facilitator in the room," he says.

"Outsiders often remark that the kids seem more independent or they seem older than kids in their school at the same age. I think that's the mark of independence that they have. They are passionate about things and able to work in the area of their interests, so they're able to be engaged for longer. It's less of the teacher trying to wrangle students, more about us working together.

"Not every child is at the same place. You meet the child where they are and you look for that thing that is just beyond their reach," he says. Giving every student a "cookie cutter" worksheet and telling them they all have to do the same thing would set up some students to fail.

"But if you're able to use tasks that are more open-ended, the kids that can achieve at this [basic] level will achieve at that level. But the kids who can take it beyond, there's much more scope for that as well."

"It's less of the teacher trying to wrangle students, more about us working together – I'm more of a facilitator in the room."

– TEACHER CHRIS JOHNSTON

The individual path to student agency

Deputy Principal Stephen Eames says that in the Design Production Education programme there are certain "toolsets" that all students need to have that will increase their ability to have agency and apply it.

"For instance in the cooking room, they need to understand how to measure, they need to know how to use that equipment," he says.

"You give them the foundations so they can delve into whatever their projects are. To do that, they will need a whole set of skills – they need to be able to collaborate, they need to be able to communicate, they need to have critical thinking. And then, obviously, their mindset is a big one. They need to be able to persevere, they need to be able to ask questions. That's all about scaffolding the ability to be able to have a little bit more ownership, and a little bit more choice in what they're doing."

The cooking room is an example of the diversity of agency that students bring. With the popularity of *Masterchef* and My Food Bag, teachers are finding that many students are already way past the basics when they start intermediate.

"Kids are coming to school with the skills that don't require them to learn how to do muffins across the classroom, you know, they have a range of skills. So we need to make sure they've got the access to be able to stretch the limits."

As the year goes on and expectations and foundational skills are established, increased understanding leads to increased choice.

"They start to specifically match toolsets to what they're doing. When they need it they'll get it, rather than just in case they need it. So it's applied.

"There are six different rooms, and they get a taster so they can make an informed choice around what they want to pursue a little bit more. So the next two sessions are five-week sessions, and they get a chance to stretch their skill in that particular room. And then the last block is a 10-11 week block, where that's the thing that they are most interested in."

Eames says that with adolescent learners there's often a correlation between what they're passionate about, and a personal connection with the teacher who is delivering that genre.

"The philosophy there is that the teacher with the best relationship is going to be the person their learning is accelerated in, because they'll learn quicker with the person that they have the relationship with. So, if we're focusing more on skills rather than knowledge, it doesn't really matter what the genre is, because they'll excel in that particular room."

02 Teacher Chris Johnston with students at Raroa Normal Intermediate.

03

Students in the driver's seat

Student motivation, behaviour and progress have shot up since Hampden Street School in Nelson introduced greater student agency. With new modern learning environments, the open classrooms prompted the school leadership to look at different ways of doing things.

Principal Don McLean says teaching is now about students driving their own learning.

"In open plan MLE classrooms you need to allow the children to own their learning a bit more," he says. "Nowadays children have devices and access to the internet so they can get the information they need. The role of the teacher now is that processing and the support, facilitation and activation of learning."

"We've got a number of ORS students and a number of children with some general high needs and this gives them some choice. This also takes the focus away from the deficiencies in their learning. So they mightn't be strong at reading or writing but they might actually be brilliant at science and they can lead the charge and the discussion around science and then have the support of their peers to help them in those other areas that they aren't so strong in."

McLean says that for an autistic child, who tends to see their world in a very focused way, being able to drive their own learning is actually a "no-brainer".

"The kids can choose to set their pathway, look at something and focus on it for themselves. Something we're really trying to do as the students get up the school is how you can do that with someone else in a collaborative way."

Teacher Noel McClements says they're preparing children for an unknown future.

"We don't know what it's going to be like, and the rate that things are moving forward, with the advances that have happened in technology so far – we look at predictions about what jobs are even going to be around in 20 years' time. Nobody can tell."

One thing that can be counted on is the need to be able to drive your own learning, work to your strengths and collaborate with others – key pillars of student agency. And the kids get it. When *Ako* visited, students frequently brought up the need to be able to work with others and prepare themselves for the real world, where teachers aren't always on hand to supply an answer.

As student Elijah says, "It gets you collaborating with other people so that when you're older you work with other people well."

> "We don't know what the future's going to be like or what jobs are even going to be around in 20 years' time. Nobody can tell."
>
> – TEACHER NOEL M^C^CLEMENTS

See teachers talking student agency on the *Ako* website, akojournal.org.nz

03 Teachers Tarnia Pilcher and Noel McClements at Hampden Street School see the need for students to work to their strengths and to have the ability to collaborate.

REVIEWS

Where's my jumper?

Nicola Slater

This book is good if you have a little sister!

We liked the pictures of the different animals, and there is lots to look at and talk about in each page.

Marti liked to lift the flaps and the holes you can look through.

At first I was worried about the jumper but I liked that in the end – everything was okay.

Mum read the book to us a few times and then I could read it to Marti and we could talk about the pictures together.

– Loren (7 years) and Marti (2.5 years) ★★★★☆

Why is that lake so blue?

Simon Pollard

Planning a science or natural history unit? Not sure where to start? This book is for you. Written by Dr Simon Pollard, biologist and award-winning author, this authoritative guide to New Zealand's natural wonders has a wealth of information and inspiration for busy teachers.

Written especially for young New Zealanders, it provides a fascinating insight into the latest understandings on how our land was formed and the evolution of our unique species, earthquakes, volcanoes, forests, lakes, rivers, wetlands and mountains. It covers the latest scientific discoveries about our oceans and marine life, including some "Seriously cool" and "Gross!" (Year 8s) creatures.

As a resource for teachers to bone up on their knowledge and identify starters for inquiry, in a New Zealand context, this resource is a star. As a student resource or reference book, it's suited to older children (Years 6-10), and those with a passion for geology, nature or bugs.

Feedback from Year 5 and Year 7 students was:

"Really cool. I learnt lots."

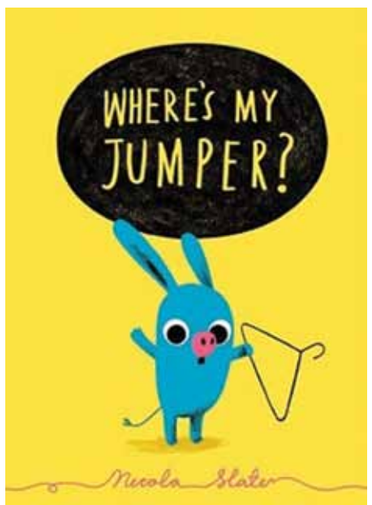
"It's kid friendly, and if you don't know a word they've got 'What does that word mean?'."

"I liked the history of our land and how it evolved."

"It's well set out and easy to read. I think a kid would get into it for a research project."

I highly recommend a copy for every school library; and maybe one for yourself in case you can't wrestle it from the science-mad kids!

– Maria Higgison ★★★★½



The sound of breaking glass

Kirsten Warner

This is Kirsten Warner's first novel – and with an eclectic creative life including journalism (and writing for *Ako*, go Kirsten!), music and poetry, *The Sound of Breaking Glass* is jam-packed with ideas, experiences and observations. In the early stages of the book, it's almost too jam-packed as if a life's worth of ideas are competing for space. But as you peel back all the layers they reveal something very special at the heart of this story.

In 1990s Auckland, busy working mum Christel juggles her job as a reality television producer with her activism in Women Against Surplus Plastic (WASP). She has a lovely husband and two lovely children, but her domestic life is presented in a fuzzy, out-of-focus way as Christel has so much more going on in her life.

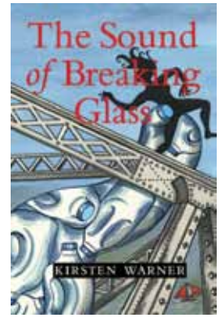
Her present is ultimately less immediate than her past, growing up as a child of Holocaust survivor Conrad (as Warner herself is the child of the late Gunter Warner, a refugee from Nazi Germany and Holocaust survivor).

There's a magical realism that weaves through the book, including the "Big C" – (for Critic) giving many forms to the voice in Christel's head and accompanying her on the bus or in the office. Christel's adolescence and her adulthood are populated with a chorus of archetypes (Karate Man, Upstairs Woman, Fat Controller, et al) who all have an impact on her and who even abuse her and take from her. Despite the hurt they inflict, they lack the emotional resonance of her parents, Conrad and Stella, and their stories. Conrad has lived through things inconceivable to the "she'll be right" laconic Kiwi, and buries and excavates these experiences in ways that leave a permanent mark on his daughter Christel.

The Sound of Breaking Glass is at its essence a treatise on pain and trauma, and how it continues to echo through generations. Christel says: "I feel like I'm lacerated on the inside, with loose ends that need mending".

The novel, despite a surplus of loose ends, does knit them all together to tell a beautiful and affecting story.

– Rebecca Matthews-Heron ★★★½☆



Tane Māhuta has a forest

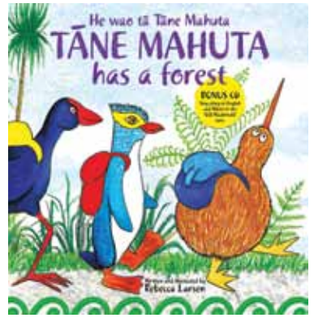
Rebecca Larsen

The moment I introduced *Tane Māhuta Has a Forest* to our tamariki, I had an intrigued audience.

They recognised the adventurous characters Pūkeko, Kiwi and Hoiho from *Row, row, row your waka,* a well-loved CD story at our kindergarten.

When the familiar tune of "Old MacDonald" started to play, the tamariki began swaying along. In the story, the three friends set off to explore the forest, and take us all along on the journey. We moved along with the music, stretching tall like a kauri tree, dancing like pīwaiwaka, and meeting other creatures along the way.

All up – a wonderfully illustrated bilingual pukapuka with a catchy tune that had us all singing along in no time. It is such a fun way to practice our te reo Māori, become familiar with Tāne Mahuta, god of the forest, and to get our bodies moving. We love that it also has a version written entirely in te reo Māori.



Of course as soon as the book ended, the calls rang out "anō, anō!"

I've lost count of how many times we have enjoyed this pukapuka. Highly recommended, it's a five-star review from us!

– Anna McMillan and daughter Frankie ★★★★★

The map of meaningful work

Marjolein Lips-Wiersma and Lani Morris

The Map of Meaningful Work represents the combined work of two experienced practitioners in leadership. It contains tools (notably the Map of Meaning) that can be used at an individual, group or organisation level. Using the Map in particular allows people to take the time to identify aspects of their work that are meaningful to them. This leads to increased motivation and satisfaction as individuals can craft their work to focus on meaning.

As a manager of a team, I found the book quickly delivered information and questions I could use in the team immediately, as well as giving options for lengthier training sessions. There are suggestions to help individuals and teams effectively use the strategies – you can see the results of decades of delivering workshops in different countries and cultures in these suggestions. The framework can also be used at an organisation level when setting strategic direction.

Case studies throughout the book give practical examples – I was very taken with an example provided of working constructively to improve processes in the organisation through identifying the mismatch between what inspired them in their work, compared with the reality.

For people who have "lost the spark" or organisations keen to centre meaning in their mission, *The Map of Meaningful Work* will provide guidance and direction.

– Emma Rutherford ★★★★½

NEWS

Significant changes proposed in compulsory sector

The report of the Tomorrow's Schools Independent Taskforce was released in December and makes wide-ranging and significant proposals for change to our education system. NZEI Te Riu Roa leaders have welcomed a returned focus to children. "The report puts children's wellbeing back at the heart of education – which is what we have been saying for a very long time. It redefines what success looks like for kids and has a big focus on equity," says NZEI president Lynda Stuart. The key recommendations include a reorientation of school boards with an emphasis on student success and wellbeing; new education hubs that would assume legal responsibilities held by boards and provide learning support; and a national school network strategy including a dedicated pathway for kaupapa Māori and support for te reo. Equity funding would increase to 6% of total resourcing. "We have lots of questions," says Stuart. "But it's a great start."

ECE strategy

The early childhood sector has also been the subject of a review, with a new strategic plan released by the Ministry of Education late in December. Consultation runs until mid March. The report was seen as a step in the right direction, if unambitious. In particular, there was disappointment that it did not sufficiently address issues related to the planning of provision or the use of digital technologies in services. It does, however, recommend moving toward a 100% qualified workforce, introducing better ratios for babies and toddlers, and increasing the consistency and levels of teacher salaries and conditions across the sector. Low quality service providers would be prevented from opening new services.

The role of support staff recognised, finally

NZEI members were particularly pleased that the Tomorrow's School report recognises the role of support staff. The report says that the status and the roles of "paraprofessionals" in schools were limited and represented a significant lost opportunity.

The taskforce defined paraprofessionals as teacher aides, non-registered teachers/ kaiako such as musicians, and others with valued knowledge and expertise.

It recommended visible pathways for the development and enhanced status of paraprofessionals, and that this be considered as part of a national Education Workforce Strategy. Besides schools being able to appoint permanent positions, the proposed Education Hubs could also employ a "cohort of paraprofessionals, including teacher aides" who could be deployed flexibly over the hub.

every child is worth it

NZEI TE RIU ROA

This year, there's a genuine opportunity for the coalition government to:

- **Restore the funding to ECE that has been cut**
- **Reduce teacher to child ratios and group sizes**
- **Restore the goal of 100% trained teachers in ECE.**

The Government is consulting on the Early Learning 10 Year Strategic Plan until 15 March. There's real potential for us to strengthen the proposals and shape the future of ECE. For more information about getting involved, email **nzei@nzei.org.nz**.

Across ECE, we're also uniting to address the historical undervaluing of our work. Mana taurite, pay equity claims are progressing, with more claims to be added throughout the year. We know the Government is committed to righting the historical wrongs, so we need to keep it on track to resolve pay equity.

To join our group of supporters who receive regular updates, sign up at **campaigns.nzei.org.nz/pay-equity/ece.**

#everychild | everychild.org.nz