


Belonging situated in routines, customs, and regular events

Farewell to a taonga

		Examples or cues	Whānau Learning Story	
belonging mana whenua	Taking an Interest	Finding an interest <i>here</i> – a topic, an activity, a role. Recognising the familiar, enjoying the unfamiliar. Coping with change.	<div>Over the last few weeks the children have been listening to the story, Māui and the Sun. The children were so interested in Māui’s story that they began to screen-print ideas that evolved from it.</div> <div>When the children learned that Trish, our supervisor, had a new job and was going to be leaving, they began to think about what they could give her as a present. Excited by their recent screen-printing experiences, they decided they would like to do some special screen-printing and so developed the idea of a unique “korowai” cloak.</div> <div></div> <div>Each child selected materials from Papatūānuku (ferns, leaves, feathers, etc.), and soon a magnificent cloak was unfolding in front of our eyes. It was very hard keeping it as a surprise. When every child in the childcare centre had printed a square, Sue sewed the backing on the cloak and all the children and teachers then completed the cloak by sewing feathers and wool as the finishing touches.</div> <div>Throughout this experience, the children and teachers learned new waiata to support Trish’s farewell. We were all amazed at how quickly the children responded to our new waiata.</div>	
well-being mana atua	Being Involved	Paying attention for a sustained period, feeling safe, trusting others. Being playful with others and/or materials.		
exploration mana aotūroa	Persisting with Difficulty	Setting and choosing difficult tasks. Using a range of strategies to solve problems when ‘stuck’ (be specific).		
communication mana reo	Expressing an Idea or a Feeling	In a range of ways (specify). For example: oral language, gesture, music, art, writing, using numbers and patterns, telling stories.		
contribution mana tangata	Taking Responsibility	Responding to others, to stories, and imagined events, ensuring that things are fair, self-evaluating, helping others, contributing to the program.		
Short-term review				
<p>What a wonderful learning experience this was for our children. They were all so absorbed and involved with the making of the “korowai” and demonstrated such a high level of persistence as well as expressing wonderful creativity.</p> <p>Every child in the centre participated in making Trish’s “korowai”. It was fantastic to see all the children taking responsibility and contributing so fully to this experience.</p> <p>It was especially positive to provide an experience like this that reflected some of the values of our tangata whenua.</p>				
What next?				
Prepare for the farewell event.				

Whānau Farewell

The day arrived; it was Trish's time to leave our centre. Children and staff began the day by making scones to share at the farewell. For many days prior to this, the children had been busy learning new waiata ("Ehara", "E Toru ngā Mea" and "I'd Like to Teach the World to Sing").



During the final morning, the children were feeling overwhelmed by the prospect of Trish leaving. We got out the tissues and talked with the children about feeling sad and letting Trish go. We also talked about how we could support each other at this time.

We then hopped on the bus, taking Trish with us to her new job. Trish's new colleagues and some of the students she will be teaching greeted us all when we arrived at her new workplace. Everyone said a mihi, including Sue, who told the people how much we would miss Trish, and then we handed her over. Her new colleagues promised to look after her in her new job, and then the children sang their hearts out. Trish was overwhelmed. In fact, we all were. We cried, wiped our noses, and laughed together.

At the end of the presentation, we all gathered together and shared a meal before we got back onto the bus and returned to our centre, leaving Trish to begin her new challenge.

Short-term review

What a wonderful day we have all experienced. The concepts of taha wairua (spiritual well-being), taha hinengaro (mental well-being), taha tinana (physical well-being), and taha whānau (social well-being) are inextricably linked in the learning of tamariki Māori. It was so amazing to be involved with the children in a farewell that reflected so much the importance of hauora (total well-being).

There is no doubt that all those who were involved will remember this experience in the days and months to come. It was an opportunity for all of us to experience challenge and success and to enhance the children's and teachers' sense of themselves as capable and competent learners.

What's happening here?

These two pictures and the commentary describe the community of an early childhood centre farewelling their supervisor and gifting her as a taonga to her next place of work. Associated with this gifting is the collaborative making of a cloak by the children and a collective farewell ceremony accompanied by waiata.

What does this assessment tell us about the learning (using a Belonging/Mana Whenua lens)?

This exemplar provides a vivid picture of children's experiences in the domain of Belonging situated in "routines, customs, and regular events" (*Te Whāriki*, page 54). The collaborative activities it documents form part of the centre's development of practices, customs, and codes of behaviour for special occasions. Māori protocol and waiata and the concept of taonga have been incorporated into the learning community's understanding of "what we do here".

How might this documented assessment contribute to Belonging/Mana Whenua?

Documenting and revisiting some of the participation repertoires and protocols in an early childhood centre is an important aspect of establishing a community of learners and a sense of belonging. This record has been included in all the participating children's portfolios, enabling families to revisit, remember, and reflect on key values and meaningful practices in the centre.

What other strands of Te Whāriki are exemplified here?

Ceremonies like this mark important events in the history of the centre and acknowledge the weaving together of aspects of the Well-being/Mana Atua as well as of the Belonging/Mana Whenua strand.