

Fergus and William take their folders outside

21 October

Today I was sitting at the puzzle table and several children were looking through their folders. Fergus was watching the other children and then asked me to help him look for his folder.

“Where’s my folder? I’ve got two folders now, cause Mum paid for another one,” he said.

He found both folders and got out his new one first. “Where’s my other one?” he asked. “Cause this one’s only got one page and I want to look through my other one.”

Fergus found his folder, and then he and William went and sat at the table together. I observed the boys from the puzzle table, and they were both busily looking back and forth through their folders. I then went to join them and listened to their conversation.

“You’ve got one of those Māori ones, William. No, not there, but back there – turn the pages.”

“Hey, yeah! Look, there you are, Fergus, on the stage.”

“That’s when we went to the museum,” replied Fergus.

Both boys glanced at the two photos, which were very similar.

“But they’re not the same, that’s the one when we were in the spaceship,” said Fergus, pointing to the photo in William’s folder.

Both boys then closed their folders and tucked them under their arms. Fergus asked, “Is it all right if we take them outside?”

“Well, if it was my nice book, I wouldn’t take it outside,” replied Anne.

“Well, Shelley does sometimes – takes books outside,” replied Fergus.

“Well, it’s your book, so it’s your decision,” replied Anne.

Both boys ran off with their books tucked under their arms.

What’s happening here?

Fergus and William are revisiting their portfolios (called folders in this centre).

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

Fergus and William may be developing the inclination to take a critical or mindful approach to rules (“mindful” is a dimension of strength outlined in Book 10). There is evidence here that they have the ability to do this and of their sensitivity to occasion. In this example, the children’s folders are artefacts of belonging: they “belong” to the children, and although the teacher may be concerned that they might get dirty or damaged, she acknowledges that the boys have the right to move their folders from place to place.

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

This story centres around the folders that contain the children’s documented assessments. It illustrates the view at this centre that these books belong to the children, and although as a general rule such folders don’t get taken outside (presumably because they might get dirty), what children do with the folders is ultimately their decision.

What other strands of Te Whāriki are exemplified here?

The ability of children to make their own choices is part of the Well-being/Mana Atua strand (Goal 2); children’s rights and those of others feature in the Contribution/Mana Tangata strand (Goal 1) as well.