

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga

The Strands of *Te Whāriki*: Well-being

Ngā Taumata Whakahirahira ki
Te Whāriki: Mana Atua

12

Kei Tua o te Pae
Assessment for Learning:
Early Childhood Exemplars

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Reflective questions

How do documented assessments contribute to the health, well-being, and safety of children in this early childhood setting?

Is there a clear understanding of the definition of well-being from a Māori perspective?

Are assessments clear about some of the strategies children can use to keep themselves safe and to see that others are safe as well?

Do documented assessments provide staff and children with guidelines about how children have been able to stay involved in a task?

Do families and whānau contribute to assessments to give teachers information about their views on health, well-being, and safety in this early childhood setting?

Do assessments provide opportunities to share different cultural viewpoints on the connections between mind, body, and spirit in well-being?

He pātai hei whakaaro iho

Endnotes

Kōrero tāpiri

- ¹ Mason Durie (2001). “A Framework for Considering Māori Educational Advancement”. Opening address to the Hui Taumata Mātauranga, Turangi/Taupo, 24 February, page 5.
- ² Paul Black and Dylan Wiliam (1998). *Inside the Black Box: Raising Standards through Classroom Assessment*. London: School of Education, King’s College, p. 13. (See also Book 10.)
“A great deal of concern has been expressed about the need to respond further to the behaviour and emotional problems of young children growing up in disadvantaged areas. Some longitudinal studies have shown us that children provided with predominantly direct or ‘programmed’ instruction sometimes do better academically than those provided with other forms of pedagogy in the short term ... But the studies also suggest that, when apparent, these gains are short-lived, with all significant differences having ‘washed out’ within a year of the provision ending. Highly structured, didactic teaching has also been found to result in young children showing significantly increased stress/anxiety behaviour.” Iram Siraj-Blatchford and Kathy Sylva (2004). “Researching Pedagogy in English Pre-Schools”. *British Educational Research Journal*, vol. 30 no. 5, October, p. 725.
- ³ The idea of an “appreciative inquiry” comes from a research project where inquiry proceeds from a positive approach: it “entails looking for what is done well, and finding ways to share strengths with others and develop them further” (Janet Holmes, 2000). *Victoria University of Wellington’s Language in the Workplace Project: An Overview*. Language in the Workplace Occasional Papers, no. 1 (November), p. 11.
- ⁴ Ministry of Education (1996). *Te Whāriki: He Whāriki Mātauranga mō ngā Mokopuna o Aotearoa/Early Childhood Curriculum*. Wellington: Learning Media, page 46.
- ⁵ *ibid.*, page 35.
- ⁶ L. S. Vygotsky (1978). *Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, p. 102.
- ⁷ Summarising another research project on the optimal conditions for learning, Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi stated that “I developed a theory of optimal experience based on the concept of *flow* – the state in which people are so involved in an activity that nothing else seems to matter; the experience itself is so enjoyable that people will do it even at great cost, for the sheer sake of doing it.” Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (1991). *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience*. New York: HarperCollins, p. 4.
- ⁸ Mason Durie (2003). *Ngā Kāhui Pou: Launching Māori Futures*. Wellington: Huia Publishers.
- ⁹ Kayoko Inagaki (1992). “Piagetian and Post-Piagetian Conceptions of Development and Their Implications for Science Education in Early Childhood”. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, vol. 7 no. 1, p. 128.
- ¹⁰ Vivian Paley wrote eloquently about the role of children’s storytelling and the value of encouraging them to revisit those stories. See Vivian Gussin Paley (1988). *Bad Guys Don’t Have Birthdays: Fantasy Play at Four*. Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press.
- ¹¹ Siraj-Blatchford and Sylva (2004), *op. cit.*, p. 725.

Kei Tua o te Pae
Assessment for Learning:
Early Childhood Exemplars

The Strands of Te Whāriki: Well-being
Ngā Taumata Whakahirahira ki
Te Whāriki: Mana Atua

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Introduction

He kupu whakataki

In 2001, Mason Durie set out a framework for considering Māori educational advancement. He set out three goals in this framework (discussed in Book 1). Goal 3 relates to well-being:

A third goal for education is linked to well-being. Education should be able to make a major – if not *the* major – contribution to health and well-being and to a decent standard of living. Educational achievement correlates directly with employment, income levels, standards of health, and quality of life. Where there is educational underachievement, health risks are higher, length of life is reduced, and poor health is a more likely consequence ... A successful education therefore is one that lays down the groundwork for a healthy lifestyle and a career with an income adequate enough to provide a high standard of living.¹

This book collects together exemplars from early childhood settings that illustrate the assessment of learning that is valued within the curriculum strand of Well-being/Mana Atua, keeping in mind that the following definition of exemplars was developed by advisers and co-ordinators during the exemplar project:

Exemplars are examples of assessments that make visible learning that is valued so that the learning community (children, families, whānau, teachers, and beyond) can foster ongoing and diverse learning pathways.

Although the exemplars have been annotated with a Well-being/Mana Atua lens, in many cases the lens of another strand could have been used. The principle of Holistic Development or Kotahitanga set out in *Te Whāriki* is a reminder that the curriculum “strands” are a construction, and in any episode of a child’s learning, these strands are inextricably intertwined and interconnected.

Assessment for Well-being Aromatawai mō te Mana Atua

The exemplars in this book illustrate possible ways in which assessing, documenting, and revisiting children’s learning will contribute to educational outcomes in the curriculum strand Well-being/Mana Atua.

- Assessments secure the responsible and thoughtful involvement of all children (for very young children, photographs of learning episodes can be revisited, and families will provide a proxy involvement for their children).
- Assessments reveal the nature of the teacher’s belief about learning and determine their commitment to “teaching through interaction to develop each pupil’s power to incorporate new facts and ideas into his or her understanding”.²
- Portfolios become artefacts of well-being, signifying the competence of the learners and celebrating learning identities in a spirit of “appreciative inquiry”.³
- Opportunities for children to discuss health, emotional well-being, and safety are provided by revisiting assessment episodes that relate to these topics.
- Teaching about health, emotional well-being, and safety, when included in the assessment record, enhances the reader’s knowledge in this area.
- Documentation provides all teachers with information about a child’s well-being cues, enhancing sensitive and well-informed relationships between teachers and children.
- Portfolios document children’s well-being journeys, including their strengthening confidence in a range of areas while suggesting possible ways forward for teachers, families, whānau, and children.

The three domains of Well-being

Ngā rohe e toru o te Mana Atua

Te Whāriki elaborates on the Well-being/Mana Atua strand:

The health and well-being of the child are protected and nurtured. Children experience an environment where: their health is promoted; their emotional well-being is nurtured; they are kept safe from harm.⁴

Ko tēnei te whakatipuranga o te tamaiti i roto i tōna oranga nui, i runga hoki i tōna mana motuhake, mana atuātanga ... Kia rongo ia i te rangimārie, te aroha, me te harikoa, ā, kia mōhio ki te manaaki, ki te atawhai, me whakahirahira i a ia me ōna hoa, me ōna pakeke.⁵

The three interwoven domains of Well-being/Mana Atua are described (as goals) in the English text of *Te Whāriki*, and each domain includes indicative learning outcomes. The exemplars presented in this book can each be allocated to one of these three domains.



Health

This domain emphasises the physical indicators of health: knowledge, skills, and attitudes to do with eating, sleeping, toileting, and keeping warm. One of the foundations of health and well-being is teachers' attunement to the children's cues, which enables sensitive and well-informed relationships. In "Dreaming the day away", Lewis's caregiver describes her strategies for "reading" Lewis's cues for being tired and needing a sleep. This record will be useful for other teachers getting to know Lewis and for reassuring the family that Lewis's health and well-being are in safe hands. In "Fish pie, please", Nicholas is involved in choosing the lunch menu. The teacher writes up the chef's story, and Nicholas's parents add more information to the record. In "Hannah goes without a nappy",



Hannah's caregiver describes Hannah's first experiences at the centre without a nappy and how she stayed calm when they had to travel some distance to find a toilet.

Dispositions and working theories include developing ways of coping with fears and anxieties (and interests) to do with health services, sometimes through stories and drama. A hospital playroom, the setting for the "Today in the playroom" exemplar, provides more examples of children exploring the daunting mysteries of health services. These stories will travel with the children between home and hospital, making a point of connection for other children and offering a catalyst for discussing potentially frightening topics.

Vygotsky explains that children are able to explore, in play, issues that are beyond their usual range of understanding:

In play a child always behaves beyond his average age, above his daily behavior; in play it is as though he were a head taller than himself.⁶

Emotional well-being

Well-being/Mana Atua develops in a safe and trustworthy environment where all children are valued and enabled to be involved. Enjoyment too is a feature of such an environment.⁷ Well-being requires integration of the emotional with the cognitive, the social, and the physical. Health includes the attunement of the body to the mind and the spirit. Mason Durie explains this in his model of te whare tapa whā as four domains – taha wairua, which relates to identity; taha hinengaro, which is about knowledge, information, and behaviour; taha tinana, which relates to physical health; and taha whānau, which refers to the place of the child within whānau and the wider social context or community.⁸ A key aspect of Well-being is the principle of Empowerment or Whakamana, where children are enabled increasingly to make their own choices and to remain focused on a task for a sustained period.

Kayoko Inagaki's early childhood research discusses a number of studies that strongly suggest that, when children acquire intensive knowledge about some topics or domains that they have chosen as their own and thus are deeply involved in, they can go beyond the topics or domains ... such knowledge may serve as the basis for reasoning and acquiring knowledge in related areas as well.⁹

Assessments give value to being "deeply involved" – the capacity to be ready, willing, and able to pay attention, maintain concentration, and tolerate a moderate amount of change, uncertainty, and surprise. In "Finn's dragonfly", Finn is deeply involved in drawing a dragonfly. The teacher reminds him of previous occasions when he was equally focused and concentrated and offers specific detail about what he did to keep going. Book 4 includes examples of children contributing to their own assessments. These are good examples of how assessments themselves can enable children to be engaged in their own learning, make thoughtful choices, and determine their own actions. In "Caroline spreads her wings", photos and comments document Caroline's progress towards independence, something that her mother is eager to encourage.



Working theories include developing ways of making sense of emotional events, sometimes through stories and drama. Working theories about the world include a sense of being of value in a particular setting. They also enable children to develop an understanding that they can help others to cope with distress and in turn can rely on others to help them cope with experiences of grief and anxiety.

In “Making a card for Great-grandad”, Zachary talks about making his great-grandfather a card to “cheer him up”. The teacher and another child, Monique, are involved in his conversations about death and dying. The assessment portfolios at that centre provide a place for a Parent’s voice that adds useful information for the teachers in developing an understanding of Zachary’s situation.

“Pōwhiri for the new principal” illustrates that well-being and a sense of belonging are closely aligned. It records (for the children, the families, and the whānau) an episode in which the childcare centre’s community is greatly valued and the children’s “exemplary” behaviour is clearly described: sitting quietly, standing to waiata when required, and remaining respectful for the whole hour.

Safety from harm

Children develop a sensitivity to place and occasion that provides them with capacity to “read” the environment and to recognise places where they trust the people, places, and things to keep them safe while they become focused and involved over a sustained period. Revisiting stories about learning can assist with this development, to the point of their recognising that the resources available to help them overcome their fears¹⁰ and to keep themselves safe in their early childhood education centre may be different from the resources available in their homes.

Being safe is a value that encompasses physical, cultural, spiritual, and emotional safety and the idea that children should feel safe to “speak out” and be safe from exclusion. The opposite of a child feeling safe to speak out is the concept of whakama, where some children exhibit a humility that limits their full participation. This can be misconstrued as being a lack of interest or apathy. Connections with Belonging/Mana Whenua are clear in this Well-being/Mana Atua strand. We can talk about a safe environment that enables a safe and trusting child. This is an absolutely central goal for early childhood education; young children do not have the power to create their own safe environments.

Research by Iram Siraj-Blatchford and Kathy Sylva, for the Researching Effective Pedagogy in the Early Years (REPEY) project, describes some of the features of a “safe” environment:

The quality of adult–child interactions in the most effective (excellent) settings in terms of the cognitive outcomes was particularly striking. The quality of interaction in one setting in particular (an inner-city nursery school), for example, was very high. The ECERS-R [Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale] Adult/Child Interaction Scale showed a high degree of consistency in staff behaviour with a strong emphasis on positive responses to children and their emotional and learning needs. The staff clearly enjoyed being with the children and engaged with them in a respectful, caring way, without criticism or harshness. They encouraged the children to try new experiences and were very enthusiastic about their efforts ...¹¹



This enthusiasm can be reflected in assessments. Assessments also give value to being ready, willing, and able to take increasing responsibility for safety. Dispositions include respect for rules about harming others and the environment and an understanding of the reasons for such rules. In “Alexander and the trees”, Alexander’s interest in trees includes taking action to protect them when he perceives that they may not be safe from harm. When this story goes home and is read by others, Alexander will gain a reputation as someone who protects the environment.

Working theories for making sense of the world include recognising that strategies for being safe from harm are different in different places and that safety is distributed across people, places, and things. In “Leora cares for others”, Leora takes responsibility for ensuring that Hannah is involved in what the group is doing and feels safe, and Leora comforts another child, Krystal, with a toy when Krystal is hurt. This kind of documentation sets down some features of this place: children help to keep each other safe from harm. Hannah and Krystal may well copy Leora, and the teacher’s recording will remind her and other teachers to notice and recognise any such acts of caring for others.

Exemplars in other books

Ngā tauaromahi kei pukapuka kē

There are a number of exemplars from other books in the *Kei Tua o te Pae* series that could also be useful in considering assessment within the Well-being/Mana Atua strand. These exemplars are as follows:

Book 2: “Those are the exact words I said, Mum!”; Aminiasi sets himself a goal; “Write about my moves!”

Book 3: Pihikete’s learning; Micah and his grandfather

Book 4: all of the exemplars in this book

Book 5: A gift of fluffy slippers; Sharing portfolios with the wider community; Rangiātea; Growing trees

Book 6: “I did it!”; Growing potatoes; Alex the writer

Book 7: Te rakiraki; Greer’s increasing confidence

Book 8: Adam determines the routine; Haere mai, Sam

Book 9: Eating at kindergarten; “I can’t tell you how amazing it is!”

These additional exemplars provide teachers who wish to reflect on the analysis and assessment of learning outcomes within the Well-being/Mana Atua strand with a comprehensive collection of exemplars for discussion.

Hannah goes without a nappy

WELL DONE!!

Today was the second day that Hannah had been in care without a nappy on. Even on the first day she had no "accidents". But today Hannah managed to go without a nappy for the entire day. Her day incorporated a sleep and even an outing to Bishopdale library. Hannah needed to go to the toilet here (indicated with lots of jumping and grabbing her trousers as if really panicking) so we calmly moved out of the library, then had to walk to the lift and wait for it to get us to the first floor - ALL IN TIME!! Hannah got lots of praise for doing things so well.

Hannah is beginning to recognise the physical feelings or cues her body is giving her about needing to use the toilet.

Hannah used some very creative strategies for communicating her needs to me!

Hannah responded calmly to the task of finding a toilet in time.

Kristina

What's happening here?

This story, from a home-based setting, marks a milestone in Hannah's development.

What does this assessment tell us about the learning (using a Well-being/Mana Atua lens)?

This assessment demonstrates self-help and self-care skills at toileting, which are aspects of the Well-being/Mana Atua strand. The carer makes it clear that Hannah is taking the geographical and physical aspects of this process in her stride, staying calm while articulating her need to go to the toilet and while getting to it.

How might this documented assessment contribute to Well-being/Mana Atua?

This assessment is written for Hannah's family. Families are usually interested in progress with toilet training and want to know whether it is proceeding smoothly. "Well done!!" the record says. Well-being includes being proud of one's achievements.

What other strands of Te Whāriki are exemplified here?

The home-based caregiver recognises Hannah's *communication* cues (in this case, the cues are physical actions), and later stories will no doubt record Hannah's progress in communicating her needs using other forms of language.

Today in the playroom

Veins, wonderful veins!

November

This morning in the hospital playroom we talked about veins in our bodies. Jessica dressed up like a doctor and looked to see if she could find Shani's veins ... **DISCOVERY!** Jessica found a vein on the back of Shani's hand. "Could medicine go into this vein?" she asked.

"Yes," I replied. "The doctors might think that was a good vein to put medicine into."



"OK, I'll be sick, OK?" suggested Shani as she climbed into bed.

"OK - and I'll put some medicine into your vein," replied Jessica as she placed a pretend syringe on Shani's arm.

"Ouch!" Shani exclaimed.

"Sorry about that," said Jessica, "but I need to put this medicine into your vein so you'll feel better."

"OK, now it's my turn to be the doctor," Shani suggested. She dressed herself in some dress-up clothes and then looked at the back of Jessica's hand. **ANOTHER DISCOVERY!**

"Oh - I can see your veins, too. Mmm ... they're very nice," she exclaimed. Both girls laughed!

"I'll be asleep, OK?" suggested Jessica. She shut her eyes as Shani bandaged her arm. "Whoops," Shani exclaimed as she finished her bandaging. "Now I can't see your veins at all!"



Comment from Sarah (Hospital Play Specialist):

Shani and Jessica were very interested in finding out about their veins and the insertion of IVs - a procedure that is commonly used when children are hospitalised. They appeared to have a lot of trust in each other (despite only meeting each other a few days earlier), showing this by letting each other find their veins and taking turns to explore the roles of doctor and patient.

What next?

During further play sessions, I aim to provide opportunities for Shani and Jessica to re-visit this topic if they choose, and I will be available to answer questions or address concerns that they, or other family members may have in regard to this procedure. Discussion with their parents/caregivers about the impact of hospitalisation and the benefits of supporting their children's interests in healthcare play (for example, at home and in their early childhood centres) may also be useful in easing the transition process from hospital to home.

Daneka's drip

2 June

Today in the playroom, Daneka asked for the pretend drip-stand to be put out.

She looked at the drip hanging from it and said, "But it's empty."

We found a bag of fluid and attached it.

"Where's the teddy bear bandage? I need a teddy bear bandage to put on me," she said.

So we found a bandage and Daneka said, "Now I can give myself some medicine." She taped on the line and then said, "But I need a towel, it's all running."

Together we looked at the drip and found the clamps to stop the fluid running through. "Now I can do it," she said.

She gave herself a (pretend) finger prick.

"I need a dolly too."

She played with the medical equipment until her mum came to get her.

"Write a note on it," she said.

"What shall we write?" I asked.

We decide to write:

Please don't touch. This is Daneka's drip.



Barbara's comment:

In her play, Daneka has shown familiarity and confidence with the equipment in the medical play area of the playroom. This has developed from her careful observations of the procedures her brother has experienced during his stay in hospital. She has developed this confidence further by exploring what the drip would feel like if it were on her. The opportunity for brothers and sisters of hospitalised children to play with real and pretend medical equipment is valuable in supporting and extending their understanding of what is happening to their siblings.

Katy's hospital check-up

April

Children's names: Jake and Matthew
Play Specialist: Sarah

"What's wrong with Katy?" asked Jake, dressed in his doctor clothes.

"Don't know," replied Matthew.

"I'll do a check-up!" suggested Jake.

Matthew sat Katy on his knee as Jake looked inside his doctor's bag. Jake pulled out a torch.

"OK. I'll check her eyes," encouraged Jake.

"Look at the light," he instructed.

Matthew put his hand inside the puppet and turned her head towards the torch. He watched carefully as Jake shone the light into Katy's eyes.

"That's good," encouraged Jake, "Now I'll listen to your heart."

Jake searched his bag once more, selected a stethoscope, and put this on. Matthew held Katy still.

"OK, breathe in," Jake instructed as he placed the end of the stethoscope on Katy's chest.

Matthew used his hand inside the puppet, opening and closing her mouth to indicate she was breathing.

"Breathe out," Jake directed, as he moved the stethoscope around Katy's chest. Matthew looked eagerly at Jake for his diagnosis. "Good. She's OK. She can go now!" he informed Matthew.

"Yay!" laughed Matthew as he jumped up with the puppet. "Bye!" he called, as he carried Katy to a new activity.

A comment from Sarah

Jake and Matthew participated in a wonderful co-operative healthcare play session, even though these two boys had only spent a brief amount of time together in hospital. It was very interesting and informative to observe how the boys used the puppet in their play. This is an invaluable resource I utilise regularly in order to gain understanding about the meaning that children take from their hospital experiences.

Jake and Matthew's interest in, and knowledge of, the hospital environment was highlighted in this interaction. Jake demonstrated confidence, control, and a good understanding about how some of the medical equipment was used. Matthew played a valuable role in providing comfort and support to Katy during her check-up (for example, by sitting her on his knee and helping her to keep still), highlighting his thoughtful and caring nature.



What's happening here?

The three stories of: “Daneke’s drip”; “Veins, wonderful veins!”, and “Katy’s hospital check-up” come from a hospital playroom. The hospital’s play specialists narrate the three play-session stories demonstrating different children’s strategies for dealing with health issues.

What does this assessment tell us about the learning (using a Well-being/Mana Atua lens)?

In all three stories, the children are playing out familiar and potentially anxiety-creating hospital procedures: having a drip put in, finding veins, and “doing a check-up”. In their pretend play, the children are in control: Daneke pretends to give herself some medicine; Jessica and Shani take turns at being the doctor; Jake takes the role of the doctor, while Matthew plays the caring parent, and Katy (the puppet) is pressed into service as the patient needing a check-up.

In “Katy’s hospital check-up”, the boys demonstrate a sense of responsibility for Katy’s well-being, and all three stories describe the children collaboratively exploring roles as they attempt to collectively make sense of a community with special purposes (health and well-being), routines, and technologies.

How might this documented assessment contribute to Well-being/Mana Atua?

In “Veins, wonderful veins!”, the hospital play specialist comments that she will provide opportunities for Jessica and Shani to revisit this topic, and she will be available to answer questions or address concerns that they, or any other family members, may have about the procedure of injecting into veins. In fact, all three stories provide opportunities for revisiting, further conversations, and enquiry.

What other strands of Te Whāriki are exemplified here?

The hospital play specialist notes how much the children already know about the procedures they are acting out – *contributing* their understandings to their playmates. Their involvement in the play scenarios also encourages them to *explore* the topics further.

Dreaming the day away

Lewis went to sleep early but only for a little while before he let us know that sleep wasn't what he wanted just then. So up to play and we set up a blanket outside for him to enjoy the sights and sounds of the children around him. Some older ones came over straight away as Lewis is a favourite baby. They offered him toys and for a while he was interested but not offering his usual delighted interactions.

So we tried a sleep again but "No way" said Lewis. What about a bottle then and we settled down outside but, oh no, too much action out there. So we went to have a drink in our very quiet inside room. What a difference! No busy attending to everything else. Straight to the business at hand. And when he'd finished, he looked at me in that dreamy way nodding his head slightly as if to say, "Tuck me in please, I'm so full I can hardly hold myself up."

Then snuggling in, dummy and musical toy in place, he instantly went to sleep.

What learning was happening?

Well, the learning was all mine as I tried to figure out what Lewis wanted. In the end, it was a nice warm bottle, a quiet place to drink it and being tucked up snug and warm in bed. I promise I'll try to remember the signs next time, Lewis.

What's happening here?

Lewis is a baby, and his primary caregiver is getting to know his requirements and habits.

What does this assessment tell us about the learning (using a Well-being/Mana Atua lens)?

This is about the well-being of a baby. The caregiver is responding to Lewis's cues in order to "figure out what Lewis wanted", and presumably Lewis is on the way to developing a disposition to relate to others and to enjoy his experiences at the childcare centre.

How might this documented assessment contribute to Well-being/Mana Atua?

In this centre, learning stories are regularly shared with other teachers to help all reflect on their practice and to assist them as they get to know the children. When this story is shared, the opportunity arises to reflect on appropriate responses to babies' non-verbal cues. Families are particularly interested in stories like this that demonstrate their children's well-being.

In reading this assessment, Lewis's family will be reassured that Lewis's health and well-being are being considered carefully and attentively.

What other strands of Te Whāriki are exemplified here?

This story is also a good example of an adult interpreting non-verbal cues *communicated* by a baby. The teacher describes behaviour: "he looked at me in that dreamy way nodding his head slightly"; interprets it: "as if to say 'Tuck me in please, I'm so full I can hardly hold myself up'"; and responds accordingly.

May
Teacher: Fran

Fish pie, please

Nicholas loves all the smells, sights and workings of the kitchen at the centre. He often enquires about what we are having for lunch or afternoon tea. The following conversation about the lunch menu was recorded by Alison, the centre chef.

On Friday Nic asked me if we could have smoked fish pie for lunch as it was his favourite dish. I replied that we were out of milk, so I couldn't make it. Nic then asked me if we needed milk to make fish pie. Not hearing his statement correctly, I once again said that we didn't have any milk. Nic's reply: "No, I'm asking you if you **need** milk to make the fish pie." I told Nic about all the ingredients that were required to make the white sauce – flour, milk and butter.

Today was Monday and after the weekend Nic had not forgotten. "Alison, can we have fish pie today now that we have milk? You can make it if you stir it."

And so the menu for Monday reads as follows:

Fish pie on a bed of rice.

Alison, Tots Centre Chef

Nicholas, your interest in all things around you is apparent in your everyday interactions with others and the environment. When Alison told me about her conversation with you, it reminded me of how much you love to converse with others, enquiring, asking questions and making discoveries. I wonder if you like to cook at home? Does your interest in cooking stem from watching your mum and dad in the kitchen making special meals for you or just from your love of good food? **Fran**

Parents' voice

Our kitchen is the focal point of our living area and much time is spent there during our time together at home as a family. Nic always has an interest in what we are cooking or doing in the kitchen. More recently he has started to get more involved in the goings-on in our kitchen, and has helped Mum cook a banana cake with chocolate chips, and last weekend, a chocolate cake. He is especially helpful when it is time to eat it! Maybe we could all make smoked fish pie in our kitchen.

Mum and Dad



What's happening here?

The story of Nicholas requesting fish pie for lunch was originally told to Fran, the teacher, by Alison, the chef at the childcare centre.

What does this assessment tell us about the learning (using a Well-being/Mana Atua lens)?

This exemplar is about Nic's interest and involvement in preparing food. It is also about Nic having a say in the menu – this is an opportunity for him to learn that his opinion is valued and that the adults at the centre will act on it.

How might this documented assessment contribute to Well-being/Mana Atua?

As a result of this documentation and two prompting questions from the teacher, the parents contribute to continuity between home and the centre. They add information about Nic's involvement in food preparation at home and suggest that they might make smoked fish pie at home as well. Nic expresses a desire for a particular meal at the centre. His parents recognise his interest and enthusiasm in planning the centre's lunchtime menu and may extend this process of choosing the menu beyond the centre to their own home.

What other strands of Te Whāriki are exemplified here?

The teacher comments on the way Nic loves "to converse with others, enquiring, asking questions and making discoveries", and these are all strategies for *communication* and *exploration*. Moreover, Nic takes part in deciding the direction for one of the centre's routines, which is evidence of his sense of *belonging* in the centre's environment.

Emotional well-being

Making a card for Great-grandad

Child: Zachary

Date: February

Teacher: Mary

	A learning story
Taking an interest	<p>“I’m making a card for my great-grandad,” Zachary told me.</p> <p>“He’s really sad!” I asked him why.</p> <p>“Because Great-grandma died. We go and see him and cheer him up.”</p> <p>“My great-grandma died before I was born.”</p> <p>“My daddy said when I’m a daddy, I might die, so I don’t want to be a daddy because I don’t want to die.</p> <p>I don’t want to grow up ...”</p> <p>(Monique was sitting listening to this wonderful chatting. She told him that everyone has to grow up!)</p>
Being Involved	
Persisting with Difficulty	
Expressing an Idea or a Feeling	
Taking Responsibility	
Short-term review	
<p>This was a wonderful way of expressing a feeling that he has picked up.</p> <p>His great-grandad is obviously very important to him and he wants to make him feel happy. He was able to talk in a very relaxed manner with little prompting from myself or Monique – very grown up!</p> <p>How important families are.</p>	

Parent comment

When I dropped Zachary off in the morning I mentioned to one of the teachers that it was Zach’s great-grandad’s birthday and we were going to visit him after crèche. I suggested to Zach that if he felt like doing a picture, he could make one for Great-grandad. The teacher suggested they make him a birthday card.

When I arrived back at crèche to collect Zachary, I was told about the conversation he had had with Mary and Monique while making the birthday card. It was really nice to hear that he had been talking about Great-grandma, who died last year, and that he was talking about looking after Great-grandad. We talked about Great-grandma dying a lot after she died – what it meant for us and for Great-grandad. I was pleased to see that he seemed to have understood it and was comfortable talking about it.

I was unable to catch up with Mary for a few days and then his learning story appeared in the portfolio with more details in it, which was very helpful. When I spoke with Mary it was also good to follow up with her about him not wanting to be a daddy because he would have to die. In a way the learning story has acted as a catalyst for discussion with the teachers about what is going on in Zachary’s life and his reactions to it.

Because I was not able to catch up with Mary straight away, it was good to have the learning story there. It let me know what was said and it also served as a reminder to me to discuss it further with her. Having the story in Zachary’s portfolio really illustrates to me that the teachers are picking up on who Zachary is.

What's happening here?

Zachary's parent suggests that Zachary draw a picture for his great-grandfather's birthday while he is at crèche. The teacher encourages Zachary to make it into a birthday card, and the teacher records the learning story conversation they have with Zachary about Zachary's great-grandfather and death, including the point of view added by another child, Monique.

What does this assessment tell us about the learning (using a Well-being/Mana Atua lens)?

Sustained conversations between children and between adults and children are valuable on a number of levels. In this case, the conversation enables Zachary to explore, with the teacher and another child, two aspects of Well-being/Mana Atua: human development (growing up and dying) and emotion (being sad when someone dies). Zachary thinks about the connection between growing up (and therefore becoming a father) and dying. His logic is impeccable: his father has told him that when you become a "daddy", you could die, "so I don't want to be a daddy because I don't want to die."

Zachary also appears to be recognising that he can help make a sad person happier.

How might this documented assessment contribute to Well-being/Mana Atua?

The Parent comment makes it clear that the parent values this story being written down. "It was good to have the learning story there. It let me know what was said and it also served as a reminder to me to discuss it further with [the teacher]."

Earlier in the comment, the parent expresses satisfaction that Zachary had understood what the great-grandmother's dying meant for the family and "was comfortable talking about it". She also feels that "Having the story in Zachary's portfolio really illustrates to me that the teachers are picking up on who Zachary is." The parent describes the learning story as acting "as a catalyst for discussion with the teachers about what is going on in Zachary's life".

What other strands of *Te Whāriki* are exemplified here?

This learning story conversation is an example of the interconnections between Well-being/Mana Atua, Communication/Mana Reo, and Exploration/Mana Aotūroa.

Finn's dragonfly

May

I approach you Finn as you are working at the art table; you are deep in thought and using a lot of concentration while you work. I wait quietly for a bit and then ask,

"What are you doing there, Finn?"

"A dragonfly."



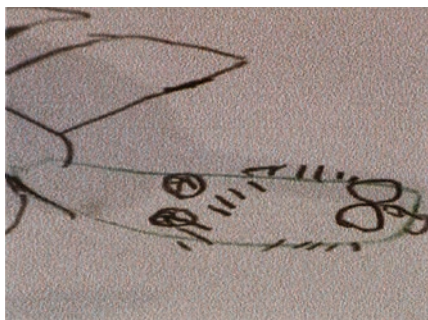
Finn, you have such attention to detail and you take time to study the book, which is open at the end of the table, before you go back to your drawing. I ask you if you have ever seen a dragonfly and you tell me, "At my friend Olivia's, she lives away way in Tauranga. She always has a little dragonfly buzzing around her pool."

You go back to your drawing and your concentration on this artwork is amazing.

"They are pretty special aren't they – dragonflies?" I say.

"Yes," you say after some thinking.

You continue to draw and then you talk to me about the green thing on your page and how you were going to draw a fish and then you decided to do a dragonfly.



I ask you if it is hard to draw and you say, "Yes, I have to concentrate," and I can see you concentrating on your artwork.

I tell you that you are an artist and you say to me, "I do like doing art."

When I ask you why, you tell me, "I like doing it for my mum and dad. I think it is pretty hard to do in noise, once I did it in the quiet."

"Is it easier in the quiet?" I ask.

"Yep," you say.

You continue with your drawing and then move on to outlining your dragonfly with PVA glue.

Finn, I can tell from your face that you are not as happy with this part of your artwork as you were with the pencil drawing. Your face is so expressive that it is hard to hide disappointment. I tell you that I think it looks great and that we can still recognise your name, but I don't think you are entirely convinced.



Finn, as I have said before, you have the ability to persevere with tasks that you set for yourself until they are completed. This learning story reminds me of two that I have written for you previously: the one about the woolly jumper that you made – do you remember how long it took you to make that piece of artwork? And more recently you were very interested in drawing a map to show the way to the zoo. I noticed then your technique of looking closely at the map and then drawing a bit and then having another look at the map on the wall. This is exactly what you were doing today when you were drawing your dragonfly. I like being able to have conversations with you Finn. I really enjoy hearing your thoughts on different things and I especially like that you are able to answer my questions: “Is it hard to do?” and “What do you like about art?” and so on. You are so right that it is hard to do artwork when it is noisy, and today was a very noisy day inside the kindergarten! I think you did really well. And I do think you are an artist.

Finn, you tried so hard not to get that sleeve of yours in the PVA glue and when I looked at the video (don’t forget to have a look at this yourself), it wasn’t until the very end that you got your sleeve in that glue!

This is a three-step process and you have completed two of the steps. When your artwork is dry you might like to do the next step and paint different coloured dye over your drawing.

Jo

What’s happening here?

As Finn draws dragonflies, his teacher discusses his drawings with him.

What does this assessment tell us about the learning (using a Well-being/ Mana Atua lens)?

This is about a child’s deep involvement in a project. The teacher comments that Finn uses a lot of “concentration” while he works, which is confirmed when she asks him if it is hard to draw and he acknowledges, “Yes, I have to concentrate.”

How might this documented assessment contribute to Well-being/Mana Atua?

The teacher documents some of the features of Finn’s deep involvement: attention to detail, taking time to study the book, and Finn’s statement that for him it is easier to draw while

being “in the quiet”. The teacher also refers back to earlier written stories to remind Finn of how long it took to make some of his previous pieces of art and offers Finn the encouraging reminder that this is a “three-step” process and he has now completed two of the three steps.

What other strands of Te Whāriki are exemplified here?

Persistence or perseverance is a disposition associated with the Exploration/Mana Aotūroa strand.

Caroline spreads her wings

20 May: I'd like Caroline to have a sense of independence – i.e., not always needing to be with me or her caregiver – time alone, or with other children and no caregiver close by would be good. Not sure how to develop her independence but I don't want to have created a "clingy" baby either!! **Jennifer**

Margaret and the other teachers at the centre had noticed that Caroline preferred to be held by adults and Jennifer agreed that this was not a new issue for Caroline. Jennifer and Margaret also discussed their observations of Caroline's expanding locomotor skills as well as her increasing social play.

Some of these observations by teachers were recorded in Caroline's profile book.

19 March: Caroline is making more of an effort to move when on her tummy. Today she succeeded in moving backwards a short distance.

23 April: Caroline crawled at home for the first time!

30 April: Caroline has been crawling today!

July: Caroline and Brecht were determined to get the toy out of the cot.

1 August: Caroline is trying very hard to stand unaided, letting go of her support for a few seconds.

2 August: Caroline and David played in and out of the tunnel laughing at each other as they met in the middle – then one would turn around and they'd follow each other through the tunnel. This play lasted at least 5 mins.

24 August: Caroline has mastered standing unaided and she can also climb in and out of the car – she is really proud of her accomplishments.

3 September: Caroline is learning to walk. She investigated the ride-on bike, but eventually chose the trolley, which offered stability and support as she walked. Caroline spent a lot of her time pushing trolleys about as she practised walking.

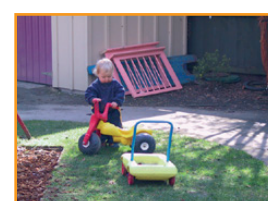


Caroline using her legs to push herself up

16 October: Caroline was determined to get onto the spring bug today despite someone else being on it already. She became quite frustrated, threw herself backwards for a few seconds, then got up, looked at the child on the bug and walked away to another toy. She kept an eye on the bug though and as soon as it was free, she went back to it and climbed on.



Caroline wanted the trolley to face the other way so she manoeuvred it around.



23 October: Caroline is learning to assert herself when she wants a toy. Today she and William both had hold of the teeter totter. They both wanted it and were quite vocal to each other. In the end Caroline walked away with a frown. Later she wanted to stand on a crate next to Allen. She got up on the crate and successfully moved Allen along until there was enough room for her to be comfortable.

Caroline seems to be taking time to assess a situation before acting or reacting, which is enabling her to attain a positive rather than negative result.

Plan – to note such moments and praise the positive interactions.



December: Caroline has become very confident and competent on her feet and is in control of her body. She can climb onto and off the small chairs with no difficulty.

Several months after her note to Margaret, Jennifer recognises a number of significant changes in Caroline:

Progress

Caroline has suddenly turned from being my baby to a wee girl. She is happy, independent, fun and knows her mind! She really has developed in the last few months – a lot more language, social interaction, skills, and physically a lot more confident.

Interests and Abilities

Caroline loves being outside, but is happy inside. She is really enjoying drawing – with a pen on paper, doing lots of small dots and lines. She also enjoys music and likes to dance to it.

What's happening here?

This exemplar is a series of entries in Caroline's portfolio. It begins with Caroline's mother, Jennifer, expressing her desire to see Caroline develop a sense of independence while she is at the childcare centre.

What does this assessment tell us about the learning (using a Well-being/Mana Atua lens)?

This series documents Caroline "spreading her wings" and developing her independence (as well as, and associated with, interdependence).

Frequency and regular events: There are two frequently occurring aspects of Well-being documented here: physical independence, as Caroline learns to walk and begins to climb, and a growing confidence in interacting and "negotiating" with other children.

Distribution across helpful people and enabling resources: Caroline is calling on a growing range of resources for problem solving – trolleys and other children feature in these examples.

Connection to a diversity of social communities: Caroline is growing confident in a range of places within the centre, both inside and outside.

Mindfulness and power balances: In October, the teacher comments that Caroline "seems to be taking time to assess a situation before acting or reacting, which is enabling her to attain a positive rather than negative result". At the end of this series of observations, Caroline's mother writes: "Caroline has suddenly turned from being my baby to a wee girl. She is happy, independent, fun and knows her mind!"

How might this documented assessment contribute to Well-being/Mana Atua?

Only some of the teacher's observations of Caroline are recorded in Caroline's portfolio – many are relayed verbally to her parents when they come to collect Caroline at the end of each day. The documented observations are accompanied by photographs and provide the family with a record of Caroline's development at the centre. Her development is paralleled in her home environment, and news of this significant milestone has been added to the portfolio: "23 April: Caroline crawled at home for the first time!" This contribution from home is supported with a photograph of Caroline crawling at the centre a week later. The teachers follow up on this observation by providing opportunities for Caroline to pull herself up to stand and to learn to walk.

These observations also provide a record of Caroline's interests in interacting with other children and becoming less dependent on adults. The teachers assist her with this by encouraging, modelling, guiding, and responding when she successfully negotiates with others.

What other strands of Te Whāriki are exemplified here?

Caroline's confidence in interacting and "negotiating" with other children is also an aspect of the Contribution/Mana Tangata strand.

Pōwhiri for the new principal

11 December

A Learning Story	
belonging mana whenua	The centre was delighted by the invitation to attend the pōwhiri for the new principal.
well-being mana atua	Significantly we sat at the front, reflecting that we are valued.
exploration mana aotūroa	The kaupapa of the centre – to encourage respect and understanding of Māoritanga – was evident in our children who sat quietly, stood to waiata when required and remained respectful throughout the hour-long pōwhiri.
communication mana reo	Two children who were tired simply leaned against adults and fell asleep – no grizzling, no testiness.
contribution mana tangata	The kaumātua for the tāngata whenua and the kaumātua for the manuhiri acknowledged the children as taonga of the college.
	As usual our children maintained the wairua of the occasion through their exemplary behaviour.
	The essence of the kaupapa and kawa were retained.

Short-term review
The children's attitudes are inspiring. May they be lifelong.
What next?
Strengthen our link to Te Puru. Continue to foster involvement in official college occasions. Forge a reciprocally valuable relationship with the new principal.

What's happening here?

This early childhood centre is located on the site of a secondary school. In this example of a group story for the children's portfolios, "The centre was delighted by the invitation to attend the pōwhiri for the new principal."

What does this assessment tell us about the learning (using a Well-being/Mana Atua lens)?

This documentation records reciprocal and responsive relationships and attitudes of respect and esteem. The children's respectful behaviour during the pōwhiri is described and is reciprocated by the kaumātua's explaining that the children are valued as "taonga" of the college, further cementing the children's self-esteem and sense of respect. The teacher expresses the desire that the attitudes and respect exemplified here be "lifelong" for the children.

How might this documented assessment contribute to Well-being/Mana Atua?

This event is documented for the children, the families, and the whānau. The documentation

records that the childcare centre's community was seated at the front, "reflecting that we are valued". In the Short-term review, the teacher records that the children's attitudes are "inspiring" and, in the learning story, she concludes that "As usual our children maintained the wairua of the occasion through their exemplary behaviour." The assessment clearly defines the attributes of this "exemplary behaviour": sitting quietly, standing to waiata when required, remaining respectful for the whole pōwhiri, and not grizzling or showing "testiness".

What other strands of Te Whāriki are exemplified here?

This exemplar illustrates the close connections between the Well-being/Mana Atua and Belonging/Mana Whenua strands – the children are valued as taonga in this place. Forward planning indicates that the childcare centre community will find ways to forge a reciprocally valuable relationship with the new principal, contributing to the centre's belonging to a wider educational community that includes the college.

Safety from harm

Alexander and the trees

Alexander loves painting



Child's name: Alexander

Date: December

Teacher: Rosie

The Child's Voice

Learning Story

Alexander and I were having a conversation about things that really scare us.

"Dad has an axe at home. It is the best axe in the world. It chops trees – and wood ... and MONSTERS!"

Big Forest by Alexander

"There was a big forest and it had seven trees! It's got a **big** tree – it's got a mouth, eyes, ears and hair – HEAPS of leaves. The tree got big because it ate heaps of sharks!"

Tree Number Two by Alexander

"That tree didn't eat anything – and no little trees – no – nothing at all!"

There's some dots and I just did a stripe in the sun. There's blue sky – it will make the sun a little bit cold – and make the tree **REALLY cold** – and that's all about the story."

July

"I said to Alexander – UGH – your sun is very close to your tree – won't it **BURN** it? That's when he explained about the cool blue sky!"



More wonderful trees!

Alexander painted more wonderful trees today!

He is really enjoying them as a subject for his paintings. His trees are getting fatter by the day.

I told him about Tane Mahuta and he looked at me and laughed disbelievably – no doubt he thinks I'm tricking him – **AGAIN!**



The trees and Alexander

Alexander was into painting trees at kindergarten. His trees were becoming bigger, more colourful and more exciting every day. Then one day Julie said to him that she had seen a huge tree, too big to put her arms around. Alexander didn't believe her but kept talking about this huge tree and his paintings became even larger. We needed to visit Tane Mahuta.

Our first day at the kauri forests was a visit to Trounson kauri forest. Alexander thinks the kauri is amazing to have special bark which it sheds to stop climbing plants growing on it. Especially impressive was the age of the trees and trying to work out what was happening in the world when they were young.

We came back for a nighttime walk sneaking quietly in the dark to try to spot a kiwi. Four excited boys tried hard but no kiwis were seen. Great excitement though in finding some large kauri snails, koura, native trout, wetas and a particularly long fat eel.

Tane Mahuta was the tree we came to see. I think everyone was more impressed by its age than its size. For Alexander this was more than a tree, this was Tane Mahuta, the God of the Forest. The amazement was written on his face, "Wow, it's cool, it is humongous. It is so fat!" He had to lie down to see the top.

We had a fantastic holiday, and Alexander's interest in trees carries on.

For his birthday his request was a feijoa tree which is now growing at the bottom of the garden. All our boys have their own native [to their own countries] trees planted at our holiday home, and these trees are watched closely and cared for as an extension of themselves.



Trees in water!

Today Alexander produced this lovely work.

"The trees are in the water!" he told me and then proceeded to paint the blue.

"What sort of water?" I asked. "A river" he told me.

I told him about weeping willow trees and he listened with great interest.

"Two small trees - and one BIG one - of those you said!" he said as he painted.

I must get hold of a book on trees and show Alexander. And get him to look at all the different trees in our environment.

Alexander came to me today and said, "Julie - I want to do a tree painting."

"Great, Alexander - would you like to look at that poster of trees?" I asked.

He said he would. We spent quite a while together talking about the various different trees and leaves.

"Cabbage tree ...?" he pondered. "Can you eat it?"

"Ummm - I don't think so - but I'm not sure - I wonder why it's called that?"

He didn't know. That might be something we think about another day.

Alexander and I had looked at this tree poster before, a couple of weeks ago when he was in full flight with his tree painting. He was very drawn to the pōhutukawa tree - and today he decided he would paint it.

He drew several branches then joined them together.

"I'm making a big branch," he said. I told him new pōhutukawas often have lovely big bouncy branches - you can sit on them and ride them like a horse!

He painted a wonderful picture, complete with flowers and waves and big rocks.

Summary

This tree painting interest of Alexander is quite delightful. I really am enjoying watching it develop and spending time with him talking about trees!

I've noticed his paintings are becoming more and more complex. He loves making his branches, rocks and suns bigger and bigger as he paints - and often enthusiastically comments on this as he works.

Julie



“Julie, come quick. A man in the park is hurting the trees!”

Alexander took my hand and ran me over to the park to look.

“QUICK – PHONE THE POLICE,” he added. “THEY’LL STOP HIM!”

“We’re powerful Alexander – let’s go over there and see what’s going on!” I said.

Alexander, Toby and Willie piled at the gate to investigate the goings on!

The man looked a little astonished at first. I explained that my friend Alexander liked trees a lot and was worried he might be hurting some. He told us he wasn’t doing anything unkind to the trees – but had put in a new rubbish bin. The boys asked how he had done that and he showed us the cement.

Phew – all was well!



What’s happening here?

These excerpts from Alexander’s portfolio record his growing fascination with trees – to the extent that he takes action when he perceives that some trees in the local community need protecting.

What does this assessment tell us about the learning (using a Well-being/ Mana Atua lens)?

The well-being of people cannot be separated from the well-being of the environment, and Alexander’s interest in trees leads him to take responsibility for protecting the well-being of the environment. His involvement in a “trees project” includes painting different types of trees and trees in different situations, writing and listening to stories about trees, and responding promptly to a real, and potentially a conservation issue: “Julie, come quick . A man in the park is hurting the trees!”

Alexander’s urgent expression of concern for the safety of the trees also demonstrates his confidence and ability to express his emotional needs and trust that the teachers at the centre will take his concerns seriously.

How might this documented assessment contribute to Well-being/Mana Atua?

Part of this exemplar relates to discussions about conservation and about what it means to “hurt” trees. Alexander could revisit this assessment to discuss and explore his experiences further as he develops his sense of responsibility for protecting others from being injured.

What other strands of Te Whāriki are exemplified here?

In this assessment, Alexander uses art to *explore* and *communicate* some imaginative ideas about trees.

Leora cares for others

18 July

Leora saw how upset Krystal was after getting the skin on her fingers pinched in the drawer. As I was consoling Krystal, Leora went to get a toy for her to help comfort her. She gave it to Krystal (who really appeared needy of it) and gave her a big smile.



23 July

This morning Leora and I were half-way down the back lawn when we saw Hannah was not with us. We looked back to see her still standing on the steps and looking very worried. "I think she needs help," said Leora who immediately ran to her. She walked up the steps, stood next to Hannah, took her hand and walked her down the steps.

What's happening here?

This exemplar relates to two entries in Leora's profile book from a home-based setting. They demonstrate Leora's concern for two other children.

What does this assessment tell us about the learning (using a Well-being/Mana Atua lens)?

Leora's developing identity as someone who assists others is documented here. In the first story, Leora sees that Krystal is upset when she gets her fingers pinched in the drawer. "I think she needs help," says Leora in the second story, when she and the caregiver look back at Hannah, who is standing looking worried on the steps. In both cases, Leora shows a sense of responsibility for the well-being of others. She finds a toy to comfort Krystal, and she takes Hannah by the hand and walks her down the steps.

How might this documented assessment contribute to Well-being/Mana Atua?

These stories will be retold to Leora and may provide opportunities for the teacher to affirm that this is what happens at this place: children help each other.

What other strands of Te Whāriki are exemplified here?

The aspects of inclusion and relationships with others also apply to the Contribution/Mana Tangata strand.