

# The Strands of *Te Whāriki*: Contribution

Ngā Taumata Whakahirahira ki  
*Te Whāriki*: Mana Tangata

15

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



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- <sup>5</sup> *ibid.*, p. 64
- <sup>6</sup> Alexandra C. Gunn (2003). “A Philosophical Anchor for Creating Inclusive Communities in Early Childhood Education: Anti-bias Philosophy and *Te Whāriki: Early Childhood Curriculum*”. *Waikato Journal of Education*, no. 9, p. 130. Writing about *Te Whāriki*, she also comments that “Turning equitable and inclusive aspirations of the curriculum into practice remains, in my experience, a challenge.”
- <sup>7</sup> Gaile S. Cannella (1997). *Deconstructing Early Childhood Education: Social Justice and Revolution*. New York: Peter Lang, p. 169. Cannella also writes: “As a final challenge, I would propose that professionalism in the field of early childhood education become the development of critical dispositions in the struggle for social justice and care” (p. 167).
- <sup>8</sup> Vivian Gussin Paley (1992). *You Can’t Say You Can’t Play*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, p. 3. Many of Vivian Gussin Paley’s books are about teachers and children reflecting on the topics of relationships, fairness, and friendships. Here is an excerpt from the children’s discussions in *You Can’t Say You Can’t Play*:

Teacher: Should one child be allowed to keep another child from joining the group? A good rule might be: “You can’t say you can’t play.” ...

Angelo: Let anyone play if someone asks.

Lisa: But then what’s the whole point of playing?

Nelson: You just want Cynthia.

Lisa: I could play alone. Why can’t Clara play alone?

Angelo: I think that’s pretty sad. People that is alone they has water in their eyes.

Lisa: I’m more sad if someone comes that I don’t want to play with.

Teacher: Who is sadder, the one who isn’t allowed to play or the one who has to play with someone he or she doesn’t want to play with?

Clara: It’s more sadder if you can’t play.

Lisa: The other one is the same sadder ...

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

***The Strands of Te Whāriki: Contribution***

***Ngā Taumata Whakahirahira ki***  
***Te Whāriki: Mana Tangata***

Introduction – He kupu whakataki	2
Assessment for Contribution – Aromatawai mō te Mana Tangata	2
The three domains of Contribution – Ngā rohe e toru o te Mana Tangata	3
Equitable opportunities for learning	3
Affirmation as individuals	4
Learning with and alongside others	4
Exemplars in other books – Ngā tauaromahi kei pukapuka kē	5
Exemplars – Ngā tauaromahi	6
Equitable opportunities for learning	6
<i>Becoming part of the group</i>	6
<i>Stevie and the pirate ship</i>	7
<i>Whakapai kai</i>	8
<i>Osmana's view</i>	10
Affirmation as individuals	12
<i>Zachary dancing</i>	12
<i>A grandfather's letter</i>	13
<i>Teaching others</i>	14
Learning with and alongside others	15
<i>Developing friendships</i>	15
<i>Mahdia's story</i>	16
<i>Blocks and beads</i>	17
<i>The three friends</i>	18
<i>A business venture</i>	22
<i>The artists</i>	26
<i>Issy's new role</i>	27
Reflective questions – He pātai hei whakaaro iho	28
Endnotes – Kōrero tāpiri	28



## Introduction

## He kupu whakataki

How does one maintain standards of accountability – to students, teachers, and parents, to school officials who are responsible for the students’ progress ... while at the same time keeping the social contract with students, who are encouraged to view themselves as co-equal participants in a community of sharing? This is a difficult tightrope to walk, and our approach has been to be honest with the children and to allow them to participate in the assessment process as much as possible.<sup>1</sup>

This book collects together early childhood exemplars that illustrate the assessment of learning that is valued within the curriculum strand of Contribution/Mana Tangata, keeping in mind that:

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.<sup>2</sup>

Although these exemplars are viewed through a Contribution/Mana Tangata 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 areas are inextricably intertwined and interconnected.

## Assessment for Contribution

## Aromatawai mō te Mana Tangata

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 Contribution/Mana Tangata.

- Children are provided with opportunities to contribute to their own assessments.
- Children have formative assessments that they can “read” and comment on.
- Group assessments illustrate children’s developing skills and dispositions to initiate, maintain, and enjoy relationships with other children.
- Continuity of assessments over time illustrates individual and personalised learning trajectories or journeys that have developed from the children’s particular interests and intentions, the teachers’ interests and intentions (including *Te Whāriki*), the available resources and activities, the opportunities that children are given to take responsibility for their own learning, the expectations of competence for all learners, the community of learners that exists at the early childhood setting, and the funds of knowledge and dispositions that the children bring from home and elsewhere.
- The curriculum and the assessment documentation include funds of knowledge<sup>3</sup> about difference and diversity, with the goal of children learning to relate positively in diverse groups.
- Teachers note, recognise as valuable, record, respond to, and revisit episodes in which children question the status quo and offer thoughtful alternatives.

## The three domains of Contribution

## Ngā rohe e toru o te Mana Tangata

*Te Whāriki* elaborates on the Contribution/Mana Tangata strand as follows:

Ko te whakatipuranga tēnei o te kiritau tangata i roto i te mokopuna kia tū māia ai ia ki te manaaki, ki te tuku whakaaro ki te ao ... Kia mōhio ia ki ōna whakapapa, ki te pātahi o ōna whānau, ki ōna kaumatua me ōna pakeke ... Kia mōhio hoki ki a Ranginui rāua ko Papatūānuku, ā rāua tamariki, me ngā kōrero mō rātou.<sup>4</sup>

Opportunities for learning are equitable and each child's contribution is valued.

Children experience an environment where:

- there are equitable opportunities for learning, irrespective of gender, ability, age, ethnicity, or background;
- they are affirmed as individuals;
- they are encouraged to learn with and alongside others.<sup>5</sup>

The three interwoven domains of Contribution/Mana Tangata 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.

### Equitable opportunities for learning

In this domain of Contribution/Mana Tangata, the emphasis is on the recognition of (and action towards) children's rights and responsibilities, together with early perceptions of and responses to diversity, inclusion, and fairness. Assessments give value to and record actions that are associated with children's increasing confidence to stand up for themselves and for others when they perceive that justice is threatened. Creating an environment that is characterised by mutual respect supports children to take on this role. Such an environment goes hand in hand with assessments that show children developing attitudes and social skills in these areas.



Communicating and teaching with the support of anti-bias principles creates educational communities where individuals and groups can contribute their perspectives to the whole to make their educational experiences inclusive, equitable and empowering.<sup>6</sup>

In the exemplar “Becoming part of the group”, Hamish is developing a number of strategies for achieving inclusion in the group. The annotation notes that, in New Zealand, where early childhood transitions often occur on birthdays and result in close companions being left behind, there are many opportunities for children to develop useful strategies to help them adjust to and fit in with new situations. In “Stevie and the pirate ship”, the teacher helps the children to learn to stand up for themselves. “Whakapai kai” is about a child taking responsibility for ensuring that his culture is included in the routines of the centre, and in “Osmana's view”, the teacher is puzzling over how to respond to cultural differences in ways of expressing thanks for food.

## Affirmation as individuals

Working theories about the self as capable and competent are the core of this domain. Children are developing an awareness of some of their strengths and a perception of themselves as capable of developing new interests and abilities.

Assessments are specific about children's strengths and suggest ways forward for their development.



Perceived differently by different cultural groups, respect for all human beings is not simple or easily definable. However, within the context of social justice and care, respect would require appreciation of the value of all other beings, acceptance of multiple ways of thinking and being in the world, and a willingness to fight for an equitable and just community for everyone.<sup>7</sup>

“Zachary dancing” is an exemplar that affirms Zachary’s special interest in dancing, an interest that he is comfortable to develop both at home and at the early childhood centre. “A grandfather’s letter” lists the valued learning that a grandfather identifies in his grandson’s profile book. In “Teaching others”, Bianca takes responsibility for helping others learn and sees herself as a competent teacher and learner.

## Learning with and alongside others

This domain of Contribution/Mana Tangata is about children’s growing capacity to develop relationships with other people who are different from them in diverse ways. Relationships between teachers and children, and between teachers, provide models for the social skills and attitudes that support this capacity.



In her book *You Can’t Say You Can’t Play*, Vivian Gussin Paley begins by discussing children in the process of developing an understanding of relationships and of dealing with rejection:

“Are you my friend?” the little ones ask in nursery school, not knowing. The responses are also questions. If yes, then what? And if I push you away, how does it feel?

By kindergarten, however, a structure begins to be revealed and will soon be carved in stone. Certain children will have the right to limit the social experiences of their classmates. Henceforth a ruling class will notify others of their acceptability, and the outsiders learn to accept the sting of rejection. Long after hitting and name-calling have been outlawed by the teachers, a more damaging phenomenon is allowed to take root, spreading like a weed from grade to grade.

Must it be so? This year I am compelled to find out. Posting a sign that reads YOU CAN’T SAY YOU CAN’T PLAY, I announce the new social order and, from the start, it is greeted with disbelief.<sup>8</sup>

Assessments give value to relationships and highlight successful strategies for initiating and maintaining episodes of social interaction and for coping with conflict in peaceful ways. Indicative outcomes for this domain also include children developing “a sense of responsibility and respect for the needs and well-being of the group, including taking responsibility for group decisions”, an outcome that is woven across all the domains of Contribution/Mana Tangata and indeed across all the strands of *Te Whāriki*.



In the exemplar “Developing friendships”, three boys whose home languages and cultures are different – one from Malaysia, one from Afghanistan, and one from Kosovo – are good friends. “Mahdia’s story” is about an early childhood centre where the children demonstrate a caring attitude, and “Blocks and beads” describes the social interactions of two children building collaboratively. “The three friends” is an example of a group’s involvement in a sewing project (begun by the grandmother of one of the children) that extends from children to their peers, their teachers, and their families. “A business venture” is an example of another collaborative project. Toddlers paint together and learn from watching each other in “The artists”. Finally, an amalgamation of two stories, a year apart, in “Issy’s new role” illustrates the power of documentation in describing continuity.

## Exemplars in other books

## Ngā tauaromahi kei pukapuka kē

The following exemplars in other books can also be viewed from a Contribution/Mana Tangata perspective.

Note: Almost all of the exemplars in *Kei Tua o te Pae* are affirmations of the children as learners, so no additions have been made for the domain to do with affirmation as individuals.

**Book 2:** Becoming a friend, becoming a learner; The mosaic project; Assessments in two languages; Toddlers as teachers

**Book 3:** Making jam; Hatupatu and the birdwoman

**Book 4:** Your brain is for thinking; Tayla and “what next?”

**Book 5:** Nanny’s story; Rangiātea; Growing trees

**Book 6:** Growing potatoes; Readers, carers, and friends; Skye in a box

**Book 7:** Te rakiraki; Greer’s increasing confidence; George makes music; “Like something real”; Fe’ao

**Book 8:** Adam determines the routine; James pursues a friendship; Ruby and the supermarket; Copy cats; Michael: a helper, friend, and brother

**Book 9:** Elaine’s stories; Eating at kindergarten; Fred’s stories

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

## Exemplars

### Equitable opportunities for learning

#### Becoming part of the group

Hamish has been very interested in joining in with Luka, Ethan, Izaak and Ronan. Over the last 2 days he has tried to become a part of their group. By watching their play he found a way he could contribute to what they were doing. He got a large tarpaulin out of the shed and said he was a "wave". This seemed to fit in well with their play in the boat and around the playground. Today Hamish did this again and eventually they developed a game where they jumped into the water off the large boxes.



thinking. Using a prop was a clever way of getting noticed and showing he had something to add to their play. It proved successful, which must have been a great feeling for Hamish.

Making new friends and developing new relationships is such a complex process. Having some creative strategies to try is a wonderful way of beginning this process with new friends.

#### What learning is happening here?

I was really impressed with the way Hamish persevered and thought of a way to be incorporated with the other boys' play. This showed such creative

#### Possibilities and opportunities

I hope that Hamish will become a part of this group. As children move off to school, new friendships often are formed with the children who are left at kindergarten. I think he is developing some good strategies for developing relationships.

Alison, August

#### What's happening here?

Hamish wants to be included in the games that four other children are developing. He uses his initiative and takes responsibility for making this happen.

#### What does this assessment tell us about the learning (using a Contribution/Mana Tangata lens)?

Hamish has developed a number of strategies for becoming part of a group. He watches to find a way of contributing; he presents a prop (the tarpaulin) and incorporates it into the group's play; he appears to have given himself a role (as a "wave"); and this results in his becoming part of the group as they develop a group game. The teacher notes that Hamish persevered with his goal of joining the group (over two days) and that his using the prop was a creative solution.

Finding his own strategies, in this case without asking a teacher to intervene, demonstrates how a child can learn to take responsibility as they develop confidence in themselves. In New Zealand, where significant transitions are made at the early childhood stage around birthdays, when children leave close companions behind and enter new communities and groups, there are many opportunities for children to develop skills

for contributing and joining new groups, and these skills are very valuable.

#### How might this documented assessment support Contribution/Mana Tangata?

The assessment acknowledges the successful strategies that Hamish has used to introduce himself to a new group. It may become part of a discussion with Hamish about other strategies that might be useful, citing examples that other children have developed for particular occasions. These documented strategies also serve as reminders for staff of strategies they can suggest to children who are seeking ways to join in (see "Stevie and the pirate ship"). In this way, one episode can take on the role of an exemplar about inclusion for others in this setting.

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

The teacher notes that developing an inclusion strategy that is successful must have been a "great feeling" for Hamish, a reminder that relationships are a central aspect of *well-being* as well as *belonging*. Many of the exemplars in the Contribution/Mana Tangata strand are about children developing working theories for making sense of the social world, which is a domain of the Exploration/Mana Aotūroa strand of Te Whāriki.



# Stevie and the pirate ship

Child's name: Stevie

## Learning stories

At one point this afternoon Stevie was very upset. I asked "What's wrong Stevie – why are you sad?" He told me he was sad because someone told him he couldn't play on the pirate ship. I took his hand and said, "That's very upsetting – and they told me I'm not allowed either – because girls aren't allowed!"

Victoria piped into the conversation "Me too!" "Wow, how did it make you feel when they said that, Victoria?" I asked. "Sad," she said. "Well that ship needs some more sails – who wants to help me make some sails?" Stevie was very keen to be involved and cheered up. So we found poles and fabric and I stapled the fabric to the poles. A group of children joined Stevie in drawing on the sails then we went together to put the sails up. After we had done this we made a sign with markers and cardboard that said "Everyone is allowed on the pirate ship" and stapled it to the ship.

### Next day ...

I noticed today there were fewer episodes of exclusion and I saw none involving Stevie. Stevie played happily on the ship and also got his face painted – which I believe is quite a new thing for him.

## Short-term review

Stevie was upset at being excluded (understandably). I validated his feelings and also helped bridge his experience with that of others (i.e., myself and Victoria's) thereby offering him emotional support.

I helped Stevie find a way back into the play, and helped him make a sign that depersonalised the conflict situation.

Question: What learning did I think went on here (i.e., the main point(s) of the learning story)?

## What next?

Keep building my relationship with Stevie.

Encourage the development of relationships with children through small-group experiences with Stevie.



## What's happening here?

Stevie and Victoria are excluded from playing on the pirate ship. The teacher helps them to see how they can be proactive in changing the situation.

## What does this assessment tell us about the learning (using a Contribution/Mana Tangata lens)?

This assessment deals with learning about rights and ways of asserting them. One way of establishing rights is to enshrine them in a written rule (or treaty), and once the teacher confirms Stevie's feelings, she encourages the children to create a sign for the pirate ship that states "Everyone is allowed on the pirate ship". Before this, the teacher suggested that the children create some props to contribute to the play; a strategy that Hamish also used successfully in "Becoming part of the group" to introduce himself to a group's play.

## How might this documented assessment support Contribution/Mana Tangata?

This exemplar is a reminder of Vivian Gussin Paley's title *You Can't Say You Can't Play*, which is discussed earlier in this book (page 4). If this exemplar was shared with the children, it would undoubtedly engender the kind of discussions that Paley's book describes so eloquently, discussions about justice and exclusion.

In this assessment, the short-term review records the teacher's strategies, so the audience is probably the other staff. It suggests ways of dealing with exclusion and provides an account of what has happened so far for Stevie and Victoria so that the teachers can build on their experiences.

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

Inclusion and recognition of the need for equitable opportunities to participate in activities are also part of the Belonging/Mana Whenua strand. One of the teacher's strategies is to acknowledge the children's feelings, encouraging them to identify their own feelings and those of others, which is a feature of the Well-being/Mana Atua strand. The teacher and the children are also setting the stage for creative and expressive play on the pirate ship, which are features of the Communication/Mana Reo strand.

# Whakapai kai

12 October  
Recorded by Marie

Today, for the first time, Anthony was joined by his best friend to give the blessing before we ate.

E Te Atua  
whakapaingia ēnei kai  
hei oranga mō ō mātou tinana  
whāngaia ō mātou wairua  
ki te taro ō te ora  
Amine



Anthony spoke with confidence and pride, reciting the whakapai kai karakia he had been taught at home and was now sharing with his friends and teachers at Whare Pukeko.

Anthony, it was only a few weeks ago that you shyly introduced “whakapai kai” to your teachers and friends, so this morning when you and Remy said the karakia together with so much confidence and assurance we were all so proud of you.

When Remy said he wanted to tell me a secret earlier today and whispered to me the karakia I was amazed and so pleased. He told me that you had taught him the words. How clever of you. It must be nice to have a friend stand by your side when you give the blessing. I’m sure it won’t be long before everyone knows the full karakia and stands with you too.

Last week your dad wrote the karakia out for me, adding a few lines that you haven’t been taught

yet. I asked for his help because I wanted to get it right before we shared it with everyone else. Did you notice that I had typed up the words and placed them on the window in the café for everyone to see and read?

A few years ago I was also taught a karakia but we sang it. Do you remember telling me off for singing it one day? You told me, “You don’t sing karakia!” This made me somewhat confused because I was taught it by a Māori teacher and believed that it was okay to sing “whakapai kai”. But how right you were, after speaking with your family I found out that it was not tikanga for their iwi, but this is not to say that other iwi might feel differently and follow a different custom.

Anthony, thank you for sharing what you have been taught at home with us. It will always be remembered.



### What learning is happening here?

Anthony has been encouraged to contribute his learning from home with us. We believe that he feels valued as an important member of our family here too.

His self-confidence has soared not only because he can now say the karakia with passion in a clear and strong voice but also because we have encouraged and supported the inclusion of his family's karakia in our daily routine. Therefore, his custom from home has been accepted by everyone here.

As an educator I have learnt to respect the different cultural values of our extended whānau and have a deep admiration for those willing and able to share their customs and language with us, therefore hopefully building deeper meaningful relationships.

Thank you, Rameka and Louise.



### What's happening here?

The teachers have included Anthony's family karakia in their routine. Anthony has taught Remy the words, and on this occasion the two children recite the whakapai kai karakia together.

### What does this assessment tell us about the learning (using a Contribution/Mana Tangata lens)?

This assessment documents how Anthony's self-confidence has developed and how he has taken responsibility for reciting the whakapai kai karakia he had been taught at home and for teaching it to others. Taking responsibility is a learning disposition. It may begin here with the whakapai kai karakia and then become evident in other areas. Anthony has taught the karakia to his friend Remy, and the teacher suggests that Anthony will also go on to teaching the karakia to other children as well.

The teacher's memory of being "told off" by Anthony for singing a karakia rather than speaking it is evidence that Anthony has taken learning his karakia to a higher level – as well as developing the skill of memorising a karakia, Anthony is also demonstrating an awareness of his family's customs and an inclination to follow those customs himself.

The teacher also writes about her own confusion and how she consulted with Anthony's family to clarify some questions. In documenting this

aspect, she is demonstrating her own learning process – when uncertain, consult the right people. She explains that she also asked Anthony's father to write out the karakia because "I wanted to get it right".

### How might this documented assessment support Contribution/Mana Tangata?

This appears to be an ongoing story. Although the assessment describes this as "the first time", the teacher includes past events in the documentation to keep the history of the narrative going, and there will be more to add as Anthony's sense of responsibility becomes more robust and develops greater breadth and complexity.

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

This aspect of Contribution/Mana Tangata is closely interwoven with Anthony's growing sense of *belonging* in this early childhood community. *Communication* is implicated too, with te reo me ōna tikanga Māori playing an important part in the exemplar. The strand of Exploration/Mana Aotūroa is also included, with the children being encouraged to develop working theories for making sense of the diversity of their social world.

This exemplar also demonstrates the affirmation of Anthony's cultural identity, which is an important aspect of the Well-being/Mana Atua strand.



# Osmana's view

Osmana is the grandmother of Elma.  
She is also the great-aunt of Shelia.  
She sat talking with us at the lunch table.  
Osmana talked about respect.  
Respect before the war.  
Respect for each other.  
Respect for our world and for the people of the world.  
“We should say thank you for this food.”  
Osmana said all of this very gently and quietly.  
Her face is gentle and warm.  
I began to think about what she had said.  
I began to think about the ways in which we could all say thank you.  
Thank you is part of respect, appreciation and a way of acknowledging and deepening relationships.  
I asked Htwe how Burmese people say thank you for food. She said, “We always say thank you at the end of the meal.”  
I asked Sadia from Afghanistan the same question. She said, “We always say thank you at the end of the meal.”  
I talked again with Osmana. I could sense that this was very important to her. We talked about how childcare centres and teachers can support family and cultural values.  
I thought in this case we could say a grace before eating, as a mark of respect.  
Thank you for the world so sweet,  
Thank you for the food we eat,  
Thank you for the friends we meet,  
Thank you for the birds that sing,  
Thank you God for everything,  
seemed appropriate.  
We introduced it that very day.  
I have asked Osmana if she will write her story for me.

## Robyn, 28 June

I want to put this grace up on the wall in the dining area.

I want to explore some simple karakia that could be suitable.

Our Māori proverbs could be a way – a pathway through. We may eventually have a collection of graces from all cultures within our centre.

## July

### Memories from Osmana

I remember gladly the times when grown-ups as well as children had much more respect for food.

I've had six sisters and my father was the only one who was working. It was very hard to provide food for eight family members. The lunch was the main meal – just like dinner in New Zealand.

Between 3 and 4 p.m., we all had to be on time for lunch. Instead of chair and table, we were eating on the thing called “siniya”, which is a very low round table, from which you could eat by sitting on the floor, with bent legs. Older sisters would be helping with serving. Usually, when the meal was served, our father would start by saying “Bismillah irahman irahim”, which means “In the name of merciful God”. When finishing the meal everybody would say “el-hamdulilah” meaning “Thank God for everything”.

No one was allowed to refuse any food or even say something bad about it. All leftovers and crumbs were thrown to birds. If someone wasn't there for lunch, he wouldn't get anything to eat until dinner. The times have changed. So did customs, and I'm trying to understand and respect everything new that is coming.

### What's happening here?

This is another exemplar about a centre acknowledging the diverse cultures and traditions of its home communities. The teacher researches different families' customs around saying thank you for food at mealtimes and describes one possible way the centre might be able to incorporate a similar thank you at mealtimes to show respect for the cultural values present at the centre. Osmana, Elma's grandmother, writes about the customs in her culture.

### What does this assessment tell us about the learning (using a Contribution/Mana Tangata lens)?

By writing down her family's customs and details of the past, Osmana is teaching Elma about them and is providing a lesson to do with respect for food. She also contributes this knowledge to the teachers and the other children at the lunch table, recalling and telling about a different time and place.

### How might this documented assessment support Contribution/Mana Tangata?

This story can also be shared with other children, extending their knowledge of other customs, as well as developing their sense of respect and gratitude for food.

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

This exemplar, with its emphasis on the cultures of the home communities, ties in with the children developing a sense of *belonging* to the two communities of home and the centre and developing their cultural identity, which extends their personal sense of Well-being/Mana Atua. Communication/Mana Reo is implicated with Osmana's inclusion of her home language in her description of the past. So is Exploration/Mana Aotūroa as the children develop working theories for making sense of the diversity of their social world.

## Affirmation as individuals

# Zachary dancing

Children: Zachary and Erin

8 February

Teacher: Carol

Sitting on the chair with Zach, going to Africa "to do ballet", Erin is wearing a tutu. When in "Africa" she changes her dress and gives one to Zach so he can do ballet too. They dance to music on the radio for a little while and then move off to separate activities.



### Parent's voice

It was great to see how Zach joined in with Erin's game. He really does enjoy moving to music and it is nice to see him feeling comfortable enough to express himself in this way in such a supportive environment. It is reassuring to know that you are seeing the same things in Zach at crèche as we are at home.

He loves to move to music, any kind of music, and will often adapt his movement to the rhythm and feel of the music. The other day when he and I were home together I put Vanessa Mae's classical album on to listen to. Suddenly he stopped what he was doing and for about 20 minutes he just danced, almost lost in the music. When it went slow, he went slow. When it was loud he did swooping big movements. It was so wonderful to watch. He really is learning to be a wonderful dancer as he explores all these movements and ways of dancing.

### What's happening here?

Zachary and Erin are dancing, and the teacher and a parent each add a commentary to the photograph of the two children.

### What does this assessment tell us about the learning (using a Contribution/Mana Tangata lens)?

Zachary's parent adds the short-term review to this short description of an event at the childcare centre. Zachary's mother comments that in her view Zachary is learning to be a dancer, and she describes an episode at home that supports this view. She affirms him as an individual with a particular strength and recognises the value of Zachary's feeling comfortable dancing with other children at the centre as well as dancing at home.

### How might this documented assessment support Contribution/Mana Tangata?

This is a documented account of how Zachary's individuality as a dancer has been noticed, recognised, and respected, and recorded for revisiting.

Erin's role has been important too. By siting dancing in a "going to Africa to do ballet" story, she has described ballet as a cultural event. It may be that previous experiences at the centre have introduced this idea. Reflection by staff on this documentation might lead to further exploration of this aspect of Erin's play.

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

Dance is an aspect of the Communication/Mana Reo and of the Well-being/Mana Atua strands. Perhaps Erin is developing a working theory about what goes on in Africa. This would link with the Exploration/Mana Aotūroa strand.



# A grandfather's letter

Thursday, 31 March

Tēnā koutou e ngā kai-whakaako ki te kura. Kei konei waku whakaaro e pā ana ki te ripoata mō Taylor. He mokopuna nōku.

To the staff

In regard to

I am Taylor's koro. I have just read his profile book, which I enjoyed very much. It provides an invaluable window of his life at kindy. The observation notes and comments helped me a great deal in understanding the steps he has achieved.

This is what I got out of it:

- |                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| 1. Feeling shy      | Staff will continue to implement name games at mat time. Staff will encourage him to be more involved in co-operative play with his peers.  |
| 2. Imagination      | Making big arm muscles (dangling helmets)<br>Wearing a ballet tutu (piupiu skirt) to do a haka.   |
| 3. Helping          | Taylor had trouble solving a puzzle. You were working at the table on another puzzle and you stopped to help Taylor by making suggestions. You guided him through his task and gave him the opportunity to complete the puzzle himself. |
| 4. Sharing          | Taylor moved around the table to help you with the fire engine puzzle. You just moved over and let him share in the activity.   |
| 5. Problem solving  | Lego construction: He has the ability to make his own decisions, choose his own materials and set his own problems. Construct-o-straws: you work with an idea in mind.  |
| 6. Retentive memory | On return from several days' absence, he reminded the teacher to look on the net for insects.   |
| 7. Deep thinker     | Teacher: I noticed this amazing picture and someone concentrating very hard.<br>Lego: Is spending time concentrating, solving, etc. ...<br>Kite: You have been very focused on making your kite.  |

Thank you for the quality time and sterling effort given to the children. What a great team! Kia ora rawa atu wāhine mā i a koutou whakangākau i a koutou pukumahi hoki ki te tauira-tamariki.

## What's happening here?

A grandfather has read his grandson's profile book and is commenting on the window the book provides into his grandson's life at kindergarten as well as on the goals the child has achieved.

## What does this assessment tell us about the learning (using a Contribution/Mana Tangata lens)?

The grandfather's assessment, and the grandchild's profile book that contributes to his assessment, affirm the child as a learner with skills that are developing in a range of domains. In the list of items headed "what I got out of it", the grandfather highlights the learning that he has witnessed from reading the profile, citing assessments from it to support his statements. This is learning valued both by the grandparent and by the kindergarten.

## How might this documented assessment support Contribution/Mana Tangata?

This documented assessment is also an affirmation, from a grandparent, of the staff as teachers. It is written for the teachers. By highlighting the learning that he has noticed and recognised, the teachers are now more aware of some of the learning outcomes that the whānau values. This knowledge strengthens and enriches the relationship with the whānau and with the child.

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

A grandfather who writes to the staff in this way indicates his sense of *belonging* to the wider community of learners and teachers at the kindergarten. The learning that he recognises and values in his grandson's profile book ranges across all the strands of *Te Whāriki*.

# Teaching others

Today I wanted to laminate some of the children's work so I set up the laminator in the Castle room and as you walked past on your way outside you spotted it.

"I'll do that for you, Elizabeth," you said.

So you set about your job of laminating the pictures for me. Today, however, was different from the last time because today other children were interested, too. Oh dear, they all wanted a turn. To begin with you were very protective of your laminating, however you also let the other children join in little by little.

To begin with, you showed them exactly how the laminating worked. Once you had made the steps clear, you allowed the other children to participate. You were very careful to give them each a turn and I was most impressed as you very clearly told each of them to make sure *"it goes in straight or you will break it!"* You took great pains to stress that it was now inside the machine and that they mustn't touch it.

Once you had done this, however, it was still your responsibility to check that final product and make sure there were no stuff-ups!



## Learning review

The Bianca we see in this story is the Bianca we see most at day care. She is very competent and confident. She allows other children into her world and while they are there she enriches every experience for them. By revisiting this activity, Bianca not only developed her own skill at using this machine, but she developed the skill of instructing others in its uses and safety aspects.

## What next?

My goodness Bianca, what next indeed!

### What's happening here?

An earlier story in Bianca's portfolio described Bianca learning to use the laminator. She had watched the teacher laminating and asked if she could do it. In this story, Bianca teaches other children how to use it.

### What does this assessment tell us about the learning (using a Contribution/Mana Tangata lens)?

Bianca's skills as a teacher in this instance include: showing the learners exactly how the technology works, giving each child a turn, clearly stating the rules ("it goes in straight or you will break it!"), and making it clear when the machine should not be touched. The teacher adds that Bianca still took responsibility for checking that the final product was of good quality.

Bianca's initial offer is to help the teacher: "I'll do that for you, Elizabeth," indicating that she is ready and willing to take on a responsible job for the teacher. However, her sphere of responsibility is extended beyond this when the other children

want a turn, and she demonstrates that she can be a competent teacher as well as a competent learner.

### How might this documented assessment support Contribution/Mana Tangata?

This assessment describes Bianca as competent and confident, and it is very specific about this competence – her skill at using the laminating machine and her skill at instructing others. The teacher recognises Bianca's capacity for taking the initiative and writes: "My goodness Bianca, what next indeed!"

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

This exemplar acknowledges Bianca's mastery of a complex piece of technology, and one of the indicative outcomes in the Communication/Mana Reo strand is "experience with some of the technology and resources for mathematics, reading, and writing".

## Learning with and alongside others

# Developing friendships

10 February

Zalaluddin is a Malaysian boy, Sajed is from Afghanistan and Art is from Kosovo. They are good friends and take care of each other.

Sajad and Zalaluddin were driving the truck. They left Art behind and Art was looking unhappy. I asked him, "What is the matter?"

He said, "I like to play with them and drive the truck. They do not want to have company."

I asked him if he would like to have another truck and play with it but he wasn't happy about it and said, "No no no! I like to play with Sajed and Zalaluddin."

I called Zalaluddin and Sajed.

"Hey guys, you missed out your friend Art. Would you like Art to join you?"

They reversed their truck to us and said to Art, "SORRY!"

It was amazing to me how they understand how he feels and their apology to Art was very polite.

This story shows the friendship and how the children cope with each other even when these children are from different countries with different cultures and different languages.

Zohra

17 February

### Noticing

Zohra has written a learning story about three children: Zalaluddin, Sajed and Art. They were able to sort out a problem that involved sharing, good manners and respect for each other. Zohra noticed all these things and wrote the friendship story. We decided at our planning meeting that there are everyday examples in our centre of children's caring behaviour towards one another and friendships even though they often do not have a common language or culture. Their life experiences are extremely varied. Nevertheless, they want to have friends and they want to help adults and each other.

### Recognising

Zohra was able to support the boys to include their friend by talking to them and listening carefully to them with respect and sensitivity. She recognised that the children are kind and considerate towards each other.

Human relationships are an important part of life. All staff have examples of children making friends and helping teachers. Some children help each other, help teachers and help themselves. We want to reinforce this behaviour and support children to develop relationships in our democratic centre.

### Responding

We want to be aware when children are helping one another, making friends and encouraging each other and adults to be inclusive and democratic.

We are all learning together.

### What's happening here?

Art is left behind when his two friends start playing on a truck. The teacher intervenes so that Art will be included in the group, and she describes how amazing this friendship is between three children who come from different countries and have different languages and cultures.

### What does this assessment tell us about the learning (using a Contribution/Mana Tangata lens)?

This documented assessment describes how Sajed and Zalaluddin quickly recognise Art's viewpoint and are willing to include him in their play. Art may learn from this that even when other children speak different languages, they may still be willing to include him in their play.

### How might this documented assessment support Contribution/Mana Tangata?

This assessment documents a common interest in friendship, crossing the language and cultural barriers. The assessment has been discussed at the teachers' planning meeting, and the teachers resolve to support children to develop positive relationships, just as Zohra did on this occasion.

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

This assessment also offers an example of a bridge between non-verbal and verbal *communication* as the children develop their relationship.



# Mahdia's story

On Monday afternoon the children were playing outside in the playground. Hadi arrived at the family centre and was happy to see his friends. He gave Shukrullah and Maryam a ride in the wagon.

Suddenly Mahdia came outside. She came over to them and showed them her arm. They began talking together in their common home language, Dari.

She showed them her plasters on her hand and inside her elbow. Their faces changed. They wanted to see closely and as she talked their faces became full of concern. I wondered what they were saying and assumed that Mahdia was telling her friends about her blood tests of this morning – about how the doctors and nurses could not find a vein and how she will have to return to hospital again tomorrow for another try.

The children were very concerned and even in the middle of playing they stopped and showed that they cared.

I was amazed and overwhelmed by their caring attitude.



Our children have knowledge of medical procedures, often ongoing ones such as in Mahdia's case. They have all experienced blood tests and know exactly what Mahdia is talking about and showing them. They are brave and understanding of one another.

Geranesh.  
16 June

## What's happening here?

Mahdia is a five-year-old. She discusses in Dari, the children's common home language, the blood tests she has had that morning.

## What does this assessment tell us about the learning (using a Contribution/Mana Tangata lens)?

These children are part of a culture of care and concern – a culture in which all children are developing the disposition to take an interest in each other's well-being. The teacher recognises the body language. She comments that the children's faces were "full of concern".

## How might this documented assessment support Contribution/Mana Tangata?

The teacher's documentation models the ethic of care that prevails at this centre and can be shared with other staff and children. The documentation provides a site for affirming this vision of care. Reflecting on it may lead the staff to consider how they can provide more opportunities to enhance empathy among the children at the centre.

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

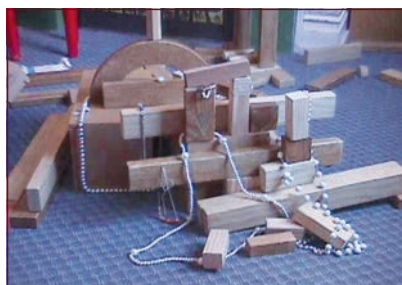
The documentation acknowledges the non-verbal *communication* that occurs between the children – features of communication that other, non-Dari speakers are also able to recognise in the signs of empathy and concern that the children show. Empathy and concern indicate that the children *belong* in their early childhood community.

# Blocks and beads

Micah and Jak had built a construction with blocks and then added treasure. Suddenly Micah left, followed by Jak, who then returned and with great delight slid into the construction and it collapsed. Micah came in and was very disappointed. Jak said to him, “It’s okay – we will build another one,” and they did.

This time they began with the beads and the blocks together from the beginning and they included the beads as they built it in a very clever way. Micah had a beautiful golden buckle and puzzled as to how he could stand it up on the block. It took him a while to figure it out. Suddenly he told Jak that he wanted to place it under a certain block so that it would stick out. Jak disagreed and carried on building and then he stopped, looked at Micah, lifted up the exact block that Micah had indicated and said “There you are, Micah!” (I just love it when they listen to each other and change their ideas to accommodate their friend’s ideas.)

David came along and he watched them for a while and I could see that he wanted to join in and wasn’t



sure how to. With a little bit of encouragement David asked Micah which necklace he could have. Micah looked at them all and handed him one. Well, David just beamed and went off to look in the mirror. Then Jak ran to the doorway asking where David was and called to him and gave him a beautiful necklace too. How wonderful to see this generosity and willingness to share. I loved the way Jak took the lead from Micah and gave David a necklace too.

## Short-term review

This is a long story and quite a complex one. I recorded it because it tells so much about Jak and Micah’s friendship and their developing empathy and inclusion of other people in their play. I was so impressed to see that they were able to keep the focus of the building project despite the other things going on. Their block building skills continue. Jak practises and practises balancing

the blocks and changing the style of his buildings. He loves to introduce new material into his building.

## What’s happening here?

Micah and Jak are building a block construction together, but they’re also building on their friendship and their skills in negotiation and empathy.

## What does this assessment tell us about the learning (using a Contribution/Mana Tangata lens)?

These two children negotiate with each other as they work together at constructing a block building. In particular, Jak listens to Micah’s viewpoint and although he initially disagrees with Micah’s vision, he later changes the construction to accommodate Micah’s design. Then Micah demonstrates a willingness to share the building treasures with David, and Jak takes in Micah’s actions and follows his example.

## How might this documented assessment support Contribution/Mana Tangata?

It may well be that these developing abilities and dispositions (to accommodate another’s design ideas in genuinely collaborative construction and to share desirable resources) are rather fragile. Revisiting documentation like this can strengthen the idea that “this is what we do here”.

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

The act of collaborative play, with the children choosing their own materials, setting their own problems, and making decisions, is also an aspect of the Exploration/Mana Aotūroa strand.



# The three friends

## Parent's voice

Tane has had an on-going enthusiasm for sewing projects following a session at kindy where he used a needle and thread for the first time. With his "MumMum" [grandmother] he made a bag with button decorations and last week he made an apron ... The biggest challenge was coming to grips with having to finish each seam with some kind of knot to keep it all together.

Child's name: Sarah

Date: 22 June

Teacher: Lesley

		Learning story	Short-term review
belonging mana whenua	Taking an Interest	Sarah and Tane were together when Tane began to discuss his sewing experiences. Sarah was keen to pursue the idea of sewing and we went into the storeroom to find some material. Initially the idea was that Sarah would make an apron (Tane's idea) but Sarah had other thoughts!	Sarah pursued her interest throughout the morning session. ( <i>Te Whāriki</i> , Belonging, Well-being)
well-being mana atua	Being Involved	Sarah wanted to make a board with material over it and she would put pieces of paper on it!	She persisted with her task and thought about ways to follow through with her idea. ( <i>Te Whāriki</i> , Exploration)
exploration mana aotūroa	Persisting with Difficulty	Sarah chose her material and we used the sewing machine to attach the pieces of material together. Sarah arranged the material on the board and I used the staple gun to attach it to the board.	Sarah communicated her design ideas clearly with a small group and the large group. ( <i>Te Whāriki</i> , Communication)
communication manareo	Expressing an Idea or a Feeling	Sarah wanted to make a sign that said, "No shoes allowed in my room," to go on the board. Sarah copied the words that I had written and then she illustrated her notice. We stapled the notice onto the noticeboard. Sarah read the notice to Tane and later on showed the group her board and read them the notice.	Sarah contributed to the programme, sharing her ideas. ( <i>Te Whāriki</i> , Contribution)
contribution manatūgata	Taking Responsibility		<b>What next?</b>  Continue to develop and extend opportunities for Sarah to pursue other sewing projects. Maybe we could use some sewing patterns to make clothing?

Sarah sewing



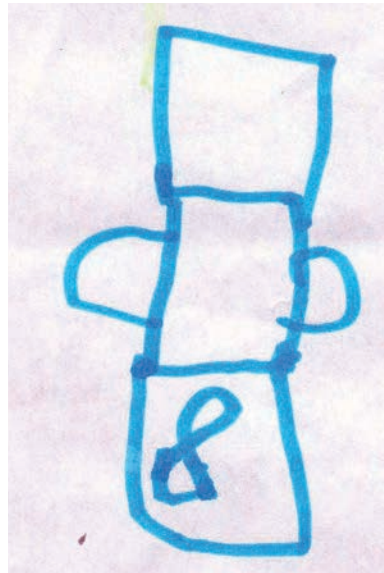
Tane and Sarah discussing their ideas about the type of fabric they could use for sewing.





**Learning story**

Tane walked into kindergarten this morning and said "Lesley, I want to make an ambulance jacket!" "Oh, how do you think you are going to make it – what about making a pattern of your ideas?" "I already have," said Tane. "Here's the pattern and here is where the holes for the arms and the head are." Tane showed me his picture, which showed a "bird's-eye" perspective of the jacket he loves to wear at kindergarten.



Leon said, "I'm going to make a police jacket," and drew his pattern showing the same view as Tane. The pattern showed the hole for the head and the arms. Sarah was also interested in making a jacket and decided to make an ambulance jacket too. The three children began to discuss who would be first to sew their jacket. "I'm first," said Tane, "and you're second, Leon, and you're last, Sarah." Sarah very quickly replied, "Tane said I'm last but I'm not, I'm third!"

Tane found the kindergarten jacket they were wanting to model their one on, and we placed it on a sheet of paper to draw around it. They each had a turn of drawing around the jacket and making a paper pattern. The pattern was then placed on the calico and cut out. They wanted words on their jackets (like the kindergarten one) so I got the fabric pens and they drew their designs on the front and the back. Leon drew maps on his police jacket and he wanted me to write the words "This is a police jacket with maps on it". Tane and Sarah drew ambulances. Tane said to Sarah, "Can I have the red pen because the light's off (on the ambulance), cos there's no red on it – I need the red so the light can go." He described in detail who was in the ambulance. "The patient got shot and that person – that's my arm driving, I'm the driver." Sarah said, "That's my mum, that's Harriet [sister] and Dad is the patient. I'm the driver. I was driving to my house. I knocked on the door and said 'Come on, let's go and get Dad,' so Mum, Harriet and me drove away to where Dad had crashed!" When they had finished their drawings, they each had a turn ironing the fabric – we talked about the importance of ironing it to prevent the patterns from washing out. The next stage was to sew the jackets. Tane's was sewn first. He controlled the foot pedal in response to my "stop" and "go" directions. He was very pleased with the result and put it on immediately! Leon and Sarah had to wait until the next day as we ran out of time!

**Sewing project continued** 21 August

Today it was Leon and Sarah's turn to have their jackets sewn. Aileen set up the machine and off they went. The jackets were completed and proudly worn. They then decided "ambulance trousers" would look good! "We haven't got a pattern for that," I said. "Maybe your mum has, Sarah." We then thought about what else they could make and the idea of a bag came up. So they each decided what size bag they wanted and I cut the calico to size. Sarah and Tane wanted a big bag and Leon wanted a very small bag. They drew their designs, ironed them and lovely Aileen sewed them with the children's help! The bag making triggered interest from many others and so the bag factory began.

**Short-term review**

The sewing interest was reintroduced into the programme with the jacket-making idea. This interest has been evident for some months.

T, S, and L focused on their project for a long period of time. (*Te Whāriki*, Belonging, Well-being)

They were familiar and confident in the concept of using a sketch to visualise their ideas and then transfer that into the item in mind using another media (fabric).

Mathematical links were evident in the connection made with the sketched drawing to the object, the drawing showing spatial awareness. (*Te Whāriki*, Exploration)

Literacy was utilised in a meaningful way (the writing on the jackets representing their purpose). (*Te Whāriki*, Communication)

Their interest triggered interest from others, which expanded into other ideas. (*Te Whāriki*, Contribution)

**What next?**

Being prepared and alert to other possibilities from the group!

August "Sewing Project"



Working together on cutting out their patterns and fabric.



Leon and Tane drawing their designs on their jackets.  
Leon made maps on his police jacket and Tane drew an ambulance.



Leon with his finished product!  
"A Police Jacket"



The three friends with their jackets  
Leon, Sarah and Tane.

### Parent's voice

Sarah came home from kindy saying "We have to make trousers, we don't have a pattern at kindy!" We went through the sewing box and found a pattern and fabric - it had to be enough to make 3 pairs for "the team". Sarah told me how we cut the fabric with "big" scissors and how we needed to draw around the pattern first.

Between us, we made the trousers - Sarah helping with the machine - comparing our machine to the kindy one.

The next day Sarah took her pattern, instructions and the extra fabric to kindy to give to the teachers to make the extra 2 pairs of trousers. Sarah wore her trousers to kindy for the rest of the week along with the vest and bag that she'd made at kindy.



The three friends in their latest designs



### What's happening here?

This exemplar involves excerpts that have been taken from the very large portfolios of Tane, Sarah, and Leon. The excerpts all relate to a sewing project that the children took part in.

The documentation follows the project as children sew a cover for a noticeboard, jackets, and bags.

### What does this assessment tell us about the learning (using a Contribution/Mana Tangata lens)?

Book 10 analyses the learning over time (across four dimensions) for this exemplar. One of those dimensions is distribution across helpful people and enabling resources.

While Tane, Sarah, and Leon are learning about sewing and the nature of fabrics and patterns, they are also learning about the “distributed” nature of persevering with an interest over a long period. They discover that their learning is distributed across friends, peers, teachers, and family – as well as material resources. Peers act as models, consultants, and collaborators; teachers take an interest and assist with the more difficult tasks (using the sewing machine, making the patterns, expanding their language); and family members help as well. In order to sustain their projects, the children learn that they have to manage this extended network of support. The teachers help them do this. For instance, the teacher suggests to Sarah that her mother might have a trouser pattern, and Sarah follows the prompt by asking her mother when she goes home. The children become more ready, willing, and able to ask for and receive help from adults. They expect to learn from others' ideas and become more inclined to collaborate with them. Three other dimensions of strengthening learning are also featured in this exemplar (see Book 10, pp. 9–10).

### How might this documented assessment support Contribution/Mana Tangata?

Many of the projects that the children take part in at this early childhood centre are written up, and frequently they are displayed on the wall. They often provide starting points for new projects (the jacket making, for instance, led to the children developing an interest in making bags) and encourage the children to build on their initiative and extend their awareness of the broad scope of possible developments.

The projects are collaborative, calling on peers, teachers, and family.

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

The children's developing skill at marshalling the scaffolding they need in order to persevere in difficult enterprises is an aspect of Exploration/Mana Aotūroa. Their new understandings about the technology of sewing and the use of different fabrics for different purposes is another aspect of this strand.

Drawing a pattern and transferring it to material is a mathematical skill that features in the Communication/Mana Reo strand.

Sarah, who made the sign on her board, and Leon, who wanted writing on his police jacket, demonstrated early literacy, which is also part of the Communication/Mana Reo strand.

Projects like this one cover all the strands of the curriculum. Successfully distributed learning is also a feature of the Belonging/Mana Whenua strand, and the children's enthusiasm and confidence are associated with decision making for a purpose, which is a feature of developing a sense of *well-being*.



# A business venture

Proposal presented by Kirstlee, Kelan and Shavaughan

## Proposal

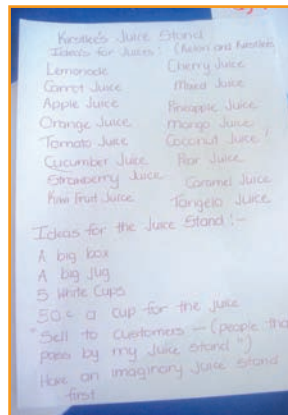
To set up a lemonade/juice stand and sell juice to customers.

## Target market

Customers (People who pass by the kindergarten)

## Action plan

1. Decide what juices to sell.
2. Design juice stand.
3. Name the stand.
4. Decide on where we will get the fruit from for the juices.
5. Decide on cost of juice.
6. Promote our product to potential customers.



## The planning stages

The girls plan and design the stand, setting the price at 50 cents per cup. Shavaughan suggests a trial run with a pretend juice stand!!

They promote their proposal at mat time to other children and to parents, chatting to them and organising people to bring in bags of fruit to enable them to begin production the following day.

The girls organise Judy to bring in her juice machine.

Kirstlee sets to work on the laptop making the signage "Kirstlee's Lemonade/Juice stand. 50 cents a cup."

Kirstlee decides on the name without a challenge from the other two girls!!!



## Designing the tablecloth

The design team set to work on the tablecloth under Kirstlee's supervision and instructions. Their brief: The colours to be pink and purple only and the design to be floral!





### Production begins



Production begins with a strong team of willing and eager workers. Oranges, bananas, apples, carrots, pineapples and heaps of tangelos (thanks to Tamara and Andy's dad) are peeled and sliced, and a "mixed juice" is decided upon for promotion on the first day of business.



### Open for business

The lemonade/juice stand is set up. Tables are resplendent in their floral tablecloths and the girls are ready and eager to attract any passers by. Business is booming and they are "SOLD OUT" in all of 20 minutes.

### Customer satisfaction

Customers declared the product to be "yummy" and "delicious" and a production run was set for the following day!



### Profit margins

Kirstlee counts the takings after 3 days of production and the addition of muffins to the product range. Their profit - a tidy \$154.00!!!



### Evaluation

It was wonderful to see an idea flow from a conversation that I had with the girls. Their ideas were very definite and they were always confident that they would work.

Although they were the initiators and often took charge in certain situations, it was great to see how so many other children and parents came on board and supported their ideas and plans. In one way or another the majority of the morning session children and parents were involved in their business venture, whether it be supplying fruit, working as part of the design or production team or simply as satisfied customers!!



### Short-term review/What next?

As they worked on their business venture, the children were developing a number of important skills. They were developing their awareness of literacy as they were writing their signs and developing the planning stages of their project. Their mathematical skills were extended as they calculated their money and counted their profits!! They were estimating quantity when they were working out how much fruit they needed to use and we focused on healthy eating as we promoted their products.

They discovered that making their project a success required perseverance, teamwork, co-operation and patience!!

I wonder now girls, how and what you will decide to do with your profits?

### Decisions to be made

After browsing through many different catalogues the girls decide that their profits should be spent on the purchase of three dolls and a selection of clothes and shoes!!



### Placing their orders

The girls ring Rachel at Play 'N' Learn and place their orders. They give her their names and the kindergarten address so that she can despatch the parcel as soon as possible.



### The rewards of a great business venture

Smiles of satisfaction from the girls as they see a tangible result after all their hard work.

New dolls for the kindergarten!!



### What's happening here?

Kirstlee, Kelan, and Shavaughan set up a juice stand at the kindergarten. They start the project by writing up a business plan – a proposal, target market, and action plan. They set the price, produce and sell the juice, and finally make the decision about what to do with the profits.

### What does this assessment tell us about the learning (using a Contribution/Mana Tangata lens)?

The children involved in this project become ready, willing, and able to collaborate together on a task that will benefit the kindergarten. The teacher comments that “In one way or another the majority of the morning session children and parents were involved in their business venture”. The children share and distribute the tasks – planning, asking for donations of fruit, making the juice, designing and painting the tablecloth, selling the juice, and spending the profits.

### How might this documented assessment support Contribution/Mana Tangata?

This assessment is written up as a business report, including: a proposal, an outline of the target market, an action plan, a design (the tablecloth), and details about production, commencing the business, customer satisfaction, profit margins, and orders. The assessment provides information about a project that has a parallel in the “real world” beyond the kindergarten and provides ideas and supports inclinations for children to develop other collaborative ventures.

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

Kirstlee uses a laptop to make a sign, and the girls design and paint a tablecloth, count their takings, and “read” the catalogue; these are all aspects of the Communication/Mana Reo strand. Also, as the teacher comments, the children discover that making their project a success requires perseverance, teamwork, co-operation, and patience, all of which relate to the strands of Exploration/Mana Aotūroa and Well-being/Mana Atua. The involvement of so many of the families contributed to a general sense of *belonging* and working for a common purpose.

# The artists

10 June

Today was such a beautiful day that Jo moved the painting outside. This soon became a very busy activity as the children came over to see what was happening and got involved. We were using cotton buds as our paintbrushes, which took a lot of skill and concentration.

Zach was the first on the scene. Jo gave him a cotton bud, which he very carefully held onto in the middle and dipped in the paint then watched as he made lines and squiggles on the paper.

Just then Nikita came to join the fun. "What you doing?", "Why?", "What's that?" were among the many questions that came with Nikita. As I tried to answer her questions she moved alongside Zach's painting and started shaking glitter over it. Luckily Zach was okay with this and eagerly watched what Nikita was doing.

After watching the other children for a while, Ivie and Gabriel got stuck into painting with their cotton buds, both delicately holding the cotton bud at the end and dipping it in the paint.

Gabriel decided to try every colour available and moved the cotton bud around in squiggles while Ivie seemed to like the colour green and drawing straight lines on the paper.

## What learning is happening here?

The most important learning that happened here was through the social interaction. One of the goals in *Te Whāriki* suggests the importance of an environment where children are encouraged to learn with and alongside others. This develops skills for friendship such as turn taking, problem solving and thinking about the other person's feelings. Nikita and Zach worked well together with Nikita taking on the role of helping and showing Zach what to do. Although Ivie and Gabriel didn't verbally communicate with the other children, they did watch and copy what the others were doing and it is important to be able to enjoy solitary play as well. The children are also experimenting with different painting objects and gaining confidence with the processes of art and craft.

*Te Whāriki* also suggests the importance of an environment where children can discover and develop different ways to be creative and expressive.

## What next?

We will continue to provide these important social activities so the children have opportunities to develop friendships and the necessary skills that are involved in working alongside others.

Most children find painting very exciting and are often queuing up to be involved, so it's important to have it available as often as possible and to introduce new painting objects to get the children thinking and learning while still having lots of fun.

## What's happening here?

Four artists come together to paint pictures, helping each other with their work and gleaning ideas from each other's efforts.

## What does this assessment tell us about the learning (using a Contribution/Mana Tangata lens)?

These toddlers are developing their inclinations and skills for social interaction in this early childhood centre. The teacher comments that Nikita is willing to take on the role of helping and showing Zach what to do, while Ivie and Gabriel watch and copy. Nikita asks questions, and contributes to Zach's painting, while Zach eagerly watches.

The teacher encourages a question-asking disposition by patiently listening to Nikita's many questions and trying to answer them.

## How might this documented assessment support Contribution/Mana Tangata?

Many of the children described in this assessment are beginning to develop complex social interaction skills and inclinations, and this documentation charts their development. Noting which children watch alerts the teachers to recognise moments when these children decide that they would like to join in.

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

This assessment notes the importance of an environment where children can discover and develop different ways to be creative and expressive: the fourth goal in the Communication/Mana Reo strand.

# Issy's new role

Teacher: Jo

We have a new primary caregiver within the centre. Welcome to Issy. Issy's new role is taking responsibility for our young friend Jimmy who is five months old. Sitting comfortably in his chair, he had not long had his bottle when he began growling with a windy tummy. Issy heard this and went over to see if he was okay. She lent a hand by rocking his small chair back and forth and he soon smiled at her. She'd noticed he'd had a spill. Issy moved towards the kitchen sink, grabbing a flannel and back to Jimmy. She wiped his face. I saw this and both Jimmy and Issy were smiling at each other.



can happen by allowing children free movement between the environments where they choose to explore either indoors or out.

A key quality indicator is responsive caregiving, which helps to ensure that trust is built and maintained between our infants and their teachers. Our teachers interact with infants in a way that includes them in any decisions that are made.

We do this through attentive listening to children's cues and modelling language. The caregiver takes on a role in which certain responsibilities are practised to ensure that there is responsive caregiving occurring.

We are all interested in "continuity" and it is so very satisfying to review these photos of Eden and Issy just over a year ago. Eden was fascinated with Issy and we watched with awe at the close attention and sustained interaction as these two worked on building a relationship.

## The learning that happened

Issy is role-modelling the evidence she has observed whilst being out in our infant room. Jimmy doesn't mind. He confidently shares a smile with everyone so for him Issy is another friendly face. Issy suits this role as she has been using these techniques on her dolls and is now putting this experience into practice with Jimmy.

## Teacher's reflection

I observed Issy attending to her "new role" as a primary caregiver at the centre. Issy showed confidence in her responsibility towards young Jimmy, making sure that his emotional well-being was nurtured. She was being sensitive, and in tune with him, open to his needs and able to interpret them correctly. These exchanges are an integral part of interactions that foster secure attachment.

Adults have an important role to play in encouraging, supporting and challenging young children as they construct understandings about their world, the events, the people and objects in it. Children take on teaching roles by role-modelling the practices that they have observed.

Children's learning and development are the result of interactions between children and their environments. This

## Excerpt from original learning story

"Eden especially developed a special bond with Issy and Issy is more than happy with Eden's beautiful singing and chatting and ever so gentle tickling. This particular day Eden stayed with Issy for over an hour, talking, singing and tickling and Issy responded with huge smiles and gurgling."

And now ... Issy takes this role with Jimmy. A rhythm, not a timetable, enables our tiny babies and toddlers to have a great deal of choice throughout the day. Rigid time fragmentation stifles investigation. Full attention supports working out what questions babies ask. This day Issy proved this to us.



## What's happening here?

Issy is a toddler who takes on a caring role with baby Jimmy and becomes the "new primary caregiver" in the centre. The teachers remember a learning story of a year earlier, when toddler Eden "stayed with (baby) Issy for over an hour, talking, singing and tickling and Issy responded with huge smiles and gurgling". They add the photos from the previous year to this episode to tell a bigger story about continuity.

## What does this assessment tell us about the learning (using a Contribution/Mana Tangata lens)?

Issy was ready, willing, and able to take a responsible role with Jimmy, "making sure that his emotional well-being was nurtured. She was being sensitive, and in tune with him, open to his needs and able to interpret them correctly." She is copying the adults here, and it is interesting that a year earlier she was similarly cared for by Eden. Perhaps it could be said that the practice of

caregiving has become a collective disposition at this early childhood centre, where an ethic of care that extends to the toddlers taking care of each other is encouraged.

## How might this documented assessment support Contribution/Mana Tangata?

The documented assessment of a year previously has been added to a current episode to build a fascinating story about continuity in relationship building. Perhaps a year later, this documented account will be added to a story about Jimmy.

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

As the teacher has commented, this is also a story about nurturing Jimmy's emotional *well-being*.

Both Issy and Jimmy are developing working theories for making sense of the social world in this early childhood centre – part of goal 4 of the Exploration/Mana Aotūroa strand of *Te Whāriki*.



## Reflective questions

## He pātai hei whakaaro iho

What opportunities are there for documented assessments to be revisited in this early childhood setting, and in what ways does this revisiting contribute to relationships between children and between children and adults?

What examples indicate that assessments are very clear about the learning that is valued in the Contribution/Mana Tangata strand of *Te Whāriki*? In what ways is continuity for that learning documented?

How do assessments reflect an inclusive and equitable culture in this early childhood setting?

Do our assessments include the collaborative and the collective work that takes place in this early childhood setting?

How do assessments illustrate the value of relationships with those who are of different backgrounds, age groups, and genders?

Which of our assessments reflect contributions by Māori whānau and community to the curriculum?

How do documented assessments reveal implicit theories about the value of children taking responsibility for their own learning? Are children involved in their own assessments?

How are children's special interests, abilities, and strengths affirmed in assessments?

Do assessments provide opportunities for teachers to share information about the children with their families and whānau? Is this a reciprocal process – are families and whānau sharing information about their children with teachers? How do assessments include advice and interpretation from whānau?

## Endnotes

## Kōrero tāpiri

- <sup>1</sup> Ann L. Brown, Doris Ash, Martha Rutherford, Kathryn Nakagawa, Ann Gordon, and Joseph C. Campione (1993). "Distributed Expertise in the Classroom". In *Distributed Cognitions: Psychological and Educational Considerations*, ed. Gavriel Salomon. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, chapter 7, pp. 188–228 (quote from p. 217).

In this chapter, Ann Brown and colleagues write about classrooms as being communities of learners. This research is in a school context, but early childhood centres can be usefully viewed as communities of learners as well. The notion of learning being distributed across people and artefacts is assessed in the analysis of the exemplar "The three friends" and is very relevant to this strand of *Te Whāriki*.

- <sup>2</sup> Early Childhood Learning and Assessment Exemplar Project Advisory Committee and Co-ordinators, 2002.
- <sup>3</sup> See Norma González, Luis Moll, and Cathy Amanti (2005). *Funds of Knowledge: Theorizing Practices in Households, Communities, and Classrooms*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum. In this work, Luis Moll says that "we found that once the relationship level of the communication between parents and teachers becomes more reciprocal, where the teachers start forming part, even if peripherally, of the household's social network, it creates new possibilities for teachers to engage households and for parents to engage the school in fundamentally new ways ... [and it] can alter ... the parents' positioning with the school as a social system" (p. 280). See also endnote 1 above.
- <sup>4</sup> Ministry of Education (1996). *Te Whāriki: He Whāriki Mātauranga mō ngā Mokopuna o Aotearoa/ Early Childhood Curriculum*. Wellington: Learning Media, p. 35.