

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga

Assessment for Infants and Toddlers

He Aromatawai Kōhungahunga,
Tamariki

8

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

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

**What do assessments tell us about
the learning of infants and toddlers?**

**He aha ngā kōrero a te aromatawai
mō te ako o te kōhungahunga,
tamariki?**

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Introduction

This book explores assessment and what it might look like for infants and toddlers in the context of *Te Whāriki*. The book also includes ideas that are relevant to children of all ages in early childhood settings in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Assessments are a tool for social thinking and action. We suggest that in an early childhood or school setting this social thinking and action is of a particular kind and has a particular purpose: mutual feedback and dialogue about learning.

Cowie and Carr, 2004

Frequently, teachers cannot be certain of the nature of children's learning, especially that of very young children. Infants' and toddlers' working theories about the world change rapidly. Their discoveries are often unrecognised by others, and they may communicate in ways that are different from those of their older peers. Communication with families and whānau is especially important when assessing infants and toddlers, as are intuitive practitioners who come to know the children really well.

Infants and toddlers often appear to be attending to several events at the same time. Barbara Rogoff (2003) suggests that this may be specifically encouraged in some cultures. She describes a twelve-month-old Mayan child who "attended skilfully to three events at once" (page 321), playing with things in a jar with his sister, whistling on a toy whistle, and intently watching a truck passing in the street. Noticing, recognising, and responding to such complexity relies on sensitive observations, understanding the nature of learning for very young children, and knowing the child and the curriculum well. It also requires us to use our intuition and to be open to multiple possibilities and pathways for learning.

Some key features of assessments for and with infants and toddlers have emerged from the exemplars. They are:

- reciprocal and responsive relationships with people, places, and things;
- involving families and whānau in assessment;
- families and whānau becoming members of the early childhood learning community.

Reciprocal and responsive relationships

Ngā whakawhanaungatanga

Reciprocal and responsive relationships contribute to infants and toddlers developing a sense of security and competence. Assessment, both undocumented and documented, takes place within reciprocal and responsive relationships. In the context of such relationships, teachers can contribute to constructing meaning with and between infants or toddlers. They can do this by listening and watching attentively and being alert to modes of communication such as vocalisation, facial expressions, gestures, and expressive body movements. Often this means noticing, recognising, and responding in several ways, using encouraging body language and an attentive presence as much as more overt interactions.

Responsive and reciprocal relationships extend widely for the Māori child. Two of the fundamental principles outlined in *A Draft Charter of the Rights of the Māori Child* (Early Childhood Development, 2002) are:

Whanaungatanga. The Māori child descends from a unique culture and history based on strong genealogical links and relationships, and has the right to be respected within the full context of those links and relationships.

Ngā Hononga. The Māori child exists within a society of extensive relationships, and has the right to know, contribute positively to, and benefit from those relationships.

Joint attention and guided participation

In discussing “educare” – the inseparability of education from care – from a sociocultural perspective, Anne Smith (1996) maintains that the teacher’s role in the mix is critical:

Looking at early childhood educare from a sociocultural perspective puts the emphasis right where it should be, on the role of the teacher. Teachers need to be involved in a dynamic interactive relationship with children, not through a didactic approach, but through being sensitively attuned to children’s abilities, interests and strengths and being accessible enough to provide scaffolding which extends them and builds bridges between the known and unknown.

pages 55–56

In a later study of two hundred two-year-old children’s experiences of the nature and extent of joint attention episodes, Smith (1999) identified that “adult-child shared attention is an essential feature of quality” (page 96). A parallel may be drawn with Barbara Rogoff’s (1990) notion of “guided participation” in the curriculum. She says that:

caregivers and children collaborate in arrangements and interactions that support children in learning to manage the skills and values of mature members of their society. Guided participation is ... a process in which caregivers’ and children’s roles are entwined, with tacit as well as explicit learning opportunities in the routine arrangements and interactions between caregivers and children.

page 65

The following is an example of guided participation in action:

I had set up the drums. Lily was beating them with her hand and a drumstick. I got out *Ten in the Bed* by Penny Dale (a favourite book). I sat by Gemma and started reading. Every time I said “roll over”, I beat the cymbal on my knee. Lily copied the sound and rhythm on the drum. What next? Lily came over to me and took the book over to the drums. She beat the drum with the book, singing, “Roll over, roll over.”

Excerpt from a child’s portfolio, 2003

The definitions of “joint attention” and “guided participation” are culturally specific. For example, Barbara Rogoff (2003) describes a cultural community in which small children are not asked questions to which the adults already know the answers (for example, “What is this?”) and “toddlers learn to sit very still and listen to adults talk” (page 325). She describes this as “intent” participation, where involvement includes children attentively listening and observing before they “have a go” themselves. In a number of contexts, very young children learn by observing and listening as well as (or in preparation for) participating actively.

Assessment is itself a cultural practice. If infants and toddlers are learning through observing and listening in on assessment in action, they are, in effect, being inducted into this cultural endeavour (Rogoff, 2003). Children who observe others taking photos, recording, revisiting, and discussing learning may learn enough of the tasks associated with assessment that they eventually see themselves as able to contribute to this practice in some way.

Involving families and whānau in assessment

Families and whānau know their children well. They must be included in the mutual feedback loops that contribute to informal and formal assessment in early childhood settings. In the case of infants and toddlers, parents and whānau are often able to fill gaps in the teachers' understanding or to explain the learning with reference to events and circumstances beyond the early childhood setting. They are able to widen the horizon, to extend the view of the other adults in the child's life. This book, for instance, features documented assessments of Michael (pages 19 to 21) as he develops a sense of identity at his centre and at home. Through his relationships with the people in those settings, he is able to actively take on multiple roles – a helper, a brother, and a friend. The feedback loop in this case includes Michael's twelve-year-old sister Roberta, who provides a written assessment of what her eighteen-month-old brother is able to do and is enthusiastic about.

Huhana Rokx (2000) points out the value of collectivism and interdependency in Māori tradition. Teaching and assessment by peers is commonplace. In a discussion of Māori methods of teaching and learning, Arapera Royal Tangaere (1997) describes the concept of tuakana–teina as it is derived from the two principles of whanaungatanga and ako¹:

Tuakana means older sibling (brother to a boy or sister to a girl), and teina a younger sibling (brother to a boy or sister to a girl). Therefore the idea of the learner taking on the responsibility of being the teacher or tuakana to her or his teina is acceptable and in fact encouraged from an early age. This is the essence of love and care for one another in the whānau. It reinforces the principles of whanaungatanga.

page 12

Becoming members of the early childhood learning community

Assessment contributes to infants, toddlers, and their families and whānau becoming members of the early childhood learning community. A common message in literature about curriculum is that it is important for infants and toddlers to construct an identity of self in their social and cultural worlds through respectful interactions with the people, places, and things in these worlds. For example, Carmen Dalli (2000) discusses what young children learn about relating to adults in the first weeks of starting childcare. Assessments that take note of the actions of infants and toddlers as they make sense of their worlds – the people, places, and things in their lives – can contribute to teachers' and families' recognition of learning and in turn inform potential responses.

Miriam Rosenthal (2000) writes, "Children's experiences and interactions at home and in childcare are likely to be quite different" (page 12). However, she adds that under certain conditions, children can move between the two environments in the same way as some bilingual children do when they use different languages in different social contexts. These "certain conditions" include parents and teachers being aware of the differences in each other's expectations and assumptions about developmental goals for children or valued child-rearing and educational practices. Portfolios and notebooks that both families and teachers contribute to can assist with establishing these conditions.

Arapera Royal Tangaere (2000) notes that in kōhanga reo, the two microsystems of home and centre must overlap. "The overlap is brought about by the commitment to the kaupapa and the entire whānau ownership of *Te Whāriki*" (page 28).

¹ "The word ako means to learn as well as to teach. In the Māori world therefore it is an acceptable practice for the learner to shift roles and become the teacher, and for the teacher to become the learner." (Royal Tangaere, 1997, page 12)

Te kuhunga mai o ngā whānau

Te whakauru ki roto i ngā akoranga o te ao kōhungahunga

Links to *Te Whāriki*

Including infants and toddlers in the educational and cultural practices of an early childhood setting requires assessment practices to be as holistic and respectful for them as for older children. It is not appropriate for infants and toddlers to experience a curriculum that is only about emotional well-being and physical development; all five strands of *Te Whāriki* are applicable, and assessment should reflect this.

Assessment of children should encompass all dimensions of children's learning and development and should see the child as a whole. Attributes such as respect, curiosity, trust, reflection, a sense of belonging, confidence, independence, and responsibility are essential elements of the early childhood curriculum: they are extremely difficult to measure but are often observable in children's responses and behaviours.

Te Whāriki, page 30

Te Whāriki is designed with the same bicultural aspirations, principles, and strands in mind for all children. However, it also emphasises that "The care of infants is specialised and is neither a scaled-down three- or four-year-old programme nor a baby-sitting arrangement" (page 22).

Carmen Dalli (2002) describes the powerful influence of teachers' expectations and assumptions on children's experience of starting childcare. *Te Whāriki* also argues that:

Assessment is influenced by the relationships between adults and children, just as children's learning and development are influenced by the relationships they form with others. This influence should be taken into consideration during all assessment practice. Adults are learners too, and they bring expectations to the assessment task. The expectations of adults are powerful influences on children's lives. If adults are to make informed observations of children, they should recognise their own beliefs, assumptions, and attitudes and the influence these will have on the children.

page 30

Assessment practices contribute to the development of children's identities as competent and capable learners and communicators. Assessment practices can also contribute to the expectations that adults have of each other's roles in the teaching and learning process, especially when children and whānau first become members of an early childhood setting's community.

Exemplars

Adam determines the routine

Ngā tauaromahi



March

Adam is so familiar with all the routines in the centre. He is seen here helping Bing to put his lunchbox away after morning tea. Adam enjoys sitting at the morning tea table and likes to start off the session with his morning tea

at present. His mother says he is getting fussy with breakfast.

18 March

Teacher: Jo

Adam is getting very independent. This morning when he arrived at pre-school, his mum handed him his lunchbox when they got in the door and asked Adam to put it away in the drawer where we keep the children's lunchboxes. Adam held his lunchbox in front of him and walked across the room to the bench. He opened the drawer and put his lunchbox in it then shut the drawer and went to play.

2 April

Teacher: Jo

Adam is communicating his needs to us very clearly at the moment. This morning, Adam once again arrived in the nursery holding his lunchbox, but instead of putting it away, Adam placed it on the table. He then walked across to where the table covers hang and started to pull the purple one that we use for kai time down. I got the cover down for Adam and put it on the table. Adam went and stood by the basin, so I turned the tap on, and he washed his hands. Adam then went and sat down at the table and had something to eat to start the day.

This story is also a nice example of how familiar Adam is with the centre routines that surround kai time.



23 May

Teacher: Jo

For a while now, Adam will sit down at the table to eat some of his food when he first arrives in the morning. He stops when he has had enough

and is happy to go off and play.

What's happening here?

Adam has been taking responsibility for putting his lunchbox away when he arrives in the morning. One day, he decides to have some of his lunch on arrival. The rituals of this become a routine that Adam initiates each day.

What aspects of assessment for infants and toddlers does this exemplify?

Adam knows the tasks associated with kai time routines at the centre well. He is able to take the initiative here. Both Adam's mother and his teachers follow his lead as he communicates to them and determines the outcome for himself. Their responses and this assessment acknowledge the importance of Adam's reciprocal and responsive relationships with people, places, and things.

How might this assessment contribute to infants' and toddlers' learning?

These assessments serve not only as examples of valued learning to follow and respond to over time but also as celebrations of progress for Adam's parents and teacher and for Adam himself. Each of these stakeholders has access to Adam's portfolio, in which these items are collected and can be shared.

What might this tell us about informal noticing, recognising, and responding in this place?

These assessments make it clear that routines are flexible here and that the teachers respond to the individual rhythms and preferences of the infants and toddlers.

JAMES PURSUES A FRIENDSHIP

Child's Name: James, 9mths, 3wks
Date: 8 Oct
Observer: Julie

A LEARNING STORY



James crawls to the puzzle area where Leigh (3.5 yrs) is completing a puzzle. He looks at what Leigh is doing, then chooses a puzzle and starts to work with it. He takes a piece out and attempts to put it back in. He tries quite a few times to position the piece correctly by lifting it out, repositioning it, and putting it back in. Eventually, the piece goes in the right way.



Leigh (the older child) finishes her puzzle, looks around for something to do, then yawns and goes to lie down on the sofa. James crawls across the floor and up the steps, and crawls to the sofa and stands near Leigh.



When Leigh later moves to the playdough area, James follows her, and they play together there for ten minutes or so.



Leigh doesn't respond, so James crawls towards some books and looks at them.

Short-term review	What next?
<p>James is enjoying being able to move independently and chooses his own activities and company.</p> <p>Although he and Leigh are unable to communicate verbally, it is clear he wants to be in her company.</p> <p>James is enjoying exploring the playcentre and particularly likes puzzles, books, and playdough.</p> <p>(Leigh makes no attempts to discourage him, and the two children finally play together.)</p>	<p>Encourage James to play alongside other children.</p> <p>Let him experience different types of puzzles, different textures (playdough, fingerpaint, sand, clay & waterplay), read him short stories and picture books.</p> <p>James also enjoys music, particularly the drum and the small shakers. This might be an opportunity for further play with other children.</p>

What's happening here?

James is initiating a relationship with an older child, Leigh. He watches and follows what Leigh does, giving these things a go, too. Later the teacher observes them playing together at the play dough table.

What aspects of assessment for infants and toddlers does this exemplify?

Through this story, we see that James is able to communicate to others through actions, indicating to Leigh that he wants to play with her.

How might this assessment contribute to infants' and toddlers' learning?

The assessment includes a series of photographs that tell the story. Both children can revisit this example of emerging collaboration. Revisiting such assessments will, over time, support their developing relationships.

What might this tell us about informal noticing, recognising, and responding in this place?

This is a mixed-age setting, providing opportunities for the older children to act as role models for and assist the younger children and for the children to develop relationships across the age range.

A relationship may be developing between James and Leigh here. The reader doesn't know the detail of the play at the play dough table, but the teacher notes that they play "together".

Ruby and the supermarket

Learning story

9 June

Teacher: Sue

Several children were busy in the sandpit, making puddings. Ruby was very sure of exactly the ingredients she needed for her pie – “Bananas, apples, chocolate, ice cream” – but she indicated that she didn’t have them all. “Perhaps we could go shopping?” I suggested.

So we set off. First we went to the “fruit shop”. “Need two apples,” said Ruby. We found the “apples” and handed over the money. Ruby had a bucket with a little bit of sand, and each time she bought something, she fished in the bucket and handed over some “money”. “What else does Ruby need?” “Get some bananas.” She used a lot of language.

The game went on for some time. (The others left us for different activities.) We visited a different shop for the ice cream and chocolate and then another one for a handle for the door and some screws. (On our travels, Ruby noticed the door of the sleep room and announced that we needed “a handle and some screws”.)

We made our way back to the sandpit to make the pie after our busy shopping trip.

Learning story

9 June, again

Teacher: Jo

Today, just like every other day, Ruby amazed me with her articulate nature. I observed Ruby and Sue discussing a trip to the shops and was very keen to pay attention as these imaginative interactions with Ruby are often so filled with rich language and with scientific and mathematical concepts. They’re a real joy to watch, even when you’re not taking part!

Apples and kiwifruit were on the agenda today. Today, Ruby’s plan was for a short visit, with just enough time to get two shiny red apples and two brown kiwifruit. “All finished now,” said Ruby once she had made her purchases.

Seeing my opportunity, I approached. “Would you like to draw a picture of your shops and food, Ruby?” “Okay,” said Ruby, running over to

the table. “Apple,” she said as she drew circles on her paper in red crayon. “Is this the colour of your apples, Ruby?” I asked. “Yes,” said Ruby. “Red.” “Well done, Ruby. What else did you buy?” “Kiwifruit – look, there” she said, pointing to her picture. Before long, we had drawn the shops as well as some pictures of her mum and dad.



Ducking inside for a moment, I brought out an apple that had been cut in half. Showing it to Ruby, I explained how

the apple had been cut and asked whether she would like to draw a picture of the inside of the apple. “No, peel it,” was the response. “Why?” I asked. “So Ruby eat it,” was the delightful answer I received as Ruby began chewing away on the apple! Well, I never!

What learning happened here?

Ruby’s thirst for knowledge is very much an aspect of her personality. Her make-believe play provides an information exchange within a responsive social context. Ruby’s use of language in her play as she responds, imagines, questions, describes, creates, and decides shows her independence, confidence, and sense of responsibility for her own learning. Her awareness of scientific and mathematical concepts was evident as she talked about colours and numbers and explored past events.

What next?

Well, a trip to the shops with Ruby is a must. My interest couldn’t be greater. Is she wonderfully helpful? Does she enjoy gathering groceries? I’m sure I will soon see. Keep a lookout for Ruby’s follow-up story, soon to come – a visit to the real shops!

Children’s learning is greatly influenced by the role of the family and significant others. The attitudes, skills and knowledge developed in the early years are the basis for learning in later years.

Hogben and Wasley, 1989, page 22



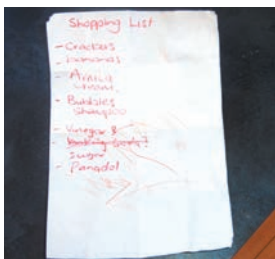
The supermarket

12 June

Teacher: Jo

"Read Ruby's stories," said Ruby on spotting me early this morning.

And so the much anticipated supermarket adventure began. After hearing and seeing her latest story, Ruby showed a keen interest in this shopping trip to the supermarket. She gobbled up an explanation of the need for a



"shopping list" of things to buy, and then we settled to the task at hand.

"Crackers, bananas, and a paper" were "musts" for Ruby. Mille was a keen helper, happy to help

budget as long as she could join us in the adventure. Checking the usually forbidden kitchen cupboards was an amusing task, which they followed by asking all the teachers for further suggestions. "Shopping list," they announced proudly, waving it around. This time-consuming challenge was of huge interest to these shoppers, who giggled a lot. "Panadol," suggested Lorraine, holding her head! (Ha, ha.) "Shelley," said Ruby, so we went in search of Shelley. "Bubbles" was Shelley's shopping item of choice, and so the journey continued.



With our list in hand and warm hats on, we set off with excitement at an all-time high and delightful smiles shining from our faces.

The walk was not without challenge as I managed to get the double pushchair stuck in the supermarket entrance bars. After

holding up a lot of busy shoppers, we got through and were off again.

What a hoot!



Once inside, the fun really began as we searched the aisles for the items on our list, then placed them in the pushchair, a very tricky task

when holding a banana. But what clever helpers! With all our items in hand, we paid, waved, and left the supermarket, keen to return another day.

Munching on our bananas, we returned to the centre, put our shopping away, and sat down for a rest and chat. "What did you think about our trip to the shops, Ruby and Mille?" I asked. "Fun shopping!" said Ruby. "Shops, yeah. Walk," replied Mille. An all-round success, I would say.

What learning happened here?

Reading her learning story and looking at photographs of herself gave Ruby the opportunity to revisit her learning and interests. It also cemented her feelings of confidence and independence and her awareness of how much we value what she does. Our discussing going on a trip to the supermarket enabled Ruby to take responsibility for her learning and to express her ideas and feelings, two very significant learning dispositions. As I had suspected, Ruby was wonderfully helpful on the trip. She persisted with the difficulty of lifting heavy items and gained enjoyment from leading this learning opportunity.



What next?

We will offer Ruby more opportunities to explore her interests and extend already cemented learning.

What's happening here?

Ruby faces an imaginary play dilemma: she is missing some of the ingredients for her sand pie. Her teacher suggests they go shopping for these ingredients at an imaginary playground supermarket. When these episodes of play end, another teacher invites Ruby to draw the ingredients she needs. They plan a trip to a real supermarket for the next time Ruby attends the centre. For this trip, Ruby and Mille make a list.

What aspects of assessment for infants and toddlers does this exemplify?

The complexity of Ruby's learning becomes evident across a number of assessments. In the first story, Ruby takes on Sue's suggestion of "going shopping" for the missing ingredients but then takes the lead, determining the storyline. Ruby obviously understands the sequence of shopping. She verbally shares the list of ingredients with Sue and selects goods from around the play area, paying for the items as she goes. She weaves these sequences into her play and guides Sue in these imaginary tasks.

In the second story, Jo has noticed Ruby's engagement with Sue and the other children in a familiar social role play around shopping and food. Recognising this interest from stories previously shared by other teachers at a staff meeting, Jo deliberately seizes the opportunity to explore this interest further with Ruby. When the time is right, Jo offers Ruby alternative media for representing her interest in food, drawing the kiwifruit and apples and, the next day, writing the shopping list. These assessments prompt the teachers to provide an opportunity for Ruby to make connections from the imagined to the real.

How might this assessment contribute to infants' and toddlers' learning?

There is only a short delay between the teachers' first stories and the excursion to the supermarket. Jo shares those stories with Ruby to prompt her recollection of events and revisit an interest. She gives Ruby the opportunity to anticipate a new storyline and to move from the realm of imaginary and dramatic play to a real event.

The teacher gives Ruby and Mille authentic opportunities to determine the outcome of this event, choosing what should be added to the shopping list, approaching the teachers for their suggestions of what could be added, and selecting groceries from the shelves. The teacher plays the role of a resource person. She writes the shopping list, providing the written link between what the children hear and the items they will seek at the supermarket. At the supermarket, she provides a secure base from which Ruby and Mille can venture.

The teachers know Mille well and recognise that she would enjoy this excursion, despite not having been involved in this learning experience from the outset.

What might this tell us about informal noticing, recognising, and responding in this place?

The teachers make time to ensure that assessments are documented. The team meets together to share and discuss stories.

The teachers write stories alongside the children. They capture the language, emotions, and events and the context of learning as it occurs. They revisit the stories with the children through reading and looking at photos.


The teachers also share stories with each other to ensure that multiple perspectives are sought and to alert each other to the children's current interests. This ensures that they are all able to seize opportunities to deepen the learning.

Often, teachers need to give toddlers' play their full attention. Moving away to document learning events could compromise the outcomes for the toddler. Here, the adults work co-operatively to support the documentation of significant learning events to ensure that they do not compromise the outcomes for the children.

The teachers make the small group excursion to the supermarket possible by negotiating the rhythm of the day to allow flexibility in teacher responsibilities.

Copy Cats

Child's name: Ngaio and Izak
Date: 6 October
Teacher: Ginny

		Examples or cues	A learning story
belonging mana whenua	Taking an interest	Finding an interest <i>here</i> – a topic, an activity, a role. Recognising the familiar, enjoying the unfamiliar. Coping with change. Courage.	<p>Izak came over to play from the Over 2's. Ngaio was watching him as he went inside and picked up a play phone from the toy shelves. Ngaio followed him and found a phone of her own. When Izak went outside, so did Ngaio. They sat and explored the phones together. Ngaio placed the receiver to her ear while pressing the buttons. Izak was busy doing the same. When Izak moved away, holding the receiver and letting the phone drag along the ground, Ngaio followed, dragging her phone, too. After a while, Ngaio decided to try something new with the phone. She placed the cord part around the back of her shoulders so the phone dangled above the ground. Izak liked the look of this and had a go with his phone.</p> 
well-being mana atua	Being involved	Emotional well-being. Sustained attention, feeling safe, trusting others. Being playful with others and/or materials.	
exploration mana aotūroa	Persisting with difficulty challenge and uncertainty	Setting and choosing difficult tasks. Using a range of strategies to solve problems when stuck. Puzzlement and curiosity.	
communication mana reo	Expressing an idea or a feeling	In a range of ways (specify). (100 languages of children.) Taking initiative, child: child, child: adult interactions.	
contribution mana tangata	Taking responsibility in the social setting	Responding to others, to stories and imagined events, ensuring that things are fair, helping other, contributing to programme. Negotiation, turn-taking, scaffolding.	
Short-term review			What next?
<p>To me this learning story was a lovely example of how younger and older children can enjoy playing with and alongside each other and form relationships with each other. Ngaio saw Izak as someone to imitate and chose to follow what he did. Later this role changes to where Ngaio influenced the direction of Izak's play. They both demonstrated a sense of being comfortable with each other's company throughout their play.</p> <p>"Children experience an environment where they are encouraged to learn with and alongside others."</p> <p>Contribution, Goal 3, <i>Te Whāriki</i> – Early Childhood Curriculum, page 70.</p>			<p>We will :- continue to encourage older children to visit and play with our Under Two's children;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – provide sufficient playthings for children of differing ages to play with and alongside each other; – support Ngaio's attempts at initiating social interactions with the older children.

What's happening here?

Izak visits from the "over-tuos", and Ngaio is immediately aware of his presence. Ngaio watches what Izak does before joining him in a period of imitative play. Ngaio closely observes Izak's actions and responds similarly. After some time, they reverse roles, and Izak takes the lead from Ngaio.

What aspects of assessment for infants and toddlers does this exemplify?

This assessment positions infants' and toddlers' learning within play episodes of observation and imitation of peers.

The teachers recognise the value of giving children of mixed ages opportunities to play with and alongside one another. Toddlers (and infants) can learn through observing and imitating their older peers, and older children can learn from infants and toddlers.

How might this assessment contribute to infants' and toddlers' learning?

This story provides insights into the type of learning that is possible when toddlers and young children have opportunities to share play spaces and materials.

This assessment provides the teachers with useful information, not only about the children's learning but also about the curriculum in action. They can use this information to evaluate the impact of resources and rituals on the children's learning in their centre.

What might this tell us about informal noticing, recognising, and responding in this place?

Learning stories are displayed on the walls in the play area for the parents to read, making visible the learning of infants and toddlers that is valued.

The teachers take note of the emerging social relationships between children of all ages and actively support these interactions.

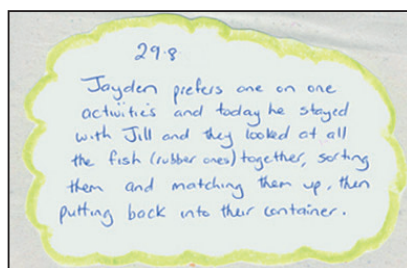
Jayden's towers

Learning story

July



Jayden likes to put things back in their place. Today, the children took the car-racing track out of its box and played with it for a short time. Jayden was then keen to put it back, persevering with the task.



Name:	Date	Observation
Jayden	14-09	
<i>21st</i>	Examples or cues	A Learning Story
Taking an Interest <i>Belonging</i> <i>Mama whenas</i>	Finding an interest here – a topic, an activity, a role. Recognising the familiar, enjoying the unfamiliar. Coping with change	Jayden really enjoys getting out his lunchbox for morning tea and his cup. He sat -
Being Involved <i>Wellbeing</i> <i>Mama sitas</i>	Paying attention for a sustained period, feeling safe, trusting others. Being playful with others and/or materials.	ate well, then packed it up and put the lunchbox + cup back in the drawer. Jayden then moved around the table helping the other children to pack up their lunchboxes and put them away as well. He is very keen to pack up the various activities when they are finished as well.
Persisting with Difficulty <i>Exploration</i> <i>Mama aoraras</i>	Setting and choosing difficult tasks. Using a range of strategies to solve problems when 'stuck' (be specific).	
Expressing an Idea or a Feeling <i>Communication</i> <i>mama res</i>	In a range of ways (specific). For example: oral language, gesture, music, art, writing, using numbers and patterns, telling stories.	
Taking Responsibility <i>Contribution</i> <i>mama tangas</i>	Responding to others, to stories, and imagined events, ensuring that things are fair, self-evaluating, helping others, contributing to programme.	
Short Term Review		What Next?
Jayden enjoys taking responsibility when it comes to packing up and likes to help others to do this too.		Jayden may like to help picking up the tablecloth and wiping down the table. He may be able to use the little brush and shovel to sweep up the floor.
Question: What learning did I think went on here (i.e. the main points) of the learning story?		Questions: How might we encourage this interest, ability, strategy, disposition away to: • Be more complex • Appear in different areas or activities in the programme. How might we encourage the next 'step' in the learning story framework?

Learning story

19 September

Teacher: Jill

Jayden was very involved with threading the cotton reels when we got them down today. I showed him how to thread the cord through the beads. Jayden sat there and tried to copy what I had shown him. After twenty minutes of focused time, Jayden had threaded eleven reels and was able to cope quite easily.



Interpretation/analysis

Jayden enjoyed the challenge, learning initially through imitation. He had a feeling of success – learning a new skill. He experienced one-to-one correspondence as well as quantity and number. (Eleven beads!) He was working on how things fit together. He was experiencing the concept of “more”. Jayden became involved and persevered with this difficult task.

What next?

Jayden can make good use of the materials in our room. He spends time sorting and classifying. We can give him more equipment, such as open play material and linkage toys.

Learning story

November

Teacher: Wendy

Jayden was fitting together a small construction set at the table when it got too high. He stood up ... but it got too high again. He stretched up and jumped, trying to fit another bit on. I nudged a chair towards him, and he climbed on and continued until it again got too high. Again he jumped, really trying to get a bit on top. I put the construction on the floor, and he was able to fit all the bits on. He was very happy with this.



Interpretation/analysis

This activity has given Jayden the experiences of:

- being involved, paying attention for a sustained period of time;
- the concepts of space and height;
- problem solving.

What next?

We will give him the set again and see if he can get all the bits together without help.

Learning story

April

Teacher: Jill

A group of children were playing with the animal train pieces. Jayden watched them making trains and started putting an engine and carriage together. He looked for an animal piece to put in the carriage. He tried two or three, but they didn't fit in. Finally, he found one that fitted. "It's the same colour as the carriage," I said. He put on another carriage, looked for another animal piece, and found a piece that matched his carriage. "It's green," he said and, pointing with his finger, said, "One, two". He put some more carriages on and counted again, "One, two, one, two", and then he pushed the train along the floor, making a train noise.

Short-term review

Jayden is matching colours and knows the names of "1" and "2". He is taking cues from other children when playing alongside them and is interested in counting.

What next?

We will provide colour-matching activities and encourage counting with the materials he chooses to play with.

Learning Story		
Child: <u>Jayden</u> Date: <u>July</u> Teacher: <u>Wendy</u>		
	Examples or cues	A Learning Story
belonging mana whanaui	Taking an Interest	Finding an interest here – a topic, an activity, a role. Recognising the familiar, enjoying the unfamiliar. Coping with change.
well-being mana ahi	Being Involved	Paying attention for a sustained period, feeling safe, trusting others. Being playful with others and/or materials.
exploration mana awhiri	Persisting with Difficulty	Setting and choosing difficult tasks. Using a range of strategies to solve problems when 'stuck' (be specific).
communication mana kōwhiri	Expressing an Idea or a Feeling	In a range of ways (specify). For example: oral language, gesture, music, art, writing, using numbers and patterns, telling stories.
contribution mana hiri	Taking Responsibility	Responding to others, to stories, and imagined events, ensuring that things are fair, self-evaluating, helping others, contributing to programme.
Interpretation / Analysis		What next?
<p>Jayden enjoys 'building' activities and will play along them for quite a long time. He showed good memory (getting on the chair) and excellent problem solving ability.</p> <p>Question: What learning did I think went on here (ie, the main point(s) of the learning story)?</p>		<p>Offer him a variety of construction activities (Triangle set, lego bricks, blocks). Also puzzles.</p> <p>Questions: How might we encourage this interest, ability, strategy, disposition, story to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> be more complex appear in different areas or activities in the programme <p>How might we encourage the next 'step' in the learning story framework?</p>
Early Childhood Learning and Assessment Exemplar Project		



What's happening here?

Jayden likes to sort, put things away, and put things together. He helps the teachers and other children to do this a lot, sometimes showing others what to do. Jayden's interest in putting things together is extended when he is introduced to a connecting construction set.

What aspects of assessment for infants and toddlers does this exemplify?

These assessments become more detailed over time as the teachers recognise the significance of Jayden's learning through his interests.

The assessments also document the development of Jayden's problem-solving skills. In one story, he uses the pieces of the construction set to build a tower, but he has a problem when he can no longer reach the top of the tower to add more pieces. A teacher suggests a chair, and Jayden finds this to be a satisfactory means of accomplishing the goal he has set himself. Another assessment describes how Jayden revisits this experience several months later, this time automatically getting a chair when he can no longer reach the top and going on to use another strategy when again he can no longer add pieces to his tower.

How might this assessment contribute to infants' and toddlers' learning?

The teachers here note a variety of events over time. Gradually these form a picture of Jayden's interests and attention to tasks that require a certain degree of persistence and understanding of spatial relationships. The teachers recognise the relationship between these events and respond to this learning in both spontaneous and planned ways.

What might this tell us about informal noticing, recognising, and responding in this place?

Assessments in this setting are sited within infants' and toddlers' interests and enthusiasms. Some of the assessments reflect the sometimes subtle nature of infant and toddler learning, which the teachers could miss if they weren't perceptive observers.

Double-ups

Child's name: Erica

Date: 3 September

Teacher: Ginny

		Examples or cues	A Learning Story
belonging mana whenua	Taking an Interest	Finding an interest <i>here</i> – a topic, an activity, a role. Recognising the familiar, enjoying the unfamiliar. Coping with change. Courage.	I've noticed that Erica often likes to have two of the same objects to play with at the same time.
well-being mana atua	Being Involved	Emotional well-being. Sustained attention, feeling safe, trusting others. Being playful with others and/or materials.	Today she found two metal objects from the heuristic playthings and tapped them together, making a big sound. Shortly afterwards, she was exploring the kitchen and laundry toys and found two plastic plates. Erica placed a plate under each hand and crawled along the lino, making a scraping sound as she did so. It was as if she had little skis on!
exploration mana aotua	Persisting with difficulty challenge and uncertainty	Setting and choosing difficult tasks. Using a range of strategies to solve problems when stuck. Puzzlement and curiosity.	A short while later, Erica had a bracelet in one hand. She crawled along with it until she found another bracelet. She then held both bracelets up to study them, as if making a comparison between the two.
communication mana reo	Expressing an idea or a feeling	In a range of ways (specify). (100 languages of children). Taking initiative, child: child, child: adult interactions	
contribution mana tangata	Taking responsibility in the social setting	Responding to others, to stories and imagined events, ensuring that things are fair, helping others, contributing to programme. Negotiation, turn-taking, scaffolding	
Short-term review		What next?	
Through her own exploration and being able to choose her own materials to experiment with, Erica has recognized objects that match. Erica uses these objects in her play in a variety of ways. She has chosen to continue to use these objects, so they are obviously important to her.		<p>Parent's voice: Erica's parents have also noticed that at home Erica likes to have two objects the same, especially when she crawls along. Sometimes, Erica will hold a couple of kiwifruit and crawl with them. (They get a bit squashed too!)</p> <p>I'd like to continue to encourage Erica's interest by providing a range of resources that promote open-ended play. She can use these to make comparisons, looking at similarities and differences and making other discoveries.</p>	

What's happening here?

Erica selects objects in both her centre and home environments in the same way. She explores what she can do with these objects as she crawls about these two environments.

What aspects of assessment for infants and toddlers does this exemplify?

This assessment documents Erica's developing understandings. She appears to be exploring the concept of "pairs". The teacher notes that she is not only selecting two of the same objects but on this occasion seems to be studying them (the bracelets) as if making a comparison. She is also experimenting with what she can do with these objects (as with the two plastic plates), perhaps finding alternatives to the usual and familiar.

The teacher ensures that Erica's parents are contributing members of the "feedback loop". She shares what she has noticed over a period of Erica's play and seeks and includes Erica's parents' observations from home before documenting some potential responses.

How might this assessment contribute to infants' and toddlers' learning?

This assessment provides insights for Erica's teachers and parents into what her emerging working theories may be about objects in her world. (X is like Y because it shares key features.) Both the teacher and Erica's parents recognise the connected nature of the events recorded in this learning story. They also recognise that Erica needs time, space, and opportunities to develop working theories about things in her environment. Adults have not intervened or interrupted these times of exploration. Rather, they plan to ensure that there are opportunities for further explorations of the kind described in the story.

What might this tell us about informal noticing, recognising, and responding in this place?

Objects that can be used for many purposes, such as those described in the story, allow children to determine their use. In this centre, they are available at heights that are accessible to infants and toddlers, allowing and empowering them to respond spontaneously.

Haere mai, Sam

Learning story

9 September

Teacher: Justine

Haere mai, Sam, and welcome to the Lincoln University Early Childhood Centre.

Sam appeared tired after Mum and Dad left, so I wrapped him in his blanket from home, and he fell asleep in my arms around 8.45 and slept until 9.30. He woke and gave us a few smiles as I held him, but he appeared quite drowsy and drifted in and out of sleep over the next hour. He fell back to sleep at 10.30, and I popped him back in his bed. He woke again at 11.15, completely refreshed, and polished off 120 ml of breast milk. After he brought up wind and had a nappy change, he joined me on the couch and stared very intently at the black and white ladybirds on the ceiling.

A great first day!

Short-term review

This was Sam's first day in the early childhood setting. At eight weeks old, the noises, smells, and his new caregivers are unfamiliar to him. It was great that Hannah and Brad brought along one of his blankets from home as it gave Sam a feeling of familiarity. The bottle is familiar to him also, and he took that from me with no trouble.

He seemed very content during his time here and was able to sleep undisturbed.

What next?

As Sam's primary caregiver, I will be guided by Sam's individual rhythm, ensuring that the routines he experiences with us are calm, relaxed, and unhurried. This will enable him to develop a sense of trust in me and a sense of well-being and belonging in the early childhood setting.

Learning story:

The beginnings of trust

9 September

Teacher: Justine

This morning, after his feed and a burp, I put Sam on the floor beside me. He was a bit fractious, so I began to sing. Immediately, Sam was silent and began to smile. As I sang, he moved his arms and legs about and began to sing his own song. There were lots of "ah's" and "oh's" to accompany me. Sam maintained eye contact throughout this experience, responding to my smiles and facial expressions with his own beautiful smile.

Short-term review

Sam is beginning to trust the new world around him and clearly communicates his needs. He responded to my interactions with confidence and felt secure enough to imitate the sounds I was making. Sam used animated gestures and verbal communication to express his delight in this experience.

What next?

Continue to respond to Sam's vocalisation, offering him sounds to imitate. Sam's primary caregivers at the centre will continue to be guided by his individual rhythm, ensuring familiar, relaxed routines and interactions.



Parent's voice

22 November

Sam started going to the centre for three mornings a week when he was two months old. He pretty much knew only us. It was reassuring to us that Sam seemed to have got to know Justine in a couple of days, and now she is his favourite person at the centre. We really like it that Justine takes a genuine interest in Sam and his development and that she records all her observations in his daily diary and learning stories rather than just telling us about him each day. We really appreciate the learning stories and look forward to reading more of them! It's a great record of what he's up to while he's there – something for us to look at and to show Sam's whānau.

Sam has developed while at the centre, and it's neat to see him interacting with the other adults and children. When he first started, he seemed to find it loud and would sleep a lot to block out the stimulus. Now, at four months old, he is much more aware of his surroundings and soaks everything in. He always has plenty to do at the centre and is very interested in everything around him during his awake times.

Since Sam is our first child, we didn't have many expectations about child care beyond that Sam would be looked after while we weren't there. But over the two months that Sam has been at the centre, we have been pleased to find that he is looked after by people who genuinely like him and want to participate in his development as much as we do.

They make an effort to see that he not only has his basic needs met but that he also has lots of learning opportunities, including talking and singing to him and giving him a variety of toys and activities.

Another aspect of the centre we like is that they facilitate our interactions with Sam during the day. Both of us are encouraged to come and visit him, and Hannah comes to breastfeed Sam twice during the day. (Sam is now at the centre three whole days a week.)

At home, Sam likes to play in bed with us in the morning, go for walks with us, watch his cat and dog, read stories (lots!), take a bath, and play with his toys (mostly with his tongue!). He enjoys relaxing and having a kick in his cot while watching and listening to his mobile. He especially enjoys this time in his room after a busy day at the centre. He likes to go out in the backyard and watch us hang out the washing, play with the dog, or work in the garden.

We feel that Sam is very settled and content in his time at the centre and that he likes going there. The routine that Sam has at the centre is pretty much the same as at home, and so his life is very smooth, with few disruptions. Through our efforts, and those of Justine and Ginny, Sam is a very contented child.

Predicting

28 November

Teacher: Justine

Yesterday, when Sam woke, I went to his cot and opened it. Sam tracked the door of the cot sliding back. Once it was open, I quietly approached Sam, asking if he'd had a nice sleep. I stood for a few moments, rubbing his chest, and he was full of smiles and those slow, lazy movements of a waking child.

As I unwrapped him, I told him I was going to get him up. As I reached to put my hands under his body, he lifted his head. I didn't think much of this until this morning when I was changing his nappy. Once again, I explained to him what I was doing, and as I reached under his body to lift him, he raised his head.

Interpretation/analysis

Sam is showing a lot more interest in the world around him. His ability to track a moving object is well developed. Once again, Sam responds to me with smiles, and this time he predicts what is about to happen to him.

I have always interacted with Sam in a calm, relaxed manner, explaining what is happening to him as I go. I believe this has enabled him to begin to take responsibility for his care and to

predict familiar events that occur throughout his day. This demonstrates his developing sense of well-being within the centre and the sense of trust he has in me as his primary caregiver.

What next?

As I am on leave in a week, I will ask Ginny to take over some of Sam's daily routines so that he becomes familiar with her while I am still around. Hannah has been coming over to feed him at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m., and I will encourage her to continue this while I am away so that there are not too many changes in Sam's day.

Parent's voice

Hannah informed me today that when they go into Sam's room at home to get him up, they often find him grunting as he struggles to lift his head and upper body in anticipation of getting up. She also mentioned that he is beginning to assist them as they dress him by pushing his arm into his sleeves.

What's happening here?

Sam and his family are new members of the childcare centre community. A number of assessments are recorded here, as Sam's teachers track how he is making sense of this new world, developing a sense of trust, and beginning to predict events. Sam's parents contribute perspectives from home.

What aspects of assessment for infants and toddlers does this exemplify?

These assessments take note of Sam's responses and reactions to his new environment while acknowledging the complexity of learning associated with Sam making sense of new people, places, and things.

The teachers make their roles and reflections visible in assessments, recognising the importance of their relationships with children in learning.

Sam's father adds a perspective to the assessments his teachers have made and provides comments about the usefulness of these to himself, Sam's mother, and other members of Sam's whānau.

How might this assessment contribute to infants' and toddlers' learning?

Both the undocumented and documented assessments on Sam's learning help his parents to value and support his participation in this early childhood community.

Sam's parents' comments on his interests and routines provide a critical interface between Sam's worlds at home and at the centre.

What might this tell us about informal noticing, recognising, and responding in this place?

The teachers actively seek opportunities for building responsive and reciprocal relationships between the children and their whānau. They regularly share stories at staff meetings to seek each other's perspectives and share understandings and responses to learning. They provide both verbal and written assessments and information in formats (notebooks and learning stories, including photos) that are interesting and relevant to Sam's parents from the very beginning of their involvement in this community.

Michael: A helper, friend, and brother

Learning story

17 September

Teacher: Gae

Michael's mum says he really likes helping at home. He closes all the doors and enjoys helping adults to do tasks.

Michael helps me to get his bottle ready. He opens the fridge, gets his milk and gives it to me, shuts the microwave door, and pushes the buttons.

Short-term review

Belonging, Goal 1: Children and their families experience an environment where connecting links with the family and the wider world are affirmed and extended.

Te Whāriki, page 56

Learning story

20 September

Teacher: Gae

Michael offered to help Matthew's mum with Matthew's lunchbox. He carried it over to the bench. Later, he wanted to help Sue get the nappy bucket, so off they went.

Short-term review

Contribution, Goal 2:
Children experience an environment where they are affirmed as individuals.

Children develop:

- awareness of their own special strengths [willingness to help], and confidence that these are recognised and valued.

Te Whāriki, page 68

Learning story

19 November

Teachers: Sue and Petra

Sue's story

I was giving Michael a cuddle as he was having his bottle. As it was my lunch break, I talked to him, telling him that I was going to have my lunch and Petra would come and give him a cuddle while he finished his bottle.

He stayed relaxed as he went to Petra, and I told him I would see him when I got back from my lunch.

Petra's story

I walked up to Sue and Michael and said, "I will give you a cuddle, Michael, because Sue is going to have some kai. She is hungry. You will see her when you wake up."

Michael was very relaxed. He snuggled into my arms and was asleep within a minute.

Interpretation/analysis

Michael has found staffing changes during the day upsetting. However, he has formed strong relationships with two caregivers and is becoming more comfortable with staff transitions.

What next?

To continue to help Michael anticipate what will happen next during the day with verbal reassurance and cuddles.

To respect Michael's choice of caregivers.

Sister's voice

MICHAEL 2nd/12
Michael's bin talking heaps lately.
He calls me Bobble. He can say hi, bye, moore, mine, cold, star, sky, oh no! Ya, ear, eye, stuck, cat & heaps moore. We can hold a conversation with him almost.
Today Michael and I dressed up in our formal wear. Me in my big pink skirt and Michael in a shiny minni skirt & tiara. We danced around the lounge.
Michael is a water baby now, we can't get him out of the pool even when he's chattering with cold. It's kept him entertained all weekend.
He's 18 months now and so much easier to handle, he sits at the table to eat and doesn't fuss to get his nappy changed.

The present

16 May

Teacher: Gae

Skye gave Michael a car from home. She had waited a few days to give it to him as he was away sick. Sue gave him the car wrapped up and told him it was a present from Skye. He opened it out of the crinkly paper and really smiled, and he looked a bit shyly at Skye, who grinned back. They had lots of eye contact with each other. Michael started to play with the car up and down Sue's arms and legs, and then he moved off by himself and played intently. He took the car home at the end of the day. He asked Sue if he could take the crinkly wrapping paper as well and went off happily.

Interpretation/analysis

A lovely social interaction, supported by Skye's nanny, who brought the present in from home.

What next?

Michael and Skye's relationship has been building over a period of time. We will continue to acknowledge and support this. Michael will soon be moving through to the pre-school. We will take Skye over for visits to see Michael and invite him into the nursery to spend time with Skye.

Michael making friends

5 June



When Michael arrived this morning, he came over to Gemma and said, "Hello, Gemma." Gemma smiled. Michael held both her hands and said, "Ringa, ringa, rosie." Gae sang the song, and Gemma then climbed off her knee and went off to play.

7 June



After kai, Skye sat in the middle of the mirror behind the pot plant. Michael looked at Skye before going over to join her. They sat there for a while, looking at the plant. Michael said, "Sue, I'm in the garden." He said this several times. Michael and Skye laughed and smiled as they enjoyed each other and their situation.

11 June

Teacher: Gae

I took Gemma and Skye through to the pre-school to visit Michael as these three had strong relationships in the nursery. Michael was sitting at the table. "Hi, Michael. I've brought Gemma and Skye to visit you." He smiled broadly and opened his arms wide. We went over to him. Michael and Skye put their arms around each other, and Michael kissed Skye very gently on the cheek. We sat for a short while. Skye went outside. "Let's go and play with the hammers with Skye, Michael." "Yes!" So off we went. They hammered together, and then they played

on the obstacle course together. Next, they played with the blocks. Michael suggested the blocks were sushi. “Yum!” After twenty minutes, we all went in to the pre-school whānau time. It was time for us to go back to the nursery for lunch. “Bye, Michael.”

Interpretation/analysis

Michael and Skye were obviously delighted to see each other. They played with and responded to each other in a positive way.

What next?

We will continue to support this relationship with regular visits to the pre-school and encourage and acknowledge their friendship.

What’s happening here?

Through a variety of relationships, Michael is developing a number of identities within and beyond the centre walls. A number of assessments are made over time, including one documented by Michael’s twelve-year-old sister.

What aspects of assessment for infants and toddlers does this exemplify?

The teachers recognise the infants’ and toddlers’ established and developing reciprocal and responsive relationships with each other, their siblings, and the adults in the environment, and they site assessments within these relationships.

The teachers recognise Michael as a competent social partner with the other children and with adults. In the assessments, they are sensitive to occasions where Michael demonstrates his competencies and are respectful in their responses to the interactions he initiates.

Whānau are included in these assessments. The teachers quote Michael’s mother’s observations at home, and his sister writes about his progress and his enthusiasms.

How might this assessment contribute to infants’ and toddlers’ learning?

The teachers gather a number of assessments over time. These inform their understandings of the children’s developing relationships and help them to scaffold relationships between the toddlers, their peers, and adults.

What might this tell us about informal noticing, recognising, and responding in this place?

The teachers recognise the ways toddlers develop identities and give value to this learning in assessments.

Relationships are the foundation of the children’s experiences at the centre, and the teachers do what they can to acknowledge and foster these with all members of the setting’s community. Information from home is valued and included.

By using language to sensitively facilitate interactions between toddlers, the teachers support shared meaning for those involved. For example, Gae records an occasion when she takes Skye and Gemma to visit Michael after he has moved to the “over-tuos”. Gae uses language to support this interaction: “Hi, Michael. I’ve brought Gemma and Skye to visit you.”

Te Puawai: Mana reo

Communication is one of Te Puawai's strongest points. Te Puawai's language skills have increased significantly since the beginning of the year.

She supports her language using non-verbal communication methods such as facial expressions and hand gestures. Her verbal communication is based on fifty words or more, using one-to-three-word utterances like "Ka haere ia", "He inu māku", or "Pānui pukapuka".

She knows everybody's names at kōhanga and can put names to faces. She has a very good understanding of what is asked of her, and she has the vocabulary to maintain short conversations in both Māori and English.

Reading is one of Te Puawai's favourite pastimes. You can usually find her sitting in the book room reading to herself, and she will follow a whaea into the room and pass her books to be read.

Her all-time favourites are the *Pingipingi Pi* collection by Jonathan Gunson and Marten Coombe and *Ko Spot i te Pamu* by Eric Hill, which are read again and again every day. She particularly likes this book because it involves farm animals that she can identify by name, and she knows the sounds that each animal makes.



Observation

24 August

Te Puawai and I spent three-quarters of an hour looking through a *National Geographic* book. She became totally engrossed in this activity.

Links to Te Whāriki

Children enjoy returning to favourite books and recognising the distinctive characteristics of book language ...

(page 73)

Children gain an increasing ability to convey and receive information, instruction, and ideas effectively and confidently by listening, speaking, and using visual language in a range of contexts.

(page 97)

Strengths

Te Puawai can identify many objects, and she is able to pick up new kupu and symbols very quickly, sometimes relating an object (such as the spade) to an activity or place in which it is commonly used (such as the sandpit).

Needs identified

- Introduce new kupu to Te Puawai and get her to repeat them after us to help with pronunciation.
- Continue to kōrero to her as much as possible and encourage her to respond to us.
- Give her simple phrases to use at the table and during group play, such as:
 - Homai koa te ...
 - Kua mutu ahau taku ...
 - Ka taea e koe ki te ...
- Continue to play games to use and reinforce new and old kupu that she has learned.



Language

Mana Reo – Communication

Tohenga Tuarua: Children experience an environment where they develop verbal communication skills for a range of purposes.

- * Te Puawai has a good understanding of te reo. She uses a combination of simple phrases, directions, and commands. Recently, she has begun to use more complex sentence structures, such as "Ka taea e koe ki te huakina".
- * She can almost recite her whole pepeha right the way through, with only a small amount of assistance.
- * She has a great imagination, matched by her great sense of humour. She often recites events from home, such as "Kei a Māmā Helen some toenails Whaea pērā ki a au" or stories from the top of her head, such as the conversation we had about her going to kura.

Observation (Condensed version)

"Ka haere au ki te kura, Whaea Nera, mā runga motokā?" "Kāo, mā runga hōiho," she said, bouncing around the room as if she were on a horse. "Tino tere tōku hōiho." And, quick as a flash, putting her hand over her mouth, she said, "Auē, kua taka taku hōiho i roto i te garden Whaea." Then she broke into fits of laughter as she proceeded to act out her story. I noted this observation, as I felt that it showed not only her level of Māori, but also her quick wit and ability to run.

- * Te Puawai is also very descriptive. She likes to tell you what she is doing, sometimes in too much detail, such as when she is on the loo.
- * She enjoys playing memory recall games. She recognises and names the pictures that she knows and will ask for the names of the pictures for those that she does not know.
- * She was reading a pukapuka to Whaea Bernie almost word for word. When she wasn't sure of the word, she looked at the pictures. It's obviously a favourite, as she read it to Whaea Bernie four times and then came over and read it to me. (The book is *Te Wahi Pai* by Manu Te Awa.)
- * She has a good understanding of our routines. She informed one of our manuhiri that they still had their "hu's" on, and then told me, "Kei te hē te wahine, Whaea, kei mau hū ia, aye."
- * We have found that when Te Puawai begins to speak in Māori, she will finish the whole sentence in Māori and not revert to English!!

What's happening here?

This exemplar includes two items from an extensive portfolio developed about and with Te Puawai over time. It documents Te Puawai using te reo Māori in increasingly complex ways, from using one-to-three-word utterances in the first observation to using a combination of simple phrases, directions, commands, and more complex sentence structures in the second observation.

What aspects of assessment for infants and toddlers does this exemplify?

This exemplar documents Te Puawai's developing competence with language and literacy using te reo Māori.

These observations also include the contexts in which Te Puawai is developing this competence.

How might this assessment contribute to infants' and toddlers' learning?

Including the context (for example, noting her favourite books) and specific suggestions for further interactions assists other adults and promotes further kōrero.

These assessments illustrate continuity and progress over time in some detail. They will enable adults and whānau to support Te Puawai's developing competence in language and literacy.

What might this tell us about informal noticing, recognising, and responding in this place?

These are detailed and specific observations indicating that the adults here listen carefully to the children, noticing words and sentence structures, recognising new developments in and purposes for te reo Māori, and responding with teaching at the right level (for instance, new books and conversations) and documentation.

Reflective questions

He pātai hei whakaaro iho

How do we ensure that assessments are respectful of the infants and toddlers in our setting?

In what ways do we ensure that our assessment practices directly reflect the nature of infant and toddler learning?

How sensitive are the assessments we make to the subtlety of infants' learning discoveries?

In what ways do our assessments recognise the learning that occurs during care moments and everyday routines as much as during spontaneous play? How do we ensure that one is not valued more than the other?

Do our assessment practices take place within responsive and reciprocal relationships with whānau and beyond? In what ways do they reflect aspects of whanaungatanga and ngā hononga?

In what ways can we recognise, complement, and celebrate home, centre, and community connections in our assessments for infants and toddlers?

In what ways do we engage infants or toddlers and their whānau in the “mutual feedback loop”?

In what ways are the infants and toddlers in our setting able to make authentic contributions to our assessment practices so that they are active participants in the assessments?

How do we provide opportunities for the learner to become the teacher in our assessment practices?

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