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Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga

Inclusive Assessment

Te Kāhui Aromatawai

9

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 is inclusive assessment?
He aha te kāhui aromatawai?

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Introduction

He kupu whakataki

Te Whāriki is designed to be inclusive and appropriate for all children and anticipates that special needs will be met as children learn together in all kinds of early childhood settings. The programmes of each centre will incorporate strategies to fully include children with special needs.

Te Whāriki, page 11

This book represents national work-in-progress, as teachers, whānau, and early intervention specialists explore inclusive assessment practices for children with special learning needs within the context of *Te Whāriki*. The exemplars highlight some of the assessment issues that are specific to children who require the extra resource of an early intervention team to support their learning. The challenges these children face may arise from a physical disability, a sensory impairment, a learning or communication delay, a social, emotional, or behavioural difficulty, or a combination of these.

In New Zealand, there is debate about how we can include children with special learning needs within the same curriculum and the same assessment practices as other children while at the same time responding to their individual ways of learning (for example, Carr and Dowson, 1995; Dunn, 2000; Purdue, Ballard, and MacArthur, 2001). Many of the exemplars in this book come from a project that explored ways of integrating the four principles of *Te Whāriki* with more traditional methods of early intervention assessment (Dunn and Barry, 2004). The book also draws on Chris Lepper, Denise Williamson, and Joy Cullen's research (2003) into ways in which learning stories can help all participants in the early intervention process to have a say and to contribute their expertise. Like all the books in this series, its purpose is to promote discussion and encourage participants to reflect on and develop their practice.

Assessment within a team context Te aromatawai ā-rōpū

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 [emphasis added].

Early Childhood Learning and Assessment Exemplar Project Advisory Committee and Co-ordinators, 2002

Book 5 emphasises the importance of inviting all members of a child's learning community to participate in assessment. For children supported by an early intervention team, this community includes all members of that team: the children themselves, their families and whānau, their teachers, and others such as:

- early intervention specialists;
- speech-language therapists;
- education support workers;
- hospital-based therapists;
- psychologists.

In a sense, all these people speak “different languages” and may use a different “lens” to plan for and assess a child's learning, a lens that may look very closely at one aspect of development and leave other aspects for other people to consider. It is vital that team members communicate with each other in ways that work well for the child and do not overlook any of the participants, especially the family and whānau. The parent of a child with early intervention support comments:

Communication is just the key to the whole thing. Otherwise, I mean, we all go off in different directions.

Dunn and Barry, 2004, page 21

Chris Lepper, Denise Williamson, and Joy Cullen (2003) explored the use of learning stories with an entire early intervention team as part of the assessment process for children with complex additional learning needs. Their findings illustrate ways in which learning stories can be used to enhance the quality of a team approach while, at the same time, allowing multiple perspectives to contribute to the well-being and learning of the child.

The researchers undertook two case studies. In each, the team consisted of the child's teachers and family or whānau, early intervention teachers, education support workers, hospital-based therapists (a paediatric physiotherapist and a neurodevelopmental therapist), and speech-language therapists. The research concludes that "Two dominant themes emerged from the data: empowerment and strengthening relationships" (page 20).

Learning stories empowered parents, teachers, and education support workers by reducing the "expert" model and breaking down language barriers. One teacher comments that "learning stories show children's interests but also our teaching" (page 21). The authors add:

The significance of this statement was evident when teachers' strategies and reflections about their teaching contributed to the setting and planning of goals at the Assessment/Individual-planning meeting.

page 21

This empowerment did not diminish the input of the specialists – for example, Chris Lepper notes that the speech-language therapist "was still able to maintain her own professional identity while using learning stories, and highlight specific data relating to her speciality in the short term review" (page 26).

Relationships were strengthened because "Everyone could bring their stories to the planning meeting and share their perspectives" (page 21). One teacher reported that she was talking more with the education support worker and that they were collaborating during sessions.

One of the early intervention specialists made a perceptive comment about the value of multiple perspectives in assessment:

I felt as though I learnt a lot more about [the child] because everyone shared what they saw as important. You also get to know more about the person who wrote it and what is important to that person. We are working better as a team now.

page 22

Books 2, 5, 6, and 7 in this series suggest that sociocultural assessment will have consequences for community, competence, and continuity. Lepper et al. highlight the capacity of a shared assessment tool to develop a shared language that supports a community of practice working collectively for the competence and continuity of learning of children with special needs.

Parent and whānau views of assessment

Te aromatawai ki ngā mātua me te whānau

Families and whānau know and understand their children best of all. When this is recognised and valued, they gain confidence in taking part in discussions on their children's learning and development.

Although they are involved in the assessment of their children through IP meetings,¹ research indicates that families and whānau sometimes feel unqualified to contribute. Writing from a parent's perspective, Bernadette Macartney (2002) argues that parents should be helped to make informed decisions about assessment and support for their children. She notes the importance of emphasising children's achievements more than their failures:

What I find of most concern is when people focus on what Maggie isn't doing rather than what she is doing. As a parent, talk that comes from that perspective is deflating. I feel like they don't really know or respect my child for who she is and what she has achieved.

page 31

In this book, Kian's mother echoes this concern:

I can't tell you how amazing it is to have someone else tell you what your child "can" do instead of all the "can'ts".

page 22

In Lesley Dunn and Sally Barry's report (2004), a parent comments on the value of her child's portfolio in highlighting his achievements:

It gives other people, like people who read them, like my family and grandparents and things like that, that don't see as much of him or only see the bad side of him when he's home and tired and grumpy – it's quite neat for them to learn and to read the stories and things [he can do] like that.

pages 20–21

Dunn and Barry interviewed nine parents or caregivers of children with early intervention support about assessments that included photographs and learning stories. The parents were enthusiastic about the learning stories because:

- the stories reflected their own knowledge of their child;
- the stories showed that the teachers really knew their child;
- they liked seeing what their child was doing when they weren't there;
- they liked reading about their child's achievements as recounted in the stories;
- the detailed observations in narrative format provided a form of accountability.

The stories that we really liked were the ones where he was interacting with the other children or the children were helping. Like one child asking him to come and sit beside him on the slide and slide down with him. And then they went off hand in hand inside.

Parent, page 19

¹ Strategies to support children with special needs are set out in each child's Individual Plan (IP), also known as an IEP (Individual Education Programme) or IDP (Individual Development Plan). This is an ongoing, developing plan of action that is drawn up and reviewed by the early intervention team.

It's a record for parents to see how your child's involved at kindergarten ... I think it gives accountability because they have to show an account of something he's actually done. Which shows they have to observe him and so they had to be involved ... I like to know that everybody is working with him.

Parent, page 20

Similarly, in Lepper et al.'s report (2003), a parent comments:

I suppose it was the learning stories. They seemed to bring out the actual enjoyment and the relationships that they [the rest of the team] have with Joe and that made me feel good. It is a compliment that other people enjoy your child ... you need more encouragement when you have a special needs child.

Mother, page 21

Often, when they read stories about what the teachers are doing, families and whānau feel encouraged to contribute their own knowledge. In Dunn and Barry's project (2004), a father wrote about an episode at home with his daughter Sherina, in which she put a video into the machine and "had it going, and was sitting in the chair, and was looking very proud of herself" (page 23). When interviewed, he said that he was keen for the teachers to see that Sherina could do more than people, including himself, expected her to.

Families and whānau know their children very well and can advise both teachers and early interventionists during formative phases of assessment and when the team is deciding "what next?" There are several examples in this book. In one, a mother illustrates her child's communicative competence through singing (page 20), and in another, the mother explains the use of signing at home (page 8).

Integrating different perspectives

Te whakauru tirohanga rerekē

Members of the learning community of a child with early intervention support may bring different and sometimes conflicting viewpoints about appropriate objectives and goals for the child and about ways to help the child achieve them. They may also bring different views about disability and inclusion (Purdue et al., 2001; Ballard, 1993). Broadly, early intervention specialists use diagnostic and norm- and criterion-referenced assessment tools that work towards supporting the child in developing new skills. Teachers, education support workers, and whānau often bring learning stories to IP meetings, introducing both more information and a different perspective on goals and learning pathways for the child (Carr, 2001). This perspective reflects the belief, fundamental to *Te Whāriki*, that all children are active learners who construct their own learning pathways through their relationships with the people, places, and things in their environment.

In considering such varied perspectives, it is not a matter of “either/or”: skills or dispositions; deficit or credit approaches; medical diagnostic tools, criterion-referenced measures, or narrative assessments. Rather it is a matter of communication, integration, and accommodation, allowing all participants’ voices to be heard. Inclusion and belonging require that children are not excluded from the curriculum of their peers. A truly inclusive curriculum incorporates inclusive formative assessment.

It is also important to consider cultural assumptions about goals and pathways for learning. Jill Bevan-Brown (1994), researching a Māori perspective on intellectual disability, concludes that, for her sixteen participants, the concepts of intellectual disability and their attitudes towards it “are intertwined with other Māori concepts, beliefs and values such as whanaungatanga, aroha-ki-te-tāngata, wairua, āwhinatanga, and manaakitanga” (page 211). Dunn and Barry (2004) quote a Māori early interventionist:

A vitality, which appears to stem from within the child, is highly regarded within a Māori perspective. It is reflected by the range of concepts in Māori culture that relate to the emotions and the importance placed on concepts like mana, mauri, wehi and ihi. These qualities all have an emotional component.

page 42

This psychologist said she was not surprised at an instruction from a Māori caregiver for the team to let the child “just do her own thing”. She explained that:

while a Māori perspective would not necessarily disregard the use of limits and boundaries to ensure a child’s well-being, it might be regarded as intrusive to encase the child’s play in a myriad of behavioural expectations ... many Māori parents deliberately stand back from their children while they are playing, in order to allow the children’s inner resourcefulness and robustness to thrive.

page 43

Book 4 explores ways in which children can contribute to assessment. Children with special learning needs have the same right to contribute their own voices and to participate in developing their own learning pathways. This principle is exemplified in this book, for example, when Elaine’s teacher allows her to lead the way in establishing communication (page 8) and when John’s teachers observe and support his developing interest in connecting things together (pages 12–14).

Links to *Te Whāriki*

Ngā hononga ki *Te Whāriki*

Te Whāriki emphasises the role of responsive and reciprocal relationships with people, places, and things in children's learning. Inclusive practice ensures that children with special learning needs are included in all of the relationships within the learning community to which they belong. The four principles of *Te Whāriki* apply to them as they do to all children.

Empowerment

Whakamana

Inclusive assessment enhances all children's sense of themselves as capable people and competent learners. It is essential that children with special learning needs feel that their achievements are valued and that their view is seen and heard and makes a difference. A Māori early intervention teacher comments:

We see the child, not the disability. That is wairua, Mana Atua.

Dunn and Barry, 2004, page 42

Holistic Development

Kotahitanga

Inclusive assessment reflects the holistic way that children learn. It attends to a complex picture that not only records skills but also considers the development of "who we are and where we belong" (Fasoli, 2003, page 40). In reviewing curricula and assessment for children with disabilities, Mary Beth Bruder (1997) advocates for new generation assessments to focus on a "holistic integration of a child's strengths and abilities" (page 536).

Family and community

Whānau tangata

Assessments make a number of assumptions about goals and pathways. Different cultural views may be excluded if relationships between teachers and family or whānau are not reciprocal and responsive. Face-to-face meetings (kanohi ki te kanohi) develop such relationships.

Inclusive assessment involves families and whānau – their values are recognised and responded to in the picture of their child (Ministry of Education, 2000, page 28). When asked directly if Māori values were reflected in her child's assessments, Jarvis' mother said that Māori values were different, noting for instance a lost opportunity to consider a tuakana-teina approach to providing support for acceptable behaviour (Dunn and Barry, 2004, page 41).

Relationships

Ngā hononga

Inclusive assessment reflects the many relationships that are key to children's learning and development. Anne Smith (1999), describing the sociocultural educational philosophy of *Te Whāriki*, writes: "Children, even very young children, are active co-constructors of their own knowledge and understanding, rather than passive recipients of environmental events" (page 7). The exemplars in this book illustrate that children with early intervention support are active and enthusiastic learners who forge relationships with peers, teachers, other adults, and the environment.

Elaine's stories

27 March

Written by: Louise

Elaine shuffled on her bottom from the block area into the main playroom and stopped just inside the open double doors. She sat still for a moment, then became engrossed in her own special hand movement.

I sat down in front of Elaine, mirrored Elaine's hand pattern with my hand and touched the palm of my hand to hers, then retracted it. Elaine transferred her gaze to my hand. Maintaining the V on my upheld hand, I began moving away from Elaine (shuffling backwards while sitting on the floor). Elaine followed after me, maintaining her focus on my hand. Elaine touched her hand to mine. I moved away again and Elaine followed, her eyes never losing contact with my hand.

While I moved back a third time, one of the children came up and announced morning teatime. Elaine and I were still mirroring our hand movements when I said to Elaine, "Haere ki te kai, Elaine." Elaine looked at me, clapped her hands together three times, and patted her chest twice. "You're ready for some kai? Come on, we'll wash our hands."

Parent's voice

At home time, when Phyllis came to collect Elaine, I relayed the learning story to her. Phyllis said, "I say that to her at home ('Haere ki te kai'), and she claps her hands and pats her chest."

Teacher's voice

I was really excited by this experience and felt a real connection with Elaine. Elaine will often become involved in self-stimulating behaviour, and this is the first time I've been able to break into the activity to achieve a response.

On previous occasions we have experienced reciprocal back patting – I've had Elaine in my arms to console her or carry her to another area, and I've patted her back, and she's patted my back in return. I was particularly surprised by her response to "Haere ki te kai" and immediately felt she was signing.

The experience has highlighted the importance of getting down to the child's level and following the child's lead.

Short-term review

- Elaine recognised and expressed interest in a familiar manual sign made by another person.
- Elaine was able to move towards something of interest.
- Elaine may understand some spoken language.
- Elaine may be using some manual signs to communicate.

What next?

- All working with Elaine to observe closely and look for other examples of manual signing, especially clapping and patting her chest.
- Provide opportunities for engagement with another person, using Elaine's own hand movement as ignition.

Early intervention team member's voice

At Elaine's IP meeting, the team discussed Elaine's communication skills. Elaine's caregiver shared that Elaine would often clap her hands when she was happy. The team agreed that they would focus on encouraging joint attention and establishing a reliable yes/no response.

I pointed out that this learning story illustrates an extension of a reliable yes/no response. There is joint attention but also, more significantly, there appears to be communicative intent. Elaine is telling us more than "yes"; she is also signalling that she wants morning tea.

9 October

Written by: Louise

Elaine shuffles on her bottom down to the bottom of the ramp where she stops and begins watching the children riding round the concrete on bikes and scooters. A teacher approaches, and Elaine starts to vocalise in a grizzly way. The teacher asks, "Do you want a ride on the trike, Elaine?" Jakob is riding past on the tandem trike - he has no passenger. The teacher speaks to Jakob: "Jakob, Elaine would like to have a ride on the new bike. Would you be the driver and let Elaine be your passenger?" Jakob pulls the bike up beside Elaine. The teacher helps Elaine into the passenger seat, and off they go. The teacher stays in close proximity. Elaine is observed clapping her hands and patting her chest.



Short-term review

- Elaine can move to different areas of the centre environment independently.
- Elaine expresses interest in what is happening in the environment.
- Elaine is willing to try new things.
- Elaine is using body language and personal signs.

What's happening here?

In the first story, Elaine's teacher documents the moment when she engages with Elaine and, by mirroring her hand movements, establishes a meaningful interaction. This breakthrough is a very exciting moment for the teacher. In the second story, she documents an extension of that communication. The two stories show Elaine reaching out to communicate with her teacher, using gesture, vocalisation, and eye contact.

What aspects of inclusive assessment does this exemplify?

The voices of Elaine and her teacher are sensitively reflected in these stories as the two interact. Several others also contribute, some within the exemplar:

- Elaine's parent, Phyllis, comments on the first story, saying that she knows Elaine can respond to "Haere ki te kai." When interviewed later, she adds that she "likes to see Elaine expressing herself in front of other people – that's improvement".
- The Interventionist reports on discussions and planning at Elaine's IP meeting.

Two contributions not seen in the actual exemplar are:

- A Māori psychologist working with Elaine says that Elaine's growing ability to express herself – to express her inner essence or *mauri* – is essential for her overall well-being and therefore very important from a Māori perspective.
- A speech-language therapist, reading the stories, says that she would call Elaine's attempts to communicate by clapping her hands and patting her chest "gesture", whereas the teacher calls them "manual" and "personal" "signs".

These examples of shared interpretations enrich the assessment and help to build up a community of inclusive practice.

How might this assessment contribute to this child's learning and development?

Both experiences documented here have important consequences for Elaine, particularly that described in the first story. What happens in that moment of communication is that Elaine's teacher starts *expecting to understand* what Elaine might wish to "say". Looking for what Elaine is telling her makes it much more likely that Elaine's messages will get through, as is apparent in the second assessment.

Documenting the breakthrough may help others to learn from it and to modify their practice – this is an example of an assessment that lifts expectations.

In the second assessment, the teacher describes how another teacher supports Elaine's desire to have a ride on the tandem bike by involving another child. She shares with other people in Elaine's learning community a simple way in which they are able to use a piece of equipment to help Elaine join other children in an activity. As a result of this documentation, others may be encouraged to find similar such opportunities.

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

These assessments, especially the first one, describe the teacher noticing exactly what Elaine is doing and joining her at just that point. Recognising the opportunity for learning, the teacher responds and builds a meaningful interaction. In the first story, she tries an action she has never thought of before – just "being with" Elaine by copying what she is doing. The teacher holds back at this point and is careful not to impose herself. She finds that she can interact with Elaine by following her lead.

JAMES AND THE PUPPETS

29 May

Teacher: Fionna

Mikayla is playing with the puppets when James comes into the family corner. Mikayla asks Maxine if James would like a puppet. Maxine tells Mikayla to ask James if he wants a puppet – which Mikayla does and she holds the puppet out for James to put his hand in – which he tries but misses the hole. He gets the puppet on his hand with some help. Mikayla, Maxine, and James together play with their puppets, pretending to talk to each other and pretending to eat food. James gets a fork and pretends to feed Maxine's puppet for a while.

Short-term review

- What lovely play occurred between Mikayla and James with the puppets!
- Great dramatic play, taking on another role, pretending to be a hen and pretending to feed it and give it something to drink.
- They were involved in this play for a sustained period of time.
- A variety of verbal and non-verbal gestures occurred between them during this play.



What's happening here?

The teacher documents an occasion when James plays a puppet game with another child, Mikayla. She describes the support given by his education support worker, Maxine, as well as the interactions between James and Mikayla. James' parents said that they particularly liked this story because it shows work towards James' IP goals of communication and interaction with another child.

What aspects of inclusive assessment does this exemplify?

In this story, the teacher describes how the education support worker fosters an inclusive experience for James, carefully considering the support he needs and what he can do for himself. Documenting this episode reinforces an important aspect of inclusion: that children with early intervention support should have the opportunity to learn interactively alongside other children.

How might this assessment contribute to this child's learning and development?

For James to build on this sort of interactive experience, he needs adults to be aware of how best to help him and how to do just enough but not too much. For others working with James, this assessment documents how much adult support he needs to manage this sort of interaction successfully.

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

The education support worker does not answer for James when Mikayla asks her if he would like to play with the puppets. Instead, she tells Mikayla to ask James himself. By valuing James' ability to make his own decisions, she communicates to Mikayla the expectation that she should talk to James herself, as she would to anyone else. The education support worker then responds by joining the game to scaffold the interaction and encourages James to talk to Mikayla, helping him to progress towards two of his IP goals.

John's connecting stories

Date: 23 July

Teacher: Julie

A learning story

John watches two children and an adult play with hooks, chains, and lines.

When they move to work nearby, he begins joining the objects together.

He places them in a line. Some droop over the end of the table, so he brings a chair to attach the length to.

A hook comes free on the table; he looks, then reattaches it the other way around.

He has difficulty attaching the length to the chair and pushes it into a hole. He continues linking and hooks the length to another chair.

He goes to the other end of the table and looks at the doorknob, where a scarf is hanging. He removes the scarf and gives it to an adult without speaking.

He links his objects from the table to the doorknob, then adds chains and lets the length hang down.

He steps back and smiles.

Short-term review

John is interested in "linking objects". He watched a group before attempting his work.

John continued to link his objects for a prolonged period.

A few of John's hooks became detached. However, he was able to solve this by turning the hooks the other way. He solved the problem of how to hook the length over the table to a plastic chair, and he used the doorknob to attach his links at the other end.

John pointed to his construction with a big smile.

What next?

Look for opportunities for John to work out ideas about connecting – e.g., boxes, blocks, tyres, string, paper-tape, carpentry.

Encourage John to talk about his interest in this play.

Date: 19 September

Teacher: Toni

A learning story

On the deck by the carpentry table. It's raining.

John picks up a paper tube and looks through it. "Rain," he says, "rain."

He looks at me as I talk into a tube. He puts the tube to his ear. I talk into it. "Yes, it's raining." John laughs, pulls the tube away, and puts it to his ear again. I whisper, "How are you?" He laughs.

John runs to the shelf and puts another tube on the end and puts it to my mouth. I say, "Pl-plop! Rain." He laughs and gets more tubes off the shelf, adds three more tubes, and passes me the end. I put it to his mouth. He says, "No. You noise." I say, "Patter, patter, rain." He holds it to his ear and laughs.

He adds two more tubes and puts one end to my mouth and the tubes start falling off. John puts it on the ground and fixes the tubes that fell off and attaches more tubes. He goes back to the shelf and sorts through the tubes. He adds more tubes – 17 in total. Sam and Blake join in and add more tubes on.

Short-term review

John spent time looking at the rain before talking. Once he heard me talk, he indicated he wanted me to talk into his tube by putting it to his ear. He enjoyed hearing me talk in different tones of voice and using words to explain the noise of rain hitting the ground beside us.

John knew how to connect the pipes by choosing different sizes so they would connect together.

What next?

Continue joint attention with John.

Include other children in his play.

John is focused on connecting things together. Support his fascination with connection in the areas of play – e.g., blocks, pipes in the sandpit, tracks for the cars, boxes, and carpentry.

Date: 9 October

Teacher: Toni

A learning story

John is in the sandpit. He picks up a plastic pipe and connects it to another. He looks around. I ask him to help get more out. As he walks towards me by the storage box, he says "Okay" and carries two pipes and connects them to the other two. He gets three more and connects them to the others.

He looks at me and says, "Water." We check out the water tanks. He takes a hose and puts it in the end of his pipe. He looks in the pipe, takes the hose out, and pulls off some of the shorter pipes. He adds three to a longer pipe, sorting pipes that are similar in diameter. He puts two small pipes in, says "No, no", takes them off, and adds two larger ones.

Joshua joins him. John looks at him and continues to add pipes, adding to Joshua's pipe. He puts the hose in the longer pipe. "Oh, water," he says and shovels sand over where the water is leaking, covering four leaks with Joshua talking to him.

Short-term review

John had an idea of linking the two pipes, looked for more, and was happy to help carry more to the sandpit. He decided to add to the longer pipe and knew how to sort the sizes so they linked together with little gap around the seal. He enjoyed connecting the pipes and seeing the water in the pipes. He decided covering the joins might stop them leaking.

What next?

Continue supporting his fascination with connection.

He includes other children in his play – continue to encourage this.

Encourage John to "talk" with children he works with by telling them what he seems to be directing at me – e.g., he looks at me if he is unsure.

Date: 9 October

Teacher: Toni

A learning story

At the bike track, John rides his bike around once, stops, and pulls at a trailer on another bike. I encourage him to tell me what he wants. He points and says, "Trailer on bike."

He unhooks the trailer as I tip the bike. He hooks it onto his bike and rides around, watching Isaac following him. John stops, adds another trailer onto his trailer, and goes around the track. He stops by Isaac and watches him. He puts another trailer onto his trailer (three now). He squeals and follows Isaac. He goes around again, stops, hooks on another trailer and looks at Isaac, who's hooking on more trailers, too.

John smiles. "More," he says. "Go now?" he says and smiles at Isaac. Isaac follows him and talks with him. John points to both their bikes. Each has four trailers connected together.

Short-term review

John asked for help because the trailer was hard to get off. He knew how to hook the trailer onto his bike and enjoyed moving his legs fast to push his bike around. He kept looking back at Isaac, enjoying having him there.

Having other trailers out and free supported John's connecting, as did Isaac following his lead. He spoke directly to Isaac and enjoyed being with him.

What next?

Continue supporting John in including others in his ideas and also in joining others himself when he indicates that he wishes to.

Give him the words he needs, if needed.

Continue supporting the fascination with "connecting" – make an obstacle course, with him leading how he wants it to connect.

Junk construction – heavy boxes, tubes, etc. to join together.

Date: 18 October

Teacher: Stephanie

A learning story

John was in the sandpit, connecting pipes. He made the pipes connect almost a quarter of the way down the playground. At the end of some of the pipes, water was leaking out instead of going down the next pipe. John got sand and packed it around the leaky spots to stop water from coming out onto the grass.

Short-term review

John found an interest in connecting the pipes to make the water flow. He keeps his interest for a sustained period of time and was playful with the materials. When he chose the task, he came up with a solution to solve the water leaking out the sides.

What next?

Challenge John to set and solve his own problems.

Encourage trusting others and group interactions.

Date: 3 March

Teacher: Toni

A learning story

John stopped in front of Joshua, who was holding a stop/go sign he had made. When the sign changed to red, John looked behind him, not moving. Oliver, Blake, Sam, and another child behind shouted "Go now!"

John moved on and went round again, this time stopping on green. Oliver said, "You go on green, John." John smiled and moved on.

He looked at another child making a stop/go sign. He ran down and took some green cellophane out of the box and found long pieces of bark. He said "Stick", cut off some tape, and stuck it to the bark. He tried three times and it wouldn't stick, so he went inside and got some sticky tape and paper, with no prompting at all, and stuck the cellophane to the paper, and then sticky taped it to a tyre on the bike track. He smiled and said "Go now" and rode off on his bike.

Short-term review

John listened to the other children and joined in the game. He decided to make a sign, and in trying, solved his own problem. He decided to put his sign on a tyre by where Joshua had stood. He joined in the game again.

What next?

John is enjoying taking the initiative, knowing how to solve his own problem. Encourage him to verbalise what he is doing, too.

What's happening here?

These learning stories describe how John's teachers extend his interest in connecting objects. His fascination with this is distributed across the curriculum, enabling him to involve other children in his games.

What aspects of inclusive assessment does this exemplify?

An important function of inclusive narrative assessment is to show progress towards IP goals. One of John's IP goals is interacting with other children. John's learning pathway is unique, but we can see his progress towards this goal as his interactions become more frequent and the stories become more complex.

John's voice comes through strongly in the stories, as a result of his increasing participation in the curriculum and the learning that follows from this. For example, when he drives through a red light, it is against his better judgment, but he does so because his friends tell him to. His hesitation next time round (to check whether the red/green rule has changed) and the way he solves the problem with his sign reveal a lot about the way he is thinking.

How might this assessment contribute to this child's learning and development?

This set of assessments shows John's ongoing progress. Trusting to John's interest, while documenting carefully just where he is up to and going, allows the teachers to take John forward towards the goal of building relationships with the other children. These assessments, particularly that of 3 March, show the adults in John's life (and John himself) that he is beginning to put other points of view first – a big ask for him.

Incidentally, John's parents enjoyed the stories very much and joked that he might grow up to be a plumber!

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

This set of stories illustrates the thoughtful reflections of John's teachers. They notice what is happening and recognise how this may contribute and lead to the goal of interacting with other children. Their responses highlight their sensitivity and professional expertise.

A father's story

Joshua came home with a wooden paddle. He asked me, "Where wheels?"

On Saturday, Joshua again asked me, "Where wheels?", so I asked Joshua to put the paddle "on my workbench". We don't have a real workbench, but Joshua clamped the paddle in the vice, all on his own.

Joshua then helped me to lay in the extension cable. He also helped me to remove the electric drill from its box. Joshua held my hand when I turned the screws holding the wheels on.

When the first wheel was mounted, Joshua let out a loud squeal (I nearly had a heart attack) and said, "We did it, Dad."

This happened three more times as each wheel in turn was mounted.

Joshua disappeared into the house at a rate of knots to show Mum.

Joshua had to be called back to help me clean up.

Joshua's father later commented that Joshua had remembered to ask to make the truck a second time, that he took the initiative by putting the paddle in the vice, and that he had again been hugely excited as the truck emerged. He also noted that Joshua remembered that he was expected to help clean up after himself.

What's happening here?

Joshua's father wanted this story to be part of Joshua's assessment and learning profile because he wanted the teachers to read about the excitement and enthusiasm Joshua displays as the truck comes together in front of his eyes.

What aspects of inclusive assessment does this exemplify?

In this learning story, Joshua's father tells the teachers how he helps Joshua to build his truck. Both Joshua's voice and his father's come through clearly. Joshua clamps the paddle in the vice all on his own and then helps his father get the extension cable and the drill ready. Finally, he holds his father's hand as they put the screws in. All this is valuable information for Joshua's teachers. Showing just what support is needed and how much a child does for him- or herself is useful information to include in assessment.

How might this assessment contribute to this child's learning and development?

Joshua's excitement as he cries out, "We did it, Dad" is a wonderful moment to record. This story also documents for Joshua aspects of himself as a capable and competent learner who orchestrates the assistance of people (his father), places (a "workbench" at home), and things (the vice and drill). His teachers, reading this learning story, will be encouraged to replicate Joshua's sense of achievement with similar activities and a similar level of support for his interests. Revisiting the first story may have encouraged Joshua to ask to make the truck a second time, to put the paddle into the vice on his own initiative, and to remember that he is expected to clean up afterwards.

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

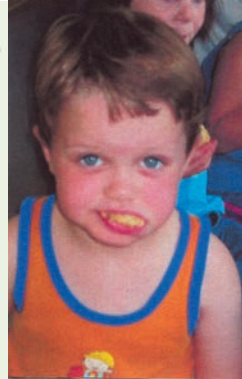
This is Joshua's father's story, and it clearly shows how he values and supports Joshua's learning. He understands what it is that Joshua wants to do when he comes home with the wooden paddle and asks "Where wheels?" Because of his empathy with Joshua, he is able to recognise and respond to the learning opportunity.

Eating at kindergarten



Nathan eating some scones at kindergarten. He had been watching the other children eating & wanted to try some as well. Maxine helped Nathan break the scone in half so that he could eat the middle piece that was soft. "Yummy" was what he said after he had eaten some. Nathan ate the remaining soft part of the scone.

28/2



As part of the kindergarten environment, we have been planting and growing some vegetables. The children have helped with preparing the soil, planting, watering, and weeding. They are now reaping the benefits and help themselves to tomatoes when they want them.

We were talking about other vegetables that we grow at home and were very lucky to have Maxine bring us in some corn and a corn plant. There was a lot of discussion about how it grew, what it had needed to grow, and where the corn grew on the plant. We were then able to have a piece for ourselves.

YUMMY!!!!

April

Kai time

Nathan is very unsure about eating at kindergarten. He doesn't like it when there are lots of children at the table. On this day he had been following Matthew & watched Matthew get his bag & followed. He nibbled his sandwich. As soon as Matthew had finished, Nathan put his bag away as well.

13 June

Nathan comes inside and says, "Morning tea." "Yes," says Maxine. "Wash your hands." Nathan washes his hands and then goes to get his bag. He comes back. "My bag lost." "Have another look," says Maxine. Nathan finds his bag and sits down to eat. He starts to eat his sandwiches, looks at Maxine, holds up four fingers, and says "I eat four." He stays and eats all his sandwiches.

Short-term review

- First time Nathan has initiated eating on his own.
- He ate all his sandwiches. Over the last two terms, he has struggled to eat one. With adult help, he has built up to four.
- He ate them in 10 minutes, previously taking 30 minutes or more.
- He joined three other children at the table. Nathan's comfort zone is increasing around other children.

Nathan showing how many sandwiches he is going to eat.



June

Teacher: Kim

Nathan is having morning tea with a large group of children. This is a huge milestone as he never used to do this and is now comfortable joining in. He now even eats when we do baking, whereas before, he took it but never ate it.

What's happening here?

Nathan had no teeth to chew with, and refusing to eat was a health issue for him and a worry for his family. In these learning stories, Nathan is shown beginning to eat at kindergarten. The teachers find ways to help him feel more comfortable and interested in the group experience of morning tea.

One of the strategies they used early on was to move the table to another area of the kindergarten that was not as busy so that Nathan could feel more comfortable eating morning tea. They also arranged for Nathan to eat with a small group of children, and they shared the goal of eating with Nathan so that he could see how he was doing. By attending to his feeling of belonging, they gradually increased the amount he was able to eat from his lunchbox.

This exemplar demonstrates that goals are not always about skill acquisition, but can be about developing a learning disposition to allow the desired skill to emerge. Nathan's IP included a measurable goal: "Nathan will eat one thing from his lunchbox." However, for his teachers, the goal was first and foremost to engender Nathan's sense of familiarity and trust at morning teatime.

What aspects of inclusive assessment does this exemplify?

By documenting Nathan's progress in feeling comfortable enough to eat at kindergarten, his teachers are able to show his family what they are doing and how successful they are in this. Nathan's grandmother said that the photograph of Nathan sitting on the bench with his mouth full was the best picture that she could have been shown. Nathan could also see his success in the pictures.

How might this assessment contribute to this child's learning and development?

There are some very practical outcomes from these assessments. Nathan needs to eat, both for his health and because chewing strengthens the muscles children use to develop speech. It is not possible to force someone to eat; what Nathan's teachers do, very sensitively, is to take advantage of moments when Nathan takes an interest in eating, for example, when he wants to do what the other children are doing. The documentation and photographs of these successful eating moments in his folio build up Nathan's expectation that he is one of the children who eat at kindergarten.

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

Nathan's teachers notice that Nathan needs "space" from the other children to feel comfortable and recognise that providing this might help him feel confident enough to eat. Their response – to move the eating place and, in a supportive way, make it clear to Nathan that they expect him to eat – is successful. Much of that success comes about because the teachers know Nathan well.

Sherina sings hello

Child: Sherina
Date: 6 October
Teacher: Janet

The child's voice

		A learning story	
belonging mana whenua	TAKING AN INTEREST	<p>First day of term 4, Mum brought Sherina into kindergarten and took her to see Sue. "Hello, Susie," sang Mum.</p> <p>"Susie, Susie," sang Sherina.</p> <p>"Hello, Sherina," I sang to Sherina.</p> <p>"Hello, Janet," sang Mum.</p> <p>"Hello, Janet," sang Sherina, using the same melody.</p> <p>Mum told me that Sherina finds it easier to sing people's names instead of saying them.</p>	<p>Review</p> <p>I have been using chants and singing when interacting with Sherina but hadn't thought of using them in greetings.</p> <p>Follow-up</p> <p>Since then, I've used singing when giving instructions and information, and Sherina sings them back to me.</p>
well-being mana atua	BEING INVOLVED		
exploration mana aotūroa	PERSISTING WITH DIFFICULTY		
communication manareo	EXPRESSING AN IDEA OR A FEELING		
contribution mana tangata	TAKING RESPONSIBILITY		

What's happening here?

Sherina's teacher knows that Sherina is responsive to music, and her portfolio has lots of examples of her happily involved in musical activities. The teacher records this story because she is excited to find out that Sherina can sing people's names when greeting them. She goes on to use this strategy whenever she wants to give instructions or information to Sherina, helping to promote an inclusive environment where Sherina's unique way of communicating is valued.

What aspects of inclusive assessment does this exemplify?

Good communication between home and the centre is vital for successful inclusive practice. Here, by listening to the parent and recording what she learns from her, the teacher discovers a strategy she can use in communicating with Sherina. The written record demonstrates to Sherina's mother that her input to the curriculum is valued: her voice, along with Sherina's, has contributed to Sherina's programme.

How might this assessment contribute to this child's learning and development?

This teacher's follow-up note shows us how useful this documented assessment has been. She increases the amount of singing she uses, and as Sherina responds, the interactions snowball. Documenting this knowledge shares it with the other teachers who work with Sherina and gives them a strategy for development.

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

This is an example of recognising success at the point at which a child is operating and consequently identifying a powerful teaching strategy. Sherina's teacher tells us how she has gone on to use this strategy and that Sherina has been responsive to it.

Later, she also comments that "More learning took place when there was an emotional impact." This is true for her as well as for Sherina – one of the interventionists had already recommended singing with Sherina, and she and the other teachers had been trying to do so, but it is seeing Sherina's mother doing it successfully that has a real impact.

Reading the portfolio

11 June

Writer: Pam

Cameron sat on the floor for 15 minutes till tidy-up time, looking at his folder. He turned the pages right to left and most of them one at a time, although not always. When a photo was on a different angle, he turned the page to look at it. He leaned over photographs he specially wanted to look at, saying "Ooh, ooh" at photos



of him with babies. He verbalised while he looked – sometimes babbling as he pointed to photos – but he also pointed at the written words and moved his finger from left to right across the page. When he finished the book, he turned it over and started again – over and over again till he was satisfied and tidy-up time started.

What's occurring here?

Cameron loves looking at the story told in pictures of himself. He has the ability to stay concentrating for a long while. He can turn

pages correctly and seems to have some idea that the words accompany spoken language and that when you speak the words, you point to the page.

What's happening here?

Cameron reads his portfolio, looking intently at pictures of himself interacting with a visiting baby. Often his interest in activities is short-lived, but this time, he becomes completely involved in what he is doing, displaying great concentration.

What aspects of inclusive assessment does this exemplify?

Cameron's education support worker recorded this assessment and took photographs of him reading his portfolio. Cameron's voice is here, too – the expressive photographs show the value of this learning moment to Cameron himself as he concentrates on his portfolio.

One of the important reasons for documenting this story was that it illustrates skills and a level of concentration that Cameron was not thought to possess. (In formal testing, Cameron did not seem to retain an interest in or memory of objects once they were out of his sight.) Consequently, the documentation interests and challenges members of Cameron's early intervention team.

How might this assessment contribute to this child's learning and development?

This assessment particularly interested Cameron's early intervention teacher because she wondered whether her own assessment had underestimated Cameron's skills. She retested very carefully, ensuring she had his attention, but got similar results. This does not mean that the information from either of these assessments is "wrong". It means that on this occasion and with this content – lots of pictures about himself – Cameron becomes absorbed in an activity that is an important learning experience for him. From here, his teachers could build on similar experiences, perhaps reflecting what he is doing each day and showing him photographs of this. Such documentation may also provide opportunities for Cameron and other children to look at his portfolio together.

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

Cameron's education support worker noticed that he was absorbed in his portfolio and recognised the early literacy skills he demonstrated, particularly in the way he handled a book.

"I can't tell you how amazing it is!"

Child: Kian

Date: 5/6

Writer: Sue

A learning story

TAKING AN INTEREST	<p>Kian is on a resonance board surrounded by rattly things and a blue cheerleader's pompom. The gold mobile is hanging above him within reach. Kian is enjoying touching the pompom and the strands of the gold mobile. He has his boots on but is not making any movement with his legs to make noise contact with the board.</p> <p>I start to stimulate some movement by creeping my fingers down his leg from the hip and finish with lifting his foot a little, then dropping it onto the board so his boot makes a noise. As I do this, I'm chanting "Kian lifts his foot and goes crash." I time the word "crash" with the boot landing on the board. I wait for him to copy. After three repeats, with waiting time in between, Kian lifts his leg himself and crashes his boot onto the board. He smiles at me. I leave Kian to a few minutes of exploring on the board. He lifts and kicks his boot one more time and smiles.</p>
BEING INVOLVED	
PERSISTING WITH DIFFICULTY	
EXPRESSING AN IDEA OR A FEELING	
TAKING RESPONSIBILITY	

Parent's voice

Today a staff member recorded this learning story about your child. It captures a part of your child's day. We invite you to make a comment about this story. We will include this story and your comments in your child's folder, which will be given to you to keep when your child leaves our centre. We would love to hear about your child's experiences at home too.

It is amazing how the smallest thing can be amazing. I was so excited with Kian's story that I went out and bought a bottle of wine to celebrate.

I can't tell you how amazing it is to have someone else tell you what your child "can" do instead of all of the "can'ts".

The processes that the centre uses to encourage Kian to communicate are very good, and since learning these things, I am looking at Kian in a different light and attempting to talk with him rather than at him.

Thank you so much, Sue, for taking the time to write down Kian's experience.

What's happening here?

Kian attends a specialist centre. This five-minute learning story describes his enjoyment and achievement on a resonance board. His mother comments on the story. Her response is in line with comments from parents in the literature on children with special learning needs.

What aspects of inclusive assessment does this exemplify?

This centre's practices facilitate parents' involvement in assessment – the note that accompanies the learning story invites the parents to comment on it and to share the child's home experiences with the centre. As a result, the voices of Kian, his teacher, and his mother are all heard in the assessment.

Kian's learning story demonstrates that the same form of narrative assessment used in mainstream centres can be used effectively with children across all early childhood settings. In the introduction to this book, a parent is quoted as saying:

They [the learning stories] seemed to bring out the actual enjoyment and the relationships that they [the rest of the team] have with Joe and that made me feel good. It is a compliment that other people enjoy your child ... you need more encouragement when you have a special needs child.

The comment from Kian's mother illustrates that viewpoint.

How might this assessment contribute to this child's learning and development?

Kian's mother's experiences with the centre, including reading this learning story, help her to see him "in a different light" and to "talk with him rather than at him". This assessment documents a successful and apparently enjoyable learning moment for Kian, an achievement that his teachers and others can build on.

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

Both the assessment and the parent comment celebrate and focus on Kian's achievement. By deliberately waiting for Kian to copy her, the teacher demonstrates that she recognises an opportunity for learning and responds in a way that leads to a positive outcome.

Fred's stories

A learning story

7 June



Today, Fred and I shared his story scrapbook together.

Fred signed "ball" when we were reading the page about him kicking the ball.



As I was reading, Fred was finishing the sentences.

There was lots of talk about what was happening in the pictures.



Ruby was standing close by, watching while I was reading. When I finished Fred's book, Ruby picked it up and started reading with him. In the picture opposite, you can see Ruby role-modelling the sign for "fish" and Fred copying her.



Fred listened to Ruby and talked about the pictures with her, too. Fred and Ruby spent quite some time sharing Fred's book and only stopped when it was tidy-up time.

The learning story is recorded onto Fred's videotape so he can revisit it with his friends and family any time.

Short-term review

What a delightful story! Fred and I enjoyed time together sharing his book and talking about the pictures. I was so impressed by Fred's strong interest in his book and the signs he spontaneously did. Fred is showing a strong interest in his name. When he got to the page of him writing his name, he used his finger to write an "F" for Fred on top of his picture. (*Te Whāriki*, Communication, Goals 3.1 and 3.4)


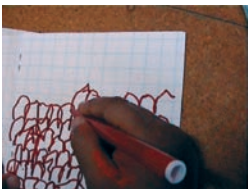


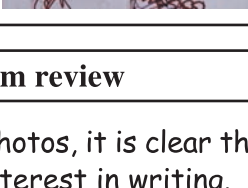
What priceless video footage of Fred with his friend Ruby, sharing time together. From the video and pictures, it is easy to see Fred's enjoyment as he shared his book with Ruby. Once again, Fred revisited his story and talked about the pictures with Ruby.


What next?

Lots more stories with Fred, sharing and talking about the pictures. Make Fred more books using pictures of his time at kindergarten. He was very responsive to the photos of his family, so perhaps a book including his kindergarten friends. Encourage Fred to use his name card as a writing tool and also introduce him to magnetic letters as an early literacy resource. We have some stories in Tongan that Fred may like to take home to share with his family.

Child's name: Fred
 Date: 10 June
 Teacher: Karen

Learning story

belonging mana whenua	TAKING AN INTEREST		Today, Fred was working with Lyn; he was working from his choosing box.
well-being mana atua	BEING INVOLVED		Fred was involved in a writing activity and made patterns.
exploration mana aoturoa	PERSISTING WITH DIFFICULTY		"McDonalds," he said.
communication manareo	EXPRESSING AN IDEA OR A FEELING		"Wow, Fred, you are so clever. You've been writing M's!" I replied.
contribution manatangata	TAKING RESPONSIBILITY		Later on, Fred's friends joined him and he continued to write. He watched Fuka and copied the symbols she had written on her paper.
			Fuka wrote her name, and Lyn suggested that Fred could write his name, which Fred did.
			He continued to enjoy this activity for quite some time, and it seems he particularly enjoyed his friends' company, too.

Short-term review	What next?
<p>From the video and photos, it is clear that Fred is showing an interest in writing.</p> <p>It is great to see him enjoying friendships and using his friends as role models. Fred has excellent observational skills and often watches his friends for cues.</p> <p>(See Fred's videotape for all the footage to this learning story.)</p>  <p>Question: What learning did I think went on here (i.e. the main point(s) of the learning story)?</p>	<p>Provide lots of opportunities for Fred to use print in activities that are purposeful and meaningful.</p> <p>Write down Fred's stories about his artwork as a way of modelling print. Talk about the letters and words.</p> <p>Share stories.</p> <p>Use Fred's name card as a tool when activities are involved around print - e.g., magnetic letters.</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>

Date: 26 June
Teacher: Karen

A learning story

Short-term review



Recently, we have begun to record some of the children's learning stories onto videotape. Today, I showed Fred his videotape for the first time.



The first story on his tape is about him and Ruby. When Fred saw the pictures, he went and got his file. Then he took his position back in front of the TV, and while he watched his story, he also looked through his file.



Fred then went on to sharing his file with his friends.



Fred also enjoyed watching his friends' tapes, but he made sure his videotape was close by. In this picture, you can see Fred has got his tape securely between his feet.



Fred joins in with the children's enjoyment as they revisit the learning story of his friends singing the pizza song.



Fred continues to keep a close hold of his tape.



Recording children's learning stories on videotape is a new development in our assessment process.

Today was the first time Fred saw his tape with his stories on it. Once he began watching his learning experience, he automatically made the connection it has with his file. He found his file and read it while he watched the video footage. As he read along with the tape, he was matching the pictures that were in his file. (*Te Whāriki*, Communication, Goal 3.2)

Fred has a strong connection with his file (recently he was dancing with it clutched under his arm), and he has automatically transferred this sense of ownership to his videotape as well.

Having some of Fred's stories on tape gives Fred and his family the opportunity to revisit learning experiences and share the learning moment again, and again, and again!


What next?

Use Fred's tape as a tool to revisit learning experiences to develop vocabulary, and encourage Fred to talk about what he is doing to help the development of his expressive language.

Fred can celebrate his stories with his friends. Once again, this is a great opportunity for Fred to use expressive language.

Child's name: Fred
Date: 27 June
Teacher: Karen




Learning story

		Examples or cues	
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.	<p>Fred came with his mum to his IP meeting today.</p> <p>We put Fred's videotape on to celebrate Fred's progress with his IP team.</p> <p>Fred's second story on the tape was about some writing he had done in a book. When the story came on the screen, Fred went to the storeroom and returned with the actual book he had been writing in a few days before.</p> <p>Fred went back to the video and began writing in his book again, writing the same pattern he was doing on the video.</p> 
well-being mana atua	BEING INVOLVED	Paying attention for a sustained period, feeling safe, trusting others. Being playful with others and/or materials.	
exploration mana aotūroa	PERSISTING WITH DIFFICULTY	Setting and choosing difficult tasks. Using a range of strategies to solve problems when 'stuck' (be specific).	
communication manareo	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 manatangata	TAKING RESPONSIBILITY	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?
<p>Once again, Fred's reaction to his video footage amazed me; I didn't realise how powerful it was going to be for the children to have the opportunity to revisit their learning experiences.</p> <p>Having this video footage also gave Fred a sense of empowerment and the opportunity to celebrate his success with adults (the IP Team) that aren't involved in his daily learning experiences.</p> <p>Question: What learning did I think went on here (i.e. the main point(s) of the learning story)?</p>	<p>Continue with last "What next?!"</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>

Child's name: Fred
Date: 16 July
Teacher: Karen

Learning story

belonging mana whenua	TAKING AN INTEREST	  	<p>Today, Fred had been busy creating in the block corner; he had used Mobilo to make a model.</p> <p>I found Fred in the art area; he had his model alongside him and was now painting a picture.</p> <p>"Fred, write a story about your model," I encouraged.</p> <p>"Fire engine," Fred replied. Fred watched as I wrote his words down. He then picked up his pen and began to write letters on his page.</p> <p>I then suggested that Fred could draw his model. Fred looked very carefully at his model. He showed me how the ladder worked. He then drew it onto his paper.</p>
well-being mana atua	BEING INVOLVED		
exploration mana aotūroa	PERSISTING WITH DIFFICULTY		
communication mana reo	EXPRESSING AN IDEA OR A FEELING		
contribution mana tangata	TAKING RESPONSIBILITY		

Fred's writing



Fred's model



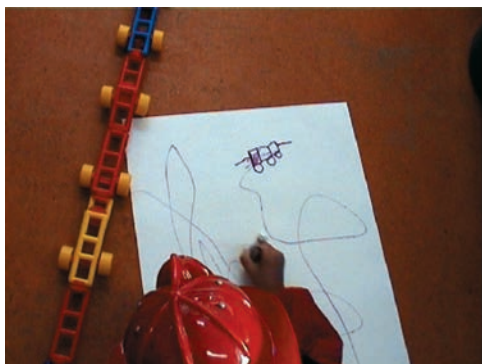
Short-term review	What next?
<p>Fred chose his own activity today. He was open to ideas when I extended the activity to involve modelling print for a purpose.</p> <p>Fred was able to represent his model in another medium and drew his model.</p>	<p>Encourage Fred to express his ideas verbally and to record his ideas. Model print.</p> <p>We have some stories in Tongan that Fred may enjoy sharing with his family. The books are in the book corner; you are welcome to use it like a library.</p>

Teacher: Karen

"On the shelf," I said, pointing to the paper.

Fred pointed to an area on his drawing. "Shop," he replied. So I drew an arrow and wrote the word "shop". Fred watched while I wrote, and then drew his own arrow.

"What are you going to buy at the shop?" Glynis asked.
Fred was quick to reply: "Chocolate!"



Short-term review

Fred drew on his experience yesterday and extended his own learning today. (See last learning story.) This story is one example of Fred being a self-directed learner, choosing his own task and persisting until he has finished. This story also reflects Fred's observation skills and how he copies what is modelled to him - e.g., drawing an arrow. It was great to see Fred celebrating his work at mat time and expressing his ideas.

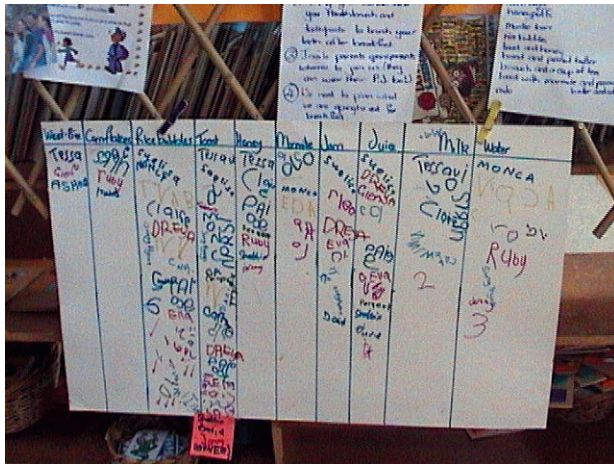
What next?

When working with or alongside Fred, verbalise what he is doing. This helps Fred to make a connection between his actions and the words he is hearing.

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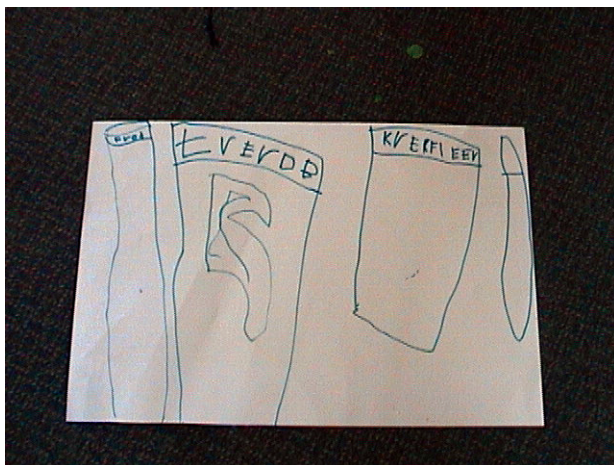
Child's name: Fred
Date: 17 September
Teacher: Karen

A learning story



Tomorrow, we are having breakfast at kindergarten. Today, the children were deciding what food we should have. To do this, they had turns voting, writing their names in the columns. Once Fred had his turn, he found his own piece of cardboard and set about drawing up his own graph.

Short-term review



Yet again, another example of Fred being involved in literacy for a purpose. Fred directed his own learning, and from his involvement in this activity, he was able to transfer this experience into drawing his own graph, even with headings.

What's happening here?

This exemplar includes seven excerpts from Fred's assessment file. In these assessments, the teacher focuses on Fred's growing competence in literacy, communication, and relationships. The centre has just begun to record learning episodes on videotape, and Fred connects his file and the videotaped versions.

What aspects of inclusive assessment does this exemplify?

Fred's voice emerges clearly in these assessments, through his actions, speech and signing, writing, and drawing. So too does his teacher's, and his family are included through invitations to borrow the centre's books to build on Fred's emerging interests (7 June and 16 July).

These learning stories show that narrative assessment can be used effectively with all children, including those with special learning needs. These stories document and celebrate Fred's interests and abilities, and the goals for him are in the same domains as the goals for the other children, for example, communication, self-direction, and persistence (17 July) and literacy for a purpose (17 September).

The documentation itself provides Fred with opportunities to participate in the curriculum. For example, Fred shares his assessment portfolio with the teacher and with other children, providing a focus for communication with others. Group learning episodes recorded on videotape (singing a pizza song) also provide Fred with an opportunity and an invitation to join in with others.

How might this assessment contribute to this child's learning and development?

In this set of assessments, we see the working out of a dynamic, ongoing Individual Plan (IP) with *Te Whāriki*-centred goals and detailed suggestions on how to achieve them. The What next? sections of the assessments document for all the adults in Fred's life (and for Fred) planned experiences that will build on his growing competence. For example, the 26 June entry plans to "use Fred's tape as a tool to revisit learning experiences to develop vocabulary and encourage Fred to talk about what he is doing to help the development of his expressive language". In the same assessment, the teacher comments on how the written and filmed stories provide opportunities for Fred to use language with his peers.

The documentation also supports continuity in Fred's learning. For example, he engages with the IP meeting process (27 June) by linking the videotape to a book he has been writing a few days before, finding the book in the storeroom, and writing in it again. The teacher comments on his sense of empowerment as he "celebrated his success with adults (the IP team)".

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

In these assessments, the teacher recognises aspects of Fred's growing competence and responds in ways that challenge him and further his learning. For example, on 16 July, he is encouraged to tell a story, write, and draw his Mobilo model. The teacher writes to his dictation, and so his interest in the written word and his developing ability with language are not held back by his limited ability to write.

Reflective questions

He pātai hei whakaaro iho

- Who do we involve in our assessments of children with special learning needs? Who else could or should we involve?
- Do our assessments reveal particular assumptions about disabilities or inclusion?
- What aspects of competence and continuity are evident in our assessments of children with special learning needs?
- What do the children value about their assessments?
- What aspects of the learning shown in assessments are valued in the children's homes?
- What do our assessments tell us about noticing, recognising, and responding for children with special learning needs in this place?
- How are whānau voices included in our assessments of children with special learning needs?
- Do our assessments raise questions for specialists and early intervention teams? What do they value about them?
- Do we relate learning pathways for children with special needs to their IP goals? How?
- How does the learning of children with special needs exemplify our understanding of inclusion?

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