



Te Poutāhū
Curriculum Centre

KŌWHITI WHAKAPAE



Social and Emotional Learning



**Te Tāhuhu o
te Mātauranga**
Ministry of Education

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o Aotearoa**
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Contents

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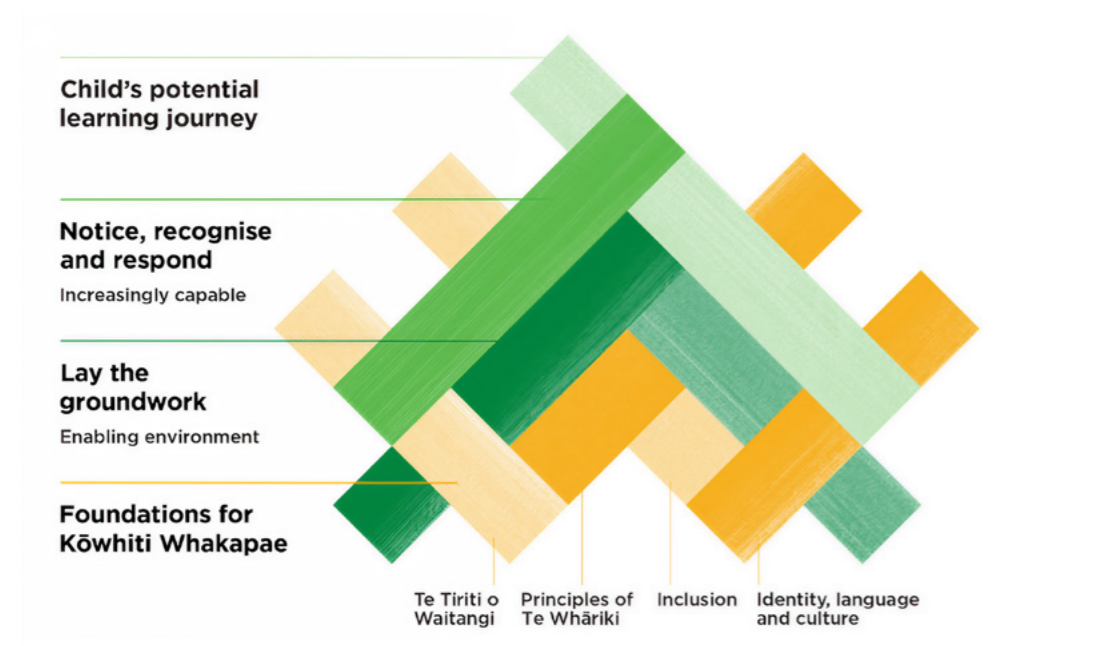
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Introduction

Kōwhiri Whakapae is designed to help early learning kaiako strengthen planning, formative assessment, and teaching practice. This diagram shows the framework for Kōwhiri Whakapae and how it aligns with *Te Whāriki*.



Kōwhiri Whakapae is built upon the four foundations shown above. Together these foundations task kaiako with providing equitable opportunities for all mokopuna to thrive within individually and culturally responsive learning environments. For further information, see the book 'Using Kōwhiri Whakapae' or the [Foundations page](#) on Kōwhiri Whakapae online, or watch the 'About Kōwhiri Whakapae' video on the [homepage](#).

Kōwhiri Whakapae supports kaiako to recognise children's capabilities and progress and to respond with effective practices in three areas of learning:

- › Social & emotional learning
- › Oral language & literacy
- › Maths.

These areas are crucial for positive later educational and life outcomes. While children's progress will vary depending on their individual learning trajectories, typical characteristics and patterns can be observed over time. These characteristics and patterns provide the basis for practices and learning progressions within the three areas of learning.

There are four Kōwhiri Whakapae books in total. Three cover these areas of learning. A fourth book provides more detailed information about the overall Kōwhiri Whakapae resource, its foundations, and a guide for getting started with it. Using Kōwhiri Whakapae

will help you to review and strengthen teaching and learning in these areas across the strands of *Te Whāriki*, understand and respond to children's progress over time, and support children's growing identity as learners.

Each area of learning guides you through a four-step process to help you:

1. **Lay the groundwork** to create an enabling environment for all children
2. **Notice and recognise** children's current capabilities and possible directions for learning
3. **Respond** to scaffold, consolidate, or expand children's learning over time
4. **Document** children's learning using the assessment examples as a guide.

Social & emotional learning

Children growing social and emotional competence, engagement, and learning

Mā te whiritahi, ka whakatutuki ai ngā pūmanawa ā tangata
Together weaving the realisation of potential

This book focuses on the area of Social & emotional learning.

What does social & emotional learning refer to?

Social and emotional learning refers to the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that children use in socially and culturally appropriate ways to form relationships, solve conflicts, express and regulate emotions, adapt in new situations, and overcome challenges.

For further information, see [this page](#) on Kōwhiri Whakapae online.

Why is social & emotional learning important?

Children who have effective social & emotional skills experience positive benefits in childhood and are more likely to experience positive life outcomes and higher levels of wellbeing in adulthood.

For further information, see [this page](#) on Kōwhiri Whakapae online.

How is social & emotional learning approached in Kōwhiri Whakapae?

Te ao Māori concepts ground and structure the social and emotional area of learning. Selected capabilities for teaching and learning have been drawn from each of these concepts.

For further information, see [this page](#) on Kōwhiri Whakapae online.

There are four key sub-areas within Social & emotional learning:

- › Whanaungatanga me manaakitanga | Connected relationships & caring for others
- › Kare-ā-roto me wairuatanga | Emotional awareness, regulation, & spiritual connectedness
- › Rangatiratanga me urutaunga | Agency & adaptability
- › Kotahitanga me kaitiakitanga | Social inclusion & action.

The remainder of this book unpacks each of these areas using the four-step process described above.

Connected relationships & caring for others

Children's ability to connect with familiar and unfamiliar people in responsive and respectful ways

Overview

What does 'whanaungatanga me manaakitanga' refer to?

Whanaungatanga is about developing respectful, reciprocal kinship-type relationships, including caring for others' wellbeing. Manaakitanga is integral to whanaungatanga and includes aroha, respect, generosity, and care for others.

For further information, see [this page](#) on Kōwhiri Whakapae online.

What are 'connected relationships & caring for others'?

Connected relationships and caring for others refer to children's ability to connect with family, friends, and familiar and unfamiliar people in responsive and respectful ways, including engaging in social interactions that are reciprocal and uphold the mana of each person.

For further information, see [this page](#) on Kōwhiri Whakapae online.

How is this area woven through the strands of *Te Whāriki*?

Knowledge, skills, and attitudes associated with connected relationships and caring for others are woven through all strands of *Te Whāriki*, helping kaiako respond to children with consistent guidance, encouragement, and support.

For further information, see [this page](#) on Kōwhiri Whakapae online.

How do the foundations of Kōwhiri Whakapae impact on this area?

The ways that children understand and form relationships and how they care for others are intricately linked to their identity, language, and culture. Connections to past, present, and future are integral to a Māori perspective on relationships.

For further information, see [this page](#) on Kōwhiri Whakapae online.



Lay the groundwork

Practices to whakaritea te pārekereke | prepare the seedbed for all children

Start by working with all the children in your setting. Create an environment that can support children to build skills related to connected relationships & caring for others.

- › Consider your current environment and how you could make it better.
- › Talk to others about what you are already doing.
- › Select practices that will be meaningful in your setting.

Interactions with mokopuna

Interact with children in ways that are intended to make them feel safe, secure, and connected in the setting.

Why is this practice important?

When children feel safe, secure, and valued within the setting, they are able to fully participate and be themselves. Mokopuna are empowered as learners when they experience feelings of connectedness with other people in the setting, and with places and people within the local community.

How to apply this practice in your setting

- Be consistently warm and responsive in interactions with mokopuna, including regular, meaningful, and sustained interactions every day.
- Ensure all children are supported to develop secure relationships with adults in the setting over time. Remember that it can be easier for a child to build a secure relationship with one adult first and then move on to getting to know the other kaiako.
- Observe mokopuna who do not often interact with kaiako, follow their interests, and find meaningful ways to engage with them in a shared interest or activity.
- Acknowledge and respond to children's emotional states. Adjust support and expectations to take account of children's individual temperaments.
- Engage with mokopuna about connections between people (both children and adults) within the setting. Talk openly about opportunities for children to make new connections with people in the setting.
- Engage with mokopuna about connections they may have with people in their whānau, community, and whakapapa and with local geographical features and places. Create opportunities for children to share connections with their local community and places, including excursions and welcoming visitors, and build on these.

Social cues and expectations

Support mokopuna to understand social cues and expectations in their interactions with others in diverse social contexts.

Why is this practice important?

Developing an understanding of social cues and expectations supports mokopuna to navigate diverse social contexts. This allows children to develop strategies for interacting and responding appropriately in a range of different social and cultural situations.

How to apply this practice in your setting

- Develop relationships with whānau and mokopuna to better understand their social cues.
- Adapt teaching approaches that value children's unique preferences and ways of being and interacting in the social world, including being aware of neurodiversity.
- Support children's increasing awareness of their expressions or body language and what that might convey.
- Draw attention to social cues such as the expressions or body language of others and discuss with mokopuna what these might convey.
- Discuss social expectations in different socio-cultural contexts with mokopuna.
- Provide and use resources and materials from a range of cultures that highlight different aspects of being a friend or showing manaakitanga.

Supporting play

Support children to play with peers and engage in a range of play experiences relevant for their age, ability, culture, and identity.

Why is this practice important?

When mokopuna are supported to play with peers and have a diverse range of play experiences, their relationships are enhanced and they develop their strengths, interests, and increasing capabilities. Play can also support children to learn and practise their communication and language skills, as well as higher order thinking skills (executive functions), which can help them plan, regulate, and be flexible in their thinking.

How to apply this practice in your setting

- Create opportunities for mokopuna to play with and alongside others as well as by themselves. Set up varied spaces and play areas to encourage different kinds of collaboration, focus, and creativity. Adapt your level of support and facilitation as appropriate.
- Talk with whānau and gain a greater understanding of their cultural values and aspirations for their children's connected relationships and ways of showing care for others.
- Create opportunities for active and noisy play, cooperative play, quiet play, dramatic play, and outdoor and indoor play.
- Provide an environment with culturally diverse and familiar materials, toys, loose parts, natural materials, and household items, allowing mokopuna to explore diverse identities, including culture and gender.

- Ensure children have choices and can participate and engage in play in different ways.
- Ensure mokopuna have sustained opportunities to deeply engage in learning and play across the day.
- Join children in play; be sensitive to social dynamics and participate in ways that enrich play and support and empower all children.

Small and large group play

Create opportunities and support children to play with peers and engage in small- and large-group experiences.

Why is this practice important?

Through peer play and group experiences, mokopuna learn and practise the skills they need to engage with others. This includes entering and being part of a group, requesting and sharing materials, navigating social dynamics, and participating in and contributing to the group, as well as accepting and encouraging the participation and contributions of others.

How to apply this practice in your setting

- Provide opportunities for whānau to share their aspirations for their children's relationships in the early learning setting.
- Scaffold children's wellbeing and learning without overhelping, and with awareness of children's capabilities and experiences and the group dynamics.
- Support mokopuna to be engaged with groups in ways that uphold their mana and the mana of others in the group. Be respectful of each child's way of being, while also being flexible to the general expectations.
- Support children to learn others' names.
- Ensure mokopuna have choices and can participate and engage in groups in different ways, including choosing to observe.
- Think carefully about how the set-up of the environment and materials foster play and collaborative experiences in different sized groups. For example: create quiet and individual spaces; set up a small table with only two chairs for artmaking; create an enclosed space for a small group with dramatic play resources in it; arrange a good number of cooking implements in the sandpit; and provide enough sports equipment for a large group.

Cooperative games and activities

Support children to engage in cooperative games and activities that have rules and expectations for participation.

Why is this practice important?

When activities have rules and expectations, mokopuna can learn and practise a range of skills and build capabilities. This includes social (e.g., sharing, turn taking, and working together), regulation (e.g., waiting for a turn and following rules), attentional (e.g., staying focused and persevering), and working memory (e.g., planning, sequencing, and making choices).

How to apply this practice in your setting

- Using your knowledge of mokopuna, select and provide a range of games and activities that are meaningful to them in your setting.
- Ensure games are representative of a range of cultures and languages (e.g., clapping games, sasa, tititorea or tī rakau, kite flying, bean bag toss, hide and seek).
- Consider how the rules of different games relate to cultural expectations (e.g., whether it is appropriate to touch heads or shoulders in 'Duck duck goose').
- Create or modify materials and instructions so that games reflect children's cultures and languages. For example, create a memory game of ngā manu Māori.
- Support mokopuna by clearly explaining the expectations and rules for playing selected games and activities.
- Differentiate supports for mokopuna to participate, including adjusting expectations or rules of the game for individual children as needed.

Conflict as learning opportunities

Use peer conflicts or everyday social problems as learning opportunities.

Why is this practice important?

When mokopuna are supported to navigate and solve social problems and peer conflicts, they develop capabilities and confidence to engage in positive interactions with others. Social problems are a natural part of the social world and mokopuna can feel empowered knowing that they are developing capabilities to consider others' perspectives and advocate for themselves and others.

How to apply this practice in your setting

- While conflict can be a learning opportunity, design routines and learning environments to minimise the potential for social problems. For example, ensure areas are inviting to mokopuna; enable a smooth flow of movement; minimise crowding and prolonged waiting; role model respectful interactions; and be emotionally aware and responsive to mokopuna.
- As a teaching team, discuss what social problems look like and why they occur in the setting, including children's peer conflicts. Discuss how conflicts can be framed as a learning and teaching opportunity.
- As a teaching team, develop consistent shared approaches to support children to learn social problem-solving strategies.
- Maintain ongoing communication with mokopuna and their whānau to better understand and support children's learning, including in emotionally charged situations such as peer conflicts.
- In consultation with whānau and mokopuna, develop a consistent team approach ensuring that teaching strategies are flexible, individualised, and responsive.
- Adjust teaching support and guidance depending on what mokopuna need to ensure that they are safe and empowered to learn. For example, as long as quick intervention is not necessary to keep children safe, do not immediately, or as a default, 'shut down' peer conflicts – instead stay calm, take a moment to observe, and consider the most appropriate response.

Supporting play preferences

Support children's own aspirations for their social interactions, including play preferences and playmates.

Why is this practice important?

When children's play preferences and aspirations are understood, valued, and respected, they are empowered and develop a sense of agency as decision makers and goal setters. Over time and with support, mokopuna develop strategies to respectfully communicate their play preferences and negotiate their play aspirations within a group setting, including understanding and accepting when other's ideas might differ from their own.

How to apply this practice in your setting

- Provide a diverse range of materials and opportunities, including those that reflect children's home and community experiences.
- Be attuned to children's preferences in play, including who they choose to play with and the kinds of games and materials they tend towards.
- Gather information through observations and conversations with mokopuna and whānau, focusing on children's aspirations for their social interactions and play preferences. Notice and acknowledge repeated behaviours or responses that communicate children's play preferences or aspirations.
- Ensure the way we support and encourage children's participation is free from gender stereotypes, and that mokopuna of all genders are able to access all curriculum activities.
- Be respectful of and continue to support mokopuna play aspirations and preferences when extending and enriching children's play experiences.
- Be attuned to neurodiversity and adapt expectations and support according to individual children's unique needs, boundaries, and strengths in play.

Tuakana-teina relationships

Foster children's understanding of whanaungatanga me manaakitanga through tuakana-teina relationships.

Why is this practice important?

When children are given opportunities to be teachers and learners, they can strengthen their capabilities in different social roles and responsibilities. Mokopuna learn and practise ways to give and receive help from each other.

How to apply this practice in your setting

- As a teaching team and community, discuss what tuakana-teina means within your setting and community, including in conversation with whānau.
- Provide opportunities and encouragement for children to care for others and welcome support from others; for example, encourage older children to help their younger peers during hand washing routines.
- Highlight and discuss the value of helping each other and ways to give and receive help.
- Discuss with mokopuna how they might ask for help or could offer help to others.

- e. Create opportunities for mokopuna to share their strengths and interests with others – for example, giving mokopuna time at a talanoa to talk to the group about their artwork or to demonstrate a sports skill.
- f. As a team, reflect on what kinds of care and teaching are valued in your setting; ask yourselves what biases might be influencing your recognition of particular children in tuakana-teina relationships. Think broadly about the different ways children support and teach each other and ensure that children can see and hear that you value their contributions.



Notice and recognise

Progress examples to help you notice and recognise a child's progress

Use the phases of progress (outlined below) to help you notice and recognise a child's progress.

- › Draw on what you already know and what you've observed.
- › Have discussions with the child, whānau, and colleagues.
- › Use the practices (in step 3) to respond, based on what you notice.

Te korekore

Within an enabling environment, children form secure connections and attachments with familiar people (e.g., caregivers, siblings).

- › Children are tuned into developing relationships with familiar people. They are becoming self-aware and can recognise their own name and image. They strive to connect with others in multiple ways, such as looking, smiling, vocalising, and engaging in different behaviours.
- › Children are curious about the environment and are able to explore it to connect with others, especially when they have someone familiar who offers security and support. They are developing their sense of wonder and play, including their interest in materials and people.
- › Children engage in reciprocal relationships and interactions with familiar people. They are attuned to feelings within the environment and notice when others are upset.

Te pō

Within an enabling environment, children expand their connections with and awareness of others, including people who are new to them.

- › Children are tuned into developing relationships with familiar and new people. They are aware of themselves and others, including adults and playmates. They begin to communicate about themselves and their whānau, and they try out strategies to initiate social interactions.

- › Children can engage in familiar, novel, and increasingly complex social activities, especially when they have encouragement and specific feedback. They may start to show preferences for playmates, play materials, and play activities.
- › Children engage in reciprocal relationships and interactions with others and try out different ways to support others. They are attuned to the feelings of others, notice when someone is upset, and try to find ways to help.

Te ao mārama

Within an enabling environment, children form friendships and extend their connections with others through a range of social interactions.

- › Children are tuned into developing relationships with others. They explore the relationships they have with caregivers, other adults, playmates, and friends. Children are increasingly able to communicate about themselves, their whānau, and their whakapapa. They explore different ways of initiating and engaging in social interactions.
- › Children engage in familiar, novel, and complex social activities, extend relationships, and make friends, especially when they have encouragement and feedback. They may have preferences but are able to play with and alongside most adults and peers and show interest in a range of play materials and activities.
- › Children engage in reciprocal relationships and interactions with others, and their support for others is increasingly visible. They are attuned to feelings and conflicts within the group. With support, they can care for others and explore strategies to solve social conflict.

Te ao hōu

Within an enabling environment, children communicate about friendships and connections with others and take action to support positive interactions.

- › Children are tuned into developing relationships with others and communicate about the relationships they have with caregivers, other adults, playmates, and friends. They know their whakapapa and can describe the people and places that are important in their lives. They use a range of strategies to initiate, engage in, and sustain social interactions.
- › Children engage in familiar, novel, and complex social activities, strengthen relationships, and sustain friendships. They can spend time with a broad range of people and can adjust their interactions in different situations. Children engage in a range of play activities over sustained periods and return to past play sequences. They communicate their play preferences respectfully.
- › Children engage in reciprocal relationships and interactions with others and are supportive of others. They are attuned to feelings of individuals and the group dynamics. Children advocate and care for others when they are upset or when something is unfair. They use increasingly complex social problem-solving strategies, including preventing or solving social conflicts.

3

Respond

Practices to help you respond at different phases of progress

After you have assessed the phases of progress (in the previous step), use these practices to work one-on-one with a child based on what you've noticed.

Talk with others about what these practices might look like in your setting, and test your thinking by looking at adjacent phases.

Note that these practices are not exhaustive, and you might think of others.

Te korekore

Within an enabling environment, children form secure connections and attachments with familiar people (e.g., caregivers, siblings).

Interactions with mokopuna

Interact with children in ways that are intended to make them feel safe, secure, valued, and connected in the setting.

- Provide a secure base and encourage mokopuna to explore their environment and interact with others.
- Create and discuss connections with children's experiences at home and in the community; for example, consider language and resources (photos, books etc.) that reflect people, places, and things that are familiar to particular children.
- Review daily routines to ensure sustained and unhurried time for all mokopuna to engage with adults and peers in enjoyable ways.

Social cues and expectations

Support mokopuna to understand social cues and expectations in their interactions with others in diverse social contexts.

- Notice and mirror expressions, body language, and actions that indicate feelings or forms of communication. Respond in ways that show you are listening and that you understand.
- Pair actions, facial expressions, and words with signs or symbols that represent those expressions (e.g., discussing images of emotions in picture books).
- Narrate basic elements of a social interaction or event.

Supporting play

Support children to play with peers and engage in a range of play experiences relevant for their age, ability, culture, and identity.

- Engage in simple playful activities with children, including turn-taking activities like rolling a ball back and forth.
- Support mokopuna to tune into others' play around them, including describing what they are doing.
- Provide enough open-ended materials so that children can play alongside peers in a shared experience.

Small and large group play

Create opportunities and support children to play with peers and engage in small- and large-group experiences.

- Be nearby to offer a secure base as mokopuna observe and explore.
- Focus on small-group experiences, rather than large groups of 10 or more children.
- If large-group experiences such as a teacher-led mat time are offered, ensure: the experience is short enough that children can remain engaged, children have access to a familiar person, the space can support the number of people comfortably, and children have choices and can participate and engage in a variety of ways.

Cooperative games and activities

Support children to engage in cooperative games and activities that have rules and expectations for participation.

- Engage in enjoyable back-and-forth interactions with mokopuna.
- Use both verbal and non-verbal signals to help children anticipate their turn (e.g., ready, steady, go).
- Sing songs in ways that allow children's varied level of participation (e.g., incorporating hand actions and facial expressions) so that mokopuna can participate in multiple ways.

Conflict as learning opportunities

Use peer conflicts or everyday social problems as learning opportunities.

- Put in place strategies that enable all mokopuna to develop connections with at least one member of the teaching team, so that they feel secure and supported.
- Acknowledge and respond to children's feelings by matching their emotional expressions and naming and affirming how they seem to be feeling.
- Support children to understand social problems in the moment. Offer and discuss a safe and appropriate solution and describe the outcome.

Supporting play preferences

Support children's own aspirations for their social interactions, including play preferences and playmates.

- Point out children's movements around each other (e.g., "Look, Maia is coming over, I wonder what she will choose?").
- Notice children's gestures and body language that signal their interest (e.g., "I can see you are interested in that ball. Let's move it a little closer so you can reach out for it.").
- Be attuned to children's non-verbal cues about their need for quiet time, and support them to have time away from busy group play if they seem to need it.

Tuakana-teina relationships

Foster children's understanding of whanaungatanga me manaakitanga through tuakana-teina relationships.

- Ensure that mokopuna have opportunities to observe and interact with a range of peers.
- Support children in their roles of either tuakana or teina, such as by working with or alongside them to show them how to help each other in appropriate ways.
- Create meaningful opportunities for mokopuna to help each other during routines, beginning with very simple actions such as passing a cup or plate during kai time.

Te pō

Within an enabling environment, children expand their connections with and awareness of others, including people who are new to them.

Interactions with mokopuna

Interact with children in ways that are intended to make them feel safe, secure, valued, and connected in the setting.

- Provide a balance between familiar and new experiences and support mokopuna during new experiences.
- Listen to children and ask questions when they talk about or want to share something from home or their life outside the setting.
- When mokopuna are testing limits and boundaries, ensure kaiako responses allow them to feel emotionally safe and supported while they learn what is acceptable behaviour in the setting.

Social cues and expectations

Support mokopuna to understand social cues and expectations in their interactions with others in diverse social contexts.

- Support mokopuna to respond appropriately to social cues by noticing and modelling a response (e.g., "Look! Ali is watching us ... Ali, do you want to play?").
- Use playfulness, tone of voice, and exaggeration to help children notice and understand the social cues you model.
- Use resources such as photos or books to notice and discuss social cues and expectations.

Supporting play

Support children to play with peers and engage in a range of play experiences relevant for their age, ability, culture, and identity.

- Support mokopuna to engage in a range of different types of play.
- Support children's participation in and contributions to play by being nearby, modelling, prompting, or providing feedback (e.g., "You joined in the dancing game. What fun!").

Small and large group play

Create opportunities and support children to play with peers and engage in small- and large-group experiences.

- Support mokopuna to approach a peer or enter a small group by joining them and showing them what to do. For example, model an interaction such as smiling, gesturing, or passing a toy, or suggest words such as "Can I play?" or "Play?".
- Focus on small-group experiences, possibly increasing the group size over time.
- Set up materials and contexts that encourage small-group play, with consideration for what will help mokopuna to play successfully in a group, for example, enough space and enough resources.

Cooperative games and activities

Support children to engage in cooperative games and activities that have rules and expectations for participation.

- Introduce games with simple rules and support mokopuna to participate. Explain the rules before the game begins or when new children join.
- Support children to use cooperative toys or engage in games where more than one player is needed.
- Discuss and describe the agreed rules and expectations within games and cooperative play (e.g., "In this game we need to watch each other and wait for our turn.").

Conflict as learning opportunities

Use peer conflicts or everyday social problems as learning opportunities.

- Role-model positive responses to children who have come to join play.
- Acknowledge children's feelings and respond in ways that support them to develop awareness of others, by talking with all children involved and discussing their feelings and views. Affirm that it is OK to feel the way they do.
- Role model gentle, kind, respectful, and calm communication with mokopuna on both sides of a conflict. Stay with them after a social problem has been resolved if they need support to re-engage.

Supporting play preferences

Support children's own aspirations for their social interactions, including play preferences and playmates.

- Tune into and comment on children's behaviours and nonverbal cues that signal their interest and awareness of others (e.g., "I see that you've been watching Maia climb the ladder. Shall we join her, since you like to climb too?").
- Show your interest in children's play preferences by commenting, asking questions, or making wondering statements about their play themes and purposes.
- Support mokopuna to understand each other's preferences in a kind and respectful way (e.g., "I can see you want to play with Ari, but he wants to be alone right now, so we will give him space.").

Tuakana-teina relationships

Foster children's understanding of whanaungatanga me manaakitanga through tuakana-teina relationships.

- Ensure that mokopuna have opportunities to observe and interact with a range of peers who may need their support.
- Support mokopuna in their roles of either tuakana or teina, such as by working with or alongside them, and comment on strategies they use to give and receive help.
- Support children to refuse help sometimes if they don't seem to want it in that moment, modelling appropriate language such as "No thanks," or "I want to do it myself".

Te ao mārama

Within an enabling environment, children form friendships and extend their connections with others through a range of social interactions.

Interactions with mokopuna

Interact with children in ways that are intended to make them feel safe, secure, valued, and connected in the setting.

- Partner with children to plan for and try new experiences, building on their interests and providing support as needed.
- Support mokopuna to connect with each other by sharing and exploring experiences and places they have in common outside the setting, for example, White Sunday celebrations or helping with gardening at home.
- Respond to children's questions, assist them to articulate and extend their ideas and thinking, support increasingly complex language and vocabulary, and engage in sustained shared thinking with them.

Social cues and expectations

Support mokopuna to understand social cues and expectations in their interactions with others in diverse social contexts.

- Provide feedback to mokopuna when they respond appropriately to social cues (e.g., "You noticed Ali was watching us and that she maybe wanted to play, too. That was nice of you to ask her to join us.").
- Use puppets, books, or social stories to highlight aspects of interactions and social cues and discuss what might be happening for different characters.
- Discuss with mokopuna situations where expectations might differ because of the context (e.g., "We need to be quiet here in the library because other people are reading").

Supporting play

Support children to play with peers and engage in a range of play experiences relevant for their age, ability, culture, and identity.

- Support mokopuna to engage in an increasing range of play types, including ones that children might not typically select, to expand their potential interests, preferences, and experiences.
- Describe and discuss the skills that mokopuna use in their play (e.g., "That took teamwork, with one of you holding the tower still, while the other added more blocks to the top.").
- Allow space and time for mokopuna to problem solve through tensions and disagreements, and be available to offer support when needed to help sustain the play.

Small and large group play

Create opportunities and support children to play with peers and engage in small- and large-group experiences.

- Invite mokopuna to join peers and group experiences. Discuss with them skills they use when they play with and support each other.
- Provide a variety of peer and small-group experiences, including structured and unstructured group experiences, group games, activities, and play areas designed for social play.
- Increase group size and use large-group experiences for different purposes. For example, organise an all-group sports game, hui, or morning meeting, or a shared kai.

Cooperative games and activities

Support children to engage in cooperative games and activities that have rules and expectations for participation.

- Increase the range of games, offering games with more complex rules while also providing games with simple rules that are easy for mokopuna to follow.
- Offer activities in which mokopuna need to work together to complete a task.
- Have conversations with mokopuna about the play within their games and cooperative activities (e.g., “What are we playing?” or “What do I need to do to play here?”).

Conflict as learning opportunities

Use peer conflicts or everyday social problems as learning opportunities.

- Provide opportunities to discuss social problems and social problem-solving strategies with mokopuna within day-to-day experiences.
- Support mokopuna to communicate and work together to solve social problems, such as by seeking the views of all those involved; modelling or prompting to help children share their ideas, feelings or questions; and supporting children to listen to each other.
- Be ready to offer support in times of peer conflict and after problems are resolved, but also allow mokopuna space and time to work through social problems independently or with minimal support, when they can. Comment on children’s constructive behaviours and use of social problem-solving strategies.

Supporting play preferences

Support children’s own aspirations for their social interactions, including play preferences and playmates.

- Acknowledge children’s play choices, validate their preferences, and encourage their plans (e.g., “You really want to play with Niko and make a castle. How about asking Niko if he wants to make a castle with you?”).

- Role-model and provide opportunities for mokopuna to explore and communicate their play preferences in a kind and respectful way.
- Carefully observe what is particularly engaging groups of children in the environment, and offer more materials and equipment that extend the learning opportunities. For example, if a group of children are spending a lot of time playing with the blocks together, consider adding further open-ended resources to enrich the area and extend collaborative play.

Tuakana-teina relationships

Foster children’s understanding of whanaungatanga me manaakitanga through tuakana-teina relationships.

- Acknowledge mokopuna as a tuakana or teina in different social interactions and in different ways, demonstrating that you value both roles and that everyone takes turns to be learners or teachers over time.
- Support a tuakana to think about their role (e.g., ask a tuakana about their responsibilities and how they respond to the needs of a teina). Support a teina to think about their role (e.g., ask teina about how they express their needs or ask questions).
- Invite mokopuna to share special interests and strengths with their peers.

Te ao hōu

Within an enabling environment, children communicate about friendships and connections with others and take action to support positive interactions.

Interactions with mokopuna

Interact with children in ways that are intended to make them feel safe, secure, valued, and connected in the setting.

- Ask children about what helps them feel they can take risks and try new things, and provide that support as needed.
- Invite mokopuna to lead curriculum experiences that draw on local knowledge and practices (e.g., re-telling stories of local landmarks and people).
- Create diverse opportunities for mokopuna to be heard and to feel valued in the group. For example, one child may be more likely to share their local knowledge and practices in a small-group discussion, whereas another child may want to stand up to share with the whole group.

Social cues and expectations

Support mokopuna to understand social cues and expectations in their interactions with others in diverse social contexts.

- Discuss and ask mokopuna about what is expected in different situations and contexts, based on contextual or cultural norms. Let mokopuna know that it is okay not to know what is expected in all social situations, and support them to develop respectful ways to ask when they are not sure.
- Use creative experiences such as games, dance, books, or dramatic play as opportunities to foster children's increasingly complex thinking about expression, body language, and social cues.
- Discuss with mokopuna respectful ways to communicate their personal preferences and boundaries in different social situations (e.g., they may prefer not to shake hands but be happy to wave hello).

Supporting play

Support children to play with peers and engage in a range of play experiences relevant for their age, ability, culture, and identity.

- Discuss with mokopuna their play preferences, including what they like and enjoy, and collaborate with children to plan new and exciting play experiences.
- Use resources, experiences, and documentation to help mokopuna think reflectively about play, including exploring ideas, reminiscing, or revising their working theories.
- Discuss with mokopuna their play with peers, including what they did together that was fun or exciting.

Small and large group play

Create opportunities and support children to play with peers and engage in small- and large-group experiences.

- Support mokopuna to invite other children to play or to join group experiences. Support children to both lead a group experience and be able to follow when someone else is leading.
- Support mokopuna to reflect on and reminisce about their interactions with others, including group experiences.
- Invite and/or collaborate with children to plan small- and large-group experiences, asking for their ideas about the rules and expectations that should be followed. Discuss aspects such as equipment and materials needed to allow a number of children to successfully join in.

Cooperative games and activities

Support children to engage in cooperative games and activities that have rules and expectations for participation.

- Invite mokopuna to explain to others the rules of a game that is being played.

- Partner with and support children to develop new games, and help them to explain the rules and expectations before play.
- Support cooperative play by providing and encouraging experiences that work better when done cooperatively.

Conflict as learning opportunities

Use peer conflicts or everyday social problems as learning opportunities.

- Invite children to talk about the social problem-solving steps they use, such as: take a deep breath and count to 10; work with others to identify the problem; think of solutions; and try out solutions.
- Acknowledge when mokopuna use successful problem-solving strategies and when children solve social problems together, providing descriptive feedback that highlights what children did well.
- Role model empathy and talk to children about having empathy for someone, even if they disagree with them.

Supporting play preferences

Support children's own aspirations for their social interactions, including play preferences and playmates.

- Support children to make and carry out their plans about what they will do in their play, and talk with them about their ideas and preferences.
- Support mokopuna to collaborate on plans for play, and facilitate gathering further resources or rearranging equipment to carry out shared plans and ideas.
- Partner with and support children to decide on respectful, kind language they can use to communicate their aspirations for social interactions and preferences for play materials or areas.
- Set up contexts in the environment for individual play, and support children to make the choice to play alone sometimes.

Tuakana-teina relationships

Foster children's understanding of whanaungatanga me manaakitanga through tuakana-teina relationships.

- Establish regular and consistent routines and expectations in which mokopuna can engage in tuakana-teina interactions.
- Support children to reflect on their roles and responsibilities as tuakana or teina in different social interactions.
- Invite mokopuna to teach their peers skills and knowledge related to special interests and passions.



Document

An example of how you could use Kōwhiri Whakapae to enhance your assessments and communication

In this section, an assessment example illustrates how you can use the information gathered in the previous three steps to enhance your documented assessments and communication. The example describes and tracks a child's learning progress over time in ways that inform ongoing planning. It also highlights the kinds of evidence, such as observations or conversations with whānau, that were used to support judgements and planning decisions. Finally, it shows how documentation can support conversations with children and whānau about a child's learning and progress.

After reading the example, think about how you currently document your planning and assessments and describe learning progress over time. Talk with team members and children's whānau to identify how your assessment documentation might better describe:

- › a child's current capabilities, strengths, and interests, with evidence (Notice)
- › a child's progress and possible directions for their learning (Recognise)
- › how you will support the child to progress over time (Respond).

Assessment example: A new place for Kahu

This is a sequence of five learning stories that follows Kahu, who is sixteen months old and attends her local childcare centre. Kahu's mother is Pākehā and her father is Māori. The family is relatively new to the area and Kahu started at the centre five months ago.

The first story sets the context for the team's recent observations of Kahu. Wanting to know more about how they might support Kahu's sense of belonging, the team examine the 'Connected relationships and caring for others' section of Kōwhiri Whakapae.

As you read the stories, highlighted comments will provide more information about the connections between them and the team's use of Kōwhiri Whakapae, as well as their alignment and links with *Te Whāriki*. Using *Te Whāriki* and their local curriculum as the starting point, the team found that Kōwhiri Whakapae provided complementary information that helped them reflect on and strengthen their tailored support for children.

This example shows kaiako focusing on an area of valued learning, identifying where Kahu is at, and progressing her learning in play-based ways aligned with her interests and whānau aspirations.

See Kōwhiri Whakapae online for the [full sequence of learning stories](#).

This assessment illustrates Whanaungatanga me manaakitanga | Connected relationships & caring for others. To browse the complete suite of examples, see [this page](#) on Kōwhiri Whakapae online.

KARE-Ā-ROTO ME WAIRUATANGA

Emotional awareness, regulation, & spiritual connectedness

Children noticing, understanding, and expressing emotions, bringing themselves to a calm state in appropriate ways, and feeling connected to the non-physical

Overview

What does 'kare-ā-roto me wairuatanga' refer to?

Kare-ā-roto includes emotions, feelings, and inner thoughts. Emotions are expressed and grounded in many different cultural ways of being. Wairuatanga can be translated as spirituality, expressed in many ways. For Māori, wairuatanga connects to everything we do.

For further information, see [this page](#) on Kōwhiri Whakapae online.

What is this area about?

Emotional awareness, regulation, and spiritual connectedness focus on children's growing awareness, understanding, and connection to their inner-selves and their wider social and spiritual worlds.

For further information, see [this page](#) on Kōwhiri Whakapae online.

How is this area woven through the strands of *Te Whāriki*?

Knowledge, skills, and attitudes associated with emotional awareness, regulation, and spiritual connectedness are woven through all strands of *Te Whāriki*, prompting kaiako to respond to children with consistent guidance, encouragement, and support.

For further information, see [this page](#) on Kōwhiri Whakapae online.

How do the foundations of Kōwhiri Whakapae impact on this area?

Te Tiriti o Waitangi, Kotahitanga | Holistic development, and Identity, language, and culture impact on the way in which kaiako understand and inclusively support emotional awareness, regulation, and spiritual connectedness within early learning.

For further information, see [this page](#) on Kōwhiri Whakapae online.



Lay the groundwork

Practices to whakaritea te pārekereke | prepare the seedbed for all children

Start by working with all the children in your setting. Create an environment that can support children to build skills related to emotional awareness, regulation, and spiritual connectedness.

- › Consider your current environment and how you could make it better.
- › Talk to others about what you are already doing.
- › Select practices that will be meaningful in your setting.

Expressing emotion and wairua

Support children to express their emotions and wairua in a range of ways.

Why is this practice important?

When mokopuna are given a range of ways to express their emotions and wairua, their learner identity is strengthened and enhanced. Supporting children to make connections to the past, present, and future and to express their emotional experiences and wairua through mind, body, and spirit affirms their sense of identity and connectedness.

How to apply this practice in your setting

- a. Participate in reflective team discussions to share understandings of emotions and wairua and how to support children's expression of these. Consider how your individual perspectives and values might be similar or different based on your experiences.
- b. Ensure mokopuna can access, choose, and engage with a range of spaces, resources, and materials to support their emotional and spiritual expression, including visual art materials, dramatic play, music, loose parts, natural spaces and materials, pictures, quiet spaces, and space to move.
- c. Consider how the aesthetics of the physical environment (including sounds, colours, textures, spaces, and smells) can influence feelings of emotion and wairua – for example, by providing calming and quiet times, spaces, and music as well as opportunities for more energetic expression and movement.
- d. Ensure spaces, materials, and resources reflect te ao Māori and children's cultures.
- e. Create opportunities for mokopuna to express themselves in different ways, including through he kōrero ā-tinana (the language of the body), he kōrero ā-waha (oral language), and he kōrero tuhituhi (visuals, signs, and symbols).
- f. Be aware of and support different perspectives of emotions and wairua and how these are expressed across a range of cultures and languages. Draw from all families' funds of knowledge and different perspectives and beliefs.
- g. Provide a calm, unhurried environment where mokopuna have time, space, and opportunities to explore and express themselves as they engage with a range of materials.

Te ao Māori ways of expressing gratitude

Integrate te ao Māori ways of expressing spirituality, connection, and gratitude into everyday experiences and routines.

Why is this practice important?

When te ao Māori ways of expressing spirituality, connection, and gratitude are understood and supported in the setting, the identity, belonging, and wellbeing of mokopuna Māori are nurtured. In addition, the social, emotional, and cultural competence for life in Aotearoa New Zealand is enhanced for all children.

How to apply this practice in your setting

- a. Talk with parents and whānau to learn more about their family and cultural practices and how these may be appropriately reflected in your setting.
- b. Engage with parents, whānau, hapū, iwi, and community to learn about their traditional and contemporary ways of expressing spirituality, connection, and gratitude, including through karakia, whakataukī, waiata, and mōteatea (chants) and by establishing connections with the environment, including Ranginui, Papatūānuku, me āna tamariki.
- c. Integrate karakia, whakataukī, waiata, and mōteatea into everyday experiences, play, and routines, such as before a meal or as part of a sleep routine.
- d. Develop and maintain a sense or pattern of ritual and routine in which practices such as karakia are embedded and become familiar.
- e. Support children to make connections to te taiao and the worlds around them – for example, connections to whakapapa, marae, maunga, awa, and whenua.

Valuing spiritual connectedness

Share understandings and feelings of spiritual connectedness in ways that value diverse perspectives.

Why is this practice important?

When diverse spiritual beliefs are openly valued and respected, children experience a safe environment that is responsive and supportive of their spiritual wellbeing and begin to see the connections between different belief systems.

How to apply this practice in your setting

- a. Within the team, share your understandings and feelings of mana atua or spiritual connectedness, in ways that value diverse perspectives.
- b. Talk about diverse understandings and feelings of spiritual connectedness with and around mokopuna, in appropriate and authentic ways.
- c. Support mokopuna to share their understandings and feelings of spiritual connectedness (e.g., through lotu, pese, proverbs, and pūrākau).
- d. Acknowledge and discuss differences in experiences, understandings, and feelings of connectedness.
- e. Ensure all communications and discussions related to understandings and feelings of spiritual connectedness occur in ways that value diverse perspectives.

- f. Be aware of and support different perspectives of spirituality across a range of cultures and languages, recognising that spirituality means different things to different people. Draw from all families' funds of knowledge and different perspectives and beliefs.

Emotion words and expressions

Use a range of words and expressions for emotions in everyday interactions to grow children's vocabulary and knowledge.

Why is this practice important?

When mokopuna are supported to develop a strong knowledge of emotions, including a range of words for emotions, they become more aware of their own emotions, more able to express their emotions, and grow the capability to regulate their emotions.

How to apply this practice in your setting

- a. Support children's growing emotional vocabulary by using words, signs, and expressions for a range of emotions, beyond happy and sad. Avoid references to these emotions as 'good' or 'bad', as all emotions are important.
- b. As a team, learn about emotions and dispositions through a te ao Māori lens. Research the nuances of words and concepts for emotions in te ao Māori and other languages to ensure their appropriate use and understanding.
- c. As a team, agree on the words for emotions that will be a focus, so that children have opportunities to hear the same words often and consistently.
- d. Say words for emotions in multiple languages, including te reo Māori, sign language, and children's home languages. Use these with children, with whānau, and in learning documentation.
- e. Provide mokopuna with information about different emotions and how feeling emotions works (i.e., 'emotional knowledge'). This includes how we can feel two different emotions at the same time (e.g., being both scared and excited) and a range of physical sensations (e.g., feeling hot or tight in our bodies when angry).
- f. Ensure that mokopuna can easily access and experience resources and materials about emotions, including waiata, ngā tākarō (games), pūrākau (legends), and ngā pukapuka (books), within the daily programme.
- g. Use resources on emotions in meaningful ways to support children's growing understandings and language for expressing their feelings.

Expressing feelings

Create and support opportunities for children to express their feelings.

Why is this practice important?

It is only through opportunities to express their emotions that children can be supported to better manage and regulate themselves, including at times of heightened emotions. Mokopuna learn that it is okay to express and share their feelings in ways that are appropriate and safe.

How to apply this practice in your setting

- a. Acknowledge and use language to name emotions that children appear to be feeling. Make sure you affirm or validate children's emotions – for example, when comforting a child saying "You seem sad. It's OK to cry and have a cuddle."
- b. Describe what you think mokopuna are feeling rather than telling them what they are feeling. This is important because it is not possible to know the feelings a child is experiencing unless they tell you. For example, instead of saying "You're happy!", say "You look happy!" or "I think you are happy!", or ask "Are you happy?"
- c. Use a range of resources, visuals, and signs (e.g., books, songs, emojis) to support children's expression of emotions and so they can learn about these concepts in relatable ways, building their ability to identify and express their own emotions over time.
- d. Remember that when children's emotions are heightened, it is likely to be difficult for them to think and express themselves clearly. In these situations, offer comfort and support and use your professional judgement and knowledge of the child and situation to match levels or types of support to the child's needs.

Learning about others' feelings

Support mokopuna to learn about the feelings of others.

Why is this practice important?

When mokopuna are supported to become more aware of how others feel, they grow their ability to understand other people and to respond sensitively, and their emotional awareness and knowledge are strengthened.

How to apply this practice in your setting

- a. Support children to tune into what other people are doing, or might be feeling, to help them be more aware of the emotions and experiences of others.
- b. As appropriate, talk with mokopuna about the emotions you feel that they can relate to, including sharing how you sometimes feel, why you feel that way, and how you express and appropriately manage those feelings (e.g., by taking slow breaths in and out to calm down).
- c. Ensure that the environment is rich with resources for learning about other people's emotions and for developing empathy for others, including books, storytelling, songs, and images. Have conversations with children about the things that happen to characters in resources, and how they might feel.
- d. Discuss with mokopuna the diverse ways in which people express their feelings.
- e. Support mokopuna to understand that people have different preferences for how they like to be supported through emotions. For example, some people like to have some time alone if they are sad, while others might want a hug.

Supporting big emotions

Support mokopuna with comfort and care when their emotions are overwhelming.

Why is this practice important?

When children are supported to experience big emotions in safe ways and find a sense of calm, their wellbeing and learning is fostered. Mokopuna learn in these moments that big emotions are normal and will pass. This provides opportunities for children to develop the ability to safely express their emotions and reach a calm place, so that they can re-engage in their play and learning.

How to apply this practice in your setting

- Notice how whānau offer comfort to their children, and talk to them about how they support their children at home. Find out what is important for whānau in the ways you provide comfort and care for their children and how you can bring valued practices into the setting.
- Be aware of how mokopuna prefer to be comforted or supported, such as with a favourite item that helps them settle, being cuddled, or hearing a favourite song. Be responsive to children's individual preferences for emotional support during times of distress.
- As a team, establish consistent practices and support each other's practice by discussing how children can be comforted and cared for when they are upset.
- Establish an environment where mokopuna can retreat or find a place or object of comfort when they are experiencing overwhelming emotions, while you remain close by. Ensure they have space and time to express their emotions safely.
- Consider the importance of all emotions, including sadness, anger, and frustration, as part of emotional wellbeing, and create environments and routines that give children the space and time to feel these.
- When a child is overwhelmed, tune in and offer support (co-regulation) that is responsive and familiar to them. Consider your approach and be aware that new strategies or discussing what may have happened may need to be delayed until the child is ready.

Strategies for regulating emotions

Support mokopuna to learn and use strategies that help them to soothe and calm themselves, or to expend energy, when upset or over-excited.

Why is this practice important?

When mokopuna are supported to use the strategies that work best for them to manage and regulate their feelings, they learn to tap into associated executive functions for controlling impulses, working memory, and flexible thinking. In this way, they become better able to navigate their emotional and social worlds, take on challenges, and persist in learning.

The organisation of the learning environment, including the predictability and responsiveness of routines, allows children to trust their needs will be met, supporting them to regulate their emotions.

How to apply this practice in your setting

- As a team, reflect on how effectively the learning environment, including routines and the use of spaces, time, and resources, protects and nurtures children's wellbeing and supports their emotional regulation. Also consider the impact of your own emotional regulation on children (e.g., remaining calm).
- As a team, have and use consistent strategies that support mokopuna to manage and regulate their emotions (including co-regulating). This might include encouraging children to take some deep breaths, thinking of someone they love, listening to music, or expending their energy in active ways such as dancing, running, jumping, or playing outside.
- Adapt kaiako strategies and supports to meet the individual needs, temperaments, and preferences of each child. Talk with whānau about their child's temperament and preferences, including the kind of supports that work best for them at home. Consider how these preferences could be supported in the setting.
- When emotions are not heightened, explore with mokopuna strategies they could use to calm or regulate their feelings during everyday routines, play, and activities.
- Support mokopuna to use these familiar strategies during moments of heightened emotion.
- Support mokopuna to understand that other factors can influence how we feel – for example, hunger, tiredness, being too hot or too cold, and big changes. Have conversations about how we can notice and look after our physical and emotional needs. Ensure care routines consistently and responsively support children to do this.

2

Notice and recognise

Progress examples to help you notice and recognise a child's progress

Use the phases of progress (outlined below) to help you notice and recognise a child's progress.

- › Draw on what you already know and what you've observed.
- › Have discussions with the child, whānau, and colleagues.
- › Use the practices (in step 3) to respond, based on what you notice.

Te korekore

Within an enabling environment, children feel their emotions and form connections through their minds, bodies, and spirit.

- › Mokopuna express their physical and emotional states through sounds (e.g., cries and coos) and expressions (e.g., tears, smiles, and waving their arms and legs).
- › Children are curious about physical sensations and feelings within their bodies and begin to recognise these sensations.
- › When upset, children rely on familiar people to soothe them and support their sense of harmony.
- › Supported by their whānau and kaiako, children connect with their spiritual worlds. They tune into spiritual aspects of te taiao as they seek out sensory experiences and they are curious about experiencing these elements.
- › Mokopuna are attuned to and influenced by the feelings of the people around them and the emotional environment.

Te pō

Within an enabling environment, children expand their emotional and spiritual connections.

- › Mokopuna feel an increasing range of emotional states and express these in a range of ways, such as through words, familiar looks, and specific movements.
- › With the help of familiar adults, mokopuna try out ways of expressing and regulating their emotional states. They may develop familiar or preferred ways of managing their emotions.
- › At times, and sometimes unpredictably, mokopuna experience their emotions with an intensity that requires a familiar person to soothe them and support their sense of harmony.
- › Supported by their whānau and kaiako, children recognise their spiritual connections. They tune into spiritual aspects of te taiao, begin to connect with living things, have preferred sensory experiences, and try out different ways of experiencing these elements.
- › Mokopuna are attuned to the feelings of people around them. The emotional environment can influence their emotional state.

Te ao mārama

Within an enabling environment, children extend the ways in which they understand and express their emotional and spiritual connections.

- › Mokopuna feel a wide range of emotional states and use increasingly sophisticated ways to express their feelings, such as through dance, drama, and storytelling.
- › Mokopuna can express and regulate their own emotional states using familiar strategies. With guidance and practice, they begin to use a range of strategies to manage their emotions.
- › Big events and changes may unsettle children, so that they experience emotions with an intensity that requires a familiar person to soothe them and support their sense of harmony.
- › Supported by their whānau and kaiako, mokopuna increasingly understand their spiritual connections and explore what is significant to them. They tune into spiritual aspects of te taiao, connect with living things, use sensory experiences to meet their needs, and explore a range of ways of experiencing these elements.
- › Mokopuna are attuned to the feelings of people around them and have strategies to manage how the emotional environment influences them.

Te ao hōu

Within an enabling environment, children communicate about their emotional and spiritual connections and take action to support their own and others' wellbeing.

- › Children feel a full range of emotions, experience complex emotional states, and express and talk about their feelings in sophisticated ways.
- › Mokopuna use a range of strategies to express and regulate their own emotions and support others to manage their emotions. They communicate about their feelings and the feelings they perceive in others.
- › Mokopuna can tolerate change and unpredictability but may have intense or delayed emotional responses to sustained stress or major events and require a familiar person to soothe them and support their sense of harmony.
- › Supported by their whānau and kaiako, children build strong understandings of their spiritual connections and communicate what is significant to them. They tune into spiritual aspects of te taiao, recognise their responsibilities to living things, use sensory experiences to support themselves and others, and communicate about their experiences of these elements.
- › Children attune to feelings of individuals and group dynamics and can support the wellbeing of themselves and others.

3

Respond

Practices to help you respond at different phases of progress

After you have assessed the phases of progress (in the previous step), use these practices to work one-on-one with a child based on what you've noticed.

Talk with others about what these practices might look like in your setting, and test your thinking by looking at adjacent phases.

Note that these practices are not exhaustive, and you might think of others.

Te korekore

Within an enabling environment, children feel their emotions and form connections through their minds, bodies, and spirit.

Expressing emotion and wairua

Support children to express their emotions and wairua in a range of ways.

- Ensure mokopuna have access to a range of natural materials, loose parts, music, messy or sensory play, and ways to make marks (e.g., paints).
- Consider how the aesthetics of the environment and routines (including care moments) influence both emotion and wairua (e.g., providing a calming social atmosphere at mealtimes).
- Model using different ways to express yourself. For example, name a feeling and show it using facial expression, body gesture, and signs.
- Support children's exploration of and engagement in their play by listening to their verbal and non-verbal expressions and being attentive, attuned, and responsive.

Te ao Māori ways of expressing gratitude

Integrate te ao Māori ways of expressing spirituality, connection, and gratitude into everyday experiences and routines.

- Consistently use a select range of karakia, whakataukī, waiata, and pūrākau during everyday play, experiences, and routines.
- Sing waiata and oriori that mokopuna are familiar with and may hear at home.
- In consultation with each child's whānau, integrate significant forms of expressing spirituality into everyday practices and rituals.

Valuing spiritual connectedness

Share understandings and feelings of spiritual connectedness in ways that value diverse perspectives.

- Provide opportunities to experience and observe spiritual connectedness, such as exploring te taiao and listening to familiar spiritual practices and rituals such as karakia, waiata, pese, and lotu.
- Engage with mokopuna in these experiences and watch and listen for the ways in which children engage and express themselves.
- Ensure that resources such as books and images include diverse examples of spirituality and cultural celebrations. Take care to ensure that resources reflect the spiritual diversity of the children and whānau in your community.

Emotion words and expressions

Use a range of words and expressions in everyday interactions to grow children's emotional vocabulary and knowledge.

- Identify a range of words to use with mokopuna to support core emotions, such as harikoa/happy, pōuri/sad, hiamō/excited, pāmamae/upset, pukuriri/angry, and matakū/scared.
- Use core words for emotions in multiple languages, including te reo Māori, sign, and children's home languages.
- Be expressive when using words for emotions, matching them with your facial and body language.

Expressing feelings

Create and support opportunities for children to express their feelings.

- Name and affirm the emotions mokopuna appear to be feeling.
- Support mokopuna to tune into the emotions of others around them, using a range of words for emotions.
- Reassure and support understanding by empathetically reflecting and responding to children's emotional expressions – for example, by smiling broadly when a child smiles, or showing concern to acknowledge a child who may be feeling uneasy or unhappy.

Learning about others' feelings

Support mokopuna to learn about the feelings of others.

- Support children to be aware of the feelings of others by noticing and sensitively commenting on the actions and emotions of mokopuna nearby – for example, "Sam has a big smile! ... Harikoa!"
- Be expressive, using tone of voice and body language to support your meaning when commenting on or talking about your own emotions.

- c. Use story books that illustrate a range of emotions. Name and discuss why characters may seem to feel a certain way.

Supporting big emotions

Support mokopuna with comfort and care when their emotions are overwhelming.

- a. Respond promptly to children's cues to co-regulate, provide comfort, and reassure them when they are upset or overwhelmed.
- b. When offering comfort to mokopuna, name and affirm their emotions.
- c. When getting to know a child's preferences for support or comfort, begin by enacting co-regulation strategies suggested by whānau.
- d. Use an appropriate type and level of co-regulation support for the individual child. For example, some mokopuna may be comforted by a cuddle or a favourite blanket, while others may like to hear soothing music or experience gentle movement.

Strategies for regulating emotions

Support mokopuna to learn and use strategies that help them to soothe and calm themselves, or to expend energy, when upset or over-excited.

- a. Be engaged, attuned, and offer support when mokopuna are overwhelmed. Gently model a way to calm down, such as taking deep breaths, while comforting a child (co-regulating).
- b. Be respectful of children's big emotions and allow them time and space to feel and express these, remaining close by and available to help them when they are ready.
- c. Consider how the learning environment (including resources, spaces, textures, and sounds) can support mokopuna to regulate their emotions themselves – for example, soft furnishings, enclosed spaces, and sensory experiences that mokopuna can access independently.
- d. Ensure care routines are responsive, build children's confidence that their needs will be consistently met, and support their ability to regulate their emotions across the day.

Te pō

Within an enabling environment, children expand their emotional and spiritual connections.

Expressing emotion and wairua

Support children to express their emotions and wairua in a range of ways.

- a. Create opportunities that support mokopuna to engage in familiar and new media such as messy and sensory play, visual art materials (for drawing, painting, constructing, sculpting, and weaving), music, musical instruments, kapa haka, and movement.

- b. Within different media, support mokopuna in their varied expressions, including movements and the use of gestures, signs, words, talking, sounds, singing, symbols, and mark-making.
- c. Sensitively join mokopuna in their play and engagement in ways that affirm their expression of emotions and wairua.

Te ao Māori ways of expressing gratitude

Integrate te ao Māori ways of expressing spirituality, connection, and gratitude into everyday experiences and routines.

- a. Find opportunities to repeat familiar karakia and waiata, supporting children's engagement and participation and encouraging them to support each other.
- b. Talk with mokopuna about their connections to whakapapa, marae, maunga, awa, and whenua.
- c. Have conversations with mokopuna about the value of gratitude and why we give thanks.

Valuing spiritual connectedness

Share understandings and feelings of spiritual connectedness in ways that value diverse perspectives.

- a. Provide meaningful opportunities to experience and observe spiritual connectedness, such as exploring te taiao or participating in familiar spiritual practices and rituals (e.g., karakia, waiata, pese, and lotu).
- b. Listen and be engaged with mokopuna in these experiences and support them to share their ideas and feelings in different ways, such as through words or movement.
- c. Explore families' spiritual practices and rituals that may be reflected in the setting – for example, by learning a song or a celebration that you have observed with the children. Have open conversations with families about how to do this in authentic and respectful ways.

Emotion words and expressions

Use a range of words and expressions in everyday interactions to grow children's emotional vocabulary and knowledge.

- a. Begin to expand the words you use to acknowledge a wider range of emotions, such as whakararuru/frustration, hihira/shyness, and whakahī/pride.
- b. Use books and images to explore words for emotions, and talk about the emotions depicted. Ensure resources are supportive of multiple languages, including te reo Māori, sign, and children's home languages.
- c. Find opportunities to comment on and discuss how emotions might feel within the body – for example, having goosebumps, a thumping heart, a tight throat, or a hot feeling in the tummy.

Expressing feelings

Create and support opportunities for children to express their feelings.

- Name and affirm the emotions children appear to be feeling. Talk about what you see in a child's facial expression and body that makes you think this.
- Provide authentic opportunities for mokopuna to talk about their feelings, supporting them with words they can use to name their feelings.
- Reassure mokopuna that emotions are valid with simple clear messages such as, "You seem frustrated. It can be hard to wait."

Learning about others' feelings

Support mokopuna to learn about the feelings of others.

- Find appropriate opportunities to describe or share ideas about the feelings of others. For example, "Sam has a big smile on his face. Do you think he's feeling proud that he has finally finished the puzzle?"
- When and as appropriate, talk with mokopuna about your emotions and how they feel in your body.
- Talk with mokopuna about how they might respond sensitively to people who may be feeling overwhelmed or upset, and model different ways of offering support – for example, "Sam looks upset. Let's help ... Sam, you look upset. Do you want to play with us?"

Supporting big emotions

Support mokopuna with comfort and care when their emotions are overwhelming.

- Be attuned early to the signs of children's needs and distress, so that whenever possible co-regulation support or comfort can be offered before a child becomes overwhelmed.
- Balance your response to children experiencing big emotions with the knowledge that it is okay for them to be upset without pressure to calm quickly.
- Name and affirm children's emotions, and offer co-regulation support and comfort in ways that are most appropriate for the child. You might ask how you can support them – for example, "You seem very sad. Would you like a cuddle?"

Strategies for regulating emotions

Support mokopuna to learn and use strategies that help them to soothe and calm themselves, or to expend energy, when upset or over-excited.

- Look for authentic opportunities to model different strategies and to calm yourself, such as taking deep breaths or going for a walk around the playground, so that children see and experience those strategies in action repeatedly over time.

- Support mokopuna to recognise their own needs and energy levels and to act on them before becoming overwhelmed (e.g., "I can see you have lots of energy. Do you want to go outside and run around?").
- Consider what resources, equipment, and spaces are available to mokopuna for expending energy. For example, space for big movements and equipment that requires the use of muscles and strength can help expend energy and calm the body.
- Review and implement consistent, calming, and responsive routines that support children's ability to regulate their emotions across the day.

Te ao mārama

Within an enabling environment, children extend the ways in which they understand and express their emotional and spiritual connections.

Expressing emotion and wairua

Support children to express their emotions and wairua in a range of ways.

- Encourage mokopuna to integrate multiple forms of expression through different media. Talk with mokopuna about how different creative media help people to express emotions and wairua.
- Be aware of children's increasing capacities for sustained play and engagement, and ensure they have the time and space they need to express themselves.
- Support mokopuna to make their expressions of emotions and wairua visible (or audible) by listening, asking questions, providing feedback, engaging in discussions, and taking pictures for documentation and reflection.

Te ao Māori ways of expressing gratitude

Integrate te ao Māori ways of expressing spirituality, connection, and gratitude into everyday experiences and routines.

- Expand conversations with mokopuna about the meanings in karakia, whakataukī, waiata, pūrākau and other te ao Māori forms of expression.
- Provide regular and repeated opportunities for participation, inviting children to support each other and providing support and feedback to affirm contributions.
- Encourage mokopuna to identify their connections to te taiao and the world around them – for example, connections to whakapapa, marae, maunga, awa, and whenua.

Valuing spiritual connectedness

Share understandings and feelings of spiritual connectedness in ways that value diverse perspectives.

- Broaden opportunities to experience and observe spiritual connectedness – for example, by being in and exploring te taiao, participating in familiar spiritual practices and rituals, and learning about rituals from a range of cultures.
- Listen and be engaged with mokopuna in these experiences and support them to share their ideas and feelings in different ways, such as through words, movement, and other mediums of expression.
- Ask children about experiences that are important to them or their families.

Emotion words and expressions

Use a range of words and expressions in everyday interactions to grow children's emotional vocabulary and knowledge.

- Expand the vocabulary you use to include an increasingly sophisticated range of emotions, and use synonyms for emotions (e.g., glad, joyful, thrilled, or cheerful for pleased).
- Revisit children's preferred resources about emotions (e.g., books, stories, or waiata). Help them create their own resources that incorporate words they know and use for emotions.
- Discuss with children how we can have several different feelings at the same time, such as being excited and nervous about the same thing, or how people might show one feeling (smiling or laughing) while experiencing another (feeling nervous).

Expressing feelings

Create and support opportunities for children to express their feelings.

- Name and affirm the emotions mokopuna appear to be feeling. When children's emotions are heightened, reassure, stay engaged, and provide them with time and space.
- Sensitively support children's responses about their feelings. Provide time for them to process an answer, or scaffold a response with suggestions and prompts, knowing that sometimes it will not be easy or possible for them to answer.
- Talk with mokopuna about ways in which they express how they are feeling, providing feedback that affirms and supports their growing capacity to understand and express their emotions.

Learning about others' feelings

Support mokopuna to learn about the feelings of others.

- Look for opportunities to expand on conversations with mokopuna about feelings and to share ideas about how emotions might feel in the body and how they can be expressed and recognised.
- When and as appropriate, talk with children about your own emotions, using increasingly sophisticated words, and describe what the feelings mean.
- Discuss with mokopuna different ways of helping people who may be overwhelmed or upset by their emotions. Encourage children to support each other in a variety of ways, and provide affirming feedback when mokopuna do seek help or help each other.

Supporting big emotions

Support mokopuna with comfort and care when their emotions are overwhelming.

- Acknowledge when you see a child is upset or hurt. Support and offer help (co-regulation) if they are overwhelmed or close to becoming overwhelmed.
- As mokopuna grow in their capacities to regulate their emotions, be ready to offer support or comfort while also providing space and time for them to experience their emotions and practise strategies for managing their feelings. Provide positive feedback to children when you see they have used a strategy to calm themselves when experiencing heightened emotions.
- When providing co-regulation support, draw on familiar strategies. For example, if a child is familiar with the idea of taking a few deep breaths, it can help to remind them by saying something like, "You seem frustrated ... remember, taking a few deep breaths may help."

Strategies for regulating emotions

Support mokopuna to learn and use strategies that help them to soothe and calm themselves, or to expend energy, when upset or over-excited.

- Sensitively support children to recognise their feelings and meet their own needs (for rest, food, physical activity, etc.) – for example, "How are you feeling? What do you want to do about that?"
- When mokopuna need help to redirect their energy (but are not so overwhelmed that prompt comfort and care is more important), respond calmly and intentionally to help them use the strategies they already know well.
- Use visuals as prompts to remind children of key strategies for calming themselves.
- Use puppets, stories, and role plays to work through pretend scenarios of someone being upset, and work with children to talk about ways of calming or managing feelings.

Te ao hōu

Within an enabling environment, children communicate about their emotional and spiritual connections and take action to support their own and others' wellbeing.

Expressing emotion and wairua

Support children to express their emotions and wairua in a range of ways.

- Support mokopuna to access materials and resources that allow them to express themselves creatively. Explore with children digital or other technologies that may be useful for researching, recording, or supporting their expression.
- Support children to reflect on their expressions and creations by commenting, listening, asking questions, providing feedback, engaging in discussions, and taking pictures for documentation and reflection.
- Support mokopuna to engage with others' expression of emotions and wairua through various media – for example, by looking at the work of artists and musicians. Engage in reflective discussion with mokopuna about what those people might be intending to express.

Te ao Māori ways of expressing gratitude

Integrate te ao Māori ways of expressing spirituality, connection, and gratitude into everyday experiences and routines.

- Partner with mokopuna for karakia, whakataukī, waiata, pūrākau, and other te ao Māori forms of expression during everyday play, experiences, and routines. Provide opportunities for children to contribute and lead, including helping others to participate.
- Help mokopuna engage in reflective discussions about where different waiata, whakataukī, pūrākau, etc, are from and their significance, including any feelings they might evoke.
- Encourage mokopuna to share and reflect on their connections to te taiao and the worlds around them (e.g., connections to whakapapa, marae, maunga, awa, and whenua).

Valuing spiritual connectedness

Share understandings and feelings of spiritual connectedness in ways that value diverse perspectives.

- Extend learning about spiritual rituals from other cultures.
- Partner with children to create opportunities for them to share spiritual experiences, practices, or rituals that are important to them.
- Support mokopuna to think about and reflect on the different beliefs people have and the different ways in which people express connectedness.

Emotion words and expressions

Use a range of words and expressions in everyday interactions to grow children's emotional vocabulary and knowledge.

- Talk with children in more depth about their feelings. Use these conversations to explore a wider range of words about emotions.
- Play enjoyable, fun, interactive games about emotions with mokopuna, such as guessing or describing how you are feeling or expressing words for emotions in different ways (e.g., through movement and body language, or through art).
- Extend children's thinking to grow their emotional knowledge and understanding. Help them to reflect on the different emotions we feel, how quickly or slowly emotions might change, and how we can sometimes feel multiple emotions at once. Discuss how we may not always want to share our feelings and that it is okay to decide who we want to share our feelings with.

Expressing feelings

Create and support opportunities for children to express their feelings.

- Talk with mokopuna about their feelings, and when appropriate (not if mokopuna are highly emotional) extend these conversations by reflecting on what may have triggered a feeling and how it might be expressed or recognised.
- Invite mokopuna to talk about their feelings with peers and as part of everyday experiences.
- Find opportunities to reflect on feelings, such as reminiscing or spending time with children looking at their photos and discussing what they were doing, feeling, and why.

Learning about others' feelings

Support mokopuna to learn about the feelings of others.

- Sensitively share ideas with mokopuna about emotions that others appear to be feeling or have expressed. Extend discussions to foster children's thinking about emotions by looking at photos of people, discussing what they are doing, how they might be feeling, and why.
- Provide affirmation and feedback when mokopuna help others who are overwhelmed or upset.
- Ensure diverse representation in resources about emotions, and use the resources to explore with children the diverse ways in which people express emotion.

Supporting big emotions

Support mokopuna with comfort and care when their emotions are overwhelming.

- Acknowledge when you see a child is upset or hurt and offer support. Remember that even when mokopuna have developed skills for regulating themselves, they may not be able to do so when overwhelmed with emotion.
- Provide positive feedback to children when you see they have used a strategy to calm themselves or have supported others who were experiencing overwhelming emotions.
- Consider when it might be useful to revisit times that mokopuna were very upset through reflective conversations about the experience. Keep the focus of these conversations on gaining perspective and on ways to manage big emotions if something similar happens in the future.

Strategies for regulating emotions

Support mokopuna to learn and use strategies that help them to soothe and calm themselves, or to expend energy, when upset or over-excited.

- Allow mokopuna space and time to practise calming techniques they are familiar with. Provide support and feedback on children's use of different strategies they have learned.
- Find opportunities to reflect on and talk with mokopuna about how they can recognise their feelings and the strategies they use to calm themselves or expend energy.
- Sensitively invite children to support each other to use strategies they have learned to calm themselves.



Document

An example of how you could use Kōwhiri Whakapae to enhance your assessments and communication

In this section, an assessment example illustrates how you can use the information gathered in the previous three steps to enhance your documented assessments and communication. The example describes and tracks a child's learning progress over time in ways that inform ongoing planning. It also highlights the kinds of evidence, such as observations or conversations with whānau, that were used to support judgements and planning decisions. Finally, it shows how documentation can support conversations with children and whānau about a child's learning and progress.

After reading the example, think about how you currently document your planning and assessments and describe learning progress over time. Talk with team members and children's whānau to identify how your assessment documentation might better describe:

- › a child's current capabilities, strengths, and interests, with evidence (Notice)
- › a child's progress and possible directions for their learning (Recognise)
- › how you will support the child to progress over time (Respond).

Assessment example: Transitions for Louie

This series of five stories is about three-year old Louie who attends kindergarten for four months after moving to New Zealand.

Louie lives with his Spanish mum, Maria, and Pākehā dad, Jamie. Louie is bilingual, speaking English and Spanish. His dad does most of the kindergarten drop-offs. Louie's family are expecting a new baby, and his kaiako know this will be a significant change for him, given he is currently an only child.

The first story explains some background information about Louie's transition into kindergarten and his emotional learning so far. The following stories build on Louie's learning journey, as his teachers use the 'Emotional awareness, regulation, and spiritual connectedness' section of Kōwhiri Whakapae.

As you read the five stories, you will find more information about the connections between them and the use of Kōwhiri Whakapae by kaiako. The stories also show how the team understands Louie's learning in relation to *Te Whāriki* and the curriculum they provide.

See Kōwhiri Whakapae online for the [full sequence of learning stories](#).

This example illustrates Kare-ā-roto me wairuatanga | Emotional awareness, regulation, & spiritual connectedness. To browse the complete suite of examples, see [this page](#) on Kōwhiri Whakapae online.

Agency & adaptability

Children directing their own learning, making choices, setting goals for themselves and their learning, and following through with their plans

Overview

What does 'rangatiratanga me urutaunga' refer to?

Rangatiratanga can be translated as chieftainship with chiefly autonomy, inherited from the ancestors and gifted to all mokopuna. Urutaunga can be viewed as an everyday skill of effectively navigating different environments and expectations.

For further information, see [this page](#) on Kōwhiri Whakapae online.

What are agency and adaptability?

For children in an education setting, agency means being able to make choices, set goals and plans, and follow through. Adaptability means that children are able to respond flexibly to different contexts and expectations, held both by others and themselves.

For further information, see [this page](#) on Kōwhiri Whakapae online.

How is this area woven through the strands of *Te Whāriki*?

Knowledge, skills, and attitudes associated with agency and adaptability are woven through all strands of *Te Whāriki*, prompting kaiako to respond to children with consistent guidance, encouragement, and support.

For further information, see [this page](#) on Kōwhiri Whakapae online.

How do the foundations of Kōwhiri Whakapae impact on this area?

Children's agency and adaptability are fostered in inclusive, empowering environments that uphold Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Identity, language, and culture impact on how agency and adaptability are expressed and enacted.

For further information, see [this page](#) on Kōwhiri Whakapae online.



Lay the groundwork

Practices to whakaritea te pārekereke | prepare the seedbed for all children

Start by working with all the children in your setting. Create an environment that can support children to build skills related to agency and adaptability.

- › Consider your current environment and how you could make it better.
- › Talk to others about what you are already doing.
- › Select practices that will be meaningful in your setting.

Choices and responsibility

Give mokopuna authentic opportunities to make choices and to take responsibility within the setting.

Why is this practice important?

Having opportunities to make choices and contribute as responsible members of the setting fosters children's learner identity and sense of empowerment. Over time, children develop deeper understandings of the concept of contribution, both their own and that of others, within their community of learning.

How to apply this practice in your setting

- Offer children authentic choices throughout the day in routine events and in play and learning experiences.
- Adapt the complexity of choices offered to individual mokopuna to match their growing capacity to manage complexity and decision making.
- Only offer options in which children's choice can be honoured. If there is something that children need to do, avoid offering it as a choice; rather offer choices about how, when, or with whom they will do it.
- Ensure that opportunities for mokopuna to take responsibility involve real and authentic responsibilities that make a valued contribution.
- Notice and positively acknowledge children when they take responsibility for themselves and their own belongings, and when they show care for others and the environment.
- Celebrate the multiple ways in which children and adults work together in the learning community, highlighting how they make different and valued contributions.

Learning goals and plans

Support mokopuna to develop their own learning goals and plans, check in with them about how their plans are going, and create opportunities to revisit their learning over time.

Why is this practice important?

When mokopuna are supported to develop their own learning goals and plans, their learning dispositions and identities as capable and confident learners are strengthened. Revisiting learning with children enables them to recognise and celebrate the shifts in their learning over time. Children's learner identity is strengthened when they hear that kaiako believe in their developing dispositions to try, persevere, and succeed in their learning.

How to apply this practice in your setting

- Reflect on your own biases regarding children's capabilities in view of the positioning in *Te Whāriki* of mokopuna as inherently confident and capable.
- Scaffold support for individual mokopuna to develop their own learning goals and plans, adapting to their growing capacity to aim for longer-term plans and more complex goals.
- Support mokopuna in their efforts to engage with people or things that are of interest to them and to persist with their plans, even when things get difficult.
- Have processes in place for kaiako and whānau to share observations of children's emerging interests, learning goals, and plans.
- Create opportunities for all mokopuna to access their own assessment documentation, so that they can revisit interests and learning with kaiako and other children.
- Invite whānau to look at their child's portfolio with their child and to celebrate their child's learning and growing identity as a learner.

Materials and resources

Support children to access materials and resources that will support and extend their play, learning, and interests.

Why is this practice important?

When mokopuna are supported to access and use materials and resources, including those that may not be readily available each day, their learning is enriched. Accessing materials of interest to them provides opportunities for children to revisit and extend their play and interests.

How to apply this practice in your setting

- Make thoughtful, informed decisions about which resources and materials will support and extend children's play, learning, and interests. This will include what is available every day and what is available sometimes.
- Consider issues such as children's safety, available space within the environment, the robustness of resources to withstand frequent or unsupervised use, and which materials and resources are rich with open-ended learning possibilities.
- Participate in reflective team discussions to share understandings of agency and your expectations of children's ability to manage different materials and resources. Consider how different experiences may shape perspectives and values. Ensure that materials and resources that are often used by mokopuna and can extend learning are frequently made available for them to use.
- Consider how the range of materials and resources in your setting are available for mokopuna, including those that are not available all of the time.
- Discuss materials children enjoy using at home and in other contexts with whānau, and consider whether these might be included within the programme.

Limits and boundaries

Support children to understand the expected limits and boundaries of behaviour in your setting.

Why is this practice important?

Knowing the expected limits and boundaries for behaviour helps mokopuna navigate their day and fosters their wellbeing and sense of empowerment. When children experience respectful and responsive interactions with adults about limits and boundaries, their mana and self-esteem is enhanced.

How to apply this practice in your setting

- Regularly discuss and review the expected limits and boundaries for behaviour in the setting. Ensure that kaiako expectations around children's behaviour are based on established shared values.
- Adapt expectations to reflect children's growing capability to understand and meet expectations. Have discussions with mokopuna about intentionally varying expectations for individuals.
- Describe and explain what children are expected to do rather than what they should not do (e.g., "Remember to walk when you are inside." rather than "Don't run!").
- Sensitively support mokopuna to navigate differences when setting and home expectations and rules differ.
- Recognise that any change in routine can be unsettling for some children. Know children's temperaments and typical responses to change, and proactively support children to navigate changes and transitions.
- Recognise that children's capacity to meet expected limits and boundaries may vary from day to day and within a day. When mokopuna find it challenging to meet expected limits and boundaries, respond with support and sensitivity. Take into consideration the various factors that might be affecting a child's behaviour (e.g., hunger, illness, or home events).
- Use a range of approaches (e.g., storytelling) to support mokopuna to explore ideas about limits and boundaries.

Making connections

Discuss their home lives and experiences with mokopuna, and support them to make connections between their experiences within and outside the service.

Why is this practice important?

When kaiako know about and understand children's lives and experiences outside of the setting, children are supported to navigate differences between contexts more easily. When their home knowledge is valued and connections are highlighted, children's learning is enriched.

How to apply this practice in your setting

- a. Build relationships over time with whānau to gain better understandings and to support conversations with children about their lives outside of the setting. Take care that information gained from whānau is used appropriately, so that they can see their input is valued.
- b. Show interest in learning about children's lives and experiences outside the setting, without judgement.
- c. Invite mokopuna and their whānau to share their knowledge, experiences, resources, and materials from outside the setting. Use these to support the provision of similar experiences within the setting (e.g., provide chopsticks as an option to use at meal times).
- d. Discuss differences between home and the setting without judgement, and support children to understand and consider what this might mean as they navigate these different settings. Provide empathy and support when mokopuna find navigating these different settings challenging.
- e. Celebrate the experiences and learning that mokopuna have outside of the setting, and use these as opportunities for further exploration and learning within the early learning setting.
- f. Draw on whānau knowledge of children's experiences and expertise, developed outside of the setting, to inform and contribute to assessment and planning documentation. Show whānau you value their contributions – for example, by including shared information in assessment documentation.

Risk and disappointment

Support mokopuna to take risks and manage disappointment when things don't go their way, and support children to try, and try again.

Why is this practice important?

When children take risks that may lead to difficulty and disappointment (and learn how to manage these), their resilience is strengthened. Mokopuna develop a positive mindset in which taking risks and persisting through difficulty are part of the learning process and can be personally rewarding.

How to apply this practice in your setting

- a. As a team, discuss risk-taking and what it looks like within the environment, to create a consistent approach to play experiences.
- b. Discuss with whānau what risk-taking and safe risk-taking might mean or look like for their child. Strive to understand the diverse cultural and personal perspectives that whānau may hold about risk-taking, and engage in respectful conversations about the benefits of taking risks for learning.
- c. Use your knowledge of children to create an environment that includes a balance of low-risk experiences and risks that stretch their comfort zone and create an element of challenge.
- d. Recognise and name the emotions you observe, such as disappointment, as a starting point to support mokopuna through challenges they face (e.g., "I can see you're feeling disappointed. What you tried was really hard. Shall I help you try again?").

- e. Celebrate effort and the process of learning in ways that foster a growth mindset. This includes talking about the process of trying, making mistakes, trying again, and adjusting plans and ideas, along with believing in themselves.

Creativity and imagination

Encourage creativity, flexibility, and imagination in children's thinking and actions to extend their learning.

Why is this practice important?

Creativity, flexibility, and imagination support new learning and the ability to connect ideas and experiences, consider possibilities, and make and share meaning with others in a range of ways. Collaboration with others supports mokopuna to co-construct ideas and make meaning together.

How to apply this practice in your setting

- a. Provide a rich array of open-ended materials, and encourage mokopuna to use these in creative and imaginative ways.
- b. Explore diverse cultural ways of being creative and expressive, and incorporate these into the programme. Involve whānau as part of this exploration.
- c. Support children to explore and learn different ways of using open-ended materials and tools (e.g., blocks, clay, sand, water, and visual arts materials), so that they are able to represent their ideas through these materials.
- d. Provide opportunities for children's socio-dramatic play, and participate as and when appropriate.
- e. Model uncertainty and thinking-in-action during interactions with children. Use tentative language (e.g., "Perhaps...", "Maybe ...") and possibility thinking ("I wonder what would happen if ...") to open up opportunities that invite mokopuna to offer their perspectives.
- f. Empathise and provide support when mokopuna find it challenging to be flexible (e.g., when another child has alternative ideas for play).
- g. Share and celebrate children's creativity, imagination, and flexible thinking with other children and with whānau.
- h. Notice and encourage mokopuna who want to explore different aspects of their identity through creative expression and imaginary play – for example, by trying out non-traditional gender roles.

Fostering learner identity

Support mokopuna to 'learn how they learn', and help them foster a confident and competent learner identity.

Why is this practice important?

The development of a child's identity as a competent and confident learner is core to their sense of self and ongoing engagement with, and success in, learning. This includes viewing themselves as capable of learning in all areas of the curriculum, while also recognising their unique strengths and contributions to the learning environment.

How to apply this practice in your setting

- a. Consider whether the learning environment in your setting is inclusive and supports mokopuna to develop a learner identity that is meaningful to them and their whānau.
- b. Provide all children with opportunities to engage with a deep, broad curriculum within the setting. Use intentional systems and processes to notice, recognise, and respond to children's learning, interests, and engagement across the curriculum.
- c. Communicate in ways that position mokopuna as capable and competent in their learning. Provide specific descriptive feedback on children's capabilities.
- d. Acknowledge children's positive dispositions for learning, and celebrate children's strengthening dispositions.
- e. Describe children's learning journeys, highlighting successful strategies they used and how they overcame difficulties.
- f. Engage with whānau about their mokopuna as learners. For example, revisit the perspectives of whānau, share strategies and ideas, and discuss children's learning, agency, and adaptability. This will support shared understandings of how mokopuna are learning and growing.

**Notice and recognise**

Progress examples to help you notice and recognise a child's progress

Use the phases of progress (outlined below) to help you notice and recognise a child's progress.

- › Draw on what you already know and what you've observed.
- › Have discussions with the child, whānau, and colleagues.
- › Use the practices (in step 3) to respond, based on what you notice.

Te korekore

Within an enabling environment, children form their sense of self and explore their ability to engage with others and navigate their worlds.

- › Mokopuna are becoming self-aware. They assert their needs and preferences through their interactions with others. They engage with their surroundings and make choices in their exploration of materials and activities.
- › Mokopuna are soothed by familiar routines, activities, and people and may become uneasy when things are unfamiliar.
- › Mokopuna are curious about their worlds, notice new things, and look to familiar people when they are unsure or when they take on challenges. They experiment in their play and may begin to persist at patterns of play.
- › Children accept help from familiar people.

Te pō

Within an enabling environment, children expand their sense of self and their ability to influence others and navigate their worlds.

- › Children are self-aware. They assert their needs and preferences through actions and requests, can make decisions when specific choices are offered, and might express desires that are not a good fit for a particular circumstance.
- › Children prefer and can follow familiar routines and activities, but are able to adjust to change when supported by familiar people.
- › In the context of safe and secure environments, children increasingly take risks and try new and different ways of doing things. They begin to set goals for their learning. They persist in their efforts when highly engaged or motivated.
- › Mokopuna may fluctuate between acting for themselves and receiving help.

Te ao mārama

Within an enabling environment, children extend their sense of self and their ability to contribute in reciprocal ways and flexibly navigate their worlds.

- › Mokopuna are aware of themselves and their own needs and preferences, while also beginning to understand how their preferences align with others and the setting's expectations. They can make choices to meet their own needs and support the needs of others, especially when they are supported to make choices that benefit the group.
- › Mokopuna can anticipate and follow familiar routines and activities, adjust to change, and adapt to meet expectations.

- › Children are increasingly aware of their capabilities and interests. They make decisions about how and when they try new things and take risks. When they explore different ways of accomplishing their goals, they can begin to describe their thinking and reasons for their choices. They can direct their attention and persist in their efforts for extended periods.
- › Children give and receive help and can contribute to the wellbeing of others in the group.

Te ao hōu

Within an enabling environment, children communicate about their sense of self and their ability to take action and partner with others in reciprocal ways. They confidently and flexibly navigate their worlds.

- › Mokopuna are aware of themselves and their needs and preferences, and how these are aligned with others' and the setting's expectations. They can communicate about their relationships and their identity within the setting. They make decisions that benefit themselves, others, and the collective.
- › Mokopuna can anticipate, follow, and help others during routines and activities. They can adjust to change, adapt to meet expectations, and respectfully advocate for changes within the setting.
- › Children hold a positive learner identity and a realistic perception of themselves and their capabilities. They are strategic with the risks they take and use a range of strategies to support their own and other's learning. Children can describe, reflect on, and adapt their goals as they extend their learning. They can direct and redirect their attention and persist in a range of tasks and types of play for extended periods.
- › Mokopuna easily give and receive help and contribute to the collective wellbeing of a group.



Respond

Practices to help you respond at different phases of progress

After you have assessed the phases of progress (in the previous step), use these practices to work one-on-one with a child based on what you've noticed.

Talk with others about what these practices might look like in your setting, and test your thinking by looking at adjacent phases.

Note that these practices are not exhaustive, and you might think of others.

Te korekore

Within an enabling environment, children form their sense of self and explore their ability to engage with others and navigate their worlds.

Choices and responsibility

Give mokopuna authentic opportunities to make choices and to take responsibility within the setting.

- Offer choices about routine events so that mokopuna have opportunities to make decisions without being overwhelmed by the possibilities. For example, begin with only two options in a question (e.g., "Would you like this or that?").
- Sensitively read and respond to children's cues regarding their preferences and choices.
- Partner with children to do activities that involve taking responsibility in the setting (e.g., put a toy away together, or help take compost to the worm farm). Describe or comment on everyone's contribution during these shared activities.

Learning goals and plans

Support mokopuna to develop their own learning goals and plans, check in with them about how their plans are going, and create opportunities to revisit their learning over time.

- Observe and be responsive to the ways in which mokopuna indicate their interest in people and things within the environment.
- Talk aloud to model making plans and setting goals as part of everyday experiences.
- Describe children's learning progress to them, affirming the efforts and dispositions that they have used (e.g., "You've been working hard at practising backing down that step, and now you can get down without any help!").

Materials and resources

Support children to access materials and resources that will support and extend their play, learning, and interests.

- Tune in to children's verbal and non-verbal communication about what resources or materials they would like to access or use when choices are offered to them.
- Invite children to come with you when accessing additional materials or resources, and offer choices on which materials they would like to have available.
- Provide a broad range of materials and resources that mokopuna can safely access independently within the immediate environment and that do not require close supervision.

Limits and boundaries

Support children to understand the expected limits and boundaries of behaviour in your setting.

- Draw children's attention to the expectations and rules by describing them, and acknowledge when children are following them.
- Only use gentle and respectful physical intervention if a child's behaviour is unsafe for themselves, others, or the environment. Simultaneously, clearly explain the reason why you are intervening.
- When mokopuna need support to learn the limits and boundaries of the setting, aim for this to be enacted by the most familiar adults available. If a child has been settling with a certain kaiako, they will likely find it less stressful to be redirected or guided by that kaiako rather than a reliever or less familiar adult.

Making connections

Discuss their home lives and experiences with mokopuna, and support them to make connections between their experiences within and outside the service.

- Learn and use specific waiata and oriori used by whānau at home (e.g., when supporting children to get to sleep).
- Incorporate home practices where appropriate around routine events and care moments (e.g., sleeping, changing, and mealtimes) within the setting's routines.
- Show sensitivity and patience with children where differences in practices between home and the setting frustrate or cause distress to them.

Risk and disappointment

Support mokopuna to take risks and manage disappointment when things don't go their way, and support children to try, and try again.

- Provide opportunities for overcoming challenges or obstacles, while ensuring children's physical wellbeing and safety.

- Talk with mokopuna about their persistence and problem-solving strategies in everyday experiences and routines; highlight when they try, and try again.
- Name and validate the emotions mokopuna show when trying or persisting at hard tasks.

Creativity and imagination

Encourage creativity, flexibility, and imagination in children's thinking and actions to extend their learning.

- Provide realistic materials that represent real-life objects for mokopuna to use in play.
- Model excitement and wonder with children, both in play (e.g., "I wonder what's under the blanket?") and about the environment and people in it (e.g., "I can hear a lot of noise coming from the trees - I wonder what's making all that noise?").
- Recognise that some children may be reluctant to explore sensory materials, and sensitively support them to engage at their own pace.

Fostering learner identity

Support mokopuna to 'learn how they learn', and help them foster a confident and competent learner identity.

- Recognise, describe, and support children's use of learning strategies and dispositions during exploration and learning.
- Use the language of thinking, knowing, and wondering in your everyday conversations with mokopuna (e.g., "I wonder if those dark clouds mean it's going to rain soon").
- Provide mokopuna with the materials and resources they may need when they have an idea about something they want to do, and support them with their plan.

Te pō

Within an enabling environment, children expand their sense of self and their ability to influence others and navigate their worlds.

Choices and responsibility

Give mokopuna authentic opportunities to make choices and to take responsibility within the setting.

- Offer clear and structured choices when mokopuna need support to make decisions.
- Notice and recognise children's interests and passions and draw on these to support them to make choices.
- Invite mokopuna to help with routine tasks such as tidying up the environment, using specific requests so that they understand what you are asking them to do. Ensure requests are manageable, and be flexible and adaptable in your expectations.

Learning goals and plans

Support mokopuna to develop their own learning goals and plans, check in with them about how their plans are going, and create opportunities to revisit their learning over time.

- Be attuned and responsive to children's differing verbal and non-verbal ways of indicating interest in people and things within the environment.
- Model the language of planning and setting goals when talking with mokopuna about their interests and learning (e.g., "I wonder if we need to make a plan for how your building will look, so we can think about how best to build it?").
- Read assessment documentation (e.g., learning stories) with mokopuna on a regular basis, and use these to spark conversations about making plans and being a learner.

Materials and resources

Support children to access materials and resources that will support and extend their play, learning, and interests.

- Reminisce with children about materials and resources that they have enjoyed previously, and ask if they would like to use them again.
- Involve children in planning conversations about what materials or resources might be made available, either in the moment (e.g., while children are playing) or later (e.g., after lunch or the next day).
- Carefully introduce new or unfamiliar materials and resources so that mokopuna are supported to use them safely and appropriately and to explore their possibilities.

Limits and boundaries

Support children to understand the expected limits and boundaries of behaviour in your setting.

- Support children to learn about your setting's expectations and rules by describing them or acknowledging when mokopuna are following them. Remind children of the expectations and rules in clear, plain language as they engage in activities.
- Consider making visual cues or social stories that support mokopuna to learn about expectations in the setting.
- When children want to make choices that are not appropriate or safe, respond with empathy to their desires and clearly articulate the reasons why they cannot make that choice – for example, to maintain the safety of themselves, others, or the environment.

Making connections

Discuss home lives and experiences with mokopuna, and support them to make connections between their experiences within and outside the service.

- Invite mokopuna to share waiata and stories that they hear at home, and incorporate these into the programme. Check with whānau about appropriate usage, wording, and sources.
- Support children to share what they have been doing outside the setting. This might include sensitively sharing connections that you are aware of (e.g., "Did you go to the swimming pool with Dad?").
- Explain, without judgement, why there may be different approaches and practices at home and in the setting (e.g., "There are more children here, so sometimes we have to take turns.").

Risk and disappointment

Support mokopuna to take risks and manage disappointment when things don't go their way, and support them to try, and try again.

- Look out for moments when mokopuna engage in risk taking, and encourage them to participate in experiences that stretch them in terms of their comfort zone, celebrating their efforts with them.
- Support children to break big challenges down into smaller achievable steps (e.g., "That's a big job. We could start with X and then do Y.").
- Talk with mokopuna and give specific feedback on their persistence and problem-solving strategies in everyday experiences and routines. Recognise, name, and validate the wide range of emotions they experience when engaged in new and risky play.

Creativity and imagination

Encourage creativity, flexibility, and imagination in children's thinking and actions to extend their learning.

- Introduce increased levels of complexity in materials and resources, and encourage mokopuna to use alternative materials and objects to represent real-life objects in their play (e.g., using a block as a microphone).
- Model simple techniques to manipulate and use materials in intended and creative ways.
- Ask open-ended questions and 'wonderings' when exploring ideas, problem-solving, playing, creating, or building (e.g., "How else might we do that? I wonder what might happen if we ... ?").

Fostering learner identity

Support mokopuna to 'learn how they learn', and help them foster a confident and competent learner identity.

- Name and describe different learning strategies that mokopuna are using, or suggest options that they might like to try.
- Use simple theory-of-mind and metacognitive language to help children recognise themselves and others as thinkers and learners (e.g., "That was a tricky problem. You had to think of lots of ways to solve it!").
- Support mokopuna to consider the materials and resources they may need by showing a few options and discussing ways to get started when they have an idea about something they want to do.

Te ao mārama

Within an enabling environment, children extend their sense of self and their ability to contribute in reciprocal ways and flexibly navigate their worlds.

Choices and responsibility

Give mokopuna authentic opportunities to make choices and to take responsibility within the setting.

- Support children to make decisions about their participation, learning, and wellbeing by asking questions and offering options.
- Provide mokopuna with authentic choices about the experiences they might engage in and the materials they can use.
- Engage in conversations with mokopuna about the reasoning for their choices. Support them to think about how their choices affect others and how to collaborate to make choices together in groups.
- Invite children to participate in projects that include a strong component of caring for others, animals, or the environment (e.g., building 'homes' for insects outside; collecting recyclable materials; making a card for someone in the community who is sick or has suffered a loss).

Learning goals and plans

Support mokopuna to develop their own learning goals and plans, check in with them about how their plans are going, and create opportunities to revisit their learning over time.

- Invite children to talk about their interests and to set learning goals and plans.
- Support mokopuna using a range of media and approaches to help them develop goals and plans (e.g., drawing plans) of things they intend to create.

- Increase the complexity of conversations with mokopuna about their learning successes and challenges, articulating the learning strategies they are using (e.g., practising, persevering, and problem-solving).

Materials and resources

Support children to access materials and resources that will support and extend their play, learning, and interests.

- Consider how mokopuna can access materials and resources independently, and support them to access those that are not readily available.
- Encourage children to request materials and resources that require adult support to access and use (e.g., hot glue guns).
- When materials or resources requested by children need to be used under close supervision, plan with them suitable times and conditions (e.g., one at a time) for these to be made available.

Limits and boundaries

Support children to understand the expected limits and boundaries of behaviour in your setting.

- Support mokopuna to follow expectations and rules by regularly discussing them, asking about them, or acknowledging when they are following them.
- Encourage children to see the importance of expectations, limits, and rules for the wider group. Have conversations about how our behaviour impacts those around us and the value of adjusting our behaviour to be fair to others.
- Use respectful and empathetic language to show mokopuna that their struggles with limits and boundaries are valid (e.g., "I know it's hard to walk inside when you really want to run to your friends, but it's important to keep everyone safe.").

Making connections

Discuss home lives and experiences with mokopuna, and support them to make connections between their experiences within and outside the service.

- Support children to share some of their favourite things with you and their peers, building on the special skills that they have learned at home or in the community.
- Invite mokopuna to share what they have been doing outside the setting, including asking questions and making connections to things they have told you previously. Use these topics to foster sustained conversations with them.
- Look for opportunities to make connections between group planning or projects in the setting and the knowledge children bring from home. Regularly ask mokopuna and whānau for ideas, and discuss and act on these as appropriate.

Risk and disappointment

Support mokopuna to take risks and manage disappointment when things don't go their way, and support children to try, and try again.

- Use moments when mokopuna engage in risk taking and working outside their comfort zone to give specific feedback about their effort and the strategies they used.
- Revisit moments where children have taken a risk, experienced disappointment, and worked through it (e.g., "Remember the other day when you tried You felt a bit disappointed when it didn't work but then you tried again ... and you got got there.>").
- Support mokopuna to collaborate in setting challenges and taking risks together. Encourage the group to help each other through problems and disappointments and to persist with difficulties.

Creativity and imagination

Encourage creativity, flexibility, and imagination in children's thinking and actions to extend their learning.

- Support and encourage children to be imaginative and creative in how they manipulate and use materials to represent their ideas and thinking.
- Model increasingly sophisticated techniques for expressing ideas and feelings through the visual and expressive arts. Support mokopuna to describe their ideas for play and creative expressions, and help them gather the views of others.
- Revisit past instances when children have been flexible and why that was helpful for them.

Fostering learner identity

Support mokopuna to 'learn how they learn', and help them foster a confident and competent learner identity.

- Support children to think about alternative approaches that they could use when learning is challenging, including reminding them of strategies they or others have used successfully in the past.
- Use resources such as puppets and stories (e.g., 'Māui Slowing the Sun') to discuss different learning processes and dispositions and what it means to be a learner.
- Use increasingly complex theory-of-mind and metacognitive language with mokopuna to describe thinking, learning, and what it is to be a learner (e.g., "That's a great solution. Why do you think it worked?").

Te ao hōu

Within an enabling environment, children communicate about their sense of self and their ability to take action and partner with others in reciprocal ways. They confidently and flexibly navigate their worlds.

Choices and responsibility

Give mokopuna authentic opportunities to make choices and to take responsibility within the setting.

- Encourage children to make plans and decisions about their own participation, learning, and wellbeing, particularly in areas that they are passionate about.
- Support mokopuna to collaborate and work with others to make plans and decisions (e.g., about projects they want to work on, both inside and outside the setting).
- Recognise and discuss the concept of service and how being responsible and giving to others (whether time, assistance, or caring) is important and valued across different cultures.

Learning goals and plans

Support mokopuna to develop their own learning goals and plans, check in with them about how their plans are going, and create opportunities to revisit their learning over time.

- Invite and support mokopuna to take on larger, more long-term or collaborative projects that extend their learning interests, highlighting that learning takes time, persistence, and cooperation.
- Support children to use external sources of information (e.g., books, internet sites, local sites, and community members) to support their thinking about how they might achieve more complex learning goals.
- Support mokopuna to document their projects over time, and encourage them to think about how each project has developed, what they have learned, and how their learning dispositions and identities have been strengthened through the process.

Materials and resources

Support children to access materials and resources that will support and extend their play, learning, and interests.

- Support children to take on a tuakana role with teina to share and use materials and resources that they have experience with.
- Support children to plan further materials and resources they might use in their play and projects, including developing lists of requirements.
- Scaffold children to learn how to use more complex equipment (e.g., sewing machines, cooking equipment, and carpentry tools), with the goal that children can safely use these with appropriate supervision.

Limits and boundaries

Support children to understand the expected limits and boundaries of behaviour in your setting.

- Encourage children to uphold expectations and rules and to support others – for example, ask them to remind each other about the rules that help keep everyone safe.
- Support children to share their ideas and understandings of limits and boundaries through conversations (e.g., “I wonder what might happen if ...?”). Discuss with them how rules and expectations might vary between the different contexts they spend time in.
- Have increasingly complex conversations with mokopuna about the need to balance rules with flexibility and empathy for others, modelling understanding about different children’s diverse capabilities and strengths.

Making connections

Discuss home lives and experiences with mokopuna, and support them to make connections between their experiences within and outside the service.

- Support mokopuna to teach adults and other children knowledge and skills that they have learned outside the setting, and celebrate the expertise that they are able to share (e.g., by sharing their home language).
- Invite and support children to share their experiences outside of the setting in larger group situations, such as morning hui.
- Support mokopuna to consider and discuss why there might be differences in how things are done at home and in the setting, without making judgements on children’s home lives.

Risk and disappointment

Support mokopuna to take risks and manage disappointment when things don’t go their way, and support children to try, and try again.

- Support mokopuna to contribute to creating an environment that has an element of risk. Discuss potential risks and how children might work through challenges they encounter.
- Encourage children to plan in advance experiences that stretch their thinking and physical capabilities (e.g., “What could we do this afternoon? I wonder if we can think of something new that we have never done before?”).
- Revisit moments of disappointment with mokopuna, including unpacking the emotions they experienced and the problem-solving strategies they used (e.g., “How did you feel when that happened? What did you do next? What else could you have done?”).

Creativity and imagination

Encourage creativity, flexibility, and imagination in children’s thinking and actions to extend their learning.

- Support mokopuna to engage in sustained imaginative play, with and without props, and to develop and tell their own imaginative stories and creative expressions (e.g., oral stories, dance and movement, using puppets, visual arts, and taking photographs).
- Support children to plan projects that involve creating something that is large or complex (e.g., building a permanent ramp to slide small vehicles down, or creating and sewing a costume), including being creative and innovative in their design plans and representing what they think their creation will look like.
- Discuss how mokopuna implemented their plans, highlighting their flexible and creative thinking and problem solving in achieving their goals. Invite them to seek the views and ideas of others.

Fostering learner identity

Support mokopuna to ‘learn how they learn’, and help them foster a confident and competent learner identity.

- Invite and support mokopuna to share with others how they learned to do something – for example, how they went about solving a problem and why they used the materials and strategies that they did.
- Support children to describe and document their learning process and dispositions, sometimes partnering with children to share their learning through a learning story.
- Support mokopuna to engage in possibility thinking with you – for example have conversations about what might happen next in a book, what they would do if they were a character in a story, and what they would do differently from how the character acted.

4

Document

An example of how you could use Kōwhiri Whakapae to enhance your assessments and communication

In this section, an assessment example illustrates how you can use the information gathered in the previous three steps to enhance your documented assessments and communication. The example describes and tracks a child's learning progress over time in ways that inform ongoing planning. It also highlights the kinds of evidence, such as observations or conversations with whānau, that were used to support judgements and planning decisions. Finally, it shows how documentation can support conversations with children and whānau about a child's learning and progress.

After reading the example, think about how you currently document your planning and assessments and describe learning progress over time. Talk with team members and children's whānau to identify how your assessment documentation might better describe:

- › a child's current capabilities, strengths, and interests, with evidence (Notice)
- › a child's progress and possible directions for their learning (Recognise)
- › how you will support the child to progress over time (Respond).

Assessment example: Mele's kai time

This example includes three learning stories about Mele, who is ten months old and attends home-based childcare.

Mele's educator cares for three other children: Manaaki (18 months old), Josie (three years old), and Ihaia (four years old). Mele is Tongan and was born in Aotearoa New Zealand. She lives with her grandmother and her parents. The three stories focus on Mele's kai routines and how she is learning about agency and adaptability as her routines change over time. The first two stories are written by her educator, Mandy, and the third by her visiting teacher, Sarah.

As you read the stories, you will find information about how the service engaged with the 'Agency and adaptability' area of Kōwhiri Whakapae to support their practice and strengthen Mele's learning in relation to the Mana atua | Wellbeing and Mana whenua | Belonging strands of *Te Whāriki*.

This selection of learning stories begins after visiting teachers ran a series of workshops for educators about Kōwhiri Whakapae. Having reviewed the information, particularly in relation to the importance placed on identity, language, and culture, Mandy and Sarah decided that a new process was needed to gather information from whānau. As part of this process, Sarah and Mandy talked with Mele's whānau to learn more about them, their culture, and how Mele's transition to home-based childcare could be supported.

See Kōwhiri Whakapae online for the [full sequence of learning stories](#).

This assessment illustrates Rangatiratanga me urutaunga | Agency & adaptability. To browse the complete suite of examples, see [this page](#) on Kōwhiri Whakapae online.

KOTAHITANGA ME KAITIAKITANGA

Social inclusion & action

Children recognising and celebrating diversity, while also connecting as people with a unified sense of togetherness and respect for each other

Overview

What does 'kotahitanga me kaitiakitanga' refer to?

Kotahitanga means unity, togetherness, and solidarity. It recognises the diversity of people and supports collective action and achieving unity when coming together. Kaitiakitanga represents the responsibilities of guardianship and stewardship.

For further information, see [this page](#) on Kōwhiri Whakapae online.

What are social inclusion and action?

Enacting social inclusion creates a context where everyone feels a sense of belonging and participation. Social action refers to the actions taken to look after and stand up for self, others, and the natural world.

For further information, see [this page](#) on Kōwhiri Whakapae online.

How is this area woven through the strands of *Te Whāriki*?

Knowledge, skills and attitudes associated with social inclusion and social action are woven through all strands of *Te Whāriki*, helping kaiako respond to children with consistent guidance, encouragement, and support.

For further information, see [this page](#) on Kōwhiri Whakapae online.

How do the foundations of Kōwhiri Whakapae impact on this area?

Te Tiriti o Waitangi, Identity, language and culture, Inclusion, Whakamana | Empowerment, and Ngā hononga | Relationships are at the heart of social inclusion and action. This is where children learn to value themselves and the community in ways that promote acceptance, kindness, and compassion.

For further information, see [this page](#) on Kōwhiri Whakapae online.



Lay the groundwork

Practices to whakaritea te pārekereke | prepare the seedbed for all children

Start by working with all the children in your setting. Create an environment that can support children to build skills related to social inclusion and action.

- › Consider your current environment and how you could make it better.
- › Talk to others about what you are already doing.
- › Select practices that will be meaningful in your setting.

Belonging and inclusion

Ensure everyday kaiako talk, interactions, and play promote belonging and inclusion for everyone.

Why is this practice important?

When kaiako engage in inclusive interactions and provide a learning environment that reflects diversity, mokopuna and whānau can experience a greater sense of belonging and inclusion. This might include having resources and materials that represent diverse family structures, gender identities, and abilities. Fairness and inclusion are important concepts for mokopuna, empowering them to take an active role in including others.

How to apply this practice in your setting

- a. Communicate with whānau to understand their family structures, values, roles, and dynamics.
- b. Within your team, discuss your current knowledge of diverse abilities and disabilities, recognising where you may need to seek extra learning or support to build your capabilities.
- c. Engage with whānau of disabled children and children with diverse abilities and learning needs to understand their needs and preferences, including language that they are comfortable using.
- d. Remain up to date with terminology and changes in gender terms and language over time (e.g., gender-diverse, non-binary, transgender, and takatāpui).
- e. Consider how the layout and provisioning of the physical environment facilitates children's access to experiences, materials, and resources regardless of their ability, gender, or culture.
- f. Ensure that displays, resources, and materials are readily available to mokopuna and are authentic, non-stereotyping, and representative of diverse family structures, gender identities, and abilities.
- g. Use inclusive language and resources, including recognising diverse families. For example, during group interactions use inclusive language such as "parents" or "adults". Ensure resources (e.g., books and visual displays) include single parents, same-sex parents, gender-diverse parents, foster parents, grandparents raising grandchildren, etc.
- h. Create, adapt, or source materials and resources (e.g., displays, books, puppets, and dolls) that reflect children with diverse abilities and disabilities and are non-stereotyping.

- i. Promote an inclusive environment and respect for everyone in the setting, challenging stereotyping or biases as they occur (e.g., ensure job roles are not gender-specific).

Collaboration and contribution

Provide and encourage experiences in which children work together to contribute towards group wellbeing and learning and celebrate each other's unique contributions.

Why is this practice important?

When children are supported to work collaboratively with others and contribute towards a shared goal or experience, mokopuna recognise and appreciate the value of collaboration that involves individuals making unique contributions.

How to apply this practice in your setting

- a. Engage with whānau to build a team understanding around how families might like to acknowledge children's contributions within the group setting.
- b. Use shared group times such as sharing kai to acknowledge children's contribution to the group. Consider how each child's contribution within the group is recognised and celebrated.
- c. Ensure assessment documentation highlights the contributions that mokopuna make as they work collaboratively towards the achievement of group goals.
- d. As a team, know children well, including the skills, abilities, and funds of knowledge that they bring to the setting.
- e. Discuss with mokopuna their strengths and interests, and provide feedback in ways that strengthen their positive identity.
- f. Offer experiences where mokopuna need to work together to achieve goals – for example, if a group of children are interested in challenging themselves physically, help them to collaborate to build a challenge course. Consider how the environment facilitates collaboration (e.g., whether there are sufficient space and resources in a particular area).

Considering multiple perspectives

Support children to consider their experiences and learning through different or multiple perspectives.

Why is this practice important?

When mokopuna are encouraged to consider and respect the perspectives of others, they can build appreciation for how diverse perspectives and experiences contribute to their own learning. This might involve children learning how important events and activities are experienced by people from different cultures and backgrounds and by people of different abilities. For mokopuna, experiencing the celebration of diverse experiences and perspectives affirms that their own experiences and perspectives are valued in the setting.

How to apply this practice in your setting

- Ensure your programme reflects different cultural perspectives, recognising and affirming the primary importance of children's families and cultures so that mokopuna can participate successfully in the setting and in their community.
- Ensure that the physical environment reflects different approaches to everyday activities, through visual images, books, and resources. For example, provide different types of eating and cooking utensils in the dramatic play area.
- To support an inclusive environment, invite whānau to contribute to the programme by sharing their cultural practices, languages, and celebrations.
- Use everyday opportunities to engage mokopuna in authentic conversations about the different approaches and experiences for children in routine experiences within the setting (e.g., food and mealtime traditions and sleeping arrangements), and support children to see these differences positively.

Fairness and prejudice

Talk openly about fairness, prejudice, equity, and justice, supporting children to advocate for themselves and others.

Why is this practice important?

Children learn about prejudice and discrimination from both spoken and unspoken messages about differences between people (e.g., in gender, ethnicity, culture, and ability). Prejudice and discrimination impact everyone's sense of self.

When mokopuna are supported to develop knowledge, skills, and attitudes about fairness, equity, acceptance, and social justice, they develop their ability to advocate for and protect their own and others' rights.

How to apply this practice in your setting

- Reflect on your own understandings of prejudice, discrimination, and bias in relation to diversity (e.g., in gender, ethnicity, ability, and family structure and values). Actively work to reframe your language and interactions to be fair, inclusive, and free of prejudice.
- Be alert to and sensitively challenge the use of stereotypic or exclusionary language or behaviours by adults and children in your setting.
- Explicitly talk about issues of inclusion, exclusion, fairness, and rights as instances occur within your setting.
- Be sensitive and aware of the range of values and beliefs held among the setting's wider community. Address issues of fairness and promote an anti-bias curriculum within the programme.

Social conflicts

Support children to resolve social conflicts while also addressing words or actions that may be intimidating.

Why is this practice important?

Children are still learning the boundaries of appropriate social behaviour and may not recognise the potential impact of their actions or words. Therefore, it is important to avoid categorising children's behaviour as intimidation or using labels such as bullying. When a respectful culture is fostered within the setting, children develop a greater understanding of the impact of their actions and words on others. They also experience protection from the actions of others that they may find intimidating, and they learn to offer the same to others.

How to apply this practice in your setting

- Discuss strategies for resolving social conflict as a team, so that mokopuna receive consistent language and messages and there are clear expectations for when or why kaiako might intervene to stop intimidating behaviour.
- Be mindful and supportive of children's heightened emotions in situations in the setting that involve intimidating behaviour.
- Approach mokopuna when you hear negative comments about a particular child and reaffirm the child's positive identity (e.g., "Remember Sammy is still learning about sharing, just as you are still learning how to go across the monkey bars.>").
- Be mindful of children who may be developing negative social reputations. Work with your team, in collaboration with whānau and considering the child and the wider context, to better understand why this is happening and to respond accordingly.
- Identify children's strengths and interests and comment on these throughout the day to foster positive identities within the group.

Advocating and supporting

Foster children's awareness of others and appropriate ways to advocate and support.

Why is this practice important?

When mokopuna learn that they have power to affect change and stand up for the rights of others, their positive identity is affirmed. Children learn that social bonds, inclusion, and social justice require a collective effort and that their own actions to stand up for, look after, or protect others are an important part of social change.

How to apply this practice in your setting

- Create opportunities for mokopuna to help, look after, and advocate for each other in meaningful ways.
- Help mokopuna to notice others' cues that may indicate they may need help or support. These cues may be verbal or non-verbal and include expressions of frustration or distress.
- Support children to use appropriate language to check whether someone wants help or not (e.g., "You could ask Amy, 'Do you want help with that?'").

- d. Take advantage of opportunities for mokopuna to support one another, allowing time, space, and support for them to do so.
- e. Role model helping and supporting members of the teaching team, with, and in front of, children.
- f. Make suggestions to children about opportunities for accessing help from each other, including pointing out when nearby peers have skills and knowledge they might benefit from.
- g. Talk with mokopuna about their responsibility to stand up for others. Explain the kinds of conflict situations where children can back up their peers or support them to get help from an adult.

Connecting with Papatūānuku

Engage mokopuna in things such as reusing, recycling waste, gardening, and experiences in nature to foster connections with Papatūānuku.

Why is this practice important?

When children are supported to learn that our food and resources comes from Papatūānuku and build connections with the land, they develop respect and a sense of wonder for nature. They learn multiple ways in which they can contribute to caring for the land, plants, and animals. Similarly, when children are supported to develop an awareness of the negative impact of waste on the natural environment, they gain a deeper understanding of how their actions and use of resources affect the environment.

How to apply this practice in your setting

- a. Have conversations with mokopuna about connections between their food and the natural world. Incorporate karakia kai that acknowledge the gifts of food from Papatūānuku, and celebrate food grown in the setting's garden or gifted to the setting by whānau.
- b. Establish clear expectations for how natural materials are collected and used (e.g., collecting fallen leaves rather than taking leaves from a tree), and remind children of these expectations and why they are important. Incorporate Māori tikanga appropriate to the situation and the local context – for example, saying karakia to give thanks for resources gathered from nature.
- c. Integrate a range of nature-based experiences as a regular part of the programme (e.g., excursions to local nature reserves and gardens, gardening, composting, and worm farms).
- d. Display and use collections of natural materials as prompts for conversations about sustainability and the natural environment, and as alternatives to manufactured materials for other areas of learning (e.g., maths, the arts, and science).
- e. Participate in programmes such as Enviroschools or with other sustainability organisations to support kaiako knowledge and strengthen practices in the setting.
- f. Learn about sustainability issues and options in the local area, and engage mokopuna in meaningful ways of addressing them.

- g. Establish, model, and encourage recycling practices across the programme. Acknowledge and celebrate with mokopuna when they remember to recycle materials or sort food scraps.
- h. Use recycled materials or re-use materials that would otherwise go to landfill. Minimise the use of plastics in the setting where possible, particularly single-use plastics and micro-plastics such as glitter.

Ngā tangata and te taiao connections

Create opportunities for mokopuna to learn about mana whenua (local iwi or hapū) and the relationship between ngā tangata (people) and te taiao (the environment).

Why is this practice important?

When mokopuna learn about their local iwi, hapū, and community, they can develop an understanding of their roles and responsibilities for nurturing and protecting the land and water, in ways that affirm the wellbeing of the community. They learn that stronger communities are developed when there is collective responsibility for caring for ngā tangata and te taiao.

How to apply this practice in your setting

- a. Establish and build reciprocal relationships with the local community, and take opportunities to participate in activities established by local iwi and hapū.
- b. Where local iwi and hapū have an education strategy, environmental plan, and/or partnership with a government department, consider meaningful ways in which your programme could connect to the strategy, plan, or partnership, to support children's relationships with and contributions to the local community.
- c. Research and learn about local narratives, histories, waiata, and karakia, including those focused on places of significance such as the awa or maunga. Share local narratives, waiata, and karakia with children.
- d. Plan excursions into the local community, exploring the environment and places of historical and contemporary significance. Invite parents and whānau to join these excursions.
- e. Make visible the relationship between people and the land. For example, display and use whakataukī and karakia that describe connections between people and the land, learn whakapapa, including that of Ranginui and Papatūānuku, and talk with children about the connections between the wellbeing of the land and the wellbeing of people.



Notice and recognise

Progress examples to help you notice and recognise a child's progress

Use the phases of progress (outlined below) to help you notice and recognise a child's progress.

- › Draw on what you already know and what you've observed.
- › Have discussions with the child, whānau, and colleagues.
- › Use the practices (in step 3) to respond, based on what you notice.

Te korekore

Within an enabling environment, children form an understanding of themselves and their influence on people, places, and things.

- › Mokopuna are attuned to themselves and the familiar people in their environment. They are at ease when those around them are also at ease.
- › Children's interactions are often aligned with or mimic the cues and actions of familiar and trusted people. They may be reluctant or uneasy in the presence of unfamiliar people.
- › Mokopuna can engage with peers in inclusive ways without reference to differences, particularly when they feel secure.
- › Children's understanding of themselves and te taiao is experienced through curiosity and wonder in nature.

Te pō

Within an enabling environment, children expand their understanding of the social world and their influence on people, places, and things.

- › Children are expanding their social worlds to include familiar and new people. They are beginning to recognise how different environments or interactions can change others' sense of ease.
- › Children's interactions may be influenced by the cues or actions of familiar people. They will engage with peers and playmates in inclusive ways and, without judgement, may begin to point out or be aware of physical differences among people.
- › Mokopuna are increasingly aware of unfairness and may try out different ways of making things fair, particularly when things do not feel fair in their favour.
- › Children's understanding of themselves and te taiao is experienced through exploration in nature and by beginning to take part in caring for the natural world.

Te ao mārama

Within an enabling environment, children extend and direct their influence on people, places, and things.

- › Children's social worlds include a diverse network of people. They have concern for the wellbeing of their whānau across different environments.

- › Mokopuna have established ways of interacting with peers and playmates, based on past experiences. With support, they can form new ways of interacting and being inclusive in their play. Through their play and learning, they explore how people can be similar and different. They may express views they have learned from others.
- › Children are increasingly attuned to issues of fairness and begin to consider patterns of unfairness. They use a range of strategies to make things fair for themselves and others.
- › Children's understanding of themselves and te taiao is experienced through exploration in nature and by taking an active role in caring for the natural world.

Te ao hōu

Within an enabling environment, children communicate about their influence on people, places, and things and take action to support positive outcomes.

- › Mokopuna comfortably engage with diverse networks of people. They take action to support interactions that are respectful and caring – for themselves, their whānau, and others.
- › Mokopuna use a range of strategies for being responsive to and inclusive of people they are engaging and playing with. They have an expanding knowledge about different people and cultures and hold views that affirm and support the rights and wellbeing of everyone. They may challenge the views of familiar people.
- › Children can consider fairness in relation to equity and equality. They will ask questions about issues of prejudice, discrimination, or bias and communicate their own thoughts and ideas about these injustices. They will take action to protect, support, and stand up for themselves and others.
- › Children will share their ideas about connections between the health and wellbeing of people and the natural environment. They can advocate for care of te taiao and create solutions that protect the natural world.

3

Respond

Practices to help you respond at different phases of progress

After you have assessed the phases of progress (in the previous step), use these practices to work one-on-one with a child based on what you've noticed.

Talk with others about what these practices might look like in your setting, and test your thinking by looking at adjacent phases.

Note that these practices are not exhaustive, and you might think of others.

Te korekore

Within an enabling environment, children form an understanding of themselves and their influence on people, places, and things.

Belonging and inclusion

Ensure everyday kaiako talk, interactions, and play promote belonging and inclusion for everyone.

- Engage in quality interactions with whānau in the presence of children, to foster a sense that they are valued, and role-model inclusive relationships.
- Ensure that children can see themselves and their families – including diverse family structures, genders, and abilities – reflected in pictures, stories, and other resources.
- Talk with mokopuna about the similarities and differences between themselves and others as a way of acknowledging and appreciating that there are different ways of knowing and being.

Collaboration and contribution

Provide and encourage experiences where children work together towards group wellbeing and learning and celebrate each other's unique contributions.

- Include songs and musical activities where mokopuna work together (e.g., singing "Row, row, row your boat"), and acknowledge children's enjoyment that comes from playing together.
- Discuss with children their developing skills, strengths, interests, and dispositions.
- Use kai times as opportunities to enjoy being together. Invite all mokopuna to contribute to conversations, and incorporate shared activities such as singing songs. Support children to help each other.

Considering multiple perspectives

Support children to consider their experiences and learning through different or multiple perspectives.

- Discuss positively with mokopuna the similarities and differences in the foods that they bring from home that reflect their cultural and home preferences.
- Select picture books, games, and toys for children that depict diverse genders, cultures, family structures, and ethnicities, and people with different abilities in a variety of roles.
- Consider artworks, fabrics, and other furnishings that may reflect the children's different home environments. Consult with whānau about aesthetic elements from their cultures that would be authentic and appropriate to include in the setting, and act on this where possible.

Fairness and prejudice

Talk openly about fairness, prejudice, equity, and justice, supporting children to advocate for themselves and others.

- Provide simple explanations of fairness when children exclude others or take things from them (e.g., "I'll hold the book up so you can all see the pictures easily – that way it will be fair for everyone.>").
- Provide an inclusive climate in which everyone is valued for their uniqueness and which is demonstrated by the actions and language used by kaiako.
- Provide enough of a resource to allow more than one child to access it at the same time, and use this as an opportunity to talk about fairness and sharing.

Social conflicts

Support children to resolve social conflicts while also addressing words or actions that may be intimidating.

- Ask children to stop and describe to them how their actions or words could upset or hurt someone else.
- Role model language that provides information without judgement or blame.
- Be available to mokopuna during group play, offering an appropriate level of support for conflict resolution according to the children's emerging capabilities.

Advocating and supporting

Foster children's awareness of others and appropriate ways to advocate and support.

- Comment on the positive interactions that mokopuna engage in with each other.
- Look for simple opportunities to include children in helping others (e.g., helping to get an ice pack for a friend if they have hurt themselves).
- Point out and discuss children's skills and abilities when mokopuna are near one another (e.g., "Are you trying to put the ball in the hole? Maia's been practising that for a while. She wants to help.>").

Connecting with Papatūānuku

Engage mokopuna in things such as reusing, recycling waste, gardening, and experiences in nature to foster connections with Papatūānuku.

- Name and describe the different plants and animals within the local environment.
- Describe weather conditions and the outdoor environment and how it can affect the way we feel.
- Model and support mokopuna to show respect and care for the natural environment in the centre.

Ngā tangata and te taiao connections

Create opportunities for mokopuna to learn about mana whenua (local iwi or hapū) and the relationship between ngā tangata (people) and te taiao (the environment).

- Invite all children to experience nature, beginning with the outdoor environment of the setting. Stay close to support mokopuna in their earliest explorations, and encourage curiosity and sensory experiences.
- Share stories and sing waiata that have significance for local iwi and hapū, with the aim that these will become familiar to mokopuna over time.
- Use te reo Māori to name and describe elements of nature, including their associated atua, supporting children to see the connection between te taiao and ngā tangata.

Te pō

Within an enabling environment, children expand their understanding of the social world and their influence on people, places, and things.

Belonging and inclusion

Ensure everyday kaiako talk, interactions, and play promote belonging and inclusion for everyone.

- Provide opportunities for mokopuna to share their family and home lives with others (e.g., display family photos that children can revisit and discuss).
- Support children to include others during play, especially when this is challenging. Discuss similarities and differences in abilities and preferences for play to help mokopuna develop understanding and empathy for others.
- When normative stereotypes emerge in children's play regarding gender, ability, and family structures, challenge the ideas in gentle ways and use them as an opportunity to openly discuss inclusion and diversity.

Collaboration and contribution

Provide and encourage experiences in which children work together to contribute towards group wellbeing and learning and celebrate each other's unique contributions.

- Use musical games that involve mokopuna having an active role together (e.g., "Five currant buns in the baker's shop", "Six little monkeys jumping on the bed", and the "Tahi, rua, toru, whā" song). Acknowledge children working together, and provide sensitive support to those who may be more reserved about participating or prefer to observe.
- Sensitively acknowledge the contributions that mokopuna make to shared experiences, including how some children share their expertise and experience to help others.
- Facilitate collaborative artmaking experiences, such as painting together. Use these experiences to acknowledge children's various contributions and to discuss sharing space, skills, and resources.

Considering multiple perspectives

Support children to consider their experiences and learning through different or multiple perspectives.

- Discuss with mokopuna the foods that they eat at home and during celebrations or cultural events. Provide different options for eating utensils that reflect their home experiences.
- Provide books, games, and resources that depict diverse genders, cultures, ethnicities, and abilities in a variety of roles, and discuss having positive images of difference with mokopuna. Ensure that diverse family structures (e.g., rainbow families) are represented in resources across the setting.
- Acknowledge children's awareness of similarities and differences among people (e.g., in skin tone, hair and eye colour, and the use of glasses or a walking frame), and celebrate diversity.

Fairness and prejudice

Talk openly about fairness, prejudice, equity, and justice, supporting children to advocate for themselves and others.

- Use the concept of fairness to frame explanations, and remind mokopuna of expectations for social interactions in the setting.
- Recognise that many children are making sense of their worlds using aspects of similarity or difference between people. Acknowledge and respond to children's questions about differences between people, using non-discriminatory language, and challenge situations in which mokopuna use difference as a reason to exclude (e.g., "You can't play, you're a girl.>").
- Use resources (e.g., books, puppets, and small figures) to tell stories about how people feel when they are included, excluded, or stereotyped.

Social conflicts

Support children to resolve social conflicts while also addressing words or actions that may be intimidating.

- Read pukapuka and point out when the words or actions of a character make another character feel sad or upset. Talk about why this might be.
- Explain to mokopuna when their actions or words might make someone else feel upset.
- Support mokopuna to work through social conflicts. Ensure that every child's mana is upheld and that every child feels supported in the setting.

Advocating and supporting

Foster children's awareness of others and appropriate ways to advocate and support.

- Name the actions and behaviours that support children's positive engagement with others.
- Help mokopuna notice cues from other children, and offer suggestions for how they might respond. Describe and explain the non-verbal cues of frustration or distress that children might not yet be aware of (e.g., body language and facial expressions).
- Use stories or resources to facilitate learning about the perspectives of others and standing up for others when needed.

Connecting with Papatūānuku

Engage mokopuna in things such as reusing, recycling waste, gardening, and experiences in nature to foster connections with Papatūānuku.

- Support mokopuna to observe and describe features of the natural world within the setting's environment. Point out and accurately name specific aspects of plant and animal biological structures during discussions.
- Offer children meaningful ways to contribute to looking after the setting's natural resources (e.g., gardening, composting food scraps, and collecting rainwater).
- Use visual cues to support mokopuna to sort waste and food scraps as part of helping with tidying up.

Ngā tangata and te taiao connections

Create opportunities for mokopuna to learn about mana whenua (local iwi/hāpu) and the relationship between ngā tangata (people) and te taiao (the environment).

- Plan excursions into local natural environments such as parks and bush walks and share stories and history of that place with mokopuna.
- Regularly use whakataukī and karakia that describe connections between the people and the land, and actively support mokopuna to learn the words and pronunciation.
- Invite whānau including those with iwi affiliations to share their stories and connections with the land. Revisit these narratives repeatedly over time and talk to the mokopuna about their significance.

Te ao mārama

Within an enabling environment, children extend and direct their influence on people, places, and things.

Belonging and inclusion

Ensure everyday kaiako talk, interactions, and play promote belonging and inclusion for everyone.

- Invite children to talk about their families and home lives, supporting them with open-ended questions and prompts to extend these conversations in complexity and depth.
- Ensure that experiences and resources are accessible to everyone as appropriate; think through what adaptations and support you can offer so that everyone has equal opportunities to participate. Discuss with mokopuna accessibility and changes to the environment so everyone can feel included.
- Using pictures, stories, and other resources as a starting point, engage children in conversation about different family structures, genders and abilities, and about the value of including everyone.

Collaboration and contribution

Provide and encourage experiences in which children work together to contribute towards group wellbeing and learning and celebrate each other's unique contributions.

- Offer regular opportunities for children to participate in acting out familiar stories and legends. Support mokopuna, including prompting what comes next within the story, and ensure that all children get regular opportunities to participate in these experiences.
- Notice, recognise and respond to interactions where children are working collaboratively and actively helping one another.
- Support long-term projects with groups of mokopuna where they can experience how everyone makes different contributions over time.

Considering multiple perspectives

Support children to consider their experiences and learning through different or multiple perspectives.

- Encourage mokopuna to try foods from other cultures when these are offered within the setting, while ensuring that whānau preferences for dietary requirements are met.
- Use resources (e.g., books, puppets, and small figures) to tell stories about people from different cultures and family structures or with different abilities, and foster open conversations about how their experiences and perceptions of the world may vary.
- Provide art materials that enable children to realistically reflect different people (e.g., pastels with a range of skin, eye, hair tones) and encourage discussion of similarities and differences among people.

Fairness and prejudice

Talk openly about fairness, prejudice, equity, and justice, supporting children to advocate for themselves and others.

- Expand the concept of fairness to include the rights and responsibilities of children and others in the setting when framing explanations and reminding children of social interaction expectations in the setting.
- Support mokopuna to explore and discuss the concepts of fairness and rights, and to recognise when they or others are being discriminatory or have biased ideas.
- Identify a range of resources and everyday experiences that include opportunities to discuss concepts around rights and responsibilities (i.e., local pūrākau, picture books, daily happenings such as making space for everyone on the mat).

Social conflicts

Support children to resolve social conflicts while also addressing words or actions that may be intimidating.

- Engage in puppet shows or read pukapuka that explore intimidation and the feelings of others who may have experienced it.
- Support children to understand that their words and actions have an impact (positive or negative) on others.
- Use questioning techniques, 'wondering' and commenting to involve mokopuna in thinking about how they might feel and ways they can make sure they treat everyone with respect.

Advocating and supporting

Foster children's awareness of others and appropriate ways to advocate and support.

- Support mokopuna to notice cues from others and what they might mean or need. Model how to check with someone to see if they need help. Stay nearby to support these interactions if needed.
- Acknowledge when mokopuna respond to others' cues for support.
- Use role play to help children think about and brainstorm ideas about what they could do to help another person who needs help.

Connecting with Papatūānuku

Engage mokopuna in things such as reusing, recycling waste, gardening, and experiences in nature to foster connections with Papatūānuku.

- Plan for regular group walks to local nature reserves and gardens, using these as opportunities for exploration and discussion about Papatūānuku, Tāne Mahuta, and the plant and animal life observed.

- Role model an appreciation for nature, and talk with mokopuna about the benefits and joy of te taiao, the natural world.
- Explain why we say karakia before eating kai and before gathering food and resources from nature, and discuss tikanga with mokopuna.

Ngā tangata and te taiao connections

Create opportunities for mokopuna to learn about mana whenua (local iwi or hapū) and the relationship between ngā tangata (people) and te taiao (the environment).

- Plan excursions to local historical sites that are significant for mana whenua. Discuss with children why these sites are important.
- Engage in research with mokopuna to understand more about the stories and history of the local environment and ngā tangata.
- Involve children in caring for te taiao – for example, picking up rubbish when out in nature or caring for native plants and gardens in the setting. Talk with mokopuna about their connections to, and responsibility for, nature during these experiences.

Te ao hōu

Within an enabling environment, children communicate about their influence on people, places, and things and take action to support positive outcomes.

Belonging and inclusion

Ensure everyday kaiako talk, interactions, and play promote belonging and inclusion for everyone.

- Involve children in planning how to include their whānau in the setting. Mokopuna may be interested in helping to plan events and celebrations or helping to plan and create communications for whānau about what is happening.
- Invite and support mokopuna to champion inclusion. Notice when children are concerned about issues of inclusion, and expand on these opportunities to foster their sense of responsibility and advocacy.
- As children further develop their sense of identity, be aware of ways in which they might feel constrained by stereotypes. Have conversations about how everyone can be themselves in the setting. This includes challenging gender stereotypes and assumptions about abilities and interests.

Collaboration and contribution

Provide and encourage experiences in which children work together to contribute towards group wellbeing and learning and celebrate each other's unique contributions.

- Invite mokopuna to develop their own stories to act out, and support them to find roles for others to participate. Support children to negotiate roles and participation, and acknowledge each child's contribution.
- Support mokopuna to recognise and describe how they supported other children's engagement in play, and how other children contributed.
- Support mokopuna to initiate long-term group projects in areas that interest them, so that different children have opportunities to take turns leading and sharing their unique skills and knowledge over time. Highlight these different contributions in conversations with children, and show appreciation for everyone's contribution (e.g., by mokopuna who prefer to paint the scenery or gather props).

Considering multiple perspectives

Support children to consider their experiences and learning through different or multiple perspectives.

- Involve children in planning cooking experiences within the setting that include recipes reflective of different cultural traditions. Include identifying required ingredients and making shopping lists.
- Help mokopuna to share and gather information about different cultural traditions, including sharing their own, talking with others, and using books and online resources.
- Have open conversations with mokopuna about different family structures, including rainbow families, and encourage children to talk about their own family structure with pride.

Fairness and prejudice

Talk openly about fairness, prejudice, equity, and justice, supporting children to advocate for themselves and others.

- Support mokopuna to use the concepts of fairness and rights when talking about and responding to instances of discrimination or biased ideas. These instances may include interactions within the setting or be part of kaiako-initiated provocations (e.g., using books or puppets to explore discrimination).
- Use resources to share stories about Aotearoa New Zealand histories, including colonisation and Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Encourage mokopuna to think about the fairness or unfairness of actions in our history and what this might mean for how they understand the world today.
- Expand children's conception of fairness and justice to include people in the wider world who the children may never have contact with. Consider ways in which mokopuna can make meaningful contributions to social justice in the wider world – for example, writing to the local council about including equipment in the playground that disabled children can use.

Social conflicts

Support children to resolve social conflicts while also addressing words or actions that may be intimidating.

- Talk with children about experiences of intimidation. Validate and affirm children's feelings during these conversations.
- Discuss supports and strategies that mokopuna can use in situations when they feel intimidated or observe others who may feel intimidated.
- Support mokopuna to begin to see themselves as helpers, negotiators, and facilitators in social conflicts.

Advocating and supporting

Foster children's awareness of others and appropriate ways to advocate and support.

- Encourage mokopuna to be advocates for themselves and others. Discuss the importance of advocating for those who may need support in a situation.
- Invite children to reflect on times when they have stood up for others or looked after the needs or rights of others.
- Engage in in-depth conversations with children about social justice, including the importance of standing up for people in life and in the wider world. Talk openly with mokopuna about the impact of collective action for social justice.

Connecting with Papatūānuku

Engage mokopuna in things such as reusing, recycling waste, gardening, and experiences in nature to foster connections with Papatūānuku.

- Invite and support children in planning a garden 'diary' that is in tune with the seasons. The diary could include preparing soil, growing seeds, and planting in time to harvest.
- Use books and the internet to explore with mokopuna the impact of waste on the natural world and to talk with them about local solutions for reducing the amount of waste in the environment.
- Share information about environmental and sustainability activities to help children relate concepts of sustainability to their local community.

Ngā tangata and te taiao connections

Create opportunities for mokopuna to learn about mana whenua (local iwi or hapū) and the relationship between ngā tangata (people) and te taiao (the environment).

- Plan with children to participate in community activities implemented by local iwi and hapū. Share with mokopuna the importance of making contributions to these groups and projects.

- b. Offer creative opportunities for mokopuna to explore and develop their connections to te taiao – for example, through the visual arts, music, dance and drama.
- c. Support mokopuna to be advocates for te taiao and ngā tangata. Children may want to plan ways of communicating their ideas with the wider community (e.g., through a mural, poster, or item in the local newspaper).



Document

An example of how you could use Kōwhiri Whakapae to enhance your assessments and communication

In this section, an assessment example illustrates how you can use the information gathered in the previous three steps to enhance your documented assessments and communication. The example describes and tracks a child's learning progress over time in ways that inform ongoing planning. It also highlights the kinds of evidence, such as observations or conversations with whānau, that were used to support judgements and planning decisions. Finally, it shows how documentation can support conversations with children and whānau about a child's learning and progress.

After reading the example, think about how you currently document your planning and assessments and describe learning progress over time. Talk with team members and children's whānau to identify how your assessment documentation might better describe:

- › a child's current capabilities, strengths, and interests, with evidence (Notice)
- › a child's progress and possible directions for their learning (Recognise)
- › how you will support the child to progress over time (Respond).

Assessment example: Jonas' identity

This example includes four stories about Jonas, who is four years old, identifies as a boy, and attends his local Playcentre.

Jonas lives with his mum, Raquel, and māmā, Irene. His family strongly value inclusion and diversity and are proud of their rainbow identity. Jonas has chosen to grow his hair long and, when his family go out, he is encouraged to choose clothes that he likes, regardless of colour or style. This means he sometimes wears skirts or dresses to Playcentre.

This series of stories show Jonas' Playcentre journey, exploring his gender identity and the differences that occur for him after kaiako engage with the 'Social inclusion & action' area of Kōwhiri Whakapae during an internal evaluation. The learning stories are written by Jonas' mum, the centre facilitator, and other parents (all adults at Playcentre are considered kaiako). As you read the stories, highlighted comments will provide more information about the connections between their content, *Te Whāriki*, and Kōwhiri Whakapae.

See Kōwhiri Whakapae online for the [full sequence of learning stories](#).

This assessment illustrates Kotahitanga me kaitiakitanga | Social inclusion & action. To browse the complete suite of examples, see [this page](#) on Kōwhiri Whakapae online.

Recommended resources

Kaiako guide

He Māpuna te Tamaiti – Supporting Social and Emotional Competence in Early Learning

He Māpuna te Tamaiti is a resource designed for kaiako in early learning settings. It promotes proactive, intentional approaches to supporting the development of children's social and emotional competence. The book comes with a set of cards for use in daily practice and during professional learning conversations.

See *Te Whāriki Online* for the [full resource and its accompanying support materials](#).

Whānau guide

He Noho Tahi | Being Together – Social and Emotional Learning in the Home

He Noho Tahi | Being Together is a set of resources designed for whānau to foster their children's social and emotional learning in the home. The set includes videos, pamphlets, and a poster in te reo Māori and English.

See *Te Whāriki Online* for the [full set of resources](#).