

# Primary Principals Sabbatical 2009

Jill Weidenbohm



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## Focus

**To investigate the implementation of New Zealand Curriculum for learner's with special needs with a focus on Student Assessment**

## AUTHOR

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Sabbatical Dates: 20<sup>th</sup> July – 25<sup>th</sup> September 2009

## MY BACKGROUND

I have been teaching many years ago in the early 1970's and have been Principal for the past ten of these years.

As the Principal of Patricia Avenue School it is my passion to provide high quality holistic education for students with special needs.

I have worked most of my career in special education with an interest in new pedagogies to support the potential of the changing population of students with special needs in schools. I believe that only by constant reflection of practice, embracing innovative approaches and continuous development, which broadens our knowledge, can we impact the future.

It has been a privilege during my role as Principal to participate on a number of MOE advisory groups and working parties to review and develop new special education initiatives to extend the continuum of inclusion for learners.

On my current specialist school staff there is a multidisciplinary staff of teachers, specialists and therapists as well as learning support staff who work in a transdisciplinary model to deliver individual learning programmes for each student.

In 2009 I was privileged to be supported by my Board for Trustees for a one term sabbatical. This was a time for me to reflect and step back from the constant juggling of continuous paperwork, school leadership and management tasks that come with supporting the development of knowledge and skills to a large staff who work to make a positive difference for families and their special needs children's/young people's learning.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to

- the Ministry of Education for giving me the opportunity for Sabbatical Leave.
- the Patricia Avenue School Board of Trustees for allowing for my absence for a term and the wonderful staff who acted up during this time. It is great to work with committed and talented people and I am especially grateful to Mrs J. Roberts who acted as Principal.
- Special Schools in Northern, Central and Southern Regions who allowed me to visit. These Principals welcomed me and willingly took the time to share information and experiences. Together with their staff of knowledgeable, skilled and hardworking teachers, therapists, specialists and support staff, I shared in celebrating with students engaged in learning.
- all who completed my questionnaire when visits were not possible.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Report is a summary to share findings from my Sabbatical in term 3, 2009. The main intended audience is fellow Principals and those in the education sector working with students with special needs pre level one of the curriculum, throughout their schooling and who usually have tagged funding from Ministry of Educations ongoing Reviewable Resourcing Scheme (ORRS).

The main topic of study and application for leave was the implementation of the new New Zealand Curriculum including Assessment for learners who have special needs.

## PURPOSE

The purpose of the sabbatical was to investigate the new New Zealand Curriculum for the students with special needs who are pre level one learners.

It was an opportunity for professional sharing, networking and having professional discussions with colleagues throughout New Zealand.

Secondly, it was an opportunity for me to refresh and reflect about my role as Principal and the school I am privileged to lead.

## METHODOLOGY

- Reading of books and websites
- Contact schools
- Questionnaire to schools
- School visits
- Meetings to share with Principals and discuss areas of enquiry with key staff
- Conference – “Kai Mau Te Ha” third combined Conference of Australia Special Education Principals Association (ASEAPA) and Special Education Principals Association of New Zealand (SEPANZ)
- Information collation, analysis and write up
- Share Report

## QUESTIONNAIRE

A questionnaire was developed to send to schools that I contacted who were willing to share knowledge and/or able to accept a request to visit.

The questionnaires were sent well before the visit and provided me with a good understanding of those schools.. Questionnaire information enabled schools to gather documentation, and respond to the questions as well as times to be set up with appropriate staff prior to the visit.

⇒ *Refer Appendice I : Sabbatical Questionnaire for schools*

⇒ **To investigate the implementation of the New Zealand Curriculum including Student Assessment**

**INFORMATION**

- The most recent New Zealand Curriculum encapsulates the way in which special schools have always provided learning to students on an individual basis as their needs and abilities have been so different to their 'normal' peers. The new New Zealand Curriculum embraces all learners. For the first time all students fit within the New Zealand Curriculum. Gone are the days of adaptation of former curriculums. All students with special needs fit within the New Zealand Curriculum. These students no longer have an adaptation of curriculum that is one that is a 'bolt on'.
- Special Schools throughout New Zealand have expertise in curriculum delivery to students that is relevant, meaningful and achievable to reach their potential. The role and responsibility to provide personalised learning for students in New Zealand special schools has always been the core business of these schools.
- This new document challenges us to review, refresh and reconfigure curriculum opportunities, assessment, planning and reporting for all students which includes each student with special education needs.
- It is not only important that the work happens in each school but also that the work is shared across our learning communities, as this shared expertise will support and benefit all pre level one learners at any school on the inclusion continuum of learning.

**FINDINGS**

- i. All schools that I visited are doing work with their school communities beyond their school gate
- ii. In all places curriculum is a work in progress
- iii. There are a range of projects in progress throughout New Zealand and overseas for developing the curriculum work going on in schools for learners with special education needs.
- iv. There is a very positive energy throughout New Zealand specialist schools.
- v. Challenges are being met to fit new research findings, pedagogies e.g. Intensive Interaction, into thinking and discussion
- vi. Very reflective, robust and professional conversations are generating some very innovative outcomes
- vii. A variety of Curriculum Cluster Groups have been formed recently and the concept has spread with outcomes benefitting the emergence of other such groups. There was the CRSSC - Central Region Special School Cluster with MOE funding and support through Massey University. Fairhaven, Kowhai, Hohepa, Arahunga, Kimiora and Kapimana. Then there was the Waikato Curriculum Cluster, supported by a small funding pool

## PRIMARY PRINCIPALS SABBATICAL REPORT 2009

from participating schools, Hamilton North, Kaka Street, Kea Street, Goldfields and Patricia Avenue School. The background of this was as follows:

- established late 2007 by Principals who agreed to release one staff member for two days per term, being a Thursday and Friday.
- Each participating school took a turn in hosting the group over the two designated days.
- This initiative was funded by each school contributing \$100 to cover food, accommodation and some travel.
- The group reported on Friday morning to participating school Principals who in turn held their Cluster Meeting on the Friday to allow all to join with the project team to report their findings.
- Their brief was 'To consider the NZC and write foundation statements which describe how this curriculum may be delivered to meet the learning of students with special education needs'.

⇒ *Refer Appendice III : Central Cluster Curriculum Development Project 2008*

- Word of this spread and at the beginning of 2009, the Associate Principal of Patricia Avenue School, when attending an Auckland Special Schools DP/AP Meeting, was invited to share the 'Waikato/Bay of Plenty' Project.

viii. From Auckland Special Schools another curriculum group emerged, made up of interested Auckland specialist schools and Patricia Avenue School, forming a Focus Curriculum Group which is facilitated by Julie King, National Coordinator of the new SEPANZ [clickspedialednz.com](http://clickspedialednz.com) website. As this work develops, members of the group take this back to share in their schools and others that meet in the regions. Where groups do not meet, information is shared through the website. Regular updates of the work are posted on the website. View on [www.clickspedialednz.com](http://www.clickspedialednz.com)

ix. A framework is shaping that has relevance for students with special needs in any classroom whether in early childhood, primary, intermediate or high school. The Curriculum is set out under the Key Competencies, that is stated clearly in a Train Journey analogy, with the view to completing the boxes NZC "I can", "I Need", and leaving the 'Experience' strand to the school to develop as this will be the Learning Experiences developed by any school to achieve personal learning goals of the learner. The bottom row of boxes refers to the learning of each student and possible planning and reporting of targets/cohort groups. The draft document covering all Key Competencies was completed late 2009 with work in the very early levels to be developed in 2010. Here is an excellent example of the draft.

⇒ *Refer Appendice II : Key Competency - Relating to Others*

## OTHER FORUMS/INITIATIVES FOR SHARED LEARNING:

- **clickspecialednz** is an exciting new website launched at the 2009 September Conference 'Kia Mau Te Ha'. Supported by SEPANZ (Special Education Principals Association New Zealand), with resource contribution from special schools and a number of sponsors, this site provides a host of ideas, links and information. Contributions from teachers and therapists working with students in special education are available to colleagues working with similar students in other schools. It is a most professional website that is colourful, highly visual and easy to use with everything only three clicks away. This is an On-line Learning Community with seven areas:

1. News Room
2. Approaches to Learning Room
3. Curriculum Room
4. SEPANZ
5. Professional Development Room
6. Therapy and Specialist Room
7. Links Room

In the future, two additional rooms are planned:

1. Whanau Room (Parents/caregivers)
2. Learning Support Room (Teachers Aides/Support Staff)

- **The Learning Fair** – hosted by Auckland Special Schools on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> October (Call Back Day), this 'Teachers' Learning fair was organised to facilitate teachers sharing knowledge with teachers.

### **'Strengthen Collegiality - Celebrate our Work – Share Learning'** **Let's share what we are doing**

A number of DPs from Special Schools in Auckland and another from Hamilton met twice per term during 2009 to develop a Curriculum Framework for students with special needs, presented their work at this Learning Fair.

In 2010, the initial framework will be trialled in schools and the next step developed.

The National co-ordinator of [clickspecialednz.com](http://clickspecialednz.com), will continue to facilitate this project in the second stage of this project in 2010 focusing on students with special needs that have PMLD (Profound Multiple Learning Difficulties). It is intended to be formatted similarly to the current work. Other ideas in the future include electronic learning platforms that will sit alongside the project.

[clickspecialednz.com](http://clickspecialednz.com) has a regular Newsletter named 'Click News' to share information about the website and the project development which has a steady growth of interest including special schools and mainstream schools both in New Zealand and overseas

## ASSESSMENT

There are a number of assessments that are being used in special schools to gather information. The most common included:

- **P Levels** – This is an assessment tool developed in the United Kingdom for pre level one students. This was not intended be used as a curriculum. A UK Review of the tool has identified that there are areas that need refinement in Levels P1 – P3. This work is currently in progress in the UK following on extensive review of student assessment data gathered by OFSTED that included students with special education needs that reported P1 – P8 learning.
- **Central Regions Special Schools (Administration) Cluster** – ‘Literacy’ is a New Zealand document that was developed and printed in 2004/2005 (prior to the NZC). This is being reviewed so that the reprint will embrace the Key Competencies aspect of the new New Zealand Curriculum. A strength of this tool is that it is set out in a similar format to NUMPA (Numeracy Assessment Document) which is familiar to teachers in mainstream schools making it user friendly. There is also a CRSS Maths Curriculum Exemplar – ‘Number and Algebra’ which has an Assessment Booklet and CD with features of the work that New Zealand teachers are familiar with, making this work useful and supportive for teaching and learning.
- Many special schools have developed their own bank of exemplars captured using camera or video as well as text.
- **Narrative Assessment** – A Resource Booklet to support the New Zealand Curriculum Exemplars for Learners with special education needs. This is a Ministry of Education publication released toward the end of 2009. ISBN: 978 0 7903 3383 0

## CONCLUSIONS

The collation of information regarding the new New Zealand Curriculum and Assessment provides a summary of work that continues to develop for students with special education needs attending a special needs school, or maybe in regular classrooms throughout New Zealand and staff who work with them.

Appendices:

- Questionnaire to Schools
- Key Competency document – Relating to Others
- Central Cluster Curriculum Development Project 2008



Appendix I: **Questionnaire**

**Jill Weidenbohm  
2009 Primary Principals Sabbatical  
Visiting Special Schools in New Zealand & Australia  
Winter 2009**

**School:**  
**Principal:**  
**Address:**  
**Email:**  
**Type of School:**  
**Satellites:**  
**Therapists:**

**Information to gather on visit:**

1. Prospectus or Brochure	Yes	No
2. Staffing Structure, Organisational and Appraisal Data	Yes	No
3. Recent school focus areas	Yes	No
4. Principal's Reports to Board of Trustees	Yes	No
5. School Self Evaluation & Self Review	Yes	No
6. Current School Improvement or Development Focus	Yes	No
7. ERO Reports or similar	Yes	No
8. Information on Strategic and Annual Plan	Yes	No
9. Charter – Planning and Reporting Data	Yes	No
10. Student Assessment Data & Analysis	Yes	No
11. Newsletters to parents & parental and pupil feedback	Yes	No
12. Learning Support Assistants training, professional development and appraisal	Yes	No
13. Specialist Service Standards	Yes	No

**Context**

What age range of students and what type/sort of students with special needs do you cater for?

Where do you students come from? Transport Comments:

Do you have many students from different ethnic groups or from poor or disadvantaged backgrounds?

Section 9: Special School's admission criteria? What admission trends have you noticed in the last 5 years or so?

If you cannot keep/help certain children (exclusion etc.) – where do they go?

When pupils leave your school (routinely) where do they go next?

**Leadership and Management**

How long have you been the Principal here?

Please can you paint a picture of your Staffing Structure? What does your Senior Leadership Team look like? How does it work?

Tell me about succession planning you are undertaking:

Tell me about staff recruitment for teachers, therapists and Learning Support Assistants (LSA's) in your school:

How do you and your Board of Trustees go about strategic planning? What do they look like?

School Budget: Where are the stresses coming from on your budget?

What is your vision for the school over the next 2-3 years?

What are your three major strategic priorities for the coming 1-2 years?

How good/suitable are your buildings? What are the ways that you are meeting the challenges?

**Student Learning and Achievement**

How well do your students do? Are they getting a good deal? How do you know?

What student achievement or attainment data do you keep? What methods do you use to assess student progress over time? What are the most difficult areas in this?

How can you make comparisons between student year groups?

Benchmarking: Can you or would you like to be able to make comparisons between pupils at your school and students from other special schools or the same age pupils in mainstream schools?

What sort of student progress or cohort targets do you set on an annual basis?

Bullying: How do you manage this? How do you respond to challenging behaviour?

What three characteristics would you like your students to have when they leave?

**Training and Performance Management**

What arrangements do you make for staff training? How is it funded?

- Management:

- Teachers:

- Therapists/Specialists (if applicable):

- Learning Support Staff (Teacher Aides/Therapy Aides/Administration Staff):

What arrangements do you make for performance management (for the management? for teachers? for Support Staff?)

What arrangements do you make for staff appraisal (for the management? for teachers? for Support Staff?)

Do you offer any training to staff from other schools (mainstream or special)? If yes – where does your staff expertise lie?

- To which organisations?
  
- What content/topics?
  
- To which staff (teachers, therapists, LSA's, Caregivers)?

What are the special education pedagogies practised in your school?

**Additional Information**

Are your students happy? Are your families happy with the school? How do you know?

What formal monitoring of teaching and learning takes place in school?

How do you review your practice in school and decide on your strategic and operational priorities (self review)?

### **Inclusion & Itineration**

What inclusive opportunities (or integration opportunities) exist for your students? What are the issues you face?

How do you work collaboratively with your local network of mainstream (or special) schools – please can you give an example of good practice?

Do you offer Outreach support (on a casework basis) to mainstream schools? If yes – how does it work and is this funded adequately and timely



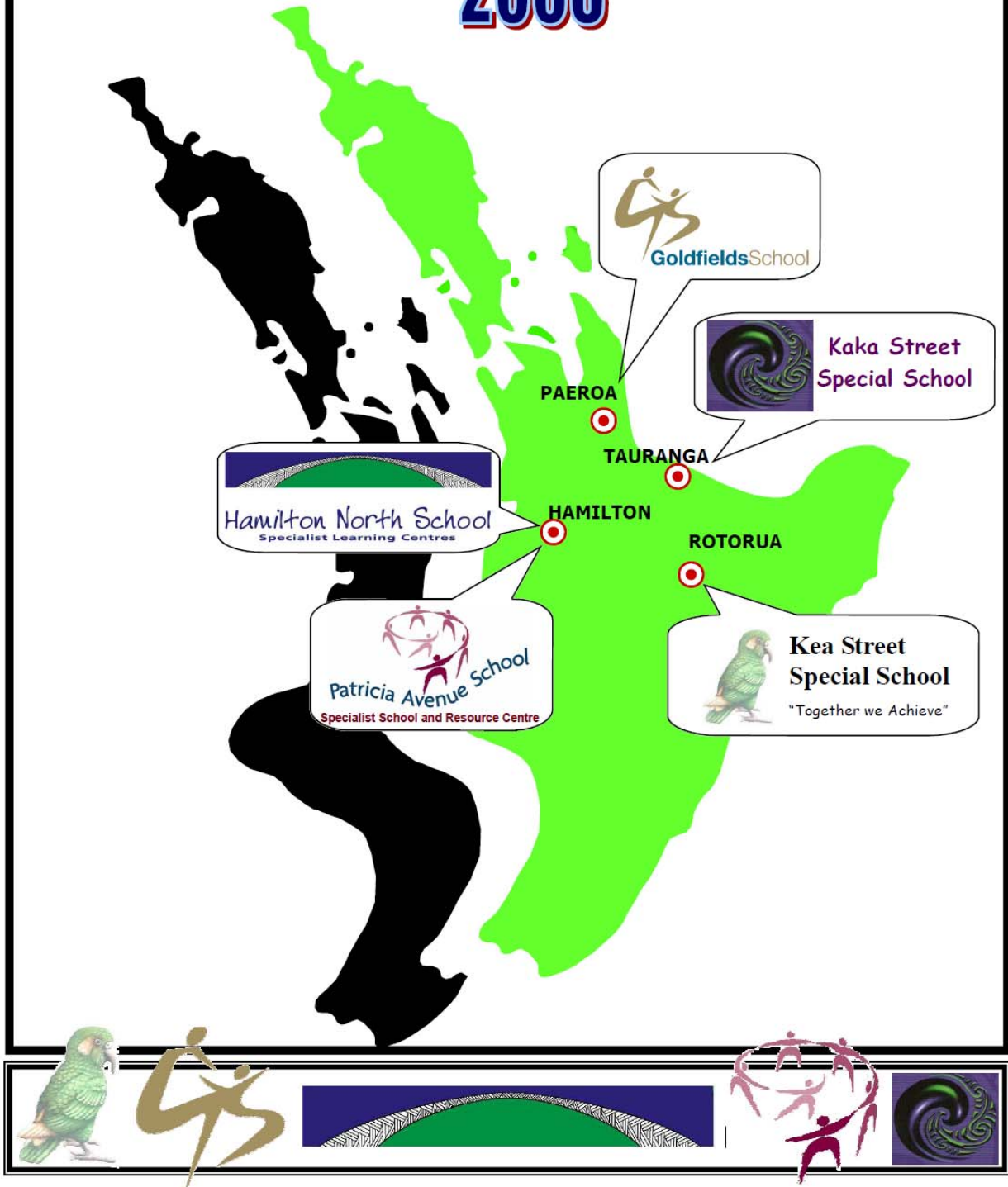


**RELATING TO OTHERS**

Interact effectively with a diverse range of people in a variety of contexts.

NZC	EXPRESS MYSELF	RESPOND TO OTHERS	LEARN WITH AND FROM OTHERS
I can	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Express my feelings and ideas.</li> <li>• Share my ideas</li> <li>• Display self confidence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listen actively</li> <li>• Understand the feelings of others</li> <li>• Understand the perspective of others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build relationships with others</li> <li>• Be a friend and make friends</li> <li>• Understand the effect I have on others</li> <li>• Negotiate</li> <li>• Adapt to different roles</li> <li>• Work effectively with others</li> </ul>
I need to learn	<p>8 Communicate feelings and ideas in a range of contexts with a range of people</p> <p>7 Communicate ideas in simple phrases</p> <p>6 Communicate feelings in response to a prompt</p> <p>5 Begin to initiate and express basic needs/ wants, likes/dislikes to others spontaneously</p> <p>4 Express basic needs/ wants, likes/dislikes to others when spontaneously</p> <p>8 Link up to 4 key words, signs or symbols in communicating about own experiences</p> <p>7 Communicate ideas about present, past or future events or experiences using simple phrases or statements</p> <p>6 Use phrases up to 3 key words, signs or symbols to communicate simple ideas</p> <p>5 Combine single words, signs or symbols to communicate meaning</p> <p>4 Express basic needs/ wants, likes/dislikes to others spontaneously</p>	<p>8 Listen attentively and respond appropriately to information and ideas about why and how</p> <p>7 Attend to and respond to information and questions from adults and their peers about experiences, events and stories</p> <p>6 Follow requests and instructions with 3 key words, signs or symbols</p> <p>5 Listen and respond to phrases that contain two elements when given a choice of two things</p> <p>4 Respond to simple requests and demands from others containing one key word, sign or symbol</p> <p>8 Be sensitive to the needs and feelings of others and show respect for themselves and others</p> <p>7 Show some consideration of the needs and feelings of others by taking appropriate action</p> <p>6 Show concern for others through facial expression, gestures or tone of voice</p> <p>5 Copy and label basic emotions in others</p>	<p>8 Begin to sustain a relationship</p> <p>7 Make purposeful relationships with others in group activities</p> <p>6 Be aware of and develop confidence and trust in adults and peers</p> <p>5 Maintain interactions with others</p> <p>4 Begin to respond to the feelings of others</p> <p>8 Be sensitive to the needs and feelings of others</p> <p>7 Show some consideration of the needs and feelings of other people</p> <p>6 Be aware of and begin to develop confidence and trust in adults and peers</p> <p>5 Maintain interactions with others</p> <p>4 Begin to respond to the feelings of others</p> <p>8 Show a basic understanding of what is right and wrong in familiar situations</p> <p>7 Consider the consequences of words and actions for self and others</p> <p>6 Be aware of the result of my own actions</p> <p>5 Respond in different ways to the feelings of others</p> <p>4 Begin to respond to the feelings of others</p>

# Central Cluster Curriculum Development Project 2008



**Midland Curriculum Development Cluster  
2008**

Goldfields School - Paeroa	Judy Martin
Hamilton North School - Hamilton	Leonie Matthews
Kaka Street School - Tauranga	Jo Crean
Kea Street School - Rotorua	Gillian Hughes
Patricia Ave School - Hamilton	Jennifer Roberts

Each school supported the project by

- Releasing one senior staff member for two days each term.
- Providing travel, accommodation and meals
- Providing the venue on a rotational basis

**Term 1**

Patricia Ave School

**Term 2**

Goldfields School

**Term 3**

Kaka Street School

**Term 4**

Kea Street School

**The Brief**

To consider the New Zealand Curriculum and write foundation statements which describe how this curriculum may be delivered to meet the needs of students with special education needs.

**Term 1**

- Described our learners, what they need to learn and how they learn
- Unpacked the Key Competencies

**Term 2**

- Considered best pedagogical practice and inquiry teaching

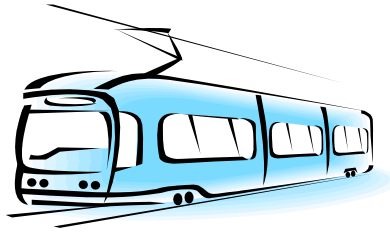
**Term 3**

- Began to unpack the Learning Areas

**Term 4**

- Interpreted the principles
- Discussed an integrated approach to the learning areas which would lead to developing skills in the key competencies
- Created a metaphor for curriculum delivery
- Set goals for the future

## A Learning Journey



The learner is the traveller  
The learning areas are the train  
Key competencies are the destinations  
Pedagogy is the track  
Professional development provides the signals  
The teacher is the train driver  
Therapists, specialists and support staff are the conductor, car attendants and all the other staff on the train  
The curriculum document is the schedule  
The IEP/PLP is the plan for the journey the traveller makes in consultation with important others  
The culture of the school determines the weather on the journey  
The Principal/Management is the station master  
The MOE provides the fuel

Our students are travellers going on a well planned journey. Their journey is NOT a destination by astonishment; it is a planned life long journey involving many people who are important to the traveller. Each traveller has different destinations, arriving in their own time at those destinations relevant to their individual learning.

It is important the driver maintains regular communication with everyone on the journey. If the traveller and the other people on the train are not aware of what the destination is, they don't know which stations they are stopping at or what they need to do on the way.

Journeys need to be fun, motivating, interesting, engaging, stimulating and relevant to the traveller.

The culture of the school determines the weather on the journey

Some journeys are worth taking more than once. But when a journey is repeated it is important to see things in a different way to pick up what was previously missed.

**The learning areas are the train; the key competencies are the destinations.**

## Who are our students?

- Our students are learners
- Our students have dreams and aspirations
- Their families have dreams and aspirations for their children
- Our students have rights and responsibilities as citizens of New Zealand
- Our students have an intellectual disability which impacts on the way they are able to process and retain information and problem solve
- Many of our students have physical disabilities and associated health issues
- Many of our students are on the autistic spectrum which compromises their ability to relate to others in the world around them
- Our students are aged 5—21 years and their chronological age may not match their developmental age

## In order to learn best, our students need

- Well being
- Engagement
- Guidance
- Their abilities recognised
- To be accepted for who they are and their potential recognised
- Open minded teachers
- Encouragement
- Ownership of their learning
- To feel good about themselves
- To understand the relevance of what they are learning
- High expectations to be the best that they can be
- To feel safe to take risks

## Our students require

- Individual programmes which are meaningful and relevant meeting each student's unique needs
- Holistic education:
  - Physical
  - Spiritual
  - Intellectual
  - Social
  - Emotional
- Appropriate learning environment
- Effective pedagogies
- Respect for individual learning styles
- Collaboration with family, school and other agencies
- Trans-disciplinary teams
- Time
- Real contexts
- Repetition/repeated exposure to skills and experiences in a variety of contexts
- Supported learning
- Scaffolding
- Modelling
- Consistency
- Range of communication styles
- Small learning steps
- Achievable goals

# PRINCIPLES

## HIGH EXPECTATIONS:

### BOT

The BOT is expected to recognise their responsibility to be a good employer and provide governance in a professional manner. They should be able to come to well informed decisions in a timely manner, be prepared to share their skills and expertise. They need to have a vision for the students in the whole school community; be prepared to access professional development relevant to their Board responsibilities and should be strategic team players.

### MANAGEMENT

The management are expected to be highly skilled professional practitioners. They must be seen to be approachable by the staff, be good communicators and be prepared to have the difficult conversations when necessary.

They must be able to delegate and be transparent, fair, have integrity and provide a role model for staff and students.

They need to possess curriculum expertise to lead the learning and to ensure staff remain knowledgeable and up to date with current trends in education.

They are responsible for providing well planned direction for the school and for establishing and facilitating a supportive culture where everyone can have a valued contribution.

### STAFF

The staff are expected to be flexible, resilient, committed to and enthusiastic about their work. They must be empathetic and be effective communicators, supportive to their students and their families and to one another.

They must be expert practitioners, able to adapt to change, be professional in their approach, engage in professional development and be prepared to contribute positively to the school culture.

### STUDENTS

The students can expect to be confident, independent and motivated to learn and have their communications heard.

They should feel a sense of community membership in their school and in their lives and have an expectation that they can contribute to their community.

They can expect to develop resilience and the confidence to be risk takers.

They will have positive expectations about their future and not assume limits to what they can achieve.

Students can expect to receive access to a wide range of therapies and specialist services to enable them to reach their full potential.

They will have self believe and be happy.



### **TREATY OF WAITANGI:**

The Treaty of Waitangi is the founding document of New Zealand and true to its conditions, our school will ensure that inclusion of and respect for Maori cultural values are paramount. The school community will embrace the Maori community through consultation.

There will be an expectation that the school will be sensitive to cultural beliefs and needs through knowledge and understanding. Te Reo Maori and Tikanga will be valued and respected.

### **CULTURAL DIVERSITY:**

Our school community and our teaching and learning programmes respect, value and embrace the cultural diversity of our students and the wider community.

### **INCLUSION:**

The students in our school are valued, wanted and fully integrated into the school curriculum and community. Inclusion in our school incorporates a holistic approach to the whole of their lives. We are proactive in our belief that disabilities will not be a barrier to inclusion.

### **LEARNING TO LEARN:**

Every student has the potential to be a learner. Students are taught strategies that are specific to them. These strategies enable meaningful learning and reflection to occur. The learning has to be owned by the learner if it is to make sense in relation to the learners' experiences. Students learn to recognise success in their learning. Students are engaged in self assessment and peer assessment. Partnerships between teacher, student, staff, and families and clarity of learning intentions are crucial for successful learning to occur. To access the curriculum effectively, students receive therapist and specialist services and interventions and a specialised learning environment.

### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:**

When school, family and the wider community form a positive collaborative working partnership, successful learning will occur for our students. The school will promote these partnerships by actively providing opportunities for involvement and engagement. We acknowledge that commitment is required by all parties to ensure successful partnerships are maintained. We value life experiences and opportunities as an essential tool.

### **COHERENCE:**

Education in our schools is meaningful and relevant. Pathways for learning are provided so that individual students are given every opportunity to reach their potential. Our students are lifelong learners who have a right to develop their own pathways for learning. Our schools develop links with a wide range of community providers / funders/ agencies, so that students and their families are receiving appropriate support services.

To access the curriculum our school provides specialised learning environments and specialised interventions through Therapy Services. We recognise the need for our

students to experience planned transitions in different environments in their daily life and through their various life stages.

Students need to practise learning in realistic settings to develop generalisations of their learning and skills in a variety of contexts. To provide a broad education students need to experience learning activities in both school and community environments. An holistic approach encompasses our provision of education.

**FUTURE FOCUS:**

Our students need to learn about their rights and responsibilities as a NZ citizen. Our students are able to make valuable contributions to the world they live in. Our students learn that when they use the principles of sustainability their lives and the lives of others can be enriched.

# Effective Pedagogy

## Teacher actions that promote student learning

These are memorable thoughts that came from the cluster views of effective pedagogy in Special Schools.

Teachers in Special Schools:

- Speak the language of the learner
- Understand differentiated learning
- Know what the point of difference is between mainstream and special schools
- Meet the diverse linguistic needs of our students
- Believe that everybody's learning journey is valid and unique
- Expect that each student is a 'learner'
- Work in multidisciplinary teams in trans disciplinary ways
- Develop personalised learning programmes
- Deliver curriculum that is relevant to individual development and learning
- Know that time, repetition and a variety of contexts are essential for learning to occur

## Creating a Supportive Learning Environment

### *In which*

- The learner feels valued
- Culture is recognised and valued
- There is an expectation that each student is a 'learner'
- The learning environment reflects the individual and caters for their needs
- There are skilled professionals
- There are committed Support Staff
- Partnerships with parents/caregivers are established

- Students have a voice in determining the culture of the learning in their class and the school
- There are working relationships with outside community agencies in health, disability and social welfare
- Individual differences are recognised and embraced
- Positive relationships are promoted (e.g. student with student / student with staff)
- The diverse linguistic needs of students are met
- There is routine and structure to create a predictable and safe environment that promotes and allows for independence
- Students have specific equipment to access the curriculum for their learning to happen

## **Encouraging Reflective Thought and Action**

### ***Through***

- Allowing time to process information
- Linking learning to meaningful real life experiences
- Providing opportunities for learning in many different ways
- Repeating learning skills in a variety of contexts
- Reinforcing learning of skills through repetition
- The provision of scaffolding so that reflection can occur
- Allowing students to make choices and experience the consequences
- The provision of experiences that challenge thinking
- Encouraging reflection through questioning and discussion
- Linking learning to prior knowledge so that connections can be made
- Teacher modelling to engage students in the learning and promote reflective thought

## Enhancing the Relevance of New Learning

### *Teachers*

- Are clear about **what** they are teaching, **why** they are teaching it and **how** they are teaching it
- ensure learning intentions and success criteria are clear to both staff and students
- Involve students in IEPs/PLP's / goal setting, providing opportunities to make decisions
- Encourage student ownership of learning
- Respond to their students' curiosity
- Affirm students' ideas
- Stimulate student curiosity
- Provide differentiated teaching

## Facilitating Shared Learning

### *Teachers*

- Encourage students to learn co-operatively
- Support students to learn successfully as part of a group
- Give students opportunities to present their learning to an audience
- Organise and plan learning groups – in class and inter class
- Provide an environment where everybody's learning is respected
- Recognise that everybody's learning journey is valid and unique
- Create a physical environment where everybody has the opportunity to be reflective on their own and each others learning
- Acknowledge their own learning journey
- Are flexible and responsive
- Work in a partnership with the student
- Speak the language of the learner

## **Making Connections to Prior Learning and Experience**

### ***Teachers***

- Use assessment information constructively to inform teaching for next learning steps
- Work in partnership with families to provide relevant generalisation experiences
- Respect the life experience students bring to their learning
- Plan to ensure maximum use of learning time
- Plan to ensure maximum use of resources - personnel and physical
- Understand the content of the curriculum
- Have a deep knowledge of learning progressions
- Understand the concept of 'best fit'
- Look to link learning with functional living skills

## **Providing Sufficient Opportunities to Learn**

### ***Students learn most effectively when:***

- Their teachers understand the students genuine needs
- Learning programmes are personalised to meet their needs and interests
- Multidisciplinary teams work in transdisciplinary ways
- An holistic approach is used
- School and family work in partnership – co-operatively and collaboratively
- Teachers know that time, repetition and a variety of contexts are essential for learning to occur
- Opportunities to practise are provided to retain new learning
- Opportunities are provided to generalise new skills

- The curriculum delivered is relevant to individual development and learning
- A teacher has a depth of knowledge of teaching strategies that can be applied to the unique needs of the learner
- Teacher subject knowledge allows for on-going assessment to monitor and sequence their learning experiences

## **Teaching as Inquiry**

- Teachers, students and support staff continually reflect on the relevance and impact of their teaching on their students learning
- Teachers, students and support staff are clear about what the students are to learn
- Teachers, students and support staff are clear about how and why they are going to learn it
- Teachers, students and support staff are clear about how they will know when students have been successful
  - Teachers, students and support staff are clear about what they will learn next

# The Key Competencies

## Thinking

<p><b>Challenging</b>  <b>Evaluating</b>  <b>planning</b></p>	<p><b>Analysing</b>  <b>Discussing</b>  <b>Creating</b>  <b>Making connections</b></p>	<p><b>Questioning</b>  <b>Choice making</b>  <b>Exploring</b></p>
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<p>Brainstorming          Debating          Giving options          Demonstrating          Problem solving          Risk taking          Using PECS          Recording          Experimenting</p>	<p>Role playing          Goal setting          Decision making          Modelling          Imitating          Experiencing/Exposure          Managing ones behaviour          Investigating          Talking          Evaluating</p>	<p>Eye pointing          Shared learning          Reflecting          Practising          Active listening          Using visual communication          Ownership          Trial and error          Comparing</p>
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## Relating to Others

<p><b>Communication</b>  <b>Interacting</b>  <b>Recognising Virtues</b>  <b>Following Social etiquette</b></p>	<p><b>Developing relationships</b>  <b>Respecting one self and others</b>  <b>Cooperating</b></p>	<p><b>Being empathetic</b>  <b>Sharing</b>  <b>Competing</b>  <b>Being sympathetic</b></p>
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<p>Active listening          Negotiating          Role playing          Situational behaviour          Taking responsibility</p>	<p>Networking          Discussing          Role modelling          Employing manners          Tolerance          Accepting different points of view</p>	<p>Group/community responsibility          Being supportive          Contributing          Making friends          Honesty</p>	<p>Respecting rules and the rights of others          Caring          Socialising          Turn taking          Respecting others' personal space</p>
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## Using Language, Symbols and Text.

<b>Communication</b> Visual language Body language New Zealand Sign	<b>Literacy</b> Intensive Interaction PECS Reading	<b>Numeracy</b> ICT Accessing Information Presenting Information
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Graphing Presenting data PECS Playing games Drawing Using the internet Cooking Shopping Tactile and sensory programmes Counting	Signing Communication boards Listening and speaking Gesture Asking questions Speaking using expression Using audio equipment Touch	Using visuals: Timetables, schedules, cues, labels, task boards, task  Using Assistive technology: Light writer, computers, page tuners, touch screen, big mac, smart board, chat box, alpha talker sequences	Facial expressions Writing Eye pointing Computer programmes Digital cameras Dance Drama Using video Playing music Using a phone Using a fax	Reading: books, pictures, Braille, sensory books, guided readers, recreational magazines' labels, papers, community & social symbols and signs
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## Managing Self

<b>Flexibility</b> Self management Adaptability	<b>Building Self Esteem</b> Becoming capable learners	<b>Confident Life Skills</b> Work Ethic Independence	<b>Resilience Resourcefulness</b> Enterprise Reliable
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Following routines Attending Managing time Independently engaging in daily living skills Enjoying life Supporting peers Employing strategies and skills for success Making personal decisions	Responding to requests Persevering Doing ones best Accepting social participation On task Turn taking Readily contributing Listening Accepting advice	Accepting consequences Attempting things Making choices Reliably accepting responsibility Exhibiting positive body language Expressing emotions appropriately Using Social stories	Completing tasks Participating Taking risks Self regulating when personally challenged Making positive choices Managing ones own personal care Setting personal goals
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## Participating and Contributing

<p><b>Membership</b>  <b>Respecting community values</b></p>	<p><b>Belonging</b>  <b>Having a sense of purpose in the community</b></p>
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<p>Recycling                  Reducing waste                  Taking school wide responsibilities                  Participating in national projects such as enviro-schools                  Participating in school productions                  Participating in celebrations                  Accessing the community</p>	<p>Developing sustainable gardens                  Self knowledge and a sense of being values                  Work experience                  Supporting peers                  Developing a sense of identity                  Participating in focus days                  Accessing the environment</p>	<p>Doing and helping with household tasks                  Hosing school events                  Socially accepting others in the group                  Are friends and have friends                  Working in partnerships with community e.g. media, charities, other learning institutions</p>	<p>Doing and helping with classroom and wider school tasks                  Experiencing cultural diversity                  Celebrating another's success                  Participating in sports clubs and/or events                  Sharing their learning with others                  Kapa Haka</p>
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