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Background to my sabbatical Focus

Background. Gate Pa School is an inner city Tauranga School ; decile 2 ; with multicultural mix of students with 50% of the children maori. In 2011 , after extensive community support, we set up our first rumaki classroom -level 1 -full immersion -y0-3. In 2014 we opened our 2nd senior rumaki class catering for y4-Y6- full immersion -level 1. In 2013 an idea came from our whanau hui meetings to explore the possibility of establishing an ECE facility in the area with the main form of instruction in Te Reo. For parents wanting to have their children learn Te Reo there were no facilities in close proximity. We also had the situation of children starting in our rumaki as a year 1 came with very little Reo and by having an ECE close by would address this situation. After exploring many options and then financial support from the MOE we were able to build a brand new facility on our school site. Te Puna Reo o Pukehinahina opened in May of this year and is run by two fully trained fluent early childhood teachers. It is also quite unique being located on the school site where they can share many other school resources and facilities. Our next focus as a centre is to build the roll.

Summary

I was fortunate to visit 7 Early Childhood Centres in Gisborne, Christchurch, Maketu, Rotorua, Pukekohe and Te Atatu. Five of these centres were well established Puna Reo.

The Puna Reo centres had been operating for many years , had full roles and waiting lists. These also had a full time administrator who looked after payroll , accounts , MOE/WINZ returns, enrolments , rosters - this person was not on the floor which left the lead teacher time to focus on the learning. For our new centre this showed that once our roll grows there will be a need for such a position.

Three of these centres offered lunch and employed a cook with the cost of this part of the fees. Parents were rostered on to make a contribution to the food by bringing in items each week. There were shared morning/afternoon tea brought by the children. All centres promoted healthy eating - fruit, water, reduction in sugar. For our centre the students are bring their own lunch box and food at this stage of our development this is something we could look at further when roll increases. We continue to educate parents as to what a healthy lunch is -just like we do with the school. Our Puna Reo centre receives fruit and milk each day as being part of the school.

One of the centres had two mini vans which were used to transport kids to/from the centre; having the vans had positives and negatives,. For trips/visits it was very handy not having to worry about parent cars , wof , registration, licensed drivers etc. The downside was it reduced contact with parents . Parents contact were made by the driver morning and afternoon on pick up and drop off but centre felt they were losing the

important contact with parents actually in the centre. They were reviewing their current transport arrangements with parents.

Implications for us were the same. Our centre manager is already finding she welcomes the contact with parents when they call in each day so they can be welcomed, know what's happening for the week, upcoming events, how they can help and give parents an update on how the day went. Perhaps a van for our centre is not a priority as we already have a school van the centre could hire at a very reduced rate for trips.

Centre fees were around \$4-5 per hour which confirmed our pricing structure as being in line with other centres. They maximised the hours and funding through MOE/WINZ- this is a big job when numbers get up - so on the radar for our centre is the admin role looming and the need to think about this position once numbers build.

All centres had a busy, engaging, active outdoor environment - kids obviously enjoyed the variety and interest this created. I was amazed at the range of exciting outdoor play facilities.

Children generally arrived from 8.00 onwards; after signing in parents were encouraged to stay; kids played for the first hour; then the first learning session started at around 9.30 with karakia, waiata, and new learning for the day; morning teas/lunch/afternoon teas together, grace. Most centres catered for working parents so were open until 4.30 -5 many though had children returning home at around 3. Flexibility of centre hours is necessary with the nature of parent employment.

I was interested in the marketing strategies each centre used. These included regular newsletters, Facebook, fliers and good signage. The main form of marketing though was by word of mouth; good news travels fast; parents spread the word themselves by their own social networks - facebook, twitter The centres are well established and have been operational for some years so are now known in the area. Implications for our centre is still getting information out to the local area but really working on our parents to spread the word- happy parents will generate more interest. Important we get fliers out to main businesses - eg Mitre 10; hospital so employees with young families are aware we exist as well. Once we have a reputation of offering a quality ECE in Te Reo we can have confidence that word of mouth counts.

All centres tapped into resources from the "Back of the chair" who are an important source of readers and other published materials.

Supervision - I had the opportunity to talk to the lead educator at Puna Reo O Manawanui for some time tracing their journey. It was so confirming because it reinforced the interest and support out there for parents wanting the Reo for their children. They had

staff from tv1 and 3 as parents, doctors and lawyers all wanting this option for their children. She mentioned the importance of “active supervision” staff supervising children which included being vigilant, proactive, anticipating situations before they arise so students are not ending up in rough play/squabbles, staff can't be talking to other staff members /parents they must be directly supervising. There was much Professional Development around this.

Another important aspect of this was the recording of accidents/incidents and being vigilant about this. If a child fell over - maybe a graze - even though minor -this was recorded; so when parents picked their child up at end of the day staff could mention - “O by the way Mary fell over in the sandpit at 12.00 - I put a plaster on and she was ok afterwards - but just thought you would like to know”. It was an important reminder to ensure our centre has high quality supervision at all times and recording all accidents or near misses is vital.

All centres had some form of networking between other similar centres. The Auckland Puna Reo centres had just held a regional hui over a weekend which was a network to share ideas/resources just like many education sectors do to upskill and inform educators. The spread of Puna Reos across the country probably now warrants a national conference of some type in the future.

When the children turned 5 nearly all the children enrolled in rumaki or bi-lingual classes in their area. Transition to school was planned out carefully. Many had the 4 year olds as a special learning group during a day and then important lead in visits to the rumaki they were attending.

Parent education was a focus for all centres. The reality of offering Puna Reo or Kohanga or rumaki/bi lingual opportunities for our maori parents is that their children are having exposure to the language during the day and are going home to english or very little Te Reo spoken. This is just the reality of this generation of parents who were not given the opportunities we now offer at school in NZ. The centres are addressing this in a variety of ways which included night classes, parent training sessions, communicating the poly tech courses and strongly encouraging parents to come into the centres ofte.

The opportunity of visiting these centres was very worthwhile. It was confirming for us that what we had created here at Gate Pa was creating a pathway now for parents and their children being able to learn the language. It was also very empowering to see meaningful whanau involvement and whanau having a strong voice. We think the Puna Reo operational and management structure suits our context with again the strong involvement of whanau.

A standout feature was the passion, dedication and commitment from the centre learning leaders. They were on the floor leading the learning with other teachers and the students. They had delegated the administration to a full time office manager.

PART B

I had the opportunity of overseas travel which helped to revitalise, refresh and energise me again in the role as principal. I also attended the ICOT -International Conference on Thinking in Bilbao Spain.

Attached are some notes and perspectives from the 2015 ICOT (International Conference on Thinking) held in Bilboa (Northern Spain). I will be using these to:

(a) Provide an overview to staff (The Menu) of the issues and topics addressed by a range of speakers/presenters These reinforce the 'global' nature of education directions debate.

(b) Overtime take aspects of themes developed by specific speakers as (summarised) and relate these to where we are as a school - as we progress the on-going review of our own wider school curriculum implementation and review process. - They will provide 'starters for 10' in professional discussions with the Leadership Team, and staff as a whole over time.

(c) I intend to develop a particular focus (revisit in some cases) the ideas of Guy Claxton around: (i) Character and Cognition (ii) Building Learning Power: The Nitty Gritty - This gives particular emphasis to the importance of establishing and reinforcing the 'school culture to facilitate a focus on "thinking" within the wider school curriculum. - The important role of taking parents along with school development initiatives around 21st C learning environment is an essential ingredient - therefore establishing means of progressing the home-school partnership around this will be part of our on-going school development, (note: Claxton is visiting NZ next March. A professional learning opportunity could be considered.)

(d) I will share some of the key ideas with the Board of Trustees, around 'thinking' and where this school is at in continuing to adapt our teaching to provide a learning environment for children that is addressing 21st C needs. Governance issues around finance, property, curriculum review, personnel will relate to decisions around this on-going review process.

1 I.C.O.T. Conference Report Debate and discussions about schools still revolve around: What children are learning? but more around How children are learning? (also confidence, independence, critical thinking) • What then does "thinking" look like in a 21st C Curriculum? (a) → Do you teach "thinking skills"? (b) → How is "thinking" integrated into the day to day curriculum/teaching? (Planned for? Evaluated?) - NZ Curriculum/our Gate Pa Curriculum? What does it say about "thinking"? (Key Competencies) (Some of the Keynote Topics and Workshops) • Making the most of the mind. (David Perkins) • Identifying and developing creative and productive giftedness (major challenge for 21st C learners). (Joseph Renzulli) • Good work in the digital area. (Howard Gardner) • Intelligent: How can we help our students become even more so? (Art Costa) • Positioning thinking in a National Curriculum: a case study from Northern

Ireland. (Carol McGuinness) • Key Competencies for the future. (Bill Martin) • What can education expect from neuroscience - and what it should not expect. (Bruno Chesa) • Character and cognition - teaching for the learning age. (Guy Claxton) • Cultural forces (and thinking). (Ron Ritchhart) • From critical thinking to critical learning. Generation Y case study. (Rafi Feuerstein) • Thinking-based learning: A methodology for transforming learning through the infusion of 'thinking instruction' into content instruction. (Robert Swartz) • Thinking and learning for today and tomorrow. (Karin Morrison) • Building learning power in the classroom: The Nitty Gritty. (Guy Claxton) • The Journey of Thinking Schools: The theoretical foundation of principles, models and research on thinking schools around the world. (David Hyerte) • Its bigger than teaching kids how to think - its about real learning. (Lane Clark) • Language and dialogue in the thinking classroom. (Carol McGuinness) • Creativity - a global issue. (Marga Iniguez) • Thinking through art (Shari Tishman) • Change: learn to love it. (Richard Gerver) 2 Thinking Conference ICOT (2,000 attended) Reflected in the when, where, why? Digital Age? Connected? The Conference Menu! Thinking for Constructive Communities • Design thinking for student led learning. (Ewan McIntosh) • Co-operative learning. (Paul Johnson) • Intelligence in the flesh: The bodily basis of thinking. (Guy Claxton) • Deep thinking and learning: It doesn't just happen. (Guy Claxton) • Cultural Acumen: Leading a team of leaders. (Brendon Spillane) • How to come up with great ideas: and actually make them happen. (Ewan McIntosh) • Challenging learning and the learning pit. (James Nottingham) So what??: Some detail follows 3 Art Costa: (Habits of the Mind) How can we make our students even more intelligent? • The focus on "thinking skillfully" - not thinking skills. • Direct instruction in thinking skills is needed for learners. • Use the terminology of thinking in the classroom (note the thinking verbs found in a curriculum e.g. explore, respond, compare. _____? _____? • Thinking about your thinking (metacognition) ("forming questions inside your head"). • Thinking together. • Thinking "big" (the big picture/enduring). Quotes * You must be the change you wish to see in the world. (Gandhi) * The best way to predict the future is to invent it. * Intelligent person: Knowing what to do when you don't know what to do. (Guy Claxton)

Carol McGuinness: Positioning Thinking in the National Curriculum (Ireland) • A pedagogical shift is needed to infuse 'thinking' within the curriculum. • A need to have broader learning zones (beyond literacy and numeracy) to more complex "capabilities" and "Key Competencies"). • Teachers' pedagogical skills need to be expanded to make Key Competencies a focus. • There needs to be content objectives and thinking objectives an the explicit teaching of thinking (immersion in subject matter is not enough). • The movement needed includes: - primary/dictative teaching to interactive dialogue - primary passive teaching to active and interactive learning - solo learning to co-operative thinking and learning - revisiting learning to deeper understanding and metacognitive and surface learning reflection • The importance of having curriculum resources/resourcing to support curriculum change e.g. classroom 'tool box') • The politics of change (lots going on in the education world) - thinking framework was introduced with lots of other changes at the time (tell us about it!). • Needs revisiting and aligning with current initiatives.

4 Rosemary Hipkins: Key Competencies for the future • The Key Competencies are ideas to “think with” as we change the learning our children experience in schools. • Key Competencies (capabilities) are not “skills” as such. • “Rich Learning” opportunities bring things together. • Using language/texts/symbols should have been called “making meaning” in the NZ Curriculum. • Children expand their learning when it is in contexts they understand. • Emotional engagement in learning contexts is very important - therefore rich learning using the Key Competencies. • A plan for learning should include - a goal for now - a goal for the future - within an interesting context - • An important shift in focus from: - curriculum content and prescribed assessment to self-assessment • There is a self-review rubric for teachers/schools on the NZCER website. • Take a look at the NZCER website ref: Rosemary Hipkins. • Get hold of the book “Key Competencies for the Future” - R. Hipkins.

Guy Claxton: Character and Cognition (Keynote How Children Succeed) • Children who have been helped to become: - resilient - imaginative - curious - collegial - enthusiastic readers • fare better in life! They also do well in tests!! • Character strengths are powerful indicators of success in life. How do we do it? Develop 21st C learning habits. 1. Organise and design your own learning. 2. Learn to think on your feet. 3. Persist with difficulty. 5 1. Manage your attention amidst competition. 2. Question and check knowledge claims. 3. Forming effective teams and study groups. 4. Check and improve your work. 5. Adapt multiple perspectives. • Create the right ‘culture’ for learning (it’s not rocket science), (ref. - plant analogy, relationships matter) • Tools: using the ‘wonderwall’. • Cultivating learners. • Cultivating self evaluation. • The “3 sides of character” - self-control; sociability; learning (responding well to challenges and disappointments). • The importance of a ‘character curriculum’. • Resources ⇒ www.learningpower ⇒ www.educatingruby ⇒ The World Beyond your Head (American author) • Books: Guy Claxton - Expansive Education - New Kinds of Smarts - Educating Ruby (Parent education is very important to effect change! This addresses this issue.) * Workshop Building Learning Power: The Nitty Gritty (Guy Claxton) • “To be happy in a complex and uncertain world requires a positive and confident attitude towards complexity and uncertainty.” (aim of education??) • We live in a world in which we have to “make it up” all the time. • An “expansive school” trains our kids to: (Indicators?) (Within a school learning culture?) - ask their own questions - research independently 6 - think on our feet - check what we have been told - adopt different perspectives - use our imagination to learn - be bold and try new things - help ourselves when we are stuck - check and improve our own work - seek and value feedback - work well in different groups - listen carefully and respectfully to others - concentrate despite distractions - become our own teacher - plan and anticipate our learning journey - persist intelligently with difficult things What does this look like in practice? • Students give feedback to the teacher on the lesson (2 stars - and a wish for improvement). • Establishing a ‘coaching’ environment. • A distracted child hasn’t got the above skill set (they need to know what to do in a learning situation). • “Stretch and grow” the above skills as children get older. • An “expansive” education strengthens children’s learning capacity/minds/learning. An “Efficient” school trains us to: • “It’s not that we need to add things to our school

curriculum but developing further what we are doing now.” So what? • A series of small, subtle but significant “habit shifts” by teachers in how they: - retain information - discuss ideas - justify our thinking - perform accurate calculations - solve well formed problems - practice small essays - produce small essays - accept criticism - achieve targets (standards) 7 The teacher’s role is to model, teach and coach these things (teacher sees themselves as a sports coach?) Building Learning Power Suggests? - talk to, or about, children - design their classrooms - design lessons - model learning - record and report information about children - involve children in designing learning - structure the timetable - work together - lead others • Note down 5 things you are going to change this term - and do it! e.g. using a “wonderwall” (writing questions to find out about things you want to know) : use a ‘riskometer’ (stretching adventurousness) !!! over-stretched statement !!!! under-stretched statement • Children in pairs designing their own problems to address. • Address death by worksheet! (worksheet free day/week) • Less use of erasers! Remember: • Children who get things right the first time, every time, is a dysfunctional view of “brightness”. • Mistakes are our friends/our teacher. • Display a chart: “things to do if you get stuck” (prepared by children). - ask a friend - read the question again * children become less dependent on the teacher? • Put up posters with messages that celebrate ‘resourcefulness’, ‘have a go’ initiatives - in the classroom - in the staffroom • ‘Work in progress’ displays on the classroom wall (not just the laminated good stuff). • Posters showing/turning characters into ‘learning heroes’ e.g. Shrek, or children as learning heroes. • “Helping Lamar” concentrate (a tool) for a lesson. undistracted!!!!!! distracted 8 What “significant” changes have you made to your teaching practice in the last 5 years to address a changing school/learning environment?? X X X - sets up a ‘challenge’ for a child that is achievable, a clear task - encourages them to become their own coach - empowered to address his own problem _ The Journey of Thinking Schools: (David Hyerie) “Thinking Schools” - is an international development • Living in a global world. • Need the ability to address change rapidly. • Need the ability to adapt/develop pedagogy to facilitate the learning process. • 3 Key areas 1. teaching for thinking 2. teaching of thinking 3. teaching about thinking • 3 Principles 1. all children are learners 2. a focus on ‘student centered’ models 3. content and explicit thinking • How do you integrate thinking into the curriculum?? - learning models/methods facilitate this - ‘creativity’ opportunities are important - inquiry methods are in place - a set of ‘dispositions’ for student character development form a key part of the curriculum. • Assessing/examining “outcomes” for a “Thinking School Approach”?? - increased self-esteem/confidence (children/teachers?) - independent learners (children/teachers?) - raised achievement - deeper understanding - skills for life-long learning • Book Resource: growing thinking students in thinking schools: David Hyerie 9 “Stance” and the Practice of Leadership: (Jeff Clanon) • Body language is important. • Your own stress/anxiety is picked up by others. • The ‘stance’ you take effects the outcome. • ‘Stance’ can become habitual. • Awareness/intention/attention/embodiment are key elements of ‘stance’.

Change: get used to it and learn to love it: (Richard Gerver) • E.D. Hersh: “Knowledge is power.” ??? Is it? • At 5yrs old - we drop kids into a “pre-set” system of learning. • Stress

- comes from a lack of control over your life. • No one has problems with change when you can control it. • Change (stress) is challenging/anxiety and apprehension is seen when: - something new is suggested - there is tension and rigidity in novel situations - self-medication (alcohol/drugs) - tendency to complain during new experiences - a focus on negatives not the positives of a new experience • Great leadership should empower others. • Get past the barriers to address change - move to the spaces. • 5yrs olds? - should be about self-learning/imagination. • We are obsessed with “curriculum” (content) - how children learn is the most important. • Employment mantra (Apple): “We will never employ someone who needs managing!!” Therefore? - grow children who don’t need managing?! - grow teachers who don’t need managing??!! Self-starters Book: “Earth from Air” _____ 10 Cultural Acumen: Leading a team of leaders Beyond answers to better questions: (Brendon Spillane) • Most of the time we think alone. • What I am saying is not necessarily what you are hearing! • Why is there such a difference between leadership intent and impact?? • An open-door policy is not about ‘me’! (I thought that went rather well for both of us!!) • Our times: Are they the “ice age” of the human heart?? • We are having to reconsider what it means to be human - who are we now?? • The way we are working isn’t working? • ‘Wisdom’ needs to follow us into leadership. • Leadership - don’t take things personally - be prepared to show some humility. • Being a ‘gate keeper’ is important (in the scheme of things). • Everyone is fighting a battle you know nothing about - be kind - always (personnel). • Wise leaders/teams: - listen - suspend judgement - ensure ‘voice’ is widely acknowledged - show respect • “It’s a disaster to lose sight of the stars.” • What should we stop doing around here? • Our times require the genius of the group - we do better together. Book Resource: “Speed of our Times” ! ! ! “The Shallows” - Nicholas Carr 11