

**Primary Principals'  
Sabbatical Report**

**Linking Library  
with Learning**

**A study of how library can be developed  
into a multimedia learning hub  
in order to further facilitate student research**

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## Executive summary

The rapidly increasing ability to access information through means other than traditional book sources challenges school libraries to function in ways other than being simply a transactional place for book exchange. At the same time, the burgeoning use of ICT in classrooms is reducing the need for stand-alone ICT suites so schools need to look at ways of linking the two facilities in order to create effective multimedia learning hubs to support classroom teaching programmes.

## Purpose

The purpose of this study was to investigate good practices that are happening in school libraries with a focus on:

- Effective links between classroom teaching programmes and library usage
- How multimedia is being effectively incorporated into school library learning programmes to support classroom teaching programmes
- How schools staff their libraries to provide effective learning links with classroom teaching programmes.

## Background and rationale

The New Zealand Curriculum (2007) provides a context for the development of student ICT skills by stating that 'Schools should explore not only how ICT can supplement traditional ways of teaching but also how it can open up new and different ways of learning' (p. 36). The curriculum also states that 'Effective teachers stimulate the curiosity of their students and require them to search for relevant information and ideas, and challenge them to use or apply what they discover in new contexts or in new ways' (p. 34). Both of these notions suggest that a research-based curriculum using ICT as a tool to enhance learning is vital to student achievement. An effective school library/ICT/information centre, linked closely to classroom teaching programmes, provides a positive vehicle for meeting these requirements.

The Principles of the New Zealand Curriculum (2007) contain two statements, in particular, that relate directly to the development of the library as a multimedia learning hub within the school – 'Learning to Learn' and 'Future Focus' (p. 9). In the Jean Batten School Charter, specific mention is made, within these two areas, of the school's commitment to developing students as lifelong learners:

- *Learning to learn*
  - Students being taught, and encouraged to develop, higher order thinking and reflection skills
  - The nurturing of independent learning skills
  - The use of inquiry learning as a teaching methodology.
- *Future focus*
  - Use of inquiry learning strategies to investigate, problem solve and consider local and global issues that affect us all
  - Developing skills and confidence in the use of information communication technologies.

In our constant endeavour to provide literacy and numeracy programmes that allow students to attain the National Standards, it is important that ready access to a wide range of information is provided, along with a wide range of appropriate methods for gaining that information. Development of the school's library/ICT/information centre as an effective multimedia learning hub is therefore a logical step towards further supporting the teaching practices that have a positive effect on student learning while meeting the New Zealand Curriculum requirements of 'Effective Pedagogy'.

At Jean Batten School the school library and the ICT suite have always been two individual units with the library being used, primarily, as a transactional place for book exchange. The ICT suite has been used predominantly as a place for reinforcing publishing skills and teaching 'just in case' skills that the students might need as part of their learning. The move to wireless technology throughout the school has meant that much of the work undertaken in the current ICT suite can be devolved to classrooms and this allows us to look at using the library/ICT suite in a different way – as an integrated Information Centre.

The focus now is on how to develop the school library, with its extended ICT facility, into being a multimedia learning hub that will further facilitate student research. Ways of incorporating current contexts for study into displays and hands-on tasks within the library setting along with the teaching of 'just in time' ICT skills that meet the needs of current contexts is seen as being the way forward.

School staffing that is funded by the Ministry of Education does not allow primary schools to have full-time teacher librarians. For effective links between classroom programmes and library usage to occur, skilled library staffing is vital to drive library function beyond the preparation, repair, issuing and shelving of books. Placing high value on trained teaching staff who can work alongside teachers to develop their programmes and support their work in the library is the logical next step for schools wanting to develop their libraries as learning hubs.

## **Methodology**

During my sabbatical I visited, or connected with, a number of principals, teachers and school librarians, both in New Zealand and Australia, to discuss how they link classroom learning to library programmes and how they were developing this aspect of their school learning culture to meet the increasing availability of information through multi-media sources. I used some of my time researching on-line and attended a course, 'Extending Horizons: A Refresher for School Leaders and Experiences Library Teams', presented by the National Library of New Zealand.

## **Findings**

The school library today is expected to function at a much more sophisticated level than was expected of the traditional library. The traditional library has, generally, been utilised as quiet place to study, read, and find books, either for recreational reading or to support aspects of learning. Today's library, however, is required to be a technologically-based facility which, amongst other things, can be used by students and teachers for acquiring information that is being produced at an exponential rate in electronic formats, as opposed to traditional print-based formats. In order to ensure that students are able to access this information effectively and efficiently, the library has to become a place where students learn how to learn (Fullerton-Rawlins, n.d).

As a consequence of my investigation, I believe that the development of school libraries into multimedia hubs that support classroom programmes hinges around four key areas:

- Staffing
- Resource provision
- Collaboration
- Timetabling.

It is also important to note that the school's philosophical stance on helping students to become researchers (often based on a school-wide research methodology) will also be a key motivator that will drive the development of a library/ICT information centre.

## Staffing

Selection of library staff is pivotal to the effective running of the school library in terms of its management, its development and the key interactions with staff that need to occur for the library to be an effective part of classroom programmes. Much has been written about the changing role of librarians from simply being book processors who access new books and maintain the shelves in a tidy condition. Fullerton-Rawlins (n.d) describes the evolving role of librarians as their becoming curriculum collaborators, facilitators and instructors. She states that these roles do not preclude the traditional functions of reading guidance and the selection and organisation of reading materials but, a teaching environment that places increasing emphasis on technological competence and literacy means that much more is required of librarians today.

In her somewhat daunting 'Manifesto for 21<sup>st</sup> Century School Librarians', Valenza (2010) lists the many and various competencies that librarians are expected to possess to fulfill their role today. She describes ways that librarians need to go about the promotion of reading and the skills needed for accessing the information landscape utilising web searches. She discusses the librarian's role in developing the library collection to encompass the multitudinous needs of students in the accession of information, while being mindful of issues around access, equity and advocacy. She looks at the librarian's role in the promotion of collaboration amongst students and ways in which they can create together and then share their work with appropriate audiences. She emphasises the vital role of ensuring that copyright is recognised and that information ethics are adhered to whilst utilising more and more new technologies that allow students to interact in social networks as part of their learning. And along with all of the above, she states that librarians are also required to interact with classroom teachers to ensure that they meet the needs of classroom programmes whilst keeping themselves abreast of changes in technology and teaching methodologies that will affect the future of the library they are working in. Such a list of competencies raises questions about who should be staffing a school library these days to meet such diverse needs.

The Ministry of Education and National Library of New Zealand (2002) cite the following examples of desirable competencies and personal attributes of library professional staff

- Specialist skills in integrating an information process approach into student learning environments (classroom and library)
- Knowledge of information and resource management and of library science and information science, including ICT applications and systems
- Experience in curriculum development
- An understanding of information management in an educational and organisational environment
- The skills and knowledge of a highly competent teacher
- Knowledge of education management and administration
- General management and organisational skills
- Knowledge of curriculum information resources in all formats, including electronic formats
- The ability to model effective uses and integration of information sources, services, and ICT in their own work
- Enthusiasm for, and in-depth knowledge of, literature for children and young adults
- Highly developed communication and interpersonal skills
- The knowledge and skills of a proficient ICT user
- The ability to act as a role model and mentor for students and teachers in the information literacy programme
- A student-centred focus
- A collaborative approach to teamwork and the ability to enjoy such interaction
- An ability to see 'the big picture' (for example, across the whole school or the whole curriculum)
- Positive attitudes towards their own abilities and new challenges
- The ability to empower others
- Confidence and the ability to present ideas to others effectively

If we are to offer our students the best learning experiences in the library information centre it would appear that the days of libraries being run by well-meaning, dedicated teacher aides are over. Many of these teacher aides have acquired a lot of valuable skills over the many years that they have been involved in running their libraries but, the competencies that are being listed for a 21<sup>st</sup> century school librarian would indicate a considerable amount of professional experience in the role beyond that of a person who has simply grown into the job over time. In no way do I decry the work of such teacher aides (and the teachers with library responsibility who have worked alongside them to the best of their ability whilst running full-time classrooms of their own) as I believe that they have kept school libraries functioning to the best of their abilities against considerable constraints of time, funding and professional knowledge. I am simply putting forward a case for having purpose-trained teachers released to work full-time in libraries (ably assisted by knowledgeable support staff) if we are to truly meet the needs of students in this rapidly evolving, information-rich, technological world. It is not fair to demand more of willing teacher aides unless they are fully professionally developed to undertake the role, and paid accordingly!

In the schools I visited/contacted, a range of staffing options were utilised:

School	Staffing
Papatoetoe East School	Part-time trained teacher (was full-time initially) Full-time teacher aide/resource manager
Viscount School	Full-time trained teacher with considerable library experience Part-time teacher aide/library technician
Waterlea School	Part-time trained teacher (Deputy Principal) in overseeing role Full-time teacher aide resource manager
Guildford West School	Part-time trained teacher (15 hours per week) Part-time resource assistant
Ramsgate Public School	Full-time trained teacher Part-time resource assistant
St Mary's Catholic Primary School	Part-time trained teacher with library qualifications (15 hours per week)
Jean Batten School	Part-time trained teacher/ICT specialist (20 hours per week) Part-time teacher aide/resource manager (10 hours per week)

In all of the schools that I spoke to, the value of having a trained teacher released to work alongside the teacher aide resource manager was seen as being vital to the role of developing the links to classroom programmes.

### Resource provision

New Zealand primary schools do not enjoy the provision of Ministry of Education-funded teacher librarians. In order to staff their libraries, schools use operational grant funding to provide support staff to work as library resource managers and, generally, allocate the role of 'teacher with library responsibility' to a classroom teacher who shows an interest in the role and who is prepared, in most cases, to work in the library during their morning tea and/or lunch breaks as well as outside their classroom teaching hours. Some schools manage to juggle staffing allocations to provide blocks of release time so that the teacher with library responsibility can work in the library while classes are present but, as often as not, this allocated time gets gobbled up with library administration work so there is little chance for any real liaison with classes, and their programmes, to take place.

Australian state and Catholic schools are granted teacher librarian staffing as part of the overall school staffing allocation, according to a funding formula based on student numbers.

Failure to provide staffing provision for school libraries would appear to be a somewhat short-sighted policy decision on the part of the New Zealand Government. School library information centres with qualified librarians and/or teacher librarians are rapidly becoming a vital component of 21<sup>st</sup> century learning. The highly complex curriculum of today requires specialist support in the teaching of information, critical and digital literacies. Students require access to high quality literature and

information resources along with quality teaching that will help them to become discerning readers and thinkers. For many students the school library will continue to be the main reading and information resource (book, non-book, Web) available to them. Libraries will need to combine everyday social media and Web tools with library services that enhance critical thinking and evaluation tools (SLANZA, 2012). Again I ask the question, is this what we must demand of our current library staff considering that many of them are unqualified and have classroom work commitments beyond their library duties?

Recommendations made by the School Library Association of New Zealand Aotearoa (SLANZA) made in its 2012 submission to the Education and Science Select Committee on the 'Inquiry into 21st Century Learning Environments and Digital Literacy' were:

- That the select committee recognise that the effective teaching of digital literacy requires face-to-face teaching to provide a framework for using ICTs tools and the internet
- That the select committee recognise that while we need to be thinking about new purpose built schools and learning environments, for the early part of the 21st century we will be working in traditional school buildings. We need a shift in pedagogy to create effective and flexible learning environments within them, rather than renovations
- Having a school library should be a requirement of all primary and secondary schools
- That the government should commit to the target of having a teacher librarian and/or a qualified librarian in every primary and secondary school
- That teacher education courses include qualifications for teacher librarians
- That principals and other senior leaders undergo professional development in how to most effectively use the school library and the specialist positions of teacher librarian and librarian
- That the Ministry of Education establish a business unit to support school boards on ICTs issues

SLANZA has appeared before the committee to speak to its submission but is still awaiting an outcome from its work in this key area. It is to be hoped that some, if not all, of the recommendations might be implemented in the near future.

In the schools I visited/contacted, staffing provision was made as follows:

School	Staffing
Papatoetoe East School	The teacher librarian is released as part of the classroom release time funding. Library lessons are taken by the teacher librarian to release classroom teachers. The teacher aide/resource manager is funded from the school's operational grant.
Viscount School	The teacher librarian is fully released as part of the schools staffing organisation (along with senior teacher/syndicate duties). The teacher aide/library technician is funded from the school's operational grant.
Waterlea School	The teacher librarian fits in oversight of the library as one of her roles as the fully-released Deputy Principal of the school. The teacher aide/resource manager is funded from the school's operational grant.
Guildford West School	The teacher librarian (15 hours per week) is funded by the Australian Government. The part-time resource assistant is funded from the school's operational grant.
Ramsgate Public School	The teacher librarian (full-time) is funded by the Australian Government The part-time resource assistant is funded from the school's operational grant.
St Mary's Catholic Primary School	The teacher librarian (15 hours per week) is funded by the Australian Government.
Jean Batten School	The teacher librarian/ICT specialist and the part-time teacher aide/resource manager are funded from the school's operational grant.

## **Collaboration**

The school library is a learning environment central to the development of an information-literate school community (Ministry of Education and National Library of New Zealand, 2002). Collaboration between the library staff and the classroom teaching staff is critical to the successful creation of this learning environment. To be effective in supporting classroom programmes, library staff members need to know and understand what is being taught in the classrooms so that they can prepare resources that will complement classroom activity. To be effective in utilising library facilities in order to extend and develop their students, classroom teachers need to work alongside library staff to determine how the library staff and resources can be utilised to best support their programmes. It is vitally important that library and classroom teaching staff collaborate effectively about upcoming classroom programmes, and about programmes currently being taught, in order for the library information centre to be a valuable extension of the classroom, and to play an important role in the development of information literacy.

Library staff and teachers collaborate to:

- Boost student achievement by sharing knowledge, expertise and resources
- Add an extra dimension to student learning by co-creating opportunities to build deeper knowledge and understanding
- Model the development of personal learning networks
- Experience the benefits of teamwork, shared responsibilities, exchange of ideas and be able to model these to students
- Actively participate in a professional learning community (National Library of New Zealand, n.d)

Library and classroom teaching staff can collaborate across many different levels simply by seeking opportunities to work together in small ways, to begin with, and then widening the commitment as time goes on. A starting point may be seeking assistance from the library staff to provide resources that will enhance a teaching programme and, from this small beginning, collaboration could expand to library staff and teachers jointly designing, teaching and assessing units of work. Opportunities for collaboration might include:

- Working together on specific learning outcomes for students
- Working towards a common goal with a shared vision and shared objectives
- Jointly planning, teaching, reflecting and reviewing
- Gathering, analysing and reporting combined evidence of student learning outcomes
- Collectively assessing student work (National Library website)

The Ministry of Education and National Library of New Zealand (2002) cite the following critical success factors in developing a learning environment that is central to the development of an information-literate school community:

- The school's staff share an educational philosophy of and a commitment to a school-wide information literacy programme in which the library plays a critical role
- Library staff members have information literacy expertise and work collaboratively with all teaching staff in the information literacy programme.
- All school staff practise and model information literacy skills and behaviours.
- The library's impact on the development of students' information literacy is measured as part of the school's assessment process.
- The library provides an environment, resources, services, and systems that support the school's information literacy programmes.
- An ongoing professional development programme in information literacy is established for classroom teachers.
- Flexible scheduling is in place to allow for library use on an 'as-needed' basis (see also pages 32–33).
- The library's ICT infrastructure supports the information literacy programme effectively.

‘A school library information centre that is a Learning Commons - a physical and virtual environment where students, library staff and teachers work and learn together - is a great environment for collaboration. A Learning Commons is designed to encourage cross-curricular participation, promote curiosity and support inquiry teaching and learning’ (National Library of New Zealand, n.d). A library that is developed as a central information hub should therefore be able to provide services, resources and technology for the learners which will enable learning to occur anywhere and at any time. Technology allows flexibility in collaborative work as instructional activities do not need to take place in the same physical space or at the same time

Clearly the collaboration that is described goes beyond paying lip-service to the notion by simply asking the library staff to provide resources. It is a school-wide philosophical shift that requires all staff (classroom teaching and library) to ‘buy in’ to the collaborative approach in order to best provide learning opportunities for their students. It requires a breaking down of role stereotypes – the library staff, in the collaborative role, would no longer be seen as ‘book managers’ as they would have a pivotal role in planning, designing and delivering units of work for students, a profile on a par with classroom teaching staff. To achieve this level of collaboration the statements made in the ‘staffing’ and ‘resource provision’ sections of this report pertaining to quality of library staff required, and funding to ensure that quality, become highly pertinent. Again, we cannot expect the well-meaning, dedicated but unqualified library staff to work at the level described without significant financial input, and professional development.

In the schools I visited/contacted, collaboration between library and teaching staff occurred as follows:

School	Staffing
Papatoetoe East School	The teacher librarian attends all planning meetings and creates library displays that support the programmes that are planned. She teaches traditional library skills (searching, comparing information etc) school-wide in order to upskill the students and she supports teachers with their programme resources. Cyber safety is progressively taught as a key part of her teaching role. Competitions are generated to link library activities to classroom programmes and these are run school-wide. The teacher librarian regularly surveys teachers in order to gain feedback about library use and the programmes she runs.
Viscount School	The teacher librarian is fully involved in school-wide planning of units of work and she develops library programmes to support these units. In her role as teacher librarian, and as a syndicate leader within the school, she drives the school-wide inquiry approach and ensures that all teachers are working at the correct stage as the units progress throughout each term. She is responsive to teacher needs regarding the teaching of library skills and will take ‘just in time’ lessons on aspects of library work (eg. Dewey System) to support teaching programmes. She links the school’s research tool to teacher needs and supports staff by giving them ideas about what they should teach next in the research cycle along with providing relevant resource material. She also provides ‘just in time’ ICT support to staff and students, relevant to their needs.

Waterlea School	Both the teacher librarian and the teacher aide resource manager attend planning meetings and are involved in initial concept planning and writing WALTs and learning intentions. The teacher aide/resource manager finds out what resources will be need to support teaching programmes and goes about making/orgaining them in the library for staff to utilise.. She works alongside the teachers to support them when they come to the library to teach the planned units of work and supports students who come to the library for research etc. The teacher librarian is on call to support teachers as required. She checks in to the library daily to see programmes in action and puts time aside to develop booklets that outline specific teaching programmes (particularly around library skills) that are to be taught each term. She also surveys staff and students on a regular basis to ascertain satisfaction with the library support programme.
Guildford West School	Staff meetings occur weekly where the teacher librarian is given the opportunity to share and promote any new resources with the staff. The teacher librarian also promotes the Premiers Reading Challenge. The teacher librarian attends stage planning meetings once a term where units of work are discussed and given out. One-on-one consultation with staff gives the teachers the chance to discuss individual resources requirements. A ‘Relief from Face-to-Face’ programme is established where the librarian shares control and planning of the units of work.
Ramsgate Public School	The teacher librarian focuses on links with classroom literacy programmes and promotes reading/books as her key role in the library. She attends staff planning meetings in order to become acquainted with classroom focuses in literacy for the term and develops programmes in the library to complement class work.
St Mary’s Catholic Primary School	The librarian attends level planning meetings at the beginning/end of each term. As with all learning programmes, the library programme is evaluated in the context of how it has supported student learning. When planning is initiated for the next term, the librarian is a not only a valued resource person, but also has input as to how her library programme will link to and support classroom learning. The librarian also attends whole school planning when the school has a specific focus such as Book Week, Literacy Week, Numeracy Week, or when learning involves a social justice issue, a values initiative or a student wellbeing issue. The librarian attends all weekly Professional Learning Team meetings, participating in all decisions related to improving the engagement of children in the learning process.
Jean Batten School	Library staff does not, as yet, attend team planning meetings. They do, however, meet with individual teachers to discuss how they can support teaching programmes. At this stage liaison with teachers is working particularly well in terms of ‘just in time’ ICT skills provision and working with groups of students in specific information searches. Some work is being done to provide resources to support learning programmes but this has been limited by time restraints for library staff. Displays that reflect current units of work, school-wide, and examples of student work as part of those programmes is a feature of the library/ICT information centre.

### **Flexible timetabling**

If a school has made the philosophical decision to promote an inquiry-based curriculum then it is important that students have access to information as and when they need it. The school library information centre is the logical source for such information and guidance and, as an extension of the classroom, it can offer access to a range of information sources to support the classroom programme.

Traditionally school libraries have offered 'library time' on a fixed basis, often weekly, and have simply been a transactional place for exchanging books and, perhaps, the teaching of some library skills. However, as the drive to promote inquiry learning increases, so flexible timetabling of the school library information centre becomes a more desirable option to support that learning style. Book exchange does not necessarily have to occur during valuable class teaching time if the library information centre is open before and after school and during break times. Whole classes do not need to go to the library information centre to exchange books at the same time – groups of students could, instead, go and select books as part of their 'tumble' during instructional reading time. Most library skills can be taught in the classroom and do not require being taught in the library information centre.

Flexible timetabling means providing open access to the library information centre throughout the day, rather than only during a scheduled 'library time.' It means the disbanding of the rigid timetabling of regular library times for each class and allowing teachers to schedule their classes (or groups of students, or even individual students) into the library as needed, for appropriate lengths of time, to suit the learning activity that has been planned. The educational value of providing access to information 'just in time' (when students need to investigate further), rather than 'just in case' (when students are provided with lessons presumed to have a future value) is widely recognised. Flexible timetabling offers students this opportunity (McGregor, 2006).

Donham van Deusen and Tallman (1994), cited in McGregor (2006) describe three types of scheduling (timetabling) apparent in schools: fixed, mixed, and flexible. Fixed scheduling is described as a situation in which a group is scheduled to come to the library information centre for instruction or to use resources on a regular basis (often weekly), for a set length of time, and often for the entire school year. Flexible scheduling is described as a situation in which the library staff and the classroom teacher plan together for instruction and/or use of resources based on student learning needs in each curriculum unit and schedule on that basis. The schedule is arranged on an ad hoc basis and varies constantly. Donham van Deusen and Tallman found that a substantial number of schools actually operated on a mixed schedule utilising aspects of both models.

Moving to a flexible timetabling system is not an easy transition for schools as many teachers are set in their ways about how they like to utilise the library information centre. Long established routines of weekly visits to the library for a story, a lesson, or a borrowing session are difficult to break away from, with the recognition of other possible formats not necessarily understood or valued (McGregor, 2006). However, as mentioned earlier in this section, if a school has made the philosophical decision to promote an inquiry-based curriculum then all aspects of how the curriculum will be implemented need to be considered and having library information centres available to students 'just in time', with qualified library staff, working in collaboration with their classroom teachers, who can assist and guide them during their visits would appear to be a valuable way for the school to operate.

Of all the schools I visited/contacted, only Viscount School offers truly flexible timetabling. The library is open before and after school, as well as during breaks, and students, and their parents/caregivers, utilise the extended opening times to exchange books. During class teaching times individual students, groups of students and, at times, whole classes book to visit the library information centre to work in the many varied areas and activities that the centre provides. All of the other schools, Jean Batten School included, operate on what has been described earlier as a 'mixed schedule' with many of the schools working towards a flexible timetable but not, as yet, having had the courage to make it mandatory!

## **Implications**

The face of the school library is changing. Public libraries are diversifying and starting to offer everything from community information and activities to opportunities for social interaction on line. Similarly, school library information centres are beginning to re-evaluate their roles and expanding what they can offer to students. Deeply embedded in the role of the library information centre is the promotion of reading and the opportunity for library users to research utilising the range of tools (book, non-book and Web) that the centre provides. This role needs to continue and to be developed to embrace a school's culture of inquiry learning.

However, the traditional, quiet research space that the school library has always been is having to adapt. People no longer have to go to a library to find information and so the library has to find ways to get people coming in for different reasons. Students now require somewhere to socialise, create things, collaborate and share their outcomes (Vangelova, 2014). They need spaces to find, present and share information in traditional and non-traditional ways, and they need to work alongside staff (classroom and library) who understand their learning goals and can support them in achieving them. Thus libraries need to become dynamic work spaces that cater for the full range of student requirements, not just the limited transactional activities that have been commonplace up until now.

A significant implication of the changing face of the school library is the role that librarians need to play to meet the needs of the school's inquiry learning programme. As curriculum collaborators, librarians will need to be fully acquainted with the school's curriculum and they will need to work alongside the teaching staff to provide the most appropriate teaching and learning teaching resources to support classroom programmes. They will need to offer learners a place for independent learning and support students to take responsibility for acquiring information for themselves. They will need some knowledge of different learning styles so that they can meet specific needs and guide students appropriately. They will need to be able to facilitate the use of new materials and assist students, and teachers, to fully utilise the use of technology for accessing and disseminating information. Librarians should also be able to assist teachers in becoming more creative and innovative in teaching through recognition of the fact that technology is changing the way we teach and learn in a positive, somewhat more exciting, way. Consequently they will need to work alongside classroom teachers to develop innovative teaching techniques, utilising the computer and multi-media equipment, in order to become more creative in presentations (Fullerton-Rawlins, n.d). This is a very different, challenging and exciting role for future school librarians.

Schools will need to become more creative about the way that they fund teacher librarians and library staff. To fully meet the needs of school-wide inquiry learning, collaboration with teaching staff, flexible timetabling and the provision of 'just in time' resourcing, full-time library staff will need to become the norm in schools, possibly employed beyond normal school hours if they are to meet with classroom teachers during their planning meetings and provide before, after and during break time access to the library information centre for users. To provide this would cost significantly from already stretched school budgets so it is probably time for submissions to be made to the Ministry of Education for funding of teacher librarians (as part of the overall school staffing allocation, perhaps according to a funding formula based on student numbers) if school's are to meet the Governments expectations regarding the principles of the New Zealand Curriculum (particularly 'learning to learn' and 'future focus') and the achievement of National Standards.

## **Benefits**

All schools that have made the philosophical decision to utilise inquiry learning as a school-wide practice will benefit from the restructuring of their traditionally transactional library to a library information centre that is a multi-media hub for learning. The freedom for students to access appropriate information and ICT skills 'just in time' coupled with strong collaboration between their classroom teachers and the library information staff can only enhance their learning experiences.

In the case of Jean Batten School, the greatest benefit gained from undertaking this study has been affirmation of the steps we have already taken towards creating a multi-media learning hub that incorporates the library and the ICT suite. An enforced joining of the two facilities in 2014 (to accommodate a class that became displaced because of building renovations occurring in another part of the school) has shown us how effectively the two spaces can work together and, in fact, many staff members commented on how much they enjoyed the choice that the students accrued by being able to select whether to utilise computers or to move around the book resources during their visits to the library information centre. This, coupled with an developing level of collaboration between classroom teachers and the ICT specialist/librarian has brought about positive steps towards 'just in time' teaching of computer skills and on-line research skills to meet student inquiry learning needs. A definitive decision to implement this initiative school-wide will see a rapidly changing role within the library information centre over the next school year. Policy decisions around staffing levels and flexible timetabling will be made as a consequence of this study.

## **Conclusion**

Todd (2001) states that 'The hallmark of a school library in the 21st century is its actions and evidences that show that it makes a real difference to student learning, that it contributes in tangible and significant ways to the development of human understanding, meaning making and constructing knowledge. The school library is about empowerment, connectivity, engagement, interactivity, and its outcome is knowledge construction' (p. 3).

This statement very succinctly defines the crux of the rationale for developing library information centres (multi-media hubs) in our schools. The focus of all school activities is making a difference to student learning and every action we take within the school setting should be driven by this notion. In a world that is constantly evolving in the way we can access information, it is vital that we teach our students how they can benefit from this high level of access, not only by traditional book-based methods, but also by utilisation of the rapidly developing area of information communication technology. Alongside learning the skills of information acquisition is the need for careful selection of relevant information from the vast range available, as well as the need for learning skills to process and share that information. Schools, therefore, need to find ways to incorporate the teaching and development of those skills into their curricula and the utilisation of a carefully staffed, timetabled and resourced library information centre (multi-media hub) that supports classroom programmes, and a school-wide commitment to inquiry learning, may well be the answer that schools are seeking.

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