

Principal Sabbatical Report
Warwick Moyle, Kaharoa School, Rotorua.
May to July 2018



MY INVESTIGATION

To investigate the Reggio Emilia approach alongside play-based learning in the early years of primary schooling, and the impacts they have on children's learning and transition from early childhood education.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Much of my topic is related to readiness. The readiness of children to 'transition' and to 'learn and develop new competencies'. This sabbatical gave me personal insight into readiness as I struggled to transition from an average 60 plus working hours per week to having more personal time. This time highlighted to me how mentally and physically exhausted I was, how challenging it is to transition to a different context and how this sabbatical could have wider benefits as I reflected on how to work smarter across all levels of the school.

I am incredibly grateful for this time to restore my health, to have space to think and to listen to others outside the daily challenges in my Principal's role. It is only when you step back from the role and have others 'walk in your shoes' that you, and they, truly realise how consuming and relentless the role can be and yet how rewarding it can be to nurture the intellectual, social, physical and emotional growth of children.

I would like to thank and acknowledge:

- The Kaharoa School Board of Trustees for approving my sabbatical and funding my course costs while also supporting my need for a break. Entrusting me with the time to widen my own knowledge and experiences which can only benefit learning and teaching at Kaharoa School.
- My Deputy Principal who led so capably in my absence, with total commitment, dealing efficiently with the many and varied challenges that came her way.
- Kaharoa School staff who all stepped up in my absence.
- Junior teaching staff for using their professional expertise while daring to experiment with the exciting challenge of play-based learning.
- The Ministry of Education for providing this invaluable opportunity.

WHAT IS THIS ABOUT? (EXECUTIVE SUMMARY)

This report is a short description of the Reggio Emilia approach alongside my thinking and understanding of how play-based learning and Reggio Emilia relate to each other. It also explores the relevance of Reggio Emilia to our school situation. What relevance and application play-based learning and Reggio Emilia have to transitioning into the early years at Kaharoa School. What can be implemented at Kaharoa School to positively impact learning, teaching, children's progress and development of their learning competencies as they progress through their eight years of schooling.

Most importantly the sabbatical was an opportunity to take stock of what implications these approaches have to our current practices. To reflect on what we are doing well, what we could build upon, place more emphasis on or modify. What we could implement or discard as part of a review of our curriculum document and practice.

This report is essentially my noticing and wondering. A reflective journal, based on my visit to the city of Reggio Emilia in northern Italy and attendance at the early childhood course, attending two play-based learning courses and visiting play-based learning schools in New Zealand.

The importance of childhood development in their early years has strongly influenced my thinking and has always been important to me. This led me to:

- introducing the Roots of Empathy programme into Rotorua in 2010 and my subsequent involvement as a Trustee of the Roots of Empathy Charitable Trust.
- my involvement as a Trustee and Deputy Chair of the NZ Foundation for Character Education.
- attending lectures by Nathan Wallis.
- my subsequent visit to Reggio Emilia and related readings.

At Kaharoa School new entrant children in general being less 'school ready' than has historically been the case has further influenced my thinking for the need for effective transition into our school.

Though the Reggio Emilia approach was contextualised to the unique Italian setting I have looked for relationships and application to our school. Other practitioners may find relevant points of interest from this report for their own schools.

Finally, it allowed me time to reflect on my leadership role as Principal.

PURPOSE

To investigate

- The Reggio Emilia approach alongside play-based learning in the early years.
- The impacts play-based learning and Reggio Emilia have on children's learning and transition from early childhood education to the Junior Primary School.

WHY THIS FOCUS? (RATIONALE AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION)

Over the period of time I have been Principal at Kaharoa School I have noted an increase in the number of five year old children starting school who are not 'as school ready' or do not transition easily into what has been our traditional teaching practice and methods.

Over the same period of time there have been significant changes in education. These include many educational initiatives, interventions, new trends, policies and

technological innovations. Teachers and schools have had to prioritise and develop our understandings as we implement and apply these in the classroom.

The introduction and implementation of the New Zealand Curriculum (NZC) in 2007 was just one of these changes and at the time was seen as a positive pedagogical change. Staff at Kaharoa School enjoyed the challenge of developing an exciting school based curriculum.

The introduction of National Standards soon after was not seen in such a positive light and took our focus away from fully developing our rich curriculum. With National Standards came the associated assessment and reporting expectations. While teachers did benefit from new learning relating to expected achievement levels as children progressed up through the standards much of their attention and time were taken by data gathering, analysis and target driven assessment. We were captured by both external and our own internal pressure to accelerate learning. A disproportionate amount of time was spent by teachers focusing on and teaching to weaknesses highlighted by summative data in reading, writing and maths. This emphasis was at the expense of teachers' energy, passion, planning and their teaching time. It was at times also at the expense of delivering a broad, exciting, in depth curriculum whereby children's strengths, passions and interests could be explored and accelerated.

The way is now clear to refocus on a holistic approach which recognises and promotes children's strengths and provides new learning experiences and opportunities for children to discover new passions and widen their horizons. To make school fun and exciting again for children and teachers.

Play is an essential part of a child's social, emotional, physical and cognitive development. It allows them to test ideas, work through uncertainties, explore social interactions and make sense of the world around them.

My aim has been to find out more about the Reggio Emilia approach and play based learning. What are the strengths of these approaches and how can they be effectively applied in our context to enhance children's individual learning needs.

So the aim of my investigation was to look at

- what the research says about play (through course attendance and some reading) and how this could be applied to our context.
- the Reggio Emilia approach and what applications does it have (if any) for play-based learning at Kaharoa School.
- how we can effectively implement and support teaching through a play-based approach in our rural school of 200 children.
- the possible curriculum and resourcing implications.
- transition from play-based learning to a more inquiry based approach as children move up through the school.
- how to support staff who are adopting the play-based learning approach.
- how to assess, record and report skills and learning occurring during student's play activities.
- how best to engage our parent community.

ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN (Methodology)

Reggio Emilia Cultural Visit and Course

- attending a 10 day study tour to Reggio Emilia in Italy organised by Reggio Emilia Aotearoa New Zealand (REANZ). This week long Reggio Emilia course involved lectures at the Louis Malaguzzi Centre¹, a workshop and learning centre visits within the cultural context of Reggio Emilia in northern Italy

Play-based learning involved

- attending two one day 'Play in the Classroom' Longworth Education workshops.
- visiting similar schools in Tauranga and Auckland that are using this approach to good effect.

WHAT DID I FIND OUT?

Research

In Reggio Emilia infant toddler centres and preschools the teacher is viewed as a researcher. Their pedagogy is based on constant research and is responsive to theories based on cultural references such as Freud, Vygotsky, Dewey, Montessori, Piaget, Milani, Freire, Maturana, Bruner, Gardiner, Morin, Loris Malaguzzi.

Teachers are responsive to neurological research and understand children in their uniqueness have a genetic predisposition for learning, they have infinite potential abilities with 80% of synapses that children grow kept for life. Nathan Wallis' presentations support this. Teachers provide varied experiences and opportunities for dialogue which activate connections allowing children to re-describe the concepts learned. If children's minds are not activated by wide experiences, social relationships, by imitation in the neuronal reticulum of the brain, connections will be lost and reactivation will be difficult.

Reggio Emilia is all about social constructivism, an interactive process of exchange with others. It is not seen as accumulation of knowledge, but as a construction of meanings and understandings that allow children to interpret the world and develop skills. It is not about filling the child with information.

Kaharoa School embarked on our play-based learning path this year after recognising the need to cater more holistically for the needs of children transitioning to our school. A greater proportion of children were entering school less 'school ready'. Oral language levels were low, basic physical skills were poor and school entry assessments levels were not where they had historically been. We felt play-based learning environments reflected a developmentally appropriate response to our new entrant children's learning needs. Educational researchers such as Piaget and Vygotsky identified a fundamental need for students in the 'Early Years' (ages of 3-7) to learn through play.

Children who are at the same chronological age can be at very different stages socially, emotionally and developmentally. Research highlights the role of play and its

¹ Loris Malaguzzi was the founder of the Reggio Emilia educational philosophy and together with the Comune and many local administrators he participated in the birth and building of Reggio Emilia's network of municipal preschools (3-6) and infant-toddler centres (0-3).

value in the healthy development of all aspects of learning – physical, sensorimotor, social, emotional and cognitive. When engaged in authentic play children are more likely to develop higher order cognitive and socio-emotional skills than if exposed to direct teaching and adult-structured learning opportunities.

Primarily, play is defined as:

- self-chosen and self-directed;
- process rather than product driven;
- contains structures or rules established by the players themselves - includes the ability to quit;
- imaginative, non-literal and removed from reality;
- occurs between those who are active, alert and non-stressed.

(Gray, 2013; Brewer, 2007)

The ability for the children to adapt and integrate into a play-based environment has been both compelling and exciting.

The challenge has been new learning and adaptations required by teachers. These have included;

- needing a strong belief and understanding of the play-based learning philosophy
- a strong knowledge of the curriculum (Te Whariki and the NZC)
- understanding of urges and application of provocations
- knowing the crucial moments (Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development) that their teaching knowledge and/or skills can be applied to support their student's learning through play.

The Reggio Emilia teacher as a researcher and observer has strong application to the play-based learning philosophy. The surmountable challenge for our teachers is to adapt from the data driven deficit approach to an observational strengths challenge based approach.

Values, Community Participation and Learning

Reggio Emilia schools closely reflect the community and place strong emphasis and value on social cohesion. Relationships are important. Living together and being together as a community and every person making a contribution is valued. There is an understanding that by listening to others and through building relationships with others you get to know more about yourself. Adults place a lot of emphasis on listening to others, providing waiting time, questioning and empathy.

Children with special rights (special needs is the more familiar term used in NZ) are provided with non specialist teacher support. This teacher looks after the child's well-being and relationships with other children. This does not involve inviting other children to support the special rights child but rather occurs naturally.

Participation is seen as a metaphor for relationships and learning and as the glue that binds everyone together. The belonging of parents, teachers' participating in the work of the children and children participating together is important. When parents bring children to school they are not dropping the child off, more becoming part of the group, with interactions in the morning forming the relationship. When parents bring children to school daily diaries set out the programme and this helps facilitate a face to face relationship.

Opportunities are also provided for afternoon visits by parents where parents can work as children do. These meetings with parents provide an opportunity to argue points of view, to interact and themselves be creative making furniture and resources for the children. The interesting group dynamic of parents as a group can be directly related to the concept of their children working together as a group.

There is power of partnership of the group with schools being seen as a place of people, of common action, improving together.

The values and theories of the educational project of Reggio Emilia are all about making visible the educational contexts and children's learning processes. The role of the teacher researcher is to view children as researchers as well and how they act in that role. Though the role of the teacher is something that is always being refined, this tension is a great motivation. Close observation of the children and knowledge of developmental stages leads to ways teachers can further develop and challenge the learning all the children. This allows teachers to act in the proximal zone of development.²

Teachers share with children how to get acquainted with each other while their strong knowledge of child enables them to know what to expect. It is regarded as important that children are exposed to risk and that trusting relationships are apparent.

Teachers share with children the goals of the activities. Collecting the children's words before a project starts, giving them a map of ideas which can open possibilities, while building familiarity with people and places. This gives children an opportunity to take more responsibility. Creating learning contexts with the children enables children to explore and experience the world. Children have opportunities for making explanations of the phenomena in the world around them and of giving shape to their ideas. What they think about that phenomena is a way for the children to position themselves or to situate themselves in the world. This approach recognises that learning is dynamic and not linear.

Teachers also share with children the idea of using time to reflect. So time is set aside each day for a meeting with children and they share what they have learnt, understood or achieved. Often on the following day children are invited to continue the activity they were on using multiple materials and opportunities.

Children are taught and develop the habit of looking at things from different points of view. This creates unique, amazing and sometimes funny graphics that convey personal thinking and comparisons that are shared and discussed. These convey the children's potential and highlights the importance of providing new and motivating contexts in everyday school life.

It was Malaguzzi's belief that conversations are the parliament amongst children. These conversations with children weren't adults continually asking questions rather children attuned to discussion, sharing idea the and listening to each other. The focus

² The concept, "Zone of Proximal Development" (ZPD) was developed by Soviet psychologist and social constructivist Lev Vygotsky (1896 – 1934). The ZPD refers to the difference between what a learner can do without help and what he or she can achieve with guidance and encouragement from a skilled partner. Thus, the term "proximal" refers those skills that the learner is "close" to mastering.

is very much on making learning visual through the use of learning walls, mind maps, Post It notes, brainstorm, story maps, drawings, artworks with teachers keeping previous work as models.

We heard about the 100 languages of Reggio Emilia. This is best highlighted by 'No way. The hundred is there: a pedagogical, social, political theory expressed through poetry' (L. Malaguzzi 1985).

The child is made of one hundred.

The child has
a hundred languages
a hundred hands
a hundred thoughts
a hundred ways of thinking
of playing, of speaking.

A hundred.

Always a hundred
ways of listening
of marveling, of loving
a hundred joys
for singing and understanding
a hundred worlds
to discover
a hundred worlds
to invent
a hundred worlds
to dream.

The child has
a hundred languages
(and a hundred hundred hundred more)
but they steal ninety-nine.

The school and the culture
separate the head from the body.

They tell the child:
to think without hands
to do without head
to listen and not to speak
to understand without joy
to love and to marvel
only at Easter and at Christmas.

They tell the child:
to discover the world already there
and of the hundred
they steal ninety-nine.

They tell the child:
that work and play
reality and fantasy
science and imagination
sky and earth
reason and dream
are things
that do not belong together.

And thus they tell the child
that the hundred is not there.
The child says:
No way. The hundred is there.

Learning through a play-based approach supports the 100 languages concept whereby children through active teacher observation and facilitation develop their languages with and through each other. Achieving an appropriate balance between direct instruction (viewed as the more traditional method of teaching) and self-directed, exploratory learning is the “art of teaching” (Robinson & Aronica, 2015,p.103).

The notion of ‘intentional teaching’ as a role for the teacher within a play-based setting also extends from Vygotsky’s concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD).

In 2004 the Cornerstone Values approach was implemented at Kaharoa School. The eight Cornerstone Values (Respect, Responsibility, Kindness, Honesty and Truthfulness, Compassion, Consideration and Concern, Obedience and Duty) and their objective definitions have been embedded across the school and community ever since. A play-based environment allows the children to not only develop key competencies but also to practice and build relationships through dynamic interaction that are respectful, responsible, kind, considerate, and trustworthy.

Parent support has traditionally been strong at Kaharoa School and learning stories include parents in their child’s learning to reinforce that support.

Resourcing

Loris Malaguzzi identified children as having theories that are soft in nature and that they can be changed at anytime by means of interconnecting languages. To assist in this process each school has a space called the atelier and the figure of the atelierista, a teacher with an arts background. In this way, the expressive and poetic languages became part of the process by which discoveries are made, knowledge is built and connections explored and made. Loris Malaguzzi saw these ateliers or laboratories as places where the children’s hands, rather than being bored, could enthusiastically converse with their minds. The understanding is that exploring a variety of topics through the arts will enhance knowledge, excite imaginations and make learning is pleasurable.

Whereas a teacher in a regular class will give correct procedure, the atelierista comes with the knowledge that each child has their own understanding and representation. Each child looks for different solutions, thus getting a variety of solutions. This tells the teacher a lot about how each child thinks and understands.

Reggio Emilia schools are resource rich, full of loose parts. These are made possible by forming partnerships with local businesses and the development of the Remida. This is a large recycling centre where new materials that have no value to the owners offer resources to schools for free once schools have paid an annual registration fee. The Remida is also a research centre a place to learn on professional development days. Once a year there is a Remida day that promotes new approaches toward

materials. Twelve tonnes of materials are reused each year in schools with materials collected from 200 companies for free. There is also a book exchange project.

Play-based learning also relies strongly on utilisation of loose parts. This is based on the theory of "an environment which is rich in open-ended materials and real materials, invokes children to experiment, engage, construct and invent; invites them to tinker, to manipulate and to play" (Nicholson, 1972)

Teaching and Documentation

Documentation at Reggio Emilia is a strategy to make learning and teaching visible and is an epistemological tool that provides structure and organisation. Working out how children are thinking individually and in groups has an impact on what the teacher is doing.

As researchers teachers begin with a hypothesis informed by preceding work and observations. This hypothesis also informs future work. Teachers observe children in context and begin documentation and interpretation using detailed notes and and focused photographs or video looking for clues to help offer a slightly different or new context.

Discussion with children is based on a world of possibilities rather than limitations with the teacher or atelierista making notes with the children as to how the project may evolve. Drawings and models from different perspectives by the children also makes learning visible. The teacher is very aware of the problems children might encounter however they prefer that the difficulties manifest themselves as part of the learning process.

The Reggio Emilia method of project and design allows for depth. By working in this way of process and problem solving through group discussion and review the children don't simplify, they tend to complicate. Everything that happens is documented like a screenplay as to how each child is interacting throughout the process.

Teachers use this detailed documentation when meeting and sharing together in a permanent process of evaluation and self-evaluation thus keeping the level of attention high.

This documentation provides teachers the opportunity to

- observe what groups and individuals are learning.
- think and tell, considering what children are thinking and feeling on three levels - cognitive, emotional and social.
- garner an understanding of learning through observation.
- document small group circulation of thoughts and ideas to see children thinking together.
- remember different opportunities offered and develop a continuum and capacity to modify processes, choose the next direction or next step and adapt teaching.
- provide a memory an understanding and an evaluation.

Documentation is shared with children to share with other children. Children's work and learning is kept as an ongoing record in individually named filing boxes, folders, charts and displays which the children have access to.

In the Reggio Emilia School for older children thinking and processes are documented and retained in wall displays, individual folders, teacher archives and teacher notes so that children's learning progress and process is visible.

The documentation allows collective thinking and sharing together with children as well as parents and teachers of actions, activity and the learning process.

At Reggio Emilia they believe professional growth is never completed and teachers are constantly trying to self-evaluate their own and others work. Formulaic experiences are never allowed to happen alone and collegiality leads to growth of others. The understanding is you need to get away from idea of stages and free yourself to build your own image of the child to focus on the real child, the individual. While not being limited by research/understandings it is still important to have knowledge of research and the learning stages.

Play-based learning stories are similar in many ways as they give a narrative description of the learning process rather than a documentation of the final product (for example the level attained or the learning achieved). They recognise the student as an active learner through observation and reflection allowing students, and their parents, a 'voice' in the assessment process. These records focus on key competencies and learning dispositions giving teachers a new set of 'eyes' on the learner. They also focus the teacher on the role they play in supporting the students urges and interests. Teachers require a strong understanding of learning theory along with Te Whariki and the NZ Curriculum.

The Environment

Reggio Emilia highlights the belief children have a right to environment, to beauty, to care for, to aesthetics, light, colour, materials, smells, sounds, microclimate. The capacity to look for the beautiful the aesthetic helps understanding and development of expressive language.

Environment is seen as the third teacher that designs its own projects in its own way and often doesn't need a teacher. The environment nurtures the quality and depth of the children's learning process and research in daily life. Young children have strong skills in perceiving through their senses and the surrounding environment provides endless stimuli. At Reggio Emilia they emphasise we do not give enough time to understanding the delicate parts of nature. Children are very aware, sensitive, they have an antennae for observing however we as adults do not often direct their attention to the extraordinary. Nature is still mysterious as we cannot see everything and we need to give children (and adults) time to observe. The approach is regarded as aesthetic and ethical.

Though most centres have a piazza, or central area, which highlights the importance placed on social interaction, there is no standard architectural model. Spaces are flexible and generally have good vision between them. These inside and outside learning areas are multifunctional with each area seen as having the same importance. The environment allows children to encounter and meet each other, share thoughts, change and modify the environment, take risks and explore challenges. Teachers and children use these spaces for a multitude of functions. Autonomy of the children is valued. All adults share responsibility regardless of their role in the Reggio Emilia schools.

Play through the play-based approach provides children with an opportunity to develop a stronger internal locus of control, as they are exposed to a variety of social situations, problems. This allows them to feel confident that they have the ability to overcome and 'problem-solve'. For children to be resilient to life's ups and downs, they need to be confident in their own ability to manage these - rather than relying on others to fix things for them. Play allows teachers to cater for children's learning urges which include gathering, transporting, deconstruction, construction, huts (enclosure), throwing (trajectory), enveloping, connection, posting, patterning and ordering, families, rotation, orientation, transformation, climbing, jumping, digging and burying, tug of war, tumbling and wrestling, running and chasing, playing with water, playing with fire. This offers an exciting creative challenge for teachers to cater for these learning urges within the physical constraints of our school.

IMPLICATIONS FOR KAHAROA SCHOOL

Reggio Emilia is very contextualised to the town itself and its history so resourcing a copy of the approach at Kaharoa School would be impossible. However there are many elements of the Reggio Emilia approach that can be adapted to suit and strengthen our setting. Play-based learning has many similarities and philosophies meaning it can be used as a conduit for many of Reggio Emilia elements.

Already through play-based learning after nearly a year the lift in our oral language results are very positive. So as a consequence of my visit we have either implemented or are looking to implement the following at our school

Strengthening our Teaching as Inquiry (TAI)

This would mean

- having fewer staff meetings and creating more meeting time and opportunity for teacher dialogue, reflection and robust questioning where teachers understand that this is in pursuit of learning improvement and research.
- developing coaching skills primarily of the leadership team and then throughout the teaching staff.
- creating more time for observation.
- creating clear expectations regarding documentation and purpose.
- a strengths based approach
- child focused formative assessment documenting progress with less reliance on summative data for data's sake³.
- building on our learning buddy approach and learner agency aiming to develop active and engaged listeners and respectful learners with strong oracy.
- the SENCO role taking more responsibility for target students by
 - creating more SENCO related time.
 - having a greater focus on identification and documentation of targeted students.
 - developing documentation systems of achievement progress and related interventions.
 - communicating regularly with teachers to track and support learning.

³ Formative assessment is in-process evaluations of student comprehension, learning needs, and academic progress during a lesson, unit, or course. Summative assessment are used to evaluate student learning, skill acquisition, and academic achievement at the conclusion of a defined instructional period—typically at the end of a project, unit, course, semester, program, or school year. ... In other words, formative assessments are for learning, while summative assessments are of learning.

- reporting interventions by teachers and progress outcomes.
- assisting teachers to involve and invite parents as partners in the learning.
- monitoring teacher communication with parents regarding child's progress.

Reviewing our Kaharoa School Curriculum

This would mean

- re-focusing on our Cornerstone Values. What do they look, feel and sound like in the different contexts at Kaharoa School and outside the school.
- our key competencies being the basis for a child-centred, culturally responsive curriculum.
- reviewing and developing our assessment systems so that it is timely, purposeful, strengths based, meaningful and varied. Allowing for self, peer and teacher assessment and parent input which highlights where the child is and what the next steps in their learning journey are.
- reviewing our reporting systems so that they are more learning story based, more child centred and have more child voice as they progress through the school.
- recognising at times planning needs to be retrospective.
- while recognising the quality of the final product builds resilience and pride, making the learning process visible and understanding the process is a very important part of learning. This can be achieved through learning walls which highlight thinking, teacher TAI and sharing, class dojo or seesaw, regular whanau information evenings.
- as children progress up through the school placing more emphasis on STEAM subjects. Utilise LEGO, coding and robotics as a natural extension for play-based learning.
- Ensure the value and importance of transition, play-based learning, the arts, learning buddies, oral language (listening and speaking) and viewing from different perspectives are highlighted.

Continual Emphasis on School and Wider Community and our Quality Rural Environment

This would mean

- continuing to support a strong transition programme coordinated by our New Entrant teacher.
- exploring the possibility of having an Early Childhood Centre at Kaharoa School.
- ensuring any junior block design fits in with play based learning and visible learning philosophy and has sufficient storage.
- introducing mindfulness into our practice.
- engaging community, past pupil and parent involvement as much as possible as an important part of developing the whole child. This could be through electives, productions, music, art, sport or any strengths parents may bring.
- ensuring parents feel communicated with and regularly checking through surveys and parent meetings and gatherings.
- building upon our inclusive and responsive school and community culture

CONCLUSION

Over the last few years with the focus on National Standards data I believe we lost sight of the importance of focusing on the individual child, the strengths and qualities they bring. In other words, what makes them 'tick', what 'floats their boat', what strengths and qualities can we promote and how can we provide for these qualities?

Much like the opportunity of this sabbatical some things are hard to measure as a snapshot. It is looking closely and critically at the subsequent journey that will direct and provide many of the answers. This means

- prioritising more of our energy and passion on inquiring and systems that support this.
- asking critical and challenging questions of ourselves and each other.
- being strong in our professional beliefs which can be justified by effective inquiry.
- effective communication between staff and with parents.
- knowing what is important and beneficial for Kaharoa learners and challenging what is not useful.
- seeing ourselves as researchers supporting each other to make a positive difference for each child's learning and their social and emotional well-being.

With a strengths based approach we can celebrate being part of an individual's development while enjoying contributing to a part of their learning journey and that of our colleagues.

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