



Tō Mātou Haerenga: te haere ngātahi me te whānau

Nā te kura o Herewini ki Rotorua



Our school

Selwyn Primary is a mainstream English medium school situated at the base of Mt Ngongotaha, Rotorua West. Our school also maintains an immersion unit. It has 3 classes, junior, middle and senior. The senior and middle school classes operate at level 1 Māori immersion, and the juniors at level 2 Māori immersion. The aim of the school is to eventually become a level 1 Māori immersion unit. The school has chosen to use *Te Marautanga o Aotearoa* as the curriculum document that guides all teaching and learning programmes in our unit.

The purpose of this snapshot is to provide a recount of our journey to create a graduate profile and localised curriculum.



Graduate Profile

Our graduate profile and localised curriculum are still developing. In these past months we have conducted 4 whānau hui. The first hui aimed at gathering data and explaining the development of a localised curriculum and graduate profile. Secondly, to glean an understanding of reasons why they send their children to our immersion unit, and in doing so, their aspirations for their children may be revealed. We were pleasantly surprised at how many attended the first meeting. There was approximately 75% of the whānau in attendance. We sent a survey out to those who were unable to attend. Very few responses were received, but, although few, it is still precious.

Localised curriculum: a wellspring

Gathering whānau thoughts was the purpose of the first and second whānau hui. Once this was done, we (teachers) analysed and grouped their thoughts. We organised their thoughts under the heading of puna, well-spring from the gods, well-spring from the ancestors, and well-spring from people.

The word ‘puna’ was taken from the schools motto, this being, ‘Te puna o te tūmanako’, ‘the spring of hope’. This motto comes from one of the local historical accounts, that is the story about Te Puna o Tuhoe. According to local folklore, it’s a fresh water spring that joins the spiritual world to the physical world.

The school has been using this motto for sometime, but its meaning has been lost. The story of its origins has not filtered through to current school personnel. Despite this, the motto remains and is used by the school. It’s displayed on the school logo, and the school has erected a concrete spring in the middle of the school.

We connected the thoughts held in Te puna o te tumanako to the histories of Te Puna o Tuhoe. In order that these whakaaro were truly understood, we took the whānau to see Te Puna o Tuhoe, which is at Mītai tourist attraction. It was there the whānau heard the explanations and genealogies about the spring. From this journey, the whānau could see, understand and came to embrace the aspects of Te puna o te tumanako.



At the fourth hui, we introduced the concepts of the 3 puna used to encapsulate the whānau thoughts. They were elated about the 3 puna. They approved all explanations. Then the thoughts started flowing about other things that could be added to each puna. In the end, the whānau have started to think about aspects of the curriculum.

Although we have been on this journey for some time, our localised curriculum is slowly coming to fruition. We can also see ways in which we can bring together the mainstream and immersion sides of the school, one of those ways is the historical account pertaining to Te Puna o Tuhoe. According to the whānau, all of those in the school should know about Te Puna o Tuhoe and its relevance to the whakapapa of the school and the immersion unit.

We are very pleased with the work that we have completed thus far. The whānau are happy because they can see their thoughts are acknowledged in aspects of the school curriculum.

There is much more work to do in front of us. Sorting, writing and agreeing upon the graduate profile and analysing and agreeing upon our principles, values and belief statements. The localised curriculum is present and we are currently delving deeper and wider in to this.

We want to acknowledge the families of the Selwyn Primary rumaki unit for their efforts thus far. The saying, ‘many hands make light work’ is very applicable. We also make mention of Maria Tibble, TMOA Facilitator for her supporting us in this project.