

CORE
EDUCATION
Tātai Aho Rau

PUSHING THE
BOUNDARIES
OF EDUCATIONAL
POSSIBILITY

A WHĀNAU CENTERED EVALUATION OF POIPOIA TE MOKOPUNA: HE PUĀWAITANGA HARAKEKE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Report to the Ministry of Education

Alex Hotere-Barnes, Amanda Jackson, Maria Tibble, Margaret Mohi and
Ngatai Walker.

CORE Education Ltd

February 2016

He mihi – Acknowledgements

Kei aku rangatira, e mihi ana ki a koutou. Koutou ngā tini whānau o te motu, ngā puānani o te reo me ngā tikanga Māori, ngā tumu whakahaere o te hunga ora anō hoki. Ko koutou ērā i manaaki i te mana mātauranga Māori o tēnā, o tēnā whānau. Ka tika rā te whakataukī “He puāwaitanga harakeke, he rito whakakīnga whāruarua.” Heoi, ko te mana motuhake hoki o ngā whānau huhua o Poipoia te Mokopuna puta noa, tau atu, tau atu. Tēnā koutou katoa.

The Māori component of the report title comes from the whakataukī “*He puāwaitanga harakeke, he rito whakakīnga whāruarua*”. This proverbial saying reinforces the metaphor of harakeke as an important place to nurture new generations, and pass on the learnings of those who have passed on, to ensure survival. It is fitting to use in this report because it speaks to the powerful symbolism of harakeke embedded in *Te Whāriki* (the early childhood curriculum), and those committed to the growth and learning of tamariki mokopuna.

This report would not be possible without the generous support and contributions of numerous whānau, iwi and Māori-led organisations. We thank you for sharing your time and passion for whānau advancement with us. Participants who requested to be named as part of this report are listed on p. 3. The Ministry of Education funded this evaluation. We would like to acknowledge the commitment of staff supporting Poipoia te Mokopuna. In particular, Lisa Collins provided invaluable support as the evaluation unfolded.

Dr Louise Taylor, Keryn Davis and Dr Carl Mika provided useful suggestions that strengthened the ethical components of the project. Keryn Davis alongside Christina Ward also provided editorial suggestions. Sally Boyd generously shared her thinking about evaluative frameworks and methods. Wawaro Te Whaiti provided reo Māori translations for the evaluative items. Shannon Vulu designed the *Te Whāriki and Poipoia te Mokopuna: A holistic model for success* diagram. Our evaluation team demonstrated flexibility and commitment to the purpose of the evaluation, in particular we thank: Deanne Thomas, Wharehoka Wano, Shannon Vulu, Phoebe Davis, Wawaro Te Whaiti and Tracey McAllister.

Tēnā koutou katoa.

Ngā kaihāpai tūmatanui – Named participants

Below is a list of participants who requested to be named as part of this evaluation:

Te Aroha Tanya Poi

Huhana Rokx-Potae

Rowena Gloria Marie Namana

Charlee-May Rangiwai

Fay Vivienne Janara Kotuhi

Tia Kirk

Amy Joanne Cole

Letisha Banita Kate Tiki-Tiki Andrews Heron

Geneva Milner

Lewis Paniore

Kylie Wilson

Susan van der Plas

Khadine Topia

Kelly Brown

Emma Anderson

Raukura Salisbury

Vanessa Clark

Nadine Walmsley

Snowee Barrett

Mandy Hotene

Teirea Te Aho

Johnathan Reihana

Cecilia Reihana

Maadi Gray

Victoria Anne Harrington

Narm Hudson

Pounamu Skelton

Te Rina Kaiwai

Natasha Roberts

Janiva Martin

Terri Lee Nyman

Mathew Kiore

Liz Fraser

Gemma Anngow

Hana-Leah Palmer

Catherine Bungard

Kat Beckett

Hayley Solheim

Ruth Waitauhi

Ngareta Timutimu

Christopher John Jacob

Te whakarāpopototanga – Executive summary

This report summarises the findings from a whānau centered developmental evaluation of Poipoia te Mokopuna. Poipoia te Mokopuna is a national programme funded by the Ministry of Education (MOE). It aims to encourage whānau with tamariki mokopuna under three years of age to make early learning a priority and develop a readiness to enrol in an early learning service. Its purpose is to meet the diverse learning needs of whānau with tamariki mokopuna under three years of age who are not currently engaged in formal early learning, to:

- Support them to lead intentional early learning activities for their children;
- Be more confident as their child's first teacher; and
- Read and talk more in the home.

A unique part of Poipoia te Mokopuna is how flexible it is. For example, each provider organisation can tailor how it works for whānau, based on their local needs and aspirations. The MOE co-constructed the programmes and reporting processes with each organisation.

What worked well?

As an emerging initiative, this evaluation was not designed to provide conclusions about whether Poipoia te Mokopuna had met or not met pre-determined goals and frameworks. Rather, it aims to provide practice-based evidence in order to support Poipoia te Mokopuna practices and MOE policy making into the future. The MOE was interested in understanding how Poipoia te Mokopuna successfully did the following:

- Engages vulnerable tamariki mokopuna under three-years-old in high quality, culturally relevant learning with deliberate linkages to other supporting social services;
- Grows parents/caregivers confidence in leading early learning activities for their tamariki mokopuna; and
- Influences participation in quality early learning.

We suggest that successful models of delivery and how well provider organisations respond to diverse whānau, is premised on the presence of two interdependent elements:

1. Systemic and cultural advocacy:

- Whānau are able to make informed decisions about the learning of their tamariki mokopuna now, and into the future;
- Whānau do not perceive organisations as controlling, or having hidden agendas;
- Kaimahi are positive about whānau potential, and demonstrate steadfastness;
- Models of delivery were free of financial cost, easy to access and built mutual trust between people; and
- Advocacy, referral and transition systems are in place and effectively used.

2. Flexible planning, culturally coherent content and pedagogy:

- Whānau and kaimahi reflect on what does and does not work, and make just-in-time adjustments accordingly;
- Whakapapa and processes of whakawhanaungatanga are used to connect kaimahi and whānau, and is infused in content and pedagogy;
- Kaimahi take a holistic and multidisciplinary approach to planning and delivery; and
- Systems are in place to enable kaimahi and whānau to document and reflect on formative whānau learning.

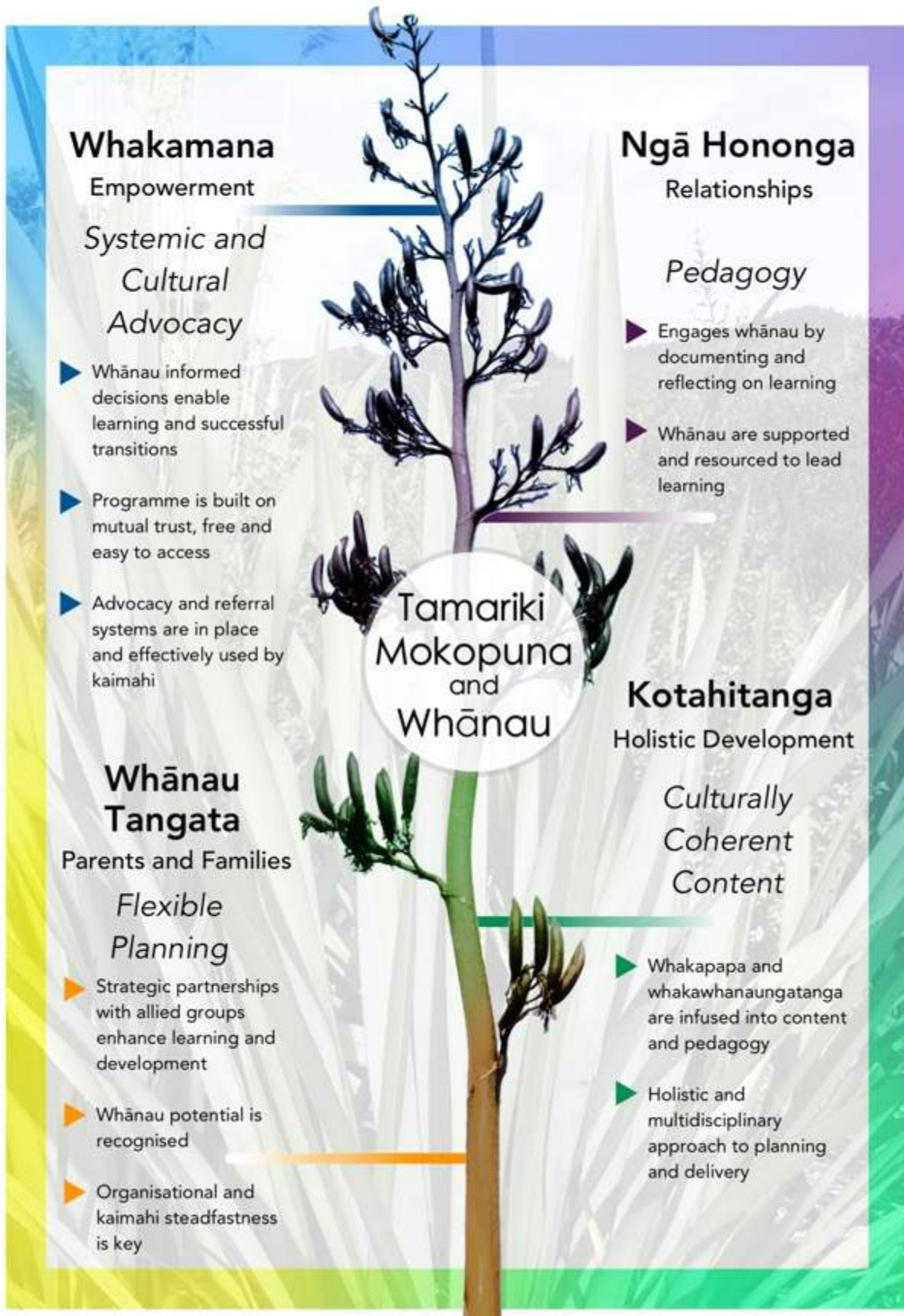
What could be improved?

We found that a number of challenges can hinder Poipoia te Mokopuna contributing to quality early learning, early childhood education and transitions to primary school or kura Māori. The table below identifies these challenges, and recommends ways to enhance alignment to MOE's early learning strategic objectives for Māori.

<i>Challenges identified by Poipoia te Mokopuna whānau</i>	<i>Challenges identified by Poipoia te Mokopuna organisations</i>	<i>Recommendations to support the alignment of Poipoia te Mokopuna to quality early learning, early childhood education and transitions</i>
Limited time available with kaimahi.	-	Support and encourage provider and whānau use of Information Communication Technologies (ICT).
Concerns about sustainable funding.	Uncertainty about long-term funding.	To sustain quality educational outcomes, develop a long-term funding model linked to positive outcomes. Encourage providers to establish avenues for whānau participation in programme planning and decision-making.
Barriers to access: transport and consistent venue.	-	See recommendations 1 and 2.
Programme organising and consistency: unaware of overarching learning goals.	-	Introduce whānau learning and transition plans.
Lack of diverse bilingual learning and engagement materials.	-	Provide wānanga about Māori early learning content, pedagogies and aromatawai. Source and fund early learning resources that include reo Māori and English languages.
-	Kaimahi steadfastness and retainment.	Provide annual training about effective whānau-centered advocacy.
-	Ambiguity about reporting outcomes.	Clarify how Results Based Accountability (RBA) can be used to support local practice and positive outcomes.
-	Lack of a 'national network'.	Establish a national network. Contribute and learn from whole-of-government and non-government collaborations i.e. Whānau Ora; Social Sector Trials.

Based on our evaluative findings, and the principles of *Te Whāriki*, we have developed the following diagram to illustrate a holistic model of success for Poipoia te Mokopuna programmes.

Te Whāriki and Poipoia te Mokopuna: A holistic model for success





CORE
EDUCATION
Tātai Aho Rau