

Good Practice in Te Aho Matua Kura Kaupapa Māori

September 2007



Ko te Tamaiti te Pūtake o te Kaupapa

The Child – the Heart of the Matter

Published 2007

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Education Evaluation Reports

ISBN 978-0-478-30878-5 (web)

ISBN 978-0-478-30879-2 (Word)

ISBN 978-0-478-30877-8 (PDF)

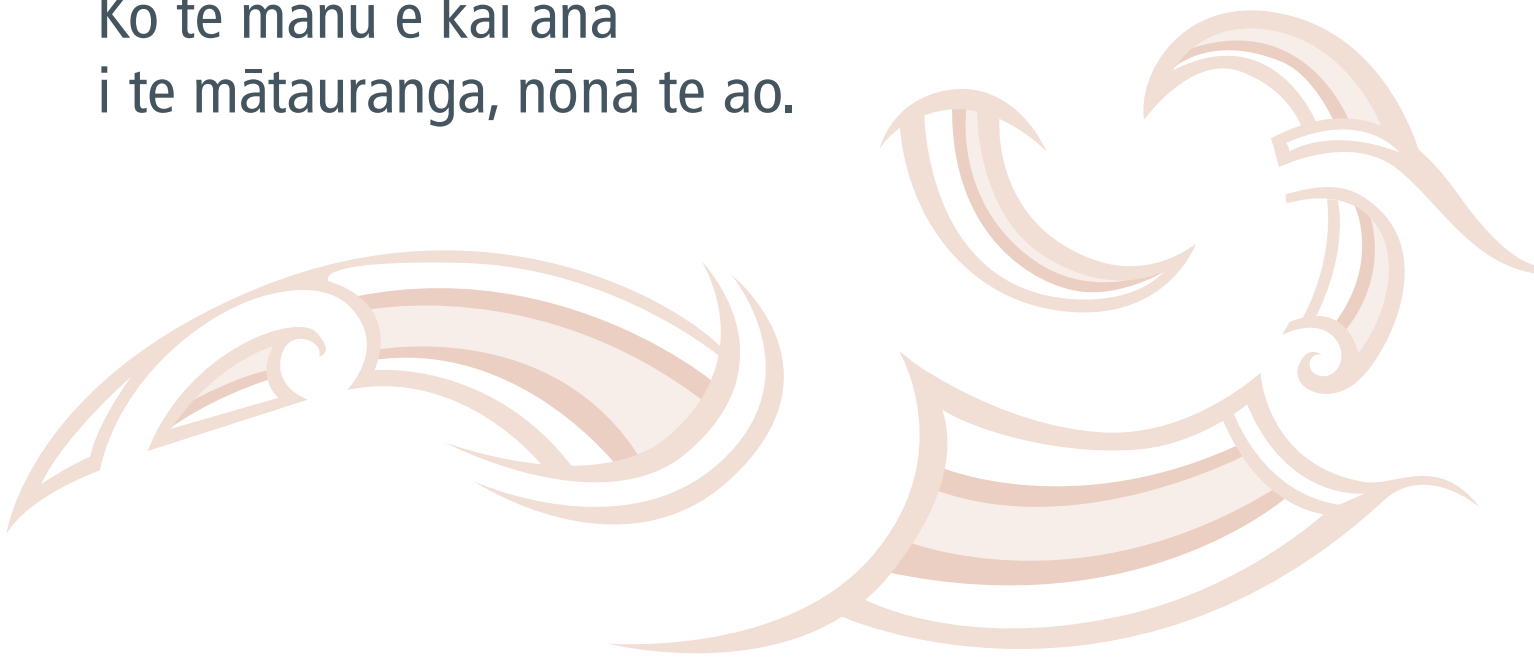
ISBN 978-0-478-30876-1 (pbk.)

ERO reports are published on the ERO web site: www.ero.govt.nz, and are available from the Manager Public Affairs, Education Review Office, Box 2799, Wellington 6140.

We welcome comments and suggestions on the issues raised in education evaluation reports.

Ko te manu e kai ana
i te miro, nōnā te ngahere.

Ko te manu e kai ana
i te mātauranga, nōnā te ao.



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Introduction

In this report, the Education Review Office (ERO) has identified examples of good practice in teaching and learning in kura kaupapa Māori that operate in accordance with Te Aho Matua. In this report 'kura' is used to refer to these kura kaupapa Māori.

Te Aho Matua, as defined in the English version of the guiding document, is “the means by which the special nature of kura can be clearly identified from mainstream schools.” It “provides the basis from which the curriculum planning and design can evolve,” and is divided into six wāhanga:

- Te Ira Tangata;
- Te Reo;
- Ngā Iwi;
- Te Ao;
- Āhuatanga Ako; and
- Te Tino Uaratanga.

ERO envisages that this report will be useful to kura kaupapa Māori in highlighting good practice, and possible areas for future development or improvement. Some of the practices that have proved effective for students in Te Aho Matua kura may also be of interest to whānau of other kura.

Te Aho Matua evaluation criteria have provided a framework for reporting this good practice.

Methodology

METHODOLOGY REFINEMENTS

Review teams made up of ERO reviewers and a representative from Te Rūnanga Nui o Ngā Kura Kaupapa Māori o Aotearoa undertake the reviews of kura. The ERO review officers and the kaitiaki of Te Aho Matua bring together their relevant experience and expertise in these evaluations.

Evaluation criteria that reflect the principles of Te Aho Matua have been used as part of ERO standard procedures for reviewing kura that operate in accordance with Te Aho Matua. Kura whānau can also use these to guide their own internal review.

The information for this report comes from kura review reports and evidential files. These reviews were carried out using the methodology designed by a combined working party in September 2000.¹

Evaluation findings and review report comments from reviews carried out between 2001 to 2006 were collated under each of the six wāhanga. As part of its own self review, ERO met with Te Rūnanga Nui to share the collated information. These meetings were designed to allow the kaitiaki of Te Aho Matua and ERO to discuss trends and patterns emerging in kura.

ERO and Te Rūnanga Nui agreed that the information gathered gave a broad picture of what was happening in Te Aho Matua kura at the time. It also gave a general insight into the extent to which the principles of Te Aho Matua guided the choices, plans and decisions whānau made about their children's education.

ERO used this information to consider possible refinements to the review methodology that would increase the quality and usefulness of information collected, and clarify the context for evaluative judgements and evaluation practice. This revised methodology, refined by a second working party,² is currently being used in reviews of Te Aho Matua kura.

ERO has recently printed two documents for the review of Te Aho Matua kura:

- *A Framework for the Reviews and Evaluations of Te Aho Matua Kura Kaupapa Māori*
- *Indicators for the Reviews and Evaluations of Te Aho Matua Kura Kaupapa Māori.*

These are also available under Review Process on ERO's website – www.ero.govt.nz.

1 A Ministerial Working Party, comprising members from ERO, the Ministry of Education and the Rūnanga Nui, was established in September 2000 to develop a review methodology for kura kaupapa Māori that operate in accordance with Te Aho Matua.

2 During 2006 representatives from Te Rūnanga Nui, the Ministry of Education and ERO worked together to review and further develop the design and implementation of the methodology for Te Aho Matua kura kaupapa Māori. The revised methodology was being trialled in kura at the time of this report.

IDENTIFYING KEY AREAS OF GOOD PRACTICE

In this report, ERO has collated the findings under each wāhanga, identifying in many of the kura some practices that enhance outcomes for students.

The following principles underpin review methodology:

- external review is based on self review by kura whānau;
- the process of the review of kura is based on dialogue;
- evaluative criteria are based on the principles of Te Aho Matua;
- there is an understanding of the nature of the Māori language (in the kura) in the context of Māori efforts to revitalise and regenerate the Māori language; and
- there is an understanding that the curriculum development process occurs in the context of kura efforts to re-establish mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge) and tikanga Māori.

While practice differed among the kura, each kura used programmes that were appropriate for their own students, met the aspirations of their whānau, and drew on the strengths of kaiako, and kura whānau.

This report presents an overview of good practice demonstrated in 56 kura reviewed by ERO during 2001 to 2006.

Good Practice in Te Aho Matua Kura Kaupapa Māori

TE IRA TANGATA

Te Ira Tangata focuses on the innate physical and spiritual aptitude of children and the importance of nurturing both in their education. Through specifically evaluating a range of aspects in each kura, ERO was able to consider the extent of the impact of whānau cultural and spiritual values and beliefs on students.

While each kura interpreted Te Ira Tangata in the individual context of whānau aspirations for their children, there were common elements of good practice in successful kura.

Te Ira Tangata challenges parents, teachers and trustees to “work together in establishing a harmonious, child-centred learning environment in which care, consideration and cooperation are acknowledged as necessary elements for the successful operation of kura for the greatest benefit of students.” ERO identified a range of good practice that reflected this positive aspiration for kura whānau and tamariki.

In kura that demonstrate good practice, kaiako are mindful of the need to reflect the principles of Te Aho Matua in their interactions with students and in their programmes and practices. Accordingly, they use a variety of teaching strategies to encourage student and whānau involvement and participation in learning. Kaiako identify and respond to each student’s strengths, aspirations and needs. Students are confident in their learning and settled in the kura.

Whānau regularly model the values of aroha, manaaki and tautoko. Constructive, nurturing and respectful interactions among kaiako, whānau and students are promoted. Tuakana-teina relationships are strong and supportive. The valuable insight kaumatua offer students is acknowledged and respected. Adults and students display genuine care and concern for each other.

Careful consideration is given to nurturing students’ emerging socialisation skills, physical health and emotional well-being. Many kaiako provide unobtrusive supervision during school breaks and before and after school, supporting positive interaction between students. Adults make sure that students have ready access to appropriate advice and guidance. Kaiako are proactive, using external agencies as required. They maintain open and clear lines of communication with their students. By focusing on each child’s all-round development, kaiako successfully help many students to express emotions confidently, and to share thoughts, ideas and opinions.

Successful kura recognise the importance of supporting students' holistic development. Whānau in these kura ensure Māori cultural and spiritual values and beliefs form the basis of this holistic approach to education. Tikanga is embedded in daily routines. As a consequence, whānau value, honour and respect the mana and uniqueness of each student.

TE REO

In Te Aho Matua, the wāhanga Te Reo focuses on how kura kaupapa Māori can best advance the language and learning of the child. Through investigating a range of specific aspects in each kura, ERO evaluated the extent to which Te Aho Matua kura made a positive contribution to the language and learning of each student.

While each kura interpreted Te Reo in the individual context of whānau aspirations for their children, there were common elements of good practice in successful kura.

Te Reo encourages respect for all languages. In kura that demonstrate good practice, effective language exploration strategies and acquisition techniques are integral to most learning and teaching situations. Students get focused assistance from kaiako to help them work towards the expectation of full competence in te reo Māori and English. Kaiako use effective strategies to introduce new vocabulary and enhance existing language. These include:

- focused teaching, questioning, and providing resources and activities to facilitate discussion and foster language inquiry;
- centres of learning where students are given tools for te reo Māori and English language development;
- formal grammar instruction and opportunities for exploration and self correction during the course of the day; and
- providing language-rich environments where students are prepared to take educational risks.

Whānau, therefore, provide an extensive range of opportunities and learning experiences to promote English language and te reo Māori. Good questioning skills stimulate students' thinking. Positive affirmations, clear routines and high expectations encourage active participation. Many students are confident, secure and independent learners.

In line with the aspirations stated in Te Aho Matua, the language of these kura is te reo Māori. Kura whānau believe that, with such strong commitment, language mastery for students will follow. In many cases kaiako in these kura possess an in-depth understanding of the skills required to encourage the acquisition of te reo Māori and give appropriate consideration to natural language progression. The involvement of kaumatua throughout the kura adds richness to te reo Māori experiences that students enjoy. Students are immersed in te reo Māori, confidently initiating and participating in conversations throughout the day.

Whānau and kaiako adopt a purposeful, planned approach to Māori language development. They make appropriate reference to curriculum statements, defined strands, and national achievement objectives. Student progress and language acquisition is assessed and monitored regularly. Kaiako use achievement information to identify students' strengths and learning needs, designing well-constructed lessons to target language development in these areas. Students respond positively to focused reo Māori teaching in meaningful contexts.

Kura establish a strategic approach to raising competence in te reo Māori for the whānau and kaiako. Participation in reo Māori professional development is high. These training opportunities include language classes at the kura and community wānanga. Parents in some kura often observe and share in the classroom learning programmes. By working together whānau proactively increase confidence, and competence in the use of te reo Māori.

NGĀ IWI

In Te Aho Matua, Ngā Iwi focuses on the social agencies that “influence the development of children, including people with whom they interact as they make sense of their world and find their rightful place in it.” Through investigating a range of specific aspects in each kura, ERO evaluated the extent to which Te Aho Matua kura social agencies, interactions and support networks influenced children’s development.

While each kura interpreted Nga Iwi in the individual context of whānau aspirations for their children, the following exemplifies common elements that contributed to success.

In kura that demonstrate good practice, the exploration of various historical, political and religious viewpoints alongside traditional and contemporary Māori perspectives are specifically included in learning programmes where appropriate. Kaiako use a range of themes and kaupapa to foster this learning. Experiences often reflect an emphasis on the importance of genealogy, ancestral links, and historical, cultural, political, social, religious and economic studies. Students are self-confident. They show a genuine interest in learning about others.

Students, together with their whānau, explore, acknowledge, celebrate and share iwi and hapū connections, learning about themselves and others. Tangata whenua and local iwi are regularly acknowledged through mōteatea, karakia and mita. Opportunities often also include learning about individual identity and marae kaupapa, and extend to diploma iwi studies through National Wānanga (tertiary institutions) courses specifically tailored to meet the needs of wharekura students.

Community and local links are enhanced. Students benefit from the ready access they have to kaumatua. By sharing whānau knowledge and expertise, students’ sense of identity and positive interactions with others are nurtured.

TE AO

Te Ao focuses on the world that surrounds children and on the fundamental truths that affect their lives. Te Ao encompasses those aspects of the world itself that impact on the learning of children. Through investigating a range of specific aspects in each kura, ERO evaluated the extent to which Te Aho Matua kura influenced aspects of the world that impact on children's learning.

While each kura interpreted Te Ao in the individual context of whānau aspirations for their children, common elements of good practice were evident in successful kura.

In the wāhanga Te Ao, kura recognise and value the significant contribution each child's experiences in their own home, in the Māori world, and in the world at large, make to their learning. Programmes offer opportunities for students to develop their understanding of Te Ao Māori and the wider world. A whānau-driven approach is often adopted to help students understand themselves and their environment.

Learning opportunities in the kura, and in the local and wider communities, include mau rakau, pōwhiri wānanga and marae-based experiences. Students' confidence in, and knowledge of, mātauranga Māori is extended successfully. Such meaningful learning experiences encourage students to maintain their links to traditional knowledge and tikanga.

Well-informed student support often clarifies whānau, hapū and iwi connections. The kura fosters respect for the natural world and encourages students to understand their responsibilities as kaitiaki of the environment. For example, studying the local coastal area encourages students to learn about the fishing techniques of tipuna; and rivers may also be appropriate places for awa safety or conservation studies. Students learn to respect and care for their environment.

ĀHUATANGA AKO

Āhuatanga Ako lists the principles of teaching practice that are considered of vital importance in the education of children. Through investigating a range of specific aspects in each kura, ERO evaluated the extent to which teaching practice supported children's education.

While each kura interpreted Āhuatanga Ako in the individual context of whānau aspirations for their children, elements of good practice were common to successful kura.

Āhuatanga Ako asserts that teaching and learning be a happy and stimulating experience for children. In many cases students enjoy colourful, stimulating classrooms with high quality, accessible learning materials and teaching aids.

Education is valued, and learning time maximised. Students enjoy educational challenges, and kaiako further enhance the value of these opportunities by redirecting and extending students' thinking. Academic and behavioural expectations are high. Kaiako take every opportunity to provide constructive, targeted feedback to students. Consequently, students successfully engage in investigation and active learning.

Staff are reflective practitioners and students are active learners. Teaching styles and positive classroom environments promote opportunities for independent, group and whole-class learning. Students' strengths and skills are encouraged and nurtured.

Students confidently engage in conversations, debate and inquiry-based learning programmes that explore historic, contemporary, national, and international topics and issues. Marae experiences and visits to wāhi tapu reinforce student knowledge of their heritage, and their appreciation of whakapapa is enhanced. Students are motivated to learn.

TE TINO UARATANGA

In Te Aho Matua, Tino Uaratanga focuses on what the outcome might be for children who graduate from kura. It states “Kura Kaupapa Māori will have in place appropriate measures for assessing and evaluating the achievement of their children at all levels of the national curriculum as well as whatever else the kura decides are valuable areas of knowledge for their children.” Through investigating a range of specific aspects in each kura, ERO evaluated the extent to which a holistic focus on the child aligned positively with student and whānau aspirations for each child’s education.

While each kura interpreted Te Tino Uaratanga in the individual context of whānau aspirations for their children, common elements of good practice were evident in successful kura.

The high expectations and aspirations kura whānau have for students’ learning, behaviour and achievement are reflected in strategies and experiences kura whānau outline to guide the future direction of programmes, operations and practices.

Many students demonstrate their capability as competent thinkers, listeners, speakers, readers and writers, both in English and Māori. Through opportunities for academic, cultural, spiritual and physical success, and a school-wide focus on literacy and numeracy, core competencies are actively nurtured.

At classroom level, effective strategies are used to promote students’ understanding of the purpose of learning. Students, their whānau and kaiako set, monitor and evaluate academic, physical and spiritual goals. Independent, focused learning is fostered in an educationally supportive environment.

Student achievement is measured, strengths and needs determined, and learning programmes targeted at supporting individual students. Kaiako share with students the information gathered about achievements and possible next steps in learning.

Students’ spiritual development is nurtured. Students are encouraged to care for themselves and to foster constructive relationships with others. Success in this area is demonstrated in positive tuakana-teina relationships, and also in students’ respectful interaction with kaumatua.

Students are regularly involved in a range of activities that enhance their physical development and achievement. Students are active and keen to participate in daily physical exercise, with some excelling in specific sports such as cross-country running, waka ama and netball.

Students demonstrate a high level of understanding of tikanga as they actively participate in cultural pursuits. These include school, regional and national kapa haka festivals where students perform a wide range of haka, mōteatea and waiata. Kura also foster students' musical, creative and artistic talents. By providing relevant, stimulating learning experiences, students' self-esteem, self-confidence, self-discipline and leadership skills are fostered.

Students' academic progress and achievement are supported through targeted, high interest learning programmes that reinforce self-discipline, confidence, and personal development. In wharekura that demonstrate good practice, many students' academic success is evident in the results of their National Certificates for Educational Achievement (NCEA). Achievement is also reflected in students' success in National Wānanga, through courses that provide alternative reo Māori options at a tertiary level for wharekura students, such as Diploma Mātauranga Māori and Bachelor Mātauranga Māori.

Conclusion

This report has outlined key aspects of good practice in 56 kura that operate in accordance with Te Aho Matua collated under the six wāhanga:

- Te Ira Tangata;
- Te Reo;
- Ngā Iwi;
- Te Ao;
- Āhukatanga Ako; and
- Te Tino Uaratanga.

Although the practices described are many and varied, there were common characteristics of good practice. Specifically, these included:

- kura whānau establishing a sound knowledge of Te Aho Matua, and developing a shared understanding of the importance of its practical implication in the kura;
- the high expectations of kura whānau for student success in learning, in both te reo Māori and English, that guide the future direction of programmes, interactions, experiences and practice;
- kura whānau remaining focused on delivering a high quality, holistic education that reinforces and acknowledges the importance of establishing a strong sense of identity in each student;
- kura whānau reviewing kura practice and programme effectiveness in light of analysed achievement information;
- whānau working together, sharing strengths and expertise to enhance learning opportunities and experiences for students;
- kaiako making effective use of assessment information to plan and adapt their teaching, thereby working to address the needs of individual students;
- kaiako sharing assessment information with students so they gain greater understanding of their own learning; and
- reflective kaiako actively seeking information on how to improve their teaching, refine learning programmes, and monitor the practices in their kura to enhance student performance, achievement and outcomes.

While every kura will have a different approach to implementing good practice, this report may help kura as they think about ways to improve outcomes for their students.





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