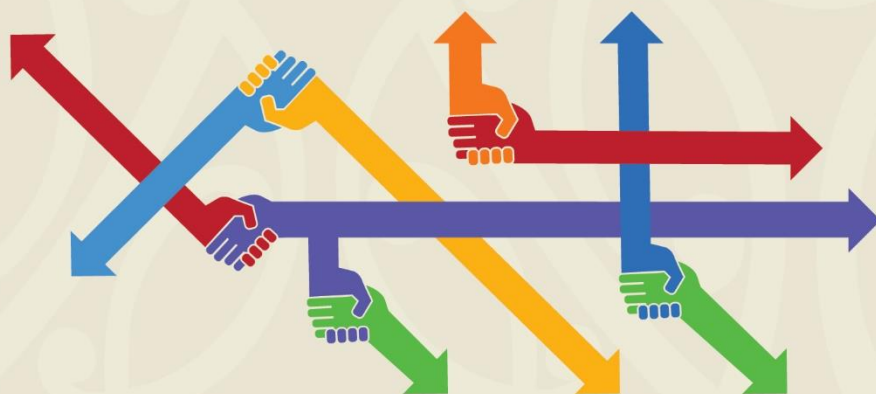


DESIGNING
LOCAL
CURRICULUM



Relationships for Learning

Guidance document
July 2019

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About the Relationships for Learning Tool

You can enrich learning opportunities for ākonga by:

- fostering new learning-focused relationships within your setting and with the wider community;
- sharing key relationships and community resources.

You can do this in your school, kura, Kāhui Ako, cluster, or early childhood centre (your setting).

The Relationships for Learning tool helps you strategically identify the community relationships that can support the learning of all ākonga in your setting. It does so by providing a process for classifying these relationships into different types and for considering the purpose of each relationship.

The tool focuses on your setting relationships with individuals¹ and groups whose roles or expertise offer a potential resource for learning. Each of the settings within the setting already has its own network of relationships. This tool enables you to build upon and sustain these relationships as a community-wide network that extends beyond the network of each individual setting.

The Education Review Office² found that leaders at schools with an extensive approach³ to student well-being:

gave priority to developing working relationships with a wide variety of people and community organisations. These relationships were not just used for moments of crisis but were also important for the day-to-day wellbeing of students. The community contributed to the curriculum. Examples included students working with local iwi to restore a wetlands or develop resources about local history, and students working with students from other schools to solve local transport issues.

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School leaders who did not spend time on building relationships often had difficulty accessing rich curriculum opportunities for students when needed.

You might take a team approach to relationship building or you might appoint one of the cross-school teachers to a designated community liaison role.

Either way, the purpose of these relationships is to help each of the settings within your setting to work with the wider community and use its resources – people, time, expertise, and material resources – for the benefit of ākonga learning.

¹ This tool is not about the relationships with individual students' parents and whānau. However, some parents and whānau will be identified because of their roles in the community.

² Education Review Office (2015). *Wellbeing for Children's Success at Primary School*. Wellington: Education Evaluation Reports.

³ An 'extensive' approach is one in which student well-being is woven through all a school's actions.

Wānanga

This Relationships for Learning tool describes the key people and groups your setting may choose to work with to support the learning of all ākongā.

Key questions

Before using this tool, there are some key questions your leadership team may wish to consider.

Resourcing

- How will it be resourced?
- Who will lead the work? Will an across-school teacher lead it? Will a team working together lead it?
- How will teachers work? Will they initially work horizontally (for example, teachers at specific transition points working together) or vertically (for example, teachers across the whole setting working together)? When will you bring the vertical and horizontal strands together?

Communication

- How will you communicate the importance of this work to other teachers?

Review

- What review process will you use?
- What questions are important to explore and what evidence will you look for?

During the review, you may find it helpful to consider whether your relationships support:

- the design of rich learning opportunities
- the effectiveness of your collective teaching practices
- the ambitious nature of your teaching practices
- collaboration within your setting and with your wider community.

Using the Relationships for Learning Tool

The Relationships for Learning Tool has a series of collaborative tasks designed to help you make strategic decisions about the relationships that will help you to achieve your goals.

1. **Create a map** of the key relationships for each school, kura or early childhood education service in your setting. Take in all relationships across governance, leadership, teaching, and administration and categorise them in terms of their type and purpose.
2. **Share and synthesise these maps in the tool** and identify which relationships are critical to the community. Link this to other work around your response to achievement challenges and strategic plans, curriculum, bundled resources and stewardship. Publish your findings with a small internal group, treating the information as sensitive until you have finished your conversations with the people involved.
3. **Invite key people and groups** your setting would like a relationship with into a discussion. Share your vision and discuss how a relationship might be established that builds from any existing relationships with individual schools and that is purposeful and beneficial for all parties, but especially for ākongā.
4. **Use this tool as a database** for recording the details of the key relationships you have identified for your setting. This ensures that everyone in your setting has access to information about the support available for implementing the curriculum.

What is the nature of the relationships you want with your wider community?

There are many kinds of relationship. Here you are looking for relationships that help generate rich opportunities for ākonga learning. Categorising different types of learning relationship can help your setting focus on the nature of the relationship you want with different individuals and groups in your wider community.

Here are four categories you may wish to consider:

1. **Partnerships:** These are long-term relationships that are of mutual benefit. Partners deeply understand and have a *shared interest* in the learning and well-being of ākonga. They sit within the stewardship group or leadership team. They help develop and share ownership of the vision and strategy. Individual parents and whānau are examples of people who partner with individual schools, kura and early childhood services. Local iwi, territorial authorities and Board of Trustee representatives are examples of possible partners for a setting.
2. **Collaborators:** These are relationships where individuals, groups and organisations outside of your setting are *directly involved in working with teachers to support the learning of the students*. They are people ākonga can learn from and with. Collaborators might include the local museum or library, tertiary providers, government (national, metropolitan, provincial, regional, or rural), environmental groups, businesses, community service groups, musicians, artists, and scientists.
3. **Professional education connections.** These are the relationships that *support the work of the teachers and leaders*, enabling them to provide quality programmes for their ākonga. They might include your expert partner, selected professional learning and development providers, professional associations or organisations, online networks and the Ministry of Education Regional Office.
4. **Providers of resources and services.** These are relationships with *people who enable those working directly with ākonga to provide rich curriculum experiences*. They might include local health services, the police, an information technology company, publishers of educational resources or a business that offers work experience for students.

Each type of relationship requires a different kind of commitment, a different level of knowledge about each other, and carries a different set of expectations. When expectations are met, there are high levels of trust. For example:

- Providers of resources and services know your setting's needs, are expected to respond when needed and expect the community to refer to them for advice and work.
- Partners are trusted for their commitment to the overall strategy of your setting and because their knowledge of the community can help make the vision and goals a reality. They, in turn, expect the community to be engaged in the vision and goals of their organisation that are relevant to young people. For these things to happen, both parties need to know that, when expectations are met, both parties will benefit. A written agreement gives clarity to this.

Individuals and groups may also have roles that sit across two or three relationship types. For example, the local council might have a stewardship role, which entails a partnership relationship. At the same time, a council-owned sustainability business might engage with your setting as collaborators.

As part of developing your relationship strategy, you will have considered the scale and scope of your setting. For example, some communities are formed around a geographic area (at a local, national, or international level) and others around a mutual set of interests, ideas, values, or beliefs.

Whatever the nature of your Community, there are some common questions to consider. These include the following:

- Which individuals and groups are in roles or have expertise that can help our Community access resources to support student learning? What type of relationship does our Community want to have with each individual or group? What would be most beneficial for ākonga learning?
- How will our Community decide on the commitment it wants to make to building and sustaining each relationship?
- How will our Community ensure that the relationships developed as a collective add to and enhance the relationships that matter to our individual members?

Activities

The following three activities are intended to help you make strategic decisions about relationships. They provide a process for identifying those relationships that are the most important for the Community to foster and sustain.

- Activity 1: Identify key relationships
- Activity 2: Use synthesised data to make strategic decisions about relationships
- Activity 3: Develop relationship agreements

If you choose to use the activities, remember to keep going back to your overall vision and goals for young people. Feel free to adapt them to your own circumstances.

Activity 1: Identify key relationships

Everyone in the setting completes this activity. It involves parent groups (such as Boards of Trustees or kindergarten committees), leaders and teachers creating a map of the relationships that are important for supporting their school, kura or service to implement the curriculum and provide students with rich learning experiences. The parent group may want to focus more on *partnerships*, whereas teachers may want to focus more on *collaborators* and *professional education connections*. Leaders will be interested in all four types of relationships.

Intended outcomes

- Each school, kura, Kāhui Ako and early childhood service will have completed an audit of their current relationships. This will help them to make decisions about which relationships they wish to put more effort into sustaining and growing.
- Setting leaders use and share the information to identify, build and sustain a community network of relationships.

Step 1: Relationships grid mapping

Display a large version of the grid below. Each of its quadrants represents one of the following four types of relationship: a partnership; collaborator; professional education connection or provider of resources and services. Talk through the types and discuss examples for your setting.

The nature of the relationships you have at your school, kura or centre	
Partnerships	Collaborators
Professional education connections	Providers we use

Give each participant:

- a copy of the grid describing the four types of relationship
- stickers in three different colours.

Ask participants to think about the individuals and groups with which your school, kura or early childhood service currently has a relationship. Ask them to write the names of these individuals and groups on a sticker and to place their stickers in the appropriate quadrant on the grid. Encourage them to also think about people or groups from another setting (for example, the science technician at the secondary school for equipment, school librarian for cataloguing support, or other schools' caretakers for sports day support, a resource teacher: learning and behaviour).

Do a very fast share to see if there are any individuals or groups you have forgotten.

Organise the individuals and groups you have identified around the purpose for the relationship. You may find that a purpose goes across relationship types or that there are several purposes within one type. It's likely you will have collections of individuals and groups in 'collaborators' for significant curriculum topics or themes (for example, people and organisations that can support learning related to themes such as sustainability).

Step 2: Discuss relationships and rich learning

Ask the participants to think about whether changing the nature of any of these relationships might help enrich the opportunities for rich curriculum learning. For example, they may want to move an individual or group from a professional education connection to a collaborator or from a collaborator to a partnership. This could be because some organisations are involved in more than one type of relationship or involved in more than one collection.

If there are relationships they would like changed, the participants can name the relevant individuals or groups on a different-coloured sticker. They can then place the sticker where they would like to see them on the grid.

Step 3: Highlight relationships

Ask the participants to use the third set of coloured stickers to highlight the relationships they think it would be more effective and efficient for the Community of Learning to foster and sustain, rather than their school, kura or service.

These could be relationships they have already identified through steps 1 and 2.

They could also be different individuals and groups that do not have a relationship with the school, kura or service, but which participants in the mapping activity think should have a relationship with the setting.

Step 4: Coallate the relationship information

Collate the relationship information you have gathered. You can then use it at both the school level and, when shared, at the Community level to facilitate further discussion and actions to support richer ākongā learning pathways.

Activity 2: Use synthesised data to make strategic decisions about relationships

This activity is for the stewardship and leadership teams, along with others, such as the principals and centre leaders.

Before conducting the activity, you will need the collated Activity 1 data from each school, kura or early childhood education service. Present the collated data to the Community's leadership team and its principals and centre leaders.

Intended outcome: The teams identify the individuals and groups in the wider community with which it wants to build and sustain a network of relationships.

Step 1: Relationship grid mapping reprise

Draw on the collated data and the vision and goals set out in the Community's strategy to repeat the relationship mapping exercise for the setting.

You can deepen the discussion by debating the following questions:

- Partnerships: Which people and groups does the Community of Learning need to partner with to achieve its strategic goals?
- Collaborators: Which people and groups does the Community want to collaborate with to achieve its strategic goals? Think about:
 - the range of pathways to and from different educational settings
 - learning opportunities around the community
 - what's important to the community as a whole
 - current community issues
 - established community networks.⁴
- Professional education connections: Which people and groups offer professional connections that are important for enacting the Community's strategy?
- Providers of resources and services: Which providers does the Community want to foster relationships with?

You may find there are patterns and that these give rise to questions. For example, it may be that most schools are using the same service provider or professional connection. If so, when is it appropriate for the whole Community to engage with this organisation?

⁴ You may have identified some *collaborators* while designing rich learning opportunities.

Step 2: Record key relationships and discuss strategy

Record the key relationships on the tool grid and then use questions such as the following to discuss your strategy:

- What would help us shift from separate schools, kura and early childhood services to a setting?
- Which are the most important relationships our Community has with the wider community?
- Which ones will require the most work to get them to the level of commitment and trust that we need?
- Who can help us improve our relationships?
- Are there relationships that can be developed through designing a rich learning opportunity related to a local issue or theme?
- What is manageable for the Community?
- Who is to be given responsibility for each of the relationships or for each type of relationship? For example:
 - How will you inform the individual or group that they are important to the success of the setting and that you would like to share the details of the relationship with the wider community?
 - How will you work with each setting within the Community to use, build and strengthen these relationships for the benefit of all students?
- How will the Community's leadership team maintain oversight of these relationships?

Step 3: Coallate information

Collate this information so it can be entered in a smart database, searched for curriculum decisions, and used at the Community level to support richer ākonga learning pathways.

Step 4: Describe teachers' expertise

There will be many teachers and other employees with expert knowledge and/or access to key resources that could be used to support teachers and students across the Community. Some of these will have been identified in Activity 1, as they are already working across schools. Your cross-school teachers, if not already working across schools in their areas of expertise, will be very soon. With their agreement, you could describe these teachers' expertise so that everyone is aware of this resource.

Step 5: Assign record keeping responsibility

Assign responsibility for keeping a record of the Community's relationships to a member of the leadership team.

Assign a contact person for each of the Community's important relationships. This person will be responsible for building and reviewing the relationship.

Activity 3: Developing relationship agreements

For each key relationship, meet with the individual or a representative from the group. Explain that you want to explore the possibilities for a collaboration that has mutual benefits. Explain that it might help the Community to enrich the learning opportunities for students and it might also enrich opportunities for the group concerned. These conversations may be undertaken while the Community is developing rich opportunities for learning or a rich opportunity for learning may draw from these relationships.

Intended outcomes

- An agreement for each key relationship that it is clear about its purpose and benefits.
- Key relationships published so all teachers within the setting can draw from them.

Step 1: Draw up relationship agreements

Talk with key people about the aspirations and goals of the setting and how they can support the curriculum. Draw up an agreement from these conversations and record it in the tool. Continue to add comments to the database about the purpose of each relationship.

Step 2: Publish relationships in the tool

Publish the relationships in the tool once an agreement has been signed.