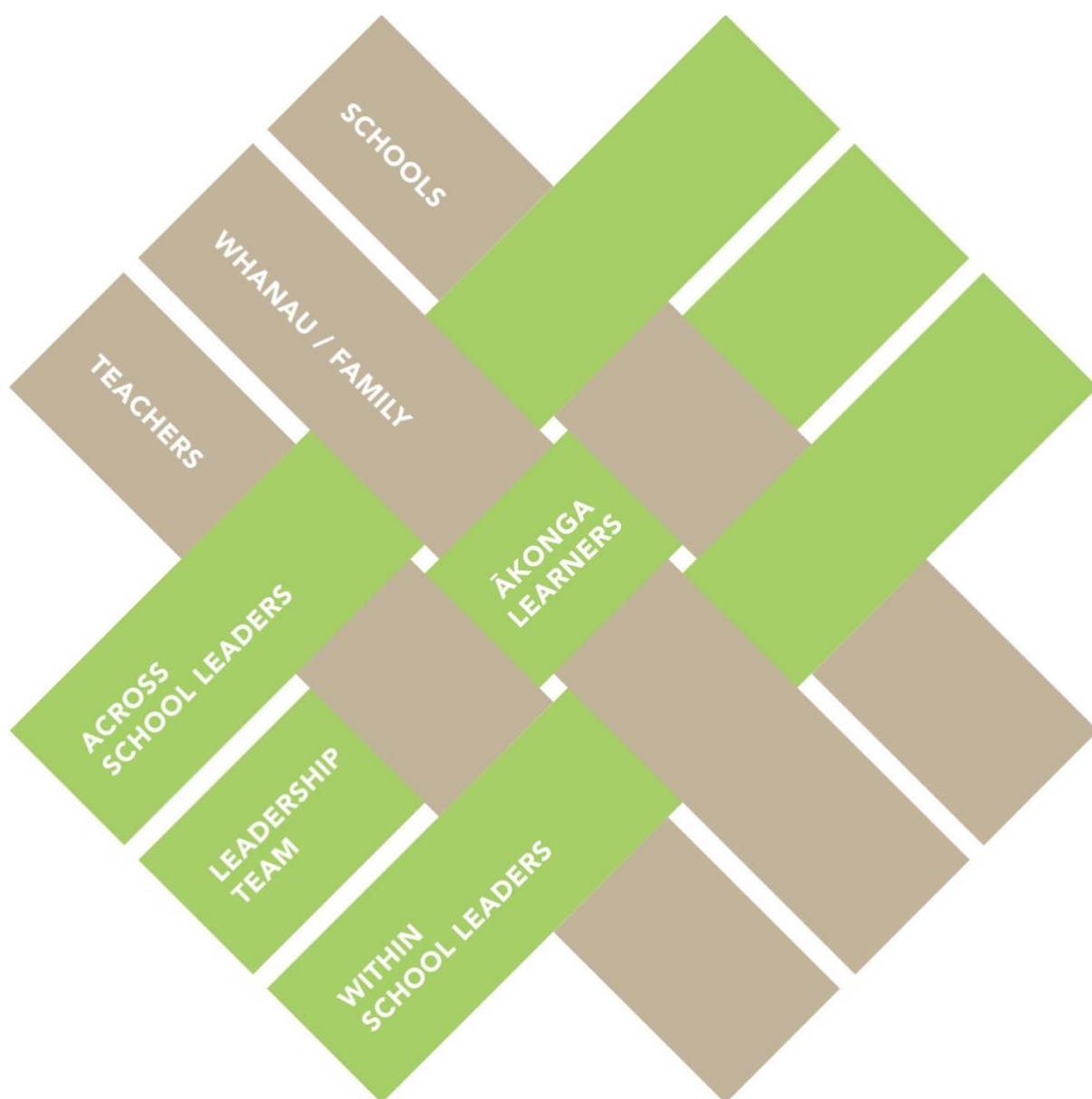


Northcote Community of Learners | Kāhui Ako

Achievement Challenge

2022-2025



Member Schools/Early Childhood Centres

Birkenhead Primary School
Principal: Bevan Verryt
www.birkenhead.school.nz



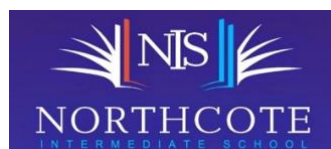
Northcote College
Principal: Vicki Barry
www.northcote.school.nz



Northcote Baptist Community Preschool
Centre Leader: Elizabeth Lupton
www.nbc.org.nz



Northcote Intermediate School
Principal: Phil Muir
www.northcoteint.school.nz



Northcote Primary School
Principal: Andrew Brown
www.northcoteprimary.school.nz



Onepoto Primary School
Principal: Daniella Latoa-Levi
www.onepoto.school.nz



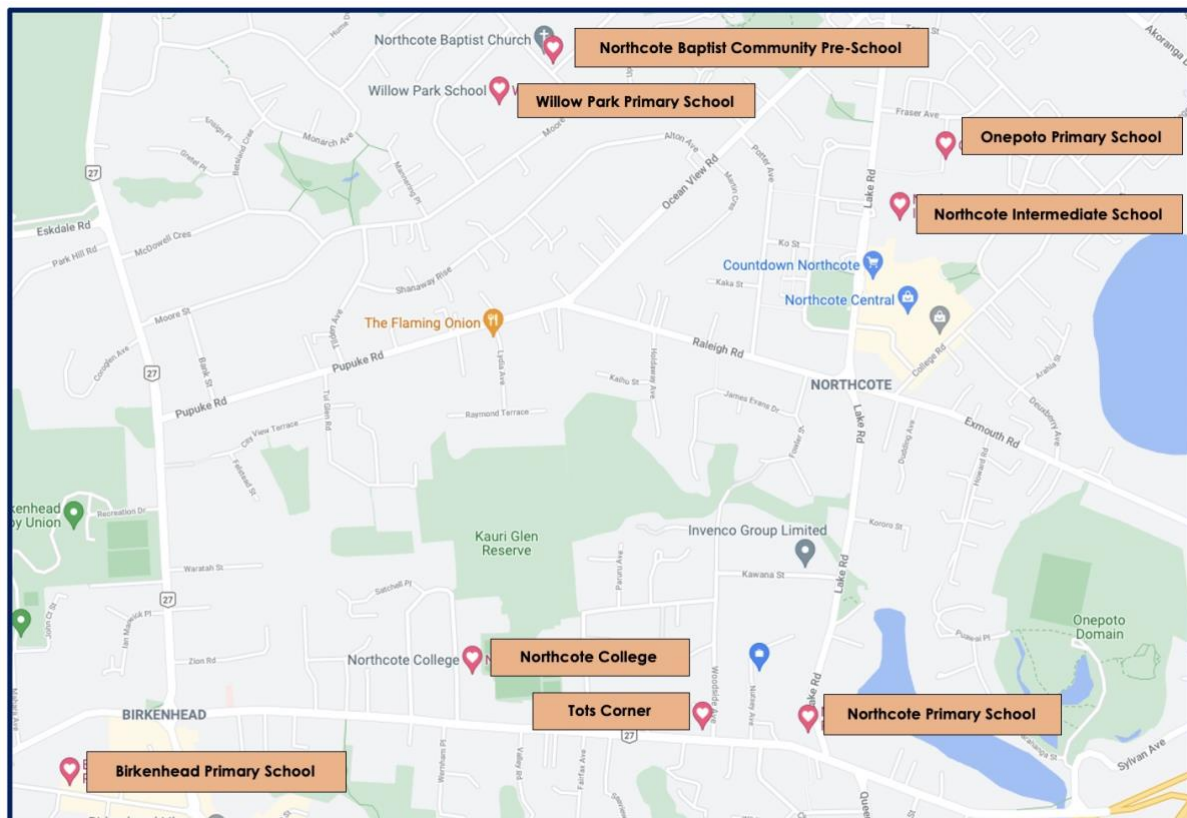
Tots Corner Early Childhood Centre
Centre Owner: Lorraine Manuela
www.totscorner.co.nz



Willow Park School
Principal: Duncan Millward
www.willowpark.school.nz



Where you can find us:



Community of Learning / Kāhui Ako: Northcote Community of Learners

Date: Kohitātea [January] 2022 – Kohitātea [January] 2025

Lead Adviser: Kirsty Dowding

Purpose and Vision

Success for all:

- We want to reduce the variance in outcomes for ākonga in this community
(Outcomes: academic, emotional, psychological, cultural, physical)
- We want to accelerate the progress of our ākonga and provide opportunities for all ākonga to be successful.

This vision has been developed through dialogue with the Stewardship Group, Within School and Across Community Leaders, teachers and whānau from the Northcote rohe. The voice of these people has been collected through meetings and case study research and our continued investigation into what success means, and looks like, to different groups in the community continues to inform, and reinforce, this vision.

As a group of early childhood centres and schools we are excited to be working together to learn about our practice for the purpose of improving ākonga outcomes; in particular the learning of ākonga who are currently not meeting their personal excellence. Our priority is to build a community that inspires learning. We aim to grow community support for a cohesive educational pathway that delivers success for all Northcote ākonga from early childhood through schools and beyond school.

NCOL early childhood centres and schools have shared values around success for all ākonga:

- We are committed to working together to improve ākonga progress and reduce disparity
- We have an ongoing history of collaboration and sharing best practice across settings
- We value the opportunity to work together to develop a sustainable professional learning community
- We recognise the importance of educationally powerful connections with parents and whānau

‘[He] finds success more easily when he is supported by a community that is ‘on his side’ and supporting him.’

- We aim for continuous improvement
- We share a willingness to use research and evidence to guide improvement
- We agree on the importance of effective teaching as inquiry
- We are committed to building teacher capability and leadership capacity
- The ākonga, families and communities in the NCoL rohe are diverse and valued. We view this diversity as a strength which will contribute to our success in improving student outcomes
- Individually and collectively NCoL kura, early childhood centres and schools are committed to special rights/special needs/priority ākonga

Over the last five years each centre and school have conducted research into understanding what success means to the whānau and ākonga in this community. Using a case study methodology teachers and school leaders have carried out hundreds of interviews with whānau and ākonga to produce nearly 250 individual case studies centred on what success means, and looks like, to individuals. Along with the extensive work of the kāhui ako's Learning Support Coordinators to create a cross-community database of learning needs, this data strongly supports the collective vision and strategic direction of this kāhui āko: to have developing educationally powerful connections between ākonga, parents, whānau, and teachers at the heart of our efforts to have success for all.

Kāhui Ako Journey so Far

Once the original achievement challenges had been approved, and staffing appointments had been made, the initial work of the kāhui ako was to establish relational trust between the leadership group. There were already very positive relationships, and high relational trust, between members of the Stewardship Group which had been evident in the process of forming the vision and initial achievement standards. In order to achieve this, over the first two terms of the kāhui ako the Within School, and Across Community, leaders met with the CoL Leader weekly to begin the process of establishing how we would begin working towards the collective vision.

We felt very strongly that for the mahi of the kāhui ako to be successful, and meaningful, we would need a sound methodological process to follow. With this in mind our work has woven together a number of elements but we have been particularly informed by Viviane Robinson's 'Leadership Capabilities' (Applying Relevant Knowledge, Solving Complex Problems, and Building Relational Trust), Anthony Bryk and Alicia Grunow et al's 'Improvement Principles' (Make the work problem-specific and user-centred, Focus on variation in performance, See the system that produces the current outcomes, We cannot improve at scale what we cannot measure, Use disciplined inquiry to drive improvement, Accelerate learning through networked communities) and Design-Based Research as outlined by Anderson and Shattuck (Being Situated in a Real Educational Context, Focusing on the Design and Testing of a Significant Intervention, Using Mixed Methods, Involving Multiple Iterations, Involving a Collaborative Partnership Between Researchers and Practitioners, Evolution of Design Principles, Practical Impact on Practice). These theories, along with the expert knowledge of this community brought by kaiako across the rohe has shaped our journey so far.

Step 1: What 'problem' are we trying to solve?

The first stage (Terms 3 & 4 2017) were spent meeting regularly to build relational trust and to try and establish just what we would be trying to do and why. After extensive consideration of the wide range of success and challenges experienced by ākonga and whānau in the rohe, it was decided that to better provide 'success for all' we would need to understand why ākonga in the community were having very varied outcomes. Considering a holistic approach to success – physical, social, emotional, psychological, cultural as well as academic – it was apparent that some rangatahi are thriving as they move through this community but others are struggling across one or more of these indicators. The problem for consideration, then, is **reducing the variation in outcomes for ākonga**. We define 'success' as being considered across the wide range of indicators identified and acknowledge that 'reducing variation' is specifically about increasing success for all ākonga.

'There can be misunderstanding between kids and parents, thus three-way talk, or school-home coordination is great to address existing problems.'

A challenge in these early stages was the proliferation of 'CoL PLD' providers and 'experts' making constant approaches to try and secure contracts for providing professional learning. It was the firm conviction of the leadership group that the power of communities of learning lay in local communities responding to local problems. Therefore, the plethora of salespeople with their 'off-the-shelf' solutions seemed antithetical to the intention and spirit of the CoL initiative. Trying to maintain a singular focus across a group in the face of voracious opportunism can be difficult.

Step 2: What theories might explain this problem?

Having established a 'problem' it was then important to try to understand what was causing the discrepancies we wanted to address. This was also a chance to include the wider community in moving towards an eventual intervention. Towards the end of 2017, WSLs ran workshops with the staff of each school and centre to ask for their explanations of why ākongā moving through the same community, through the same centres and schools, with the same teachers and (theoretically) the same opportunities could be leaving school with such a diverse range of outcomes.

These workshops consisted of teachers writing down as many different factors as they could think of to explain this problem, and then in groups creating a 'fishbone diagram' – organising all their ideas into some common areas (home factors/ pedagogical factors/ health factors etc). There were some clear findings from this process: the two most significant factors identified by teachers were student disposition and home factors. This was a consistent finding across all schools. It was clear that teachers believe the most significant contributing factors to student success are, by and large, 'beyond-the-classroom' factors.

These findings presented a challenge as the leadership group felt that teachers had more agency to address some of the identified issues than teachers, in general, believed they had. Some characterised the findings as evidence of a deficit thinking model. It was clear, however, that teachers were very emotionally, and temporally, invested in their ākongā and that positive relationships and high hopes were almost universally present in day-to-day pedagogy. That said, we were aware that any future interventions would need to accommodate the teacher beliefs which had been established if there were to be any chance of them being effective.

Having canvassed teacher explanations for this problem it was important to ascertain what the views of ākongā and whānau were. To this end WSLs began conducting case studies of ākongā who they identified as being successful and those who they felt were struggling to succeed with some aspect of their personal development. The case study process was to interview both the student and their

'What next in my own teaching practice: Not to overlook the students who quietly chip away because they might be struggling.'

whānau to find out what success meant to them, and to identify teaching and learning practices that support, or prevented, their success. From these conversations it became clear that for whānau in this community their vision of success is centred around their child's happiness: they want them to be happy, healthy, confident people who have healthy, positive relationships. There was a lot of alignment between what parents saw as successful and the vision, values and key competencies of the New Zealand Curriculum (NZC). For ākonga there was a strong correlation between their own views of success and their parents'.

All of this data was analysed and from it we concluded that while there were some common themes coming through from each group, success was not often specifically discussed and there were often assumptions made about what ākonga were wanting or needing. We established that the first theory we wanted to test was that improved outcomes for ākonga who were struggling in some way to be successful could be brought about by a stronger understanding of success between ākonga, teachers and whānau.

Step 3: How do we test the validity of these theories?

In 2018 a number of workshops were organised to promote more interaction between teachers and the parent community. These were held at different schools throughout the community and offered parents the chance to talk with teachers about ways they could mutually support ākonga. There were a variety of topics ranging from reading and maths to being safe online and providing healthy lunches. While the feedback from parents was extremely positive, there were real challenges around the number of parents attending and the lack of parent representation from significant groups within the community. There was also a perception from teachers that these events were for CoL staff so teacher attendance was low.

Towards the end of 2018 it was decided that even though parents had been very enthusiastic about these events, and they reinforced the views from parents which had been collected in the case studies, they were not an effective way to either test the theory we were exploring or to address the problem in a meaningful way. It was decided that the best way to do this would be to return to the case studies carried out the previous year as these had not only given valuable insights to those who carried them out, but the focus they brought to the learning of individual ākonga had, in a number of instances, been the start of a positive process of change for ākonga, teachers and parents. The decision was made by the Stewardship Group that all teachers in the kāhui ako would complete a case study on one student, who they could see was not thriving in some way, in the 2019 academic year. The positive outcomes from this process has led to the case studies being carried out in subsequent years. It is the intention for this process to be part of 'business as usual'

'As my relationship with [him] became more positive, relaxed and less authoritarian, he has been motivated to apply himself more in my class and to genuinely want to do well... [He] has progressed from being unwilling or too shy to ask for help in class, to regularly seeking my help, which has been great to see.'

for each centre and school in the CoL: from now on it will be an undertaking that each teacher completes a case study each year as a part of their professional responsibilities of working in this community.

Step 4: How do we intervene to meaningfully address this problem?

The potential of the discussions at the heart of the case studies to be, of themselves, a starting point to improve outcomes for ākongā, means that this process doubles as both a test of the theory being explored and an intervention itself. The 250 case studies which have been completed by teachers in 2019 and 2020, and which are currently being worked on for 2021, have provided an invaluable resource for understanding the success, challenges and aspirations of young people and families in our community. Some of the key benefits are:

- a way for a number of teacher assumptions to be challenged
- a way to target classroom interventions in a way that has a realistic chance of making a difference to these ākongā
- specific insights into the learning and wellbeing of our most vulnerable ākongā
- an ability to find out more about nearly 10% of the ākongā teachers are concerned about every year
- placing these ākongā (and their whānau) at the top of this intervention process rather than the typical approach of having them at the bottom of the intervention model
- a way for teachers to signal their care and belief in ākongā and to build positive learning relationships
- a way for (often marginalised) families to have their voices heard at school
- a way for teachers to connect with, and build relationships, with whānau
- a way to enact Māori ākongā having success as Māori
- a way for all families who do not have a mainstream pākeha world view to have their ideas of success heard and acknowledged
- a way for teachers to develop their cultural responsiveness
- a way for young people to explicitly hear that home and school are on their side
- changing teacher practice: teachers alter how they work with individuals as a result of this process, often these changes provide useful professional learning and ways to improve outcomes for other ākongā
- providing very important information to share between sites to help ease the transition of vulnerable ākongā

‘I wish all my teachers took the time to get to know me better, and then I would feel comfortable to tell them when I was struggling.’

A big challenge to enacting this work has been to get teacher support of the mahi. Most teachers work at full capacity so perceived increases in workload are not seen as positive regardless of the merit of the initiative. Many teachers are also jaded from the many, many initiatives they have been required to comply with which have not produced any lasting benefits. In some schools there was strong pushback from teachers to a perceived increase in workload from the introduction of the case studies. To counteract this the Stewardship Group agreed that something would be 'taken away' at each site to enable the time to carry out this work. However, this coincided with a period of change in leadership for some of the schools and implementing this work was not necessarily a priority for outgoing or incoming leaders. Currently seven of the eight centres and schools involved have this process in place with the intention of it being ongoing. Some are in their third year of having every staff member complete a case study and some are in their first year but while there may still be some residual pockets of dissatisfaction, the overall feedback is that teachers see the value and potential of the process and there is a high level of compliance.

A further challenge has been for WS Leaders implementing this process with their colleagues. Because this has been an iterative process and the design has been developed along the way, implementing case studies was not necessarily the work the WSLs envisioned themselves doing when they applied for their positions. The challenges of implementing work that some colleagues are opposed to is always challenging. Some WSLs were able to adapt to this fairly easily while others found that it was too difficult. This problem has largely been solved but subsequent staffing rounds so WSLs have had a better idea of the nature of the work they would be doing when they apply for their positions.

A way to mitigate some of these issues would have been to have all staff involved in co-constructing the intervention to test the theory they had established earlier on. While this would have been feasible (though definitely challenging) across so many different sites, the time it would have taken to carry this out would have delayed implementation of an intervention substantially. Some WSLs were already feeling that a lack of visible 'progress' by the CoL was making their positions difficult at their schools and so it was decided that it would be better to move into the 'doing' phase without this consultation. In hindsight it may have been easier in the long term to have taken the time to have staff more involved at that stage.

We have also had CoL wide events for all teachers to provide professional learning to support their work with the student who is their focus: Nathan Wallis (2019), Kathryn Burkett (2020), Melinda Webber (2021).

We would like to make special mention here of the wonderful work with case studies which has happened in our Early Learning Centres despite not having any funding or WSLs on staff to assist with this mahi.

Over the last four years we have also run professional learning sessions for ELS teachers in this rohe. These happen once a term and presenters are chosen by drawing on the expertise of our colleagues from the Northcote Baptist Community Preschool and Tots Corner. Presentations have included: Debbie Watkin, Trauma-Informed; Jen Ryckaert, Raukatauri Music Therapy; Anna Claridge, The Neuroscience of Behaviour; Barbara Watson, Te Ara Poutama; Structured and Critical Literacy, David Taylor and Theresa Kinloch.

These evenings are always well attended: up to 60 participants from up to 18 centres across the rohe. These events provide food (as most teachers have come straight from work) and have consistent positive feedback. For many of the teachers these are the only professional learning opportunities they can access.

Another series of evening events to support our overall purpose are maths parent evenings run at the college. At this stage these are for Year 9 parents to learn about what is happening in maths classes so they can provide support at home. These are always very well attended with up to 100 participants including parents, Year 9 ākonga and Year 13 helpers.

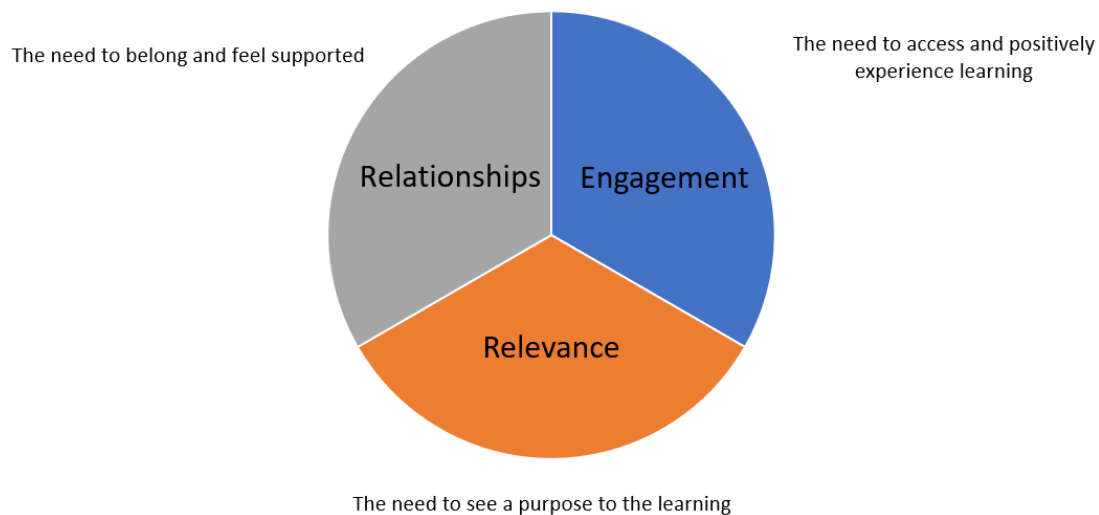
Step 5: How do we know if we are making a meaningful difference?

While we have a great deal of anecdotal evidence and wonderful individual stories of success and progress, this is an area that we need to focus on more. We have a great deal of qualitative data which indicates strongly that these case studies are having a positive effect on student outcomes and on changing teacher practice. We now need to develop a way to reliably draw overall conclusions about the degree of difference this making and about whether the positive changes which have been documented are sustained beyond the year the teacher is working specifically with the student. This is a very important next step for this work.

As well as many examples of positive individual case studies, there are other indicators to suggest the effectiveness of the work the kāhui ako has been doing in this space. The number of completed case studies has increased as teachers have come on board with the idea, experienced the power of working with a student in this way and hear the positive stories of others. The School Practices Survey has also shown a growing awareness of the impact of this work.

'This [the case study] ... also made me realise that the way I make students feel about themselves and their place in the world is far more important than anything mathematical I teach.'

Based on the data gathered from all the case studies the following model has been developed to help understand the key aspects which ākonga need to be successful. If there is an issue with one or more of these aspects ākonga will struggle at school.



A model for understanding success

This model can help teachers to identify the barriers for the student they are working with and to adjust their practice accordingly. This is the key to the success of this work: we are not providing a top-down intervention to be applied to all these ākonga, rather the ākonga are at centre of intervention design: it consists of many individual interventions, each one specific to that student and their needs. This provision of bespoke interventions not only has the potential to strongly impact student progress and achievement but influences teacher practice as kaiako respond to the individual needs of the student they are working with.

In this way the kāhui ako has made excellent progress against the five central aspects of the previous achievement challenge (see below).

[Student] is so polite that she may not ask for help a first or second time because she “doesn’t want to offend” her teachers.’

Previous Achievement Challenges

The previous achievement challenges were framed by this intention:

- We will focus on the accelerated progress and achievement of our identified priority ākonga:
 - Achievement Challenge One – Writing
 - Analysis of 2015 that looked at trends and patterns from all schools identified a need in writing to address the achievement of Māori, Pasifika and boys
 - Achievement Challenge Two – Reading
 - Analysis of 2015 that looked at trends and patterns from all schools identified a need in reading to address the achievement of Māori, Pasifika and boys
 - Achievement Challenge Three – Mathematics
 - Analysis of 2015 that looked at trends and patterns from all schools identified a need in mathematics to address the achievement of Maori, Pasifika and boys
 - Achievement Challenge Four – NCEA
 - Analysis of 2015 that looked at trends and patterns from Northcote College identified a need to improve NCEA level 2 achievement of Māori, Pacific and male leavers.

The following five aspects were identified as key to pursuing this intention:

1. A consensus of valued outcomes
2. Culturally responsive curriculum
3. Pathways and Transitions
4. Educationally powerful connections and relationships
5. Professional learning

‘...since completing the interview [she] has been much more receptive to my help during class time, is working harder and more effectively, contributes answers during class discussion and shares her successes... with [mum]... Both are really happy with her improved progress and attitude as a result of [me] taking an interest’

While the first half of this intention (and the key aspects which underpin it) were, and continue to be, strongly supported by all member centres and schools, the imperatives to have such a narrow focus and to be guided so rigidly by National Standard and NCEA data, was always at odds with the beliefs and values of this Kāhui Ako. Though both National Standards and NCEA data could be seen as useful objective, standardised, measurements, there is little evidence that a focus on assessment outcomes is the best way to bring about the changes to teaching, learning, and wellbeing that that is the vision of this Kāhui Ako. **It is the firm belief within this community that focusing on improving learning experiences will in time lead to shifts in the assessment data, rather than the other way around.** This approach has endured despite the demise of National Standards and the substantial changes being made to NCEA: by 2024 none of the measures required for the original achievement challenge plan will exist.

	1: Writing [Māori/Pasifika/ Boys]	2: Reading [Māori/Pasifika/ Boys]	3: Mathematics [Māori/Pasifika/ Boys]
Birkenhead Primary	2017: Māori: 72% (18/25) Pasifika: 50% (5/10) Boys: 69% (147/214) 2018: Māori: 79% (19/24) Pasifika: 38% (3/8) Boys: 72% (163/225) 2019: Māori: 85% (18/21) Pasifika: 54% (6/11) Boys: 80% (184/230) 2020: Māori: 55% (11/20) Pasifika: 44% (4/9) Boys: No data available	2017: Māori: 84% (21/25) Pasifika: 50% (5/10) Boys: 83% (179/214) 2018: Māori: 83% (20/24) Pasifika: 62% (5/8) Boys: 87% (196/225) 2019: Māori: 90% (19/21) Pasifika: 54% (6/11) Boys: 82% (190/230) 2020: Māori: 75% (15/20) Pasifika: 66% (6/9) Boys: No data available	2017: Māori: 80% (20/25) Pasifika: 60% (6/10) Boys: 88% (189/214) 2018: Māori: 92% (22/24) Pasifika: 75% (6/8) Boys: 89% (201/225) 2019: Māori: 90% (19/21) Pasifika: 63% (7/11) Boys: 89% (205/230) 2020: Māori: 75% (15/20) Pasifika: 66% (6/9) Boys: 88% (208/236)
Northcote Primary	2017: Māori: No data available Pasifika: No data available Boys: No data available 2018: Māori: 94.1% Pasifika: 50% Boys: 84.5% 2019: Māori: 95.9% Pasifika: 33.3% Boys: 86.9% 2020: Māori: 66.6% Pasifika: 40% Boys: 81.3%	2017: Māori: No data available Pasifika: No data available Boys: No data available 2018: Māori: 100% Pasifika: 75% Boys: 94.1% 2019: Māori: 95.8% Pasifika: 66.7% Boys: 91.2% 2020: Māori: 78.8% Pasifika: 50% Boys: 87%	2017: Māori: No data available Pasifika: No data available Boys: No data available 2018: Māori: 100% Pasifika: 87.5% Boys: 95.3% 2019: Māori: 91.7% Pasifika: 44.4% Boys: 87.5% 2020: Māori: 75.8% Pasifika: 50% Boys: 88%
Willow Park Primary	2017: Māori: 79% (42/53) Pasifika: 71% (10/14) Boys: 79% (228/300) 2018: Māori: 70% (32/46)	2017: Māori: 77% (41/53) Pasifika: 86% (12/14) Boys: 84% (252/300) 2018: Māori: 91% (42/46)	2017: Māori: 77% (41/53) Pasifika: 79% (11/14) Boys: 87% 261/300 2018: Māori: 78% (36/46)

‘Ask her if she understands and if she needs help. Don’t assume because she’s quiet, that she’s okay.’

	Pasifika: 62% (10/16) Boys: 73% (244/332) 2019: Māori: 69% (37/54) Pasifika: 48% (9/19) Boys: 73% (234/337) 2020: Māori: 66% (39/59) Pasifika: 71% (15/21) Boys: 74% (264/358)	Pasifika: 75% (12/16) Boys: 84% (279/332) 2019: Māori: 82% (44/54) Pasifika: 79% (15/19) Boys: 85% (286/337) 2020: Māori: 75% (44/59) Pasifika: 81% (17/21) Boys: 83% (298/358)	Pasifika: 75% (12/16) Boys: 87% (289/332) 2019: Māori: 72% (39/54) Pasifika: 61% (12/19) Boys: 83% (279/337) 2020: Māori: 69% (41/59) Pasifika: 48% (10/21) Boys: 83% (298/358)	
Northcote Intermediate	2017: Māori: 61% Pasifika: 76% Boys: N/A 2018: Māori: 61% Pasifika: 76% Boys: N/A 2019: Māori: 70% Pasifika: 56% Boys: 70% 2020: Māori: 70% Pasifika: 57% Boys: 66%	2017: Māori: 69% Pasifika: 76% Boys: N/A 2018: Māori: 69% Pasifika: 76% Boys: N/A 2019: Māori: 71% Pasifika: 57% Boys: 76% 2020: Māori: 72% Pasifika: 68% Boys: 76%	2017: Māori: 64% Pasifika: 65% Boys: N/A 2018: Māori: 64% Pasifika: 65% Boys: N/A 2019: Māori: 65% Pasifika: 51% Boys: 74% 2020: Māori: 72% Pasifika: 53% Boys: 74%	
Northcote College	Māori leavers with NCEA Level 2 or better	Pacific leavers with NCEA Level 2 or better	Male leavers with NCEA Level 2 or better	Overall leavers with NCEA Level 2 or better
NCEA Level 2 Challenge to improve NCEA results for boys, Māori and Pacific Overall target: 95% of leavers achieving NCEA Level 2	2015: 75% 2016: 79.7% 2017: 90.9% 2018: 87.2% 2019: 77.3% 2020: 84.4%	2015: 68.2% 2016: 80% 2017: 92.3% 2018: 93.5% 2019: 86.4% 2020: 88.9%	2015: 83% 2016: 85% 2017: 98% 2018: 93% 2019: 85% 2020: 89%	2015: 89% 2016: 91.7% 2017: 94.2% 2018: 93.4% 2019: 92% 2020: 95.9%

Summary of Progress 2015-2020

To meet the overall intention of the challenges we have undertaken the rigorous approach outlined above: identifying the 'problem' we are trying to solve, seeking to understand the theories which might explain this problem, and beginning to implement an intervention to solve that problem.

Points of interest:

- though low student numbers leads to fluctuations in some percentages, there are positive trends across all schools for improvement for priority ākonga
- there appears to be a significant shift for Māori ākonga across the community

[Whānau] connection improved [her] overall motivation towards completing her schoolwork.

- there are positive signs of good performance for boys across schools
- while there is still work to do to bring parity between groups this data shows emerging patterns of change
- this data shows relatively brief snapshots of the educational journey of these ākonga: over time we can expect to see even greater benefits for ākonga
- the focus for the Kāhui Ako has been on quality teaching and learning, informed by educationally powerful connections (rather than a focus on the data) with the belief that this, in time, will bring benefit to all ākonga: this data strongly suggests that this approach is working in this community

'Being perceived as not knowing something or not being good at something in a whole class setting is very stressful for him and causes him to switch off from being able to learn. He is afraid of people seeing him failing and this can often be the reason behind [him] quickly giving up on tasks.'

New / Updated Achievement Challenges

Achievement Challenge Tahi: To Reduce the Variation in (Holistic) Student Outcomes by Knowing Individuals and Supporting their Well-Being and Learning

Problem

There are a large number of ākonga in the rohe who are struggling with well-being and learning challenges. We want to make sure we are identifying all these rangatahi and providing appropriate interventions to help support them.

Outline

Ākonga wellbeing continues to be a concern for teachers, principals and whānau. By continuing to build educationally powerful connections with all in the community we can better ensure that we are meeting a holistic range of needs for ākonga and whānau.

Evidence for challenge

- Our newly compiled Learning Support Register shows that there is a very high number of ākonga (819 – approx. 36% of all ākonga in the Kāhui Ako) needing extra support to reach their personal excellence (academic, emotional, psychological, cultural, physical)

Actions

- Further develop and enhance Case Study approach across the Kāhui Ako
- Continue to develop an understanding across the Kāhui Ako of what success looks like
- Investigate well-being programmes across the Kāhui Ako
- Enhance transitions across the Kāhui Ako
- Enhance functionality of Learning Support Coordinators and use of Learning Support Register across the Kāhui Ako
- Strengthen educationally powerful connections and partnerships between ECE/School and home
- consider the messages conveyed to ākonga through current reporting processes

'It's so interesting to reflect on learning, success, motivation and disposition. And of course, hearing your child's voice and interpretation. Fascinating.'

Goal

To increase the percentage of ākonga on the Learning Support Register targeted by specific interventions to support them to reach their personal excellence. This will be measured by cross referencing the ākonga on the register with interventions at each school/centre. We will be hoping to see that all ākonga on the register are accessing appropriate interventions to support their well-being and/ or learning challenges.

Achievement Challenge Rua: To Improve Akōnga Skill and Confidence in Mathematics

Problem

Rates of progress in mathematics have fallen over time and despite many interventions there has been no clear solution to improving overall achievement rates. This has been paralleled by low confidence in, and enjoyment of, mathematics.

Outline

The challenges facing New Zealand ākonga in maths (and science) have received a lot of media attention recently but this is not a new issue. It is also not specific to this community. We are very keen to find some local solutions to some of the learning issues facing teachers and ākonga in this rohe.

Evidence for challenge

- international comparisons show a decline in mathematics achievement in Aotearoa New Zealand over an extended time
(<https://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/publications/schooling2/large-scale-international-assessments/insights-for-teachers-new-zealand-student-self-belief-and-confidence,-and-implications-for-achievement>)
- national evidence suggests teachers are often uncomfortable and lacking confidence when it comes to maths teaching
(<https://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/publications/series/2571/timss-201415/teachers-and-teaching-in-maths-and-science-what-we-know-from-new-zealands-timss-201415-results-for-year-5-and-year-9>)
- national evidence suggests that mathematics curriculum issues need addressing
(<https://arxiv.org/abs/2106.06674>)
- over the last two years we have put Kāhui Ako resourcing into exploring maths teaching in this community which has shown that student confidence in mathematics is often low

‘[His] mum... highlighted that “[His] overconfidence is a mechanism that hides his lower confidence”. She also highlighted that he most likely wouldn’t say “I don’t understand”. This painted the picture for me that [he] is resistant to seek help quickly in class as he may not be sure what to ask or how to ask it.’

- Year 9 mathematics testing shows that the basic skill level of 47.7% of ākonga (93/195) is very low (2020 data)
- Year 9 mathematics attitude surveys show that 50.1% of ākonga (99/195) do not enjoy maths (2020 data)
- collectively this evidence shows a need to address issues in mathematics across the Kāhui Ako

Actions

- establish what mathematical skills children should be expected to take with them at transition points
- investigate what more we know about this problem
- continue to investigate what is happening in mathematics across the CoL including pedagogical approaches
- streamline the transition of mathematics from ELS - Primary – Intermediate - College
- develop a plan to move forward and implement it
- enhance a positive attitude in mathematics across the CoL
- standardise assessment of ākonga in mathematics across the CoL

Goal

- higher teacher confidence teaching maths as measured on pre- and post- intervention surveys
- more student confidence as measured on attitude survey at transition from Y8-9
- higher level of skills shown at Y9 as measured on skills test at transition from Y8-9
- these goals will be also be monitored using the existing Year 9 surveys as well as primary schools' analysis of variance for mathematics

Achievement Challenge Toru: Developing Local Curriculum

Problem

Over recent years there have been policy settings that have impacted (and limited) current curricula. There has also been the introduction of new policies which will require changes to what is taught in all schools.

'I thought I knew a lot about [him] - and I did, but I learnt so much more during this process. Especially where he comes from and the sorts of things that help him be successful.'

Outline

We want to ensure that all ākonga are receiving opportunities to learn across all curriculum areas. The introduction of the compulsory teaching of Aotearoa New Zealand Histories provides an opportunity for schools to consider the breadth and depth of what ākonga are taught and to ensure they have programmes in place to meet ākonga' curriculum needs.

Evidence for challenge

- the 'Curriculum Refresh' currently taking place in Aotearoa will require a review of current teaching programmes
- introduction of Aotearoa New Zealand Histories into the NZC
- limited science teaching time reported by teachers and principals
- a desire to include more tikanga Māori in schools
- the requirement by the Teaching Council of Aotearoa for all teachers to 'Practise and develop the use of te reo and tikanga Māori' to meet the standards for registration
- some community perceptions of an unevenness in learning opportunities across learning areas

Actions

- focus on developing knowledge and understanding of local history across the CoL
- review learning opportunities across learning areas with a specific focus on local history, tikanga and science
- adjust teaching and learning programmes if/ where required
- provide support and professional learning if/ where required

Goal

- To be confident by 2024 that all ākonga are having opportunities to learn across all learning areas as required by the New Zealand Curriculum
- a mechanism for measuring this will be developed using teacher voice, whānau voice, and the relevant curriculum documents as they become available

'He is a personable student who has to overcome barriers every day to function and learn. ... Learning about him and how to support him and his family effectively so he can find individual success will make a big difference for him.'