

School introduction and background

Arohanui School is a state school situated in Waitakere, West Auckland. We provide quality learning programmes for students with intellectual disabilities aged from 5 to 21 years. Our school's 29 classes are located across fifteen sites including our base school, satellite classes in host schools across West Auckland, and a post-18 unit. We also deliver a comprehensive Specialist Teacher Outreach Service for students with ORS funding in their local mainstream school.

At Arohanui we view each student as a unique learner. The Arohanui Special School Curriculum focuses on supporting each student to develop the skills they need to be an effective communicator, as independent as possible throughout their lives, and to reach their potential in all areas. We follow the New Zealand Curriculum but adapt it to meet the needs of each student.

The whole school participates in EOTC, and we actively look at meaningful ways this can be incorporated into our learning programmes to help our students access learning experientially. While this case study examines the programme supporting our Intermediate - Adult learners, the Junior School were also included, as we have a school-wide context for learning each term.



EOTC and 'camp' at Arohanui

Our 'camp' and EOTC experiences look slightly different to that in other schools, due to our high student needs. We don't run overnight camps, instead provide meaningful day trips within our local community.

We have always considered EOTC to be an important part of our students' education and have worked to include as many EOTC learning opportunities as possible, in authentic contexts. We also feel strongly about the inclusion of place and culturally responsive pedagogies and in recent years have strengthened the use of these concepts within our EOTC.

We want to encourage and support our teachers to increase their use of EOTC and to bring a more explicit link to learning programmes and the development and extension of learning. This means reducing the real and perceived barriers faced by our staff, especially given the diverse and complex needs of our students.

What we did

This year our EOTC is driven by the theme 'Arohanui Pepeha', which aims to connect students with local places and explore how they identify/engage with the community. Within this theme we consider:



- The history of Aotearoa, our local environment and people
- Personal and cultural identity
- Explore recreational and social activities that can be continued beyond school

To support the unpacking of our theme we developed a template that identifies how the topic content/learning intentions link with the learning concepts or approaches, such as Education for Sustainability (see Appendix 1). This has really helped to identify whether we are providing a balanced programme and have considered all possible learning opportunities. We created this template using the information provided in the Re-visioning School Camps resource.

We use a wide range of locations and environments, however all are significant to the students and help to connect them to their local place. For example, when learning about our early ancestors and how they explored and lived off

the land, students visited the Arataki Visitors Centre and the Auckland Museum. We have taken students out kayaking and have arranged to work with a local Waka Ama Group to take our students down our river, the Whau, and to support learning about Matariki we provide a Hangi and invite in all of our whanau. The students also learn and play traditional Māori games, and have the opportunity to fish off Cornwallis wharf and cook over a fire. Funding for our camp experiences is provided by ORS.



We have made a purposeful decision to focus on the following concepts as part of this EOTC:

- Place-based/responsive approaches
- Environmental Education for Sustainability
- Cultural responsiveness using Maatauranga Whakauka Taiao: Strategy and Action Plan 2017-2021.

We selected these three concepts because they are areas of strength and interest within the SLT, who develop the EOTC framework and provide programme support/professional development for the staff.

Over the last 6 months we have also been encouraging our students to help plan for our EOTC events, by adapting the planning sheet to include visuals (see Appendix 2). This is providing an opportunity for our teachers to better understand the prior knowledge students come with, and is support our students to take greater responsibility for themselves and others during the events.

We use a wide variety of activities and environments to support students in the ‘Arohanui pepepa’ EOTC experience. Some students have physical challenges alongside their intellectual differences that alter how and what level they can participate in particular activities and environments. We are working towards having students engaged in all activities. For example, while some students are able to paddle board or kayak, a student who is in a wheelchair and cannot kayak will be included by having them on a boat nearby. We are working with our teachers to increase their confidence and competence in EOTC, so the challenges they face appear less daunting and more manageable.

Reflections and suggestions

- Keep conversations and planning solutions focused.
- Focus on those students who will require additional supports, who are likely to have never been presented this opportunity before simply because it has been “too hard”.
- Reach out to others, including external agencies who are more familiar with individual adaptations that can be made, and know what resources are available to help.
- Include your students in the planning of EOTC experiences as much as possible - consider how your forms can be adapted to support student input (we amended ours to reflect the familiar visuals our students use).



Appendix 1: Staff EOTC planning tool: Links between the topic content/learning intentions and the learning concepts or approaches

Learning Concepts	Preparatory Activities: Research Base	Place-based/ Place-responsive approaches	Environmental Education for Sustainability (EEfS and Action Competence)	Maatauranga Whakauka Taiao: Strategy and Action Plan 2017-2021
Our Early ancestors came from overseas in Waka	Auckland Museum : Aotearoa and Pasifika Galleries Maritime Museum - Kupe: Waka and Vaka displays Auckland Libraries - Myths and Legends	Kayak and paddle board in Auckland Harbour.		
Our early Ancestors explored and lived off the land	Arataki Visitors Center Matariki - study and events Hangi Auckland Council - Heritage Information	Bush Walks. Beach Walks. Boat outing down the Whau. Te Whau Pathway (Archibald Reserve) Puketotara (Jonkers Farm) or Pukematakaeo visit. Bethells stream and dunes walk.	Take only photographs, leave only footprints. Pack in/Pack out. Planting gardens	Flax weaving Rope making Traditional Maori games Fishing off Cornwallis Wharf Pa sites Cooking on a fire
Our Ancestors experienced the full force of natural elements .	Fire safety Weather safety / planning Snow planet	Go out in the rain. Play in the snow. Sun safety.		Build a fire. Indoor Rock Climbing
Our early Ancestors settled into communities	Marae trip - Hoani Waititi Heritage buildings			Make shelters. Heritage sites
Other people arrived in different boats	Maritime Museum	Sailing trip Sea biscuiting Paddleboarding		
Sometimes our ancestors were involved in war: these formed our National Identity	Treaty of Waitangi ANZAC day	Trip to Devonport North Head Mt. Victoria Orakei Bastion Point Orakei Marae		Guns (target shooting- not people!) Laser strike Rough and tumble – wrestling
More people arrived and were born in New Zealand; we have built towns and cities		Ferry ride from Hobsonville Point to Auckland. Visit Britomart . Visit Auckland Airport	Twin stream walkway .	



Appendix 2: Student planning tool

<p>what  Activity?</p>	<p>where  Where?</p>	<p>when  When? (Date, Time, Expected Return)</p>	<p>who  how many  Who is involved?</p>
<p>why  go  Why are we doing this?</p>	<p>what  Oh no!  What could go wrong? [Harm]</p>	<p>what  careful  What could cause this to happen? [Hazard]</p>	<p>stop  What can we do to prevent it from happening? [Control]</p>
<p>help  If it still goes wrong this is what we'll do ...</p>			

Core Competencies	Roles & Responsibilities	Supervision Structure

