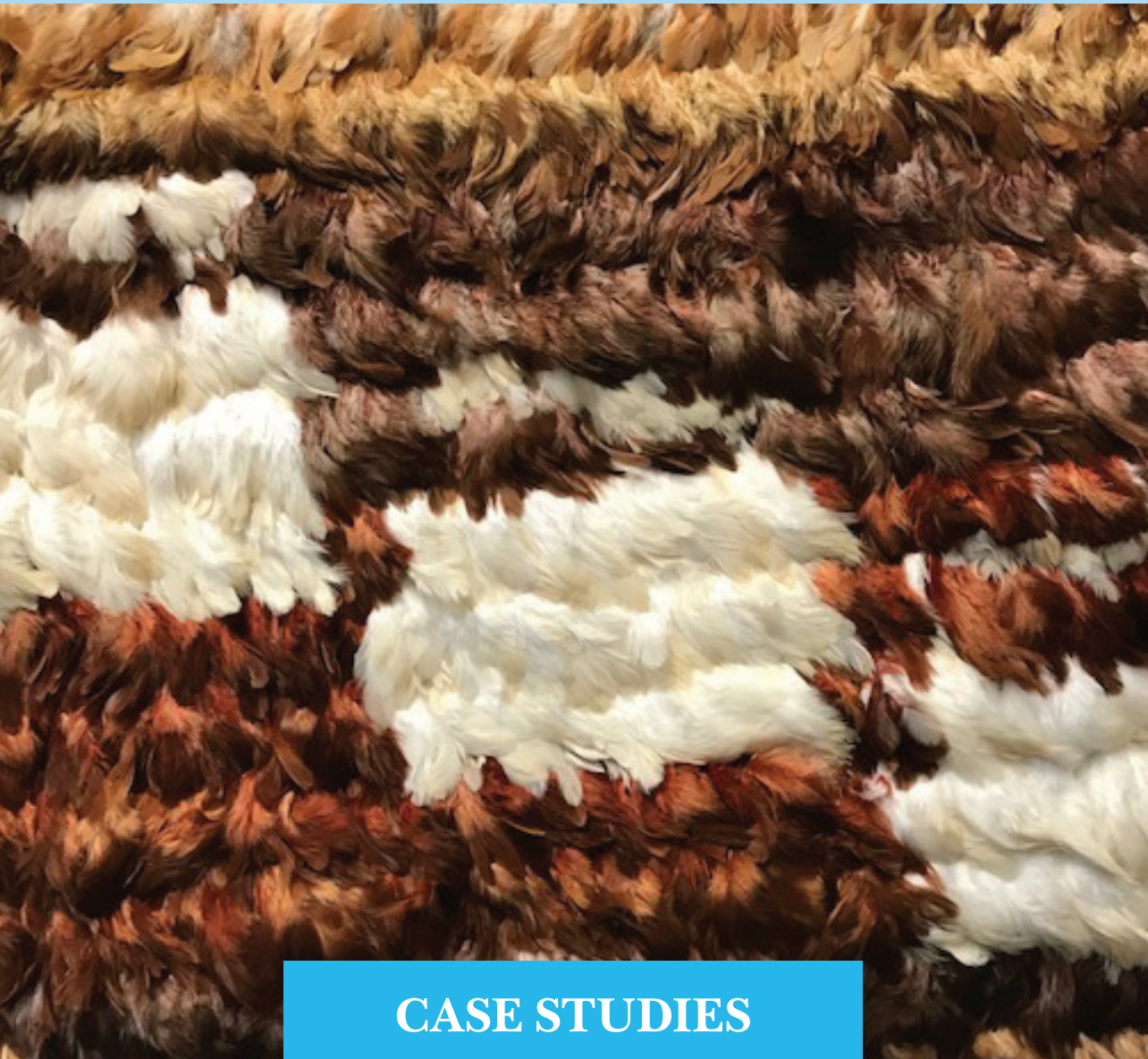
Te Rito Maioha
Early Childhood New Zealand

Poutoko Whakatipu Poutoko: Whakamanahia Ngā Poutoko Kōhungahunga Hei Hautūtanga Toitū

Leaders Growing Leaders: Effective Early Childhood Leaders for Sustainable Leadership

Gwen Davitt, Janis Carroll-Lind, Debbie Ryder, Sue Smorti, Raewyn Higginson, & Mere Smith



CASE STUDIES

Poutoko Whakatipu Poutoko: Whakamanahia
Ngā Poutoko Kōhungahunga Hei Hautūtanga Toitū

Leaders Growing Leaders

Effective Early Childhood Leaders For Sustainable Leadership

CASE STUDIES

Gwen Davitt, Janis Carroll-Lind, Debbie Ryder, Sue Smorti,
Raewyn Higginson, & Mere Smith

Te Rito Maioha
Early Childhood New Zealand

WELLINGTON, NOVEMBER 2017

Case Studies:

Poutoko Whakatipu Poutoko: Whakamanahia Ngā Poutoko Kōhungahunga Hei Hautūtanga Toitū

Leaders growing leaders: Effective early childhood leaders for sustainable leadership

by Gwen Davitt, Janis Carroll-Lind, Debbie Ryder, Sue Smorti, Raewyn Higginson, & Mere Smith

© Te Rito Maioha Early Childhood New Zealand, 2017

PO Box 12 725, Wellington 6144
Phone (04) 473 4672
www.ecnz.ac.nz

Ma te huruhuru ka rere te manu
Adorn the bird with feathers so it can fly

The cover image depicts the metaphor that all the different types of feathers coming together to make the korowai shows the strength of diversity/leadership. This whakatauki therefore reflects the idea that a bird cannot fly without feathers, but if you give the bird what it needs, it can thrive. Diversity and leadership thrives as we weave together our own unique strengths.

ISBN 978-0-473-42311-7 (print version)
978-0-473-42312-4 (online PDF)

Designed and typeset by Lynn Peck, Central Media Ltd

RHPF Central REGIONAL HUB PROJECT FUND AKO AOTEAROA

AKO AOTEAROA NATIONAL CENTRE FOR TERTIARY TEACHING EXCELLENCE

An Ako Aotearoa publication.
This project output has been funded by Ako Aotearoa through the Regional Hub Project Fund.

This work is published under the Creative Commons 3.0 New Zealand Attribution Non-commercial Share Alike Licence (BY-NC-SA). Under this licence you are free to copy, distribute, display and perform the work as well as to remix, tweak, and build upon this work non-commercially, as long as you credit the author/s and license your new creations under the identical terms.

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS VII

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Research Questions 1
Background to the study 1
Method 2
Phase One: National Online Survey 2
Phase Two: Case study interviews ('espoused theories' of the designated leader) 2
Phase Two: Case study data collection 3
Phase Three: Case study data collection 3
The Case Study Centres and their context 3
Participating early childhood centres 4

CHAPTER TWO: WHĀNAU AKOMANGA: WHANAUNGATANGA: WALKING THE TALK

Introduction 5
Case Study Description 5
Key Themes 6
Delegation 6
Roles and responsibilities 7
Head teachers 7
Staffing and staff monitoring 8
Administration including finances 9
Professional development 9
Te ao Māori 11
Building sustainable relationships 11
Discussion 12
Conclusion 12
References 13

CHAPTER THREE: PUKEAHU PRESCHOOL: HOA AROHAEHAE: BEING A CRITICAL FRIEND

Introduction 14
Case Study Description 14
Key Themes 15
Engages in intentional conversations 15
Growing leadership through identifying strength areas 17
Leader personal/professional qualities 17
Conclusion 18
References 19

CHAPTER FOUR: TAMARIKI O NGĀ MĀTUA: AN ETHIC AND CULTURE OF CARE

Introduction 20
Case Study Description 20
Key Themes 21
How the designated leader espouses leadership in this ECE setting 22
Observed leadership 'theories-in-use' in the ECE setting 24
Similarities and differences between 'espoused leadership' and 'leadership-in-use' 25
Factors limiting and supporting sustainable leadership practices within the ECE setting 26
Conclusion 27
References 28

CHAPTER FIVE: TE KŌHANGA REO: TUAKANA TEINA

Introduction 29
Case Study Description 29
Key Themes 30
Te ao Māori 31
Kotahitanga 32
Pedagogical leadership 35
Organisational leadership 37
Discussion 38
Conclusion 39
References 39

CHAPTER SIX: BABBLING BROOK "IT'S NOT MY PLACE, IT'S OUR PLACE"

Introduction 41
Case Study Description 41
Characteristics of the Leader 42

Characteristics of the Teaching Team 43
Key Themes 44
Leading the Centre 44
Leading effectively 46
Leading teams 49
Leading professional learning and development 49
Leading sustainability 50
Conclusion 51
References 52

CHAPTER SEVEN: WHAKAMANA LEADERSHIP: A 'BIG SIS' APPROACH TO LEADERSHIP
Introduction 53
Case study description 53
Key Themes 54
Growing leadership knowledge and change 54
A 'big sister' approach to leadership — guiding and role modelling 55
Culture of trust: Identifying strengths in others 56
Conclusion 57
References 58

CHAPTER EIGHT: MAYFIELD KINDERGARTEN: MANAAKITANGA: BEING CARING TO OTHERS
Introduction 59
Case Study Description 60
Key Themes 61
Manaaki — looking after each other and the environment 61
Pedagogical leadership—focus on teaching and learning 63
Working alongside whānau and community 64
Sustainable leadership — delegation and being solution focused 66
Conclusion 69
References 69

CHAPTER NINE: PULLING THE CASE STUDIES TOGETHER
Leaders Growing Leaders: CASE STUDIES 70
References 74

GLOSSARY OF MĀORI TERMS 75

ABOUT THE AUTHORS 76

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To the designated leaders who formed the basis of our case studies, we thank you for granting us the privileged opportunity to observe your enacted leadership practice and to examine your leadership values and beliefs. Without your participation, our research study would not have been possible. Similarly, we thank the members of the teaching teams in our seven case studies for sharing your insights and perceptions of leadership within your early childhood settings. Together your leadership stories brought the study to life.

Growing effective leaders is what this study is all about. What we learned from you will be of professional interest to the early childhood sector as the stories shared reinforce the widespread recognition that leadership is a key factor in improving quality.

We also gratefully appreciate the financial contributions of Ako Aoteraoa: National Centre for Tertiary Teacher Excellence and Te Rito Maioha Early Childhood New Zealand for funding this research study.

Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi, engari he toa takitini
Success is not the work of one but the work of many

CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

Characterised by their diversity and effective leadership, designated leaders and their teaching teams from seven teacher-led early childhood education services (ECE) participated as case studies in the research project: *Leaders Growing Leaders—Effective Early Childhood Leaders For Sustainable Leadership* (Ryder, Davitt, Higginson, Smorti, Smith, & Carroll-Lind, 2017). The study explored the role of designated centre leaders in growing both their own and their team's leadership, to ensure sustainability of effective leadership over time, within the context of Aotearoa New Zealand. The intention was to investigate how leadership is currently working within early childhood services, what the role of professional learning and development is in this process and what structures, processes and/or practices are enacted to sustain and grow early childhood education leadership now and for the future.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The key research question was:

- What leadership processes and structures do effective ECE leaders develop in their centres for the sustainability of the leadership culture?

In addition, four sub-questions underpinned the main question:

1. What professional learning and leadership development do effective ECE leaders undertake and how has it affected change in leadership practice?
2. What leadership actions (pedagogical, team leadership, and organisational) do ECE leaders take in developing others as leaders?
3. What are the 'espoused theories' and 'theories-in-use' used by effective leaders?
4. How can the identification of leadership barriers build capability and capacity within the ECE setting?

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The seminal work of Argyris and Schön (1974) informed the theoretical perspective of our research project. Argyris and Schön (1974) contend that people develop an 'espoused theory', about their beliefs and theories in regard to *how* they behave in any given situation, for example, in a leadership role. In contrast is a person's

'theories-in-use', which is about *how* people actually act in specific situations. 'Theories-in-use' are informed by a person's thinking, knowledge, and reflection and are often not consciously apparent. Whilst individuals can articulate their 'espoused theories' it is important to recognise that these particular theories are not always consistent with an individual's 'theories-in-use'. This research project therefore aimed to explore possible contradictions between leaders' 'espoused theories' and 'theories-in-use' and the implications for effective and sustainable leadership capacity and capability.

METHOD

The research design involved a mixed-method approach over three phases of the project.

Phase One: National Online Survey

The survey gathered quantitative and qualitative data about leadership qualifications; leadership roles and responsibilities; leadership learning and development; and sustainability of leadership. This survey was emailed to every teacher-led early childhood education centre listed in the New Zealand Ministry of Education 2015 database.

At the conclusion of the survey an additional question sought expressions of interest for centres to participate in phases two and three of the research project.

Phase Two: Case study interviews ('espoused theories' of the designated leader)

As a result of the expressions of interest seven ECE centres from across Aotearoa New Zealand were selected to participate in Phases Two and Three of this research study. They represented diverse service organisations and their eligibility was based on the following criteria:

- The designated leader held administration, management and pedagogical roles;
- The most recent Education Review Office (ERO) report rated the centre as 'very well placed' or 'well placed';
- The designated leader was involved in growing leadership, for example, their own, the team, and/or the centre's;
- The ability to be committed to the research project for its duration; and
- The centre was not currently supported by the Ministry of Education in terms of funding and/or professional development.

Each of the seven centres became an individual case study and worked with a specific researcher.

Phase Two: Case study data collection

Data was gathered through:

- A semi-structured interview between the researcher and the designated leader;
- The designated leader's reflective journal (Critical Incident Journal); and
- Notes taken by the researcher during centre visits.

Phase Three: Case study data collection

In this final phase the data was collected through:

- A semi-structured interview with the centre team;
- The researcher conducting three days of observation in the centre;
- Notes taken by the researcher during centre visits; and
- Collation of relevant centre documentation (e.g., centre philosophy, meeting minutes).

THE CASE STUDY CENTRES AND THEIR CONTEXT

Firstly it is important to acknowledge the diversity of New Zealand's teacher-led ECE services and how this diversity is reflected in the range of centres involved in this research project. The case studies included two kindergartens; four early childhood education and care centres; and one Kōhanga Reo (Māori language medium preschool). These ECE services were located across both the North and South Islands of Aotearoa New Zealand. In addition, they reflected a range of ownership structures (e.g., community-owned, privately-owned, corporately owned and centres that are part of larger umbrella organisations). Two case study services were also distinguished by their unique special character.

The following table presents the names and types of centre for the seven ECE services that participated in our research project. Of the seven centres, one centre opted to use its real name, the Kōhanga Reo[1] called itself Kōhanga Reo in place of its full name and five centres chose to use a pseudonym for both the name of their centre and the designated leader.

The following chapters place the lens on each of the seven case studies examined for the wider research project. Each narrative is deliberately different to appropriately reflect the individual centres, their specific contexts and their unique insights into leadership values, beliefs and practices. The leadership qualities of the Designated Leaders (DL) in the participating centres are showcased, depicting the 'espoused theories' and 'theories-in-use' (Argyris & Schön, 1974) of these seven ECE leaders in action.

By sharing these case studies and then the cross-case study analysis in the final chapter, we aim to facilitate robust dialogue around building effective leadership that drives quality within the early childhood education sector.

1. A glossary of Maori terms is on page 94.

PARTICIPATING EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTRES

Centre	Location	Structure of Organisation/Centre	Licence Details	Staffing	Designated Leader
Babbling Brook	North Island provincial city	Kindergarten Not for profit Governance board with community membership	40 O2 Sessional M–F, 8.30–2.30	5 teachers 4 degree qualified 1 diploma qualified 1 postgraduate study 1 emergent leader Ratio 1:10	Head Teacher: Vera Maud 21 years teacher, 2 years Leader Studying upgrade to BTch (ECE)
Mayfield Kinder-garten	South Island town	Kindergarten Umbrella = Kindergarten Association Purpose built centre	Mixed ages M–T, 8.45–2.45 F, 8.45–1	4 teachers, all with Bachelor of Teaching (ECE) degrees, education support worker, administrator 40 children, ratio O2 1:10	Head Teacher: Kathryn
Tamariki o ngā Mātua	North Island city	Community-based ECE centre Unique character Charitable Trust with community membership	32 children 24 up to 2 8 over 2 40% Māori 29.6% Pasifika All day service M–F, 8.30–3.30	6 teachers 80% qualified teacher aide centre cook Staff long standing tenure – 12, 11, 9, 8, 5 & 4 years respectively Ratios: U2 1:5; O2 1:10	Manager: Nanny Leader for 30+ years. Leader in this centre for 13 years
Pukeahau Preschool	Central North Island city	Education and care centre Not-for-profit parent co-operative Parent management committee Unique character	25 aged 2–5	4 teachers, 3 ECE qualified, 1 primary trained, 1 international qualification, 1 parent helper per day.	Principal: Hannah (16 years experience in NZ; 5 years overseas, 2 years as principal) DipTch (ECE) BTch (ECE)
Te Kōhanga Reo	North Island city	Pan tribal centre Iwi based Operates within tertiary institution	100% Māori 77 children, including up to 25 U2	12 teaching staff, including 6 ECE qualified. 3 head teachers (Pouwhakahaere), one for each of the teaching rooms. Most of the teachers have held qualifications for over 5 years, with some recently qualified.	Tumuaki/Manager: Rina (new leader)
Liberty Kids	North Island city	Originally privately owned, purpose built all-day centre. 2014 change of ownership to Corporate Centre (publicly listed company) with umbrella organisation	0–6 Full day	3 head teachers (one for each teaching room) and approx. two other teachers in each room. Majority of teachers qualified.	Centre Director: Louise BTch (ECE)
Whānau Akomanga	North Island city	Private ownership (2 centre portfolios; 2004, 2011)	74 children 50 @ centre 1 24 @ centre 2	15 staff including relievers across 2 centres Ratio: U2 1:3 O2 1:7	Owner/manager BC Leader is part of local iwi Owns 2 centres in same city

KEY

M–F = Monday to Friday O2 = over 2 years old U2 = under 2 years old

CHAPTER TWO

WHĀNAU AKOMANGA: WHANAUNGATANGA: WALKING THE TALK

INTRODUCTION

The Designated Leader (BC) of Whānau Akomanga is of Māori descent with links to various iwi across Te Ika a Maui. She currently owns and manages two early childhood centres known as Whānau Akomanga (with the centres referred to as Centre 1 and Centre 2). These centres are geographically close as they are just four kilometres apart. This means BC can easily travel between the two centres on any given day.

CASE STUDY DESCRIPTION

BC opened her first centre in 2004 following the completion of her Diploma in Teaching (ECE) from Te Tari Puna Ora o Aotearoa/New Zealand Childcare Association. BC then upgraded to her Bachelor of Teaching and Learning degree in 2004. BC's first centre (Centre 1) was licensed for 24 children. In order to retain her staff BC built a bigger centre (Centre 2) in 2011. Currently BC owns and manages the two centres in the same town and has a staff of 15 (including the relievers) and licencing capacity for 75 children overall.

In the quote below BC explains how her belief in her leadership ability had led her to now own two centres.

> I've always been a leader so you know to me I was always gonna run a centre or be a manager in management […] that's just one of those things I want to do.

BC has established a hierarchical structure within both centres, which are intentionally managed in exactly the same way. BC described the hierarchical structure as the director (BC), head teachers, the other 'girls' in each room and then the relievers. Centre 1 has one room where all the children are together, regardless of age, while Centre 2 has two rooms: over twos and under twos. All three rooms are run individually by head teachers who supervise the teachers within each room.

BC is currently training up a new head teacher for Centre 1. BC keeps in daily communication with this head teacher using her mobile to text messages and updates. When BC is not texting the head teacher she is with her at the centre.

> With the new head teacher [there] she has actually fitted in really good now. She's been there about three months now, July/August she took over and she's been really good, so I've got to know her … we just text each other or she rings me if there are any problems, but I am down there every day just to check that everything is okay.

KEY THEMES

Delegation

BC explained she is committed to delegating some of the roles to both the head teachers and staff. The head teachers meet with BC once a month to discuss any concerns and provide a report on each of their rooms. These reports usually include outcomes of the team meetings led by the head teachers, discussions on transitions (both between rooms and to primary school), staff requests and/or suggestions, and concerns regarding whānau. BC reads these reports out loud to all the head teachers, with BC asking clarification questions as she reads the reports. The meeting then moves on to the general business of running the centres. It is important to note that some of the information discussed remains solely with this management group.

The head teachers now run their own staff meetings, usually held within the centres' rooms at the end of the day.

> I used to attend the centre meetings but I don't now because I have head teachers and they can do it … whatever gets discussed at the head teachers' (meeting) is relay[ed] back at the centre meetings, what the girls need to know.

Discussion at the staff level involves relevant outcomes of the head teachers' meeting. These include programme planning, organisation of staff appraisal, professional development, the day-to-day running of each room (including rosters), concerns and changes about children, and any ideas staff would like to initiate. These discussion points are then taken to the next head teacher meeting or discussed informally with BC. Here the leadership has clearly been delegated to the head teachers, who in turn ask one of their staff to take responsibility. Responsibility helps the staff to feel like a collaborative team:

> I think we work well together, it's like a collaborative. […] Yes, we try and help each other as much as we possibly can.

However there are times when the staff need to make sacrifices for the viability of the centres. For example, sometimes staff have to stay home if there is no work for them:

> When we get lower numbers she (BC) says like do you need to go home, or the days drop, and sometimes I used to not come in at all to the centre in January, but come back in February.

The staff occasionally have to continue supervising children when conducting their staff meetings.

> Even [in] our meetings, the children are [still] on the floor, interruptions and we are trying to concentrate and they are all running around, on our time, because we are trying to have a meeting.

BC has plans for the staff to start leading their own professional development programme with other centres. As she explains:

> My aim was to have that emerging leadership, you know, the girls know what to do and how to do it without me. They can make decisions over things and… So we are just trying to work something where we might be able to do networking around the ECE area and will hold something and the girls can facilitate them.

Roles and responsibilities

Within the overall area of roles and responsibilities, five key areas are of concern to BC in striving for the successful operation of her centres. These five areas are: staffing; the head teacher role; administration; staff monitoring and finances.

Head teachers

BC is encouraging the head teachers to take on more responsibility. This includes the trialling of new staff members, staff appraisal and programme planning. BC aims to have emerging leadership occurring within her two ECE settings, so that the centres can run while BC takes time out for herself.

BC is adamant about letting the head teachers take more of the responsibly as it is her intention to slowly withdraw from attending the centres on a weekly basis. However, this is easier said than done. As BC explains:

> The biggest challenge is actually letting go […] stepping back, but I'm finding I'm just getting busier and busier. There's always something happening, like a staff member goes away, leaves, staff move on you know […] have to employ more staff. It's just getting bigger and busier.

When discussing how BC managed a two week holiday in Australia, it became more obvious that letting go was hard. Unsurprisingly BC still supervised the administration as evidenced in the following quote. BC explained:

> So I took my laptop (to Australia) and I've got all my systems on, running on there. It is actually easier. So the girls know how to run day to day, it is just they like to be, you know, if they have got any queries then they just filter them through me. The head

> teacher emails me of any changes. And I was away on one of the pay weeks so she just emailed me all the time, she's got both centres. She just scans them [worksheets] all through.

Staffing and staff monitoring

It is interesting how BC refers to the centre staff as though she is speaking for them, using the word 'we' to incorporate all and will refer to them as "my girls". She refers to the staff in this way through the aroha she feels for them. The staff also recognise this and have explained that BC is the owner, the boss, and the director.

BC was aware of the importance of having appropriate staff for her centres. "I've got to attend to their needs". Being aware of the need to ensure the teams remain stable, BC will usually trial a new staff member before employing them permanently to ensure they are the best person for the position.

> We're trialling her (a new staff member) out because she's just started training […]. I put people on a casual contract first if I don't know them […] their history. It's up to the head teacher to get back to me and see if they fit in their room cos some haven't.

Training up and retaining staff is a matter of importance for BC. She acknowledges some of the staff have been at either centre for up to 5 years.

> I'm looking at rewarding in some way, you know, cos quite a few of them have been here like 3, 4, 5 years … or longer. So I wanted to shout them, looking, I'm looking at the ways to, you know, treat, treat them and stuff.

This attitude of BC of training up and retaining staff ensures the staff remain loyal to her, hence the reason for staff remaining in her employment for a number of years, often only leaving when their family moves out of the region. When an ex-staff member moves back into the area they will often approach BC for a job, knowing their work is valued and the centre runs smoothly.

> I had a past employee drop in with her two children who have moved back, enquiring about a teacher position with us. She had called in a month before to let me know she was returning and if there was any possibility of a vacant position arising shortly.

However BC was aware of how a clash of personalities can impact on the teachers within her centres, and if the head teachers are unable to problem-solve the tension then she will step in to resolve the situation. Once incident clearly stood out for BC:

> I was not very happy with the person in speaking. I had spoken to her earlier in the month regarding no hours available to her in 2016. But she has involved everyone else into her situation, making them feel uncomfortable in a confrontational manner. The last thing I want is to have the rest of the team upset.

BC does like to ensure all the staff are developing their teaching pedagogy. BC monitors them and acknowledges that:

> I keep an eye on how the teachers themselves are individually progressing in their professional pedagogical, professional empowerment, self-empowerment etc., every month. I like to know what the girls have done in the month.

Administration including finances

The administrative duties are essential to BC as she is accountable for the financial viability of the centres. Thus she has developed a routine where:

> Monday mornings are usually busy mornings for me with administrative duties. I decide on the wages and the contracts and all that. And when employing a new staff member I get the last say as in we need to do this and I look at the money side. Is it going to be financially okay? Does it fit in the budget? Is it going to affect the Centre drastically? That's my last thing to consider.

As the owner/manager of the centres it is not unreasonable to expect the emphasis BC places on finances and administration. After all she would like the centres to be of high quality and for them succeed; therefore she has a vested interest in ensuring they do.

This espoused theory was observed by the researcher. BC was busy doing the accounts, specifically processing parents' payments, balancing bank statements and writing out further accounts for parents to pay.

The financial viability of the centres is an issue, as evidenced by BC stating that one of her concerns is paying the wages for all her staff:

> Probably lack of funds, yeah, cos obviously I've got to pay them good wages, so if I don't have the money and I can't pay them, they're not going to stay.

Professional development

Whilst being able to pay her staff good wages was a concern for BC, she also believed strongly in the value of professional development. BC thought professional development is important for her staff and herself. As a result BC attends conferences and workshops focusing on leadership and her perceived needs for running her centres. This interest in professional development is demonstrated in the quote below:

> So things that I know I need to do — if that comes up as a topic I make sure I push myself to that … obviously cost comes into it, but I try and go to a conference every year.

The staff acknowledged the professional development BC has given them, agreeing that the courses they attended have been relevant and useful in their daily practices. As the staff explained:

> We have been on workshops this year… it was really good.

> Yes, we went through [a Professional Development Organisation] and if there are more than six people they do an in-centre one. So that was better for us than having to travel to them.

BC also offers the staff a choice of what type of professional development they would like to do.

> [The staff are] involved with the ELP [Educational Leadership Programme]. We can source our own PD and we take it to [BC].

Through these actions it can be observed that BC is wanting to extend the skill level of her staff. BC keeps up-to-date with emails and correspondence from different organisations. This she considers is part of her own professional development.

BC also undergoes an appraisal process and asks her head teachers to feed into this process.

> Then the three head teachers and me will do the Head Teachers and mine, but we will do it for four people. So we will do all of ours together, the head teachers and me, and then the girls could do theirs. I don't think I will be present [at the individual staff appraisals], they [the head teachers] should be okay with theirs, they are capable.

BC's trust in her head teachers and staff illustrates Dahlberg and Moss' (2004) thinking about how trust and loyalty often go hand in hand.

BC has a vision for the centres she owns as leaders of professional development within the community. She would like to initiate professional development for her own team and invite other centres to attend as well. Eventually BC would like the head teachers to lead professional development for other teachers in the area. As a result she is now upskilling the head teachers in leadership to ensure they continue to grow and develop as professional ECE teachers.

> [My] vision is to empower the head teachers to take on more leadership role[s] plus strengthening leadership by having the head teachers lead their team of teachers' appraisals and empower each head teacher to discuss their PD with both teams.

BC has an expectation that all her staff (as well as herself) are accountable for their mahi (work). All staff including BC have a job description where their roles and responsibilities are outlined. BC explains:

> Job description – so [the staff have] all got jobs and stuff to do. They've got to do reports. The new thing that we've got in our self–review is that the girls are starting their own 'self' folders […] they're going to talk about it today [at the staff meeting], so it'll be interesting who has started.

The *Teacher Capability Folders* being completed by the staff will contribute towards the Education Council's teacher registration process (Education Council, 2017) as well as to their appraisals. BC is encouraging all staff to ensure the folders are regularly updated by each teacher and includes reflections on their own practice

(similar to learning stories) as well as links to academic writing. BC views the head teachers as the role models for this new initiative for all teaching staff.

Te ao Māori

BC values and is mindful of the fact that she is a successful Māori leader in ECE. Therefore it is important to her that her centres are bicultural. As BC explains:

> This is a bicultural centre, as in, you know the tikanga and things like that…we do implement tikanga Māori down there, Te Tiriti o Waitangi, as in karakia, himene, Matariki celebrations, marae visits.

This position is confirmed on Whānau Akomanga's website where the Māori motif and a local legend are explained. Additionally there are kete for each child where the daily notices are put for the parents to pick up when they collect their child. Tikanga was observed with karakia used at the beginning and end of meetings. Further examples of tikanga were also apparent in the different rooms with the tamariki, implemented by the teachers and supported by BC.

Building sustainable relationships

Building sustainable relationships is an important aspect of practice for BC, who believes that positive relationships between herself and her team, children and their parents/whānau are most important. She does walk the talk here, always taking time to greet tamariki, their parents/whānau and staff. BC knows the parents and staff well, engaging in conversations about their whānau, as well as the daily events.

> My philosophy is to help parents, you know while in early childhood. I've been here for so long that parents come first, cos obviously they're bringing their children [to the centre].

BC explains that both centres are a whānau based centre due to her kaupapa and training in Playcentre. The concept of being whānau centred is demonstrated as her mokopuna attend the centre with her and her daughter and daughter-in-law are part of the staff.

> And we sort of know the whānau based here, which is always my kaupapa, my philosophy. I believe in um you know, family based, but in saying family based is like it's privately owned, I own it, […], I've got my daughter, my daughter in-law who work here.

As a part of her philosophy BC sees it as her role to ensure she is there for the needs of the parents and tamariki. This support was seen throughout the data collected by the emphasis on, and consistency between, her 'espoused theories' and 'theories in use' (Argyris & Schön, 1974) and demonstrates how parent relationships are very important to BC.

DISCUSSION

It can be seen that at Whānau Akomanga the hierarchical development within the two centres, gives the staff clear pathways for developing their leadership. While acknowledging the structure is hierarchical, BC is trying to enable opportunities for the staff to grow their leadership skills. BC provides relevant professional development (finances allowing) so that her team can continue to develop their leadership skills. BC acknowledges her staff do not move on to other early childhood settings (due to her ability to find and retain good staff). BC has developed a vision to look wider and seek leadership opportunities for her staff within the wider early childhood community, where the staff can aim to lead the professional development. Here BC's espoused theories and 'theories in use' (Argyris & Schön, 1974) appear to match and correspond with Education Review Office's feedback[2] about the centre providing opportunities for teachers to engage in relevant professional learning and development to support achievement and extension of teachers professional goals.

However, there are barriers to genuine leadership developing. BC is the first to acknowledge it is difficult to let go and allow the head teachers and staff to take on more responsibility and leadership opportunities. While this is understandable, it also limits the possibilities for other staff to move into her managerial role. If leadership positions are available then the current teachers can apply for these, however if there is no movement (due to the staff loyalty), then staff may decide to look elsewhere for a leadership role.

CONCLUSION

It is clear BC demonstrates many features of successful leadership including:

- Community Leadership through an understanding of and response to the day by day centre based issues and problems. BC provides a listening ear to her staff (via text, emails, and face-to-face) to ensure the staff are comfortable with the decision making processes. If necessary, BC is capable of making the final decision especially if it is a difficult one;
- Pedagogical Leadership, which relates research to teaching practices as seen in the introduction of the *Teacher Capability Folders* and the requirement of the staff to link their teaching to research. As a leader BC is a sound role model;
- Administrative Leadership is one aspect BC is particularly strong in, as evidenced by her administration and financial management and responsibility of both centres;
- Entrepreneurial Leadership is demonstrated through strategies involving vision, forward thinking, planning and risk-taking. Opening the new centre and having faith in her own ability certainly displays these strategies; and

2 While some case study participants have referred to their centre's Education Review Office (ERO) report at times, these reports have not been referenced to ensure each centre's anonymity.

- Career Development Leadership where BC enables her head teachers and staff to visualise progressive and fulfilling career paths.

BC is a resourceful and visionary leader who has the best interests of the tamariki, their parents/whānau and the kaiako at the centre of everything she does.

REFERENCES

Arygris, C., & Schön, D. A. (1974). *Theory in practice: Increasing professional effectiveness.* San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Dahlberg, G., & Moss, P. (2004). *Ethics and politics in early childhood education*. Oxfordshire, England: Routledge.

Education Council. (2017). *Our code: Our standards: Code of professional responsibility and standards for the teaching profession*. Wellington, New Zealand: Author.

CHAPTER THREE

PUKEAHU PRESCHOOL: HOA AROHAEHAE: BEING A CRITICAL FRIEND

INTRODUCTION

This chapter tells the story of Pukeahu Preschool and provides the case study description, findings and summary. The case study description provides an overview of Pukeahu Preschool as an ECE setting. The key themes of the case study are: intentional conversations; growing leadership through identifying strength areas; and leadership personal/professional qualities. Finally, the themes are drawn on to describe the benefits of the leadership disposition of 'being a critical friend' (Hoa Arohaehae).

CASE STUDY DESCRIPTION

'Pukeahu Preschool' was the pseudonym given to the ECE setting for this case study. 'Hannah' is the designated leader of Pukeahu Preschool. As the 'Leaders Growing Leaders' study (Ryder et al., 2017) concentrated on the role of the designated leader, the teaching team of Pukeahu Preschool were referred to as 'the teaching team' with no pseudonyms provided. This case study focused on the effective leadership of Hannah as the designated leader and how she developed and grew leadership within the teaching team of Pukeahu Preschool.

Pukeahu Preschool is an established multicultural ECE service located in central New Zealand. Pukeahu Preschool operates as a non-profit parent cooperative catering for children aged over two years. A management committee of parents govern the centre with the support of the experienced principal. Whilst Pukeahu Preschool provides education and care for children and families of the wider community, its identity is also underpinned by a set of specific Jewish values.

Hannah's position title is that of principal. She holds a Bachelor of Education (ECE) qualification and is responsible to the chairperson of the parent committee. Hannah is a very experienced early childhood education leader with 16 years ECE experience in New Zealand and five years overseas. At the time of writing this case study Hannah had worked in her current leadership position at Pukeahu Preschool

for 14 years (this included two years as a teacher, before becoming the principal). Prior to her employment at Pukeahu Preschool Hannah worked in various positions overseas including a kibbutz in Israel. Hannah was also responsible for programmes for children with special needs at one time.

Pukeahu Preschool is licensed for a maximum of 25 children, employing four teachers, and one parent helper per day. Parent involvement is essential to the Pukeahu Preschool philosophy. At the time the research was undertaken three teachers were registered and ECE qualified, two were registered and primary qualified (one was currently finishing her ECE qualifications) and one had an international qualification aligned to the Jewish culture. The next section relates to the research question: *'What leadership processes and structures do effective ECE leaders develop in their centres for the sustainability of the leadership culture?'*

KEY THEMES

The key themes section draws on 'theories-in-use' and 'espoused theories' data (Argyris & Schön, 1974). The 'espoused leadership theories' are the leader's own values and beliefs regarding her practice and draws on data from one *designated leader's interview* and three *critical incident reflections*. The 'leadership theories-in-use' is the observable practice that the leader demonstrates and draws on data from three *researcher observations* and one *teaching team interview*.

Engages in intentional conversations

A key attribute that Hannah brings to her role as leader is that she prioritises her engagement in intentional conversations with the teaching team where she talks through and critiques their practice. Hannah is a 'straight talker'. She is assertive, direct and demonstrates a level of tenacity, which is evident in her intentional conversations. A crucial element of the intentional conversations is, what Hannah refers to as, the conversation having 'push-back'. In other words, Hannah is keen to challenge the teachers in such a way that it encourages them to think further. In the quote below Hannah explains what she means by 'push-back':

> I do listen but I love push-backs. So if I say something, I keep at it, it's not because I think my idea is the best, it's just because I want some push-back. Some people are better than others, because some give up. It's because I feel that the more you push to and fro, in a friendly manner, the better you get to the core.

The critical conversations and push-backs viewed by Hannah as being important are confirmed in the following quote by a new teacher who had just joined the teaching team. The new teacher talks about the need to be prepared to be challenged and hold your own in conversations with Hannah. She states:

> We are told that in this room (indicating the staffroom) things get raised and talked about. Be prepared to be challenged. So if I have a bright idea someone will say "Well convince me why". You've got to be prepared to hold your own, with Hannah.

Alongside the practice of having these intentional/critical conversations Hannah believes it is important to check in with the teaching staff during the day. In the leader interview Hannah states *"often even during the day I'll just go [and ask] are you alright? Is everything okay? It's so important to get those conversations in*". The 'checking in' Hannah talks about is confirmed in the interview with the new teacher, who states *"she constantly checks in – not in a way that would drive you nuts but 'how are you going, how's your day going?".*

Hannah not only believes it is important to prioritise time for checking in with the teaching team; she also has a strong belief in the importance of checking in and prioritising time for talking to parents. Whilst this might seem like a task all teachers and leaders should perform, Hannah has a daily ritual of talking with parents. This is clearly a key component of her leadership practice in regard to intentional conversations.

At 1pm each day the centre reduces its number of children, and so this is a key time that Hannah takes for talking with every parent as they are about to leave. In a critical reflection she wrote after the first researcher observation, Hannah states what her regular daily practice looks like.

> At 1pm the majority of the children are being picked up. I usually have the door duty so that I can pass on information to the parents while keeping the children safe during this transition time. I manage to speak to the majority of parents and I single out some of the conversations for deeper reflections. During this time, even if I was in deep conversation with one parent while another arrived, I take the time to at least acknowledge the parent arriving and the same when leaving. I do that in a way that doesn't disrupt the current conversation too much and the parents know this is my strategy so they are used to it.

The following quote describes Hannah's reasoning behind her daily 'door duty':

> I think it is imperative to take the time to listen to the parents and if I don't have time to talk to each and every one, at least acknowledging them is important. The same when they leave.

Hannah's key practice of prioritising and checking in with every parent is supported by the teaching team. One teacher refers to Hannah's daily door duty and says:

> Yeah, there's a lot behind that standing at the door and talking to the parents, coming in and out. This is something which has been done for years. It has been given to all the teachers from time to time, but because many parents prefer to talk to [Hannah] she takes responsibility for the door duty.

Whilst the checking-in that occurs in the 'door duty' practice is evidence of Hannah's belief in the importance of regular conversations with parents, it is also evidence of her own personal strength in verbal communication.

Growing leadership through identifying strength areas

As well as Hannah's open and honest practice of challenging others and her willingness to be challenged in return, she also had a strong belief in growing leadership. In the quote below Hannah describes how she deciphers particular teachers' areas of strength. Hannah explained:

> I listen and observe what their strengths are and go with that. Um so it's knowing them, it's knowing the person, and simply just letting them shine.

Hannah then provided an example of the team working from each other's strengths. She explained why leadership is not something teachers need to carry out single handedly.

> For example, [she names a staff member] is fully in charge of the [.....] curriculum. That doesn't mean that we're not coming up with ideas or anything but she makes sure it happens. Because then it just comes naturally, because everyone can be a leader. Anyone can be a leader within their passion. I definitely think that we work from people's strengths and give everybody a chance to be a leader in their own right.

Alongside this idea sits an acknowledgment of in-house leadership development as being more relevant than any external professional development process. When asked what leadership professional development the teachers had had, one teacher replied:

> To be honest, I mean I think particularly for me this year, being my first year back here, and the changes that have evolved and just working within the centre and getting to know again these wonderful people, has given me a lot. It has broaden[ed] my ideas of early childhood. I mean in years to come, you know when I've got it all down pat here (she laughs) I might, you know… I'm not saying that I couldn't do with all the professional development that you have. But [I'm] certainly gaining a lot by working with these people here. And I know you're asking about things outside of here, but for me at the moment, this is where more of the learning is going on within the centre.

Hannah went on to explain that she does not believe that everyone *has* to be a leader. In the leader interview she stated, *"So I, I don't necessarily think everyone are leaders, I do believe there are some people who prefer not to be, and if that's the case, that's fine".* The notion that not everyone has to be a leader was something that the teaching team as a whole were also comfortable with.

Leader personal/professional qualities

What came through very clearly in the teaching team interview was the utmost respect the teachers have for Hannah as their leader, and the personal and professional qualities Hannah demonstrates in her everyday practice. The teaching team talked openly about how Hannah inspires others with her wise manner, the level of encouragement she demonstrates, and the leadership responsibility that she most capably undertakes.

Besides inspiring others, the teaching team identified Hannah's personal attributes such as her warm nature, knowing herself and openly telling others how she was feeling. As a leader Hannah provided her staff with hope and confidence. In regards to Hannah's professional qualities the teaching team talked about three overall areas: open communication style; strong leadership within the teaching programme, and demonstration of clear leadership. Hannah's open communication style was demonstrated through being honest about her own performance and by being a straight talker. The teachers said that Hannah liked to get down to grass roots and understand what is happening for everyone. The teachers talked about Hannah's style of communication being direct and how she liked to talk things through. The teachers believe that Hannah's strong leadership within the teaching programme is evident in the way she manages any situation. The teachers talked of Hannah being 'the constant' within a day, and how she operates in a wise professional manner in the way she talks with the parents. Lastly, but not least, Hannah demonstrates clear leadership. The teachers said that Hannah's clear leadership is evident in regards to the full responsibility she demonstrates within all aspects of the running of the centre. The teachers talk about Hannah not being frightened of taking the mantle of centre leadership on her shoulders. There was all round agreement of how reassuring it was for them "just knowing that your leader of the team *is* the leader".

CONCLUSION

It is evident that the leadership theories Hannah espoused either in her interview or critical reflections align with the leadership 'theories-in-use' that have either been reported by the teachers or observed by the researcher. Hannah talked about being direct in her communication style and this direct style of communication was reiterated by the teaching team. Hannah spoke about having critical conversations and encouraging 'push-backs' from those she communicates with, and once again, this was supported by the teaching team's comments. Hannah expected the teaching staff to not just accept what is being said but to challenge and to be able to be challenged. The teaching team understood that this is a key expectation from Hannah and they appreciated such strong leadership. Just as Hannah expected the teaching team to challenge and be challenged, the teaching team respected her direct communication approach. At the same time as encouraging critical conversations, Hannah was supportive of her team, constantly checking in with them, as she does with the parents. Hannah's approach to growing leadership is to identify individual strength areas and knowledge and encourage teachers, where they want to, to take the lead in these areas. The teaching team understood that leadership is not an individual task held by one person, but rather a shared responsibility amongst passionate, energetic members of the team who want the best for the children attending their centre. On a personal level the teaching team found Hannah to be warm natured as she inspires hope and confidence in others. On a professional level Hannah has an open and direct communication style as well

as strong leadership within the teaching programme, and demonstrates a clear leadership style that can be depended on.

Hannah has become a pivotal influence over the many years that she has led Pukeahu Preschool. Whilst Hannah was clearly identified as the centre leader at Pukeahu Preschool, the teaching team have come to understand leadership in a new light. One member of the teaching team described her own understanding of leadership in this way:

> It's about making a difference in the lives of the children. In order to do that you need to make sure that you're doing things as well as you can. Therefore you put in that much energy, as much energy as you've got. If you're that sort of person, (and I think that the team that we have here are) you want to do the best for the children, and for the centre. You know. So I think that leadership from the individual comes from a want, a need to do your best.

Through Hannah's critical conversations, where she challenges and is also willing to be challenged she has inspired a culture within her teaching team by encouraging them to be their best and do their best. Hannah role models an open and honest leadership approach, which builds tenacity across the teaching team, and in doing so, has developed a sustainable leadership culture.

REFERENCES

Argyris, C. & Schön, D. (1974). *Theory in practice. Increasing professional effectiveness*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Ryder, D., Davitt, G., Higginson, R., Smorti, S., Smith, M., & Carroll-Lind, J. (2017). *Leaders growing leaders: effective early childhood leaders for sustainable leadership.* Wellington, New Zealand: Te Rito Maioha Early Childhood New Zealand.

CHAPTER FOUR

TAMARIKI O NGĀ MĀTUA: AN ETHIC AND CULTURE OF CARE

Each section of this case study is supported by a specific whakataukī to illustrate the strong conceptual and actual connections between the centre and te ao Māori.

INTRODUCTION

Tamariki o ngā Mātua means children of the parents and has been chosen as the pseudonym to reflect the special character of this specific early childhood centre. Tamariki o ngā Mātua was originally established in the 1990s as a community based early childhood centre to support a teen parent unit of a local high school enabling students to continue their education alongside parenting. Over time, while the centre may have moved location, it has continued to support teen parents, their children and early childhood education in the local community. The centre's hours of operation are Monday to Friday from 8.30 am to 3.30pm to coincide with the school hours of attendance of the teen parents.

Statistically the suburb has a higher rate of teen pregnancies in comparison with other regional suburbs. Teenagers (13-19 years) are the largest age group represented in this suburb's population at 18% compared with the national average of 15%. Sixty-two percent of the population identifies as European, 8% as Māori, 7% as Pacific peoples, 10% as Asian and 13% as other (QV, 2016).

CASE STUDY DESCRIPTION

Tamariki o ngā Mātua early childhood education centre has its roots in providing early childhood education under the leadership of a centre manager who appears to take on a matriarchal role. The centre manager chose the pseudonym 'Nanny', a name bestowed upon her by the children attending the centre, which reflects the whānau approach underpinning both the philosophy and practices of the centre. Tamariki o ngā Mātua is governed by a charitable trust to whom Nanny is responsible and accountable. As the manager of the centre Nanny also sits on the Trust's board. The centre team is well-established and consists of six teachers, 80% of whom are qualified, plus a teacher aide and the centre cook who are considered equal members of the aforementioned team. Nanny has been the centre manager for 13 years. The teachers' periods of tenure are 12, 11, 9, 9, 5 and 4 years of

service respectively. The centre philosophy is based on the provision of quality education and care that focuses on children's right to freedom of choice.

KEY THEMES

Analysis of the data identified the emergence of five key themes: (1) importance of cultural context; (2) a whānau collective approach; (3) key communication strategies; (4) empowerment through professional learning and development; and (5) ethic of culture and care. Importance of cultural context relates to the ethnic culture, environmental culture and sociocultural context of the children and their whānau as well as that of the early childhood education centre and its team members. In addition the unique character of the early childhood centre as part of a teen parent unit, governed by a trust and the associated relationship with the local high school are contributors to this unique cultural context.

A whānau collective approach: Data gathered through observations, interviews and additional documentation provided evidence of the team culture as a community of practice (Wenger-Trayner & Wenger-Trayner, 2015). Recognition of difference in terms of strengths, abilities and knowledge has enabled the team to come together to work as a whole sharing their knowledge, abilities and strengths for the common good. This collective approach is supported by a very strong culture of whānau tangata or family and community across all aspects of the centre community.

Key communication strategies were a factor that was fore fronted by both the leader and the team. Nanny described herself as "a stroppy person. I am opinionated. I say what I think and so I can be intimidating …but it's always done with thought and I am prepared to backtrack". One staff member reiterated this explaining how:

> Nanny can be quite assertive when she wants to be, but I think that without that assertiveness and her pushing us to do better we probably wouldn't be the way that we are and that the quality we offer wouldn't be of its highest standard.

Repeated evidence of key communication strategies was collected from meetings, appraisal discussions, individual and collective hui. Nanny would ask questions, ask for evidence of, explain her ideas and/or processes; share her knowledge, make suggestions, provide instructions, reiterate expectations and practise reflective listening. In response the team members shared their ideas and knowledge, explained their thinking, made suggestions, sought clarification and agreed to expectations.

Empowerment through professional learning and development is clearly a high priority within the centre driven by the premise of "upskilling, empowering and upskilling and allowing them [the team] to also upskill me [Nanny]. So that community of practice is that I learn, as much from them as they learn from me". Nanny emphasised the importance of knowing the teachers, that is, "how they think, what they know and what they want to know". Nanny empowers the team

to engage in reflective practice and professional development to then share their learning with the whole team thus upskilling and empowering everyone.

An ethic and culture of care underpins each of the four themes. The intention to empower and enable each team member and in turn, each child and parent, not only as an individual but also as part of the collective and community of Tamariki o ngā Mātua, became evident through analysing the case study data. One team member emphasised how they are:

> …grateful for the leader she is, for the role that she has in all our lives. You know whenever we need support she's always there to back us up 100 per cent, whether it be a death in the whānau (family), or you know, something personal going on in your home.

As the students of the school are also the parents of the children of the early childhood centre, Nanny's role, as the centre leader, is to provide liaison between the centre and the high school. In addition Nanny acts as advocate for the tamariki with their parents and with various government agencies. Above all the establishment and sustainability of "family and community … relating learning [and leadership] to the wider world and of providing the flexibility to respond to different conditions, different needs, and the expectations of local communities" (Ministry of Education, 1996, p.42) is integral to the leadership of Tamariki o ngā Mātua. Nanny emphasised that

> I don't think that what we've got here is perfect. I don't think that we get it right all the time – I know I don't. But I do know that I'm open to change and to development and to new learning and I think because of that the staff are too. It would be interesting to see what they think.

Whāia e koe ki te iti kahurangi, kia tāpapa koe, he maunga tikitike.
Follow your treasured aspirations, if you falter, let it be because of insurmountable difficulties. (Mead & Grove, 2001, p.422)

How the designated leader espouses leadership in this ECE setting

Nanny describes the centre as "being on a journey of excellence" for the Tamariki o ngā Mātua which reflects the uniqueness of this cultural context. Nanny trained in early childhood education at Te Tari Puna Ora o Aotearoa/NZ Childcare Association (now known as Te Rito Maioha Early Childhood New Zealand) and was strongly influenced by lecturers Maureen Locke, Pat Thompson, Mary Alice Bramwell and key role models and early childhood education advocates such as Helen May and Marie Clay. Nanny reiterated how these experiences helped her learn about power, in particular, "not power over, but power to lead growth and change". Role models such as these key early childhood advocates supported Nanny to learn and grow her own self-esteem, and learn to be a leader influenced by strong, competent

women. Then Nanny made her own way. Nanny also acknowledged that "early childhood education changes and evolves as the discourse around best practice takes on board new information, new research, and new discoveries around what is best for children at this very young and vulnerable age". According to Nanny such changes then need to be integrated into the thinking and practices of the centre team and community.

Right from the outset Nanny was very open and clear with me, as the researcher, explaining that she works in a way that works for her. She recognised that at times her communication style and way of doing things might not be interpreted in a positive light by others. Nanny is driven and her primary focus is advocating for the children, the parents and the team. When describing her leadership she talks about being accountable, taking responsibility, and having current knowledge. One key driver is Nanny's desire to empower others especially the team and the tamariki to enable change in the future and for the future.

Nanny's belief is that working within a distributed (Spillane, 2005) and shared (Lambert, 2002) leadership model enables each person to take on a leadership role. From her perspective leadership is "both individual and collective" but requires the leadership of an effective leader who is visionary, inspirational, culturally responsive, an effective communicator, collaborative, self-aware and an active participant in ongoing and regular professional development. Nanny stated, "I believe an effective leader empowers others in the team to contribute and share responsibility and ideas. This means a team works together collaboratively in a learning community towards a shared goal or vision" which is reflected in the centre strategic planning processes and underpins daily practices.

Nanny explained how she had "been a leader for over 30 years and I would say in the last 10 years I have really come to this place and it's because of working with my [team]". Nanny went on to explain that she has:

> handpicked them [the staff]. I know the training providers they've done their training with are the ones that I trust, because I've lobbied with those people and so I know they are good value and alongside that […] I've trained them up through the ranks as well to be where I want. So why would I then want to do it [the job] all myself? So my advice is to trust your staff, to empower them to complete and to achieve and then to accept that reward of having that as a shared responsibility, knowing that everybody comes from a different angle and it's far better to have all the heads together than one little head alone – it's too big a job.

E ai ō harirau, hei rere mai.
You have the wings to fly.
You can get there if you really try (because you have the means).
(Mead & Grove, 2011, p. 21).

Observed leadership 'theories-in-use' in the ECE setting

In the interview with the team, the staff identified ways in which opportunities for learning and development are advocated for by Nanny. They explained how she "has the ability to tell you when you're going to be a leader [...] I mean [...] in your actions or whether you can move that way, whether you have the ability to move that way". One teacher elaborated:

> The key to her [Nanny's] knowledge and her years of experience and abilities are what supports her in her ability to draw out the best in all of us and therefore make a place that keeps going from strength to strength.

Members of the teaching team talked about how Nanny encourages the staff to train, to engage in professional development and empowers them to extend themselves saying "I can't get you there – what can you do to get yourself there?" One team member acknowledged the collective approach where:

> We are all leaders in our own way. We all sort of have a role to play in the running of the centre. We've all got certain leadership roles that we do and I think because we've all got these strengths and interests, we've all got different things to add to the running of the centre and without one of us, or one of our strengths, it wouldn't be this way. I think in our own right we are all leaders, we just have different qualities. I mean Nanny's the overall manager but I don't think she she's the only leader.

Another teaching team member reiterated this comment saying, "I do see Nanny as the overall leader, because she runs the place. But that doesn't mean to say that other people don't have their own leadership qualities and put all those into practice as well". This quote represents the strength in a family and community or collective approach to effectively running and leading the centre.

In relation to communication styles, there was robust discussion with one teaching team member stating:

> The fact that Nanny is quite assertive, and probably not the right word to use, and staunch in her role is because of her experience and her passion for early childhood. I'm thankful, as a student, I'd say that she is the way she is and pushes you to strive for the best and make sure our practice is of high quality so that our, the tamariki receive all they can, you know, the best quality and to begin with I was a little bit taken away, I suppose, by how much she expected. But, I think that's assisted me in my training to be better and to, and it's almost made me more, it's provided me , I suppose with more passion and confirms why I am in this sort of mahi .

The description of Nanny and her communication and leadership styles were elaborated on by an additional team member who stated that:

> She terrifies me sometimes, you know, but at the same time she's got a gentle heart ... She does come down to your level and she has come down to my level so many times to help me grow and be a better person.

Each of these individual comments reiterates the strong ethic and culture of care and empowerment that has evolved within the centre's cultural context of whānau tangata, (family and community).

> **Ko te pae tawhiti, whāia kia tata; ko te pae tata, whakamaua kia tīna.**
> Seek out distant horizons and cherish those you attain.
> (Mead & Grove, 2001, p. 257)

Similarities and differences between 'espoused leadership' and 'leadership-in-use'

Interestingly, when comparing the data across the key themes the responses of the designated leader and the team were very similar. According to Nanny leadership needs to be both about the individuals and the collective because "the key skills of a good leader is when they identify the skills, attributes and knowledge that others in the team have and enables each person to contribute to the tasks at hand".

Similarly, interviews and observation data collected identified a diverse range of communication strategies that are utilised within the centre by Nanny, as the designated leader, which in turn are mirrored by the teaching team under Nanny's role modelling. For example:

- Collegial sharing of ideas;
- Providing encouragement;
- Participating in robust discussions;
- Supporting focused explanations;
- Asking questions;
- Seeking clarification;
- Providing feedback;
- Introducing alternative suggestions and; and
- Following up the implementation of decisions made.

As one staff member shared, Nanny says "I've got an idea – what do you think and how can we as a team implement whatever we have decided to do for the best interests of the centre?" Nanny explained that "a leader helps a team develop their own culture, by setting goals and objectives that support the work of the service". In the cultural context of this centre collaboration involves liaison with the high school teachers, the parents, various government agencies and the tamariki. The team talked about how:

> we've got the parents, we've got the teachers, we've got the trust, we've got the community and we've got community organisations that we work with and it's sort of like we become this community, you know, of learners and we all sort of, you know we take knowledge from everywhere…to reach everybody that's involved in the centre and work with them and hold positive relationships and that we all share our knowledge.

Effective leadership thus requires shared team responsibility and shared leadership opportunities in an environment where everyone values the opportunity to work and learn collaboratively, and keep up to date with current thinking, knowledge and practice to support and strengthen the cultural context of Tamariki o ngā Mātua.

Ki te mau te ariki, ka mau katoa te rere kākara.
If the leader is caught, the whole cluster of molluscs will be caught.
A leaderless group is not capable of coordinating its efforts and therefore is weak.
(Mead & Grove, 2001, p. 224)

Factors limiting and supporting sustainable leadership practices within the ECE setting

Nanny shared how the centre vision focused on "want[ing] the children to leave us with the equipment that says they know how to focus on work and research for themselves and feel good about themselves and all those things". Nanny also applies this vision to the team and parents. In the teaching team interview there was very strong reinforcement of Nanny's vision—emphasising the continuous encouragement, empowerment and support received to upskill which "has been a big part of making me a better person and a teacher as well as the way I am today". One staff member expressed how "she takes care of us, she takes really good care of us [not just] as teachers but as people. She's got high expectations but those high expectations are what drive us to be better teachers, better professionals, better people". This message is reiterated by another teacher who stated:

> Here I'm a different person, I am a better person. In my community I'm a different person leader again, but with the constant support and encouragement from Nanny it kind of makes me compile the lot together so I can be a better person and a better teacher for the future.

Nanny enquires about the aspirations and interests of the teaching team members, then takes this a step further by encouraging them to work towards achieving their individual aspirations, even when "it might not involve being here". From the perspective of one teaching team member the only barrier to sustainable leadership practice would be "your own, you'd have to be pretty hard pressed not to grow and change in this environment I would think". Nanny epitomised this thinking, stating how "a leader facilitates and supports professional development in others ensuring teachers are equipped with the knowledge they need to teach children, support families and lead change".

From their perspective the teaching team discussed how Nanny encouraged and in some cases 'pushed' them to complete professional development. They concurred that it was important for them to gain the experience, learning and skills to enable them to become effective leaders. One teaching team member explained how

Nanny "pushes you to strive for the best and make sure that our practice is of high quality, so that our tamariki receive all that they can". A critical aspect of practice was identified as "being able to reflect upon our own practices and using our critique of current research to decide if those practices are appropriate or need modifying" in order to be responsive to change. One team member shared how they believed that "it's her job [as manager] to enforce our policies and procedures in regards the regulations and things like that—to ensure that the whole running of the whole entire centre is the way it should be".

Further discussions revolved around collective responsibility and accountability. An example of a team approach to projects was discussed, which acknowledged the importance and requirement of each person's contribution to complete the project as a whole. There was a consensus that when one part of the project is not completed the whole team is let down. Success was identified by undertaking research, having currency of knowledge and the empowerment of team members. Collectively the centre team develop the strategic plan, provide input into the management plan, evaluate and review the centre philosophy, policies and procedures in addition to contributing to the budget. Nanny, as centre manager, then becomes the conduit between the centre team and the governing trust to advocate for the approval of the team planning, evaluation and decision making processes.

CONCLUSION

Whaowhia te kete mātauranga.
Fill the basket of knowledge. Emphasise the importance of learning.
(Mead & Grove, 2001, p. 424)

Within this case study, it is obvious that at the end of the day the responsibility of leadership resides with Nanny as the designated leader of this unique whānau tangata early childhood education centre. In reality the centre operates within a hierarchical structure as Nanny is accountable and responsible to the Trust, which in turn reinforces this view of the leadership role. However each member of the team contributes as both an individual and as part of the collective to the implementation of procedures, practices and ongoing learning and development.

Nanny leads from the heart with passion. Nanny has strength, a strength which is comprised of pride and sincerity as she encourages and empowers the teaching team to be courageous, to be authentic and to advocate for tamariki and mātua. This resonates with an analogy of the heart as an organ that provides function and structure, as the power machine of the human body. I would describe Nanny as the 'power' or driving force behind Tamariki o ngā Mātua. She is the vital organ and this is reiterated by the teaching team. Both Nanny, as the designated leader, and the team emphasise the importance of being the best that you can be and being empowered to achieve your best. The future lies in continued learning — learning

about teaching, learning about learning and learning about leading in order to grow future leaders. Nanny shared this parting insight explaining "I never think I've reached an end point. I am always on a journey of excellence. If I ever get to point of thinking there is nothing to do or learn, then it's time to get out".

REFERENCES

Lambert, L. (2002). A framework for shared leadership. *Educational Leadership, 59*, 37-40.

Meade, H. M., & Grove, N. (2001). *Ngā pēpeha a ngā tipuna: The sayings of the ancestors*. Wellington, New Zealand: Victoria University Press.

Ministry of Education. (1996). *Te whāriki: He whāriki matauranga mō ngā mokopuna o Aotearoa: Early childhood curriculum*. Wellington, New Zealand: Learning Media.

Spillane, J. P. (2005). Distributed leadership. *The Educational Forum, 69*(2), 143-150.

Wenger-Trayner, E., & Wenger-Trayner, B, (2015). *Introduction to communities of practice: A brief overview of the concept and its issues*. Retrieved from http://wenger-trayner.com/introduction-to-communities-of-practice/

CHAPTER FIVE

TE KŌHANGA REO: TUAKANA TEINA

INTRODUCTION

Taking account of kaupapa Māori principles of research principles, the researcher invited the Designated Leader (DL) of a Kōhanga Reo setting to participate in Phase Two and Three of our study into 'Leaders Growing Leaders'. The other Kōhanga staff also agreed to participate in this case study.

Evidence for this case study was obtained from one designated leader interview, two critical incident journals completed by the designated leader, three designated leader observations, one pouwhakahaere interview and a staff hui observation.

CASE STUDY DESCRIPTION

This Kōhanga Reo is in a city in the North Island of New Zealand and is pan-tribal, sitting under the umbrella of the local iwi, and is within a tertiary organisation. The kaupapa that underpins this centre is inspired by whānau aspirations for their tamariki to be educated in learning te ao Māori underpinned by whanaungatanga and manaakitanga. Kaiako observe, recognise, and celebrate each child's endeavours, by acknowledging that the tamariki are facilitating their own and other's learning. Whakamana acknowledges the power of each child as an active participant in her/his own learning. Children are dependent on their social and cultural learning to help them make connections with their past, with their community, and their wider world (Walker & Walker, 2009).

The Kōhanga Reo supports and implements *Te Whatu Pōkeka: Kaupapa Assessment for Learning Māori: Early Childhood Exemplars*, which is a kaupapa Māori assessment framework provided to support tamariki Māori attending early childhood services. The Kōhanga Reo is on a three yearly Education Review Office (ERO) review cycle and is rated as highly effective.

The DL tumuaki, pouwhakahaere and kaiako work collectively under kotahitanga with common aspiration practices, philosophies and theories, to support the kaupapa Māori framework of the Kōhanga Reo.

The designated leader has been involved with the Kōhanga Reo for quite a number of years prior to taking on the role as the tumuaki. At the time of this research

study she was new in the role and still implementing a new style of leadership while ensuring her staff were all engaging with her, thus ensuring there was open communication between her the staff and especially her pouwhakahaere. The actual position is that of tumuaki/principal**,** where she has expressed that her desired leadership style is one of open and shared leadership. She explains:

> We are currently in the transition from a hierarchical leadership system within our kōhanga to a shared leadership system. This has been due to the departure of a leader whom held a significant leadership position for 15+ years and the implications of one person being at the helm without any other senior leadership having training or experience in that specific role.

The designated leader believes that shared leadership facilitates trust in the staff by empowering them more in the operational work of the organisation through reciprocal relationship building, and ensuring positive outcomes for the Kōhanga Reo so that all will benefit.

Although the DL expressed shared leadership, both pouwhakahaere also identified a second leadership style to be that of distributed Leadership. When explaining the way in which the Kōhanga Reo is structured, the pouwhakahaere explained:

> The tumuaki is accountable to the kōmiti mahi (employment committee appointed on behalf of the kōhanga whānau/family) and the whānau. The tumuaki manages the senior leadership (kāhui pouwhakahaere) which consist of three pouwhakahaere (team leaders). Pouwhakahaere are responsible for the day to day running of their building, with staff.

Distributed leadership is similar to shared leadership in that it is another way in allowing room for teachers and leaders individual leadership skills to develop across social settings (Young, 2009).

KEY THEMES

The Kōhanga Reo is not only about teaching te reo Māori; the smooth running is because of the collective efforts of all staff. It is about growing relationships and leaders through whanaungatanga, and knowing where one comes from through tribal identity and affiliation. Māori language and culture is fundamentally important in the role of leadership, hence the essence of how leadership is moulded (Skerrett, 2010). The Kōhanga Reo staff have built strong working relationships with each other and continue to take on tuakana roles even when supporting new staff in the Kōhanga Reo. Longer serving staff are very tolerant and supportive of the new staff. Their interactions are calm and caring as they demonstrate culturally preferred practices in a Māori context of tuakana teina and ako. It is noticeable that kotahitanga is important in practice as relationships and trust grow.

Observations show that the DL is able to change roles and becomes a staff member on the floor too when the need arises. This not only makes her feel part of the team,

but also allows her to see how the running of the setting is going when working alongside staff. The DL at times would identify things that may need changing in practice or during routine times, and writes on the board for all kaimahi and herself to discuss together. Staff also have the opportunity to write comments on the board too. The DL explains this is an effort to work more transparently with each other.

The DL and pouwhakahaere work together to lead for change, as they often seek each other out to plan, clarify things, give and accept feedback to ensure they all have the same focus. The DL and pouwhakahaere prefer being on the floor alongside their teams. Observations show that both DL and pouwhakahaere influence change through modelling, during their curriculum involvement as they follow policies and procedures, in their interactions with tamariki and staff. The DL explained why being a good role model builds respect and maintaining integrity is most important when leading a team. This can apply to both staff and whānau.

Te ao Māori

Te ao Māori is integral to the centre as it is built upon on tika (correct/lawful) and pono (truth/valid). Staff, tamariki, and their whānau (including non-Māori whānau) all support te reo me ōnā tikanga Māori. As the Designated Leader explained:

> I am a strong believer in te ao Māori practices focusing on the ongoing development and neutralisation of one's mauri (life force) and tuakiritanga (personal dispositions between an individual and their Māori practices and identity). This, I believe, sets the foundation to how I carry myself in all walks of life, ensuring that all I do is within the realms of te tika me te pono ki tā ngā tūpuna i whakapae māku.[3] This contributes dramatically to how I exert myself as a leader.

Pihama, Smith, Taki, and Lee (2004) explain that "pono is integrity, faithfulness to tika and aroha [love]. Pono is motivational. It is a principle which compels our actions to be both tika and aroha" (p. 43). These traditional values have been practiced by Māori for centuries and with the support of leaders within the Kōhanga Reo; they will continue to be learnt, practised and passed on to future leaders.

Leadership comes in a range of strategies and leaders possess many qualities within their leadership roles, including ensuring the aspirations of the parents, tamariki and staff are realised through values such as: kotahitanga, arohatanga, manaakitanga, wairuatanga and whanaungatanga are a central process. Skerrett (2010) explains that "because Māori leadership is assured up with Māori language and culture it makes sense then that the Māori-medium education sector plays an important role in continuing to shape and define Māori leadership" (p. 42).

Pouwhakahaere in this Kōhanga Reo were asked. "Who are your leaders?" One responded by saying: "I see the tamariki as the leaders of the centre. The tamariki

3 I trust wholeheartedly in the practices of our ancestors and continue to develop practices that soothes one's life force and one's identity, as they did.

are the leaders of our centre because I mean everything that we do here, revolves around them". Another Pouwhakahaere added, "I think yeah, I totally agree, that we're the role models. Yes so I mean philosophically we say the tamariki are the leaders."

In te ao Māori, tamariki are viewed as tāonga and accepted unconditionally for their individual strengths and characteristics by whānau, hapū and iwi through cultural interactions and practices (Hemara, 2000), thus affirming tamariki to be the greatest taonga for tribes (Hemara, 2000; Pere, 1997). These same traditions continue today as the Kōhanga Reo leaders maintain traditional customs to cultivate and develop children's abilities, recognising how "these personal traits enhance a child's rangatiratanga or distinctive strengths" (Walker & Walker, 2009, p. 51).

Kotahitanga

The data showed that as a new leader in the role of tumuaki, the DL and the pouwhakahaere have a shared vision of how the Kōhanga Reo should be operating to maintain traditional Māori practices, but with additional ideas of how to change some operational practices and policies.

The designated leader's vision is to move from what she and the pouwhakahaere believe to be the previous transformational leadership system to a more shared and/or distributed leadership model.

> We are currently in the transition from a hierarchical leadership system within our Kōhanga to a shared leadership system. This has been due to the departure of a leader whom held a significant leadership position for 15 plus years and the implications of one person being at the helm without any other senior leadership having training or experience in that specific role.

Skerrett (2010) emphasises that transformational leadership is unsuitable in an educational model of leadership due to its hierarchical nature. Whereas distributed leadership "recognises the role that all professionals within an educational setting play in implementing change, and that it is through collaboration and collectively ensuring that expertise is" (Clarkin-Phillips, 2009, p. 22).

It is normal for both the DL and the pouwhakahaere to change roles, as this allows the pouwhakahaere to learn and improve in the role of being a tumuaki, and for the DL (while working on the floor with staff) to better understand their role of pouwhakahaere. These shared goals help to shape the pouwhakahaere to become better leaders in their own right.

This is not always easy as acknowledged by pouwhakahaere.

> I think we've got into a position where, when Designated Leader went on maternity leave, we got that opportunity to each have a turn at being the manager, and I think that's where our unity came in, that we supported each other in that, it wasn't no I'm just doing this for me, it was hey we need to do this together, … we'd always

> pray, please don't let anything go wrong on my shift, you know or if something did go wrong, oh it happened while you, you know you're taking that jovial side of things as well so it doesn't get you down, but it's a lot of hard work, it's a lot of hard work, it's your accountability to the whānau (family) as well, so that was an opportune time for us to show our leadership.

The relationships between the leaders, staff and parents/whānau are strong within the kohanga reo as a large number of whānau are members of the committee and therefore leaders as well. As one Pouwhakahaere explained:

> It's interesting enough because the kōhanga is whānau managed, but it's not whānau led because the teachers are the ones who sit down and write the programme yeah, we've tried to push that across for many years without umbrella organisation, we've always been that kōhanga whānau.

The DL strongly believed in supporting her staff through the change process from the hierarchical structure to the shared and/or distributed leadership. She mentioned several times that it was important for her to ensure the mana of the staff (and pouwhakahaere) was maintained and would try and give constructive criticism without offending anyone. Collaboration is an important aspect of this Kōhanga Reo. Kōrero tahi is essential. However she did acknowledge this can be difficult at times, stating:

> Something I find challenging is finding a strategic approach to dealing with the different personalities and leadership styles amongst the kāhui pouwhakahaere when an overall goal is desired. This I believe will come with time and more experience in the position; however I identified quite early in my role that this would be a good challenge for me and my abilities as a leader.

The DL is using a range of supportive strategies to enable her to lead the staff through this change as she tries her best to work alongside staff to reach their goals. The basic premise of this model is that leaders recognise good ideas and are constantly looking for new and better ways of doing things. Previous studies suggest that Māori leadership needs to be distributed as there are increasing roles, functions and responsibilities in leadership, and in order to capitalise on educational outcomes, leadership roles should be distributed to staff with the experience or creativeness that influences change for the betterment of the organisation (Ord, Mane, Smorti, Carroll-Lind, Robinson, Armstrong, Read, Brown-Cooper, Meredith, Rickard & Jalal, 2013; Skerrett 2010).

Shared and distributed leadership appeared to be working when the Designated Leader and Whaea Pouwhakahaere were guiding the organisation's change process. They worked alongside each other because of the shared vison, commitment, and core skills that they both brought to the organisation. Shaw and Walton (1995) state that "leaders spend an increasing amount of time and energy shaping the vision and allowing change to emerge and develop within a common set of values" (pp. 274–275).

One example of distributed leadership in practice within this Kōhanga Reo was when a Pouwhakahaere was absent due to illness.

> In terms of kaiako (teachers) stepping up into the pouwhakahaere position, we have for some years practised the same concept when the pouwhakahaere is absent. The qualified staff will rotate the responsibility of stepping into that leadership role in the whare for each day the pouwhakahaere is absent.

This shows that not only do the tumuaki and pouwhakaheaere change roles through distributed leadership, it appears that kaiako are able to take on leadership roles when pouwhakahaere are absent from duties. This leadership role is a common occurrence between staff, which shows the whānau collectiveness. It is not uncommon for role changes to happen within the Kōhanga Reo. It has become common practice for the DL to seek advice from the pouwhakahaere and vice versa.

The pouwhakahaere appreciate this. As they shared:

> She's [the Designated Leader] always open to hearing what we want, always is more open to us and [we can] share anything with her.

> And I think the beauty of that too is we meet with the manager, so she hears all our words, so it's not her making the decision herself, she collates what we think and we work together to try … and I think it's good that, because there's three of us and the manager, we've become quite a tight team, yeah we're starting to iron out our [issues], there's not many we don't agree on, but we do have a few challenges and it's good, it's healthy to be, to debate about certain things.

Pouwhakahaere also acknowledged that:

> One of our biggest barriers has always been communication, how we communicate, the information we communicate, how people receive that communication, and how they internalise it.

The DL has found it hard at times when constructive feed forward and questioning, aimed to stimulate critical thinking and reflection of staff, is misunderstood and taken as umbrage by some of the team. The DL identified that communication still needed to be strengthened. One strategy that the DL and kaiako came up with was to place large pieces of paper in the centre for kaiako, pouwhakahaere and tumuaki to communicate ideas on for addressing in a staff hui. Staff and tumuaki also leave comments on stickers on the staffroom wall with ideas of things that are working and things that are maybe not working so well. The DL explained that due to new settling changes, including the employment of new staff, she is not always available to talk kanohi ki te kanohi. Hence she likes to encourage staff to write comments as to what worked well that day and what still needs to be worked on. She also adds her comments, suggestions or ideas beside the teachers' comments and asks staff to reflect on each day, for example: Tuesday was a great smooth day (why?). Wednesday was a shambles (why?).

> DL is aware that no matter how diplomatic the constructive criticism is, some staff will still take offence.

Pedagogical leadership

Clarkin-Phillips (2009) suggests that pedagogical leadership "commands particular interest because it is pedagogy that impacts most immediately on children" (p. 22). This is pertinent to earlier comments by Pouwhakahaere when they were acknowledging that the tamariki are their leaders, and leaders need to advocate for change to better cater for children's physical, psychological, cultural and spiritual needs. Customarily children were viewed within Māori social orders as leaders of the future (Pihama, Smith, Taki, & Lee, 2004).

The Designated Leader's time is not only spent working alongside all staff, her time is also taken up with whānau and tamariki as well. During the researcher's visit, the DL was observed spending a lot of time on the floor with tamariki, staff and pouwhakahaere.

Manaia and Hona (2010) maintain that "acknowledging success and achievement is difficult for many Māori, but it is a practice we need to embrace particularly because we tend to do this collectively" (p. 4). It is also important to understand that pedagogical leadership happens better in a collective team effort, where learning builds on kaupapa Māori theory through ways of knowing, being and doing (Ord, et al, 2013; Rau & Ritchie, 2011; Walker & Walker, 2009).

New staff tended to find the changes easy to follow, more so than staff who have been employed longer. The notion of tuakana teina relationships comes to mind, where the leaders use a pedagogical approach to leadership, to manage change through conversations with tamariki and within the team. *Te Whatu Pōkeka*, (Walker & Walker, 2009) affirms that the kaupapa of the document is:

> to support children's identity, self-esteem, and confidence for life and to enable children: to learn, understand, and implement their tikanga; to challenge and test boundaries; to take risks and problem solve; to establish relationships and ongoing friendships to learn life skills in an environment where they are loved and understood. (p.59)

Pouwhakahaere acknowledges that the tumuaki has been supportive of mahi tahi, and:

> She's given us opportunity to actually work one on one with our new staff, to bring them up to speed as part of…, so you know I think we're getting a good deal here.

The Designated Leader also believes that building stronger communication within the team is an important aspect of team dynamics.

> I believe that having weekly contact with kāhui pou as a collective and individually helps me to maintain communication and build a strong working relationship with pou [Pouwhakahaere]. The individual meetings will also provide an avenue to discuss

> challenges and triumphs, one experiences and provide mentorship and guidance for them. There are many things one can learn from discussions of this nature, not just the pou but also myself as I too become the learner when reflecting on discussions.

Sustainability of leaders is important for growth. Working within a Kōhanga Reo that is connected to a tertiary institution, the parents/whānau who are either employed by the tertiary institution staff or students bring with them a range of knowledge and skills, and being part of the Kōhanga Reo committee, relationships are strong. These relationships go beyond the Kōhanga Reo with parents/whānau and staff into community leadership. The whānau and teaching staff are diverse in that they come from different tribal areas. Respect is shown for such diversity which is also observed in a range of dialectic differences in conversations between staff and tamariki. Each person is respected and contributes to the culture of the setting. Everyone is seen as leaders within the collective. Adults working with whānau and children gain an understanding of a range of iwi through kōrero and the concept of whanaungatanga (Ministry of Education, 2017).

Such kōrero reminded the DL of the whakataukī:

Ehara taku toa I te toa takitahi engari he toa takimano
My strength/leadership doesn't come from me alone,
it comes from the strength of many.

This is how leadership is reflected within the Kōhanga Reo. The DL acknowledged that the success of the Kōhanga Reo is due to the collective. She explained that:

> I am quite fortunate in my position that I am surrounded by a supportive team of kaiako and whānau. The skills and knowledge amongst the whānau extends enormously over many fields and professions and like many Māori examples of leadership, the strength of the leader is not solely based on the individuals skills and knowledge but on those of the collective and primarily on the collective working in unity for the benefit of the collective.

The DL went on maternity leave, confident that in her absence, Pouwhakahaere and staff could collectively continue running the Kōhanga Reo. She was aware of the skills and knowledge that each possessed, due to the support that she has received from them in her tumuaki role. She explained this by stating:

> I will be going on maternity leave very shortly and a new process we are trialling is sharing the tumuaki role amongst the pouwhakahaere. Delegating certain tasks and duties of the tumuaki amongst the pouwhakahaere and focusing on specific skill sets each pou contributes to the leadership team and building on those.

She goes on to say that:

> In terms of kaiako stepping up into the pouwhakahaere position, we have for some years practiced the same concept when the pouwhakahaere is absent. The qualified

> staff will rotate the responsibility of stepping into that leadership role in the whare (building) for each day the pou is absent.

Traditional and contemporary Māori leadership is one that is considered as shared leadership between staff and leaders with similar goals and philosophies. In this way staff are provided opportunities to change roles or support any unpredictable or practicable circumstances that arise. When teachers step up to take on leadership roles and leaders stand back to allow teachers to show their skills as leaders, this practice benefits the collective (Katene, 2010).

Organisational leadership

DL has a strong sense of leadership as a collective; she is aware of the strengths that each of the pouwhakahaere possesses, and the types of leaders they are. It is that kind of leadership that holds the Kōhanga Reo together not only in good times, but also when they are faced with challenges**.** The Designated Leader firmly believes in the concept of collegial practices of shared, reciprocal, educational and cooperative collective relationships to ensure success of the Kōhanga Reo. She is aware that there will be challenges, but trusts the success of leadership as she has observed first-hand how pouwhakahaere come together in a time of need.

Designated Leader explained that:

> …when you've got three buildings then you have a kaiwhakahaere manager, supervisor of each building, you have to try and be collegial, it's not the easiest thing to do, because you all bring different styles of leadership with you. I think this week has been a great example of collaborative work, with what's happened in this kōhanga through the outbreak, all the staff from one particular building were absent, because of the illness that was going around, we just pulled together as a team, and everybody's leadership style showed in the three days, so I think we have a bit of everything, over those three things—in this environment anyway.

The DL acknowledged that collaboration and communication are very much a must in the running of the Kōhanga Reo and leadership. Staff, tumuaki (herself), pouwhakahaere and parents/whānau are the drivers of the success of the Kōhanga Reo and DL accepts it is not always perfect: however, DL believes foremost that communication enhances collective practice and leadership.

> I think we don't really concentrate on the process and the structures. The collaboration that we have as is kind of a new thing, like I say in the last six months, it's still a kind of a new thing to us really, to have this unity and so I mean that I suppose is the biggest contributor to our leadership cultures and now, and it's just about maintaining that and keeping, communication is probably the biggest thing. As long as we keep communicating and build that culture within us, not just us as kaiwhakahaere but within the whole staff.

Communication between the staff continues to develop within the Kōhanga Reo. This requires time and patience between both staff and leaders. Kouzes and Posner (2002) concur. They say managers who possess positive qualities such as tolerance, patience and determination within the workplace are able to influence successful transformational change in reaching desired outcomes through shared visions and goals.

DISCUSSION

The DL of this Kōhanga Reo provides space for leaders to meet and discuss matters in relation to team expectations and needs of the tamariki. In her new role as tumuaki this DL has made efforts to move away from the previous hierarchical leadership to a shared leadership system where she allows autonomy in each of the whare, and trusts that pouwhakahaere are capable of any change processes through collaborative conversations. This process supports the notion of sustainable leadership achieved through respect and trust. It enables collective advocacy for change that benefits staff, whānau, and especially tamariki. Rather than working from a hierarchical leadership position, the DL encourages staff to have a voice.

As Pouwhakahaere identified:

> But I suppose in terms of the leadership for us, as kaiwhakahaere we've got to show that direction, and we've got to show that we understand, and have that knowledge to make those decisions, and if its, if our staff have some kaupapa or take, it's up to us to be able to advocate for them as well, so we're not only advocating for what we think, we're advocating for what our staff think, we're advocating for what our parents think, and absolutely and at the end of the day it's all for our tamariki. It's all about collaboration to make decisions.

This is an example of leaders growing leaders, where DL allows Pouwhakahaere autonomy and a voice to not only lead, but to also advocate for staff, whānau and for the physical and spiritual wellbeing of the tamariki. DL and Pouwhakahaere have a common goal and that is to move from the hierarchical leadership to a shared, distributed, collective and pedagogical leadership. The ideas of empowering others and letting them know that they are trusted to be able to step up to take on leadership roles when the time arises shows that the DL has put her trust in the Pouwhakahaere. As an emergent leader, she was appreciated for her own style of leadership.

> Because of the different style of leadership that this young girl was showing in there, yeah it was really good to hear.
>
> She's (Designated Leader) not afraid or to come and ask for advice.
>
> Always come with a paper, ok what do you want, well what do you think, and it's really good, it's uplifting that we know that she can come and ask us for some, some advice or some thoughts.

CONCLUSION

Efforts to grow leadership is very evident in tumuaki, pouwhakahaere and kaiako practices within the Kōhanga Reo. They continually role model Māori values and practices such as whanaungatanga, manaakitanga, kotahitanga, arohatanga, and wairuatanga that connect to te ao Māori. The DL encourages kōrero tahi in a number of ways, where ideas for change are heard and respected. Humour can be used to construct and enact many different types of relationships in the workplace. Indeed, there was humour in some interactions between staff and also with whānau and tamariki.

In the findings there were indications that changes had taken place, particularly when leadership activities were attributed to the team working together as a collective through distributed and shared leadership styles activities within the workplace. It was also evident that pathways for staff to become leaders had occurred through a range of ways, thus contributing to a culture of sustainable leadership. There appeared to be some staff who had no difficulties in taking on leadership roles and working towards change; however, there were still a small number of staff who took longer to accept change and sometimes challenged why change was needed. The main leadership strategy for these situations was allowing staff a voice by listening and respecting all contributions when asked for.

The Designated Leader at this Kōhanga reo had a strong commitment to the kaupapa of the setting. She provided a wide range of teaching and learning pedagogical activities and language to grow future leaders. This leader and her team empowered tamariki to feel a sense of fulfilment and delight in what they learn and do. All staff made the effort to work together with the same vision to ensure that each child's physical, intellectual, and emotional, language, leadership, spiritual and social skills are nurtured within a culturally safe environment.

REFERENCES

Clarkin-Phillips. J. (2009). Distributed leadership. Utilising everyone's strengths. *Early Childhood Folio, 13,* 22-26.

Hemara, W. (2000). *Māori Pedagogies: A Review from the Literature*. Wellington, New Zealand: NZCER.

Katene, S. (2010). Modelling Māori leadership: What makes for good leadership? *Mai Review*, *2*, 1–16. Retrieved from http://www.review.mai.ac.nz/index.php/MR/article/viewFile/334/477

Kouzes, J. M., & Posner, B. Z. (2002). *The leadership challenge: How to get extraordinary things done in organisations.* San Francisco, USA: Jossey Bass.

Manaia, W., & Hona, D. (2005). *The changing face of Māori development*. Retrieved from http://www.firstfound.org/manaia%20and%20hona.htm

Ministry of Education. (2017). *Te whāriki: He whāriki mātauranga mō ngā mokopuna o Aotearoa: Early childhood curriculum*. Wellington, New Zealand: Learning Media.

Ord, K., Mane, J., Smorti, S., Carroll-Lind, J., Robinson, L., Armstrong Read, A., Brown-Cooper, P., Meredith, E., Rickard, D., & Jalal, J. (2013). *Te whakapakari kaiārahi āhuatanga ako kōhungahunga: Developing pedagogical leadership in early childhood education*. Wellington: Te Tari Puna Ora o Aotearoa/ NZ Childcare Association.

Pere, R. (1997). *Ako: Concepts and Learning in the Māori Tradition*. Wellington: National Te Kōhanga Reo Trust.

Pihama, L., Smith, K., Taki, M., & Lee, J. (2004). *Literature review on kaupapa Maori and Maori education pedagogy*. Retrieved from http://aotearoa.ac.nz [Google Scholar]

Rau, C., & Ritchie, J. (2011). Ahakoa he iti: Early childhood pedagogies affirming of Māori children's rights to their culture. *Early Education and Development, 22*(5), 795817. doi:10.1080/10409289.2011.596459

Shaw, R. B., & Walton, A. E. (1995). Conclusion: The lessons of discontinuous change. In D. A. Nadler, R. B. Shaw & A. E. Walton and Associates (Eds.), *Discontinuous change: Leading organisational transformation.* San Francisco, USA: Jossey-Bass.

Skerrett M., (2010) A Critique of the best evidence synthesis with relevance for Māori leadership in education. *Journal of Educational Leadership, Policy and Practice 25(1), 42-50.*

Walker, R., & T., Walker. (2009). *Te whatu pōkeka: Kaupapa Māori assessment for learning: Early childhood exemplars*. Wellington, New Zealand: Learning Media.

Young, H (2009). (Un) critical times? Situating distributed leadership in the field. *Journal of Educational Administration and Theory, 41(4), 377-389.*doi:10, 1080/0022062093211588

CHAPTER SIX

BABBLING BROOK "IT'S NOT MY PLACE, IT'S OUR PLACE"

INTRODUCTION

For this case study the participants chose the name "Babbling Brook" as the pseudonym for their centre. Babbling Brook is located in a provincial city in the North Island of New Zealand and is one of a number of centres within its wider geographic region that operates under an umbrella Kindergarten Association.

This particular Kindergarten Association began in 1949 so has been around for some time. As a not-for-profit organisation it is governed by a Board elected by its local community and who sets its strategic direction.

CASE STUDY DESCRIPTION

The Association's Kindergarten that is the focus of this case study is licensed under the Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations for 40 children aged over two years and operates according to ratios of 1:10. Session times run from 8.30 am to 2.30pm each week day.

The centre promotes its service as an inclusive environment that fosters confident, competent learners in partnership with parents and whānau. Its aim is to provide high quality education that supports and maintains positive relationships with whānau. The staff provide opportunities for every child to develop holistically, supporting their emotional, cognitive and physical skills, knowledge, interests and attitudes. They promote a positive attitude to learning that encourages individuality, creativity and enquiry and actively develop self-esteem.

The inclusive philosophy environment is evident in the teachers' welcoming of an adult with a disability who volunteers at the centre every Tuesday and in the leader's words is "another thing that you do that adds to the richness". The shadowing sessions to enable the researcher to gain an insight into the designated leaders' day-to-day activities revealed this leader's awareness of working with both children and adults with additional needs. Similarly the centre's mission

statement around partnerships with parents and whānau was very visible—during her visit the Researcher counted 10 or 11 parents on the mat. The leader, Vera Maud, explained her philosophy:

> It's really funny cos when I first started and said that I wanted parents, my goal was to have parents off the lino and on the carpet. And it was like why would you want that? I said, well I'm a Playcentre parent and I believe that families need to have a place here and it's not about them standing over there watching what's going on. It's about them being part of the process. And yeah. It's empowering people to have a voice and a say. Like our community has changed too. We've gone from having stay at home mums to working mums as well. So they haven't got that time that they used to have. So sometimes it can be really hurried but if they make the time for us we need to make the time for them. Yeah. It's really important.

Vera Maud was adamant that engaging with families is a non-negotiable practice and with the children attending their centre belonging to 15 ethnicities she worked hard to ensure they felt welcome even if it was a steep learning curve at times. She said:

> Including parents does not impact on my role as a leader because that's what I want. I want families to be here. I want to have conversations with them, I want them to be part of this building, part of this place—this community that we're growing.

In their focus group interview, the team attributed their centre's inclusive culture to Vera Maud's leadership. The different teachers are identified by a number as their pseudonyms.

> [T1]: And it's the inclusiveness and I think that's a big thing of [DL]'s leadership.

> [T2]: People are just like, "can I book in a time to come in and visit?" We've got an open door policy – come in whenever you like, yeah we've got tea on, yeah.

> [T1]: It's a different strategy since DL has been the leader… Another thing [DL] she's really open to children you know with other needs, yeah so we, you know no matter what those other needs are we've always had an open door; you know it's never been in the too hard basket or anything like that. We've embraced it and walked that journey and we have had some children with quite high, high needs that require work.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LEADER

The centre's designated leader and the focus of this case study is Vera Maud (pseudonym). Her position title is that of Head Teacher at this kindergarten. She has been teaching for 21 years and leading for two years. As a mature student Vera Maud "graduated late in life" and readily admits that most of her teaching team have had more teaching experience than her. Currently Vera Maud is completing her upgrade from diploma to degree qualification.

As the designated leader of this centre, Vera Maud is directly responsible to the Kindergarten Association's General Manager and Operations Manager. Further to

the key tasks outlined in her job description, Vera Maud (like all Head Teachers in the Kindergarten Association) must meet the Education Council of New Zealand's Registered Teacher Criteria; Professional Teaching Standards; and hold a *Teaching Practising Certificate*. She is expected to adhere to the Code of Ethics for Registered Teachers to achieve the Kindergarten Association's objective that its "Head Teachers engage in appropriate professional relationships, demonstrate commitment to professional values, to leadership, and the successful running of their Kindergarten".

Worth noting is this leader's comment that "I enjoy my work most of the time. I like going to work". Every job has its ups and downs but according to Vera Maud, "you've got to know, you've got to experience the downs to know what the highs are."

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE TEACHING TEAM

All five teachers are qualified and registered; one has a teaching Diploma, four have teaching degrees and one is engaged in postgraduate study. The majority of the teachers are very experienced, with one younger teacher taking on an emergent leadership role.

The latest Education Review Office (ERO) evaluation rated the centre to be "well-placed" in terms of promoting positive outcomes for children, thus validating its criteria for selection in this research study. At the time of undertaking the data collection for this case study, the centre was preparing for this ERO visit. The previous evaluation identified the need to increase the use of self-review and the research interviews for this study with both the teaching staff and their leader indicated that they were actively working to address this area of their practice. For example, Vera Maud stated:

> We've been looking at planning and development, planning and assessment… It's huge. It's taken us over 12 months. Yeah, and it's and so it should cos it's really important…came out of our ERO Report. It's quite important that we address that".

All of the teaching staff were expected to participate in the reviews. As explained by their leader:

> We have a roster of people sharing ideas. So I don't, I don't take staff meetings. I participate like they do. So we have sharing of ideas around staff meetings and reviews. Everybody has a role to play, for example, with reviews. It's your job to come to the meeting with the review question and the data.

The 2016 evaluation found that the issues raised in the previous report (e.g., self-review) had been effectively addressed and that the kindergarten had improved its ability to establish good relationships and a learning environment better able to support learning to bring about positive outcomes for children.

KEY THEMES

Leading the Centre

There are two tiers of leadership operating at this centre. First, the day-to-day management of the whole Kindergarten Association is the responsibility of the general manager. In addition an operations manager supports all the kindergartens under the Association's umbrella in terms of their compliance, policy development and financial accountability etcetera and a senior teacher provides professional leadership for teaching and learning across the kindergartens. The participants in the focus group interview identified the more fiscal matters (such as the payroll) and sick leave coming from "higher up", whereas the second tier is at the centre level. It is the leadership practice of the designated leader within this workplace setting that is detailed in the present case study.

Accountability

While much of her dialogue was about working as a team ("the centre is not my place, it's our place, it's our centre – we're part of a community"), Vera Maud also considered herself to be accountable in the leadership role. She explained: "…at the end of the day the buck stops with me. I am the overseer of what happens at [centre name] but I believe we're on a shared journey". She saw it as her role to "make sure that everybody does their job effectively and knows what they should be doing". There was some ambiguity in her espoused theories, however. She started to say "I operate from the 'power' of" but changed her sentence to say, "[I operate from], oh place of trust. And my expectation is that they will do it and perform. And so if they, if things aren't happening, that's when I start to question."

As part of being accountable, things not going to plan often instigated a review, i.e., "when something's not ticking over like I think it should be or we think it should be, it's about coming together as a team and deciding where we're going to go from here". Vera Maud explained that sometimes the review was "emergent and sometimes it's a long term review—so a strategic review"… Sometimes too the review was decided for them (e.g., a requirement in their ERO report). Nevertheless, to undertake any type of review Vera Maud understood the need to "work collectively. Yeah, it's a joint decision because there's no point in making people review things if you can't lead a horse to water and make it drink."

Although on the one hand Vera Maud maintained that decisions are made collectively, her next sentence suggests a tension between working collaboratively and being accountable as a leader.

> …but sometimes I have to say well actually that's what's going to happen. Yeah, and the repercussions of that happening is not nice. The team, they don't like being told what to do. And I can understand why. We tend to talk things through so that we have come to the same decision. Like, it might take me four or five weeks of sowing a seed so that we work collectively as a team.

Vera Maud related how a new administrator had been transitioned into their centre and expressed her satisfaction that, as this person had come to them from another centre within their umbrella organisation, she already knew the systems that go across the governing body.

> So she has slotted in really, really well, yeah, so I just ask questions around um, has this happened or which way, how do you do this? And she normally feeds back and says yup, it's happened and it's done, and it's done, and it's like oh. We're coming up to the end of first month and I've kind of signed the rolls off at the end of the month, and it's all going to happen.

Financial accountability

This designated leader was forthright in articulating her limitations regarding financial accountability and her espoused practice of distributed leadership worked well in the following example where she said: "I don't want to do data entry, that's my, well it's not my area of strength. I really struggle with data entry. And finance. Um. But, and it's trusting people to do that".

Vera Maud was clear about delegating this responsibility to her administrator, perceiving it be an administrative task rather than hers specifically as she would always prioritise working with children over administrative duties. She reiterated that it was appropriate to trust people to do that work and "yeah so between us, she developed between us a system that worked, and it does work for us".

One incident involving 'missing money' threatened to undermine this way of working for both the leader and her team. As relayed by Vera Maud:

> I think probably the last three weeks have been the biggest low that I've had at [name of centre]…Trust being broken. But we worked through that. Everybody worked together and thought about our processes and how it worked and it finally came to light—it was a systems thing. But you know we used to sit in the afternoon and you could see each other looking at each other and I would be saying, "This, we've got to continue to work together. I believe that nobody did anything wrong. I believe that with all my heart. I believe that nobody that walks into this building has done anything wrong." Cos once you start not trusting people, things start to go haywire.

As it turned out there was no money missing and it was purely a processing mistake in the system. This example does, however, highlight the leader's feelings of financial accountability alongside her philosophy of valuing trustful relationships within teams. Her team valued her commitment to building trust and being trustworthy, as evidenced by their comments below:

> [T2]: I think she works hard at building a team that has the foundations of trust and respect of one another and for the children in our families but also she has confidentiality if you do need to go and speak to her yeah as well.

> [T3]: She keeps it real and, you know, as adult teachers I think that's important yeah.

> [T1]: Makes you respond, yeah the response is quite quickly, if you need to know something the response is there straight away if you need to deal with it; if it's something like you want to talk to her quietly with a closed door (that doesn't happen very often) but when, you know, anyone needs to do this, she's there straight away— yeah it's not like it can happen tomorrow she'll be there within a minute.

Leading effectively

Vera Maud's notions about her own leadership style were interesting. She was a positional leader by virtue of her title as the Head Teacher of the Kindergarten. However, contradictory themes emerged between her espoused theories of leadership and her theories-in-use. For example, on the one hand she called herself a "laissez-faire leader". She also said, "…and that's probably one of my downfalls is that I don't dictate to people". Then on the other hand Vera Maud described herself as an "overseer", and needing to be "always visible" and "monitoring what is happening", which does not fit with the concept of laissez-faire leadership (although this leadership style was supported by the researcher's observations). Furthermore, Vera Maud espoused the benefits of following a model of distributed leadership. Sharing the workload was perceived to be one of the aspects of distributed leadership.

> And we share the workload. Um, like we have a, um, what do you call it, a roster. We have an annual plan. With specific duties and tasks that need to be completed by somebody. At the beginning of the year we sit down and ask, who needs to learn how the health and safety role works?

This was supported in the focus group interview with the team.

> [Teacher 1]: We have a termly job, which is over on the wall, a termly roster. So each person each term changes, for example, I'm on the fire drills this term, [Teacher 2] is on health and safety, [Teacher 3] is on bicult stuff. Yeah so it rotates so we all know what to do at any time because we've all dealt with it. And then at the end of the year or the beginning of next year we rub it all out and we've put in the new names for the next year. So it becomes someone else's responsibility. So like I think [Teacher 3] last year she was the health and safety, [Teacher 2] is it this year, next year it might be yeah. Yeah so it rotates.

The concept of distributed leadership was also discussed in the interview with Vera Maud's team. Indicative comments included:

> [T2]: She is a distributor. She, you know she's not just one person in a team. There's four others, five others in the team and she wants everybody to have a say in things and she'll support where needed. She lifts you up as well, like, I say this purely cause like you guys have been here for a few years now but coming in like she's made us feel like we can actually contribute—like if new families come in we know about enrolments and like that makes us feel…

> [T3]: Inspired.
>
> [T2]: Yeah and just like you've got more responsibility as well. So she's not just, you know, that teacher, the new teacher, you, we're all equals.
>
> [T1]: I think she sees you know we've all got our strengths and our values all the way around aye, that's really good and she will what's the word she'll articulate that to you, oh I think you're really good at this and this and that or oh that's just cool that's what you're really up to yeah.

Clearly both the leader and her team considered they worked collaboratively within a distributed leadership model. However, Vera Maud's espoused theories around accountability and 'the buck stopping with her' indicated that while everyone (i.e., her team) was 'doing it', no-one other than her was really taking responsibility. Teacher 1 confirmed this in the following comment:

> I think she takes the initiatives for making sure all the boxes are ticked at the end of the day but the way those boxes get ticked are in a collaborative situation; it's not just the head teacher that's, she goes and she gets them all done and that's it finished but she takes the initiative and drives it. "Oh we'll we need to look at the annual plan you know". They might be way forgotten in my head but she will bring it to the light that needs to be looked at. Then she'll write it on the computer. "I'll be looking at that on Monday"—you know those little things just to prompt.

There were occasions when other members of the team did "step up" when required.

> [T2]: Well if [DL] isn't here [Teacher 3] is the next one who steps up. But like we experienced last term [Teacher 3] was away but the kindergarten still ran well when [DL] wasn't here as well and we just, you all kind of just step up and [DL] enables us to have the responsibility to deal with you know if like if something's wrong, we know who to call, what to do, we know the routines and the structure of the day so we are capable of running well, yeah.

Teacher 2 also said that the final responsibility lay with their leader. She said "Generally it's a collective but where needed the head teacher makes that final decision yeah".

Teacher 3 summed up the team's appraisal of Vera Maud's attributes as a leader as being a both a 'people person' (approachable) and task focused:

> [T3]: She's approachable. We're all approachable but yeah as a leader definitely you know. She's really quick. And she's pretty much focused as well yeah. Focused on the tasks at hand or the up and coming happenings that are going on — yeah like the organisation and stuff like that.

Teachers 1 and 2 further elaborated:

> [T1]: You know takes the time for you to get whatever it is off your chest, finding

> solutions, making things work, yeah. I think she does that a lot for parents that come in and need helping yeah.
>
> [T2]: She's not one to let it fester. Like it's up front, she, it's like a gentle approach too—like it's not like, you know she's like right it seems like there might be something happening here, let's sort it out. Yeah or if something's come up with a family she's like, right this has been brought to my attention and we need to discuss it, like it's yeah up front.

How Vera Maud addresses, in practice, the key tasks listed in her job description was illustrated through many examples during the course of the 'designated leader' interviews. Such illustrations provided rich evidence of how she leads the implementation of structures and processes that create a learning environment able to bring about positive learning outcomes for children. For example, the inside/outside roster is strategically placed to support the relieving teachers as well as the whole teaching team.

> We sat down one day because Teacher 1 was new and she said "I don't have enough information about what I should be doing". Okay let's rectify that. So that's what we did, we sat down and we brainstormed everything that we want to happen and it's been critiqued twice since then. It's a living document. And ours is flexible too. So like if somebody's on outside duty and a child wants them to come in inside, we actually swap. We negotiate with that, we don't say well actually I can't come inside because I'm on outside duty. I'd like to stay out or in. We actually follow the children.

Another source of information was the leader's journal where she reflected on her leadership knowledge skills and theories. The following journal entry provides an insight into her tensions between having to prioritise the structures and processes of organisational leadership over pedagogical leadership: "The question I ask myself on days like today is what was the learning for our tamariki from me? I struggle with responses sometimes when management takes over—an evil necessity of a leader at times".

Prohibiting factors

In terms of her roles, responsibilities and functions as an early childhood leader, Vera Maud identified that when she is in ratio, this has to be her key focus because in her words, "you can't be off the floor when you have a full house". This however, can create other problems, such as lack of contact with her Administrator.

> Like [sigh] there's only one day a week that I actually catch up with her when I'm off the floor. Like she comes when I'm on the floor. So Friday is the only day and that's in my lunch break. I've said to her, look if you need me, I can come off the floor but we just need to organise it.

Leading teams

Whether it was about pedagogical or organisational leadership, a key theme that emerged from this case study centred on team dynamics and the way that Vera Maud led the team in working together to achieve their goals. Having a shared philosophy helped too. As stated by Teacher 1 in the focus group interview:

> [T1]: And the ultimate tool we have is our philosophy. I don't whether it's possibly, depends how you look at leadership, I mean we all have similar beliefs. You know the partnerships with parents, the reciprocal responsive relationships, Treaty of Waitangi, you know it's all there and because we all believe in it the interactions become a lot easier. The environment's set up in a way for children to explore independently or as a group and that's something that we all are very passionate about and [DL] is passionate about it also so it just kind of flows as opposed to DL saying this is what we should be doing…And like I can only speak on behalf of me and [Teacher 4] but being the newbies and coming in to a team that you, you know they're already formed and they have their philosophy and all that kind of stuff and then being, us being able to contribute to that and also understand you know the underlying principles of our philosophy and how this team works that has helped us being able to have that input yeah. And then knowing that we review it if something else pops up, and like we've added in a few things, but we're all on the same page now yeah.

Enabling 'voice' was quite a theme with this leader. Earlier, she talked about empowering parents to have a voice. Here, within the context of developing harmonious relationships, Vera Maud stated: "It's really important that everybody is heard. So if we're having team discussions, that everybody has a voice because they all operate quite differently." Again there appears to be a discrepancy between this leader's genuine desire for a team culture and how she views her team. The language in this next excerpt (i.e., her use of the word 'my') suggests she perceives the team to be hers rather than viewing herself as part of the team working collaboratively together:

> {Teacher 2]'s my scientist. She comes from a very theory database background. Um, [Teacher 3]'s my 'quiety'— like needs a long time to think about what's going to happen and how it's going to happen and how it will affect, and how it'll affect them. And so quite often if we start a conversation we actually have to put it on hold until the next day. And [Teacher 1]'s my little gun ho–you know–she's out there with energy enthusiasm; I've been in the system two minutes and I'm almost bullet proof. And I'm going to give everything a go. And it's like, she's got a voice.

Vera Maud again refers to the importance of voice below, this time for herself, when she described the impact of her own professional learning.

Leading professional learning and development

While her team acknowledged the extra workload involved for their leader to be studying on top of leading their centre, Vera Maud attributes having more energy

and more desire to do more professional learning and development as a result of studying in the diploma to upgrade programme. She reported satisfaction in being able to share some of her learning from her upgrade studies with members of her teaching team.

Interestingly she commented that the upgrade programme had not only "given me my voice back"; it had helped her as a mentor teacher. She elaborated:

> Rather than losing my voice I chose not to speak. I just went quiet. And the focus came back on to learning and development or assessment and planning. And it was like that's where I wanted to be…But actually when you've got students you have to have a broader base. And when you're learning, um receiving more information you automatically gain more information…And it was like, you could just see the light come on for her…Really makes you think about what you do and how you do it.

Vera Maud further elaborated as to why it was beneficial for the centre to have students on teaching practice, i.e., "they question what you do; they make you think about your practice, and it's like, that's got to be good". She also valued the professional learning opportunities afforded to the teaching team by their governing body. In the focus group interview the other teachers too expressed their appreciation of the many opportunities the offered to them. They liked that the choice is theirs as to what they applied for. As a team they attended the Reggio Conference in Auckland together. According to Vera Maud, "it was amazing, the work we did together and the changes that took place because of what we'd done together".

In terms of developing other staff as leaders her team consider that Vera Maud takes a "guiding" and "communication" role. Teacher 1 explained from her perspective how she helps them to articulate their practice:

> I think [DL] is very honest in the fact that she does not know everything and I find it very empowering how she will, like I've seen her do it with the other teachers and stuff, but she will pinpoint what it is that they're very like a strong aspect of them, that is, and she will ask questions about it so that she can get to know a bit more if that makes sense. Yeah and it's to help her better understand it as well, like I'm just speaking from, an example would be she's doing, she's been doing te reo this year through her course. And my goal is around biculturalism and I'm doing a course as well and so we feed off each other and like I'm quite happy to say my pronunciation with things like that and so with one of her assignments she asked me to record it all for her so that she could learn it, so she's honest in that aspect that she yeah and she wants your help too yeah.

Leading sustainability

In addition to the sustainable practices implemented in the centre Vera Maud was committed to actively pursuing leadership processes that contribute to the sustainability of the leadership culture. Having a shared knowledge and vision were the two factors she identified as being the most important. She also commented

that it might take a while to change the culture of teams. She remembered how her first two years leading the centre were "all about change" and "developing a new team culture"—and "when things go wrong, and they do go wrong, it is easier to revert back to bad habits". Her ultimate goal as a leader was to grow the team:

> Like I don't see, like I am the leader but I know that I could be away today…I want my team to fly. I want us to succeed.

The team shared this view in their focus group interview. Teacher 2 said:

> …So we sit down and we talk about what needs to be done and all those jobs that need to be done and we work together collaboratively but obviously we're very capable of these roles and [DL] supports us if she, if needs be, but she doesn't also need to be there you know so by doing that we all know our responsibilities but we've done it together as a team yeah and then reviewed whenever…I think like we've all mentioned about how we're a collaborative team and I think like I know from my experiences working in places—you know who the head teacher is and they've got the final say—it's in everything whereas here we do collaborate a lot and it, like we know [DL] is the head teacher but if she's not here the kindergarten's not going to fall to pieces like, if that makes sense, yeah… I like that even though [DL] isn't here or someone's not here, nothing's going to just fall to pieces.

Indications are that this leader has provided cohesion to bring about the sustainability of their practices. As stated by Teacher 3:

> [T3] …Over the past four or five years since she's probably been here she's seen a change from where we were to where we are now so we've come a long way and it's been a, it's been a journey in that process but she's, I mean I know I am, there's a point where you're proud of what you're doing and you can see those changes…

CONCLUSION

In this case study there was definite alignment between the espoused theories of the leader and the leadership theories-in-use, as independently confirmed by the teaching team and observations of the researcher. When the leader provided an example of her espoused theories and/or leadership practice, often the same example of her leadership in action was highlighted by one or other of the teachers participating in the focus group interviews. While the leader and her team may sometimes have articulated or enacted a practice that did not always accurately portray a particular leadership theory, nevertheless they all 'sang from the same page' with a shared understanding of how it worked for them and their centre.

Key themes emerged for leading a sustainable team within the context of an early childhood education service. The leader in this case study was inclusive in her approach (to the children, families, and her team) and she modelled a commitment to catering for both disability and cultural diversity. She ensured everyone's voice was heard; she was approachable, trustworthy and trusted her

team to meet the tasks required of them. Successful early childhood settings are characterised by effective leadership, where there is minimal staff turnover and a shared vision of practices, pedagogy and curriculum (Siraj-Blatchford & Manni, 2007) and promotion of leadership within an inclusive culture (Education Review Office, 2011). These characteristics were found in this case study.

REFERENCES

Siraj-Blatchford, I., & Manni, L. (2007). *Effective leadership in the early year's sector. The ELEYS study (Issues in practice)*. Retrieved from http://www.eblib.com

Education Review Office. (2011). *Evaluation at glance: What ERO knows about effective schools*. Wellington, New Zealand: Author.

CHAPTER SEVEN

WHAKAMANA LEADERSHIP: A 'BIG SIS' APPROACH TO LEADERSHIP

She's not just the leader – she's like your sister. You know her good and bad points, and she knows yours. She knows that their conduct and behaviour is a reflection on the whānau, and on her so she has high expectations and is confident to enforce them. You know that she's the one who you can trust, that she's got the experience and knowledge to help. She knows each of her siblings inside-out and wants the best for each one.

INTRODUCTION

This case study was conducted at Liberty Kids. 'Liberty Kids' was the pseudonym given to one of the seven early childhood education centres that took part in the 'Leaders Growing Leaders' research (Ryder, Davitt, Smorti, Higginson, Smith, & Carroll-Lind, 2017). The chapter is divided into three sections: case study description; key themes; and case study summary. In the case study description an overview is provided of the ECE setting's context, including a brief discussion on the background of the positional leader. The findings section describes the four main findings: leadership as an expectation; a 'big sis' style of leadership; a culture of trust, and personal professional leadership qualities. Finally, a summary is provided on how a 'big sis' approach strengthens 'whakamana leadership' through the process of being a leader of growth and change.

CASE STUDY DESCRIPTION

'Louise' is the pseudonym given to the designated leader of Liberty Kids. The teaching team of Liberty Kids is referred to simply as 'the teaching team' with no pseudonyms provided. The Liberty Kids case study focused on the effective leadership of Louise as the designated leader and how she developed and grew leadership within the teaching team of Liberty Kids.

Liberty Kids is situated in the North Island of New Zealand. At the time of the research study (2016), the centre had been open for operation for approximately three years. Liberty Kids is licensed for children in three age groups (i.e., children aged up to 18

months of age, 18 months to three years, and three years to school age). At the time of its first ERO review (2013) Liberty Kids was a privately owned, purpose built, all day education and care service, and was one of approximately 40 other education and care services operating under the same umbrella name. At the time of the ERO (2013) review Louise was the Centre Director, and had overall responsibility for day-to-day operations of the centre with governance and management support. In 2014 Liberty Kids underwent a major change of ownership, where the centre was purchased by a publicly-listed company and became one centre of a much larger number of early childhood education centres owned by the parent company. Louise is a very experienced leader. Her qualifications include the Bachelor of Education (ECE) with a background working in the area of ECE professional development. The majority of the teaching team at Liberty Kids are also qualified teachers.

KEY THEMES

This section draws on 'theories-in-use' and 'espoused theories' data (Argyris & Schön, 1974). The 'espoused leadership theories' are the leaders' own values and beliefs regarding her practice and draws on data from one positional leader's interview and three critical incident reflections. The 'leadership theories-in-use' are the observable practices that the leader demonstrates. This data draws on three researcher observations and one teaching team interview. The three key themes identified in this case study are: (1) Growing leadership knowledge and change; (2) A 'big sister' approach to leadership — guiding and role modelling leadership; and (3) Culture of trust: Identifying strengths in others. These three themes address the overall research question for the wider research study, which was: 'What leadership processes and structures do effective ECE leaders develop in their centres for the sustainability of the leadership culture?'

Growing leadership knowledge and change

One of the key aspects of the leadership at Liberty Kids, is that it is formally shared across four people—Louise as the centre director, and three head teachers of each of the 'rooms' (up to 18 months of age, 18 months to three years, and three years to school age). With Louise's increased managerial tasks due to the change in ownership, it was essential that she developed a formal structure of leadership across the three head teachers. As managerial tasks increased, so unfortunately did the need for Louise to give up on a lot of her pedagogical leadership duties. This meant that the head teachers stepped up as the pedagogical leaders within their rooms. Because Louise knew she had limited time for pedagogical leadership of the centre as a whole, she felt she needed to be clear in her leadership messages she gave the head teachers. In the quote below Louise described her leadership style and how it is clear and to the point. Louise talked about her style of 'pushing' the teachers to get the results she expects:

> I'm on their tail all the time. I'm a bit of a dog with a bone. I have lists and I give the head teachers deadlines and stuff to work too. I talk lots to them, where are you at with it? I'm very clear about expectations. I push lots, I push, push, push, and I know that I've had it pushed back and sometimes I've backed off and sometimes I haven't. Um, never really sure whether it's right or wrong sometimes… but most of the time the result is pretty good.

The quote below demonstrates that the head teacher's view Louise's tenacity and her ability to challenge the teaching staff in a positive manner, and see that it encourages them to think for themselves. One teacher discusses how Louise responds when the teacher has a query:

> I find sometimes she won't give, she won't answer it. She will rephrase it back to get you to… or suggest a different angle to look at it [Another teacher agrees]. Yeah, when we approach her with something she gets us to sort of unpack it a bit more and look at it from different angles.

Louise is directive in her leadership approach and makes her expectations clear. Louise expects that the three head teachers will step up and lead and support their teams, in the same way they expect to receive leadership from her. The following quote from the teacher interview clearly demonstrates this leadership approach. One of the teachers stated:

> I remember I sat in on one of your meetings you had. She [Louise] had a really good process, she was very clear [and said] 'well you might like to think about this. Go away and think about that and I want you to do that by the time you come back. I will expect that from you'. She has high expectations but I think they are clear, like really clear.

Another way that Louise demonstrates growing leadership and knowledge is in a regular meeting she holds with the head teachers. During these meetings Louise demonstrates the value of being a 'big picture' thinker and of having systems and processes to support that overall leadership thinking and planning. The quote below provides an example of these meetings with the head teachers, where leadership roles and expectations were discussed:

> I'm quite a system person [I like] a visual picture, so I will have these [referring to paper with roles and responsibilities written on it] out for the leaders to follow so clear ideas of their roles and responsibilities, we tick them off. I give clear expectations every month of what we've got to meet. The big picture stuff is discussed so that there's no "oh I didn't know I was going to do that", or "I've run out of time".

A 'big sister' approach to leadership — guiding and role modelling

Louise's clear and decisive approach to leadership links to the ways she refers to herself as the 'big sister' of the family. In this way, Louise reflected on how a key part of her role as an effective leader is clear guidance and role modelling,

in much the same way that a 'big sister' acts as a role model to guide a younger sibling. Louise recognised that it was important to be intentional in her leadership guidance and role-modelling and just like being a 'big sis', this at times entailed being quite clear and directive. She reflected:

> I've worked this out…I'm like that big sister in your family… that you just love dearly but you know you're going to hear from her. It's like you've got that big sister in your family, which you know she's lots of fun, but if rank needs to be pulled, she'll pull it, and you just need to listen.

Louise also recognises that the 'big sis' style of guidance and role-modelling is only going to work within a teaching team that has a very close knit culture. This was also discussed in the quote below by a new teacher during her reflections of when she first started working at the centre.

> When I first met the team back then and since working here I get the sense that the centre is quite a close knit culture, but we are also pushed to do the best that we can do. But then there is also like a very strong emphasis on having fun and relaxing together.

Just as 'big sisters' are reluctant to give up their role as head of the family they also know that it is good for their siblings to take on new roles. Here links can be seen to the importance of 'growing leadership' within the ECE setting. In the following quote the teacher who previously worked with Louise (when she was teaching in ratio) explained the challenges of relinquishing pedagogical leadership, whilst understanding there is a need to 'grow' the new teacher into the role. This teacher described the leadership handover as a gradual process for Louise:

> So it has been a slow hand over process and I guess it is about her stepping back a little bit. So there are some things that I will check in with her because I don't want to step on her toes. At that time she was doing the centre director and team leader position and I think she was juggling both of those and it was quite a lot of work for her.

It is clear that although Louise had strong leadership expectations in her three head teachers, it was hard at times for her to give up the pedagogical leadership of the centre. However, her 'big sister' approach to leadership allowed Louise to manage her changing role. As Louise stepped back from the pedagogical leadership of the centre (due to increased managerial tasks), a guiding and role modelling approach to leadership meant she retained the overall knowledge of the teaching and learning within the ECE setting.

Culture of trust: Identifying strengths in others

Louise's reflection on her having a 'big sister' approach to leadership relies, like any family, on understanding and trust. A 'culture of trust' is evident at 'Liberty Kids' in a shared approach to appraisal that Louise has devised. Louise decided that she would incorporate an appraisal process that not only involved the usual one-to-

one feedback meetings but also included collaborative reflection and professional development amongst the teaching teams as a collective group. The key learning in this appraisal process came from the collaborative sharing of goals between the teaching team. The teachers give up their Saturdays twice a year and share with each other what their goal is and how they intend to achieve it. Then six months later the team will meet again. By this stage everyone has researched and reflected on their goal, and represented their learning visually in some way or other, so as to be able to discuss it with their peers. At first the process was daunting for the team. However, because Louise knew that a culture of trust existed within her team, she knew she could push them to speak openly about their individual appraisal goals. Not only did the teachers end up openly sharing their goals, but they were now accountable to the whole team to ensure that these goals were acted on. Louise talked of not only a culture of trust, but a culture of curiosity. She reflected:

> What I hoped for …. curiousness, wrestling, embracing, rejecting… has all happened. It's been a relatively easy culture of curiosity to create because I am a systems person and I have a good system, and I'm really passionate about this so I can energise the girls really well. Now they love what they get from the process, the feeling of being excited from the new thinking, so they are driving the process now.

The following quote from one of the teachers at the teacher interview supports Louise's new appraisal system. The teacher is demonstrating a high level of trust in Louise's ability to lead the team through new and innovative practices. She named the appraisal system as one of those practices:

> She sort of motivates you and challenges you. I think she is like the back bone really you know…She definitely has a vision. [Other teachers agree]. It's inspiring. Yeah [it's like we] don't know how to get there, and then we all jump on board. [Louise] has a vision at the end, she has it. I think that appraisal system was a vision of hers you know and she must be so pleased to see it all. Yeah and it's good for us too. We like it.

The collaborative approach to appraisal was just one of the many processes and systems Louise devised within her time as leader at Liberty Kids. However, all of Louise's processes and systems would not have worked without their close knit culture of trust amongst the team as a whole.

CONCLUSION

Louise's story is multi-faceted. It tells of a direct, challenging leader on one hand, and a loving 'big sis' on the other. It is clearly evident that Louise's *espoused leadership theories*, match the *leadership theories-in-use* of the teaching team. Argyris and Schön (1974) refer to espoused theories, as those beliefs the individual holds about their practice and will articulate to others, and *theories-in-use* as the actions that can be observed by others. Therefore, what Louise espoused either in her interview or critical reflections aligned with the leadership theories-in-use that have either been observed or reported by the teachers.

Louise's qualities of being a 'systems' person supported the centre through times of change. Due to a change in ownership from a privately owned company whose sole purpose was early childhood education, to a publicly-listed company with early childhood education as just part of their portfolio, Louise underwent a major shift in her practice as a leader to a leader/manager. Louise identified that if the centre was going to progress successfully through this time of change, it was important for her to grow the leadership practice and knowledge of her teaching team.

As more and more managerial tasks were put on to Louise's shoulders she felt she was constantly grappling between leadership and management. The change in organisational ownership and structure of the ECE setting impacted on Louise's identity of who she was as a leader. In the first year of change of ownership Louise's managerial tasks increased to a degree that she could not successfully be both the pedagogical and managerial leader of the ECE setting. Louise therefore had to withdraw from many of her direct pedagogical leadership roles to manage the ongoing managerial stability of the centre. Louise's 'big sister' approach to leadership provided the team with strong guidance and role modelling to see them through the time of change. As Louise says, the 'big sis needs to be firm because she has the weight of the responsibility of the whānau on her shoulders. For Louise 'her girls' (the teaching team) were her whānau.

Whilst this case study could have told a 'management versus leadership' story, instead the focus lay on the leadership disposition of 'being a leader of growth and change' (whakamama) which enables the ability to build and sustain a culture of trust and leadership development.

REFERENCES

Argyris, C., & Schön, D. (1974). *Theory in practice. Increasing professional effectiveness*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Ryder, D., Davitt. G., Higginson, R., Smorti, S., & Carroll-Lind, J. (2017). *Leaders growing leaders: Effective early childhood leaders for sustainable leadership*. Wellington, New Zealand: Te Rito Maioha Early Childhood New Zealand.

CHAPTER EIGHT

MAYFIELD KINDERGARTEN: MANAAKITANGA: BEING CARING TO OTHERS

> … responsibility for self — that's also sort of part of it … looking after your own belongings and your environment and each other so that whole manaaki … so it is throughout, looking not just after Papatūānuku [but] looking after each other and how we support each other.

INTRODUCTION

Kathryn Richards is the head teacher of Mayfield Kindergarten. Kathryn has chosen not to use a pseudonym stating,

> We think we've got good practices here and so we're kind of proud of what we do, and want to do. We want to show other people too what we do, and to be leaders.

Leadership in this early childhood setting is an aspect of practice that is both visible and intentional. A common thread in this case study is the alignment between the espoused theory of the leader (Kathryn), the enacted leadership as discussed by her team, and observations of practice by the researcher. The key themes discussed in this case study are:

- Manaaki (looking after each other and the environment);
- Pedagogical leadership (focus on teaching and learning);
- Working alongside whānau and community; and
- Sustainable leadership (delegation and being solution focused).

Kathryn is a relatively new designated leader, having been in the head teacher role at Mayfield for just two years. Immediately prior to this Kathryn was in a relieving leadership position at another kindergarten for six months. She has also had more pedagogically focused leadership roles as "room" supervisor positions in private early childhood centres. In talking about the role, Kathryn noted the breadth of her work as head teacher, from dealing with emails to the overall running of the kindergarten, teaching and supervising the development of staff and students,

and working with parents and community. Kathryn is also a facilitator for the environmental schools programme in the broader Marlborough region.

Kathryn's qualifications include a Diploma of Teaching (ECE) and Bachelor of Education (ECE). She leads a team of three teachers all of whom hold Bachelor of Teaching (ECE) degrees, as well as an administrator and education support teacher.

CASE STUDY DESCRIPTION

The kindergarten is one of seven run by the Marlborough Kindergarten Association. Kathryn has responsibility for the day-to-day running of the kindergarten, including the staff appraisal of the teachers.

On the association website the kindergarten is described as having a

> strong focus on the environment and the outdoors. Our new purpose built building is situated on a large section, creating an exciting outdoor classroom including natural elements such as a stream, mud pit, grassy hills, exploration of nature and many challenges for children.
>
> Throughout the programme, children participate in sustainable practices like recycling paper into usable items, collection of rainwater, worm farming, composting etc. The kindergarten curriculum enables children to become confident and competent learners within a fun supportive atmosphere. (http://www.marlboroughkindergartens.org.nz/mayfield-kindergarten)

The hours of operation are Monday–Thursday, 8:45am to 2:45pm, and Friday 8:45am–1:00pm. Children attend in mixed age groupings. The ERO report of August, 2014 noted that Mayfield Kindergarten with this newly established team was "well placed to promote positive learning outcomes for children".

The teaching team are all experienced teachers, one has previously been a head teacher herself; another is the bicultural facilitator for the Association. The kindergarten team mentors teachers in training as well as students from local schools. One of the team was completing her upgrade from Diploma to Bachelor's degree in teaching at the time of the field research. As an enviro-kindergarten the team has a significant leadership role in the community. Thus one might describe all the members of this team as 'leaderful'.

In the team interview the teachers described their team as 'diverse' and noted the potential this diversity has for innovation and for conflicting ideas. Kathryn noted in the designated leader interview that one of the qualities a leader must have is confidence and self-belief noting that:

> You've just got to have confidence in yourself and you've been given the job and it helps if people believe in you…that's a big thing…to think that you're in it for the right reason. It just takes time and I think age and for like me, the teachers here are all older than me…not a lot but you know, ten years.

Kathryn also noted that "*being a leader doesn't' mean that you know it all and never make mistakes…we like to own our mistakes here at Mayfield Kindergarten*". She talked about trying to "*be amongst the team and lead **with** them*", also commenting on trying to *"lead as a team, so Head Teacher … and everyone working together collaboratively".* This was very evident in practice where teachers were observed constantly supporting each other in their work with children and whānau. The teaching team also commented on this in their interview from a slightly different angle, suggesting an acceptance of positional leadership as one of taking responsibility. One teacher commented:

> I think leadership is collaborative from the point of view of working with whānau, with families as well, to develop goals for their children, to work through difficulties. There's a sense of partnership and collaborativeness within the leadership here.

Another teacher said:

> I think it's both collegial and collaborative. I think that we have robust discussion around things, I think that we don't always agree but we can agree to disagree and find a path forward—but at the same time Kathryn's prepared to make the final decision or do some of the hard, hard yards.

KEY THEMES

Manaaki — looking after each other and the environment

A common thread in the interview with Kathryn and the team, and very visible in the enacted curriculum, was the environmental programme and the wider responsibility of caring for each other. While this can be seen as a pedagogical activity it is strongly connected to leadership and Kathryn's perception of her role as a pedagogical leader who cares for the people whom she leads.

> So we make paper bricks every couple of weeks and then give them to the parents, composting, worm-farming to get rid of our scraps, talk a lot with the children about water, looking after water and we tip the water on the gardens after we've finished with it. And just that responsibility for self — that's also part of it… looking after your own belongings and your environment and each other, so that whole manaaki…so it is throughout, looking not just after Papatūānuku [but] looking after each other and how we support each other.

Part of this quote is highlighted at the beginning of this chapter because it gets to the essence of what Kathryn believes. One of the key roles of a leader—"*my biggest role"*—according to Kathryn, *"is that of pastoral care of the team, and making sure that everyone is happy here…we're here more than we are at home".* The teachers also talked about the importance of pastoral care, giving specific examples of acts of kindness such as the following:

> I'm grateful for that Kathryn's the sort of leader she is. I've had times when I've been in a bit of a trough emotionally. Kathryn's supported me through that, and you know

> that really matters to me, in a no nonsense sort of a way, not wrap me in cotton wool but you know, do you need anything? , what can I do? Okay, well you just tell me if you do.

Another teacher said:

> I think too, little things happen like Kathryn will just bring in morning tea one day out of the blue that she's made you know, because you know we've had a hard week.

The teachers also talked about the importance of working in a safe environment, where they felt able to take some risks under a supportive leader.

> I think we get the chance to lead things so, we take turns at the duties around the place, and we take turns at leading different focuses so I think you know we get the chance to build our leadership skills as well, but it's in a safe framework.

> She's[Kathryn's] also very professional though, in the way that, I think she keeps us safe within all of those policies and procedures and practices, and at the heart of all her decisions are what is best for the, for the tamariki you know, that's what we're here for, and that's such a good firm foundation.

The acknowledgement of the leader's rationale for decision making is also a thread in the teachers' interview, as in the previous example. Teaching is viewed as a challenging job and in this setting whānau and community needs are high, with the kindergarten providing a lot of support for parenting and parent education. For these teachers the support of leadership is recognised as being important for their well-being. One said:

> And I think leadership, you know it's vital,[if] you don't have that good leader then it's you know, I don't think it's going to work, because this is, it's a hard job, it's a really hard job teaching, and I think it's getting a bit harder as whānau needs go up…

Another aspect of feeling safe and being able to teach well, mentioned a number of times in the teachers' interview, concerned conflict resolution and the valuing of difference. Kathryn saw this as a priority too, noting in her interview that the kindergarten had to be a "happy place to work".

> But I'm the overseer so if I can see that something's happening between staff members or you know I can hear talk that I don't think is very positive or something like that that's a major thing for me. I'm always keeping an eye on that because I believe in really if something's not right then we meet and we talk about it. And it's done and dusted. And I make teachers responsible so if anyone comes to me saying something about someone else they very much have to stand up and own it and approach that person. When usually it's a safe thing to do but that's challenging that can be a shift, we've had that, a little bit of a shift in culture to do that.

The teachers obviously respected this approach and reiterated the expectation that "niggles" are dealt with immediately. They also noted:

> I've learnt a lot from how she does that. I was really afraid of that kind of critical honest communication, so I think one of the most important jobs is being able to keep the team well-oiled and functioning, and talking.
>
> Because we are, we are very different in our approaches to everything, and life and our upbringings as a team, we're all incredibly different, and we all come from different angles. And it's, oh, sometimes you think oh my goodness how are we ever going to resolve things, but you know we agree to disagree and, and respect each other for those decisions you know. I may not like it and I may not want to listen to them but, at the end of the day you know…

Pedagogical leadership—focus on teaching and learning

As the Head Teacher, Kathryn has the overall responsibility "to ensure the delivery of excellent early childhood education in the Kindergarten, through management of curriculum delivery, leadership of teaching and other staff, and operation of the kindergarten in accordance with Association policies, procedures and relevant legislation" (Head Teacher job description). Speaking about her role as a leader, it is clear that she has a focus on learning and teaching (i.e., pedagogical leadership) and in practice was observed constantly supporting individual teachers, students, and children and whānau in the delivery of the curriculum. During the observation periods there was constant communication and teacher talk occurring across the kindergarten, but also times when Kathryn focused on individual children and groups in a very intentional teacher role. The researcher noted that Kathryn's passion and enjoyment of teaching was visible throughout the observation periods.

In the designated leader interview Kathryn spoke about her role as primarily one of supporting the teaching team to focus on their teaching:

> My, I guess my, sometimes not my biggest worry but my biggest thing is to make sure everyone loves working here…cause to me that's just super important cause I think when that's right they will teach well and therefore the children get great learning outcomes because you've got enthusiastic teachers who are well and happy and energised. So for me I think as the leader that's my key role…Because I want the teachers to teach and be; that's their key role. They shouldn't have to be looking after this or the team, we do we have our individual responsibilities for looking after team morale.

It was also clear that the roles of leader and teacher sometimes are contradictory, so it was important to Kathryn that she made time for her teaching in the busyness of the day-to-day running of the kindergarten.

> …leadership with children. But seeing the interest in the water colours today outside and noticing that a few children were lacking skills and obvious experience in using them. I felt that they weren't getting the most out of the experience and felt with a little bit of leadership or instruction I could make a difference and deepen their learning. Taking the time to stop and teach can be hard for me when I have my head

> full of being responsible for the centre. I find I need to remind myself to be present with the children and take time to just observe or work alongside….

Kathryn works as a full member of the teaching team with the same responsibility for teaching and learning as all teachers. On the three observation days, Kathryn followed the same routines and regular activities as her team, including rostered duties such as toileting, tidying up etc. Many of the activities seemed to be a shared responsibility, such as the group times where a teacher might be responsible for the planning, but all teachers contribute and the leadership of the activity is shared. At times her teaching was interrupted by visitors, such as the new school principal who came on a planned visit during session, or on several occasions during the observation days, to talk with parents.

As a pedagogical leader, Kathryn has developed a number of structures that assist the day-to-day teaching. One such structure was the quick team catch-up at the beginning of each day where the whole team (student teachers and relievers included) meet in the office for 5-10 minutes. Kathryn explained this in her critical incident journal as:

> I like to go through the diary with the team what is happening for the day, intentional teaching that anyone has planned. After giving teachers time to greet each other and touch base I initiate a discussion to help us all be on the same page for the day. As it is the second to last week of term today I decided to ask everyone if there was any child they needed help to assess or notice, I wrote these up on the board so everyone can see and be reminded. I feel it is important to encourage teachers to be intentional in their teaching. This helps us focus on the job ahead and I feel that it helps us keep on top of our work load of assessment of children by encouraging teachers to follow up on learning. By doing this together in the morning we are aware of each other's plans and help each other notice learning throughout the day. This also helps us to gather multiple teacher voices on a child.

This meeting occurred each day during the observations, and much of the informal planning, such as roles and assistance with mat-times, took place at this time. It was evident that there was an expectation that teachers came to this meeting with their plans ready for a very brief discussion, but also that teaching is a team effort and teachers were expected to seek help and to help each other. The documentation of the plans on the whiteboard was another structure that made learning and teaching visible and helped to "keep everyone on track". The overall focus of the leader here was on intentional teaching and supporting the teachers to be the best that they can be, thus ensuring the delivery of quality early childhood curriculum in which learning outcomes are met.

Working alongside whānau and community

A key role of the designated leader in this kindergarten was working with whānau. As Kathryn noted in the designated leader interview, this is a community where support for parents is an important part of the kindergarten's practices.

> Yeah we do, yeah we go through waves of yeah different needs, we've got a large variety of sort of socioeconomic situations so some of them [parents] come in with not much confidence…And so we have to do a lot of building up a relationship with them and making them feel really, you know, just comfortable being here…So they hang around and they'll meet other parents, so we try hard with those. And they're often the low socioeconomic parents that are the quietest, yeah and we really want them to, not just rush in and rush out. We like it when they stay and be noisy and chat through mat time, so we to get to know them because that makes it easier to work with the child.

In her critical incident journal, Kathryn reflected on several interactions with parents that were challenging, and this was an aspect of leadership that the teachers commented on strongly. In discussing how decisions are made in the centre, for example, one teacher noted that "*sometimes when there are things happening with whānau that are quite challenging to deal with, Kathryn is prepared to step up and be the one that deals with it*". Another teacher noted the sense of security and respect that comes from having leadership where teachers are expected to step up themselves,

> But in saying that I will say there are times where, I will go well actually Kathryn, can you deal with this? I'm going to hide behind you on this one, and she does step up you know, there's some processes that yeah I'm not totally comfortable with sometimes, and I just go well, you know, and she does step up.

There is a strong sense of advocacy in Kathryn's approach to partnership with parents, and again an emphasis on expectation and trust is evident in her relationships with parents when she says:

> I find when you ask parents for help; that helps with their relationship building too… Cause they feel comfortable. So you might say, oh could you do this for me and they go, oh okay yeah, yeah so it's amazing when you actually put an expectation on some of them how much they step up and then you've got them involved yeah. Hopefully they might take some of those ideas home and give it a go…

Later, in the staff meeting that was observed, Kathryn took a much more direct advocacy role with the teaching team, as reported in the following extract from her critical incident journal. The researcher who documented aspects of leadership during that meeting noted the tact and respect for all views demonstrated by the designated leader. In her reflection on that day, Kathryn wrote:

> I had been made aware this week that a parent had posted on a feedback Marlborough Facebook page that she was really unhappy about kindergarten. She didn't say what and which kindy but I knew that I needed to follow this up face to face with her. It was important to do this within a short timeframe of it happening… I approached the parent and just told her that I was aware of her post and said that I would really appreciate it if she could come and talk to us first if she was unhappy, so we always had an opportunity to explain ourselves and that often I felt that when a situation

> was explained the person's intent would be clear and a better picture of the situation gained. Think she was shocked that I had seen the post and embarrassed…I brought this up at the staff meeting to make sure everyone was clear on what had happened and then to make it clear about our approach with this Mum. The conversation was on the verge of getting a bit negative about this parent so it was up to me to try and lift it back to keeping it professional in our approach and even if we thought that this Mum was being unreasonable, that she obviously had some needs and we were here to help with those as best we could and within our job. It is always a bit of a balancing act of letting teachers have a rant and also making sure that I make sure things are kept professional. It can be very easy to just join the ranting but I know I need to keep my distance at times like this.

Courageous conversations such as this often fell to the designated leader. Explicit in this extract is a sense of respect for the parent's situation, empathy for the parent who felt embarrassed, and a focus on reaching a solution that included both the parent and the team, while retaining a professional approach that acknowledged the views of the teaching team. The problem was dealt with immediately so as to avoid further damage to the organisation's reputation, and the parent was talked with face-to-face during the kindergarten session in a space that was familiar to her.

There were two other challenges that Kathryn wrote about in her critical incident journal over the three days of observation, and this would suggest that work with parents/whānau was a major part of her role. While all teachers took responsibility for reporting back to parents on children's learning, the role of dealing with what the teachers described as the "hard stuff" seemed to fit within the Head Teacher role in this setting. It could well be that this is not a designated leadership role, but one that played to Kathryn's strengths—although the Head Teacher job description did require the Head Teacher to "strive to establish and maintain the kindergarten whānau group [through] fostering collaborative relationships with parents to encourage parent participation in the kindergarten". While communication with parents is a process that supports the functioning of the centre, there were structures such as staffing, ratios and the organisation of tasks that underpinned this activity.

> It just shows me that all the time I spend chatting with parents in an open and friendly manner mostly informally really pays off when I need to get things done. The strength of relationships is very evident when you have issues to deal with. It gives me more confidence to say what I need to say. I know how the parent will react as I know them and they know and trust me.

Relationships and trust are obviously important here, but so too is the idea that a leader should have confidence and belief in themselves.

Sustainable leadership — delegation and being solution focused

Although Kathryn is a positional leader and had overall responsibility for the operation of the kindergarten on a daily basis, she is quite clear about ownership

and the succession of the Head Teacher role. She wanted the team to be able to take responsibility for the day to day operation of the kindergarten, and worked hard to retain a culture where knowledge (and systems) are shared and collaborative. In this excerpt from the designated leader interview, Kathryn acknowledges the former Head Teacher and the structure (delegation) set up by her predecessor. The example given towards the end was a visit by a new school principal, which required a change of duties to free Kathryn up to talk with the principal and to facilitate some short conversations with a couple of children transitioning to school.

> Yeah it's not my place…I'm very much, I never want to hear myself saying it's my kindergarten…I just see that I think that's my view that I do feel I'm replaceable in my job and I know I'm not going to be here forever and it's not my kindergarten, so I want others to, when I'm not here. It shouldn't make a change and I guess that was made obvious to me when [former Head Teacher], our last Head Teacher left here and she'd been here for 17 years… So it was a little bit unknown but it just it happened really smoothly and I think things ticked along quite the same and parents did say to us they felt everything was just the same…So that showed because she'd delegated a lot out in her time here that we just kept that. I wanted to keep that philosophy going so it goes all through from knowing when we've got, you know, like the principal coming in today you know…They [the team] knew that yesterday so if I didn't end up being here today they, you know they don't say "Kathryn's not here, I'll wait till she gets back".

Thus one focus was having the kindergarten work well when Kathryn was not there, and another was the longer term focus for when Kathryn moves on. It is possibly this sense of (limited) ownership that encouraged the distribution of roles and responsibilities that led to the distribution of leadership, and that builds on a culture of delegation that already existed when Kathryn became the Head Teacher two years ago. When asked about the structures and processes that operate in the kindergarten Kathryn responded:

> I think delegation's the key…And providing staff with opportunities to lead so and being prepared for someone to do it their own way, yeah, and just learning that it might get done, but it might get done differently.

Kathryn supported her statement about accepting the different ways that her team carry out the delegated tasks saying:

> I do try and encourage teachers to come to me with solutions, not just questions or issues, get them coming up with what they think is the best practice or strategy to use. That way it's not me making all the decisions, which can get really tiring and stressful. I also feel that when teachers are given space to come up with their own ideas the team is more independent and not reliant on me making all the calls as I am not always at work, or if away, I want things to run smoothly.

This gave teachers the freedom to be creative and try out new ideas. This acceptance of difference and trust in her team was also noted by the teachers. They felt supported in trying new things, and indeed saw it as one of their roles to

support the Head Teacher by volunteering to take on some of the tasks as these two comments from different teachers show:

> …any strengths that a teacher has is supported, so if you've got a high interest in something then that's something that you can work with and lead a whole team in that area, rather than sitting back and waiting for the Head Teacher to do all of that, and there's good support for interests and skills of our parents as well actually, teachers and parents…

> Kathryn has high expectations of everybody, and I think that's a really good thing because she's prepared to support you to reach them, and that's not like not high expectations that, that are her expectations but that she believes you can do really, really well.

When asked how she decides who takes on the delegated roles and responsibilities Kathryn said:

> I just wait for someone to put, for someone to put their hand up… if someone doesn't want to I probably don't want them doing it…Or if I feel that that teacher's doing other things then I say I don't think that's a good idea, or if I see a teacher who could really do with it and hasn't done it for a while I'll suggest it…so it's not compulsory, but I like them to feel they step up, and I really notice that if you do let staff do it, then they really gain an appreciation of how the place runs…The work that's involved and how important communication is …and you know yeah when they know what goes on behind it, makes a huge difference yeah.

These were the actions of a leader who has high expectations of her staff; she trusted that they had the skills to complete the task, and she supported the teachers. In the teacher interview, the teachers' responses reflected Kathryn's dialogue, with one teacher noting that the six monthly rotation of tasks was "really just lotto, what you haven't done before". Again the idea that knowing how each task is performed came through strongly in the teachers' interview:

> Then there's some that you do try, I do really try to dodge some roles and that's because they just ... but we do work under a system where everyone should know all the jobs, so that if one person is away someone else can take over.

> And it is quite empowering because you do get to know how things tick over… so it gives you an appreciation… some of the jobs are quite little but it's that whole thing about all the little pieces make the whole.

Another teacher added to this dialogue noting that she now had a better understanding of the "bigger picture", which also leads to sustainability of the leadership and work of the kindergarten.

> And now we've got this sheet of paper up in the office, of the sort of everything that needs to happen over the year, like achieve by term and reviews and that so, that for me has been a huge eye opener and it has helped me to come to understand

> actually, Kathryn hasn't just got it in her head but we need to, and you look at it and you can suggest oh you know we need to, you know so it's, having that visual there… it's actually the bigger picture

CONCLUSION

The leader in this case study (Kathryn) fits Siraj and Hallett's (2013) description of a pedagogical leader; that is, a leader who is focused on "leadership for learning [as] a learning centred approach to leadership" (p. 113). Kathryn shares her love of learning and teaching with her team; she enjoys her role as both a leader and a teacher and ensures that she has time to engage with children, fellow teachers, students, parents and community members. She is proud of the kindergarten, the team that she leads and the learning that occurs within this space. Her enthusiasm and support for learning was evident as she led pedagogical discussion and modelled intentional teaching. Her leadership style is transformative as she endeavours to support her team to be the best teachers that they can be.

There is a strong sense of congruency between espoused theory and theories-in-action (*Argyris and Schön*, 1974) which suggests that everyone in this setting works cooperatively and shares the same vision for children and whānau. Divergent thinking, innovation and difference are encouraged with a focus on solution based leadership that extended across the whole team. There was an expectation that everyone contributes to leadership in this team.

Sustainability is a key theme in this kindergarten setting, underpinned by the enviro-school philosophy, which blends into a curriculum that is strongly influenced by the values and behaviours inherent in New Zealand's early childhood curriculum, *Te Whāriki* (Ministry of Education, 1996). There is a strong sense of manaaki in this setting, which comes from a deep caring for the people and the environment, and the expectation is very clear that everyone who is associated with this kindergarten is both thoughtful and leaderful in their interactions. Respect and trust are key attributes demonstrated by Kathryn that afford ownership to her team through a structured approach to delegation and leadership for each team member. This is a setting where the leader grows leaders.

REFERENCES

Argyris, C., & Schön, D. (1974). *Theory in practice. Increasing professional effectiveness*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Ministry of Education. (1996). *Te whāriki: He whāriki mātauranga mō ngā mokopuna o Aotearoa: Early childhood curriculum*. Wellington: Learning Media.

Siraj-Blatchford, I., & Hallet, E. (2013). *Effective and caring leadership in the early years*. Retrieved from http:// www.eblib.com

CHAPTER NINE

PULLING THE CASE STUDIES TOGETHER

Designated leaders and their teaching teams from seven teacher-led ECE services (characterised by their diversity and effective leadership) participated as case studies within a wider study on growing sustainable leadership in early childhood settings. Those case study narratives are recorded in the previous chapters. What did we learn from their individual stories?

In the wider project each case study was initially analysed separately, followed by a cross-case analysis of the seven case studies. From this, a picture unfolded of current ECE leadership experience and qualifications, beliefs and practices including the organisational structures and processes underpinning the leadership culture within early childhood centres.

The data analysis first focused on the leadership processes and structures that effective early childhood leaders develop in their centres to ensure sustainability of the centre's leadership culture. The content of the four research sub-questions also informed the analysis process. Hence professional learning and development, leadership actions, 'espoused theories' and 'theories-in-use' were utilised as an analysis framework. In addition, any barriers to leadership were identified and recorded. The following key themes emerged:

- Approaches to leadership
- Leadership within centre teams
- Developing a culture of growing leadership
- Expectations of leadership
- Leadership dispositions
- Professional learning and development (Ryder, Davitt, Higginson, Smorti, & Carroll-Lind, 2017, p.31).

The second level of analysis involved a comparative evaluation of the key themes across all seven case studies to provide evidence of consistency amongst the emerging themes or patterns. The key themes that emerged from this second level of analysis were:

- Leadership as an organisational cultural practice.
- Congruent leadership practices relating to:

  - Strong leadership as a an expectation;
  - Leadership dispositions; and
  - Professional learning and development.
- Incongruent leadership practices (i.e., incongruence between 'espoused theories' and 'theories-in-use'.

Centre structures and processes were used to analyse three areas of leadership actions: (1) pedagogical; (2) team leadership; and (3) organisational. The data analysis elicited information about how leadership practices change; how leaders theorise leadership; and how they enact leadership to further build capacity and capability in and of leaders, by growing leaders for the purpose of sustaining the leadership culture.

Drawing on the seminal work of Argyris and Schön (1974) and adapting their theories of action model, the seven case study narratives collectively provided evidence of 'espoused leadership' and 'leadership theories-in-use'. The high level of congruence found between what the designated leaders said they valued (espoused leadership theories of action), and the practices they enacted (leadership theories-in-use), as experienced by their teams, influenced the leadership culture of those ECE centres.

While some leaders were explicit regarding the leadership model they enacted, other leaders focused more on utilising key phrases or terms to represent their approach to leadership, for example, kaupapa Māori, distributed leadership, pedagogical leadership, shared leadership, and emergent leadership. Additionally a range of terms such as accountability, responsibility, collective, positional, and delegation were also emphasised in relation to leadership practice. Furthermore values and beliefs about leadership were explained through phrases such as "we are all leaders in our own way" (Tamariki o ngā Mātua), "tamariki are the leaders of the centre…leaders of the future" (Te Kōhanga Reo) and "everyone can be a leader" (Pukeahu Preschool).

Some ambiguities or incongruences were evident between 'espoused theories' and 'theories-in-use' such as:

- Direct communication style: encouraging and supportive;
- Challenging: wanting to be challenged;
- Accountability and responsibility: distributed/shared leadership;
- Articulation of leadership style not reflected in practice/action;
- Pedagogical leadership focus when focus was really on organisational leadership; and
- Role of leader: role of teacher (time, energy, priority).

The tension that exists between leadership and management and how this aspect is responded to within ECE centres was often identified in relation to 'espoused theories' and 'theories-in-use'. One example of this tension is that while the leaders' objective was to enact distributed or shared leadership (terms which participants used interchangeably at times), the leaders recognised that the

centres often continued to operate in a hierarchical structure governed by a board, a parent committee, a trust or an owner manager.

Clear and strong leadership were identified as critical aspects of the overall concept of leadership. The wider research study found that long term successful sustainability of educational and centre leadership requires a collective and/or whānau approach, underpinned by a culture of trust, respect and care, coupled with ongoing professional learning and development to reflect the importance of growing leadership with in the centre team. Participants considered commitment to their centres and teams to be important. Staff loyalty, while highly valued, creates stability and conditions of low staff turnover. In contrast this outcome also results in a lack of opportunities for emerging leaders to gain designated leadership roles and apply their learning.

The research findings presented a range of attributes, skills and knowledge that was deemed necessary for effective leadership. A priority was knowing the staff, for example, their knowledge, skills, strengths and how they operate. The role of the leader was deemed to include staff wellbeing and a belief in the team and their capabilities by setting high expectations and then supporting the team to achieve such goals, reach their potential and maintain their mana (prestige).

Leaders saw themselves as driving the centre vision, and providing their team with the inspiration and motivation to make the organisation's vision a combined reality. The staff reflected on the role of leader as a position of accountability in terms of centre structures, processes and responsibilities, particularly when initiating courageous conversations, engaging in robust dialogue and providing a safe teaching and learning environment. The positional leader was seen as a driver of change and improvement, a role model, and advocate for teachers, tamariki/children, whānau and community.

The leaders in this study were described as approachable, warm, and friendly professionals who maintained confidentiality, demonstrated wisdom and were aspirational in their thinking, alongside having the ability to enact whanaungatanga, manaakitanga, wairuatanga, kotahitanga and arohatanga.

Communication featured as a predominant attribute for both leaders and teams. The case study findings clearly ascertained that effective leaders exhibited strength in their communication style. Various leaders were, at times, described as straight talkers (Pukeahu Preschool) and/or assertive (Tamariki o ngā Mātua) but most importantly people who provided time for kōrero (Te Kōhanga Reo), reflective discussions (Tamariki o ngā Mātua) and critical conversations that may involve 'push-backs' (Pukeahu Preschool). One of the greatest challenges experienced was that of providing constructive feedback.

Being a collective and working as a team to enact a shared philosophy was perceived to be pivotal to the leadership success of the centres who participated in

this research project. Collaboration, operating collectively and developing a strong collegial whanau-based team culture were emphasised. A culture that involved the sharing of roles and responsibilities, common goals, and caring for each other was truly valued.

Acknowledgement that teams and individuals need to grow and be responsive to change was also highlighted. Various centres (e.g., Whānau Akomanga, Babbling Brook, Tamariki o ngā Mātua) forefronted the importance of undertaking professional development to maintain currency of learning and teaching. Both professional and self-empowerment were identified. The actual professional leaning and development (PLD) undertaken was not as important as actual participation in 'in-house' PLD, studying, networking or attending seminars or conferences. The emphasis was on extending themselves, gaining experience, skills and currency to share valuable learning with the team as a whole. One centre was even working towards leading PLD within their own early childhood community.

Interestingly the centres that participated in this research project demonstrated a strong belief in growing leadership and developing a leadership succession or sustainability plan. The case study centres and, in particular, the designated leaders were cognisant of enabling opportunities for others to gain experience, knowledge and skills to thus enable the positional leaders to step back and/or retire over time. Tuakana teina relationships support this objective as do the principles of whakamana, support, inspiration, motivation, guidance and being the 'big-sis' (Liberty Kids) or rangatiratanga (Te Kōhanga Reo). Encompassing community and centre based partnerships strengthened the collective, collaborative and holistic approach to manaakitanga and whanaungatanga.

Findings from the wider study (Ryder, Davitt, Higginson, Smorti, & Carroll-Lind, 2017) indicate that currently within the early childhood education sector there is a limited focus on leadership and/or professional learning and development specific to leadership. However there is much debate about the relationship between management and leadership. Furthermore, leadership has been identified (Education Review Office, 2010) as a major influencing factor on quality educational outcomes for children.

These case studies underscore the value of making 'leadership practice' a more explicit part of what ECE leaders and teachers reflect on and articulate within their everyday professional lives. Therefore we hope that the findings of our study will extend understanding of how leaders enact, sustain and grow effective leadership in early childhood education centres because the leaders and the teaching teams that participated in our study have shown us that effective leadership is not something that just occurs—leadership needs to be purposefully grown, developed and sustained across the ECE setting and indeed, across the wider ECE sector.

REFERENCES

Education Review Office. (2010). *Quality in early childhood services*. Retrieved from http://www.ero.govt.nz/National-Reports/Quality-in-Early-Childhood-Services-August-2010

Ryder, D., Davitt. G., Higginson, R., Smorti, S. & Carroll-Lind. J. (2017). *Leaders growing leaders: Effective early childhood leaders for sustainable leadership*. Wellington: Te Rito Maioha Early Childhood New Zealand.

GLOSSARY OF MĀORI TERMS

Ako : Teaching and learning (mixed gender)
Arohatanga : Loving/compassionate
Hapū : Sub-tribe
Himene : Hymn
Hoa arohaehae : Critical friend
Hui : Meeting/gathering
Iwi : Principal Tribe
Kāhui pouwhakahaere : Group team leaders
Kaiako : Teacher
Kaimahi : Staff
Kaiwhakahaere : Manager
Kanohi ki te kanohi : Face to face
Karakia : Prayer
Kaupapa Māori : Māori philosophy/ ideology
Kete : Basket
Kōhanga reo : Māori language medium preschool
Kōmiti : Committee
Kōrero : Discussion
Kōrero tahi : Talking together
Kotahitanga : Collectivism/unity
Mahi : Work
Mahitahi : Work together /collaboration/ Co-operation
Mana : Prestige
Manaaki : Generosity and care for others
Marae : Meeting place of family/principle tribes
Matariki : Māori New Year
Mātua : Parents
Mauri : Life force
Mokopuna : Grandchildren
Ngā Hononga : Relationships/making connections
Papatūānuku : Mother Earth
Pono : Truth/ valid
Pouwhakahaere : Team leader
Rangatiratanga : Sovereignty/attributes of a chief
Tamaiki o ngā Mātua : Children of the parents
Tamariki : Children
Taonga : Precious / treasure/ valued
Te ao Māori : The Māori world view
Te Ika a Māui : North Island of New Zealand
Te reo Māori : The Māori language
Te reo me ngā tikanga Māori : The Maori language and practices
Teina : Younger/learner (of the same gender)
Tika : Correct/lawful
Tikanga : Customary values and practices
Tīma : Team
Tuakana : Elder/expert (of the same gender)
Tuakiritanga : Personal dispositions between an individual and their Māori practices (identity)
Tumuaki : Designated leader/principal
Wairuatanga : Spirituality
Whakamana : Empowerment/enable
Whakapae māku : My assumption/guess
Whakataukī : Proverb
Whānau : Family
Whānau tangata : Family and community
Whanaungatanga : Relationships/kinship
Whare : Building/house /dwelling

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

GWEN DAVITT is a Senior Lecturer at Te Rito Maioha Early Childhood New Zealand. She has an extensive background in early childhood education and adult teaching. Her own educational background includes a Masters of Education, Graduate Diploma in Higher Education and Bachelor's degree. Being passionate about integrating theory and practice, the pedagogies of teaching, learning and leadership and leading change for best practice underpin Gwen's current research foci. Gwen teaches in Te Rito Maioha's Bachelor of Teaching (ECE) and Postgraduate Diploma of Leadership (ECE) degree programmes and is an active researcher and learner.

DR JANIS CARROLL-LIND is the Director of Research and Postgraduate Programmes at Te Rito Maioha Early Childhood New Zealand. In her current role she oversees a postgraduate qualification in ECE leadership that includes a Trans-Tasman cohort where Australian and New Zealand early childhood leaders share together in sustained professional learning to build leadership capability within the sector and across both countries.

Janis began her teaching career as a primary and early childhood teacher as well as teaching children with challenging behavioural and learning needs. As a senior lecturer at Massey University she taught across the early years, primary and secondary pre-service and in-service teacher education programmes (in inclusive education and mentor teaching). Prior to her current position Janis was the Principal Advisor (Education) for New Zealand's Office of the Children's Commissioner. Her research interests are in teacher education, early childhood education, children's rights, inclusive education and educational leadership.

DEBBIE RYDER is a senior lecturer and has worked for Te Rito Maioha Early Childhood New Zealand since 2012. Debbie lectures in the Postgraduate Leadership Diploma (ECE) in the area of organisational leadership. Prior to her employment with Te Rito Maioha, Debbie co-developed and lectured in the leadership programme of another tertiary organisation. Throughout the course of this research project Debbie has disseminated a number of presentations on *Leaders Growing Leaders,* alongside other members of the research team. More recently Debbie wrote a chapter in a NZCER publication

describing a case study from this research project. Debbie is currently completing her PhD studies.

SUE SMORTI is a senior lecturer and the Academic Leader for the Postgraduate Certificate and Diploma in Leadership for Te Rito Maioha Early Childhood New Zealand. She is located at the Papaioea/Palmerston North teaching b*ase.* Sue supports both the teaching staff and their students. She oversees the academic and pastoral concerns relating to the students, provides academic advice to the lecturers and has responsibility for the development of teaching resources, moderation and the review and revision of the postgraduate leadership papers. Her research interests are in leadership, education for sustainability, and children's science and technology.

RAEWYN M. HIGGINSON is a Paper Leader/Kaiārahi Marautanga for the research papers at Te Rito Maioha: Early Childhood New Zealand and currently works out of the teaching base in Hamilton/Kirikiriroa. She has worked previously as a teacher in Primary and Intermediate schools, in Special Education in the Eastern Bay of Plenty and Wellington, and has been a research assistant at the University of Auckland. Raewyn has presented at numerous conferences (e.g., Autism NZ conference; NZEALS Conference; Te Rito Maioha: ECNZ Conference) and has had some of her research work published including *Together we can do it: A professional development project for regular teachers' of children with autism spectrum disorder* (*Kairaranga,* 2012). Her current research interests are leadership in early childhood education and inclusion for children who have diverse needs (especially Autistic Spectrum Disorder).

MERE SMITH is a Pouako/Lecturer for both Manukau and Kirikiriroa Hamilton teaching bases for Te Rito Maioha Early Childhood New Zealand (ECNZ).

Mere has a strong early childhood background, beginning in Kōhanga Reo and then later moving to mainstream education to manage a large childcare centre in south Auckland. For almost 20 years Mere has taken on lecturing roles in ECE programmes for a Polytechnic and now Te Rito Maioha Early Childhood New Zealand. At the polytechnic she facilitated alongside well-known Tainui kaumātua on Tikanga Māori practices and communication skills of Māori learners, so that non Māori staff were able to understand the differing communication styles between Māori and that of western ideology. Mere has undertaken Māori advisory roles for several organisations such as the Nanny Education Organisation of New Zealand (NEONZ); as well as reaccreditation and curriculum development committees for other tertiary organisations. Mere's strength lies in facilitating Maori history pre and post colonisation, Te Tiriti o Waitangi, te reo me ōnā tikanga. Her Master's in Education focuses on Māori leadership. Mere has taken up opportunities to present at conferences, both overseas and within Aotearoa New Zealand.

He aha te kai ō te rangatira?
He kōrero, he kōrero, he kōrero.

What is the food of the leader?
It is knowledge, it is communication.

Te Rito Maioha Early Childhood New Zealand (ECNZ) is a national membership organisation that promotes high-quality early childhood education (ECE) through its undergraduate and postgraduate teacher education qualifications, research, professional development, advocacy and membership services.

Formerly known as Te Tari Puna Ora o Aotearoa/NZ Childcare Association, ECNZ represents early childhood services and their teachers who provide education and care to infants, toddlers and young children. Our members are drawn from a diverse range of community-based and privately-owned education and care services, home-based services and kindergartens.

ECNZ has 11 teaching bases throughout New Zealand. Recognised as a leader in bicultural teacher education, ECNZ is accredited and approved by NZQA to deliver undergraduate and postgraduate qualifications in early childhood teacher education and leadership.

This publication is a companion to Te Rito Maioha Early Childhood New Zealand's fourth flagship research report: *Poutoko whakatipu poutoko: Whakamanahia ngā poutoko kōhungahunga hei hautūtanga toitū: Leaders growing leaders: Effective early childhood leaders for sustainable leadership.*

The case studies that underpinned the *Leaders Growing Leaders* research project are showcased in this book. Designated leaders and their teaching teams from seven teacher-led early childhood services (characterised by their diversity and effective leadership) participated as case studies. The perspectives of the participants became the central focus of the case study research, offering valuable insights into the espoused and enacted theories and practices of effective leadership within the context of Aotearoa New Zealand early childhood education settings.

An alternative title for this book could be: *Āta whakarongo: Listen carefully—Voices from the inside*. Hearing the narratives of these early childhood practitioners will be of professional benefit to those wanting to increase their understanding of educational leadership. These case studies confirm that effective leadership is not something that just occurs—leadership needs to be purposefully grown, developed and sustained across educational settings.

ISBN 978-0-473-42311-7 (print version)
978-0-473-42312-4 (online PDF)

Te Rito Maioha
Early Childhood New Zealand