

HAUHAKETIA NGĀ TAONGA TUKU IHO KIA PUĀWAI AI

Unearth our ancestral treasures so that we may prosper



Ko te Tamaiti te Pūtake o te Kaupapa
The Child – the Heart of the Matter

He Tīmatanga

He hōnore, he korōria ki te atua,

He maungarongo ki runga i te whenua,

He whakaaro pai ki nga tangata katoa.

He tīmatanga korero māku ki a Ihowa o ngā mano
mō āna manaakitanga i ūhi ake ki runga i a tātau katoa
korōria ki tōna ingoa tapu.

Āmine.

He Oriori

He aha rā kei taku aro e?

He moko ki te puna he tiwha ki te rae

I haramai rā koe i te kunenga mai o te tangata

Haramai, haramai

Taku mokopuna e.

Meaning of cover symbol:

Te kōhanga reo literally means, 'the language nest' and symbolises a warm and secure place where the young are nurtured, surrounded by their whānau, their culture and language.

The outer circular shape represents an holistic structure – where the entire whānau are an integral part of each kōhanga reo. Kaumātua are the 'keepers' of tribal knowledge, the parents and kaiako actively participate alongside children who absorb te reo Māori and tikanga Māori as a process of intergenerational transmission.

Contents

Foreword	4
Executive Summary	6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What did we find overall? What is the conceptual framework that underpins success in kōhanga reo? What are the exemplary outcomes for children? How do whānau positively influence success? What are the highlights of the learning environments? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 6 8 10 12
Equity and Excellence	17
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why did we undertake this evaluation? Definition of Te Kōhanga Reo <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Te Kōhanga Reo background External evaluation and reviews of kōhanga reo How did we design this evaluation? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We identified the evaluation sample group We considered their evaluation history We designed our evaluation approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 17 18 18 19 19 19 19 20
ERO Findings	22
<i>'How well are children nurtured to have a strong sense of belonging, be happy and respectful, confident and communicative and curious learners?'</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mana Atua Mana Whenua Mana Tangata Mana Reo Mana Aotūroa <i>'How well do whānau positively influence kōhanga reo operations?'</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning and Evaluation Whānau commitment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 22 22 23 25 27 29 30 30 32
Conclusion	33
Mihi Whakamutunga	34
References	35
Glossary	36
Appendix 1: Participants in effective practice in kōhanga reo	37

Foreword

Quality education is the right of every child and young person in New Zealand and is underpinned by learning environments that place the learner and learner outcomes at the centre of all activity.

Successful learning organisations are those that are on a continuous, deliberate and future focussed journey of improvement, using evidence to shape their direction and decision making.

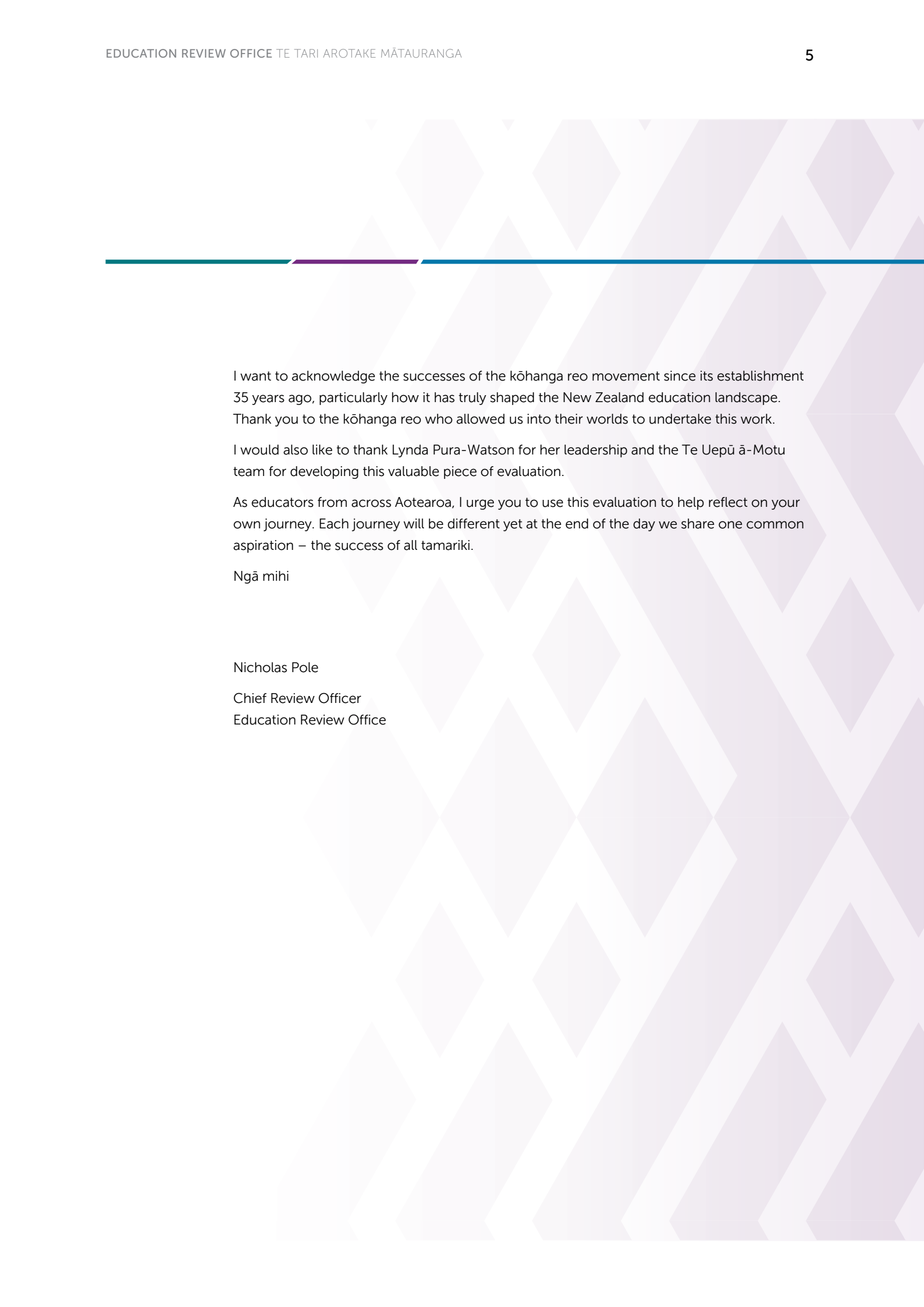
Kōhanga reo are unique and critical to nurturing and revitalising te reo Māori in Aotearoa. This uniqueness means there are few models, if any, that are suitable for use as an evidence base to benchmark against. The effective practice examples in this study provide insight into what great kōhanga reo do and the distinct value of high quality Māori immersion education.

We aim to support every kōhanga reo to be a great place to learn and grow. We work in approximately 160 kōhanga reo annually, exploring what's working well and identifying areas where further improvement is needed. This presents ERO with a privileged opportunity to contribute to the strengthening of all kōhanga reo and ultimately to the creation of a strong foundation for te reo Māori and Māori educational outcomes.

Through this evaluation we aim to support Te Kōhanga Reo National Trust and its professional development programme, quality assurance and framework for various self-reflection and internal reviews.

Hauhaketia ngā taonga tuku iho kia puāwai ai – *Unearth our ancestral treasures so that we may prosper*, affirms the view that children are more likely to experience success as learners in an environment where identity, language and culture are valued and validated.

We saw evidence that proves children are likely to be successful when the learning environment reflects te reo Māori, tikanga Māori, te ao Māori and mātauranga Māori. It also underlines the importance of learning environments that enrich children's emotional, physical, intellectual and spiritual wellbeing. Having a strong vision, clear purpose and goals which encapsulate whānau aspirations is critical, as is deliberately planning for their successful programme delivery. Constantly monitoring to check how kōhanga reo are progressing to inform future decisions ensures actions and outcomes are aligned with aspirations. Quality kōhanga reo have high expectations for every learner. Each actor in kōhanga reo (from whānau, kaumātua, kaiako and kaiāwhina) is clear about their practice and acknowledge their roles as complementary to those that they are working alongside. Such environments work to create a strong foundation for tamariki.



I want to acknowledge the successes of the kōhanga reo movement since its establishment 35 years ago, particularly how it has truly shaped the New Zealand education landscape. Thank you to the kōhanga reo who allowed us into their worlds to undertake this work.

I would also like to thank Lynda Pura-Watson for her leadership and the Te Uepū ā-Motu team for developing this valuable piece of evaluation.

As educators from across Aotearoa, I urge you to use this evaluation to help reflect on your own journey. Each journey will be different yet at the end of the day we share one common aspiration – the success of all tamariki.

Ngā mihi

Nicholas Pole

Chief Review Officer
Education Review Office

Executive Summary

What did we find overall?

Evaluation insights by the Education Review Office (ERO), alongside contributions from the Te Kōhanga Reo National Trust (Te Kōhanga Reo Trust) and kōhanga reo whānau, inform our overall findings which:

- create the conceptual framing that underpins success in kōhanga reo
- clarify the exemplary outcomes for children and affirm the positive influence of whānau values, beliefs and practices in kōhanga reo
- acknowledge how whānau positively influence success
- highlight the value of learning environments grounded in te reo Māori, tikanga Māori, te ao Māori and mātauranga Māori.

This evaluation affirms the distinct value of high quality Māori immersion education and its positive influence on children from birth. The findings are emphatic and assert the thesis that children are more likely to experience success as learners within an environment where language, culture and identity are valued and validated.

What is the conceptual framework that underpins success in kōhanga reo?

As a part of this evaluation, ERO identified common themes most likely to contribute to kōhanga reo and their understanding of how to 'get to great' and achieve successful outcomes for children. These common themes emerged from our evaluation and the analysis and synthesis of ideas. These themes have been used to create the conceptual framework (refer Figure 1) that underpins what works well in kōhanga reo.

This framework is a diagrammatic portrayal of ERO's evaluation insights. It shows critical areas of influence where:

- the child is the focus (ko te tamaiti te pūtake o te kaupapa)
- intellectual, physical, spiritual and emotional wellbeing (ngā ahuatanga) are paramount
- te reo Māori, tikanga Māori, te ao Māori and mātauranga Māori are dimensions (korahi) used to illuminate the Māori paradigm
- the strands of te whāriki (taumata whakahirahira) provide a learning platform that reflects depth and embodies the kōhanga reo philosophy (kaupapa)
- whānau, kaumātua, kaiako and kaiāwhina create a nurturing, loving and caring environment.

Hauhaketia ngā taonga tuku iho kia puāwai ai – Unearth the treasures of our ancestors so that we may prosper is the name given to the conceptual framework. It refers to the value of the above areas and suggests that all need to be present, tailored, active and activated simultaneously to achieve successful outcomes for kōhanga reo children with their whānau.

The diagram illustrates the Tamariki framework, centered around the word **Tamariki**. The framework is organized into concentric layers:

- Center:** A blue circle containing a green stylized 'M' and the word **Tamariki**.
- Inner Ring:** Four green segments forming a circle, labeled **WAIUA**, **HINENGARO**, **TINANA**, and **WHATUMANAWA**.
- Second Ring:** Four grey segments forming a circle, labeled **Mana Tangata**, **Mana Atua**, **Mana Aotūroa**, and **Mana Whenua**.
- Outer Ring:** Four teal arrow-shaped segments pointing outwards, labeled **WHĀNAU**, **KAIĀWHINA**, **KAI AKO**, and **KAUMĀTUA**.
- Outermost Ring:** Four curved green lines connecting the outer segments, labeled **Mātauranga Māori**, **Tikanga Māori**, **Te Ao Māori**, and **Te Reo Māori**.

What are the exemplary outcomes for children?

In 2004, ERO worked with Te Kōhanga Reo Trust to develop the first set of evaluation indicators for education reviews in kōhanga reo. The process we used included the voices of kōhanga reo whānau, ERO's experience in kōhanga reo at that time, and referenced relevant research information. The indicators developed from this process defined outcomes for children. They included high level competencies such as children interacting with and making sense of the world around them. They also included learning dispositions (maiohatanga) such as courage (manawanui), curiosity (pākiki), love (aroha) and care (manaakitanga). Other desirable outcomes included children's actions and behaviours, such as taking an interest, expressing a point of view or feeling, and assuming responsibility.¹ These indicators are still in use in 2017, and continue to support ERO reviews.

ERO's evaluation findings from the reviews of this sample study group have provided further insight into what exemplary outcomes for children look like. These are presented in a table, *Figure 2*. The table provides an overview of evidenced outcomes and could be used for the development of a new set of indicators to define exemplary practice and support improvement for all kōhanga reo.

ERO found that children in kōhanga reo who learn and live te reo Māori and tikanga Māori, and develop understanding about their land and their people, grow in confidence, and believe in themselves. This synthesis of learner outcomes is referred to in the table, as one overarching outcome: *Children have a strong sense of belonging, are happy and respectful, and are confident, communicative, curious learners.*

¹ Education Review Office Evaluation Indicators for Education Reviews of Kōhanga reo.

FIGURE 2: Exemplary outcomes for children

Children have a strong sense of belonging, are happy and respectful, and are confident, communicative, curious learners.

Ngā Taumata Whakahirahira (strands of Te Whāriki)

MANA ATUA	MANA WHENUA	MANA TANGATA	MANA REO	MANA AOTŪROA
› Children are developing as confident learners who know and understand Māori beliefs and values.	› Children have a strong sense of belonging, and environmental awareness and care.	› Children value and respect themselves, their whānau, hapū, iwi and others.	› Children explore te reo Māori with increased confidence and accuracy.	› Children are developing their awareness of the natural and physical environment.

Ngā Ahuatanga (intellectual, physical, spiritual and emotional wellbeing)

› Children show that they value who they are and how they connect.	› Children know their connections to the land.	› Children know their identity and their place.	› Children pay attention and respond in a variety of ways.	› Children independently explore their environment.
› Children show that they are calm, happy and positive.	› Children are confident and calm as they learn and play.	› Children are responsible, and respectful as a part of the kōhanga reo whānau.	› Children understand, and are able to communicate with others.	› Children are developing as curious learners.
› Children display positive interactions and behaviour.	› Children interact positively and show they are caring.	› Children look after themselves and others.	› Children express themselves with increased confidence and accuracy.	› Children are eager learners who enjoy making new discoveries and experimenting.
› Children are keen to participate and are confident as learners.	› Children explore and show care for their environment.	› Children are growing their confidence and responsibility for learning.	› Children expand their use of te reo Māori.	› Children learn and associate te reo Māori to the natural world.
› Children show that they feel safe and comfortable.	› Children develop an understanding of their role as tangata whenua.	› Children grow with positive and supportive learning relationships.	› Children are confident to speak te reo Māori, to take risks and share their thoughts.	› Children are inquisitive and curious about the wider world.
› Children talk about their ancestral heritage.	› Children share their experiences of the whenua with whānau.	› Children show aroha, manaaki and āwhina.	› Children graduate from kōhanga reo with confidence and joy.	› Children experience other cultures and languages.

How do whānau positively influence success?

ERO concludes that where kōhanga reo whānau, kaumātua, kaiako and kaiāwhina focus what they do, in line with Te Korowai, Te Whāriki and their iwi, hapū and whānau aspirations, then they are most likely to achieve successful outcomes for their children.

ERO defines process indicators as the way to describe those whānau practices, processes, actions and beliefs that contribute to positive outcomes for children. They provide a guide to the probable causes of outcomes and are therefore particularly relevant to reviews focused on improvement.²

Whānau, kaumātua, kaiako and kaiāwhina make significant contributions to a kōhanga reo that runs effectively, as they assume their natural roles to lead, model, guide, support and influence. They are key actors in the lives of their children. Their roles, practices, processes actions and beliefs are defined in the table in *Figure 3*. The table provides a summary of evidenced outcomes and could be used for the development of new indicators which define exemplary practice and support improvement for all kōhanga reo.

² Education Review Office Evaluation Indicators for Education Reviews of Kōhanga reo.

FIGURE 3: Whānau roles, practices beliefs and actions.

Te Reo Māori, Tikanga Māori, Te Ao Māori, Mātauranga Māori						
KŌHANGA REO	MANAGEMENT	MANA ATUA	MANA WHENUA	MANA TANGATA	MANA REO	MANA AOTŪROA
Whānau	Leaders, visionaries, decision makers, managers, responsible and accountable learners who are passionate, aspirational and focused					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Complete their charter to commit to the provision in kōhanga reo.› Create the vision from Te Korowai and whānau aspiration.› Formalise strategic planning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Set high expectations for providing loving learning spaces.› Promote physical, spiritual, emotional and intellectual wellbeing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Share their aspirations for their child's contribution to their marae.› Promote experiences and focus learning on connecting to people and places.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Set high expectations for a comprehensive programme of learning.› Show commitment to focusing a responsive environment and programme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Commit to te reo Māori use at home, and at kōhanga reo.› Commit to seamless transitions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Promote opportunities for children to explore new things and different environments.
Kaumātua	Leaders, visionaries, repositories of knowledge, keepers and guardians of Mātauranga Māori, who are committed contributors					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Contribute to the vision of te kōhanga reo by sharing their knowledge and aspirations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Share deep knowledge about ngā Atua.› Introduce different karakia, mōteatea and model use.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Share stories about whakapapa and landmarks.› Model the role of mana whenua.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Model leadership and support kōhanga reo as leaders.› Tell stories about whānau connections to each other.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Provide strong language models as users of local hapū and iwi reo.› Focus and commit to sharing all they know and providing whānau support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Suggest places to visit, learn and experience mātauranga Māori.› Lead and model as experiences are shared.
Kaiako	Leaders, teachers, creators and learners who engage, challenge and respond to the needs of children and whānau					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Provide programme planning that reflects whānau aspiration and kōhanga reo kaupapa.› Use programme evaluation to support improvement with their practice.› Use assessment information to inform responsive programme planning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Create authentic situations where children learn about themselves.› Share what they know about child development and learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Teach specific tikanga, karakia, mōteatea.› Use the environment for every learning opportunity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Plan and teach children of different ages and abilities.› Use information about children to develop a responsive programme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Promote risk taking, introduce new language, develop both verbal and non-verbal communication.› Motivate and challenge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Promote the use of technology, science and mathematics.› Create different and new learning experiences.
Kaiāwhina	Contributor, supporters and learners who engage, challenge and respond to the needs of children and whānau					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Monitor what children are doing as they learn, develop and play.› Observe children and share this information with kaiako and whānau.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Support children as they learn about ngā Atua.› Help children to learn new karakia.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Encourage babies and young children to interact with other places and people.› Support all children to develop their knowledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Support children with special needs.› Talk with children encouraging them to play and learn with others.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Support children to mimic language.› Question and encourage language use.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Support children to engage with different resources.› Promote new learning.

What are the highlights of the learning environments?

ERO's evaluations identify that where te reo Māori, tikanga Māori, te ao Māori and mātauranga Māori underpin and influence the kōhanga reo environment, children are most likely to be successful.

ERO used its investigative approach (refer Figure 5) to determine the core components of success. The responses to this approach are expressed as broad explanation, supported by significant judgements.

How well are children supported to develop their knowledge of Māori traditions, beliefs and values?

Children are linked to their traditions and the creation of the Māori view of the world. Many traditional stories have their genesis in the world of atua Māori (*spiritual deities connected to the physical and spiritual worlds*).

A deliberate focus on Māori beliefs and values underpins the provision of a warm and nurturing environment. Learning about whakapapa and the natural physical and spiritual elements helps kōhanga reo children to understand their connections and develop personal pride, self-esteem and self-worth. There are high expectations for the provision of supportive and loving learning spaces.





How well do children show their connectedness, belonging, environmental awareness and care?

Children's learning and development are intrinsically linked to their connections to the physical world. The land is a source of mana. Occupation of the land from generation to generation is recorded in its traditions, landmarks, marae and stories. These locate children at the centre of their tūrangawaewae, or the place and space from which they belong.

The local environment, the land, the whānau, iwi and hapū define and influence the variety and depth of children's learning. Familiarity with the environment, through cultural learning experiences (Royal Tangaere 2012) and play, creates links and stimulates enthusiasm for children. Positive relationships are encouraged as children learn about other environments, with other people and other communities.

How well are children developing value and respect for themselves, their whānau, hapū, iwi and others?

Children who experience a strong sense of self have the potential to make significant contributions to their community. According to Hemara (2000), the interconnectedness to others and their communities creates a sense of security. For many Māori children, this sense of security is situated in knowing:

- *Ko wai ahau?* Who am I?
- *Nā wai ahau?* From whom do I come?
- *No hea ahau?* From where do I come?

Experiences and opportunities that value and respond to the identity, strengths and needs of individual children support a love of learning and play. A warm and nurturing learning environment underpinned by whanaungatanga creates a sense of belonging and purpose for children. A wide range of cultural learning experiences and play opportunities support the diverse physical emotional and intellectual wellbeing of all children. Strong relationships and enduring commitment to immersion education influence decisions whānau make about their child's education pathway.





How well are children exploring and expressing te reo Māori?

Children are nurtured in environments that naturalise te reo Māori. Te reo Māori is described as a window to the Māori child's world. It provides spiritual meanings and descriptions of concepts that are uniquely Māori. Te reo Māori is distinctive and nurtures the spirit of the child. Karetu (2008) believes te reo Māori serves to restore an identity for people who see themselves as Māori.

Unwavering whānau commitment to te reo Māori in homes, at kōhanga reo, kura and in communities supports the intergenerational communication of te reo Māori. Focused and seamless transition from kōhanga reo into immersion education strengthens the te reo Māori learning pathway. Effective language acquisition strategies co-construct language development (Royal Tangaere 2012). The spontaneous and purposeful use of te reo Māori builds language capability.

How well are children developing their knowledge of the natural and physical worlds?

Children's relationships with the natural world, physical resources and people, impact on what and how they learn. This suggests, that if children come to understand their connections to nature, the universe, their immediate surroundings and people, they will come to understand where and how they fit into the wider world (Mihipeka, 1998).

High quality learning experiences promote exploration of te ao Māori and the wider world. A stimulating learning programme provides motivation and challenge. A well designed, attractive, spacious, and well-resourced environment supports learning.



How well do whānau use planning and evaluation to ensure they provide high quality learning?

Whānau effectively used planning and evaluation to focus them on the provision of high quality learning. ERO evaluations found that a strong evaluative culture, with internal evaluation process and practices, underpinned effective planning and supported whānau to focus on improvement and accountability. Internal evaluation effectively informed whānau and influenced their decision making. Consequently, children were immersed in an environment based on a strong vision for their success.



Equity and Excellence

ERO is focused on equity and excellence in education for all children. Improving outcomes for Māori children is a key priority for the education sector.

This ERO report sets out to highlight effective practice in kōhanga reo, specifically, the support children need to grow and thrive through a quality immersion pathway. The aim is to identify what works well, and how this contributes to whānau aspirations for equity and excellence. It intends to articulate the actions and value for the Māori paradigm, and the connections, relevance and significance of te reo Māori, tikanga Māori, te ao Māori and mātauranga Māori.

Why did we undertake this evaluation?

Te Kōhanga Reo Trust and ERO have a mutually professional and respectful relationship, alongside a shared commitment to equity and excellence. Both parties agree there is value in sharing their collective knowledge and working in a co-constructed manner to evaluate and document what great practice in kōhanga reo looks like. Important to kōhanga reo is the ongoing learning and development of young, well-educated generations, articulate and rich in te reo me ngā tikanga Māori, living as Māori.

The impetus for this evaluation is to:

- understand and define the conditions, characteristics and practices that influence quality outcomes in kōhanga reo
- develop and refine ERO's Evaluation Indicators for Kōhanga Reo, and the Kōhanga Reo evaluation methodology
- support kōhanga reo to enhance their practice and achieve the outcomes they seek for their children
- assist kōhanga reo and Te Kōhanga Reo Trust in their endeavours to '*get to great*'
- update our collective knowledge and understanding of effective educational practice in a Māori paradigm
- influence policy-making decisions by the Ministry of Education (MoE) and Te Kōhanga Reo Trust.

Significantly, 2017 recognises and celebrates 35 years since kōhanga reo were initially established, and this evaluation is the first national good practice report produced during this time. Also, with the launch of Te Whāriki a Te Kōhanga Reo in April 2017, this evaluation may have use in supporting its implementation.

Definition of Te Kōhanga Reo

Te kōhanga reo is an early learning setting, based on total immersion in Māori language, practice and values. The overarching focus is to revitalise te reo Māori and the Māori way of life for future generations.

Te kōhanga reo contribute to building learning foundations for children, to develop as speakers of te reo Māori who are confident learners. Research shows that children who participate in education that is influenced by *te ao Māori* (culture, identity and te reo Māori) are more likely to do well as lifelong learners.

Te kōhanga reo literally means, 'the language nest' and symbolises a warm and secure place where the young are nurtured, surrounded by their whānau, their culture and language.³ The entire whānau from kaumātua to children are an integral part of each kōhanga reo. Kaumātua are the 'keepers' of tribal knowledge, the parents and kaiako actively participate alongside children who absorb te reo Māori and tikanga Māori as a process of intergenerational transmission.

The feathers that line the nest symbolise the kaumātua or elders who provide that warmth, security and knowledge to the children and their whānau.

(Royal Tangaere, 2012:65)

Te Kōhanga Reo background

The kōhanga reo movement began in 1981 under the Department of Māori Affairs 'Tū Tangata' initiative, with its genesis in the hopes of kaumātua of that time, to revitalise and arrest the demise of te reo Māori.

Te Kōhanga Reo Trust is a Charitable Trust to which individual kōhanga reo are affiliated. As the umbrella organisation, Te Kōhanga Reo Trust acts as guardian of the *kōhanga reo kaupapa* or philosophy. In turn, all kōhanga reo whānau pledge commitment to the kaupapa and abide by the guiding principles of Te Korowai through their *tūtohinga*, or charter to Te Kōhanga Reo Trust.

Te Korowai establishes guidelines to support whānau in understanding the purpose of the kōhanga reo movement. The philosophy of te kōhanga reo is founded on four *pou*, or cornerstone statements, in Te Korowai. These four pou are:

- te reo Māori and tikanga Māori
- whānau decision making, management, and responsibility for Te Kōhanga Reo
- accountability
- health and wellbeing of the children and whānau.

³ In Best E 1975 *Te whare kōhanga and its lore*. (First published 1929): Wellington, Government Printer. Kōhanga was the name given to the special house where women gave birth to their babies.

External evaluation and reviews of kōhanga reo

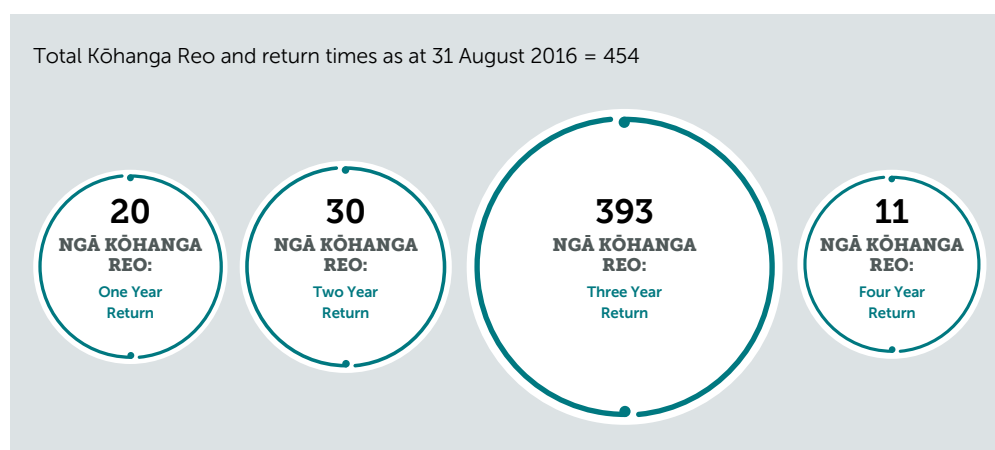
Through its external evaluation and review of individual kōhanga reo throughout Aotearoa, New Zealand, ERO has a unique evidence base of what is happening within this part of the Māori medium education pathway. In particular, ERO's evaluation reports provide information for kōhanga reo whānau to celebrate their success; and where applicable, attend to matters for improvement.

How did we design this evaluation?

We identified the evaluation sample group

The sample group is made up of 11 kōhanga reo, all of which at that time were on a four-year review return time. Review return times are an indication of how well kōhanga reo are performing. For example, a one-year return time signals that urgent action and support is needed. Conversely, a four-year return time indicates high performance by kōhanga reo that are outcomes focused and action oriented. As at 31 August 2016, ERO's records showed a total of 454 kōhanga reo, with the majority on a review return time of three years. The return times for all kōhanga reo are summarised below in Figure 4.

FIGURE 4: ERO Review Return Times for Kōhanga Reo



We considered their evaluation history

All kōhanga reo in the sample study group demonstrated a sustained history of quality provision for children, whānau and their communities over a number of years. They showed future-focus, commitment to the kōhanga reo kaupapa, determination for continuous improvement and strong professional capability and practice. The collective stories, insights and ideas provide the basis for this evaluation. It should be noted that all kōhanga reo in the sample study group have one or more kaiako with Whakapakari and/or Early Childhood Education qualifications.

We designed our evaluation approach

ERO's reviews of kōhanga reo are co-constructed with whānau so that each has an external evaluation that reflects their vision, aspirations and achievements – one size *fits one*. ERO and the whānau, kaiako and kaiāwhina develop the evaluative question to guide their review.

However, for this national report, ERO framed evaluation questions to examine what is working well for kōhanga reo on a four-year review return time.

ERO's key evaluation questions for this report seek to answer:

- › *How well are children nurtured to have a strong sense of belonging, to be happy and respectful, to be confident and communicative, and to be curious learners?*
- › *How well do whānau positively influence kōhanga reo operations?*

ERO designed its evaluation questions and the investigative approach to resonate with *Te Whāriki a Te Kōhanga Reo*⁴ and the *Evaluation Indicators for Te Kōhanga Reo – Ngā Taumata Whakahirahira, Ngā Ahuatanga*⁵ and *Te Korowai*. The investigative approach, premised on the learning platform, is presented in *Figure 5*. It considers children's observable behaviour and uses defined lines of enquiry to determine the practices, processes, actions and beliefs used by the kōhanga reo whānau. Also, the influential role of kōhanga reo whānau, their management capability, practices and use of planning and evaluation to ensure the provision of high quality learning are considered.

⁴ Te Whāriki a Te Kōhanga Reo, Te Tāhuhu o Te Mātauranga, Ministry of Education – 2017

⁵ Evaluation Indicators for Education Reviews in Kōhanga Reo, Education Review Office – 2005 (revised 2006)

FIGURE 5: *ERO investigative approach*

	INVESTIGATIVE APPROACH	LINES OF ENQUIRY
LEARNING PLATFORM	MANA ATUA <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How well are children supported to develop their knowledge of Māori traditions, beliefs and values? What do children do to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, attitudes, dispositions and competence? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How well do kōhanga reo, kaiako, kaiāwhina and whānau contribute to children's knowledge of Māori traditions, beliefs and values? How do they promote children's learning experiences in this area?
	MANA WHENUA <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How well do children show their connectedness, belonging, environmental awareness and care? What do children do to demonstrate their connection, belonging, awareness and care? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How well do kōhanga reo, kaiako, kaiāwhina and whānau support children to connect, belong and be environmentally caring and aware? What do they do to develop children's learning experiences in this area?
	MANA TANGATA <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How well are children developing value and respect for themselves, their whānau, hapū, iwi and others? How do children demonstrate value and respect for themselves and others? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How well do kōhanga reo, kaiako, kaiāwhina and whānau support children to respect themselves and others? What actions do they take to grow the value and respect children have for themselves and others?
	MANA REO <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How well are children exploring and expressing te reo Māori? What do children do to show their discovery and expression of te reo Māori? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How well do kōhanga reo, kaiako, kaiāwhina and whānau contribute to children's exploration and expression of te reo Māori? How do they encourage te reo Māori experiences of children?
	MANA AOTŪROA <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How well are children developing their knowledge of the natural and physical worlds? What do children do to show their knowledge of the natural and physical worlds? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How well do kōhanga reo, kaiako, kaiāwhina and whānau develop children's knowledge of the natural and physical worlds? What do they do to foster children's knowledge and learning experiences in this area?
WHĀNAU MANAGEMENT	PLANNING AND EVALUATION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How well do whānau use planning and evaluation to support the provision of high quality learning? What do they do to ensure effective planning and evaluation occurs? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How well do kōhanga reo, kaiako, kaiāwhina and whānau contribute to planning and evaluation? What roles and responsibilities do whānau, kaumātua, kaiako and kaiāwhina take as they plan and evaluate? How does whānau commitment support them to achieve quality outcomes for their children?

ERO Findings

ERO's overarching evaluative questions provide the focus for these findings. The answers are evidenced and reported through the strands of Te Whāriki, highlighting the exemplary learner outcomes, and the positive influences of whānau.

'How well are children nurtured to have a strong sense of belonging, be happy and respectful, confident and communicative and curious learners?'

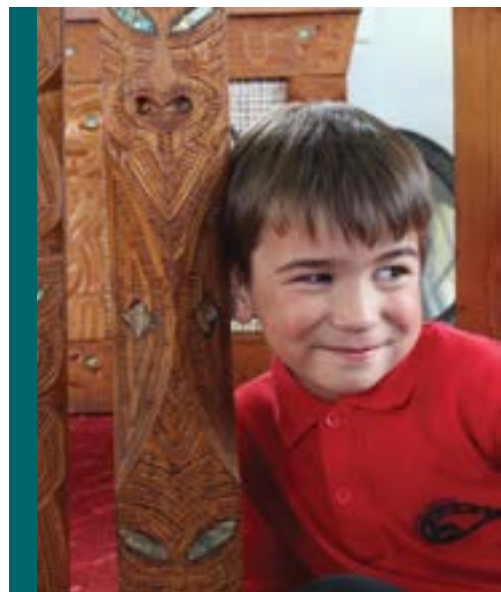
Mana Atua

ERO found that:

Children develop as confident learners who know and understand Māori beliefs and values.

ERO's findings showed that Māori traditions, beliefs, values and practices influenced and supported the learning, development and wellbeing of children. Kaumātua shared their knowledge about ngā atua Māori with the kōhanga reo whānau. Whānau and kaiako talked about how they used their collective knowledge of ngā atua Māori to inform their planning, learning programme and practice. They said this influenced the teaching content delivered at different times, and contributed to what they value as mātauranga Māori. ERO observed a number of examples of this, including karakia to prepare and settle children for the start of their learning, before they eat, before they rest and before they leave kōhanga reo at the end of the day or to go on an excursion. Whānau also talked about the importance of caring interactions and loving relationships. These influence the range of learner outcomes identified as a part of Mana Atua.

Learning about whakapapa and the natural physical and spiritual elements helped kōhanga reo children to understand their connections and develop personal pride, self-esteem and self-worth. Kōhanga reo whānau stated that they believed their children learned to be resilient and confident as a result of this way of learning. ERO evaluations showed that there are a number of factors that contributed to this success. When whānau provided information about their hapū and iwi, their tipuna, the local area, and key landmarks, this was integrated and developed into a carefully designed programme of learning. Kaiako and kaiāwhina were then well equipped to create authentic learning experiences that linked to ngā atua Māori. Kaiako introduced specific vocabulary and language patterns so that children became familiar with new words, understood how they were used and what they meant. They supported children to share what they learned and how they felt.



Kaumātua were observed sharing stories about whakapapa and the local area. They talked to ERO about the importance of being around their children and mokopuna, as they helped them to understand their identity and connections to the past and present. As a part of learning about cultural and spiritual connections, children also discovered how to care for and respect other people and things. Kaiāwhina supported children as they learned about ngā atua Māori and how this influenced them with the things they chose to do. Older children talked confidently about themselves, their family and their identity. They were also observed caring for each other. *Children show that they value who they are and understand how they connect.*

A deliberate focus on Māori beliefs and values underpins the provision of a warm and nurturing environment. The kōhanga reo philosophy encourages whānau to live healthy lives based on Māori values and practices. Whānau, kaiako, and kaiāwhina clearly defined the importance of their holistic view, recognising that spiritual, physical, emotional, and intellectual wellbeing are essential to guide the learning and development of their children. This emphasis gave focus to kaiako and kaiāwhina as they planned their learning programmes guided by ngā ahuatanga, Māori beliefs and values. Kaiako were observed providing different learning experiences so children could express themselves. They praised children and encouraged them to participate and enjoy learning with their peers and in groups. Whānau described children as taonga. They said that they learned alongside the children and showed them love and affection at the same time. This highlighted the deliberate connections whānau had with children and their learning. *Children show that they are calm, happy and positive towards others.*

There are high expectations, for the provision of supportive and loving learning spaces. Whānau know the significance of providing an environment that is inviting to all children. Kaiako talked about the importance of creating opportunities for children to practise traditions and tikanga as they learned about themselves and others. These learning experiences included inside and outside play, so children learned how to interact with each other and the environment. Kaiako talked about how te reo Māori, te ao Māori, tikanga Māori and mātauranga Māori are embedded in all they do, with and for children. Kaiako planned kaupapa and themes that influenced the learning programme, such as learning about the seasons and what that means. Their plans were focused on supporting the different learning needs of children. They provided specific activities and one-on-one support as required. All areas of the kōhanga reo were attractive, comfortable, clean and tidy. Whānau showed pride in their kōhanga reo, the physical environment and what they provided to and for their children and others. *Children talk about how they feel safe, comfortable and happy.*

Mana Whenua

ERO found that:

Children have a strong sense of belonging, and environmental awareness and care.

ERO's findings showed that where children learned about traditions, protocols, their marae and connections to the land, they developed a strong sense of belonging. Kōhanga reo whānau actively contributed their knowledge to the learning programme so children learned about, and confidently expressed, who they are. ERO observed programmes that reflected Mana Whenua, and provided varied and interesting cultural learning experiences for children. As a consequence, ERO found that children are supported to learn about Mana Whenua and their roles.

The local environment, the land, whānau, hapū and iwi define and influence the variety and depth of children's learning experiences. In the sample study group, ERO found that kaumātua and whānau shared their knowledge about mana whenua and worked with kaiako and kaiāwhina to show children its importance and value. Kaumātua described the area around the kōhanga reo and told stories about the whenua. This information was used to help create a range of relevant learning experiences. Whānau talked about their desire to build te reo Māori for and with their children to one day become productive members of the marae. Kaiako know the children, their whānau, background, local hapū and iwi. The learning programme plans showed that for each kaupapa, te reo and tikanga Māori were used to increase understanding about ancestral places and stories. Kaiako and kaiāwhina taught tikanga, karakia and mōteatea and supported children to learn these and grow their understanding about their use and meaning. The older children were observed playing key roles during pōwhiri and knew when to harirū, hongiri and use mōteatea. *Children talk confidently about the land, rivers, mountains, hapū and iwi.*



Familiarity with the environment, through learning and play, creates links and stimulates enthusiasm for children to learn. The natural and physical environments provided positive learning spaces. Kaumātua talked about the role of kaitiaki and how tikanga and kawa influenced how to look after the environment. Children were encouraged to practise the tikanga and kawa they learned as they moved through the kōhanga reo. Whānau and kaiako established and followed routines and practices to support safe learning and play for children. Kaiako took every opportunity to use the kōhanga reo environment so children were familiar and comfortable as they made confident decisions about their learning and play. Children talked about all the different learning areas and could show they understood their space and how to care for it. Kaiāwhina included babies and carefully supported them to develop a love of exploration safely. Whānau said they appreciated that their children learned about the importance and value placed on the environment. Children were observed caring for others and showing respect for their natural and physical environments. ERO also observed the older children looking after their kōhanga reo surroundings. *Children confidently interact with the environment as they learn and play.*

Positive relationships are encouraged as children learn about other environments, with other people in other communities. Whānau and kaiako provided learning and play experiences that included connecting with people in different environments. Kaumātua modelled leadership, particularly when they supported the kōhanga reo in their visits to local marae. They told stories about other people and places, and explained to children about whanaungatanga. Kaiako talked about the importance of creating opportunities for children to learn about differences and similarities. They planned marae experiences so children participated in pōwhiri and learned about their connections to the area. Other trips around the community supported children to see beyond the kōhanga reo. Kaiāwhina encouraged babies and children to interact with others during these visits. Kaiako supported all children to be leaders, and allowed them to take responsibility at different times using specific protocols, routines and activities. Children talk about when they meet other people and how they interact.

Mana Tangata

ERO found that:

Children value and respect themselves, their whānau, hapū, iwi and others.

ERO's findings showed that where children learned about who they are and their relationships with others, they are more likely to value and respect themselves and display a sense of belonging and purpose. These findings also showed that programmes of learning about Mana Tangata provided varied and interesting learning experiences for children. Additionally these findings recognised that the knowledge of the whānau is the knowledge of the kōhanga reo.

Experiences and opportunities that value and respond to the identity, strengths and needs of individual children support a love of learning and play.

Kaiako talked about the need to recognise, acknowledge and ensure each child knows who they are, to whom they belong to and from where they come. They provided an environment where children were encouraged to be themselves. ERO observed kaiako supporting older children as they shared their whakapapa with others, while younger children were supported to share stories about what they do with their whānau. Kaiāwhina and



kaiako held and cared for babies during this time so they were a part of this learning. These planned opportunities showed the importance and value of each child, their participation and contribution. Whānau shared with kaiako the likes and dislikes of their children. This information was used to create learning choices that reflected each child's needs and strengths. Children were observed moving between different activities. Some children were supported by kaiāwhina to complete tasks. Children with additional learning needs were provided with opportunities to be successful. Various whānau talked about how kaiako and kaiāwhina are patient with children with special needs. All adults were observed actively ensuring all children were included. *Children show that they know who they are and enjoy learning and play.*

A warm and nurturing learning environment underpinned by whanaungatanga creates a sense of belonging and purpose for children.

Kaumātua and whānau talked about the importance of their contributions and involvement in kōhanga reo. They knew their presence during different times of the day provided opportunities for children to bond and learn with them. Whānau talked about how they happily contributed to the kōhanga reo in different ways, including supporting kaiako with the learning programme. Kaiako were observed encouraging children to interact with each other and adults in positive ways. Adults were seen modelling the values of aroha, awhi and tautoko by being kind, supportive and loving. In turn, ERO noticed children showing similar displays of affection and kindness through their interactions and play with others. The children were praised and affirmed for their positive interactions. Kaiako and kaiāwhina were observed supporting children to be thoughtful and curious as they learned to make friends and establish relationships.

The older children were seen showing care towards the babies as they readily included them in their play. These opportunities promoted meaningful connections and developed tuakana teina interconnectedness. *Children are responsible and respectful as a part of the kōhanga reo whānau.*

A wide range of learning and play opportunities support the diverse physical, emotional and intellectual wellbeing of all children. The kōhanga reo caters for children of all ages, abilities, needs and interests. Whānau talked about their commitment to supporting their children to be healthy and happy. They said their children 'have a yearning for learning'. Kaiako developed learning programmes that included children eating healthy food, exercising daily, loving learning and being safe and happy. Kaiako and children were heard talking about healthy food while planting in the maara kai. This included older and younger children who showed their eagerness to play in the dirt, plant seeds and talk about what they were doing. Older children talked about how they eat some of the things they plant and how they sometimes helped harvest the kai. Some were seen preparing food, talking about and tasting fruit. ERO noticed that children were encouraged to play, run, walk, crawl and enjoy physical activity and outside games. Kaiako shared the importance of supporting children of all ages to develop their fine and gross motor skills. Older children were supported to be independent and encouraged to take responsibility for what they do. Kaiako talked about promoting purposeful learning and play. As children learned about who they are, they developed a greater appreciation of their place as tangata whenua. *Children are growing confidence and responsibility for learning.*



Strong relationships, and enduring commitment to immersion education influence decisions whānau make about their child's education pathway. ERO found that kōhanga reo whānau, kaumātua and kaiako were clear about what immersion in te reo Māori meant to them, their hapū, and iwi. They were clear their aspirations to replicate a te reo Māori, te ao Māori, tikanga Māori and mātauranga Māori learning environment would support children to be successful beyond kōhanga reo. Some whānau talked about their older children who moved from kōhanga reo to the local kura and how easy it was because there was a sameness – *one like the other*. Many whānau said that the transition from kōhanga reo is an important milestone for their children and families. Whānau and kaiako talked about the things that make the transition from kōhanga reo to kura successful. They said where there are established, enduring and positive relationships between the kōhanga reo and the kura, amongst the kōhanga reo whānau, kaiako and the kura kaiako, then the transition is seamless. A valued sense of belonging, wellbeing, engagement in learning and learner identity, as a part of the learning culture, also contributed to the successful transition from kōhanga reo to other immersion education options. ERO noted that the majority of kōhanga reo in this sample study group were amongst the first kōhanga reo to be established. They were set up by whānau who have retained their involvement since this time. The whānau talked about how they identified the need to establish a kura option for their children which they have done. Whānau also shared that many of them had been to kōhanga reo as children and that the relationships they formed continued to the end of kura, and have become lifelong connections. *Children grow with positive and supportive learning relationships.*

Mana Reo

ERO found that:

Children explore te reo Māori with increased confidence and accuracy.

ERO's findings showed that children who use te reo Māori at home and at kōhanga reo are confident to communicate. Discussions with kaumātua, whānau, kaiako and kaiāwhina highlighted how important it is to be totally committed to te reo Māori. They were adamant that kōhanga reo should foster high quality te reo Māori teaching and learning. They also said that as they consistently speak and promote the use of quality, iwi specific reo, they are one step closer to achieving their aspirations. ERO found evidence of successful strategies used to promote language and learning.

Effective language acquisition strategies enhance language development. Whānau proudly shared with ERO that, *'we are investing in our children's educational journey and use te reo Māori at all times.'* They talked about how they developed skills for communicating. They focused on providing strong language models, encouraging children to speak with clarity, explore language as they learn and discover its meaning. They prompted children to talk about what they were doing and why they were doing it. Kaiako had a range of strategies to promote expression, such as providing regular opportunities for children to perform waiata and kapa haka or dance on stage, play instruments and re-tell stories. Kaiako were observed giving instructions in different ways, asking open-ended questions to promote language use, and sharing information to motivate children. They continually introduced new learning and revisited earlier lessons. Kaiako planned daily routines and activities for children to listen, develop and use a range of non-verbal and verbal communication skills. Children were observed paying attention and responding in a variety of ways. Kaiako used language progressions to show the individual language levels of the children and used these to monitor children's progress.



Children understand and are able to communicate with others.

The spontaneous and purposeful use of te reo Māori builds language capability. **Whānau were clear that a positive learning environment promotes language learning and success.** They talked about the value of risk taking in language learning. They actively supported each other as they learned new language in a safe language learning zone. Kaiako planned for a range of learning activities, experiences and resources that encouraged children to express themselves and learn with others. Waiata, pūrākau and kori tinana reinforced children's learning of language about te ao Māori, te ao tūturu and te ao whānui.



Kaiako were observed reading as a part of the programme at kōhanga reo, creating a love of books for children. Children shared what they knew as they drew narrative pictures to tell stories, used symbols to write messages and read. Some older children used known language to compose and sing simple waiata. Most children extended their vocabulary and built their understanding of language as they sang waiata and hīmene, recited karakia and mihi. Younger children and babies mimicked, babbled and used gestures in their interactions with kaiako to show they understood and were learning as a part of their natural language development. The older children were observed using language in role play situations where they showed their enjoyment to instruct and organise each other, their whānau and kaiako. Kaiako used a range of different strategies to encourage children to explore language, self-correct and be expressive. They also encouraged children to ask questions using simple language structures. Children were observed talking with increased confidence and accuracy. *Children show that they are comfortable and confident as they expand their use of te reo Māori.*

Unwavering whānau commitment to te reo Māori in homes, at kōhanga reo, kura and in communities supports the intergenerational communication of te reo Māori. Our evaluations provided opportunity for kaumātua to tell us about growing the language of their hapū and iwi. These were their aspirations and expectations for te reo Māori and reflected in their shared vision, strategic planning, policies and processes. Whānau and kaiako took time to support language development within the local community. This encouraged families to learn alongside their children. Young mothers and fathers returned to kōhanga reo and were actively involved to help their children learn the language. Some of these parents have become kaiako while other whānau members are grandparents still supporting the kōhanga reo kaupapa. Iwi, hapū and whānau including kaumātua and kaiako are committed and share a deep passion for kōhanga reo and te reo Māori. Whānau are highly committed to the survival and revitalisation of the Māori culture and language. *Children are confident to speak te reo Māori, to take risks and share their thoughts.*

Focused, seamless transition from kōhanga reo into immersion education strengthens the te reo Māori learning pathway. Kaumātua, whānau and kaiako talked openly about how much they depend on and value education provided in te reo Māori. They discussed the ideal shared learning journey for children in kōhanga reo and spoke about the importance of preparing for continued immersion education. Using the direction from kaumātua and whānau, kaiako developed a specific programme so all children would have high levels of te reo Māori. This is intended to support the smooth transition into other Māori immersion settings. *Children graduate from kōhanga reo with confidence and joy.*

Mana Aotūroa

ERO found that:

Children are developing awareness of their natural and physical environment.

ERO's findings showed that children enjoyed success as they played and learned in the natural and physical environments. ERO also found that learning opportunities outside of kōhanga reo extended children's knowledge of te ao Māori and mātauranga Māori. **Children are encouraged to explore and learn in different settings.**



High quality learning experiences promote exploration of te ao Māori and the wider world. Kaumātua, whānau and kaiako planned excursions to expand children's experiences and enhance their view of the world. Learning at kōhanga reo is linked to children's interests at home. Children are encouraged to be confident users of digital cameras, computers and iPads, particularly where these devices support their learning. Kaiako and whānau provided high quality resources and interesting learning experiences. Activities were organised to stimulate, challenge and extend children. New vocabulary and sentence structures were introduced as children learned more about other places. **Children are confident to explore the environment independently.**

A stimulating learning programme provides motivation and challenge. Whānau and kaiako encouraged risk taking and provided opportunities for exploration. There was a range of experiences that included either adult-led activities or independent choice for children to experiment with different things. Routines and transitions flowed smoothly and were well understood by children. Kaiako skilfully supported children so they learned at their own pace and played uninterrupted for long periods of time. They were encouraged to follow their interests and learn alongside their peers. They showed that they enjoyed playing, experimenting and challenging themselves.

Children are developing as curious learners.

A well designed, attractive, spacious, and well-resourced environment supports learning. Kaiako provided outside play opportunities that supported children to combine imaginary play with physical challenges. Kaiāwhina supported children to play in these areas when they wanted to revisit the experiences they had enjoyed. Kaiako and kaiāwhina created resources that catered for various ages and abilities of children. They provided opportunities for older children to create, use their physical skills, try different technologies and develop their numeracy and literacy skills. Whānau supported their children to go on outings into the wider community where they learned about te ao Māori. **Children are eager learners, who enjoy making new discoveries and experimenting.**



'How well do whānau positively influence kōhanga reo operations?'

ERO found that:

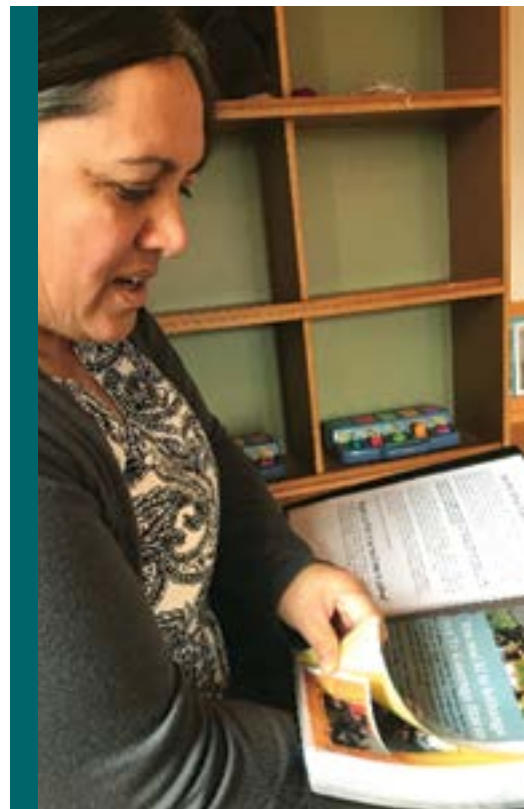
Whānau positively influenced kōhanga reo operations through their commitment, time and willingness to be active members of their children's learning.

ERO's findings showed that whānau commitment is a key contributor to successful outcomes. Whānau defined their commitment as learning the language, building their knowledge of the kōhanga reo philosophy, defining what mātauranga Māori looks like in their kōhanga reo, and choosing to follow Māori medium education. They understood that providing support to the kōhanga reo requires giving of their time. Previously time translated into whānau presence, active participation and full whānau involvement. ERO found there are different ways that whānau provide their time, including attending whānau hui, supporting kaiako and kaiāwhina to develop resources, and participating in kōhanga reo trips. Whānau talked about their willingness to be active in their child's learning. They were very clear about the needs and interests of their children, and how they support kaiako and kaiāwhina to provide a responsive learning programme. They said that talking to the kaiako about their children and assisting with the development of the learning programme helped them to value their involvement. Kaumātua, whānau, kaiako and kaiāwhina openly discussed their expectations and commitment to participate and support their children at kōhanga reo.

Planning and Evaluation

ERO found that strategic planning was comprehensive and used by kōhanga reo whānau to reflect their purposeful direction. This planning showed the vision and aspirations for their kōhanga reo and alignment to Te Korowai, Te Whāriki and Te Ara Tūāpae. This enabled whānau to develop a number of key goals and included themes like te reo Māori, succession planning, long-term sustainability and high-quality learning and wellbeing for children. The strategic plans were supported by implementation plans. Within the implementation plans, each strategic theme had defined goals and objectives. Whānau, kaumātua, kaiako and kaiāwhina all played a significant role in documenting their plans to achieve the kōhanga reo goals and aspirations. These plans demonstrated their unrelenting commitment to 'te kaupapa o te kōhanga reo' through Te Korowai and respective Tūtōhinga (charter).

ERO found that where strategic planning was underpinned by strong internal evaluation, it effectively influenced decisions whānau made about ongoing improvement. As a result, kōhanga reo whānau had a sound understanding of their achievements and progress and were clear about their next steps.



The kōhanga reo whānau stated that their internal evaluation processes fostered collective responsibility. Whānau shared these processes with ERO, which included development of specific and agreed evaluation questions, focused investigations, evidence gathering, deliberate discussions, sense-making and defining next steps. Whānau explained that once the questions are agreed, they carefully gather the right information from a wide range of sources to build a sound evidential base. While building this base, analysis of their findings is undertaken with decisions then made about what to look at next. This leads to the sharing and testing of observations, ideas and sense-making. Each part of the process challenges whānau to consider how well they are doing and what is needed to do better. Their internal evaluation and sense-making processes assisted whānau to make good decisions that lead to positive outcomes for their children. Kōhanga reo whānau said "it is a privilege to support kōhanga reo, to be accountable and maintain high standards. Being involved has its benefits and we are all beneficiaries of the success of kōhanga reo." ERO noted that these processes also applied to the provision of regular reports to whānau on kōhanga reo operations.

Learning programmes were effective, well organised and responsive. Kaiako understood the importance of gathering relevant assessment information, providing detailed programme planning and comprehensive programme evaluation to support improved practice. They were alert to children's learning and development, so gathered a range of information to identify what children knew, what they could do and what they were interested in. This included regular observations of children taken at different times and in different settings, anecdotal notes about what learning progress and or preferences children displayed, annotated work samples with development comments, whānau sharing about what their children knew, and records of te reo Māori development alongside photos. This information was shared with parents and used to inform responsive programme planning. Programme planning included a wide range of activities that focused on and in te ao Māori. It also included whānau ideas, children's prior knowledge and their interests.

ERO observed that programme evaluation helped kaiako to focus on improvement and draw on multiple sources of evidence. Kaiako regularly reflected on what they had done, modified and re-evaluated the learning programme activities and experiences. ERO found that the kōhanga reo kaiako and kaiāwhina met regularly to talk about the programme of learning, specifically what they did, how the children reacted, what activities were well received and those that were not successful. The kaiako and kaimahi said that the time spent together to discuss what was happening for the children at kōhanga provided them with deliberate focus on how they were supporting their cultural learning, play and development. They also acknowledged that they felt comfortable to openly share the things that worked and those that needed improvement. They talked about how reflecting on what they did at kōhanga reo helped them to make connections to the developments children were making. Once these reflections were considered to support programme improvement, the kaiako and kaimahi would set their individual improvement goals. They were highly committed and worked collaboratively to maintain high standards. Whānau said there was good communication amongst kaiako and kaiāwhina and that they are able to input into the learning programme.



Kaiako made improvements so they could provide a responsive programme of learning. Children's progress and learning was supported as kaiako reflected on what they do and the effectiveness of the daily programme.

ERO observed high levels of professionalism by the kaiako and kaiāwhina. They also made significant contributions to the professional development programmes of other kōhanga reo where they shared their good practice about the learning programme, their planning, evaluation and assessment. The professional knowledge of kaiako, and supportive leadership, contributes to the overall success of te kōhanga reo. Kaiako were also regularly able to access Te Kōhanga Reo National Trust training programmes and regularly attend purapura hui and wānanga.

Whānau commitment

ERO acknowledges that whānau, kaiako and kaiāwhina modelled an unwavering commitment to their kōhanga reo. They participated in various committees taking responsibility for monitoring and reporting back to the whānau on all aspects of kōhanga reo operations. Whānau shared their views and contributed to the development of the kōhanga reo. Kaiako depend on whānau for extra support during the course of a day and during their outings. Whānau recognised the positive demeanour of kaiako and understood that they play a vital role in the education and care of their children each day. Whānau are included in the kōhanga reo and this successful partnership leads to relaxed, content children. They say, "it is a privilege to support our kōhanga reo to be accountable and to maintain high standards. We are involved in our children's education and we can have a say".

From their commitment to te reo Māori and the Māori medium education pathway, kōhanga reo whānau talked about how they have supported the establishment of local kura. In the sample of kōhanga reo in this evaluation, whānau have committed to their children's enrolment in a learning journey from kōhanga reo to kura and onto wharekura.

Conclusion

Ko te tamaiti te pūtake o te kaupapa – where the child is the focus in kōhanga reo, the likelihood of producing quality learning outcomes is high.

The learning journey of children in this sample group of kōhanga reo is compelling. It underlines the importance of a learning environment that enriches children's emotional, physical, intellectual and spiritual wellbeing, as the foundation for the strong start they need to be successful lifelong learners. *Ngā Taumata Whakahirahira* and *Te Whāriki a Te Kōhanga Reo* are fundamental for structuring and designing the kōhanga reo learning programme. The content is informed and transferred by whānau, kaumātua, kaiako and kaiāwhina through the critical and complementary roles each plays. These roles within and across all kōhanga reo are similar in nature, however, the content, protocols and practices are unique to their context. This uniqueness emerged as the *point of difference* of each kōhanga reo and is captured and reflected in their vision, aspirations, protocols, practices and stories. The teaching and learning of the content, influenced by their uniqueness, were identified as conditions for a high-quality learning environment where children receive mātauranga Māori, observe and practise tikanga Māori and speak te reo Māori so they function effectively in te ao Māori.

ERO identified that where the learning environment, learning programme, key actors (whānau, kaumātua, kaiako and kaiāwhina) and learning content are tailored, present and applied, successful outcomes for children will occur.

Mihi Whakamutunga

Tēnā rā koutou katoa, e ngā whānau o te motu. Ko koutou te tāhuhu o tō tātau whare kōrero. Kei te tū tonu te whare kōhanga reo i a koutou mauri ora e hiki tonu ana i te manawa o te whare. Kua pihi kau ake te whakaaro pai, e hauhake tonu iho i a koutou e noho tūara i roto i ngā whare ako o tēnā kōhanga reo, o tēnā kōhanga reo. Ko te taura kei roto tonu i o tātau kapu ringa, hei kōwhiringa mā tātau kia tūtuki i ngā tūmanako a ō tātau tīpuna.

E te whānau kua kite ā karu, kua rongo ā tāringa i te māhanatanga o te noho tahitanga o ngā kaimahi, me ngā whānau. Kei te poipoi tonu koutou i ā tātau mokopuna. E kī ana, ko ā tātau mokopuna te pou tokomanawa o tō tātau whare. Kei te hotuhotu tonu, kei te kapakapa tonu te manawa o te kaupapa. Nā reira kia ora ra ki a koutou.

He mihi nui ki ngā kaiako, ki ngā kaiāwhina i titi kaha ai ngā tikanga ki ngā pū kōrero o tēnā kōhanga reo, o tēnā kōhanga reo huri noa te motu. Nā koutou ngā tikanga i tauira atu i te reka o te reo Māori, e kōrero tonu ana, e tipu tonu ana i roto i ngā kōrero tuku iho mai i ngā whare pā o ngā tīpuna. Nā koutou ngā taunaki i whakakao. E kī ai mā Te Whāriki a Te Kōhanga reo

e whakatō te kaha ki roto i te mokopuna ki te ako, kia pakari ai tana tipu. Ko te taumata whakahirahira tērā e whakamana i te māhere ako, i te mātai mokopuna, i te pūmaharatanga e tūhāhā ai te mana āhua ake o tēnā mokopuna, o tēnā mokopuna, huri noa te motu. Kua tau.

E pāoho te kupu mihi whakamutunga ki ngā kaumātua, e kī ana ko te hā o ngā tīpuna e pupuri tonu ana i te tapu o te pō. I kimi ai ngā mātauranga i te pou tūarongo o tō tātau whare. Ko te hā o te tipuna e tātaki ana ki waho kia kite ai e te ao. Ānei te huarahi hei whai mā ngā uri whakatipu. Nā reira e whakaaweawe ai ngā taonga tuku iho e ngā uri whakatipu. Koia nei ngā kōwhiringa kōrero kua tōpū ki kōnei, hei whakarewa ai o koutou tūmanako.

Nā reira ko tēnei ripoata e whakakākahūtia ana te korowai ki te kāhu o te tika, ki te kāhu o te pono, ki te kāhu o te rāngimarie. Hei te wā ka whītikina mai te tūtohinga o te kōhanga reo ki tōnā taumata, he kōrero āwhinā tēnei i a tātau whānau kia eke ki ngā tau e whā o te arotake. Ruia taitea, kia tū ko taikākā anake.

Tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou kia ora rā tātau katoa

References

Best, E. (2005). Te Whare Kōhanga and its lore: comprising data pertaining to procreation, baptism and infant betrothal. Wellington: Te Papa Press. First published 1929

Edwards, M. (2003). Mihipeka: Early Years POD. Penguin (NZ). First published 1990.

Education Review Office, (2006). Evaluation Indicators for Education Reviews in Kōhanga Reo. Wellington: Education Review Office. First published 2005.

Hemara, W. (2000). Māori Pedagogies: A view from the literature. New Zealand Council for Research Press.

Kāretu, T. (2008). Māori language rights in New Zealand. New Zealand Council for Research Press.

Ministry of Education, (2017). Te Whāriki a Te Kōhanga Reo. Ministry of Education, New Zealand Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga.

Royal-Tangaere, A.R. (2012). Te Hokinga ki te Ūkaipō: a socio-cultural construction of Māori language development: Kōhanga reo and home. University of Auckland.

Te Kōhanga Reo National Trust, (2008). Te Ara Tūāpae: Strategic Plan 2008 – 2033. Te Kōhanga Reo National Trust.

Glossary

Aotūroa	light of day, nature	Pākiki	curious, inquisitive
Aroha	compassion, empathy, love	Pou	marker, stake, sign
Atua	gods, spiritual deities	Powhiri	welcome
Awhi	embrace	Pūrākau	myths, legends
Hapū	sub tribe	Purapura	group or cluster of kōhanga reo in close proximity
Hariru	shake hands	Tamariki	children
Hongi	press noses	Tautoko	support
Hui	meeting	Te ao Māori	the Māori world
Iwi	tribe	Te ao tūturu	original world
Kaiako	teacher	Te ao whānui	wider world
Kaiāwhina	support staff	Teina	younger brother (of a male), younger sisters (of a female), cousins (of same gender) of a junior line
Karakia	to pray, prayer	Te Korowai	Te Kōhanga Reo National Trust guidelines, cloak
Kawa	protocol	Te reo Māori	the Māori language
Kaumātua	older or elderly generation	Tikanga Māori	Māori practice
Kaupapa	philosophy, purpose	Tuakana	elder brother (of a male), elder sister (of female), cousins (of same gender from more senior line)
Kia rere te reo	let the language flow	Tūrangawaewae	place where one belongs and feels strong a connection
Kōhanga reo whānau	includes kaiako, kaiāwhina and whānau	Tūtohunga	charter
Korahi	dimensions	Wānanga	forum, conference, seminar
Kori tinana	exercise	Whakapapa	genealogy
Kura	school	Whānau	related through lineage – immediate or extended relatives
Maiohatanga	disposition, respect	Whanaungatanga	relationships
Mana	strength, influence, authority	Whare	house, large space, dwelling
Manaakitanga	care, kindness, hospitality		
Manawanui	courage, determination		
Marae	meeting place		
Mōteatea	chant		

Appendix 1: Participants in effective practice in kōhanga reo

KŌHANGA REO	LOCATION
Te Kōhanga Reo o Te Wiri	Auckland (Tamaki Makaurau)
Te Kōhanga Reo ki Pukeroa Ōruawhata	Rotorua (Waiariki/Tūwharetoa)
Te Kōhanga Reo o Rongopai	Rotorua (Waiariki/Tūwharetoa)
Te Kōhanga Reo o Rotokawa	Rotorua (Waiariki/Tūwharetoa)
Te Kōhanga Reo o Matawera (Te KKM o Ruamatā)	Rotorua (Waiariki/Tūwharetoa)
Te Kōhanga Reo o Mana Tamariki (TKKM o Mana Tamariki)	Palmerston North (Aotea)
Te Kōhanga Reo o Waitara	Waitara (Aotea)
Te Kōhanga Reo o te Wānanga Whare Tāpere o Takitimu (Te KKM o te Wānanga Whare Tāpere o Takitimu)	Hastings (Kahungunu)
Te Kōhanga Reo o Ao te Rangi	Hastings (Kahungunu)
Te Kōhanga Reo o Tōmairangi	Gisborne (Tairāwhiti)
Te Kōhanga Reo o Ngā Mokopuna (Te KKM o Ngā Mokopuna)	Wellington (Ikaroa)

Published 2017

© Crown copyright

Hauhaketia ngā taonga tuku iho kia puāwai ai (English)

ISBN 978-0-478-43868-0



Except for the Education Review Office's logo used throughout this report, this copyright work is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 New Zealand licence. In essence, you are free to copy, distribute and adapt the work, as long as you attribute the work to the Education Review Office and abide by the other licence terms. In your attribution, use the wording 'Education Review Office', not the Education Review Office logo or the New Zealand Government logo.

