

# ĀHURU MŌWAI

Evaluation report for Te Kōhanga Reo

WHĀIA NGĀ ARA PAINGA KIA ANGITU  
AI – POUTIRIA TE REO MAURIORA



## ĀHURU MŌWAI

This report is the reflection of Kōhanga Reo on their particular educational approach. Their collective aspirations are captured within the summary of conditions outlined as Whanaungatanga, Strategy, Tikanga Māori, Te Reo Resurgence, Kaumātua, Ako: Teaching and Learning, and Leadership. This evaluation will provide empirical evidence about graduates, their achievements and identifies conditions across their learning journey.

Whāia ngā ara painga kia angitu ai – Poutiria te Reo Mauriora aims to highlight the conditions that underpin Māori immersion education provision, and Māori enjoying and achieving success as Māori.

This report has been written with a Māori worldview to ensure the conditions highlighted explain what Kōhanga Reo are doing to ensure Māori children are enjoying and achieving success as Māori.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ERO would like to acknowledge the six participating kura kaupapa Māori, kura whānau, students, teachers and leaders. Your willingness to support and share your collective knowledge and expertise has been invaluable in this project. Your contributions have provided ERO with important insights to help build our knowledge about the provision of te reo Māori education throughout the country, tēnā koutou.



## METHODOLOGY

ERO has developed an approach that tends to the differing provision of education for Te Runanganui o Ngā Kura Kaupapa Māori, Ngā Kura ā-Iwi and Te Kōhanga Reo.

Data collection held on site includes face-to-face interviews with, and film footage of, kaumātua, parents, graduates, teachers and leaders at the respective Kōhanga Reo.

In each Kōhanga Reo a case study focussing on learning pathways of graduates, the Kōhanga Reo, primary and secondary school that exist together was carried out.

A number of graduates of Kōhanga Reo were selected by their respective whānau to provide insight into the conditions that foster Māori success in Kōhanga Reo. A case study focussing on the learning pathways of graduates was carried out.

*Āhuru Mōwai* is one of three individual reports in te reo Māori and English. The participating Kōhanga Reo are –

- ▲ Te Kōhanga Reo o Te Kaahu
- ▲ Te Kōhanga Reo o Te Matawera
- ▲ Te Kōhanga Reo o Ākina Te Reo
- ▲ Te Kōhanga Reo o Māwake
- ▲ Te Kōhanga Reo o Waihī
- ▲ Te Kōhanga Reo o Te Ara Hou
- ▲ Te Kōhanga Reo o Hoani Waititi Marae
- ▲ Te Kōhanga Reo o Te Kākano o Te Kura
- ▲ Te Kōhanga Reo o Kawakawa Mai Tawhiti
- ▲ Te Kōhanga Reo o o Kaitumutumu
- ▲ Te Kōhanga Reo o Rāhui Pōkeka
- ▲ Te Kōhanga Reo o Te Kauri
- ▲ Te Kōhanga Reo o Te Whaanui

Kōhanga Reo have identified key conditions for Māori education success. This is achieved through the analysis of information collected around seven broad questions that are reframed for *Āhuru Mōwai*.



The learning conditions, characteristics and practices as experienced and recalled by individual graduates were used as lines of inquiry by the evaluation team.

Universal themes are the key themes of significance that came out of an internal analysis of evaluation reports and information about high performing kōhanga, puna, kura and wharekura over a period of time.

Collected data from interviews are analysed with aspects of a Māori worldview as the foundation to identify the key conditions of educational success across Kōhanga Reo.

## UNIVERSAL THEMES



### **Mana Atua:**

Learners develop knowledge of Māori beliefs and values that invoke feelings of peace, happiness and love and effective relationships.



### **Mana Tangata:**

Learners develop knowledge, value and respect for and of oneself, whānau, hapū, iwi and others. Learners grow with positive and supportive learning relationships.



### **Mana Whenua**

Learners are familiar with ancestral connections, values and beliefs and develop a strong sense of belonging, environmental awareness and care.



### **Mana Reo:**

Learners will develop skills and knowledge of mana Māori immersed in te reo Māori.



### **Transitions and natural progression:**

Children progress naturally and seamlessly from one learning environment to another, and connection to the marae community fosters the connections across the pathway from kōhanga to wharekura.



### **Leadership and management:**

Is viewed as effective in Kōhanga Reo. Leadership involves: strategy and visionary sustainability; commitment to student success, tikanga Māori; and whanaungatanga.



**Foundations** of the approach are a condition for Kōhanga Reo



**Whānau aspirations influence choice and direction**

## SUMMARY OF CONDITIONS

### WHANAUNGATANGA

**WHANAUNGATANGA ME TE WHAKAPAPA:** Ancestral connections provide children with security and a strong sense of belonging.

**WHANAUNGATANGA ME TE WHAKAPAPA** underpin the Kōhanga and Kura environment, the wider community and leadership.

**WHĀNAU ARE COMMITTED** and actively involved in te reo Māori education and the resurgence of te reo Māori.

**WHĀNAU ARE STRATEGIC** decision makers who have multi-generational dedication to language revitalisation.

### LEADERSHIP

**LEADERSHIP ACTIVELY SUPPORTS A SENSE OF BELONGING**

**LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES ARE AVAILABLE**

### AKO: TEACHING AND LEARNING

**CONTEXTUALISED LEARNING SPACES** are critical for learning.

**TEACHING AND LEARNING CONSIDERS** Kaiako Characteristics; Learner Characteristics; Learning Environments; and Whānau Participation.

**TEACHING AND LEARNING** takes place in a safe and nurturing environment.

**TEACHING AND LEARNING** involves developing the skills and knowledge of mana Māori me ngā tikanga Māori.

### STRATEGY

**TRANSITIONS** in and from the Kōhanga are strategic and seamless

**LEADERSHIP ARE CHAMPIONS** of language revitalisation, they are effective, strategic, aspirational, inspirational and innovative.

**WHĀNAU** are strategic decision makers who have multi-generational decisions to language revitalisation.

**HIGH-EXPECTATIONS** of learner achievement, and positive outcomes is central to Kōhanga Reo.

### TIKANGA MĀORI

**WHĀNAU** insist that tikanga and kawa are a foundation of kōhanga.

**IMPORTANT** tikanga and kawa include: karakia, uaratanga (value system), love, respect, care, manaaki, aroha, taonga tuku iho, whai tikanga, arohanui, awhi, tiaki, mauritau, whanaungatanga mahi tahi, kia ū ki te kaupapa and tautoko.

**IWI BASED** are important to the resurgence and revitalisation of te reo Māori and intergenerational transmission.

**LEADERS** uphold tikanga and kawa.

### TE REO RESURGENCE

**COLLECTIVE COMMITMENT** to the resurgence of te reo Māori with community, whānau, kaiako and learners as the cornerstone of all things.

### KAUMĀTUA

**KAUMĀTUA** presence at the Kōhanga Reo ensure tikanga and kawa are embedded in practice.

**THE ROLE** of kaumātua within the kōhanga is a constant condition across areas.

**KAUMĀTUA** are important to the resurgence and revitalisation of te reo Māori and intergenerational transmission.

## MANA ATUA

Kōhanga Reo are highly effective in ensuring a nurturing learning environment.

Learners develop knowledge of Māori beliefs and values that invoke feelings of peace, happiness and love as effective relationships.



**Whakapapa (genealogy) connections:** Whānau involvement and whanaungatanga are important conditions for Kōhanga Reo. Positive relationships are found where whānau demonstrate and role model care and support for others. The presence of kaumātua at the Kōhanga Reo ensured that these values were embedded in practice.

... the practices of the elders guided the whānau. We were directed by humility and love for one another. (Raukura – Te Rito)

### Learning Environment:

Contextualised learning spaces are critical for learning. The creation of significant spaces for learning ensure that learners are confident and willing participants. Kōhanga Reo foster wellbeing and happiness.

Te Aho Matua was a priority for whānau, kaiako and students ... We could hear and feel Te Aho Matua in our kura, ā-wairua [spiritually]. (Raukura – Te Ara Hou)

**Tikanga Māori:** Kōhanga Reo implement a range of tikanga Māori. These include: uaratanga (value systems), love, respect, care, manaaki (ethic of care), aroha (love/compassion), and taonga tuku iho (ancestral knowledge) that result in learners feeling safe and secure.

I wasn't scared because I grew up in te ao Māori, in a whānau environment. We felt aroha. We felt, heard and saw manaaki. We saw, felt and heard whanaungatanga. We could touch it. Those are valuable treasures as you make your way in the world. (Manu Pīrere – Rākaumanga)

It felt like home. It was a whānau. The whole kura is a whānau. (Raukura – Te Kākano)





### **Te Aho Matua**

Tikanga Māori (Māori value systems and protocols) are a key condition for Kōhanga Reo, including: whai tikanga (adhering to protocol), aroha, arohanui (great compassion), manaaki, awahi (ethic of support), tiaki (guardianship), mauritau (calm disposition) and whanaungatanga. Localised tikanga (values/protocols) are important such as: Pai Mārire (a Māori faith) and Nga Manaia e Whitu (iwi based value system).

### **Leadership opportunities**

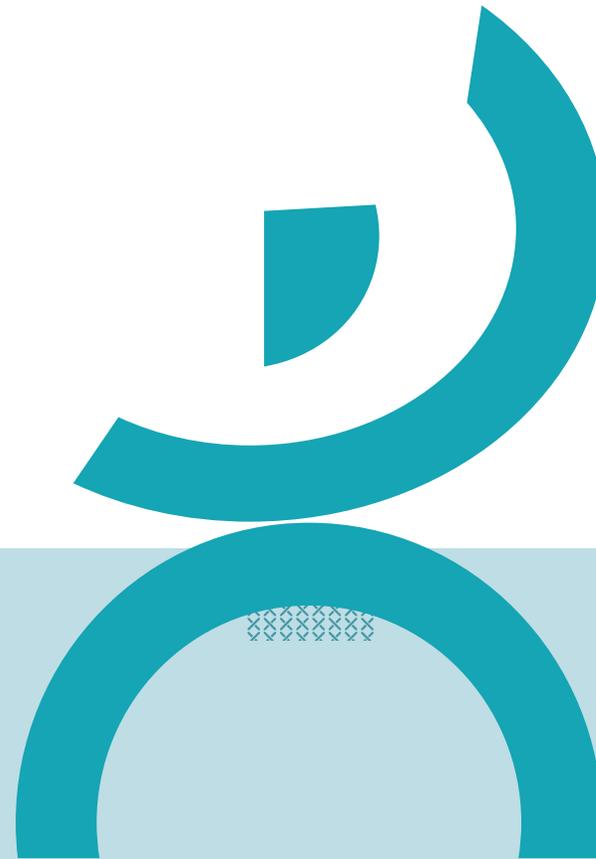
I am supporting this path of Kura Kaupapa Māori and Te Aho Matua. I have seen the benefits. I have seen the success. I have seen the path for a Māori child. It is a path that enables you to walk in both worlds. (Raukura – Te Waiū)

### **Teaching and Learning**

The conditions for teaching and learning can further be described in four specific ways: Kaiako Characteristics; Learner Characteristics; Learning Environments; and Whānau Participation.

There was no difference between kaiako and whānau – they were one in the same. (Raukura – Te Ara Hou)

This is a place that they know will look after and nurture them – pouako, kaiāwhina and more who will care for them while they are here. The biggest benefit and attribute of this kura was the whānau. (Manu Pirere – Rākaumanga)



## MANA WHENUA KŌHANGA REO ARE HIGHLY EFFECTIVE IN ENSURING A SENSE OF BELONGING



**Sense of Belonging:** Learners are familiar with ancestral connections, values and beliefs and develop a strong sense of belonging, environmental awareness and care.

Children participated in regular marae excursions. Whānau provided opportunities for children to explore mana whenua and children's roles as tangata whenua. They ensured that children developed an understanding of tikanga and kawa of the marae. Children took part in pōhiri and tangihanga, where they witnessed kaumātua role-modelling karanga and whaikōrero.

If you were to ask any of the raukura from Hoani Waititi, where are you from? Where is your marae? To be honest, Hoani Waititi would be one of them. (Raukura – Hoani Waititi)

Here the kaiako are like your parents. (Raukura – Te Rito)

### **Whanaungatanga**

The kaimahi were able to provide meaningful learning that were related to hapū experiences. This provided a strong connection between the learners and their identity as Ngāti Porou. Kaumātua provide significant connections for Kōhanga Reo.



### Contextual Learning Environment

A range of contextual learning environments are provided by Kōhanga Reo. These include: marae, and local events such as Koroneihana (Coronation), Poukai (Kingitanga visits to marae) or regatta.

It is a kura that is connected to the marae, therefore we were all raised within the principles of the Kīngitanga, Tūrangawaewae Marae and all the events that they hosted. (Manu Pīrere – Ngā Taiātea)

### Ngā Rautaki Whakaako

Ka whakapuakihia ngā whakaakoranga me ngā akoranga i te taiao haumarua e poi-poi ana i te ākonga. Ka toro atu ki ngā tikanga whakaaro e whakamana ana i te tuakiri o ngā ākonga, pērā i ngā pepeha, ngā waiata, ngā karakia, ngā haka a Waikato, me te Pai Mārire.

### Tikanga Māori

Tikanga Māori are acknowledged such as: tikanga and kawa; tongi (prophetic saying); tangata whenua roles; Kīngitanga; kaitiakitanga as ancestral practises; kawa o Tūwharetoa; Ngātoroirangi; and karakia.

### Koroua and Kuia

Koroua and kuia are often referred to by participants. The role of kaumātua within the kōhanga is a constant condition across areas.

We were marae based. The cookhouse, kitchen, dining room and meeting house were our classrooms. The floor was your table and chair. Resources were scarce but our resources were in the natural environment. Ruarua noa iho ngā rauemi, ko ā mātou rauemi i te taiao. (Raukura – Kawakawa mai Tawhiti).

## MANA REO

### Kōhanga Reo are highly effective te reo Māori learning environment



Learners will develop skills and knowledge of mana Māori immersed in te reo Māori. Ultimately, community, whānau, kaiako and learners commit to the resurgence of te reo Māori.

The whānau of Te KKM o Te Waiū o Ngāti Porou were pioneers for Te Aho Matua in its inception... the whānau displayed considerable determination to revitalising te reo Māori in the community of Ruatōrea, with a focus on the dialect unique to Ngāti Porou. To achieve this, intergenerational transmission of te reo Māori became a focus for the kura. Learners understood the significant connection of te reo Māori to their identity as Ngāti Porou.

Because of this home I have Māori language. This is the only place my language developed and probably why my deep love for the language grew. (Raukura – Hoani Waititi)

#### Whanaungatanga

Whanaungatanga and whakapapa underpin the kōhanga and kura environment and the wider community. Learners make significant contributions to their communities; show a strong sense of belonging and express their identity confidently.

#### Teaching and Learning

Teaching and learning involves developing the skills and knowledge of mana Māori immersed in te reo Māori me ngā tikanga Māori. These include regional and dialectal variances such as: Te reo o Waikato, Te reo o Ngāti Porou, waiata, mōteatea (traditional chant) and pao (song).



### Te reo Māori resurgence

There is a collective commitment to the resurgence of te reo Māori with community, whānau, kaiako and learners. Te reo Māori was valued by the whānau and learners who also demonstrated a commitment to revitalising te reo Māori and the dialect distinct to the area.

Success, for our kura, is to revitalise te reo o Ngāti Porou and Ngāti Porou tikanga. (Raukura – Awatere)

### Tikanga Māori

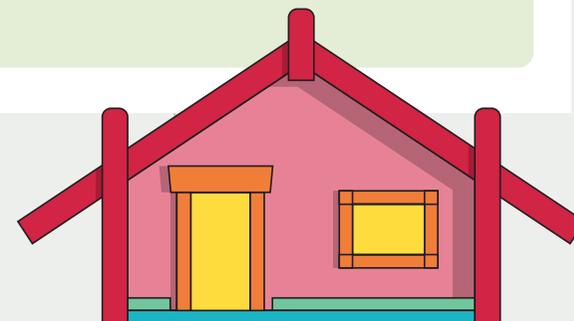
Learners develop skills and knowledge of mana Māori immersed in te reo Māori me ngā tikanga Māori. Discrete regional and iwi variances are identified in terms of mita (dialect), waiata, mōteatea, karakia and pepeha. Aspects such as the Kīngitanga and Pai Mārire are important, as are the notions of pai (goodness), aroha, and manaaki.

... there's nothing better than taking the children to the lands settled by our ancestors and to teach them about the Tūwharetoa land boundaries, that the language belongs to the land, to the river, the mountain, the bush. (Whānau Statement – Hīrangī)

### Kaumātua influence

Kuia and koroua have a particular role to play in the resurgence and revitalisation of te reo Māori. Intergenerational transmission is critical, and the contribution that native speakers make as key teachers is valued.

The marae is our principal home so we need to take care of it, look after it and with it the people, the gathering of families and the people for all of the significant events. (Whānau Statement – Te Rito)



## NATURAL PROGRESSION:

Kōhanga Reo are highly effective in ensuring natural progression.



### **Transition is a natural progression**

Children progress naturally and seamlessly from one learning environment to another.

### **Whānau connections**

Whānau are committed and actively involved in te reo Māori education, where working together as a whānau, connecting widely and inclusivity are key.

Whānau have a high expectation for learners, they have vision and provide tautoko (support) and tuakana (senior) involvement.

Whānau involvement is described as: mauritau (calm disposition), kia ū ki te kaupapa (commitment to objectives).

### **Strategic**

Transitions in and from the kōhanga are strategic and seamless. This process is child centred and is familiar to learners as they have participated in the process many time before, this contributes to a seamless pathway for learners.



### Tikanga Māori

Tikanga Māori are valued as meaningful contribution to kōhanga transitions. These include: mahi tahi, mauritau, kia ū ki te kaupapa and tautoko. The processes for transition are also an important aspect of tikanga Māori.

It was due to KKM that I was able to smoothly transition.  
(Raukura – Kawakawa)

It started from Kōhanga Reo, our whole Māori journey. It was quite a breeze to go from the learning levels of young children to middle school and on to secondary. (Manu Pīrere – Hīrangī)



# LEADERSHIP

Leadership and management is effective in Kōhanga Reo



## Strategy and Visionary Sustainability

Leadership are champions of language revitalisation, they are effective, strategic, aspirational, inspirational and innovative. The qualities of good leadership on one site are described

### ERO OBSERVATION:

*[Leadership] has a vision for sustainability and actively supports raukura to return as kaiako to contribute to the longevity of the kura. He is future focussed and committed to creating positive outcomes for learners. Learners are encouraged to become life-long learners.*

### Commitment to student success

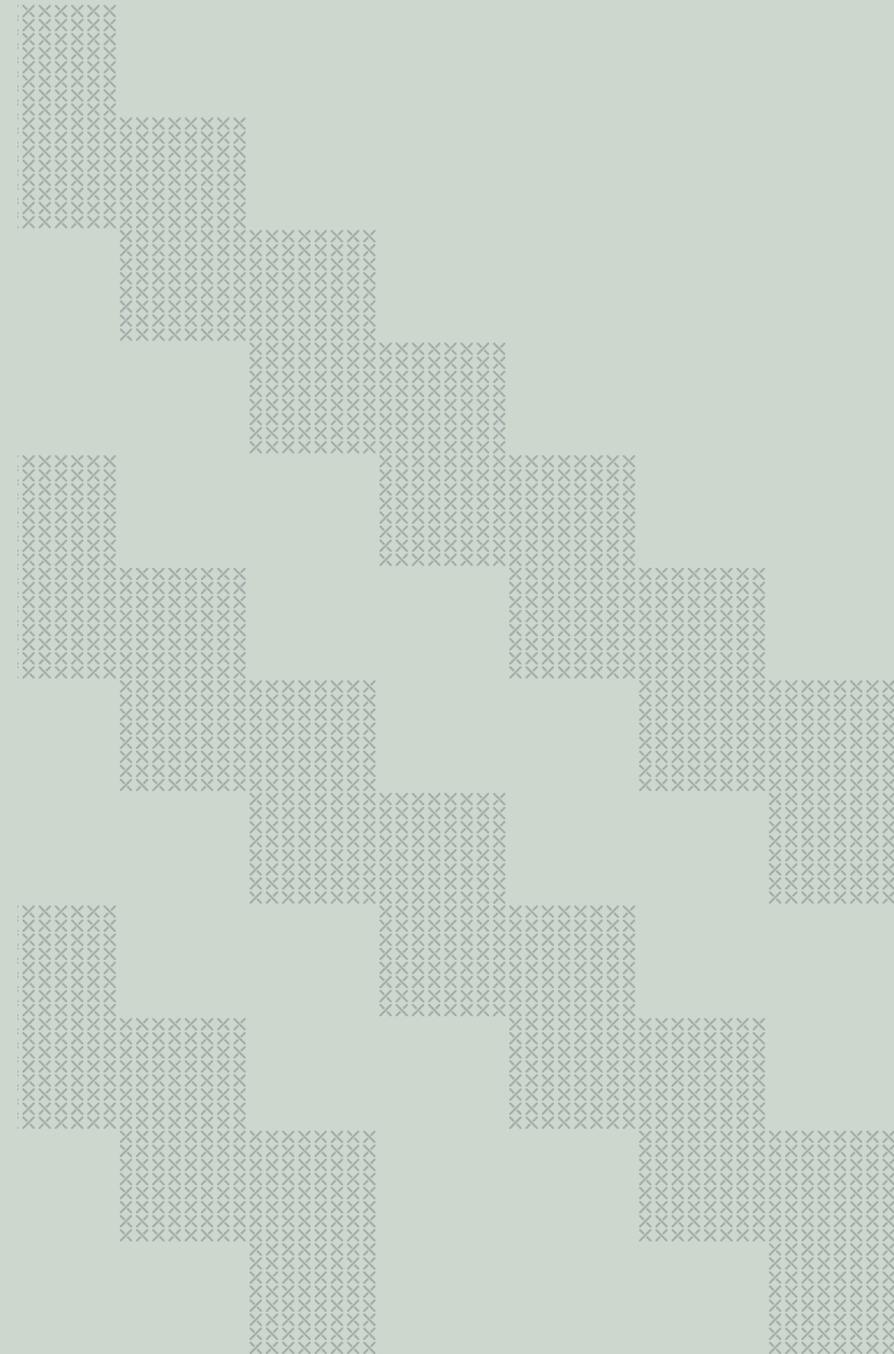
Whānau have high expectations for positive outcomes. Leadership are focused on student outcomes and a shared vision of mokopuna success. Leaders role model affection and empathy for others, are supportive of learner aspirations, and committed to student success.

## Māori practices

Understanding and implementing Māori practices are critical aspects of leadership. Leaders must have a knowledge of regional and iwi variance, as well as participation and knowledge of key regional/iwi events, iwi histories, and ancestral narratives. These include: Te Aho Matua, Te Kīngitanga; iwi based practices and protocols; ancestors such as Ngātoroirangi.

### Forming and maintaining relationships

Leaders also have an intimate understanding of, and actively practise forming and maintaining relationships. Leaders are well known within the local and wider communities and have a number of beneficial relationships in the community. Leadership is described as: Hard-working hands, Industrious for the cause, Collaborative and Relationship keeper.



## FOUNDATIONS

Kōhanga Reo have solid foundations



### **Te Reo Māori resurgence**

The drive for te reo Māori resurgence comes from the whānau. Community, whānau, kaiako and learners commit to the resurgence of te reo Māori as the cornerstone of all things. Intergenerational transmission of te reo Māori in the whānau was a primary focus.

### **Whānau as committed decision makers**

Whānau showed strong commitment to Kura Kaupapa Māori, Te Kōhanga Reo and Te Aho Matua. They actively and regularly supported initiatives that benefitted the kura. Kaumātua provided support and guidance in the formative years of the kura.

### **High Expectations**

There are high expectations for the use of te reo Māori as a living language. High quality te reo Māori provision is essential for Māori.



## TIKANGA MĀORI

Whānau were insistent that values of love, respect, generosity and care and forming and maintaining relationships were entrenched within the kōhanga/kura culture. These are essential for learners to achieve success.



I only have one memory [from kōhanga] and that was love – from the kaiako. I do remember the aroha of the kuia who were there and how beautiful the reo was of one of those kuia there. We had many relatives there and I still keep in contact with some of my friends of kōhanga now. (Raukura – Ruamatā)

Intergenerational transmission of Māori language and culture is the norm and we derive a great deal of pride from the knowledge that most of the whānau within our community have three or four generations of Māori speakers where once there were none. (Whānau Statement – Ruamatā)

I recall as a student at the kura the strong connections and depth of thinking around ao Māori and Te Aho Matua ... there were really strong connections between roles of adults and at the heart it was always about and the tamaiti. (Raukura – Te Ara Hou)



## WHĀNAU INFLUENCE

Kōhanga Reo effectively engage with whānau aspirations



### Whānau Strategic Commitment

Community, whānau, kaiako and learners commit to the resurgence of te reo Māori. Whānau are strategic decision makers who have multi-generational dedication to language revitalisation.

### Forming and maintaining relationships

Intergenerational connections, whakapapa and whanaungatanga are integral to Kōhanga Reo. Collaboration, kura connections and commitment to te reo Māori are key and are demonstrated by: purapura, hapū, iwi, whānau.

### Tikanga Māori

Ngā uara or values are highly regarded by Kōhanga Reo. Aspects such as: manaaki, tikanga, kawa, and aroha. Te Aho Matua is highly regarded by whānau and learners as a powerful tool to influence transformation and creating lifelong learners.

### High expectations

Expectations of learner achievement, and positive outcomes is central to Kōhanga Reo. Whānau have high expectations for learners to succeed and excel. They support learners in their individual pursuits during kura and after.

It felt like home. It was a whānau. The whole kura is a whānau...  
I know who I am... Here the kaiako are like your parents.  
(Raukura – Te Rito)

In terms of raising children on the marae, that was also the way  
at Kōhanga Reo. Our grandmothers, grandfathers, uncles, aunts,  
let's say the many families of this village were our teachers.  
(Manu Pīrere – Rākaumanga)

The practices of the Kōhanga Reo were to prepare us for the marae. All  
of the teachers were aunts, uncles, callers, speakers, working in the  
front, at the back, in between, before the hui and after, that is how they  
prepared us at Kōhanga Reo. (Manu Pīrere – Hīrangī)

## CONCLUSION

The title of this report, *Āhuru Mōwai* is taken from Te Whāriki a Te Kōhanga Reo and refers to a sheltered haven.

The view of Kōhanga Reo as safe, nurturing settings captures a common theme expressed by participants contributing to the achievements of graduates across their learning journeys.

The conditions of fostering Māori success as Māori in Kōhanga Reo are characterised by a Māori worldview and investigation via ERO themes identifies seven key conditions –

Whanaungatanga, Strategy, Tikanga Māori, Te Reo Resurgence, Kaumātua, Ako: Teaching and Learning and Leadership.

Kōhanga Reo strive to ensure children have unrestricted access to their Māori world. Through authentic Māori experiences located within the aspirations of whānau, hapū and iwi, each child is able to realise their own potential in safe, nurturing Māori language immersion educational settings that they call home and the people there are whānau. The normalcy of involvement of kaumātua and pakeke, is just one of the ways that the whānau structure is replicated. The pedagogical approach allows for a smooth transition to kura that happens naturally because the Kōhanga Reo uphold the same values as kura, the tikanga they practice is consistent with kura and the language they speak is the same.

This nurtures communality amongst tamariki and their whānau and binds them to a common purpose grounded in a Māori worldview that is focussed on ensuring the Māori language survives.

*Ko te Kōhanga Reo he āhuru mōwai mō te mokopuna, ā, ko tōna rite ko te kōhanga manu, arā, ko tāna mahi ko te poipoi i ana pīpī kia tipu ora ai rātou.*

*Te Whāriki a Te Kōhanga Reo (2017, pg 29)*

The kōhanga is a sheltered haven for the mokopuna, just like a nest providing for little ones so they may grow and flourish.

