
EIS Practice Guidance

Supporting wellbeing and success through transition

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Introduction

“Poipoia te kākano kia puāwai”

Nurture the seed and it will bloom.

Early Intervention Service (EIS) is support from the Ministry of Education for children with additional needs until they start school. It provides a wide range of specialist support to children, families and educators in homes, early learning services, schools, and kura.

Research shows that intervening within the first 2,000 days of life leads to the best learning and social outcomes for children, particularly for learners with high and complex needs. For this reason, from 2026, the EIS will extend to provide specialist learning support to children, whānau, family, and educators up to the end of Year 1 at school and kura. This means that learners in Years 0-1 at school, with new or previously identified needs can be supported through the transdisciplinary EIS approach in their critical first years at school.

Children who receive the early intervention service before school and continue to need support at school will be supported through their transition up to the end of Year 1, based on their individual strengths and needs. Starting school is an important transition for all children, especially those with additional needs and their whānau.

This guide helps EIS specialists and teaching staff to provide the best support for mokopuna and children with additional needs.

The introduction of a consistent nationwide approach means it is important for all specialists to know how the EIS supports effective, evidence-informed transition to school. This means everyone is ‘on the same page’, the system works efficiently as possible, and staff and specialists can get the maximum benefits for mokopuna.

This is vital as mokopuna and children transition from their early childhood setting to their first year at schools and kura.

This guide is for:

- › Service Managers
- › EIS specialists – Early Intervention Teachers (EITs) Speech Language Therapists (SLTs), Psychologists, Kaitakawaenga, Advisers on Deaf Children (AoDC)
- › Resource Teachers: Learning and Behaviour (RTLB)
- › Learning Support Co-ordinators (LSCs), Special Education Needs Coordinators (SENCOs), and school and kura leadership teams
- › Teacher Aides (TAs)
- › Early learning and primary teachers who work with mokopuna, children, their whānau and families through the transition process in the first year of school.

Overview – our approach to transition to school

Our approach to transition to school has four key features, supporting transitions that are:

- › nationally consistent
- › curriculum aligned
- › evidence-informed
- › outcomes-focussed.

This guidance provides a set of resources to inform and support the approach to embed and strengthen over time.

Nationally consistent

The EIS practice guidance supports a nationally consistent, inclusive approach to transitions from early learning into school. This means that mokopuna and children across New Zealand will enjoy services of similar quality and be able to continue with the same support as they move from one region to another.

Grounded in **He Pikorua** and **Te Tūāpapa**, the guidance promotes:

- › family-centred, strengths-based practice
- › collaborative inquiry and shared decision making
- › culturally affirming, inclusive support across settings.

Providing continuity of learning for mokopuna and children with diverse learning requirements into their first year of school or kura may include consideration of their developmental, behavioural, or communication needs, upon entering school or kura.

This journey begins with preparing for the move and continues until parents, whānau and families feel fully established as part of their new community and learning supports are in place. A wide range of supports may be needed so that mokopuna and children thrive during this process:

- › specialist involvement (such as EIT, SLT, psychologists, Kaitakawaenga, AoDC, RTLb)
- › teacher aide support (TA) or teacher aide hours
- › structured planning
- › consistent communication
- › ongoing pastoral care.

These supports may look different for each mokopuna or child: from practical strategies in the classroom, to culturally responsive guidance for whānau and families, to intensive one-to-one intervention. By providing continuity and flexibility of support throughout the transition, better outcomes can be achieved across all areas of learning, wellbeing, and belonging for mokopuna and children and their whānau and family.

Curriculum aligned

The EIS approach integrates Te Whāriki, Te Marautanga o Aotearoa and the New Zealand Curriculum, so that there is alignment across Māori and English medium settings.

Curriculum-aligned assessment tools like Kōwhiri Whakapae are used to guide planning and goal setting. Literacy and numeracy checkpoints are embedded in the transition phases to align with curriculum expectations.

The English and Māori medium curricula support these key areas for learning:

- › social and emotional learning
- › mathematics
- › oral language, communication and literacy.

[Kōwhiri Whakapae](#) is one curriculum resource that can guide educators through a reflective cycle of teaching, learning, assessment and review. Schools or kura may have other resources from their own curricula to utilise. The elements of Te Whāriki, Te Marautanga o Aotearoa, and the New Zealand Curriculum will be integrated into the goal setting and Focus Area indicators during Phases 2 and 3 of the transition journey. This is so teachers and other learning support facilitators in both Māori medium and English medium settings can plan and assess in ways that reflect the language, culture, and values of their learning community.

Evidence-informed approach

Intervening within the first 2,000 days of life has the most significant impact and is informed by evidence, particularly for learners with complex learning and wellbeing needs. For this reason, EIS has been extended into Year 1, for continuity of learning during a critical transition period and reducing the risk of service gaps.

Four Focus Areas for the EIS expansion sitting on a foundation of early planning and collaborative teaming, are considered best evidence and guide planning, implementation, and review:

- › **Continuity of Learning:** a child's prior learning, life, skills, and relationships are recognised and strengthened, supporting a smoother and more confident transition.
- › **Familiar and Clear Routines:** helps mokopuna and children feel secure and reduces anxiety by providing predictable structures as they adjust to a new environment.
- › **Positive Relationships (peers and adults):** strong relationships with adults and peers fosters a sense of belonging, supports social and emotional development, and helps mokopuna and children engage more fully with learning.
- › **Safety and Belonging:** feeling safe and included is foundational for learning, enabling mokopuna and children to explore, take risks, and participate confidently in the school or kura community.

The Transition Toolkit includes nationally consistent templates and a progress and outcomes tool to support evidence-based planning and reporting. These tools enable specialists, schools, and whānau to collaboratively understand learner progress and inform decisions about ongoing support.

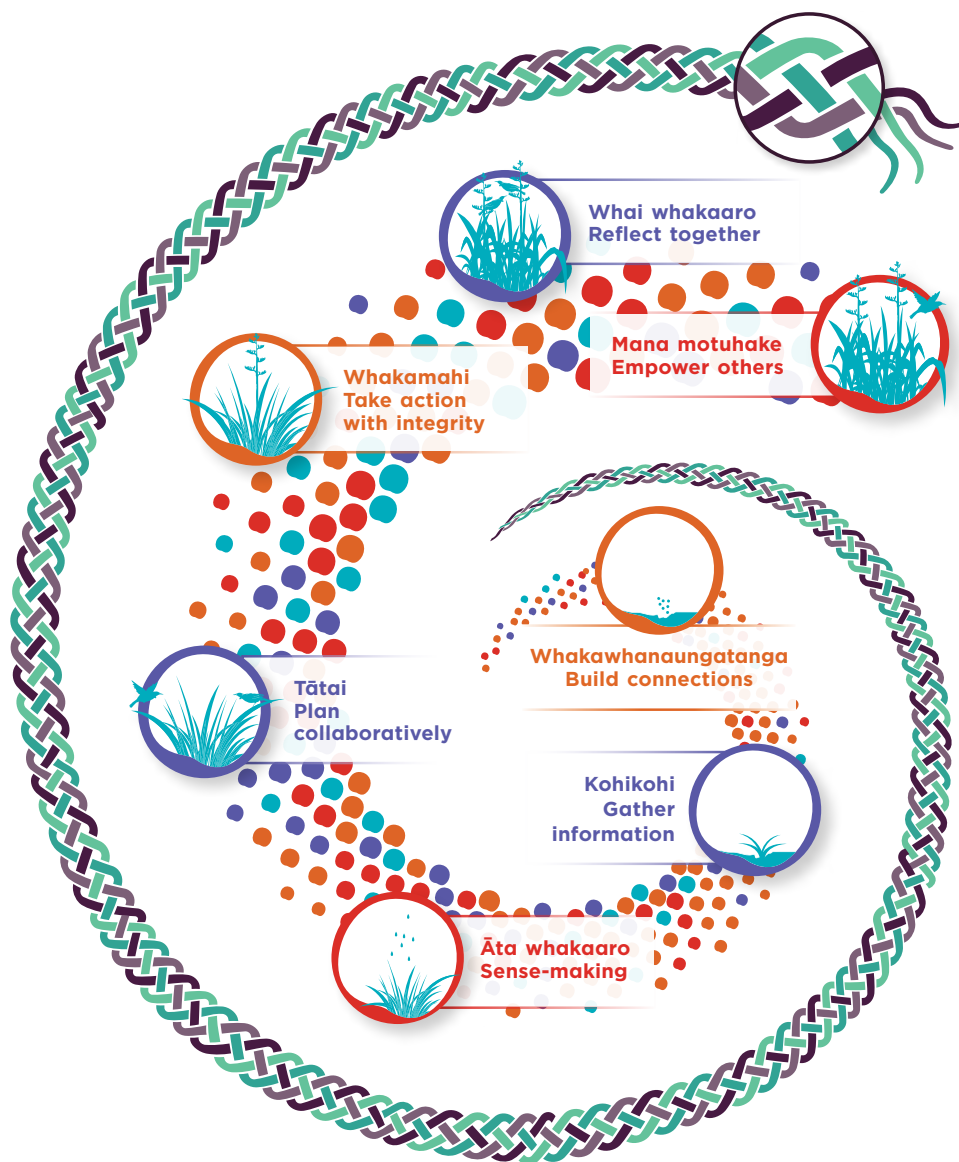
Outcomes-focussed

The expansion of Early Intervention Services (EIS) through to the end of Year 1 is underpinned by a strong focus on outcomes. This means that every aspect of the service – from planning and delivery to monitoring and evaluation – is designed to improve learner progress, continuity of learning, and deliver measurable impact.

To support this, the Ministry has developed a nationally consistent Progress and Outcomes Tool, co-designed with Massey University. Using a 0–6 impact. It is embedded within the Transition Toolkit and is used by specialists and Learning Support Coordinators (LSCs) during team reviews to evaluate learner progress and adjust support plans accordingly.

Learning Plans are central to this model. These plans are collaboratively developed by the team supporting the child, including EIS practitioners, classroom teachers, LSCs, family, and whānau. Each plan captures the learner's strengths, needs, and aspirations, and aligns support strategies with curriculum expectations such as Te Marautanga o Aotearoa, taiaho, Te Whāriki, and the New Zealand Curriculum. The plans include SMART goals and indicators of progress across Focus Areas such as peer relationships, routines, and belonging. They also serve as the foundation for inclusive classroom practice and continuity of learning.

This outcomes-focused approach focuses so support is meaningful, measurable, and responsive to each learner's needs. It also reinforces the Ministry's commitment to transparency, and continuous improvement, so that no learner falls through the gaps during their transition into school.



Focus Areas

CONTINUITY OF LEARNING

A child's prior learning, life experiences, skills, and relationships are recognised and strengthened, supporting a smoother and more confident transition.

FAMILIAR AND CLEAR ROUTINES

Helps mokopuna and children feel secure and reduces anxiety by providing predictable structures as they adjust to a new environment.

SAFETY AND BELONGING

Feeling safe and included is foundational for learning, enabling mokopuna and children to explore, take risks, and participate confidently in the school or kura community.

POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS (PEERS AND ADULTS)

Strong relationships with adults and peers fosters a sense of belonging, supports social-emotional development, and helps mokopuna and children engage more fully with learning.

Roles and responsibilities

One of the guiding principles of these guidelines is whakawhanaungatanga. At every stage of the transition process, all team members must focus on prioritising, understanding and meeting the aspirations whānau and families have for their mokopuna or child and support the value of tino rangatiratanga and mana motuhake in the decision-making process. Any concerns from families, whānau, and caregivers must be addressed throughout the process and over the multiple conversations during the months leading up to the child starting kura, school, and beyond.

If mokopuna or children have ongoing needs after the first 12 months of school or kura, then transition through to RTLb, then communication or behaviour services may be appropriate.

Whānau and family

This could be caregivers, parents or extended family who advocate on behalf of the child. As well as having a key role in their child's transition journey, the expectation is that whānau and family remain informed about their child's progress and outcomes, including specific outcomes for numeracy and literacy.

ECE and School or Kura team

Early learning teachers provide important information about learning strengths and preferences of the mokopuna or children prior to and during the transition. Part of their role is to inform the EI lead worker about learner needs and teaching strategies that have been effective up to this point. They will help inform the classroom teacher, of the ongoing learning strengths and needs of mokopuna or children.

Classroom teachers

Collaborate with the EI lead worker and Early learning teachers on planning pathways that align with the identified strengths and learning needs of mokopuna or children.

Teacher Aides (TAs)

Follow and implement planned strategies and guidance that reinforce continuity, routines, and relationships for mokopuna and children and their peers. They are a valuable resource who work as part of the teaching team to enable the teacher to have an effective relationship with the mokopuna or child.

Learning support coordinator and/or special education needs coordinator

Gradually take on the leadership role of meeting the mokopuna or child's and whānau or family's needs as they transition into school or kura. They will continue to strengthen the relationship with whānau or family over time and address any ongoing learning support needs or whānau or family concerns that arise.

Early Intervention team

Within the Early Intervention service, requests for support are welcome from parents, whānau and family, teachers and other agencies. In a school or kura context, a range of supports may be offered depending on the needs of the mokopuna or child and the adults alongside them.

Service Manager

Service Managers play a key role so that supports are in place across the whole of the Early Intervention Service. This includes timely support, implementation of proactive supports across Te Tūāpapa and workload management when tailored supports are required. The Service Manager has oversight over decisions for the specialist support and that individual plans are in place, including reporting on progress and outcomes. The focus of the support is on access to the curriculum and achievement. This means that support is focussed on the adults around the child in their education context.

Early Intervention lead worker

Leads and coordinates the entire transition process, working closely with whānau and family and the school team to assess the strengths and needs of the mokopuna or child. Guides the development and implementation of collaborative plans, including a tailored Learning Plan, that is consistent, evidence-informed support.

Specialist staff

This could include Early Intervention teacher, Speech Language Therapist, Psychologist, Kaitakawaenga, Special Education Adviser, Adviser on Deaf Children, and RTLb.

They contribute targeted expertise to support mokopuna and children during the transition. Their involvement is guided by the individual strengths and needs of each child and the level of support required. When there is more than one specialist on the team they work to support the lead worker's role in expanding teachers' capability, so that interventions are timely, coordinated, and evidence-informed. This may also include working alongside teachers in the classroom to support capability using coaching and other strengths-based adult learning models as appropriate.

Other providers

This could include Early Intervention Specialist Service providers and health-based professionals. They work alongside the school team and whānau or family to support the EI lead worker intervention, providing additional expertise and services as needed to support a smooth and successful transition. Mokopuna and children who access Early Intervention Services from another provider will have the same support as outlined in this practice guide.

Planning and managing service delivery for Service Managers

The Tātai (planning collaboratively) component of He Pikorua supports the identification and development of appropriate supports for mokopuna and children. Planning collaboratively with whānau and families, teachers, LSCs and SENCOs leads to effective outcomes that build the capabilities of teachers to support all mokopuna and children. This is outlined in the levels of support within Te Tūāpapa:

- › **Te Matua:** a whole classroom approach providing universal support may be appropriate. This may look like working alongside the classroom teacher, supporting planning, modelling and coaching with the implementation of strategies. A classroom teacher may find a whole classroom plan more effective to integrate into their planning and implement rather than individual plans for several mokopuna or children. A mokopuna or child's level of need does not necessarily correspond to the support offered e.g. mokopuna and children with multiple and complex needs may be best supported with a Te Matua approach.
- › **Te Kāhui:** a group of mokopuna or children may receive targeted support with specific aspects of their learning and wellbeing. This may look like adapting the curriculum, working alongside teachers, TAs and other school staff to support the achievement of goals and Focus Areas within the Learning Plan.
- › **Te Arotahi:** mokopuna and children have an individualised plan that monitors their progress and the impact of the work of the adults around them. This individual plan can include supports across Te Matua and Te Kahui as well as more tailored supports.

As teams progress through He Pikorua, Whai Whakaaro helps with tracking the impact of the work. Mana Motuhake supports reviewing progress and stepping back from tailored support.

Transition planning

Several key components contribute to successful transition planning for all mokopuna and children:

- › Consistent and measurable structures and outcomes are put into place, so the approach empowers and supports the mokopuna or child and their whānau or family within the inclusive framework of He Pikorua.
- › Measurable goals and outcomes are set up to support the process, not dictate it.
- › Each school or kura team uses its own unique supports within their own learning community. The learning community will determine how and when these supports are put into place and when to exit.

Focus Areas as measurable outcomes

Research indicates that successful transitions are grounded in evidence-informed, culturally sustaining practices that increase the likelihood of successful transitions for children and their families. A set of Focus Areas has been developed, based on a range of research sources, that are designed to support measurable outcomes. These Focus Areas provide EIS teams, school and kura staff, and learning specialists with a robust framework for planning and setting meaningful goals in partnership with whānau and families.

Each Focus Area is implemented across the three-phase timeline, where progress can be monitored at key points or stages.

The Focus Areas are:

- › **continuity of learning:** a child's prior learning, life experiences, skills, and relationships are recognised and strengthened, supporting a smoother and more confident transition.
- › **familiar and clear routines:** helps mokopuna and children feel secure and reduces anxiety by providing predictable structures as they adjust to a new environment.

- › **positive relationships (peers and adults):** strong relationships with adults and peers fosters a sense of belonging, supports social-emotional development, and helps mokopuna and children engage more fully with learning.
- › **safety and belonging:** feeling safe and included is foundational for learning, enabling mokopuna and children to explore, take risks, and participate confidently in the school or kura community.

Agreeing an overall aim

The aim is the overall purpose of our transition. The outcomes are the result of the actions through He Pikorua in Action.

Progress indicators

The purpose of the progress indicators is to help teams reflect together on the effect of a planned action or change on a learner's experience and outcomes. At regular times during planning, whānau, teachers, and other team members can use the scale to review and identify whether a change has low, moderate, or high impact. It also guides dialogue about what evidence can be used to show these impacts, ensuring that supports and interventions are targeted to meet the learner's needs effectively. Progress indicators within each Focus Area help the team set goals and monitor readiness to move to phase 2 and 3. These goals are tailored to the mokopuna or child and adjusted as needed.

What does this look like?

EXAMPLE: Phase 1 in action: Starting early | Collaborative Teaming

In **Phase 1**, the focus is on starting early and building strong relationships with shared understanding between the mokopuna or child, their whānau or family, and the school or kura team. The team might hold hui to explore the strengths, interests, and aspirations of the mokopuna or child and their whānau or family. This lays the foundation for whakawhanaungatanga and ensures that everyone feels heard and valued. An overall AIM for transition through the phases is also agreed.

Using the Focus Areas as a guide, the team identifies key areas for support, such as:

- › communication
- › social and emotional wellbeing
- › numeracy and literacy.

If the mokopuna or child shows strong social skills but needs help with transitions between activities, the team might prioritise goals that focus on routines and emotional regulation strategies (familiar and clear routines Focus Area). The whānau may also need support navigating school systems (safety and belonging Focus Area), so the team ensures clear communication pathways are in place. Each transition journey is shaped by the evolving needs of the mokopuna or child and their whānau or family.

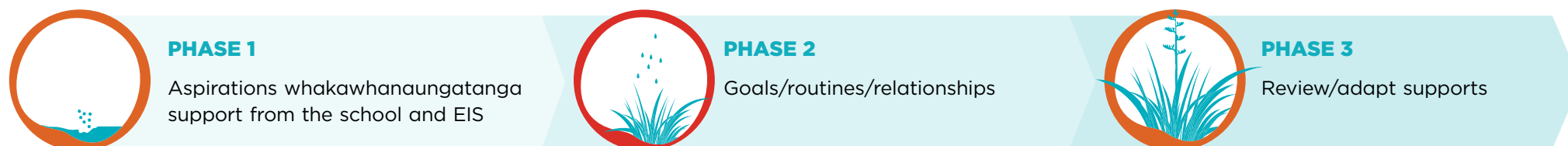
Progress indicators – measuring impact

An impact is an effect or influence on people or settings. These progress indicators are used to decide on impacts of the agreed aim for service, including impact for mokopuna or child, whānau and kaiako.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
No impact	Very low impact	Low impact	Moderate impact	Moderately high impact	High impact	Very high impact
This mahi has had no noticeable effect	This mahi has had minimal effect	This mahi has had a slight, somewhat noticeable effect	This mahi has had a noticeable but not substantial effect	This mahi has had a considerable effect that is clear	This mahi has had a significant impact that is easily observed and appreciated	This mahi has resulted in a transformative and highly significant effect
		As evidenced by: › › ›		As evidenced by: › › ›		As evidenced by: › › ›

A three-phase transition timeline

This guidance follows a three-phase process that begins up to a year before starting school or kura and may continue up to the end of Year 1. Progression from one phase to the next does not depend on timeframes, but on learner engagement and achievement of the key groundwork by the school or kura team supporting the child and family.



PHASE 1: Planning and Preparation

Teams will work with whānau or family to identify aspirations, build relationships, identify strengths and learning needs, and set the initial aim for the service through the phases. They will then agree on outcomes to support the overall aim, using the focus areas. prepare learner support plans. Whakawhanaungatanga, Kohikohi

Move to Phase 2 when initial information gathering and assessments are complete and the team has initial structures in place.

[Ata whakaaro Tātai](#)

PHASE 2: Strengthening Connections

Led by the EIS practitioner, the team continues to use the learner support plan to review relationships, establish routines, and target supports to the ongoing needs of the child, along with their whānau or family. School visits occur during this time along with any additional resources that may be required to set the learner up for success in their new learning environment. Ata whakaaro Tatāi

Move to Phase 3 when confidence and engagement are evident, and supports are stable. The EIS practitioner may gradually step back as the school team takes on the leadership role of the transition process.

PHASE 3: Embedding and Reflecting

School or kura teams consolidate learning, continue to embed routines, and review progress through the Learning Plan. This continues until the child and their whānau or family are settled and supports can be sustained beyond the first year of school.

[Whakamahi, Whai whakaaro, Mana motuhake](#)

This phased timeline guides adults in prioritising support areas throughout the journey into school or kura but is not definitive of how long each child will be supported. This is open to review and may change according to how settled the child is in their new environment.

The phases are expanded upon below:

PHASE 1: Planning and preparation

FOCUS: Building relationships, gathering information, setting the vision

FOCUS AREAS: Starting early | collaborative teaming | Whakawhanaungatanga

What will we be doing?

EIS lead collaboratively works with others to:

- › hold initial planning meetings with whānau and family, ECE provider, Learning Support, and school or kura staff to clarify who will be the team across learning support and school-based supports
- › co-construct Learning Plans with whānau and family including an overall aim for the service through the phases
- › enable and support whānau or family to make decisions about the school or kura their child will attend
- › identify current learner strengths, interests and supports as well as the strengths of the team supporting the learner
- › work with ECE teachers to determine current assessment documentation (based on Te Whāriki, the New Zealand curriculum) and use of any other supporting resources when developing Learning Plans.

What will we see?

- › New connections and relationships established between whānau or family, early learning service and school or kura.
- › Language, culture and identity are embedded into the Learning Plan.
- › He Pikorua collaborative inquiry approach and questions are used to develop a Learning Summary/map within the Learner Plan that is mokopuna or child-centred and involves whānau and families, LSCs, and other learning support providers.
- › Responsibilities for aspects of the Learner Plan and learner summary are clearly defined.
- › Timelines are agreed.

What will we record?

- › Whānau or family hopes and aspirations.
- › A Learning Plan is generated.
- › Learner summary built collaboratively. Sensory, medical or emotional needs identified alongside explicit curriculum connections such as the use of Kōwhiri Whakapae or other curriculum assessment documentation that outline current teaching strategies and best practice approaches for the learner.
- › How communication will occur between home and school or kura.
- › Outcomes with Focus Areas and current curriculum assessment documentation.
- › An overall aim agreed impacts across Whai Whakaaro.

PRACTICE EXAMPLE - LUCA

TE AROTAHI

We follow Luca through the three Phases of transition into and through year 1 at school. At each Phase He Pikorua in action is used to connect together, gather information related to the four Focus Areas and reflect on progress.

- › An Early intervention teacher (EIT) is working with Luca and his whānau at home and kindergarten. His EIS team also includes a speech-language therapist (SLT).
- › Luca has a support plan in place with goals generated from the Routines Based Interview. His goals are related to him participating at mat time by sitting alongside his peers, following one step instructions at familiar routines such as kai time and during play, and using familiar phrases in social contexts. A family level goal is for Luca's whānau to feel confident that Luca has the opportunity and support to transition happily to school with his peers.
- › Luca will be five in March and his whānau have enrolled him at his local school.

PHASE 1: Planning and preparation

FOCUS AREAS: Starting early, collaborative teaming, whakawhanaungatanga

- › Transition planning will start in November. His team will book a meeting with the school in December so they can plan ahead. His team at this stage will be his whānau, early learning kaiako, EIT and SLT, and then the school LSC and classroom teacher
- › At the first transition meeting the team, guided by He Pikorua in action (Whakawhanaungatanga), establish that the EIT will be the lead worker through Phases 2 and 3. They decide on how they will work together in terms of roles and responsibilities.
- › The whānau priority is for Luca to interact with peers at school as part of the Positive Relationships Focus Area and to continue his early literacy and maths learning. Using the 4 Focus Areas (Continuity of Learning, Clear Routines and Expectations, Safety and Belonging, Positive Relationships).

- › **An overall support aim of developing positive peer interactions through engaging in learning is agreed and support outcomes are established.**
- › Using Kohikohi reflective questions the team start to gather and share information together as follows:
 - They complete the learning profile including curriculum connections for numeracy and literacy. Through talking to the kaiako and LSC, and using Kōwhiri Whakapae progressions, the EIT is able to provide this information and make explicit links with NZC.
 - The EIT shares strengths, interests and strategies that have been effective in early learning and at home including specific practices from Kōwhiri Whakapae. Puzzles and music are positive ways to engage Luca. He also responds well to activities he can complete easily and to lots of positive praise and encouragement.
- › Luca's early learning kaiako has noticed that Luca shows lots of interest in letters when they are part of puzzles. He is also starting to understand more set phrases when they are repeated in an activity or game, e.g. "turn it around", "my turn next", "1,2,3, go!".
- › Over time, Luca has started to notice when singing happens at mat time and will gradually shift closer and closer to where his peers are sitting on the mat. This only happens around music. In other mat activities, for example when a big book is shared, he tends to lose interest and will move away.
- › The team agree that the SLT will work with the EIT to support kaiako to develop a visual timetable for the whole class.
- › The team use Whai Whakaaro to agree on impact measures, reflecting on the Focus Areas of Positive Relationships and Continuity of Learning.
- › The specialists talk to the service manager about teacher aide time and agree that this extra support is not needed at this time. As part of Tātai the Learning Profile is completed for Phase 1 - the EIT then enters the plan onto the digital system.
- › The Phase 2 hui is scheduled.

PHASE 2

Strengthening connections and supports (Transition Phase)

“Nāu te rourou, nāku te rourou, ka ora te iwi”

Our skills and resources combined will ensure the wellbeing of everyone.

Agreed movement from one phase to the next occurs when the mokopuna or child, whānau or family, and support team review progress against goals, share perspectives, and collectively decide that the priorities of the current phase have been met.

FOCUS: Establish and practice routines, connection building, supporting changes

FOCUS AREAS: Continuity of learning | peer relationships | consistent routines and expectations | safety and wellbeing

What will we be doing?

EIS lead collaboratively works with classroom teachers to:

- › support planned whānau or family visits to school or kura
- › integrate the use of social stories and other appropriate visual resources
- › identify key routines that will continue from ECE or home to new school or kura. This includes the use of visuals, communication devices, and other routines
- › introduce buddy systems if appropriate. See Tuakana-teina model
- › identify changes and supports within the physical learning environment - seating, sensory needs
- › help teachers and support staff prepare the learning environment
- › use similar daily schedules across ECE to school or kura.

- › begin using social, emotional and sensory supports
- › collaborate with teachers on class-wide strategies and other supports specific to the mokopuna or child such as small group activities Mana motuhake – empower others.

What will we see?

- › Teachers and support staff prepare learning environment and learning resources.
- › Continued partnership with Learning Support, school or kura staff and whānau or family.
- › Clear routines and expectations that meet learning needs.
- › Some schools or kura will review the timings of each phase to accommodate those who turn up to school close to the start of school term.
- › Communication with whānau or family and wider team that is timely and ongoing.
- › A plan is in place that refers specifically to the Focus Areas with clear outcomes and progress indicators. This is reviewed regularly based on the readiness to learn of the mokopuna or child.
- › Attendance is reviewed as appropriate depending on progress of the mokopuna or child.

What will we record?

- › Monitor a child's strengths and connections with tools like the progress indicators within the Learning Plan and learner summary.
- › Agreed times to review the Learning Plan.
- › Applying the progress indicators to Focus Areas in the Learning Plan. (See Kowhiti Whakapae).
- › Literacy Checkpoint (Level 1) – review and recognise progress (The Expanded New Zealand Curriculum guidance may be used to inform this).
- › Numeracy Checkpoint (Level 1) - review and recognise progress (The Expanded New Zealand Curriculum guidance may be used to inform this).

PRACTICE EXAMPLE - LUCA

PHASE 2: Transition Phase, strengthening connections and supports

FOCUS AREAS: Continuity of learning, peer relationships, consistent routines and expectations, safety and wellbeing

- › The team meet to plan for Luca starting at school, including starting date and the routine for drop off for the first week. Whai Whakaaro measures are reviewed from the previous phase and new ones identified for Phase 2. The team agree on two goals to help support the overall aim:
 1. Luca will start recognising his name from a list of 5 names of his peers.
 2. He will learn to use the social phrases “can I play?” and “my turn” appropriately in simple games
 - › The EIT as lead worker puts together a list of dates and times when they will be at the school so everyone can plan ahead. The EIT agrees to liaise with the SLT as needed. The plan includes times when the kaiako and LSC will be released from the classroom to meet with them, as well as times in the classroom.
- › Luca starts school. His kaiako uses the previously successful strategies to engage him such as using music and positive praise. The kaiako is also learning to recognise when he is becoming overwhelmed in the classroom and will then support him to go to a quieter space, such as book corner.
 - › At part of Laying the Groundwork the EIT is supporting with the implementation of a whole class visual timetable and has emphasised the importance of using text and consistent language alongside the pictures. The EIT spends time with the kaiako in the classroom regularly to develop specific engagement strategies to support implementation of identified outcomes. Consideration is given to how these strategies sit within Te Matua and Te Kāhui, along with intentional support for Luca.
 - › The EIT models using consistent language in literacy and numeracy games, in order to help Luca learn the appropriate phrases for the games, e.g. “I finished it”, “my turn”, “do you want to play?”

PHASE 3

Embedding and reflecting

“Nāu te rourou, nāku te rourou, ka ora te iwi” Our skills and resources combined will ensure the wellbeing of everyone.

FOCUS: Strengthening independence, monitoring progress, refining supports, ongoing support and review

FOCUS AREAS: Clear routines and expectations | continuity of learning | mokopuna and children are part of a safe and supportive learning environment

What will we be doing?

Classroom teachers with LSC and SENCO will:

- › review the Learning Plan – goals, and agreed outcomes, impact scale
- › hold regular review meetings with teaching staff and whānau or family to adjust learning goals and supports
- › be planning transition to other supports as appropriate.

What will we see?

- › Mokopuna and children’s culture, identity, and language are embedded in classroom texts, activities, and displays.
- › Peer support and relationships are beginning to emerge.
- › Routines and visual schedules are embedded.
- › TA facilitates independence and support as part of the teaching team.
- › The learning environment reflects the child’s learning preferences and strengths.
- › Learning supports are accessed by children, whānau, and families.

What will we record?

- › Update assessment using the progress indicators scale to measure growth in receptive and expressive communication.
- › Reflect using Whai whakaaro to measure the impact of the overall aim for service that was agreed at Phase One.
- › Progress is monitored for social and emotional wellbeing and strengths.
- › Literacy Checkpoint (Level 1) – review and recognise progress (The Expanded New Zealand Curriculum guidance may be used to inform this).
- › Numeracy Checkpoint (Level 1) – review and recognise progress (The Expanded New Zealand Curriculum guidance may be used to inform this).

PRACTICE EXAMPLE - LUCA

PHASE 3: Embedding and reflecting, supporting mana motuhake

Focus Areas: Continuity of Learning, Clear Routines and Expectations, Mokopuna and Children are part of a safe and supportive learning environment

- › The team meet regularly to review Luca's plan, to celebrate achievements and to add additional strategies.
- › The focus has shifted to supporting peer relationships alongside continuity of learning as Luca is starting to spontaneously ask "can I play?" when his peers are doing an activity of interest to him, particularly word puzzles. His peers are now welcoming him into these games.
- › **The team use Whai Whakaaro to review the and then identify new goals for Phase 3 which relate to the overall aim. These include:**
 - 1. Recognising his name amongst the names of the whole class**
 - 2. Recognising some letters in books**
- › The team continue to meet regularly and further refine supports. Luca is starting to engage in structured repetitive activities in the classroom with his peers, and is watching closely when they play tag in the playground. He is showing interest in the visual

timetable and spending longer at the mat, lengthening his attention to explicit instructions from his kaiako. He is starting to predict activities – for example, he knows when to choose his favourite literacy puzzle and when to choose the teddy bear counters for maths activities.

- › Towards the end of Year 1, the team review Luca's progress and invite the local RTLB to join the review meeting. Luca is now regularly joining mat time for a variety of activities and is engaging in some literacy and maths tasks. He is able to recognise his name in the class list. He is choosing to look at books and starting to recognise some letters in the text. He is joining in alongside his peers when they play tag at lunchtime. His whānau report he enjoys going to school and now looks forward to it every day.
- › **The team review the outcomes, measure the impact and plan next steps using Whai Whakaaro:**
- › The RTLB indicates that continued support for Luca's learning will include a Tier 2 intervention for structured literacy.
- › The SLT indicates that the Communication service will also start, with a focus on developing expressive language and social communication.

The Learning Plan

The Learning Plan is collaboratively developed by the EIS lead worker with the school or kura team and is based on whānau or family aspirations and mokopuna or child strengths and learning needs. Teams may choose a variety of ways to develop plans. The focus is on a seamless transition from one learning environment or setting to another in a way that meets the additional learning needs of the learner and whānau or family aspirations.

Ideally regular updates on the progress of the learner during the transition will occur and the progress indicators will be applied along with any supporting evidence for all learning outcomes.

Hui 1: Phase 1	Hui 2: Phase 2	Hui 3: Phase 3
Whānau and family aspirations: what are the hopes and dreams for the mokopuna's learning, wellbeing, and identity? Mokopuna strengths and aspirations: what does the mokopuna bring, enjoy, want to learn, or feel excited about? Whānau concerns: include medical needs, safety concerns and other wellbeing needs. Collaborative teaming: who is required to support this transition? Aim and outcomes setting: integrate the Focus Areas, whānau aspirations and current learning strengths and needs. Literacy and numeracy: provide targeted interventions, observe and document progress. Review and next steps: date and plan for next review, including actions and responsibilities, progress indicators and how progress will be measured and celebrated.	Emerging strengths, interests and sensory supports: what does the mokopuna enjoy, want to learn or feel excited about? Goal setting: integrate the Focus Areas, whānau aspirations and current learning strengths and needs. Literacy and numeracy: provide targeted interventions, observe and document progress. Review and next steps: date and plan for next review, including actions and responsibilities, progress indicators and how progress will be measured and celebrated. Review supports for learner: what changes need to be made to the environment to accommodate emerging needs?	Goal setting: integrate the Focus Areas, whānau aspirations and current learning strengths and needs. Literacy and numeracy: provide targeted interventions, observe and document progress. Review and next steps: date and plan for next review, including actions and responsibilities, progress indicators and how progress will be measured and celebrated.

How to use the Learning Plan template

Setting an overall aim and deciding on outcomes using the Focus Areas outlined in this guide bring the structure and focus to the Learning Plan. The aspirations of the whānau or family are set up in the first meeting (hui) and may change as the transition develops. In the second and third meeting, outcomes are adjusted to meet the emerging strengths, interests and sensory needs of the learner. This may also include additional professional development for staff or learning support and/or property modifications to be made before the learner starts school. It is important to start early so families have a clear sense of direction about how the transition process will unfold.

The Learning Plan template can be accessed on the EIS Confluence page.

Mana motuhake – maintaining progress

As the child transitions from Early Intervention Services (EIS) to other forms of support, decision-making transfers increasingly to the team and the whānau or family surrounding the child.

It is essential to review the composition of this team to ensure clarity about roles and responsibilities. This includes the Learning Support Coordinator (LSC), communication and behaviour services if appropriate, and other adults involved. This team must be equipped to make informed decisions about the child's next steps, particularly during periods of ongoing transition.

A well-informed, collaborative team is key so that the child's transition is smooth and that their learning and development continue to be supported effectively beyond the intervention guidance outlined in this document.

Supporting resources and research

To support this process, educators and support staff can draw on a range of resources, including:

Literature Review:

- › Sally Peters Literature Review: educationcounts.govt.nz/publications/ECE/98894

Planning and transition

- › [Te Aro Ako](#)
- › PATH planning tool – [Te Ara Ako - Learning pathways in times of change: PATH planning tool](#)
- › [School Transitions – reflecting on culture, curriculum and connections](#)
- › Teacher aide learning and resources: [Teacher aide practice, Taurangi - Teachers and teacher aides working together](#)

Literacy goals

- › Literacy resources include: [phonics checks](#) and the [Te Aho Arataki Marau – mō te Ako i](#) to ensure continuity and coherence in learning pathways.

Assessment and curriculum

- › The [Kōwhiri Whakapae assessment tool](#), and the expanded curriculum guidance in [Te Mātaiao](#) for both general and mathematics learning.
- › Early learning settings can refer to [Te Whāriki](#) for foundational curriculum principles.
- › Kōwhiri Whakapae – [assessment examples](#)

