

**Whare kōhungahunga Māori, teitei ka eke:
“High-quality” early learning for tamariki-
mokopuna Māori**

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Abstract

This thesis affirms Māori ways of knowing, being and doing by reclaiming Māori understandings of “high-quality” early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori. High-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori is a term used regularly in education policy throughout Aotearoa New Zealand. This is problematic as quality is subject to numerous understandings – quality for one person may not be quality for another. For Māori it is particularly contentious because quality has been largely defined and dominated by Anglo-Saxon discourse.

This research is underpinned by Kaupapa Māori theory and methodology. Pūrākau, informed by semi-structured interviews, and document analysis are the methods used to examine whānau perspectives of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori. The early childhood curriculum, *Te Whāriki* (Ministry of Education, 2017a) and Te Tauākī Kaupapa (the philosophy statement, TTK) are explored as critical documents that support whānau perspectives.

Nana Letty’s (Dr Ereti Brown) pūrākau foregrounds this research. A revered kuia who has taught and managed Māori Playcentre, Kōhanga Reo, and Puna Reo, Nana Letty’s pūrākau provides a historical, political, social, and cultural context to understandings of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori. Whānau views of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori are then explored through three overarching āhuatanga: Te Tiriti o Waitangi, Whakapapa and Te Mana o Tamariki-Mokopuna Māori (the three findings chapters). The thesis argues that despite *Te Whāriki* and TTK reference to these āhuatanga, the extent to which they can provide support for whānau views is limited, and a deeper level of comprehension is required. Unless these āhuatanga are understood through Māori historical, philosophical, pedagogical and theoretical understandings, they are highly unlikely to be recognised or enacted authentically as key features of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori.

He Mihi

Tihei Mauri ora

Ki te taha o tōku koroua

Ko Moehau te maunga

Ko Tīkapakapa te moana

Ko Waihou te awa

Ko Tainui te waka

Ko Ngāti Naunau te hapū

Ko Ngāti Maru te iwi

Ko Matai Whetū te marae

Ko Watana te whānau

Ki te taha o tōku kuia

Ko Maungatautari te maunga

Ko Piako te awa

Ko Tainui te waka

Ko Ngāti Werewere te hapū

Ko Ngāti Hauā te iwi

Ko Kai-a-te-mata te marae

Ko Wirihana te whānau

On my grandfather's side I whakapapa to the mountain of Moehau, the ocean of Tīkapakapa, the river of Waihou, the canoe of Tainui, the sub-tribe of Naunau and the iwi of Maru. My ancestral meeting place here is Matai Whetū. My whānau name is Watana.

On my grandmother's side I whakapapa to the mountain of Maungatautari, the river of Piako, the canoe of Tainui, the sub-tribe of Werewere, and the iwi of Hauā. My ancestral meeting place here is Kai-a-te-mata. My whānau name is Wirihana.

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Chapter One: Introduction

Undertaking doctoral research requires a huge amount of dedication – both academically and culturally. Māori (Indigenous people of Aotearoa New Zealand) who conduct research for, by and with Māori (L.T. Smith, 1999), are responsible, accountable and answerable to Te Ao Māori (the Māori world). Eyes and ears, seen and unseen, are observing our physical and metaphysical being. We are expected to be honest, respectful and humble. Most importantly, we must be committed to ensuring the wellbeing of Māori is at the forefront of our research – and in everything we do as Māori. As a Māori researcher, I honour the principles of Kaupapa Māori (Māori principles).

This introductory chapter provides my reason for undertaking this research as well as my connection to and positioning in the study. It includes a brief overview of how and where the research took place, the research questions, and an outline of each chapter. It concludes with a note on how Māori language is used.

Why this Research

While undertaking my master’s degree working in an early childhood education centre, I was introduced to the term high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori (Māori children, grandchildren).¹ I found this expression both intriguing and confusing. Although I have some ideas about teaching and learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori, I was curious about what high-quality provision looked like. My non-Māori colleagues acknowledged they too were perplexed by the term and felt it needed to be theorised by whānau Māori.

In trying to find the genesis of the term high-quality for tamariki-mokopuna Māori, I was guided to *The Māori Education Strategy: Ka Hikitia Accelerating Success 2013–2017* (Ministry of Education [MoE], 2013). This document includes a section titled “Early Learning,” which addresses issues of quality for tamariki-mokopuna Māori and whānau (family) in early childhood education. The requirements laid out in this section are that “All Māori children participate in ‘high-quality’ early learning” (p. 31). Determining what constitutes high-quality early learning is problematic because the word *quality* is subject to multiple interpretations –

¹ Some people use either tamariki or mokopuna to describe Māori children. To ensure respect for all views, the wording tamariki-mokopuna from the 1996 Māori curriculum of *Te Whāriki* (see MoE, 1996, p.31) is used principally to describe Māori children in this thesis. However, there are times when singular terms are used – such as direct quotes or when scholars/curriculums are specific about terminology.

what is quality for one person may not be quality for another. Regarding Māori education, it is contentious primarily because quality has been largely defined and dominated by Anglo-Saxon discourse (Dahlberg, Moss & Pence, 2007) rather than Indigenous Kaupapa Māori discourse (Bishop & Glynn, 1999). The noticeable absence of research focused on high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori through Māori traditional knowledge, has been the motivation behind this research.

Early Childhood Education in Aotearoa New Zealand

Currently, early childhood education in Aotearoa New Zealand is comprised of six recognised regulated early learning services: centre-based, home-based and hospital-based, Kōhanga Reo, Playcentre and Playgroups (MoE, 2018c). Centre-based services include early childhood education and care centres, Kindergartens, preschools, crèches and day-care centres. Considered the most common, centred-based services are administered by teachers with an early childhood education teaching qualification. Home-based services are generally managed from a private home and provide an early learning educational programme for a small group of children. Home educators do not necessarily have a formal qualification. However, their services are supported by a qualified early childhood teacher. Hospital-based early learning services are specifically for sick children in hospital and administered by trained early childhood teachers. Kōhanga Reo are generally administered by Te Kōhanga Reo National Trust and managed and taught by whānau (family) and kaiako (teachers).² Playcentre are parent-led centres. Previously, Playcentres administered their own qualification; however, parents are now required to undertake a New Zealand Certificate in Early Childhood Education and Care (G. Croad, personal communication, April 3, 2019). The Ministry of Education website states playgroups are considered the most informal of the early childhood establishments and are facilitated by parents of children attending these sessions. Playgroups operate from places such as private homes, churches or community halls. These groups are certified as opposed to holding a license to operate like early childhood centres, therefore they do not require a trained teacher to facilitate their group.

² “Tohu Whakapakari [strength and development qualification] is the 3-year training programme for kaiako working in Kōhanga Reo. It is New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) approved and is considered a Level 7 [qualification, according to the] New Zealand Qualifications Framework along with Diplomas and a Bachelor’s degree” (Tangere-Royal, 2012, p. 13).

These six early childhood educational groups are the most recognised by the Ministry of Education. However, there are other forms of early childhood educational centres. Although small in numbers, Puna Reo, Puna Kōhungahunga Māori (Māori immersion language spring for the young) are Māori-medium licensed early childhood centre services operating throughout Aotearoa New Zealand. Discussed in more depth in Chapter 3: Nana Letty; these services developed from Te Kōhanga Reo movement (Morehu, 2009) and are responsible to the Ministry of Education. The two centres in this study are Māori medium early childhood centres – described in this research as Whare Kōhungahunga Māori (WKM).

My Positioning in this Research

I am a kaiako (teacher) at Te Kōhanga Reo o Ritimana (Ritimana),³ I have been involved with Ritimana for approximately 18 years and currently teach 2 days a week. While I have had breaks away from Ritimana to pursue employment in other educational fields, I always find a reason to return. Most of our kaimahi (staff) have been at Ritimana for over 20 years. Our kuia (woman elder), Dr Waiora Port, who is now in her 80s and one of the original kaiako, has been a strong advocate of Ritimana from its inception in 1984. The years of dedication to Māori-medium early childhood education, I believe, demonstrates our collective commitment to tamariki-mokopuna and whānau Māori.

Without doubt, my early childhood educational experiences influenced my decision to work in Māori education. One of my most memorable childhood experiences was commencing Māori Playcentre in 1967. Under the protection and guidance of Aunty Letty Brown (Dr Ereti Brown, also affectionately known as Nana Letty), I was nurtured and educated in a safe and secure Māori-centric environment, where being Māori was exciting.

Nana Letty is a revered kuia, Māori-medium early childhood expert, Māori advocate, community mobiliser and social justice activist. Dr Aroha Harris’s article “Letty Brown, Wahine Toa” (2002) is a testament to Nana Letty’s outstanding work with and for the Māori community in Tāmaki Makaurau – mostly in Te Atatū North (now known as Te Atatū Peninsula), a suburb of Waipareira (West Auckland). Nana Letty’s pūrākau, presented in Chapter 3, chronicles her involvement and dedication to Māori Playcentre, Kōhanga Reo and

³ Although Ritimana Kōhanga Reo still maintains the name Kōhanga Reo, they are a licensed Māori-medium full-immersion early childhood centre who have a direct relationship with the Ministry of Education. Kōhanga Reo are traditionally under the auspices of Te Kōhanga Reo Trust.

Puna Reo. Nana Letty's mahi (work) alongside the mentoring from many incredible wāhine (women) Māori (also known as the aunties) living in Waipareira, influenced my decision to work with and for tamariki-mokopuna, whānau, hapori (community) hapū (sub-tribe) and iwi Māori (Māori tribe).

I consider myself privileged to have received a Māori-centric early childhood education. What was recognisable in those early teachings was the aunties' confidence in our (tamariki-mokopuna Māori) abilities. Aunties Letty Brown, Claire Rodgers, Rehi Nobel, Ellen Wineti, Betty Ngata and my mother Kahurangi (Eva) Watana Mataira Taylor (and many more) were selfless in their commitment to working with tamariki-mokopuna and whānau Māori. They were kind and loving and recognised the mana (divine spirit) in all tamariki-mokopuna and whānau Māori.

Recognising mana – divine spirit in Māori is by no means a new phenomenon in Te Ao Māori (Māori world); it is embedded in whakapapa (genealogy) Māori, deriving from metaphysical beginnings to our physical presence (Marsden 2003; Reedy, 2013). The aunties taught us about our interconnectedness to a world far beyond our physical being. We listened to oral narrations of pūrākau and learnt waiata (songs), poi (ball with string for swirling) kapa haka (Māori dance) and mau rākau (weaponry). All aunties were native Māori speakers (first language speakers of Māori language) and spoke frequently in te reo Māori (Māori language).

Laughter and smiles were regular but there were also times when the aunties were silent. As a young child, I knew silence generally implied something significant had happened – like someone had departed from the physical world (passed away). As a 4-year-old, I was always interested in the mystique of the aunties' silence and believed they were communicating through other means to other people to another world. While my fascination as a 4-year-old has continued for over 50 years, I recognise that I do not possess the deeper understanding required to talk comprehensively about this other world or what is considered esoteric knowledge. Apirana Ngata warned of “A half-pie Maori, who pretends a knowledge he does not possess” (Ngata, 1972, p. 4). This is someone I do not want to be. For this very reason, I am dependent on intellectuals who understand this enigmatic world.

Many Māori scholars talk eloquently about the other world and are well versed in Māori cosmology, ontology, epistemology, axiology and theology. One such scholar was Reverend (Rev.) Māori Marsden. Ahukaramū Charles Royal anthologised and edited Rev. Marsden's writings, producing a “guide to his thinking, his passions and his concerns” (Marsden, 2003, p.

viii). Marsden described the journey in Te Ao Māori as an evolutionary process, traversing spiritual and physical worlds, encompassing the realms of Te Korekore (potential being), Te Pō (becoming) and Te Ao Marama (being). He explained Te Korekore (often interpreted as the void, meaninglessness or nothingness), as “the realm between non-being and being: that is, the realm of potential being” (p. 20). Te Korekore transitions through Te Pō, to Te Ao Marama, from darkness to light, essentially moving from becoming to being.

It is important for me to acknowledge the three realms and particularly my presence within them. To me, my physical presence in Te Ao Marama, the realm of being, comes with responsibilities. Irrespective of my role, I am conscious that I am interconnected to Te Ao Māori through whakapapa, therefore I am answerable to Te Ao Māori. Regardless of my profession or everyday engagements, being Māori requires me to be committed to working for and with Māori. This requires me to be pono (honest and truthful) in my daily interactions.

Pono – honesty and truthful are core values in this research; therefore, it was important to ensure they were enacted in a meaningful way throughout this study. With the support of a proficient te reo Māori speaker, I sought to articulate my positioning. Together we created the following whakataukī (proverb):

Kia whāia te mahi matatika, ka pono te rangahau – honest face, truthful research.

This whakataukī is the title of the methodology chapter (Chapter 3) and it is something that I have committed to throughout this research.

Sharing this pūrākau (story) of my journey is deliberate. Clearly being Māori influences my personal and professional decisions, thus I acknowledge my own subjectivity within this research. My lived experiences being Māori have influenced the way this research has been designed. Being Māori and committed to working for, by and with Māori (L.T. Smith, 2009), clarifies my proximity to this research. I recognise my voice throughout this study; however, it must be emphasised, my voice is not intended to dominate or to diminish the credibility of the research. My voice supports my engagement with whānau participants – helps to form an authentic relationship with whānau – and exposes my interconnectedness to this research – my personal relationship with this research and my being Māori in this research. Marsden (1992) concurred, when he argued “The route to Māoritanga through abstract interpretation is a dead end. The way can only lie through a passionate, subjective approach. That is more likely to lead to a goal” (p. 117).

Despite my positioning, being Māori within a Western academic environment has been challenging. To complete this study, I (like many Māori students and academics) had to traverse rules, directives and physical spaces, demarcated by Western ways of being, while trying to maintain my loyalty to Kaupapa Māori. This has been difficult. Dr Arapera Royal Tangaere (2012) knows this space well. She cautioned “The challenge as a Māori academic was the constant awareness of academia versus culture” (p. 17). Like Royal Tangaere, L.T. Smith (2005) and others know these tensions. L.T. Smith (2005) suggested Māori and Indigenous researchers seek comfort and answers from within our own communities. The solace of safe spaces has been valuable. There have been instances where I have found the disharmony between Western and Māori ways confronting. Being Māori, I am obliged to stop what I am doing if friends dropped by to visit and engage in whakawhanaungatanga (relationship building) and manaakitanga (respect and hospitality). This requires me to offer refreshments, thus the nearest communal tearoom is a place to provide this tikanga (protocol). A requirement of tikanga is to also introduce manuhiri (visitors) to those present in the tearoom. However, my enactment of tikanga (offering refreshments and introductions) has been met with disapproval by some people in the academic space in which I am positioned. Sadly, being Māori, adhering to Māori ways of knowing and being, has not always been welcomed in Western academic spaces. To address historical injustices, to challenge disparities and subjugation of our people, to reaffirm our philosophical, theoretical and pedagogical knowledges, requires safe spaces to be Māori— especially safe academic spaces.

Another example of differences between Western and Māori ways of being is when Western academia asks that large quotes from scholars’ work be paraphrased. As Māori, we need to kia tūpato (be careful), especially concerning the words of a tohunga (expert), rangatira (leader, chief, academic) or someone who has passed (died). To rewrite their words is to takahia te mana (trample, abuse the essence, the prestige), “the sacredness of the language” (Reedy, 2013, p. 50) they have written. The same applies to the spoken word. These are my understandings, what I have been taught. The power of language, in te reo Māori or in English, verbal or non-verbal, is an extremely important teaching for all Māori and especially important when teaching tamariki-mokopuna Māori. These elements are discussed in more depth in Chapter 5: Whakapapa, and Chapter 6: Te Mana o Tamariki-Mokopuna Māori. Sharing examples of my auhi (anguish) with those who understand has been valuable as it has helped me to refocus on the importance of this research – to claim space for Māori to share their theoretical and philosophical perspectives of high-quality early learning for tamariki Māori.

Overview of the Research

This research does not follow a conventional pathway. Nana Letty's pūrākau is a chronicle of her life as a kaiako, manager and kuia across Māori-medium early childhood education. Nana Letty is considered a repository of Māori knowledge (Waitangi Tribunal, 2013), and an expert in Māori-medium early childhood education, therefore her philosophical and theoretical understandings of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori are critical to this research. Nana Letty's theories underpin this research providing kaitiakitanga (guardianship), and mātauranga (knowledge and wisdom).

This project is a small qualitative study, conducted across two Māori-medium early childhood centres (MMECC) in Te ika a Māui, the North Island of Aotearoa. Māori medium early childhood education centres are limited in numbers, compared to Kōhanga reo, therefore it was important to try and ensure anonymity for the two centres involved this research. Some MMECC have personalised names representing a rohe (area), a tūpuna (ancestor) or hapori. A more common term used throughout Aotearoa is *Puna Reo* (language spring). Due to the possibility of identification, a neutral name for both centres: Whare Kōhungahunga Māori (WKM – Māori house for the young) was chosen for this study.

The Māori title of the research, *Whare Kōhungahunga Māori, teitei ka eke*, was gifted by my whanaunga (relative). The title describes a Māori house, he wāhi haumaruru (a safe place) where tamariki-mokopuna Māori can ascend to the highest point. This name encapsulates a kotahitanga (unified) approach where all tamariki-mokopuna Māori progress together to attain high-quality Māori-centric early learning.

Kaupapa Māori is an appropriate methodology for this research. Pūrākau informed by document analysis and semi-structured interviews are the methods used to present and discuss overall themes and findings. Pūrākau is also the methodology used to write this thesis. The findings chapters (4, 5 and 6) include various forms of literature and scholarship, rather than including a separate literature review chapter.

The overall question for this research asks:

What key elements ensure tamariki Māori in Whare Kōhungahunga Māori early childhood contexts receive a high-quality Māori-centric early learning education?

This question is supported by three sub-questions:

1. What is high-quality early learning from the perspective of whānau Māori who educate tamariki in Whare Kōhungahunga Māori?
2. In what ways does the national early childhood curriculum *Te Whāriki* (MoE, 2017a) support whānau perspectives of high-quality early learning for tamariki Māori?
3. In what ways does Te Tauākī Kaupapa (TTK – the philosophy statement) of Whare Kōhungahunga Māori incorporate whānau perspectives of high-quality early learning for tamariki Māori?

Ten whānau across the two Whare Kōhungahunga Māori (WKM) were interviewed for this study. Whānau participants were given the option of choosing their own pseudonyms – some did, and others asked me to choose. All whānau participants identified as wāhine Māori (Māori women). Whānau consist of one kuia, Āwhina;⁴ one kaiwhakahaere (manager), Jane; four mātua (parents), S.W, Andrea, Kaha and Tauira; and four kaiako, Ātaahua, Papatūānuku, Wairua and Pono. Āwhina was raised by her kuia in a rural area where the community was predominately Māori. S.W, Andrea, Tauira, Ātaahua, Papatūānuku and Wairua were also raised in a rural area, where the community was mostly Māori. Pono, Kaha and Jane’s upbringing was in an urban area, where their community was predominantly Māori and Pasifika people. Similar to Kōhanga Reo, kaiako, kaiwhakahaere and kuia in this study “are ...both teachers and whānau. They bring ...both their professional perspectives as teachers...and responsibilities as whānau” (McKenzie, 2006, p. 41).

The participants in this research were interviewed separately in an environment chosen by them (discussed more in depth in the research methodology chapter). All interviews were conducted by me, audio recorded, and notes were taken as necessary. When interviews were finished, I transcribed them myself and emailed them (posted two) to participants for approval, disapproval or, when necessary, amendment. On return, I went through each interview carefully. I initially concentrated on the occurrence and reoccurrence of regular themes – explicit messages. However, I also focused on implicit messages. This required an enormous amount of repetition as Māori words can have multiple meanings. Also, a singular response by one whānau may require further theorising - therefore must be considered. For example,

⁴ There are instances when participant names refer to specific Māori elements or meanings. An example of this is Wairua – the pseudonym of one of the whānau participants. The context/discussion informs whether it is the person or the element.

knowledge of the history of Te Tiriti o Waitangi⁵ (The Treaty of Waitangi) was considered essential by one whānau and referenced by another whānau participant. Two responses might appear minimal; however, all whānau responses interconnected with Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Also, their attendance in a WKM, a MMECC, is a right afforded by Te Tiriti o Waitangi, hence the importance of this chapter when theorising high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori.

Whānau perspectives of high-quality early learning for tamariki Māori produced three main overarching āhuatanga (features): Te Tiriti o Waitangi, Whakapapa and Te Mana o Tamariki-Mokopuna Māori (the divine spirit of the Māori child). These āhuatanga, inclusive of interrelated elements, are presented as findings chapters. Each chapter examines the āhuatanga and connecting support elements independently – commencing with a brief overview of relevant literature relating to the subject matter or element, followed by whānau perspectives. Ways in which *Te Whāriki: He Whāriki Mātauranga mō Ngā Mokopuna o Aotearoa: Early Childhood Curriculum* (MoE, 2017a) and TTK support and incorporate whānau perspectives of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori are observed. Findings chapters finish with a section focused on strengths and concerns, followed by an overall summary.

Outline of Chapters

Chapter 1, this chapter provides the reader with an outline of why I undertook this research, followed by my pūrākau sharing my influences and explaining my positioning. An overview of the study was provided, inclusive of the naming of the study, whānau participants, key research question and sub-questions, and an outline of the thesis chapters.

Chapter 2, the research methodology chapter, titled *Kia whāia te mahi matatika, ka pono te rangahau*, begins with an overview of Kaupapa Māori theory and methodology. This is followed by a brief synopsis of Kaupapa Māori theory in Māori-medium early childhood education, an overview of the research, inclusive of research design, methodologies, methods, data-gathering phases, data analysis and matatika (ethics).

⁵ Aotearoa New Zealand's founding document, authenticating the partnership between the English colonisers and the Indigenous Māori people (discussed in more depth in Chapter 4: Te Tiriti o Waitangi).

This chapter concludes with the haerenga, the journeying through each phase of this research from recruitment, whakawhanaungatanga (relationship building) with WKM, data gathering, interviews and data analysis.

Chapter 3, foregrounds Māori-medium early childhood education through Nana Letty Brown's pūrākau. Nana Letty has taught and led three Māori-medium early childhood settings: Māori Playcentre, Kōhanga Reo and Puna Reo – all while establishing other Māori organisations. She shares her haerenga (journey) from rural Te Araroa to urban Te Atatū. Nana Letty's pursuit of ensuring tamariki Māori receive high-quality early learning, has not come easy. Experiences of racism and discrimination did not deter her from her primary focus – the hauora (wellbeing) of tamariki-mokopuna and whānau Māori. Nana Letty shares her wawata (aspirations) for tamariki-mokopuna Māori to be immersed in a te reo me ōna tikanga Māori immersion early childhood education, infused in Māori philosophical teachings. This, she argues, is high-quality early learning for tamariki Māori in WKM.

Chapter 4, Te Tiriti o Waitangi is the first of the three findings chapters. Whānau stressed that knowing the history of biculturalism in relation to Te Tiriti o Waitangi is fundamental to high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna in WKM. In addition, understanding the implications of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the importance of critical reflection centred on Te Tiriti o Waitangi were viewed as essential. Findings in this chapter suggest that while *Te Whāriki* and TTK make references to Te Tiriti o Waitangi, they do not provide the in-depth historical knowledge required to inform and nurture kaiako in these teachings; therefore, WKM (all ECC) need to ensure kaiako have access to professional development focused on the Te Tiriti o Waitangi. This means teacher education institutions and professional development services must provide programmes centred on historical and contemporary understandings of Te Tiriti o Waitangi – inclusive of the two versions of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, Māori and English and the implications of bicultural discourse in WKM (all ECC). Teachings must be delivered by those who are highly skilled in this subject matter.

Chapter 5, Whakapapa, is the second findings chapter. Whānau emphasised the importance of whakapapa (genealogy), alongside whānau (family) and whanaungatanga (relationships) and tuakiri (identity) and mana whenua (belonging) as key elements of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori. While *Te Whāriki* acknowledges, endorses and references these elements, explanations are limited, thus not sufficient to fully recognise whānau views or traditional understandings of these concepts. Implications also extend to tamariki-mokopuna

and whānau Māori who may be disconnected from their whakapapa. In addition, *Te Whāriki* requires kaiako to take responsibility for their own learning regarding these elements. While kaiako are required to commit to ongoing learning, it is the responsibility of WKM (all ECC) to provide professional development to ensure kaiako are supported in Māori traditional and philosophical understandings of whakapapa, whānau and whanaungatanga, tuakiri and mana whenua as key elements of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori in WKM. Teacher education institutions and professional development services need to ensure their teaching programmes include in-depth understandings of whakapapa and interconnected elements. Importantly, this knowledge must be taught by experts.

Chapter 6, Te Mana o Tamariki-Mokopuna Māori is the last of the findings chapters. When discussing high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna, whānau emphasised an environment infused with aroha and manaakitanga and te reo me ōna tikanga Māori. Tamariki-mokopuna being harikoa and hauora – happy and healthy was also considered hugely important. Although *Te Whāriki* and TTK endorse, include and reference these elements in various ways (strands and dimensions in *Te Whāriki*⁶), these documents do not provide the deeper level of Māori knowledge required to fully recognise the implications of these elements as high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori. The chapter concludes by introducing Lady Tilly and Sir Tamati Reedy's theories of te mana o mokopuna Māori. The Reedy's theories are underpinned by aroha, manaakitanga, te reo me ōna tikanga Māori and harikoa and hauora. As writers of the Māori curriculum of *Te Whāriki* (MoE, 1993, 1996) the Reedy's possess a deeper level of Māori theoretical knowledge pertaining to the teaching and learning of tamariki-mokopuna Māori, therefore the Reedy's philosophies supported by traditional understandings must be considered when theorising te mana o tamariki-mokopuna Māori as a key element of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori. Whare Kōhungahunga Māori (all ECC) must ensure their kaiako have access to professional development centred on these understandings. This requires teacher education institutions and professional development services to ensure their teaching programmes are underpinned by Māori traditional knowledges and include the Reedy's theoretical perspectives of *Te Whāriki*. Importantly, these theories must be taught by specialists in this area.

⁶There are five strands in *Te Whāriki* focused on learning and development and four dimensions focused on human development (MoE, 2017a). Strands and dimensions are introduced in Chapter 6.

Chapter 7, the conclusion chapter returns to the overall purpose of this research. Theories, methods and methodologies used in the research are then explained. The reason for choosing an unconventional format to present this thesis is reaffirmed, followed by an outline of Nana Letty’s chapter – including her theories of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori. Whānau views, limitations of *Te Whāriki* and TTK and an outline of the main components of a Whare Kōhungahunga Māori centric high-quality early learning curriculum programme are then introduced. Finally, contributions, recommendations, limitations and future research directions complete this chapter.

The Terms *Māori* and *Māori Language* in this Research

The word *Māori* is a common term used to describe the Indigenous people of Aotearoa. This term was non-existent prior to the arrival of the British to Aotearoa.⁷ Māori self-identified according to their iwi (tribe) affiliations (Maaka & Fleras, 2005; Morrison, 1999; Rangihau, 2011; Webber, 2008); however, to separate themselves from the new arrivals, the term Māori, meaning ‘normal’ or ‘ordinary’ was adopted (Walker, cited in Webber, 2008). Participants in this research talked casually about their iwi connections; however, as mentioned earlier, I have tried to remove any form of identifiable markers, therefore have not included their tribal affiliations.

As explained to the participants engaged in this research through the participation information sheets (see Appendix A), I am a second-language speaker and learner of te reo Māori. I do not have the expertise to write this thesis in te reo Māori. While te reo Māori (with English translations) features recurrently throughout this study, I am conscious there could be variances in Māori-to-English interpretations (Metge, 1995); therefore, when trying to translate, Māori meanings can be literally lost in translation (Mutu, 2004). I am also aware that a singular word may change according to the context in which it is used and said. For example, the word *kaupapa* is used throughout this thesis, appearing either as a singular word or in conjunction with another word. Meaning may vary depending on the context in which it is written. As Rangimarie Pere (1982) explains, “One word or one simple phrase can convey a host of meanings depending on the context in which something is said, including the intonation and tone of voice that is used” (p. 18).

⁷British arrival discussed further in Chapter 4: Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

By conferring with whānau participants across the two WKM in this research, forming a consultative relationship with a proficient Māori language speaker and drawing on Māori-to-English literature explanations produced by te reo language scholars, I have tried to ensure that English translations closely align to the Māori intent. The glossary of terms at the back of this thesis includes variations in meaning.

Chapter Two: Kia whāia te mahi matatika, ka pono te rangahau – Honest face, truthful research

Introduction

This research is underpinned by Kaupapa Māori theory and methodology and presented through pūrākau, informed by document analysis and semi-structured interviews. The chapter begins by providing an overview of Kaupapa Māori theory and methodology, followed by a brief synopsis of Kaupapa Māori theory in Māori-medium early childhood education. An overview of the study follows, inclusive of research design, methodologies, methods, data-gathering phases, data analysis and ethics. The chapter finishes with the haerenga (journey) through each phase of this research, from recruitment, whakawhanaungatanga with Whare Kōhungahunga Māori, whānau interviews, data gathering and data analysis.

Kaupapa Māori Theory and Methodology

While there is a growing awareness and acknowledgement in Aotearoa of the unethical colonial practices imposed upon Māori, one practice requiring continuous redress is research. Linda Smith argued “research is probably one of the dirtiest words in the indigenous vocabulary” (L.T. Smith, 1999, p. 1). Western research methodology has been dominant in the field of research for hundreds of years, resulting in Indigenous people’s lives being falsified and traumatised through Western analysis of the Indigenous world. Māori have been overly represented in research projects conducted through a Western lens. These studies have subjugated Māori to the position of helplessness and dependence unable to conduct their lives without Western support or directives (L.T. Smith, 1999). Māori researchers argue that this overriding sense of superiority has had a profound impact on the social, political, economic, spiritual and cultural wellbeing of Indigenous people throughout the world (Bishop & Glynn, 1999; L.T. Smith, 1999). An active counter-resistance to these dominant research practices is the assertion of tino rangatiratanga throughout Māori communities in Aotearoa. In her seminal text, *Decolonising Research Methodologies* (1999) Linda Smith’s “agenda for Indigenous research” (p. 115) provided a restorative pathway to reassert and reinstate Indigenous knowledge through “the processes of transformation, of decolonization, of healing and of mobilization as peoples” (p. 116). This research draws on L.T. Smith’s reclamation proposition by focusing on reconceptualising and reasserting Māori understanding of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori.

Acknowledging and exposing the impact that historical research has had on Māori people is a reminder of why I am conducting this research. Avril Bell (2006) described revisiting history as a place that “*can* fuel resentment and blame as well as understanding and reconciliation. But it is equally clear that understanding is impossible *without* attending to history [emphasis in original]” (p. 265). I was committed to ensuring this research was sincere and all people involved had the opportunity to move freely and without restriction between the past and present. Revisiting past injustices is a reminder to all potential researchers, when undertaking a research project that involves Māori; the research must be beneficial to and for Māori. Retracing the past is essential to this research as it validates and justifies why this research is crucial for Māori.

An important feature in this research was to ensure that my research practices were in accordance with being Māori. While this research is Māori-centric, I am mindful that my reason for advocating for Māori is not to vanquish Western philosophy or theory (Penehira, Cram, & Pipi, 2003), nor to promote the “rejection of Pākehā knowledge and or culture” (G.H. Smith, 1997, p. 338). The ultimate purpose is to “retrieve space” (L.T. Smith, 1999, p. 183) where Māori knowledge and truth is no longer marginalised and can stand equally alongside Western forms of ideology.

Research practices introduced by Kaupapa Māori theorists (such as G.H. Smith, 1997; L.T. Smith, 1999; Pihama, Smith, Taki, & Lee, 2004) have provided the cultural, ethical, theoretical and methodological framework for this research. As this research was seeking to elicit interpretations and understandings of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori, a qualitative research project, pūrākau and document analysis, underpinned by Kaupapa Māori (G.H. Smith, 1997; Pihama, 2001; Pohatu, 2004), were deemed appropriate methods and methodologies. The following discussion provides a brief overview of these disciplines, explaining their relationship with and to this study.

Kaupapa Māori is not a new phenomenon and has been in existence prior to colonisation; however, what is relatively new is its transference into academia (Pihama et al., 2004; Taki, 1996). Leading Kaupapa Māori theorists, such as G.H. Smith, L.T. Smith, Mereana Taki, Leonie Pihama, Taina Pohatu, Russell Bishop, Ted Glynn, Jenny Lee, Kuni Jenkins and others, have contributed extensively to Kaupapa Māori theory. However, Tuakana (Tuki) Nepe (1991) must also be acknowledged for her dedication to the revitalisation of Māori knowledge. Nepe (1991) shared that Kaupapa Māori “influences the way Maori people think, understand, interpret, and

interact within ‘their’ world” (para. 3). Moreover, she argued, Kaupapa Māori provides a “process by which the Maori mind receives, internalizes, differentiates, and formulates ideas and knowledge exclusively through te reo Maori” (p. 15). Importantly, Kaupapa Māori is unique to Māori; it is firmly entrenched within the lands, the mountains, the rivers, the history and the culture of the Māori people of Aotearoa (Pihama, 2001) and constructed within cultural heritage – iwi, hapū, tikanga and whanaungatanga (Taki, 1996).

Kaupapa Māori as a theory has been deeply influenced by critical theory. Graham Hingangaroa Smith’s (1997) unpublished doctoral research embraces four key critical theorists: Frantz Fanon, Michael Apple, Antonio Gramsci and Paulo Freire – all of whom have influenced his development of a Kaupapa Māori theoretical praxis in Māori education. These theorists have recognised both current and historical struggles and cultural oppression. G.H. Smith was inspired by the work of Paulo Freire (1972), emphasising the links among “conscientisation, resistance and transformative praxis” (G.H. Smith, 1997, p. 34). Kaupapa Māori embraces these critical notions and uses them as a decolonising tool.

While it is important to acknowledge the influence of critical theory in Kaupapa Māori theory, it must also be recognised that the two have their own distinctive praxis. L.T. Smith (1999) described Kaupapa Māori as a localised critical theory as it advocates for the empowerment of Māori, whereas critical theory is espoused in the culture and values of Europe.

Kaupapa Māori theory is premised on the survival of te reo me ōna tikanga, the legitimacy of Māori as being the norm, and the assurance that Māori have autonomy over their cultural wellbeing (G.H. Smith, 1997). Nepe (1991), Pihama (2001) and G.H. Smith (1997) supported the notion that te reo me ōna tikanga Māori are critical to enacting the practices and principles of Kaupapa Māori theory. G.H. Smith (1997) proposed six key intervention elements within his discussion of Kaupapa Māori theory: (1) tino rangatiratanga (the “self-determination” principle); (2) taonga tuku iho (the “cultural aspirations” principle); (3) ako Māori (the “culturally preferred pedagogy” principle); (4) kia piki ake i ngā raruraru o te kainga (the “socio-economic mediation” principle); (5) kaupapa (the “collective philosophy” principle); and (6) whānau (the “extended family structure” principle). Two further elements have been added over time, one by Pihama (2001): Te Tiriti o Waitangi, and another by Taina Pohatu (2004): Āta (the “building of relationships”).

Russell Bishop and Ted Glynn (1999) proposed that Kaupapa Māori was “the reassertion of indigenous Māori cultural aspirations, preferences and practices... termed Kaupapa Māori

theory and practice... that historical and ongoing power imbalances will be addressed” (p. 223). Kaupapa Māori theory is both emancipatory and self-determining. Moreover, it provides a space for whānau Māori in this research to assert their views of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori.

Philosophical beliefs and social practices are at the foundation of Kaupapa Māori and classified as Māori ontology or what Māori see as real (Henry & Pene, 2001). Living according to the rules of tikanga is Māori epistemology, or what is perceived as being tika or correct. Henry and Pene further explained that Kaupapa Māori is culturally unique to Māori as it originates from Māori epistemology and cosmology and is grounded in traditional Māori cultural values and beliefs. Māori epistemology sits in unison with the metaphysics which incorporate the connection between time and space. Rewa Paewai (2013) claimed the Māori concept of time and space must be viewed through Māori understanding, stating “cosmogenic whakapapa and Ngā Kete o te Wānanga depict the origins of the universe as a series of evolutionary or creative stages that take place in the Space-Time continuum of Te Kore and Te Pō” (p. 22). The ability to understand the concepts, the experiences, and the nature of being, is at the foundation of Māori knowledge and the enactment of Kaupapa Māori.⁸

G.H. Smith (1997) argued Kaupapa Māori is more than just doing things the “Māori way.” At the forefront is the assurance that tikanga is adhered to. Although a primary motivation of Kaupapa Māori is “to assert greater cultural, political, social, emotional and spiritual control over their own lives” (G.H. Smith 1997, p. 456), it also creates a pathway where Māori concepts are drawn on to examine, review and intercede when trying to make sense of one’s surroundings (Lee, 2009). In the context of this research, Kaupapa Māori ensured a safe and secure structure for the WKM to assert their understandings of what high-quality early learning looks like from their cultural context and it has provided guidance and protection to me while undertaking this research.

Kaupapa Māori and Māori-Medium Early Childhood

Regarded as a transformative philosophy, Kaupapa Māori as a counter-hegemonic practice is deeply embedded in Māori principles intended to enhance and sustain the wellbeing of Māori (G.H. Smith, 1997). Critical to wellbeing of Māori is te reo me ōna tikanga Māori (Nepe, 1991;

⁸ Cosmogenic whakapapa, nature of beginnings of the Māori world is discussed more in-depth in Chapter five, Whakapapa.

Pihama, 2001; G.H. Smith, 1997) – a primary focus in Māori-medium early childhood education and therefore essential in the attainment of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori.

Morehu (2009) asserts that Māori-medium early childhood centres like Puna Reo, have materialised through the Kōhanga Reo movement, an organisation founded on liberation and self-determination and immersed in Kaupapa Māori (discussed comprehensively in Chapter 3). While Morehu pays homage to the Kōhanga Reo for their role in the revitalisation of Kaupapa Māori principles such as te reo me ōna tikanga, Nana Letty praises Māori Playcentre for influencing the development of Kōhanga Reo and Māori-medium early childhood education. Acknowledging early influences is extremely important to this research as they are instrumental in the formation of Māori-medium early childhood centres such as the WKM in this research. Through their very existence, WKM are expected to align their philosophies and practices with Kaupapa Māori values, inclusive of te reo me ōna tikanga. Kaupapa Māori has been invaluable to this research as it has provided guidance, support and care to all involved.

Overview of Research

Qualitative research.

As this research is underpinned by Kaupapa Māori, qualitative research is a suitable paradigm because it is a field of inquiry which incorporates diverse methods (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Denzin and Lincoln have argued that qualitative research can represent different meanings according to contexts and people. L.T. Smith (2005) explained that qualitative research can support Indigenous communities, as it has the power to:

weave and unravel competing storylines; to situate, place and contextualise; to create spaces for decolonizing; to provide frameworks for hearing silence and listening to the voices of the silenced; to create spaces for dialogue across differences; to analyse and make sense of complex and shifting experiences, identities and realities; and to understand little and big changes that affect our lives. (p. 103)

A number of interpretive projects situated within qualitative research have similar struggles to Māori. Race theory, queer theory and feminist theory have commonalities with two theories embedded in Kaupapa Māori – critical and decolonising theory (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Qualitative research has been appropriate for this study because it supports critical pedagogy, Indigenous inquiry, inquiry, storytelling, and people's lived experiences. As Denzin and Lincoln (2011) contended, Kaupapa Māori can be merged with Western research

methodologies providing strong, positive, honest, respectful and authentic relationships. Notably, qualitative research provides the opportunity for multiple nuanced perspectives and not single stories of truth.

Pūrākau.

Pūrākau has been used as a method and methodology in this research. Pūrākau are Māori narratives, which incorporate values and beliefs that are essential to the distinctiveness of Māori. Lee (2009) argued that pūrākau legitimise the ways that stories are narrated through the voice of Māori. Narrative inquiry has played a pivotal role in the introduction of pūrākau as a methodology in research (Lee, 2009). Like pūrākau, “narrative inquiry is stories lived and told” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 20). Clearly, the focus on lived experience and sharing of knowledge is in keeping with pūrākau in this research.

Pūrākau provided me (the researcher) the opportunity to use my own distinctive style of writing this thesis. Pūrākau generated from literature, whānau and documents are presented collectively in the three findings chapters. Writing and presenting in this style was intentional – and a way to “inspire the reader to think more deeply about the issues and the story” (Lee, 2005, p. 13). Pūrākau, underpinned by Kaupapa Māori, drives this research and works compatibly with the methods chosen⁹ (document analysis and semi-structured interviews – introduced further on in the thesis).

The first sub-question in this research asks: What is high-quality early learning from the perspective of whānau Māori who educate tamariki-mokopuna Māori in Whare Kōhungahunga Māori? Pūrākau provided whānau interviewees in this research a traditional way of narrating their stories within a familiar framework. Furthermore, pūrākau allowed me as the researcher the opportunity to share familiar stories when enacting whakawhanaungatanga with whānau participants.

According to Lee, traditionally pūrākau were told orally; however, they can now be used as a contemporary method in research to support Māori to document both their personal experiences and those experiences of Māori in a research environment. Pūrākau provides Māori a safe space for narrating, sharing, listening and reflecting on stories. However, Thomas King (2003), an Indigenous Native North American scholar, cautioned, “once a story is told, it cannot be called

⁹ Ways in which pūrākau were constructed from the data, discussed in research design section.

back. Once told, it is loose in the world. So, you have to be careful with the stories that you tell” (p. 10). This compelled me to be mindful of the pūrākau within the pūrākau. When whānau share their story, other stories may come to light – personal and private – not destined for research. Further stories emerging from the original story might well be intended for the research, thus it was important for me as a researcher to clarify what can be shared and retold for “my voice as the storyteller has the power to shape and deliver a message in a way that esteems or undermines the ‘voice’ and the pūrākau” (Cliffe, 2013, p. 40).

My recent experience with pūrākau when undertaking my master’s degree (O’Loughlin, 2013) has allowed me to utilise pūrākau as a method in research. I am also conversant with the power of pūrākau – specifically when conversing with my/our kaumātua (elders) from Hauraki (Thames Coromandel area of Aotearoa). When I ask them a question, they generally answer with a pūrākau, a long story which takes me on a journey, through time and place. Dr Kimai Tocker (2014) gave a strong example of this when interviewing distinguished Māori academic, Dame Kāterina Mataira. Tocker asked Dame Kāterina a question about how Te Aho Matua (Kura Kaupapa Māori, educational curriculum) had developed. Dame Kāterina answered with a story about her own life through schooling and life experiences. Tocker stated, “I learnt that there was more wealth of knowledge in the story (the pūrākau) instead of the brief response I was expecting” (p. 20). Whānau pūrākau in this research have provided a rich and powerful narration of their experiences (both positive and negative) which have influenced their decision to educate tamariki-mokopuna Māori in WKM. Pūrākau provided whānau interviewees an opportunity to articulate their views on what they determine as high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori.

Research context

Working as a kaiako in a licensed Māori-medium early childhood centre, I am familiar with the day-to-day requirements. However, I am also aware that daily directives and programmes are essentially governed by legislation. To maintain an operational license, licensed early childhood centres are required to adhere to “the licensing criteria as well as the other regulatory requirements contained in the regulations ... [consequently the criteria must] be read in conjunction with the Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008” (MoE, 2009a, p. 3) and *Te Whāriki* (MoE, 2017a).

Te Whāriki, first published in 1996, had two versions – a Māori immersion curriculum and a bicultural curriculum (MoE, 1996). The Māori curriculum, written in te reo Māori and focused

on Kaupapa Māori, was developed specifically for Kōhanga Reo, although licensed total-immersion MMECC were given permission to use this document if they wished. All other licensed early childhood centres were expected to use the bicultural curriculum. *Te Whāriki* has recently experienced a review, with the ensuing revised curriculum published in 2017. The revised curriculum presents two distinctive curricula, one specifically designed for Kōhanga Reo to be used “in all kōhanga reo affiliated to Te Kōhanga Reo National Trust” (MoE, 2017a, p. 69) and the other: a bicultural curriculum for all other licensed early childhood centres. Consequently, as from 2017, MMECC such as WKM are required to use the revised bicultural curriculum. These changes prompted me to consider how WKM might navigate this bicultural curriculum, while maintaining their distinctiveness as an MMECC. Moreover, I was interested in ways the new revised *Te Whāriki* affirms notions of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori.

As whānau are extremely important to WKM, I also reflected on their positioning and what their thoughts and aspirations might be – their perspectives of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori when attending WKM. This reflection directed me back to the revised *Te Whāriki* (MoE, 2017a) to observe how this curriculum views the role of whānau. *Te Whāriki* encourages families and early childhood services to work in partnership to support the education and wellbeing of children, stating:

Each child is on a unique journey. They come into the world eager to learn and into family, whānau or ‘aiga that have high hopes for them. Teachers, educators and kaiako in ECE settings work together in partnership with the family to realise these hopes. (MoE, 2017a, p. 6)

For whānau Māori, this statement, encouraging a partnership relationship with ECE, is further supported by Te Tiriti o Waitangi where emphasis is placed on the partnership relationship between Māori and Pākehā. This partnership requires early childhood educational services to provide tamariki-mokopuna Māori with:

culturally responsive environments that support their learning and by ensuring that they are provided with equitable opportunities to learn. (MoE, 2017a, p. 3)

Affirming the cultural identity of tamariki-mokopuna Māori is critical to this research, particularly when examining notions of high-quality early learning.

In addition, whānau Māori in WKM should be given the opportunity to contribute their ideals and aspirations regarding high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori by

participating in the writing of a philosophy statement – Te Tauākī Kaupapa (TTK). The licensing criteria provides early childhood services and therefore families and whānau the opportunity to assert and affirm their values and beliefs. A requirement outlined in this document is for early childhood services to create a philosophy statement which:

- i. [reflects] the fundamental beliefs, values, and ideals that are important to the people involved in the service – management, adults providing education and care, parents, families/whānau, and perhaps the wider community;
- ii. identifies what is special about the service; and
- iii. is intended to be the basis for decisions about the way the service is managed and about its direction in the future (MoE, 2009a, p. 6).

Te Tauākī Kaupapa is a hugely significant document to WKM and whānau as it affords an opportunity to document their unique qualities: their distinctiveness, their tikanga, and their tino rangatiratanga (self-determination). Moreover, TTK should provide a space for WKM to affirm their commitment to Kaupapa Māori and assert their understandings of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori.

This research identifies the critical role of whānau in theorising high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori who attend WKM. Furthermore, the research recognises *Te Whāriki* and TTK are required to work in a supportive co-constructive relationship with WKM; therefore, this research seeks to examine the strengths of this relationship and ways in which *Te Whāriki* and TTK support whānau perspectives of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori through the following questions.

The overall question for this research asks:

What key elements ensure tamariki Māori in Whare Kōhungahunga Māori early childhood contexts receive a high-quality Māori-centric early learning education?

This key question is followed by three sub-questions:

1. What is high-quality early learning from the perspective of whānau Māori who educate tamariki-mokopuna Māori in Whare Kōhungahunga Māori?
2. In what ways does the national early childhood curriculum *Te Whāriki* support whānau perspectives of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori?
3. In what ways does Te Tauākī Kaupapa incorporate whānau perspectives of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori?

These three questions are drawn on in the three findings chapters, Te Tiriti o Waitangi, Whakapapa and Te Mana o Tamariki-Mokopuna Māori, and are revisited in the conclusion chapter of this thesis.

Selection site and recruitment.

The research was undertaken in two licensed WKM in Aotearoa. Deciding on how I was going to choose potential WKM required me to be honest about my position. As a kaiako in a WKM and also knowing many other Māori educators working in WKM, I was aware that I needed to ensure there was no conflict of interest or room for bias. To mitigate these issues, I utilised the Education Review Office (ERO)¹⁰ website as a guide to find potential WKM with whom I have never associated. I selected WKM from Te Ika a Māui, the North Island of Aotearoa New Zealand, which are licensed Māori-medium early childhood centres under the guidance of the Ministry of Education and where 50% or more te reo Māori is spoken on a daily basis. These criteria were important as this research is underpinned by Kaupapa Māori and therefore recognises the importance of te reo me ōna tikanga. The ERO website revealed approximately 13 centres that appeared to match my set criteria. I was focused on WKM from Te Tai Tokerau (Northland) down to Te Whanganui-a-Tara (Wellington area). In order to ensure that my choosing was impartial, I wrote the names of the 13 centres on individual pieces of paper then drew names randomly from an envelope.

Securing the two WKM for this research was achieved through a process of elimination. This procedure proved to be rather arduous. Eight centres were very eager to participate; however, five were already involved in research projects, one was committed to their own iwi research initiatives, one was in the process of relocating and one contacted me after I had secured two centres. My first point of contact was through a phone call, followed by an initial visit to the centre, followed by several more visits before I was able to secure the WKM and whānau participants. Once obtained, I was able to begin the process of informing, recruiting and interviewing.

Semi-structured in-depth interviews.

The interviews were conducted across the two participating WKM. My original intent was to interview a total of 16 participants: eight whānau participants from each WKM. Due to an

¹⁰ The Education Review Office is responsible for evaluating the education and care of children and young people in early childhood education services and schools.

internal issue in one of the WKM, I was unable to continue researching in this centre; however, before my withdrawal, I was able to conduct two interviews (see haerenga section).

Semi-structured in-depth interviews (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011) underpinned by pūrākau (Lee, 2009) created a space to whakawhanaungatanga (build relationships). Sharing stories between myself and whānau participants, provided a secure safe way to interview whānau participants for this research.

Interviewing Māori requires a particular insight into Māori ways of knowing and being. I believe my lived experiences as Māori provide an understanding of the Māori world. I was taught from an early age that it is far more respectful to speak kanohi ki te kanohi (face to face) to a person. This way of thinking is encapsulated in the whakatauākī “he kanohi kitea” (L.T. Smith, 1999, p. 120) which means *face seen*. Essentially, the semi-structured kanohi ki te kanohi interviews were a safe space to kōrero (talk). Face-to-face individual meetings provided the opportunity for participants to share their pūrākau (Lee, 2009) their stories, their narratives (Clandinin, 2006; Flick, 2014) and, importantly, their hypothesising of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori.

Semi-structured interviews also allowed for flexibility in this research. At times there were detours in the kōrero, which can be common when conversing with Māori (see pūrākau section). Interviews often moved on to other topics; however, every digression had meaning and purpose. Sometimes, I was required to gently guide our kōrero back to the topic. Individual whānau interviews were conducted in a respectful and responsive manner in a culturally safe space (Irwin, 1994) chosen by the participants. Interview times went for approximately one hour each.

Data-gathering phases.

Phase 1 was one-on-one interviews with whānau Māori who were directly associated with the centres. Whānau Māori from WKM in this research consisted of one kuia, Āwhina; one kaiwhakahaere, Jane; four kaiako Māori, Wairua, Ātaahua, Papatūānuku and Pono; and four mātua, S.W, Kaha, Andrea and Taura – a total of 10 interviews. The whānau interviewees responded to the question: What is high-quality early learning from the perspective of whānau Māori who educate tamariki-mokopuna Māori in Whare Kōhungahunga Māori?

Phase 2 focused on analysing *Te Whāriki* to look at ways this curriculum supports whānau views of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori. The sub-question asked:

What way does the national early childhood curriculum *Te Whāriki* support whānau perspectives of high-quality early learning for tamariki Māori?

Phase 3 examined TTK to look for ways this philosophy statement incorporates whānau views of high-quality early learning for tamariki Māori. The question for this phase was: What way does Te Tauākī Kaupapa ā Whare Kōhungahunga Māori incorporate whānau perspectives of high-quality early learning for tamariki Māori?

Data analysis – thematic and document analysis.

Thematic analysis was used to examine data from Phase 1 of this research. When analysing these interviews, I paid particular attention to recurring themes and patterns (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Interviews were read and re-read (Flick, 2014) several times during the initial analysis and revisited numerous times throughout the period of this thesis. I refer to main themes throughout this thesis as *āhuatanga Māori* (main features). Braun and Clarke's (2006) six phases of thematic analyses were followed:

1. Familiarizing yourself with your data
2. Generating initial codes
3. Searching for themes
4. Reviewing themes
5. Defining and naming themes
6. Producing the report. (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 87)

Three main *āhuatanga Māori* emerged from whānau perspectives of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori – Te Tiriti o Waitangi, Whakapapa and Te Mana o Tamariki-Mokopuna Māori – the titles of the three findings chapters. Whakapapa and Te Mana o Tamariki-Mokopuna are supported by several interconnected elements. Each transcript was colour coded according to the three main *āhuatanga*. Interrelated elements followed the same system. It is important to note that even though Te Tiriti o Waitangi was only discussed by two whānau participants in this research, the remaining eight whānau are inherently connected to Te Tiriti o Waitangi through their position as partners in this foundational document of Aotearoa New Zealand. In addition, tamariki-mokopuna and whānau Māori participation in WKM is their right guaranteed under Article 3 of Te Tiriti o Waitangi (Orange, 2004; Ritchie, 2003). What is more, all whānau perspectives in the findings chapters disclosed their advocacy of *mātauranga*, (knowledge, protocol – epistemology), *pono* (truth – ontology), *tikanga* (values, protocol – axiology) and *wairua* (spiritual – theology) Māori, their rights as Māori, hence the

absolute importance of recognising Te Tiriti o Waitangi as a key feature of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori in WKM.

Most of the participants in this research revisited their past, to inform their present, when talking about notions of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori in WKM. At times, whānau shared emotional pūrākau (see haerenga section), exposing similar journeys to other whānau in this research. Ivor Goodson (2013), coined the term “thematic density” to characterise those life history interviews that either cover a wide range of themes or cover particular themes in deep and profound ways” (p. 40). It was important for me to provide whānau with a safe space to share their pūrākau, and I also prioritised acknowledging the importance of these stories – because their stories and influences are integral to how they view high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori. Thematic analysis was an appropriate form of analysis because it captured the intricacy and meaning within (Guest, McQueen, & Namey, 2012).

Document analysis is a research method used to examine organisational documents (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011). This method was used to analyse data in Phase 2 and Phase 3 of the research, which involved examining how *Te Whāriki* and TTK support and incorporate whānau perspectives of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori. As explained earlier in this chapter, the licensed WKM participating in this research are required to adhere to the Licensing Criteria for Early Childhood Education and Care Centres 2008 (MoE, 2009a), Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008 and *Te Whāriki* (MoE, 2017a). Each centre is encouraged to design their distinctive way to record these directives (MoE, 2011). Directives “may take a variety of forms to suit the service’s operation (such as portfolios, wall displays, policies and procedures)” (MoE, 2011, p. 10).

Choosing a method cognisant with examining organisational documentation required careful consideration. I sought a method harmonious with pūrākau underpinned by semi-structured interviews. Above all, it was important to ensure the methodologies and methods were compatible with Kaupapa Māori research. One of the focuses for this research was examining *Te Whāriki* and Te Tauākī Kaupapa to observe ways these documents supported whānau views of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, Whakapapa and Te Mana o Tamariki-Mokopuna Māori as key āhuatanga of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori. Document analysis was chosen because it examines specific organisational documents such as formal records, minutes from meetings, plans, stories and policy documents (Cohen et al., 2011). Also, the process for

gathering data is similar to the procedure followed researching literature for this thesis – reading through copious amounts of written material, undertaking word and phrase searches and drawing on particular whakaaro Māori (Māori thinking) pertaining to main āhuatanga and interconnected elements.

Another important focal point in this research was the WKM inter and intra-organisational perspectives (Kelly, 2014). According to Coffey (2014), documents are seldom in isolation from other documents and there is the opportunity when analysing documents to explore “relationships and meanings within a text and in relation to other texts” (p. 7). In addition, documents “have potential to inform and structure the decisions which people make on a daily and longer-term basis” (May, 2001, p. 368, cited in Coffey, 2014, p.3). The sub-questions for this research are focused on whānau views of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori, together with ways *Te Whāriki* and TTK support and incorporate these views. I was interested in ways in which whānau voice and written documentation (technical documentation) interconnected and worked co-constructively to support high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori.

Coffey (2014) asserts thematic analysis is an acceptable way to investigate key themes, regular patterns and classifications within documents. While the key themes, āhuatanga Māori, had already been established through whānau interviews, thematic analysis was useful to ascertain the ways in which these key themes were evident in *Te Whāriki* and TTK. Thematic analysis is appropriate for document analysis within social research as it can also provide a context to the environment being researched (Coffey, 2014); therefore, particular attention has been paid to associations, understandings, values and interconnectedness between whānau perspectives of high-quality early learning, *Te Whāriki* and TTK.

Matatika – ethics.

The title of this chapter aligns with the ethical requirements for this chapter: *Kia whāia te mahi matatika, ka pono te rangahau– honest face, truthful research*. Matatika (ethics) encapsulates the principles of honesty and integrity. Kaupapa Māori underpins this research and incorporates matatika; therefore, adhering to ethical protocols has been a natural enactment throughout this study. Rameka (2012) states Kaupapa Māori has set principles that set the foundations for “cultural appropriate ethics” (p. 47). While Kaupapa Māori ethics may appear the norm in Te Ao Māori, these ideals have not always been valued or reciprocated by other cultures, namely in the field of research (as shared in the Kaupapa Māori theory and methodology sections).

This section outlines the way I have adhered to matatika, Kaupapa Māori ethics. Before recruiting the two participating WKM for this research, I was required to complete an ethics application to the University of Auckland: Human Participants Ethics Committee (UAHPEC). I was pleased to be granted University of Auckland: Human Participants Ethics Committee (UAHPEC) approval on May 16, 2016 for a period of 3 years.

All whānau participant involvement in this study was voluntary. An initial participation information sheet was given to the WKM, inviting WKM and whānau participation as well as outlining each stage of the research (see Appendix A). This information sheet informed whānau participants about the study, which included audio recording, transcribing, data storage, privacy and confidentiality as well as participants' right to withdraw. A consent form was completed by each of the whānau participants, formalising their participation in the study and, essentially, their rights as a participant.

Ten whānau interviews were conducted and transcribed by me. Each participant was assigned a pseudonym to prevent identification of their involvement in this research. I offered whānau the option of choosing their own pseudonym – most asked me to choose. All whānau were given the option of reading through their transcripts (two chose not to, stating they trusted me) and editing accordingly. They were also reminded that they had the right to withdraw data up until 2 weeks after a copy of their transcript was forwarded to them. Nana Letty's interview did not require ethics approval as her interview was a one-off interview. She is considered an expert in her field of work, who has enough mana to understand and protect her own interests (see clause 3.8 of UOA Ethics manual). Nana Letty was given a copy of her transcript for approval.

The audio files from digital recordings have been stored on a password-protected computer that only the researcher has access to. Documentation has been stored in a locked cabinet separate from the consent forms. In keeping with university procedures, all data will be stored for 6 years and then destroyed. Paper data will be shredded, and the audio files deleted.

The design of this research required whānau participants to share their pūrākau, their stories. Although emphasis was placed on ensuring my relationship with whānau was respectful, responsive, honest and trustworthy, I acknowledge that kaiako and kaiwhakahaere may have felt vulnerable when sharing their beliefs, values and practices in this research.

In order to help alleviate any anxiety that whānau participants exhibited, seven cultural norms were applied when conducting the interviews. Ngahuia Te Awekotuku (L.T. Smith, 2000)

documented these cultural ideas when writing about research ethics in a Māori community. Moreover, L.T. Smith (2000) explained that these should be a natural way of interacting on a daily basis:

1. Aroha ki te tangata (a respect for people)
2. Kanohi ki te kanohi (the seen face – that is, present yourself to people face to face)
3. Titiro, whakaronga...korero (look, listen ...speak)
4. Manaaki ki te tangata (share and host people, be generous)
5. Kia tupato (be cautious)
6. Kauhā e takahia te mana o te tangata (do not trample over the mana of the people)
7. Kauhā e mahaki (don't flaunt your knowledge). (L.T Smith, 2000, p. 242)

A critical component of this research was adhering to matatika, Kaupapa Māori ethics. While the ethics application process was lengthy and testing at times, I was constantly reminded *kia whakatōmuri, te haere whakamua* (the past is the present is my future). Ethical processes are in place to protect human participants and in this research, I was protecting whānau Māori participants as well as the WKM. This came into actuality after the data-gathering phases. I was informed by one of the kaiako in the research that my original research focus - interviewing whānau and analysing policy and programme documents and tamariki-mokopuna portfolios (associated with whānau interviewees), had caused anxiety among some kaiako within the WKM. Even though I was given permission from the WKM and whānau concerned, some kaiako (who were not part of the study) did not feel comfortable with me reading through/examining this documentation. They viewed it as an audit of their practice and felt exposed. After conversing with my supervisors, I made the decision to review the sub-questions. It was extremely important to respect all whānau members and eliminate any concerns they may have had. Moreover, it prompted me to reaffirm whānau voice and redesign the study. Consequently, the original focus changed. The key question remained and two of the sub-questions changed to focusing on ways in which *Te Whāriki* and *Te Tauākī Kaupapa* support whānau perspectives of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori in WKM.

Te haerenga—the journey.

This section is my pūrākau of my haerenga, my personal journey undertaking this research.

Recruiting whānau participants.

Both kaiwhakahaere from the WKM assisted me in recruiting participants. Although the WKM agreed verbally and formally (in writing) to participate in the research, the kaiwhakahaere were very protective of their whānau, and did not want me approaching them alone or at a whānau hui. I had formed a good relationship with the two kaiwhakahaere; therefore, I trusted their reasoning. Being Māori required me to observe their kōrero-a-tinana (body language), their talking body, their non-verbal language. I left my information at the WKM, including my email address. It was not long before 10 whānau had been recruited. Whānau participants (who have pseudonyms) in this research were introduced in the introduction chapter of this thesis.

My initial intention was to conduct eight whānau interviews from each WKM. However, while undertaking the interviews, an internal issue transpired in one of the WKM and I was only able to secure two of the planned interviews. This required me to draw on my knowledge of tikanga collectively with the seven cultural norms (L.T Smith, 2000) in my matatika, Kaupapa Māori ethics section. As a Māori researcher, it was important for me to acknowledge the contribution and support from this WKM thus far, respect their circumstances and step quietly away from that phase of the research. At the forefront of this research was my commitment to the wellbeing of our whānau Māori and to ensuring aroha ki te tangata (respect for people) i ngā wā katoa (at all times). Therefore, my decision to introduce the whānau participants individually and not associate them with either of the WKM was in relation to the request for absolute anonymity by one of the WKM and also the reduction in interviews. The main objective of this research was to explore determinants of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori within a Māori context – not to compare the two WKM. Also, during discussions with whānau participants and WKM management, I was respectfully asked not to complicate or disturb their stories – to keep things simple. I have endeavoured to honour these directives. My authorship has been an attempt to complement whānau pūrākau, not to overshadow them.

Introducing myself to Whare Kōhungahunga Māori and whānau participants.

My first contact with the two participating WKM was through a phone call. I introduced myself and gave a brief outline of the research. The time was mainly focused on whanaungatanga, finding connections and sharing whakapapa. This initial encounter was then followed by emails back and forth to secure a date to visit. I commenced my haerenga on the 8th of June 2016 to one of the WKM. This WKM is situated in Te Ika a Maui (North Island of Aotearoa).

My first visit to the WKM in a semi-rural area took a bit of organisation as it was quite some distance from my home. I had had a global positioning system (GPS) in my possession for some time but had never used it. After a couple of lessons from my son, I felt confident to use it and set off at 6.45am. I arrived at my destination (firstly getting a little lost) with plenty of time to prepare myself. The kaiwhakahaere did not indicate whether there would be a formal welcome so I assumed there would be either a mihi whakatau (informal welcome) or casual introductions. I prepared a karanga (a female call) to identify myself and my intentions just in-case it was required. This is an important part of being a Māori researcher undertaking Māori research: always be prepared and always be aware that you are being researched too (L.T. Smith, 1999). Kai (food) was taken as a koha (gift) each time I visited the WKM – which is part of tikanga Māori. The WKM were also given a small monetary koha (gift) as a token of my appreciation.

I met the kaiwhakahaere in the carpark. She greeted me with a smile and a hug and proceeded to introduce me to kaimahi (workers) and whānau outside. We went inside the WKM and she asked me to sign in first (safety first) and directed me to a room to store my belongings. She then introduced me to kaimahi inside as well as tamariki-mokopuna and whānau. We exchanged hugs, including the tamariki-mokopuna, and a small mihimihi (greeting): kia ora (good health, hello), ata mārie, mōrena (good morning). I participated in whakawhanaungatanga with the tamariki-mokopuna and whānau and joined in a cup of tea and kai (food).

My excursion to the second WKM in an urban area almost mirrored my experience at the first WKM, in the semi-rural area. I was met in the carpark by one of the kaimahi. She greeted me with a smile and embraced me with a hug, leading me to sign in and then proceeded to introduce me to all the tamariki-mokopuna, whānau, kaimahi and kaiako. Every pakeke (adult) followed the protocol of mihimihi followed by a hug and kiss. Some tamariki-mokopuna joined in and one in particular called out to a kaiako, “Whaea Ātaahua, your mummy is here” (I did not know Whaea Ātaahua but was happy to be called her mummy). Tamariki-mokopuna in general were very curious about my visit, immediately referring to me as either whaea or aunty. This whakawhanaungatanga was typically Māori. What stood out for me was the natural way we engaged. There was no polite “Hi” from a distance or a glance, or awkwardness. I felt safe and secure. It was like I was going back to my marae (traditional meeting place) or my place of employment – it felt normal – it felt Māori.

Gathering the data.

The data-gathering phase of the research was very interesting. As mentioned earlier, my original research included whānau interviews and examining policy, programme documents and portfolios of tamariki-mokopuna of the participants in the research. At one of the centres, they handed me a big folder with all their WKM documentation and suggested I find a space on the mat to examine these documents. I followed their suggestion, but it was not long before tamariki-mokopuna were curious to know what I was up to. The handing over of the folder, as opposed to giving me copies of their documentation, was also interesting. While it would have been a much faster process to work from home or university, I realised the whanaungatanga between myself and the tamariki-mokopuna and whaea was incredibly valuable. I followed the same process in the second WKM. My many trips to the WKM helped me to establish relationships with the tamariki-mokopuna and whaea. The tamariki-mokopuna all knew my name and I knew theirs, and on many occasions, I participated in their wā whāriki (mat-time) and assisted in other areas of the programme. I also realised tamariki-mokopuna were watching my every move. When I wrote in my notebook (transposing data), some tamariki-mokopuna asked if they could help me, so I organised notebooks so they could participate. Some sat for long periods writing away. This was a wairua (spiritual) time for me and reminded me that although I was treated as one of the whānau, I was still in their wāhi (place) and I needed to respect this.

Interviews.

Securing interview times was difficult for whānau participants. Some had young tamariki-mokopuna and others had work and whānau commitments. I understand the difficulty traversing many spaces. Patience and being hūmārie (humble) and grateful for their involvement were important. There were also times during interviews when whānau disclosed very personal details about their life. Trusting in me was critical and although I became part of the WKM whānau - an insider, I was still a researcher – an outsider; (L.T. Smith, 1999) so I needed to ensure I was fully aware of my responsibilities to them and myself.

Transcribing.

I decided to do my own transcribing. Some of the stories were very personal. I felt obligated to protect their privacy – especially when personal sadness surfaced, alongside the sound of tangi (crying) or silence. While transcribing is quite an enormous undertaking, it is hard not to interconnect with whānau pūrākau. Transcribing provides researchers like me the opportunity to familiarise myself with the wairua and tone of participants' voices, their words and messages.

Also typing as the whānau spoke appeared to give more clarity. I am very pleased I transcribed the data. As mentioned in the introductory chapter, once I had finished transcribing, I sent the transcripts to whānau through email and two through post (with a self-addressed envelope) for editing if required (two informed me they did not need to see transcripts as they trusted in me). All whānau were content with their transcripts. Nana Letty was also given hers to read.

Analysing data.

As noted earlier, the research changed to analysing ways *Te Whāriki*, and TTK support whānau views of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori. This involved collecting data from the 1996 version of *Te Whāriki*. In 2017 the new revised curriculum emerged. Consequently, I had to decide whether to include the 1996 curriculum data, together with data from the 2017 revised curriculum or focus primarily on the 2017 curriculum. I chose to concentrate specifically on analysing data from the newly revised 2017 curriculum. However, there are occasions where I draw on data from the 1996 curriculum.

Analysing data required many hours of work going over and over documents, undertaking word and phrase searches that corresponded with whānau views of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, Whakapapa and Te Mana o Tamariki-Mokopuna Māori (findings chapters of this thesis) and categorising findings under these prospective headings. While these were the three main overarching āhuatanga, there were also several interconnected elements requiring classification. For example, when interviewing whānau, they discussed whakapapa and four interrelated elements whānau and whanaungatanga and tuakiri and mana whenua. Also, the focus and title of Chapter 6: Te Mana o Tamariki-Mokopuna Māori, emerged from whānau interviews, in which they stressed the importance of tamariki-mokopuna Māori being nurtured and educated in an environment that embodies aroha and manaakitanga and te reo me ōna tikanga Māori; and also being happy, healthy and secure in their identity as Māori. These elements are embedded in what Lady Tilly and Sir Tamati Reedy term “te mana o te mokopuna”– the divine spirit of the child which incorporates whānau aspirations within a theoretical framework. Lady Tilly and Sir Tamati Reedy are revered Māori elders, tikanga experts, theorists and educationalists who were Te Kōhanga Reo-appointed writers of the original Māori component of *Te Whāriki* (MoE, 1993, 1996), therefore their philosophies are extremely valuable to this research and are drawn on expansively in Chapter 6.

The categorising of data from TTK required adding an extra column to an existing table (already made earlier for data from the original research design). Pages of this table were previously

numbered. The column in question was titled Te Tauākī Kaupapa ā Whare Kōhungahunga Māori (TTKAWKM). Content from TTK was transferred over to this table. Main āhuatanga and interconnected elements were highlighted as they occurred and allocated a code from a.1–a.21. When data appears in findings chapters relating to TTKAWKM, it reads as TTKAWKM, followed by the page number and a code from.1–a.21 – for example, TTKAWKM, p. 10, a.19.

A different system was followed when analysing data from the 2017 version of *Te Whāriki*. After analysing and categorising an enormous amount of data associated with the original research and then *Te Whāriki* 1996, I became overwhelmed with data and coding, and found it easier to use an electronic copy of the 2017 *Te Whāriki* to search for words and phrases relating to the three overarching āhuatanga: Te Tiriti o Waitangi, Whakapapa and Te Mana o Tamariki-Mokopuna Māori, and interconnected elements. Once the words and phrases were located, they were highlighted and transferred to my working document. While this process required checking and double-checking, having access to an electronic document was manageable and practical. Also, data from *Te Whāriki* 2017 mostly involved direct quotes, requiring page numbers for reference purposes – which is helpful when needing to recheck quotes.

Also, while I found pūrākau was a companionable method and methodology and I was comfortable writing the first three chapters of this thesis, as well as the conclusion chapter, I found the three findings chapters (4, 5 and 6) somewhat challenging to write. I was conscious of the considerable amount of information presented in each of these chapters. However, it was important that all pūrākau – historical, traditional and contemporary, whānau, document contexts and findings were presented concurrently and not separately. Above all, it was essential that documents and voices had the opportunity to speak to each other.

Chapter Three: Nana Letty

Introduction

This chapter chronicles Nana Letty Brown's haerenga (journey) in mostly Māori-medium early childhood education – from Playcentre, Māori Playcentre, Kōhanga Reo and Puna Reo. Nana Letty is one of the early Māori activists who advocated for the reclamation of Māori cultural identity for tamariki-mokopuna and whānau Māori. Nana Letty's pūrākau is not only exciting and inspiring, it provides understandings of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori.

Born in Te Kaha¹¹ in 1938, Ereti (Letty) Taitua Bristowe moved to Tāmaki Makaurau (Auckland) in 1957, where she met her future husband, Hone Brown, from Moerewa.¹² They married in 1959 in her hometown of Te Araroa¹³ (Harris, 2002). While living in her new home in Te Atatū North¹⁴ (now Te Atatū Peninsula) with her husband and two young tamariki, Nana was introduced to Playcentre. Playcentre is unique to Aotearoa New Zealand and was established as a parent-led early childhood organisation in the 1940s. The Playcentre focus was parents learning about their children's development through observing their child playing (Stover, 1998).

Playcentre ignited Nana Letty's passion for working with tamariki-mokopuna and whānau Māori. Her involvement in Playcentre evolved into senior positions in all three Māori-medium educational movements – Māori Playcentre – Playcentre led by parents of tamariki-mokopuna Māori, Kōhanga Reo – Māori language nest for preschool-aged children, and Puna Reo – Māori-medium early childhood centre. Māori-medium early childhood education would not exist without the dedication and devotion of rangatira (leaders) like Nana Letty. Although she is involved in many community initiatives, Māori early childhood education has always taken precedence.

Despite having a long-term relationship with Nana Letty, I was somewhat hesitant to ask her to contribute to this thesis, mainly because she is a rangatira, a leader who is deeply

¹¹ Northern coast of the North Island of Aotearoa New Zealand

¹² Northland region of the North Island of Aotearoa New Zealand

¹³ Northern coast of North Island of Aotearoa New Zealand. Knowing where a person is from is extremely important in Te Ao Māori as it relates directly to one's whakapapa (genealogical connections). Whakapapa is discussed extensively in Chapter 5.

¹⁴ Area of West Auckland, North Island of Aotearoa New Zealand.

knowledgeable about Te Ao Māori and constantly in demand. Also, I knew components of her pūrākau had already been narrated exquisitely by Māori academic Aroha Harris (2002, 2007, 2008). Harris interviewed Nana Letty in 1998 when Nana was 60 years old and, as Nana puts it, “on to it!” Aroha Harris’ commentary has been invaluable to the development of this chapter.

After deeper reflection, I was convinced Nana’s successive involvement in Playcentre, Māori Playcentre, Kōhanga Reo and Puna Reo was particularly unique, namely because it provides a historical account of her involvement in early childhood education, which led to the materialisation of Puna Reo, Māori-medium early childhood education. Also, having been a past student of Nana Letty’s in Māori Playcentre who continues to seek guidance from her, I knew Nana’s pūrākau would contribute significantly to the scholarship of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori.

Reflecting over how I could present Nana Letty’s pūrākau led me to another pūrākau, *The Kuia and the Spider* by Patricia Grace (1981), in which, after a disagreement about who was the better weaver, the spider and the kuia establish they are both competent weavers, working to enhance the wellbeing of their whānau. This story provides a deeper message of love, care, support and safety of whānau. Moreover, the message emphasises the intergenerational interconnectedness and the sharing of knowledge from old to young. Nana Letty’s pūrākau is a sharing of knowledge from her, to me, to you. It is a fusion of her voice, my voice and other voices and frames many of the ideas around quality that will be discussed later in the thesis.

Knowing that Nana Letty’s daughter, Carolyn, is her confidant (I call her Nana’s lady-in-waiting), I consulted with her first. I knew Carolyn would have Nana’s best interests at heart. To my delight, after conferring with Nana, Carolyn advised me to meet Nana at 10.00am on Wednesday November 30, 2016, at their Puna Reo in Te Atatū Peninsula. Naturally, I was humbled and very excited. When I arrived, Nana Letty was waiting out the front of the Puna Reo. I wasn’t sure whether she was going to karanga (formal call) me in or not, so I waited by my car. She signalled me with her hands to move towards her. We greeted each other with a hug, and both went into the Puna. She introduced me to the whānau – tamariki, kaimahi, kaiako and mātua as whaea Barbie. Everyone stopped what they were doing, looked my way and said, “Ata mārie, whaea Barbie” (peaceful morning, good morning mother/aunty Barbie) to which I responded “Ata mārie tamariki mā” (peaceful morning, good morning children and everyone else). Nana explained that it is absolutely important to show respect to each other by offering a

simple greeting aha koa, he aha (no matter what) and all tamariki-mokopuna and whānau should enact this protocol.

I call myself Barb these days. However, like my whānau and many close friends, Nana calls me by my childhood name, Barbie, as does my childhood friend Ruby Noble, who is a kaiako at the Puna. We both attended Māori Playcentre and school together, so it was fabulous to see her – quite emotional to be honest. Lots of wonderful memories returned and of course sad ones, especially for those who had passed away.

After a quick catch up with Ruby, Nana suggested her and I move to the house next door, which is used as an office, lunch area and for events pertaining to the Puna. Before doing so, I passed the kai I had brought to the ringawera (kitchen person), then off we set. Nana's daughter Moana joined us, offering a cup of tea and kai on our arrival. We sat down in the lounge area and before I had time to discuss the main focus of the interview (I had sent everything to Carolyn to explain the research to Nana) Nana started narrating her pūrākau. I was pleased I had my audio recorder near me. My role was to listen and ask questions when appropriate. It was extremely important to let her story flow as I knew instinctively deeper messages would emerge regarding high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori. However, I wasn't completely silent as I contributed to the kōrero about the many events in our hapori – including the hilarious and sometimes challenging situations. Towards the end of the interview, I summarised what she had said (as I was taking notes) and asked Nana to clarify what she views as high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori.

Nanas Letty's interview was delightful – she spoke for over 2 hours about her journey in early childhood education (and other community activities). I think she would have gone on longer. However, her kōrero-ā-tinana (Nana's body language) told me she was tiring. I suggested we finish the interview. She agreed.

Nana Letty

Nana Letty is an image of beauty and grace. Many describe her as regal. Her mind is acute, her passion for Puna Reo Māori-medium early childhood education is irrepressible, her humour delightful and her dedication to all things Māori commendable. Although I am attempting to illustrate all that she is, the reality is words cannot actually capture her entire being. At 80 years of age, she continues to work tirelessly for Māori. She is Nana (kuia), and currently part-time

teacher at Te Puna Reo o Manawanui, the Puna she founded in the year 2000 alongside her whānau in Te Atatū North.

Nana Letty has been recognised and honoured throughout Aotearoa New Zealand. She was awarded *Young Māori Woman of the Year* in 1968 for her tireless devotion to Māori women's welfare, a *Queen's Service Medal* in 2009, for her services to Māori and youth, and her most recent tribute, an honorary Doctor of Education in 2016 from Unitec, Te Whare Wananga o Wairaka. Nana has been interviewed, profiled, referenced, and acknowledged throughout Aotearoa New Zealand. Her life, initiatives and achievements are chronicled in newspaper articles, magazines (Te Ao Hou, 1968), books (Harris, 2002), theses (Harris, 2007) and television interviews. She was also celebrated at her home on Mother's Day, 2016, by one of her favourite Aotearoa New Zealand's bands, Six60 ("Six60's Touching Mother's Day Surprise," 2016). The same year, a documentary honouring Nana Letty featured on *Waka Huia*, a television show screened every Sunday on TVNZ1¹⁵ (wakahuiatvz, 2016). This documentary is particularly special as it features Nana Letty receiving her honorary Doctor of Education at Hōani Waititi Marae in West Auckland. I was honoured to attend this monumental occasion, alongside her whānau, hapū, iwi, friends, colleagues and many of her past and present students.

Nana was one of the early activists in the reclamation of Māori identity. She was instrumental in mobilising the Māori community in Te Atatū North to work for the advancement of Māori people. Her focus was directed at reigniting all things Māori. Although some have passed, those who worked alongside her in those early days in Te Atatū North are rangatira still working in the community. Like many kaumātua throughout Aotearoa, Nana Letty is the pou tokomanawa (centre ridge pole in meeting house) that holds together whānau, hapori, hapū, iwi, Kōhanga reo, Puna Reo and numerous Māori organisations. The physical, spiritual and emotional presence of these kaumātua, embodies our past to teach those present to teach those who are coming.

Playcentre

Nana Letty heard about Te Atatū Playcentre through a neighbour in Te Atatū North, a suburb of Waipareira (West Auckland) in Aotearoa New Zealand. Trying to ascertain the exact dates

¹⁵ Television New Zealand, channel 1.

Te Atatū Playcentre opened was difficult;¹⁶ however, it has been confirmed that it was operating in 1961 (M. Alford, personal communication, June 6, 2017), some 20 years after the first Playcentre opened in Wellington, Aotearoa New Zealand. The Playcentre philosophy focused on children’s “imagination, flair and practical skills” (Stover, 1998, p. 10). Children were encouraged to learn through play, and parents were expected to support their children’s learning by participating in parent-led sessions and engaging in parent education programmes. Playcentre parents were community focused and reliant on fundraising to sustain their centres.

Nana was in her 20s when she started her relationship with Playcentre. She talks fondly about her experiences in Playcentre, particularly the mother’s help programme where she (and other mothers) supported the supervisor in the daily running of the centre. It is here she learnt many skills, like making playdough and paint – skills she taught her own children. Essentially, Nana’s love and passion for working with preschool children ignited during this period and she undertook her Playcentre assistant’s certificate (Harris, 2002) and later her supervisor’s certificate. Although the supervisor’s certificate took 3 years to complete, she describes it as “really good [learning] how to observe...by observing children you would see how they are growing and see how they are doing.”

While undertaking her supervisor’s certificate, Nana acquired knowledge about governance and administration:

You get to know how to run a meeting... how to write minutes... how to look after the money as treasurer and I have never ever done that until that time because we [were] all young mothers – all learning the same thing. So, you get to be the chairperson, you get to be the president and then you get your supervisor’s certificate.

On receiving her supervisor’s certificate, Nana became a liaison officer for Playcentre. This position took her on haerenga outside of her Te Atatū branch. There were times she would travel to places like Helensville Playcentre to offer her support. This experience she describes as:

Really interesting for me to get out there and get to know your neighbours, [make] friends and not only that, you get to do fundraising, you get to know the shop keepers... butchers...all the people within that community and you start learning how to ...fundraise.

¹⁶ There are instances when Nana did not provide actual dates of events and although I have attempted to find out through her and other sources (whānau, literature and so forth), this has been difficult.

A motivation for Nana becoming a qualified Playcentre supervisor was engaging with whānau Māori in her community:

I started at Playcentre and I was the only Māori there and [I knew] with your supervisor's certificate you can set up your own group of mothers within the Playcentre. You could have afternoon shift or morning shift or whatever, so I went for my supervisor's certificate.

Once attained, Nana went door knocking to find out why whānau Māori were not attending Playcentre. Many were not aware of what was going on in the community, others had joined but left. Being very active in community initiatives, Nana knew how beneficial Playcentre would be for tamariki and Māori mothers and encouraged her community into Playcentre. However, even though there was initial interest and participation, Māori interest started to wain and they stopped attending:

They all started disappearing. I thought I wonder why they all left so I went back to see them again. They said they are too shy... they were feeling a bit embarrassed because you know like all young mothers, you want to do the best for children but then you feel inadequate when you see the Pākehā... look after their kids their way and wasn't your way.

Nana recognised this shyness and also the differences in cultural ways of being. She had similar experiences when she first started at Playcentre. While attending a Playcentre committee meeting, Nana explained the situation and advocated for Māori having their own Playcentre session. She announced to the committee: "I've got my supervisor's certificate" knowing very well that this certificate gave her the mandate to operate her own sessions. Nana also knew that Lex Grey, the "Māori Education Foundation (MEF) preschool officer" (Stover, 1998, p. 11) was recruiting and promoting Māori Playcentres in rural areas. She assumed Lex Grey would provide immediate support for Māori families having their own session. However, this was not the case, instead he promoted urban Māori Playcentre mothers mixing with urban Pākehā Playcentre mothers (Harris, 2002).

Nana Letty's position of separate sessions for whānau Māori initially resulted in "banner headlines about apartheid" (Stover, 1998, p. 146) but her determination proved to be valuable for the Māori community, resulting in the opening of a Māori Playcentre in Te Atatū North (also known as Waipareira Playcentre) in the mid-1960s. This centre commenced with three sessions a week and approximately 35 tamariki Māori (Harris, 2002).

Te Atatū North Māori Playcentre (Waipareira Māori Playcentre)

Nana Letty described to me how Māori Playcentre became a kāinga (home), a meeting place for Māori mothers and their children. Fathers, too, were involved with fundraising and working bees. Mothers revitalised many traditional Māori practices. In the following excerpt Nana Letty talks to me about this revitalisation and recalls my mother's participation:

Rehi taught all the parents how to do kete [flax bags] and make mats, your Mum included. Your Mum was really good with her hands. Sophie was good at making flax things and the other ones that were not so much good at making things, they would be up on the stage doing action songs. We had [our] own culture group. So, we had all these parents being involved. Ellen, Abe and Cindy composed a song just for our Playcentre.

During this period, the whānau set up their own Playcentre committee underpinned by tikanga Māori – Māori values and principles. With Nana's guidance, they learnt how to facilitate meetings, write minutes and fundraise. Although this was new learning and undertaken mostly by women (men were working full-time), they had no difficulty grasping these tasks. This wasn't a surprise as organisational and leadership skills were natural to Māori women. Rei, McDonald and Te Awekōtuku (1993) shared that, in pre-European times, Māori women were devoted to the wellbeing of their whānau, hapū and iwi. They had their distinctive roles in Māori society and were accustomed to organising and leading. Māori women worked together caring for tamariki-mokopuna and participating in tasks such as collecting food, weaving mats and clothing. Their skills and dedication transitioned into contemporary settings. Although there were many instances where Māori women were confronted with racism and prejudice, they did not let this distract them from their advocacy and dedication to the wellbeing of Māori. Around the 1880s, Māori women were active in Māori politics and participated in many non-Māori organisations – such as women's suffrage, church and sports groups – all focusing on the education and wellbeing of their people (Paterson & Wanhalla, 2017). Nana Letty and the Māori Playcentre committee continued this legacy of Māori women's leadership.

Nana was aware that there were many tribal representations in Te Atatū North Māori Playcentre “like people from Tainui, up north and down the coast.” Māori Playcentre united these different iwi representatives. Nana acknowledged that “It was the first time they had mixed with other peoples besides their own people.” Intertribal differences were present; however, once whānau

got to know each other, they moved past their tribal patriotism. Importantly the whānau “could see the benefit that their children were getting from being together.”

Fundraising initiatives not only united Māori in Te Atatū, they brought the community together:

I keep telling my daughters, we had fun while we were fundraising. It wasn't like a big job, we had fun talking to each other. I would go to your Mum's house and pick up cakes and whatever and she would come and help on the stalls, so all that work was community work and it was good fun.

Nana also credits Jack Colvin, the Mayor of Waitemata County Council from 1967–1972 (Auckland City Council, n.d.) for supporting Te Atatū North Māori Playcentre. He enjoyed “the social aspect...he just loved it. [He] was part of our little centre.” Nana recognised and valued people who were kind, respectful and willing to support Māori initiatives such as Māori Playcentre. Moreover, she knew how to navigate spaces and people – especially those who were in power, like Jack Colvin. Nana attended council meetings and made a concerted effort to participate in various community events. Not only was she a genuine supporter of community initiatives, she also knew she had the opportunity to network.

Although Nana was well aware of the racism and discrimination (discussed further on in this chapter) directed towards Māori Playcentre and other Māori initiatives in Te Atatū, she said it was important to remain focused on their future projects. However, she acknowledged there was both personal and collective anguish. I witnessed it first-hand with my mother – watching her sadness – her silent crying – tears without voice. Although this was very real, the urgency to get on with business – that being Māori cultural reclamation – dominated their thinking. They were women on a mission – he wāhine rangatira (noble women, women leaders).

Working as a collective for the wellbeing of tamariki-mokopuna, whānau and hapori Māori was hugely important for Nana Letty and the committee. Aroha (love), manaakitanga (respect) and hūmārie (humility) underpinned their thinking. They looked after and respected everyone. They were both kaiako and tauira – teachers as well as learners – which enhanced their own wellbeing and confidence and that of others. These traditional Māori women leadership qualities remain in our communities today – a wonderful example of the value of intergenerational knowledge. A recent publication by Ruru, Roche, and Waitoki (2017) speak to the leadership qualities of Nana Letty and the Māori Playcentre committee where hūmāire, aroha, manaakitanga and kotahitanga, were viewed as essential to Māori women's leadership and wellbeing, as are mana and courage – something Nana Letty and the committee proudly displayed.

Focusing on projects ahead included Housie (Bingo) – a popular fundraising event which was held at Te Atatū primary school. This charity event was common among church groups, which many Māori attended. There would be a specific goal:

We wanted to raise three hundred pounds, so we raised that amount of money then we stopped [as we didn't] want to get too carried away with fundraising and not look after our kids.

Nana describes the Playcentre whānau as “the best fund-raisers out.” With many of the parents associated with Te Atatū Māori Playcentre growing in confidence, they started to get involved in school committees, taking their fundraising ideas with them: “They got onto the school committees and started [fundraisers] like [selling] hāngī [traditional Māori cooked food].” Nana proudly credits Māori Playcentre for becoming “the hub not only for the [Te Atatū] community but the whole of West Auckland.” Notably, Māori Playcentre unified the Māori community.

During this period, Nana Letty was also involved with the Māori Women’s Welfare League situated in Auckland City. Nana and her cousin Ellen Weneti enjoyed their regular trips to the Auckland branch which was facilitated by their Aunty Maraea Te Kawa. It wasn’t long before Aunty Maraea directed the two to start their own branch in Te Atatū North. Nana describes their initial reluctance: “We didn’t want to set up our own Welfare League because we really loved getting in touch with those old people in the city.” However, after much deliberation, they conceded. This proved to be a huge success, with many of the Te Atatū Māori Playcentre mothers (including my mother) joining the Māori Women’s Welfare League:

We did wonderful things; we did community things. We just didn't go and have coffee hour... we were actually involved in the community and it was a real community effort on behalf of all those people. Not only that, we had people who were really poor. I got them involved in the League because being involved in the League, you're looking after yourself and we are all looking after them. They have to know, not only are we helping them, but we appreciate what they do.

Māori Playcentre played a central role in the establishment of Kaupapa Māori-driven rōpū (groups) in Te Atatū North. Māori Playcentre was followed by the Māori Women’s Welfare League, Te Rōpū Manutaki¹⁷ culture group, and Hoani Waititi Marae.¹⁸ Many other Kaupapa Māori organisations developed during this period. Māori pro-activism initiated by Māori

¹⁷ Te Rōpū Manutaki is a well-known West Auckland Māori culture group.

¹⁸ Hoani Waititi Marae, named after Māori educationalist Hoani Waititi.

women showed their strong ability to mobilise their hapori and work collectively. Māori women have always been leaders, nurturers. This leadership led to whānau Māori being valued and respected in their Māori communities. This eventuated in many becoming leaders. Nana argued that whānau Māori wanted to do the best for their children:

They wanted to carry on all for their kids. The school was for their kids, the Welfare League was for their kids and Te Atatū was all... for their kids. Rutherford [high school] was for their children and so was the marae.

Nana acknowledges Playcentre and Māori Playcentre for bringing the Māori community together:

Fortunately for me we had all these people that I worked with in Playcentre and I have always said, all that hard work started from Playcentre. All those committees that were set up in Te Atatū came out of Playcentre.

While Nana credits Playcentre and Māori Playcentre for bringing the hapori together, it was her vision and activism that mobilised the Māori community in Te Atatū North – for which she deserves absolute recognition. She was nurtured in the value, importance and beauty of being Māori and wasn't afraid to walk or talk her beliefs. However, she knew many Māori who moved away from their hometowns, did not quite have her confidence. They were lonely and isolated and felt judged by Pākehā and were therefore whakamā (shy) to mix in Pākehā-dominated environments like Playcentre. Nana's recognition of this led to her advocating for Māori Playcentre – where Māori could feel comfortable and confident being Māori. Once approved, many Māori mothers and tamariki-mokopuna Māori joined. Māori mothers learnt various new skills, in a safe, caring and nurturing environment. They became active whānau members and contributors to their Māori Playcentre committee and as their confidence grew, they joined other committees, such as school committees and the Māori Women's Welfare League. They were no longer whakamā to walk in the world as Māori or advocate for their tamariki-mokopuna Māori. Moreover, they had the courage and confidence to mix, work, partner and, if required, challenge injustices, prejudice or racism towards Māori. Nana Letty recognised this and thought it was the opportune time to merge the two Playcentres together. This was always her vision – to ensure Māori maintain and sustain their identity as Māori while learning Pākehā ways. Nana knew this would prepare them for their future endeavours in both worlds, Te Ao Māori and the Pākehā world.

Māori and Pākehā Playcentre: Blending Together

While Nana was optimistic about the blending of Pākehā and Māori in Playcentre, she had not forgotten about the racism directed towards Māori:

Some of those parents [Pākehā] were really racist. It seemed like the whole world were against all what we were doing in Te Atatū. They wouldn't give us any funding because it was for parents who were attending Pākehā Playcentre... that's why we fundraised so we got our own money. [We even had] this Māori journalist, [write] this one-page article about why we set up [Māori] Playcentre.

The journalist was Harry Dansey, a well-known Māori journalist who worked for the Auckland Star (Harris, 2002). He became a race relations conciliator in Aotearoa New Zealand around the mid-1970s. Nana said he was good man who spoke up for Māori and saw the advantages of Māori Playcentre. She had the article somewhere but could not locate it and I have tried with no success. However, a recent news article quoted Dansey where he emphasised the need for people of Aotearoa New Zealand to “understand each other, and, in particular, that the Māori view should be known by the rest of New Zealand” (McKibbin, 2018, para. 4).

Dansey envisaged Pākehā and Māori building a harmonious relationship (McKibbin, 2018), yet racism towards Māori continued, extending to local schools. Many Māori parents whose children went to Māori Playcentre “knew their rights” and wanted Māori teachers and Māori language taught at school. Nana would help out at the local school, placing signs around the room, like tūru (chair) and māhita (teacher). She preferred the older Pākehā teachers over the younger ones. Many older teachers had been in the Second World War with Māori and had formed respectful relationships; however, she found many younger ones were racist towards Māori children, stating: “The young ones were really quite racist and I had a few run-ins with them about their attitude towards Māori kids, putting them in the back of the class and all those sort of things.” At one stage, the racism was so bad, a group of Māori parents asked the principal, Mr Shepherd (who was very supportive of Māori) to invite Ranginui Walker, a member of the Auckland District Māori Council at the time (later becoming a professor of Māori Studies), to advocate for Māori. Nana recognised Ranginui as a person who was passionate about Māori education and not afraid to speak out, stating: “He just loved what we were doing in Te Atatū” and he was excited to be asked to help. Walker stood beside the Māori parents at the school and advocated for their rights to have te reo me ōna tikanga Māori taught in their school and for more Māori teachers to be employed.

Strong self-advocacy coupled with support from people like Dansey and Walker and many other prominent male Māori figures, including Dr Pita Sharples and Professor Pat Hohepa,¹⁹ assisted the Māori community in Te Atatū North to fulfil their vision. Interestingly, according to a friend, Harry Dansey was incredibly passionate about Māori issues but did not like any form of confrontational politics (McKibbin, 2018). Dansey's friend alluded to Dansey becoming impatient with people who reflected this – naming people like Ranginui Walker, Syd Jackson²⁰ and Pat Hohepa. Regardless of the different styles of advocacy and assertion of Māori rights, these Māori men had the same vision – to enhance and sustain the wellbeing of tamariki-mokopuna, whānau and Māori. Moreover, these prominent Māori leaders' vision aligned with the aspirations Te Atatū North's Māori community, which Nana Letty argues, all started from Playcentre and Māori Playcentre.

There were many others who contributed to Māori cultural reclamation. Walker (2016) commended Dr Tūroa Royal, a Māori education advisor to the Ministry of Education, who advocated for the inclusion of taha Māori (Māori knowledges and ways of being) in all schools. In 1971, Royal wrote a seminal report outlining three main recommendations:

1. cultural differences be understood, accepted and respected by children and teachers,
2. the school curriculum must find a place for the understanding of Māoritanga (the Māori way of life),
3. special measures must be taken to achieve the goal of equal opportunity. (Codd, Harker, & Nash, 1985, p. 75, cited in Walker, 2016, p. 23)

Māori community activism and strong Māori advocacy at national level resulted in Māori teachers gracing the schools in Te Atatū and other parts of Aotearoa New Zealand. Walker (2016) shared:

there were several hundred Māori teaching in both primary and secondary schools. They initiated action from within by stepping up the teaching content on taha Māori in social studies, promoting school visits to marae (meeting houses), and, in the 1970s, establishing marae on school campuses (p. 31).

Some of teachers I remember during this period were Aunties June Mariu, Betty Ngata, Ellen Weneiti, Aroha Sharples and Marama Martin. There were many more. Even The Right

¹⁹ Professor of Māori Studies.

²⁰ Prominent trade unionist and Māori rights activist.

Honourable Winston Peters was a Māori teacher during this period. He taught my sister Susie at Te Atatū Intermediate around the mid-1960s.

Even though Māori had some unpleasant experiences, Māori Playcentre played a huge part in developing confidence among the Māori community. Nana recognised this and although she could not remember the exact dates (she thinks around the early 1970s), Nana felt it was time for Māori Playcentre to start merging with Pākehā Playcentre:

What happened, Aunty Ellen was there so I said to Aunty Ellen, I think it is time. They were so confident they will be so beneficial to the Pākehā parents. The Māori parents all joined the [Pākehā] Playcentre. Instead of leaving, it was blended together which is what I really wanted from the beginning.

Māori parents were radiating confidence – something they did not have when they first experienced or contemplated attending Playcentre. The opening of Māori Playcentre supported their transition from trepidation to courage. Moreover, they were confident in their identity as Māori, which supported their relationships with Pākehā. The Pākehā parents and Māori parents were now working together on community projects. Nana did not see it as Māori going over to Pākehā Playcentre, more like Pākehā moving to Māori Playcentre – or, as she called it, blended:

All these Pākehā were now part of the Māori community – that is how Playcentre ended up. It became blended together. [Some would ask] what happened to Māori Playcentre and I used to say they are all together now. It was just to get those shy parents used to their kids having that beautiful time with the other children. A lot of Māori continued to attend and Lilian Trifilo [who was Māori] became the supervisor of the blended centre.

Nana’s notion of “blended together” shows the early signs of bicultural discourse that was starting to build momentum. She was very clear about her vision for tamariki Māori “having that beautiful time with the other children.” She also knew empowering Māori mothers needed to take precedence. This was accomplished through Māori Playcentre: Nana knew the mothers required a secure space to be Māori first, before they learnt about the Playcentre philosophy (including mixing with Pākehā parents). Once the mothers developed confidence, they were able to work with and alongside Pākehā. Nana’s vision had been achieved and she knew it was time to blend together. Nana has always maintained that Māori ways of knowing and being are beneficial to Pākehā parents.

Kōhanga Reo

Nana continued to work with the Māori community in Te Atatū North; however, she found herself working in other Māori communities as well – a directive given by her seniors in her new employment with the Department of Māori Affairs²¹. Nana remained a strong advocate of Playcentre but was also realistic about the changing political climate:

What happened in the 1980s, day-care centres came up. Playcentres were still there but a lot of parents needed to go to work and we were still establishing our parents. A lot of Māori parents had to go to work in the end. In the 60s it wasn't too bad because we didn't need as much. Playcentre Kaupapa was lost along the way because other early childhood centres were being set up.

During this period of change, a significant milestone was taking place for Māori. The 1980s proved to be a momentous time where the wrongs of the last 150 years were being discussed. Colonisation had led to a significant Māori language decline, impacting directly on Māori identity and wellbeing. The early 1900s saw approximately 90% of new entrant Māori tamariki at school speaking in te reo Māori. By the 1960s, this had decreased drastically to only 26%. The Māori language was in such decline that, by 1979, it was thought to be dying (Walker, 1990 cited in A. Durie, 1998). This was very disturbing for Māori; they realised it impacted terribly on their identity as Māori and created significant barriers to asserting Māori self-determination (Skerrett-White, 2001).

While Nana and whānau Māori had worked tirelessly to establish Te Atatū North Māori Playcentre, followed by the blended centre, they were conscious of the deeper issues in Māori society. The devolution of language and identity saw Māori failing terribly within the education system; for this reason, Māori had no other alternative but to create their own educational pathway (Skerrett-White, 2001).

It was during this period that Te Kōhanga Reo (Māori language nest) movement was established. Proponents of Te Kōhanga Reo worked tirelessly to develop a Māori-centric early learning language environment focused fundamentally on the survival of te reo me ōna tikanga. Te Kōhanga Reo is recognised as a revolutionist (Irwin, 1994) and interventionist movement

²¹ Nana Letty cannot remember the exact date she moved to this department but said it was in the 1970s. I know she was definitely working there in 1976 as I remember her attending my mother's tangi (funeral) alongside many other people from the Department of Māori Affairs.

(Nepe, 1991). Nepe argues both Te Kōhanga Reo and Kaupapa Māori education are “credible institutions by Maori parents and grandparents specifically, for intervening to redress the educational malpractice performed by New Zealand education system on the majority of Maori children who pass through it” (p. 67).

G.H. Smith (2003) described the period of the 1980s as the “real revolution.” This process was empowering as Māori were learning about emancipation. Māori were becoming strategic in their thinking. Instead of waiting to be instructed and directed, Māori became the leaders and directors of their aspirations. The establishment of Te Kōhanga Reo National Trust and the opening of the first Kōhanga Reo total-immersion Māori language nest in Wainuiomata on April 13, 1982 (Skerrett-White, 2001) validated the advancement of Māori. Tuki Nepe (1991), celebrated for her advocacy of Kaupapa Māori, was one of the negotiators and initiators of Te Awhireinga Kōhanga Reo in central Auckland. Nepe believed the philosophy of Te Kōhanga Reo was distinctively Māori:

spiritually bound to the metaphysical base which in turn influences the common-sense thinking and interpretations of a Maori world view. This thinking and interpretations are transmitted through the medium of Maori, by a “wairua Maori,” and with a “hinengaro Maori” (p. 80).

Dr Kara Puketapu, the secretary of the Department of Māori Affairs during this period, was one of the leading advocates of Te Kōhanga Reo movement. While undertaking his civic duties, he would often take visiting dignitaries to Nana’s Māori Playcentre in Te Atatū North. Cognisant of the work Nana had done, he requested she establish Te Kōhanga Reo in Tāmaki Makaurau:

The first thing I did when I set up Kōhanga, I went to every community and I said to the young mothers who wanted to learn te reo (and there was heaps of them in the community) and I said to them, get your Nana first. Don’t come back to me until you find a Nana. Find a Nana first for your children. If your grandmother can [speak] Māori, bring her in.

Nana Letty placed huge emphasis on “getting a Nana,” primarily because she believed they had te reo and they knew tikanga. Once the young mothers found their Nanas, they were encouraged to look for a place to start their Kōhanga Reo:

They’d go to churches, they looked [for] garages, anywhere that they [could]. They went to community centres. I tell you all the communities were really supportive of these Kōhanga being set up. At the same time, I would go and visit every Kōhanga to make sure that they were ok.

Nana recalls the first group of Kōhanga Reo in Tāmaki Makaurau:

The first Kōhanga was [set up by] Ruby Gray up at Ōrākei. She was in te reo in a really big way so she [recruited] all her nieces and nephews up there and they were so rapt. That was the first Kōhanga that was set up in Auckland. The girls from down at Waiatarau (Freemans Bay) ... were the second ones. They had all those fantastic parents – they were all, but in different ways. [Kōhanga] was something they had always wanted for their children and they held onto that Kōhanga and they did everything, just like I did when I was in Playcentre. Hoani Waititi set up. Aunty Rehi started up the one in Te Atatū. My Kōhanga I set up in the house we had over in Hopetown Street. We had Nana Kura and she used to come. All the kids came from the Māori Affairs staff [to my Kōhanga].

Interest in Kōhanga Reo escalated to a point, Nana had to set up different groups:

What happened after that, it got big and so I said right we are going to set up [more groups]. North Shore... West Auckland..., the inner city... Kaipara....

The interest resulted in Nana's workload increasing. One of her job requirements was to offer guidance and mentoring to mothers so they could undertake administration tasks:

It just reminded me of the Playcentre days when I said do your own minutes. I set them up exactly like I set up the Playcentre in the old days.

Nana noticed the parents growing in confidence and not whakamā to challenge the education department about lack of resources or educational requirements for their children. Due to the parents' working hours, Nana advocated for increasing their opening hours past the traditional Kōhanga Reo hours of 9am–3pm.

Nana was kept busy supporting Kōhanga Reo throughout Tāmaki Makaurau; however, the 90s brought about government restructuring. Nana recalled this period when “the Labour Party got rid of all the work and everybody was made redundant.” Many lost their jobs in the public sector, including the Department of Māori Affairs. Nana was affected by these changes but was offered a position leading a Kōhanga Reo in Carrington Road, Pt Chevalier. This Kōhanga, positioned in the old nurses' home opposite the former Carrington Hospital, offered full-time care for many of the staff's children as well as children from outside of Pt Chevalier. Even though the Kōhanga was still officially under Te Kōhanga Reo National Trust, the building was owned by Carrington Hospital and two full-time teachers' salaries were paid directly by them. They also provided all the meals for children and staff.

Nana enjoyed working as Kōhanga Reo liaison officer in Tāmaki Makaurau as well as manager at the Kōhanga Reo in Pt Chevalier. There were many highlights:

Our Nannies got together every week at Māori Affairs, setting up the programme. It was beautiful, aroha and manaaki. We set up our own training programme for Auckland. We [were] not setting it up for the whole [Kōhanga movement] because every community is different. You know the Wanganui community is different from Wellington. We know in our Auckland community; we have got different communities and it was their Nannies from all their own different communities [who recognised their community needs].

While there were many memorable times, Nana Letty also acknowledged there were challenges. Her overall philosophy continued to reflect the Kaupapa (philosophy) of Te Kōhanga Reo, but her developing views did not always mirror that of the movement. As a strong advocate for the community she recognised their needs were changing, requiring her to respond to these changes. When she was advised that their building was about to be demolished, she saw this as a “tohu” (sign) telling her it was time to move on. Nana Letty left the Kōhanga Reo movement – although she still remains a strong advocate for this organisation.

Puna Reo

After many years dedicated to Kōhanga Reo, Nana was ready for something new. She still wanted to continue working with tamariki and whānau Māori. With the help and assistance of her daughters Ngaire and Yvonne, and support from the Ministry of Education, premises were found in Te Atatū North to start a Māori-medium early childhood centre. It is during this time the name Puna Reo became synonymous with Māori-medium early childhood education. Haare Williams, an expert in te reo and tikanga Māori, suggested the name Puna Reo. Nana explains it as *puna*, meaning a spring, a life force, and *reo* meaning the language. She interprets the fusion of the two as the life force of Māori language. Haare Williams originally wanted Nana to lead the Puna Reo at Unitec in Auckland, but she thought it would be more beneficial to her community to set up her own. Te Puna Reo o Manawanui opened in the year 2000 in Te Atatū Peninsula. It is a full-immersion te reo Māori-medium licensed early childhood centre, catering for 30 children.

Puna Reo has developed into a Māori-medium early childhood educational environment, different from Kōhanga Reo. It has no accountability or relationship with the Te Kōhanga National Trust. Puna Reo receives funding directly from the Ministry of Education and has the

same responsibilities as early childhood centres. The opening of Nana's Puna Reo has been contentious for some. Colleen Morehu (2009) argues Puna Reo has materialised from Te Kōhanga Reo and is a breakaway group from the patronage of the Te Kōhanga Reo. She acknowledges that changes in social formation are common among Māori structures, therefore the need to dedomesticate should not be perceived as adverse. However, there are tensions: Morehu draws on King's research (2007, cited in Morehu, 2009) in which the author established that many Māori gaining fluency in te reo are from a middle-class background. According to Morehu, there is a risk in these parents choosing Puna Reo: "If Puna Reo continues to attract the middle-class whānau, an elitist model of Māori-medium early childhood will become the norm for those who can afford it" (p. 8).

Nana Letty agrees with the sentiments of Morehu (2009) and believes the term *elitist* has come from their Puna Reo. Nana openly acknowledges that her Puna caters for many whānau who are highly educated, professional and fluent in both English and te reo (many classified as experts in te reo Māori). However, she believes there is a need to respond to the community needs:

Well, it's come from here actually. Those elitist groups haven't got anywhere to go and they want their children to learn the reo. They want to see staff bond with their children. They want their children to be bonding with the staff and learning the reo.

She also argues Kōhanga Reo does not suit everybody and there should be openness to different ways of delivering te reo Māori to children. Nana advocates for (play) groups in houses if it works as a medium for delivering te reo. The main focus should be striving for te reo Māori, building trust and bonding with the whānau and children:

[Te reo] is really, really important, absolutely important. It should be the first priority to get that reo going. Even if they start slowly because a lot of them, even when we were setting up Kōhanga you have to get to know your parents first, bond in with them. Kuia have to bond in with the parents, before they bond in with the kids, you have to get the parents to trust you and then you start teaching the reo.

Up until recently, Nana's Puna Reo had three trained registered teachers but currently has two and one teacher who is in her final year of her degree. Nana would like to see Puna Reo start its own training programme where Kaupapa Māori early childhood education is taught:

I always say the best thing that I would love to see is us doing our own training programme because those 3 years that they are [training], they lose a lot. We teach them a lot when they're here and when they come back, they are totally different.

Nana's support of a Puna Reo educational institution is to ensure the tamariki are learning tribal stories, specifically their own tribal stories:

You see a lot of our kids come from different tribes, that's why the kids from Tainui get [taught about] Kīngitanga [in our programme]. That's where they are from and they learn all the names of the kings [and queens] and marae [ancestral iwi grounds] and awa [river] of that particular tribe because that is where some of our kids are from. It makes them feel good... and they learn their pepeha all the time so when we celebrate something that is part of them, that's why we do it. Like the one's from Taranaki, we learn all about Taranaki, about Te Whiti and then there is the Ratana. Heaps of our kids are Ratana, so we learn about Ratana and who he was and about the star and they all get to do the star and the colour and all that and they love it.

Recognising children's iwi and religious affiliations is absolutely important to Nana. Essential to their programme is teaching the tamariki in te reo Māori about Māori concepts, deities and ways of being. Their Puna programming relates directly to atua (Māori gods/deities):

We learn about Papa-tū-ā-nuku [Mother Earth] and why she is erupting all the time and Rūaumoko [god of earthquakes] is still in his mummy's tummy and he is wanting to get out. They can talk about Tāwhiri-mātea [god of wind] and it's more about what's around them in Māori. This morning the little boy looks up in the tree and he says Tāne Mahuta [god of forest] Nana and he looks up into the tree outside and I say "Āe, Tāne Mahuta [yes, god of forest]" and they look... everything [has] got a wairua with it and it's more meaningful to them, not just the reo but also other things like Rōngo-mā-Tāne [god of kumara and cultivated foods]. We taught them that song about Rōngo-mā-Tāne and then we have got the pikopiko [fern shoots] up there and we talk about the pūhā [thistle leaves] and we talk about safety like when we go to the beach, we talk about holding hands and safety and that's Tangaroa [god of the sea].

Nana stipulates that te reo Māori is of no benefit unless the tamariki learn about what is in their surroundings. All that is around them is who they are and where they come from. She also emphasises the need to involve whānau and community in programming. She explains this by talking about what happened with a kumara plant:

I must talk about this kumara [sweet potato] plant, we do the tipu [bud]. We cut the kumara, we put it in a cup and they see it grow and then it becomes the tipu, so what happens with that tipu, it goes over to Hoani Waititi [marae] and they have got a big māra kai [vegetable garden] because we can't have any here and they plant those tipu

and it grows into kumara. That little thing carries onto somewhere else and not just stays here.

The Puna Reo harvests the kumara when they are fully grown; however, typical of pūrākau, Nana's example carried a deeper meaning of whanaungatanga [relationships]. The exchanging and growing of the kumara ensures there is always a connection between the whānau of the Puna Reo and the whānau of the marae. Many of those who have passed on have children and mokopuna who either attend the Puna or are connected in some way to the marae. These exchanges show the continuum between the past, the present and the future.

When discussing notions of high-quality early childhood education, Nana Letty talks about two key ideas. The first is the need to have an abundance of staff. Nana is a strong advocate of high ratio of staff to child. Her Puna can have up to nine staff per day but will always have a minimum of six (three required legally). Three staff hold Western early childhood qualifications.

Nana believes fluency in te reo me ōna tikanga surpasses Western qualifications. She also reflects on why whānau choose to come to their Puna reo:

All these years our parents always tell me why they come in. They have got different reasons. The main reason for them is te reo. It must be total immersion. The parents said, it must be total immersion and they haven't seen it before. They have never gone to a centre where they have been greeted by the children, welcomed them in like ata mārie [good morning] and when they leave at night, there is a ka kite [see you] to all the kids. That is the way they come in and the way they leave so to me that all has to do with te reo.

Nana Letty continues talking about how hard it is to find a full immersion te reo Māori early childhood centre and how her whānau are in the process of building a new centre because their Puna is in great demand and cannot accommodate everyone. Nana also recognises within her immediate whānau there are iwi affiliations to Te Aitanga-a-Māhaki, Ngāti Porou, Ngāti Hine and Tainui, which also attracts whānau who share the same whakapapa (genealogy).

That's why we are putting up the new centre. It's really heart-breaking because if we could do it in a hurry we will. Some of these kids have been on the waiting list until they've have gone to school. They are still waiting. That's why I feel really terrible about some of the kids because they really want to learn the reo. [Sometimes we hear

stories like] us from Ngāti Porou, we can't even get in and the kaiako are from Ngāti Porou.

Our kōrero (talk) could have gone on for hours, even days, but I see that Nana is tiring so I suggest we finish. She acknowledges she is becoming weary, finishing with a final thought about how imperative te reo Māori is to high-quality early learning for tamariki Māori:

What people have got to realise, no matter how flash your place, these families want te reo and if te reo is not there, then they are not happy.

Summary

This chapter has focused on Nana Letty's pūrākau, storying her journey through Playcentre, Māori Playcentre, Kōhanga Reo and Puna Reo. Although she started her journey in her 20s, her journey continues, 60 years on. This is testament to her commitment to Kaupapa Māori initiatives and more specifically her devotion to Māori-medium early childhood education.

Essentially this chapter is a reminder of, or for some an introduction to, how Māori-medium early childhood education came into existence. Nana Letty's pūrākau reveals her preparedness to disrupt dominant discourse and advocate for the rightful positioning of Māori ways of knowing, being and doing when attending and teaching in Playcentre. This resulted in the commencement of Māori Playcentre where whānau Māori could be safe to be Māori and therefore safe to assert their language and culture. Through her own strength, power, courage and knowledge, Nana Letty was able to mobilise her/our Māori community in Te Atatū North. Nana Letty's ability to organise resulted in many wāhine Māori (Māori women), including my mother, being able to maintain their sensibility and identity as Māori, alongside learning administrative and leadership skills. This resulted in a newfound confidence in many of the wāhine Māori – confidence to navigate the Pākehā world. They carried this confidence forward to the local schools where they continued to be involved in the education of their tamariki-mokopuna while also challenging injustice, racism and prejudice directed towards Māori. Leading figures such as the mayor of Waitemata, Jack Colvin; Māori activists, academics and writers like Ranginui Walker, Harry Dansey, Pat Hohepa, Peter Sharples and Syd Jackson; as well as the local school principal Mr Shephard, showed their allegiance towards Nana Letty's (and others) Māori-driven initiatives – including te reo me ōna tikanga Māori in schools.

Nana Letty's pūrākau emphasises the critical need to be responsive to community needs at all times. She has uplifted Māori communities – which has had a flow on effect to tamariki-

mokopuna Māori. Nana Letty's activism (alongside many others) has witnessed a transition from assimilation (Playcentre) to self-determination (Māori Playcentre) to biculturalism (blended Playcentre) and a return to self-determination (Kōhanga Reo and Puna Reo – Māori-medium early childhood centres) for Māori. Importantly, Māori Playcentre, Kōhanga Reo and Puna Reo have provided the sharing of intergenerational knowledge – where tamariki-mokopuna Māori can learn te reo me ōna tikanga from, with and alongside knowledge bearers like Nana Letty.

While Nana Letty speaks warmly about her transitioning across Māori-medium early childhood education, she recognises Puna Reo responds to working parents as it offers longer hours. Morehu (2007, cited in Morehu, 2009) draws on King's research which raised concerns about middle-class Māori parents choosing Puna Reo over Kōhanga Reo. There was concern this had the potential to create an elitist group of whānau Māori. Nana is open and familiar with the changing face of Māori. She recognised a new group of whānau Māori whose tamariki-mokopuna Māori attend her Puna Reo – describing them respectfully as “out there” elite Māori who are professional people who speak te reo Māori. Nana sees this as positive – maintaining their identity as Māori while traversing professional spaces and places. This was always Nana Letty's vision for the mothers who attended Māori Playcentre – building their confidence in their identity as Māori while learning new skills.

Notably, Nana Letty speaks to the absolute importance of te reo Māori when considering notions of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori, advocating tamariki-mokopuna Māori need to be immersed in a Māori-centric educational programme that embodies Māori concepts, values and deities.

Chapter Four: Te Tiriti o Waitangi

Overview of the Three Findings Chapters

This chapter is the first of the three findings chapters. As discussed previously in the introduction chapter of this thesis, whānau perspectives concerning high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori generated three overarching āhuatanga – Te Tiriti o Waitangi, Whakapapa and Te Mana o Tamariki-Mokopuna Māori. Each of these āhuatanga form the findings chapters – presented as a pūrākau, informed by semi-structured interviews and document analysis. Document analysis involved analysing *Te Whāriki* and TTK to observe how these critical documents in MMECC support whānau views of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna in Whare Kōhungahunga Māori (WKM).

The findings chapters follow a consistent format, commencing with a brief literature review, followed by whānau views. Ways in which the curriculum document *Te Whāriki* and philosophy statement TTK support whānau views of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna are then presented. Each chapter finishes with a section focused on areas of strengths and concerns in the relationship between *Te Whāriki*, TTK and whānau perspectives – including recommendations for how the relationship could be strengthened. A final summary completes each findings chapter, asserting why the proposed āhuatanga should be considered a key factor in high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori.

Introduction

This chapter, Te Tiriti o Waitangi, is in response to whānau views of Te Tiriti o Waitangi as a key element of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori. It is important to point out only two whānau participants talked explicitly about Te Tiriti o Waitangi. However, *all* whānau participants in this research are inherently partners to Te Tiriti o Waitangi through their identity as Māori in Aotearoa New Zealand. The right to attend and participate in WKM, a MMECC grounded in Kaupapa Māori – Māori ways of knowing, being and doing – is afforded to tamariki-mokopuna and whānau Māori by Article 3 of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. This article guarantees that the rights and privileges of Māori are protected (Orange, 2004; Ritchie, 2003). Importantly, Kaupapa Māori perspectives in this research are inherently informed by Te Tiriti o Waitangi so while not always mentioned explicitly, there is an implicit assumption that Te Tiriti o Waitangi underpins the kōrero of whānau participants.

The pūrākau for this chapter commences with a small overview of pre-European Māori-centric early learning practices for tamariki-mokopuna Māori in Aotearoa New Zealand. This is followed by an historical to contemporary narration of Te Tiriti o Waitangi – including early relationships between Māori and British (through the medium of written text) – the signing of Te Tiriti o Waitangi in 1840 – the negative impact of this document – namely the development of policies enforcing assimilation of Māori people into British society. Māori counter-colonial resistance in the 1970s is then explained, including ways in which resistance induced a review of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and associated policies. Early childhood education’s initial willingness to embrace Te Tiriti o Waitangi as a partnership document is then described, followed by an introduction to *Te Whāriki*, the first bicultural Te Tiriti o Waitangi partnership early childhood curriculum in Aotearoa New Zealand (and the world). Subsequent policy and procedural documents to support the implementation of a bicultural Te Tiriti o Waitangi partnership curriculum are presented. Different forms of resistance demonstrated by many mainstream early childhood centres (teachers) to bicultural partnership policies are then explained. This first part of the pūrākau finishes by discussing the interrelationship between WKM and Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

The pūrākau continues by introducing whānau views proposing Te Tiriti o Waitangi as a key factor in high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori in WKM. Ways in which *Te Whāriki* and TTK recognise, endorse and incorporate whānau perspectives are then explored. This is followed by a section on areas of strengths and concerns in the relationship between *Te Whāriki*, TTK and whānau, together with recommendations how the relationship could be developed. The chapter concludes with a final summary presenting ways the pūrākau in this chapter has made a case for why Te Tiriti o Waitangi should be considered a key factor in high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori in WKM.

Pre-European Māori-Centric Early Learning Practices

This next section provides a brief overview of pre-European Māori-centric early learning practices in Aotearoa New Zealand.²²

²² As noted throughout this thesis, Māori concepts interconnect through whakapapa, thus there are times when concepts might appear in other sections or chapters. Also, pre-European Māori-centric child-rearing practices are disseminated throughout chapters 5 and 6 of this thesis.

According to Tuakana Nepe (1991), knowledge is disseminated from the spiritual world, and it is here where Māori child-rearing and early teaching practices originate (Harte & Jenkin, 2011). Whānau play an integral role in the child-rearing of tamariki-mokopuna Māori. Through whakapapa, tamariki-mokopuna are located within a whānau; the extended family unit (L.T. Mead, 1996). The upbringing of the tamaiti (child) is the responsibility of all the whānau and not just that of the mother or father.

As tamariki-mokopuna developed, various lessons were given to sustain their “spiritual, intellectual and physical wellbeing” (Hemara, 2000, p.11). The main responsibility for teaching tamariki-mokopuna Māori was given to kaumātua (elders). Tamariki-mokopuna would sleep collectively in one whare (house), alongside their parents and their kaumātua (Makereti, 1986). Story telling was a common evening ritual. Kaumātua would share pūrākau (stories) about battles and recite whakapapa night after night until tamariki-mokopuna were able to recall the material through memory. Tamariki-mokopuna could confidently identify themselves through their whakapapa, which included their waka, mountain, river, sub-tribe and tribe (L. T. Mead 1996). Knowledge of whakapapa validates tamariki-mokopuna identity as Māori.

The oldest son would ultimately take on the senior role for his whānau. Specific educational tasks would be assigned and tamariki-mokopuna whose whakapapa descended from Te Aho Ariki (chiefly line), would be considered special (Makereti, 1986). Tohunga (priest/expert/healer) would be assigned to teach young male chiefs oratory skills, such as whaikōrero (formal speech making). This was seen as a hierarchical task, requiring expert speech-making skills that would arouse emotions in all present. A tama (boy) that reaches this apotheosis takes on the responsibilities of maintaining the mana (prestige/authority/status) of his chief and therefore tribe. The passing on of key knowledge, whakapapa, whaikōrero and particular skills were considered key educational tools.

Although social hierarchies were present, tamariki-mokopuna within the community generally played and worked together (Makereti, 1986). Tamariki-mokopuna were always kept busy and their entire life involved some form of educational training to help them prepare for their adulthood (Buck, 1982; Harte & Jenkin 2011; Hemara, 2000; Makereti, 1986). The social order of Māori society reinforced the central role that whānau play in the socialisation of tamariki-mokopuna (L.T. Mead, 1996). Whānau as a collective committed to ensuring, “Children, boys and girls, had to be prepared for life as warriors, food producers, parents and marital partners” (Harte & Jenkin, 2011, p. 24). Various stimuli were provided for tamariki-mokopuna. These

consisted of both domesticated and fun activities. Tamariki-mokopuna were accustomed to fishing, gardening, swimming, diving, surf riding, running, jumping wrestling, canoeing, skipping, racing, kapa haka and waiata.

Games were widely used to teach various educational skills (Hemara, 2000). Tools were often made specifically for instructive purposes. Hands on experience taught tamariki-mokopuna the fundamentals of how to care and use tools correctly. Competition was promoted to expose tamariki-mokopuna to the realities of their tough environment. As tama began to mature, they were trained to hunt and trap animals. Kōtiro (girls) were assigned lessons in weaving and providing for visitors. Specific roles assigned to female and male shows that in traditional time's quality education and learning was noticeably gender specific.

This section has introduced a very brief overview of traditional Māori-centric early learning practices for tamariki-mokopuna Māori. While the collective whānau were responsible for child-rearing practices, early learning teaching practices was the responsibility of kaumātua. Ensuring tamariki-mokopuna were well versed in both their physical and intellectual knowledges and fully competent in transitioning from childhood to adulthood, was of the utmost importance.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi o Waitangi

When discussing Te Tiriti o Waitangi, it is important to provide a brief insight into early relationships between the two signatories to Te Tiriti o Waitangi – Māori and British. This relationship can be traced back to the arrival of Captain Cook, in 1769, to Aotearoa New Zealand (Jones & Jenkins, 2011). Jones and Jenkins shared their discovery of Māori and Pākehā engagement through handwriting and drawing. This period is significant to this research as it reveals an early Māori relationship with English text – reading, writing, and participating in English education.

Although the engagement revealed a relationship, Jones and Jenkins point out this early relationship was clearly problematic. Māori words were written and interpreted into English words (Jones & Jenkins, 2011), seriously limiting the essence and meaning of Māori language (Mutu, 2004; Pere, 1982). Divergences in understandings between English and Māori written words resulted in miscommunications and mistranslations. Te Tiriti o Waitangi, which comprised two texts with two meanings – one in English and one in te reo Māori, is a salutary example of misperception and mistranslation that has had far-reaching implications that

continue to reverberate today. Te Tiriti o Waitangi, signed in 1840 is considered Aotearoa New Zealand's founding document. Orange (2004) explains the English version of Te Tiriti o Waitangi as:

Article 1, By the Treaty in English, Māori leaders gave the Queen “all the rights and powers of sovereignty” over their territories... *Article 2*, By the Treaty in English, Māori leaders and people, collectively and individually, were confirmed in and guaranteed “exclusive and undisturbed possession of their lands and estates, forests, fisheries, and other properties”... [and] *Article 3*, The Treaty in English extended to Māori the Queen's protection and all the rights and privileges of British subjects. (p. 38)

Ritchie (2003) described the Māori version of Te Tiriti o Waitangi: Article 1 allows for the British Crown to have *kāwangatanga* – governance – over Aotearoa New Zealand while ensuring Māori have absolute authority over their lands. Article 2 gives Māori “full authority,” that is their *tino rangatiratanga*, over all their possessions, while Article 3 gives protection and equal rights to both Māori and the British citizens. The noticeable differences between the two texts are in Articles 1 and 2. Terms such as *sovereignty* and *undisturbed possessions of land...and other properties* documented in the English text are in contrast to the Māori text. The Māori text guarantees *kāwangatanga* and *tino rangatiratanga* – “unqualified chieftainship over their lands, villages and all their treasures” (Orange, 2004, p. 30). It is important to note, a vast majority of rangatira signed the Māori version of Te Tiriti o Waitangi - 500 in total, including 13 women. The English text was signed by 39 rangatira (Waitangi Tribunal, 2016). These figures confirm most of the rangatira committed to the Māori version and not the English text.

Mistranslations from English to te reo Māori were foreseeable. The translation of Te Tiriti o Waitangi from the English version to Māori language was completed by Henry Williams, an Anglican minister, and his son Edward (Orange, 2004). Neither were experts in te reo Māori; however, they did have a level of spoken Māori. Henry Williams recognised language differences when drafting Te Tiriti o Waitangi, stating “it was necessary to avoid all expressions of the English for which there is no expressive term in Māori” (Orange, 2004 p. 25). According to Orange, the men were aware that they would be facing translation problems. Mistranslations from English to Māori language resulted in misunderstandings and miscommunications. English language explanations took priority over Māori understandings, leading to the English

text of Te Tiriti o Waitangi being considered lawful – ultimately leading to British colonial rule over Aotearoa New Zealand.

Assimilatory policies.

Mistranslations of Te Tiriti o Waitangi from English to te reo Māori exposed early signs of colonial dominance – a prelude to what would soon become a “wave of assimilationist legislation and policy” (Rau & Ritchie, 2011, p. 795). Assimilationist policies and legislation continued after the signing of Te Tiriti o Waitangi with the introduction of the Education Ordinance in 1847. This ordinance introduced industrial boarding schools where the main objective was to educate Māori in the English language, to become either teachers or missionaries (Stephenson, 2008). In 1867, the Native Schools Act and the Māori Representative Act were introduced. The Education Act followed in 1877. It was during this period that James Pope, the inspector of native schools, wrote the Native Schools Code, in 1880 (Nairn, 1986, cited in Ritchie, 2003). Pope publicly declared the Māori language was an artefact with no relevance within New Zealand society, only to be used as a transitional tool (Ritchie, 2003). Enforced directives from government departments directly impacted on the number of Māori language speakers, seriously disrupting the survival of te reo Māori (Walker, 2004). Several scholars have argued about the integral link between language, culture and identity (May 2012; O’Sullivan, 2007; G.H. Smith, 1997; L.T. Smith, 1999; Walker, 2004). These early assimilatory policies and legislations resulted in the dislocation of Māori identity (Ritchie, 2003), which continues to this day. Wirihana and Smith (2014) argued “Legal imperialism facilitated the loss of language and cultural practices and damaged protective social structures and interpersonal relationships within Māori families and communities” (p. 201). According to Wirihana and Smith (2014) this has resulted in many Māori being exposed to intergenerational trauma which has resulted in physical and psychological unwellness, fractured relationships between men and women and the breakdown of traditional loving, nurturing tamariki-mokopuna centred whānau environments.

Counter-assimilatory mobilisation.

In the 1960s, reports emerged about young urban Māori struggling with identity. The ‘Hunn Report’ (Hunn, 1960) authored by Mr J. K. Hunn, who was the Acting Secretary for Māori Affairs, described the adverse effects of rapid urbanisation. This report argued that the forced integrative process of assimilation by the Crown had resulted in extremely negative effects on Māori.

Māori language was in such decline that, by 1979, it was thought to be dying. According to Spolsky (2003), it was evident that the assimilationists “were winning, and language was losing its place in Māori ethnic identity” (p. 559). In response to assimilation practices, Māori began to mobilise, forming counter-assimilationist networks. One such movement, formed in the early 1970s, was Ngā Tamatoa, a group of young, educated Māori activists, who were instrumental in ensuring the Māori language was to be acknowledged and introduced into schools. Guided by kaumātua and kuia, the Māori Council²³ and Ngā Tamatoa²⁴ were influential in having their submissions and protests acknowledged regarding the welfare of Māori. The government responded by introducing the Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975 and establishing the Waitangi Tribunal (Walker, 2004). Walker informed, responsibilities of the Tribunal include hearing historical and contemporary Māori grievances, examining Crown breaches of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, considering Te Tiriti o Waitangi claims and making non-binding recommendations to government. Māori were becoming empowered and liberated while working through the process of decolonisation (L.T. Smith, 1999).

This period also witnessed significant political changes in Aotearoa New Zealand. Māori found themselves engaging in proactive politics (G.H. Smith, 2003). Frustration about dispossession of their language and culture led to many Māori vocalising and demonstrating their concerns – openly venting their distrust of Pākehā policy makers. Although this was a period of extreme change for both education and social policy, G.H. Smith stated it was particularly liberating for Māori, learning to “[free] the indigenous mind from the grip of dominant hegemony” (p. 3). This resulted in many Māori-focused initiatives, one such being the formation of Te Kōhanga Reo National Trust in 1982. The opening of the first Kōhanga Reo total-immersion Māori language nest in Wainuiomata on April 13, 1982 further advanced the progress of Māori self-determination in education (Skerrett-White, 2001).

Partnership policies in early childhood education

Two key documents developed in the 1980s were pivotal in the development of ECE – these documents underpinned huge administrative and curriculum reforms in early childhood education in Aotearoa New Zealand and included a focus on partnership and power-sharing. While not fully realised, the intention was clearly to assure a stronger position for tamariki-

²³ The New Zealand Māori Council is a legal entity, established in 1962. The Council is responsible for advising on Māori policy development at both a local and national level (<https://maoricouncil.com/about-us/our-purpose/>).

²⁴ For further understanding, view <https://www.nzonscreen.com/title/nga-tamatoa-2012>

mokopuna Māori and their whānau. Under the direction of David Lange's Labour Government, a working group, focusing specifically on "purpose, place, form and function of early childhood education" (Te One, 2013, p. 9), produced *Education to be More* (Department of Education, 1988), otherwise known as the Meade report after the chair of the working group, Anne Meade. Five primary themes were appropriated from the "1987 Royal Commission on Social Policy as underpinning all areas of social policy reform in New Zealand" (Te One, 2013, p. 9). These consisted of:

- implementing the Treaty of Waitangi
 - improving the social and economic status of women
 - providing a legislative environment which safeguards basic human rights and freedoms, and works towards the removal of discrimination
 - recognising the needs, contributions and traditions of Pacific Island peoples and other minority cultures residing in New Zealand
 - enhancing the family unit in New Zealand society
- (Department of Education, 1988a, p. v, cited in Te One, 2013).

The second key document – a government response to the Meade report produced the *Before Five* (Department of Education, 1988) policy. This document, written in conjunction with other educational policies, concentrated on administrative reforms in early childhood care and education (Te One, 2013). Participants were reflective of the broad range of stakeholders in early childhood education. These two documents are foundational in the structure and organisation of ECE and set out key ideas that remain relevant to all policy and curriculum development in ECE today. Significant proposals emerged from these reports that were important for the development of Māori early childhood initiatives, namely the directive for "a true partnership between the Crown and the Māori people, [ensuring] equal sharing of power and resources" (Department of Education, 1988, p. 7).

Te Whāriki, in relationship with policy documents.

The need to address Māori discontent with the education system resulted in the Minister of Education, David Lange (also the Prime Minister), selecting an advisory board in the 1980s to address Māori concerns (Te One, 2013). Recognised as the Rūnanga Matua, the goal of this advisory board was to oversee, advise and bring a Māori perspective to the proposed reforms. Lady Tilly Reedy was a member of this board and, together with her husband Sir Tamati Reedy, formed a partnership with Margaret Carr and Helen May in the writing of *Te Whāriki*. Lady Tilly and Sir Tamati were instrumental in ensuring "Te Whāriki had its beginnings in Māori

pedagogical and philosophical beliefs” (Te One, 2013, p. 11). This represented a significant shift towards policies of partnership, as intended in Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Te Whāriki (MoE, 1996) was a response to the needs of the Aotearoa New Zealand community. This bicultural curriculum recognised disparity, promoted inclusion of all children, and celebrated multiculturalism and diversity. More than that, it included an intentional, full-immersion Māori curriculum (Te One, 2013). The Māori curriculum was considered “an integral part of the document [that] provides a basis for bicultural early childhood education in New Zealand” (MoE, 1996, p. 10). Emphasis was placed on promoting and partnering with whānau Māori, nurturing Māori language and culture, ensuring Māori had their voice in decision making, and supporting tamariki-mokopuna Māori to develop their sense of belonging as Māori.

Jenny Ritchie (2008) described biculturalism as an effort by the colonisers to address the inequalities between Māori and Pākehā, and to create an authentic Te Tiriti o Waitangi partnership. Te Tiriti o Waitangi plays a fundamental role in *Te Whāriki*. It firmly states that “all children should be given the opportunity to develop knowledge and an understanding of the cultural heritages of both partners to Te Tiriti o Waitangi o Waitangi” (MoE, 1996, p. 9; MoE, 2017a, p. 69).

Throughout the 1990s and 2000s, the Aotearoa New Zealand government introduced early childhood policies and curriculum documents to support the implementation of *Te Whāriki*. These documents made specific mention of the unique role of Māori as a Te Tiriti o Waitangi partner. The inclusion of Te Tiriti o Waitangi in these documents validates the partnership between the tangata whenua and the tangata treaty (Ritchie, 2003). Most importantly, these policy documents make specific mention of quality or high-quality early childhood education for tamariki Māori. The documents include:

Quality in Action (MoE, 1998a) which recognised that “the most appropriate people to support Māori language and convey Māori cultural protocols are Māori” (p. 77) and emphasised the need for educators to have “knowledge of te reo and tikanga Māori” (p.77).

The Revised Statement of Desirable Objectives and Practices (DOPs) for Chartered Early Childhood Services (MoE, 1998b): This early document, published to support the implementation of *Te Whāriki*, talks about quality early childhood education for tamariki Māori being embedded in Māori language, customs and practices.

The Quality Journey He Haerenga Whai Hua (MoE, 1999) was introduced as a resource guide to support the development of quality systems and reviews within early childhood centres. Te reo Māori, and validation of Māori culture and pedagogy are considered essential components to a quality early childhood curriculum for tamariki Māori.

Pathways to the Future: Ngā Huarahi Arataki: The 10-Year Strategic Plan (MoE, 2002) was specifically aimed at improving access, participation, relationships and quality in early childhood education with a primary focus to increase the number of Māori and Pasifika children in quality early childhood centres. As part of the consultation process with Māori, the government committed to ensuring the improvement of Māori educational outcomes by implementing three goals: improving the relationship between Māori and government; improving ECE services for Māori; and increasing numbers of tamariki and whānau Māori in ECE.

Ngā Arohaehae Whai Hua/ Self-Review Guidelines for Early Childhood Education (MoE, 2006) supports early childhood services to evaluate the quality of their centre. Once areas for concern are established through data gathering, centres are expected to formulate plans to improve practice.

Te Whatu Pōkeka: Kaupapa Māori Assessment for Learning: Early Childhood Exemplars (MoE, 2009b) a Kaupapa Māori assessment framework for tamariki-mokopuna Māori aimed at normalising success for tamariki-mokopuna Māori and whānau. The exemplars in this document provide ideas and philosophies drawn from Kaupapa Māori pedagogy and practices related to Kaupapa Māori assessment – Māori ways of knowing, being and doing.

Success for Māori Children in Early Childhood Services (ERO, 2010b) encourages ECE to develop partnership processes with whānau Māori and support whānau aspirations for tamariki-mokopuna Māori. It suggests ECE reflect on how well they incorporate Māori perspectives in their programme. An additional recommendation for services is to ensure their employees are provided with professional development to support authentic partnerships with whānau Māori.

Partnerships with Whānau Māori in Early Childhood Services (ERO, 2012) focuses on moving beyond building relationships with whānau Māori to committing to authentic, culturally responsive partnerships.

The above policy and curriculum documents provide crucial information for early childhood services to ensure tamariki-mokopuna Māori are receiving high-quality early learning. Te reo

me ōna tikanga; understanding Māori childhood theories, pedagogies and philosophies; the need for proficient bicultural educators; and acknowledgement of Māori as possessors, experts and disseminators of knowledge are all considered fundamental to achieving a quality Māori-centric educative programme. The principle of partnership in Te Tiriti o Waitangi is integral to improving quality systems for tamariki Māori.

Resistance to partnership policies in early childhood education.

While Te Tiriti o Waitangi partnership directives outlined in policy and curriculum documents were introduced over 10 years ago (the 1993 draft version of *Te Whāriki*, 26 years ago), many mainstream medium early childhood centres (teachers) remain apathetic towards partnering with whānau Māori (Burgess, 2006; ERO, 2008; Jenkin, 2009; Taniwha, 2005). Although early childhood legislation and other government directives have mapped out the quality requirements of a bicultural service provider and bicultural educator, adherence to these directives remains ambivalent. The foreword to the 1996 version of *Te Whāriki* refers to high quality: “This curriculum statement provides the basis for consistent high-quality curriculum delivery in the diverse range of early childhood services in New Zealand” (MoE, 1996, p. 7). As the first bicultural curriculum developed in Aotearoa New Zealand (and the world), the Ministry of Education’s expectation was for ECE to adhere to biculturalism, therefore acknowledging the role of both partners to Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Despite the fact *Te Whāriki* was legislated through the Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations (2008), legislating documents does not guarantee implementation. Hedges and Nuttall (2008) argue that educators are generally governed by their political or individual views, not by legislation. This is validated by research conducted following the introduction of government policies and procedures (1990s onwards), exposing tensions with ECEs’ commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi and biculturalism (Burgess, 2006; Jenkin, 2009; Taniwha, 2005).

Research conducted by Taniwha (2005) established that participants had varying interpretations of what bicultural practice means. Individuals were either influenced by their own cultural understandings or saw themselves as a voice for their prospective community. This resulted in fluctuating notions of the how, what and why of bicultural practice. For example, when discussing bicultural implementation, participants argued they were governed by the expectations of parents and some parents did not favour bicultural discourse. Taniwha argued for continuing discussions centred on authentic bicultural practices as well as recognising the

need for ECC to receive ongoing professional bicultural development. A critical focus for ECC is to “provide quality practices within their early childhood environments, and that quality should include quality bicultural practices” (p. 109). According to Taniwha (2005), quality bicultural practice must be underpinned by the principles of Kaupapa Māori (see Chapter 2).

Jenkins’ (2009) study disclosed that some educators exhibited a lack of genuine commitment to Māori as Te Tiriti o Waitangi partners. Similarly, Burgess (2006) found that a third of the participants in her research preferred to be classified as New Zealanders and did not practise biculturalism. Participants in this group supported the notion of “human commonality rather than an essential cultural difference” (p. 73). This leaves the positioning of quality early childhood education for tamariki-mokopuna Māori at risk, especially when an essential component to quality education is an early childhood environment rich in Māori culture and pedagogy (MoE, 2009a).

A report by the ERO (2008), analysing reviews of 16 early childhood centres, established that many services failed to implement self-review processes monitoring the progress of tamariki-mokopuna Māori. The report stated that there was a notable lack of congruency between centres’ documentation and educators’ practice. In “many services teachers and managers said that they treated all children the same, and that they did not have aspirations for Māori children that differed from those held for all children” (p. 1). This is contentious because treating all children the same is not only problematic for tamariki-mokopuna Māori, but also implies every child has similar aspirations, ultimately disregarding children’s ethnicity, culture and unique identities.

Clearly, some kaiako in ECE have shown resistance towards a bicultural Te Tiriti o Waitangi partnership relationship. This raises concerns for tamariki-mokopuna Māori, particularly when the 2017 early childhood education census advises that most tamariki-mokopuna Māori attend mainstream early childhood education – 58% education and care services,²⁵ 15% Kindergarten, 7% home-based services and 1% Playcentre (MoE, 2018b). As Taniwha (2005) pointed out earlier, a quality early childhood practice equates to “quality bicultural practices” (p. 109) underpinned by Kaupapa Māori, therefore it is imperative that Māori adopt a proactive political

²⁵ According to this census 17% of tamariki-mokopuna attend Kōhanga Reo – there are no percentages for MMECC. However, another report titled an *Overview of Bilingual and Immersion Language Use in ECE in 2018*, advises there are 453 kōhanga reo – immersion te reo language nests, 60 MMECC and 30 home-based te reo immersion services (MoE, 2018a).

stance to ensure tamariki-mokopuna and whānau Māori are acknowledged and received as partners, as outlined in Te Tiriti o Waitangi. An assurance of an equal partnership will support Māori to confidently enact Māori epistemologies (Edwards, Lambert, & Tauroa, 2007; Henry & Pene, 2001) and ontologies - Māori ways of knowing and being (Henry & Pene, 2001).

Whare Kōhungahunga Māori: Living Te Tiriti o Waitangi in policies, procedures and praxis.

Whare Kōhungahunga Māori are responsible for maintaining and sustaining te reo me ōna tikanga. This is achievable through their centre policies, procedures and praxis – and discussed next.

Resistance, apathy and indecisiveness by some mainstream ECEs to a Te Tiriti o Waitangi partnership heightens the obligation of WKM to ensure Te Tiriti o Waitangi is embedded in all areas of its practice. Recognition of Te Tiriti o Waitangi as a partnership document is a direct result of Māori activism. Acknowledgement of Te Tiriti o Waitangi has led to the creation of Māori-centric spaces focused principally on the reclamation of Māori language and identity. Early learning environments like WKM are key contributors to the revival and survival of Māori culture and language – therefore WKM has a responsibility to continue developing, nurturing and sustaining this vision. For WKM to acknowledge Te Tiriti o Waitangi as a key component in high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori, Te Tiriti o Waitangi must be embodied in its philosophical, pedagogical and organisational documentation and praxis.

Organisational documentation is a legal requirement in WKM; therefore, as licensed MMECC, WKM are officially required to provide written documentation explaining how they comply with and meet regulatory criteria. Criteria can be recorded through “policies and procedures” (MoE, 2011, p. 10) which are expected to provide the mandate to “influence, determine decisions, actions and other matters” (p. 6). Importantly, policies and procedures are underpinned by TTK (MoE, 2011). TTK are crucial documents as they provide the WKM a space to identify and share their unique philosophies, values and aspirations (MoE, 2011) – notably their rights as Māori as guaranteed in Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Documenting their core values in TTK empowers WKM to contribute to a “counter-colonial re-narrativisation” (Ritchie, 2012, p. 63) of policy and procedural documents. Importantly, it is through this medium WKM can assert and affirm tino rangatiratanga.

When considering ways to ensure Te Tiriti o Waitangi is personified in documentation in WKM, it is important to recognise while WKM no longer have the privilege of a Māori

immersion curriculum, written fully in te reo me ōna tikanga (as they did in the 1996 version of *Te Whāriki* – discussed in Chapter 3) – critical elements of quality education for tamariki-mokopuna Māori (Department of Education, 1998; MoE, 1996, 1998a, 1998b, 2017a), they do have the opportunity to “weave a local curriculum that reflects its own distinctive character and values” (MoE, 2017a, p. 7). Creating their own high-quality Māori-centric early learning curriculum programme immersed in te reo me ōna tikanga, underpinned by Te Tiriti o Waitangi, is conceivable. This can be actualised by substantiating their unique values and beliefs in their TTK (MoE, 2011) and drawing on critical support documentation, such as *Te Whāriki* as designed by Lady Tilly and Sir Tamati Reedy (Reedy, 2013) as a Te Tiriti o Waitangi-based curriculum. Talking and walking their “local curriculum” (MoE, 2017a, p. 7) will ensure Te Tiriti o Waitangi is authenticated as a key feature in high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori in WKM.

So far, literature presented in this chapter has provided a small commentary of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Undeniably, Māori have endured enormous challenges since the signing of Te Tiriti o Waitangi in 1840. Enforced assimilation under British colonial rule seriously affected Māori cultural, spiritual, physical, emotional, political, economic and social wellbeing. Through counter-colonial resistance in the 1970s, Māori activism exposed and challenged the subjugation, deprivation and cultural alienation of their people. Asserting their rights as legitimate Te Tiriti o Waitangi partners became a core mission. Te Tiriti o Waitangi Act, passed in 1975, was in direct response to Māori activism. The Waitangi Tribunal – a council where Māori can formally address the Crown’s breaches of Te Tiriti o Waitangi – soon followed. Numerous developments have materialised from the 1970s – the opening of the first Te Kōhanga Reo in 1982 being a major mobilising force in the reclamation and revitalisation of te reo me ōna tikanga Māori.

The 1990s witnessed the commitment and willingness of the early childhood community in regard to a Tiriti partnership. Consequently, *Te Whāriki*, the first bicultural partnership curriculum in Aotearoa New Zealand (and the world), was developed and substantiated by policies focused on fostering a Te Tiriti o Waitangi partnership. While there was an initial preparedness by the early childhood community to partner with Māori, a number of kaiako in mainstream early childhood education have struggled to understand, adapt or embrace a bicultural Te Tiriti o Waitangi partnership. This is clearly problematic due to the fact a majority of tamariki-mokopuna Māori attend mainstream early childhood education and, secondly, quality for Māori is directly connected to language and culture – all things Māori as espoused

by Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Consequently, tamariki-mokopuna and whānau Māori are dependent on authentic Te Tiriti o Waitangi partners to ensure their identity and culture as Māori is validated. Without a commitment by key stakeholders such as kaiako in ECC and ECE, the probability of Te Tiriti o Waitangi being a key element of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori in mainstream early childhood education is highly unlikely.

Whānau Perspectives of Te Tiriti o Waitangi

The pūrākau now turns to whānau perspectives of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Thematic analysis was the method used to read and re-read whānau interviews to search and review themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Although Jane and Pono were the only whānau who talked explicitly about Te Tiriti o Waitangi, all whānau and mokopuna Māori in this research are in relationship with Tiriti o Waitangi, through their role as Te Tiriti o Waitangi partners, their attendance and participation in WKM and their advocacy of Māori ways of knowing and being as disclosed in Chapters 5 and 6 of this thesis – their fundamental rights as Te Tiriti o Waitangi partners (see introduction of this chapter for further explanation).

Perspectives expressed by Pono regarding a Te Tiriti o Waitangi policy and Jane’s standpoint on knowing the history of Te Tiriti o Waitangi are presented, alongside Jane’s impassioned appeal to personify Te Tiriti o Waitangi in WKM. Jane also expressed her concerns about tokenistic practice – something she has observed in both mainstream ECC and WKM.

When discussing notions of high-quality early learning, Jane, who is the kaiwhakahaere, talked passionately about Te Tiriti o Waitangi:

[In regard to Te Tiriti o Waitangi] I really do believe it has a place. You look at it, it is the founding document of our country... [It] needs to be embedded in who we are as Māori in our centre because it has a place – it has a very important place.

Jane has experience working across various early childhood centres. She explained to me that she has observed some centres treating Te Tiriti o Waitangi in a perfunctory manner. This troubles her as she is a strong advocate of Te Tiriti o Waitangi as Aotearoa New Zealand’s founding document and understands that it is significant for ongoing change. In this next excerpt she discusses how important it is, and you can hear her outrage at tokenistic responses to Te Tiriti o Waitangi:

It has a very important part to play and I think that given the tokenism... in those centres... acknowledgement of Te Tiriti... becomes even more important for us here...

[I]f you were to ask teachers what the Treaty of Waitangi looks like in their centre, you will get a lot of blank looks... Again tokenism [or they will describe it as] a Treaty, it's an agreement between you and the children like centre rules, we won't do this and won't do [that]. No, it's not, I'm sorry but it's not and that for me is quite blatant tokenism.

Jane's concerns relating to apathy and tokenism towards biculturalism and Te Tiriti o Waitangi are similar to research presented in the literature review in this chapter, where some kaiako in ECC showed resistance towards biculturalism and Te Tiriti o Waitangi (see Burgess, 2006; ERO, 2008; Jenkin, 2008; Taniwha, 2005). Correspondingly, Jane's description of some kaiako views about Te Tiriti o Waitangi, as an agreement between the centre and children, similar to centre rules, as "blatant tokenism" is comparable to a description given by Whetū, a participant in my master's research. Whetū was asked by a teacher in her son's mainstream early childhood centre if she could "teach them Māori things because it was Māori [language] week." Whetū viewed this request as "more tokenistic" (O'Loughlin, 2013, p. 40), proclaiming it was the teachers' responsibility to be conversant with Te Ao Māori and responsive to the needs of tamariki-mokopuna Māori. Whetū also stated teachers should not assume whānau Māori would undertake the teachers' work.

While authentic bicultural partnership underpinned by Te Tiriti o Waitangi is fundamental to Jane's teaching practice, she also cautioned that being Māori does not necessarily equate to knowing Te Tiriti o Waitangi or to biculturalism. In addition, Jane argued tokenism or "superficial" practice is not only confined to mainstream early childhood education. In the following kōrero, Jane recognises deficiencies in WKM, affirming they too need to review their understandings, responsibilities and commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi:

Because we entered a partnership [and] because it is equally important. We go on about mainstream and this oh it's all tokenistic, it's all superficial. Well just because we are in a Māori centre, does not mean that we do not have that same level of superficial ...practice... Just because we are Māori, it doesn't mean we understand it and it doesn't mean we have embedded it in our practice. It just means that we are Māori and so if we are going to be authentic and if we are going to give our children a sense of identity and a sense of belonging²⁶..., you've got to understand the history of why...

²⁶ Identity and belonging are discussed in depth in Chapter 5: Whakapapa.

biculturalism is important. It's the Treaty of Waitangi... unless it's implemented, it's just simply words and a waste of paper.

Jane's disclosure is disheartening, particularly when Māori-medium early childhood education was born out of the Kōhanga Reo movement (Morehu, 2009) – highly respected for the reclamation and revitalisation of te reo me ōna tikanga Māori (Morehu, 2009; Te One, 2013), advocacy of tino rangatiratanga (Te One, 2013), and “conscientising whānau to step up and take power and control of decision making over the curriculum” (Morehu, 2009, p. 4). Jane's revelation of “superficial” practice in WKM, emphasises the importance of knowing the history of biculturalism and Te Tiriti o Waitangi and ensuring it is embedded in practice – critical to WKM (and all ECC) in Aotearoa New Zealand – especially in relation to high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori.

However, while tokenistic practice is real, it cannot be assumed all tokenism or superficial practice is intentional. A research report *Te Puawaitanga: Partnerships with Tamariki and Whānau in Bicultural Early Childhood Care and Education* (Ritchie & Rau, 2008) discloses anxieties regarding biculturalism or what Ritchie and Rau term a Tiriti-based curriculum. One of the questions in the research focused on ways “Māori/Pākehā/Tauīwi [non-Māori] educators committed to a Tiriti-based curriculum paradigm” (p. 6). A two-way conversation between a teacher and a parent revealed personal reflections about their bicultural journey. The teacher shared: “The more you learn the more comfortable you are” (p. 9) to which the parent replied: “Oh absolutely, because the fear is taken away” (p. 9). The teacher responded: “You don't feel like you are overstepping the mark or being fake about it or its tokenism. I don't want to seem like I am trying to be in their culture I don't want it to seem like it's a token gesture” (p. 30). This brief dialogue provides an example of how ongoing learning about a Tiriti-based curriculum can build confidence amongst members of the early childhood community (including WKM) – helping to eliminate fears or anxieties around being disingenuous or tokenistic.

Taniwha (2005) stresses the importance of open-dialogue and continuous professional development around bicultural practice and stipulates early childhood centres are required to “provide quality practices within their early childhood environments, and that quality should include quality bicultural practices” (p. 109). Ongoing professional development would ensure those working in WKM (all ECC) are educated in the history of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and biculturalism. An example of an early childhood environment engaging successfully in

bicultural practice is Richard Hudson Kindergarten who was part of Ritchie and Rau's (2008) study. One of the teachers' self-reflection disclosed ways professional learning supported their understanding of Māori knowing and being. Involvement in the research project validated their practice as bicultural educators where the team discovered they were motivated to:

refocus on the importance of what you are doing and to dig a bit deeper to get to the next level (we've all just enrolled for a "New Zealand History from a Māori Perspective" course). We feel very fortunate to be in a team that is so genuinely committed to Te Ao Māori that we couldn't stop even if we wanted to! It is a life-long passion that will carry on into post-teaching life. (p. 43)

This illustration provides an insight into the Richard Hudson Kindergarten team's bicultural development. Self-confidence has led to dedication, unification and willingness to transmit their bicultural learning beyond teaching. Moreover, the team's involvement in the research project encompassed "ongoing practitioner reflection and analysis" (p. 8) resulting in confidence to undertake further professional development. Enrolment in a history course of Aotearoa New Zealand, from a Māori viewpoint, aligns with Jane's views – to understand authentic bicultural practice you must know the history of biculturalism and therefore Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Ongoing professional development will provide regular opportunities for early childhood environments to engage with, revisit and reflect on their relationship with Te Tiriti o Waitangi and biculturalism.

In her kōrero with me about what constitutes high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori in WKM, Pono recognised the critical role of Te Tiriti o Waitangi in early childhood education. Here she talks about how early childhood centres have started to include Te Tiriti o Waitangi policies in their operational documentation, suggesting they could actually prompt centres to reflect on their partnership relationship:

Some [centres] never had Treaty of Waitangi policies. Today I see... more centres... have got them so that's [motivation] for centres to be thinking, "okay, how are we abiding by the Treaty of Waitangi?"

A document to assist critical reflection is *Ngā Arohaehae Whai Hua/Self-Review Guidelines for Early Childhood Education* (MoE 2006), introduced earlier in the literature review. This document is designed to support early childhood services to review practices through a reflective process. More so, these self-review guidelines encourage ECC, like WKM, to reflect on strengths in their practice, areas requiring improvement and ways to accomplish

development. A robust critical reflective practice could address the question proposed by Pono, *how are we abiding by the Treaty of Waitangi?* An extension of this question could ask: In what ways do we recognise Te Tiriti o Waitangi as a key component of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori?

The implementation of robust self-review processes will also ensure WKM meets expectations outlined by the ERO.²⁷ An overall objective of ERO (2013) is, “to build the capacity of the early childhood sector to review, evaluate and improve its own practice” (p. 4). *Te Whāriki* (MoE, 2017a) can also assist in this process as this curriculum encourages reflective practice, providing suggestions throughout this curriculum (see pp. 30, 35, 40, 45 and 50). Without doubt, self- and external evaluation, aimed at ensuring Te Tiriti o Waitangi is personified in practice, will help to enact an authentic Te Tiriti o Waitangi partnership, consequently removing Jane’s anxieties about disingenuous or tokenistic practice.

Pono and Jane have shared their views concerning Tiriti o Waitangi as a key feature in high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori in WKM. Jane expressed her concerns regarding tokenistic and superficial practice in ECC and WKM, arguing for the absolute importance of knowing the history of biculturalism in relation to Te Tiriti o Waitangi to understand authentic bicultural Te Tiriti-based partnership in early childhood education, and ensuring tamariki-mokopuna Māori have a sense of identity and belonging (identity and belonging are discussed in the next chapter). Pono suggested Tiriti o Waitangi policies in centres may support dialogue and reflection about roles, responsibilities and commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi. It is clear that ensuring Te Tiriti o Waitangi is recognised as a key feature of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori in WKM (all ECC) necessitates consistent critical self-reflection and regular ongoing professional development about the history of biculturalism in relation to Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Ways in Which Te Whāriki and Te Tauākī Kaupapa Support Whānau Views of Te Tiriti o Waitangi

There are a number of ways *Te Whāriki* and TTK support Pono and Jane’s views of Te Tiriti o Waitangi as a key feature of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori. *Te Whāriki* and TTK are critical documents in WKM. *Te Whāriki* is a bicultural early childhood

²⁷ Government agency responsible for evaluating early childhood practices (all teaching practices) in Aotearoa New Zealand.

curriculum underpinned by the philosophy of Kōhanga Reo (MoE, 2017a), a total-immersion Māori language nest centred on maintaining and sustaining te reo me ōna tikanga Māori. As in the Kōhanga Reo philosophy, *Te Whāriki* recognises Kaupapa Māori as an underpinning theory, normalising “Māori knowledge, language and culture” (MoE, 2017a, p. 61) as avowed in Te Tiriti o Waitangi. In addition, TTK provides the opportunity for WKM to affirm their core values, aspirations, ideals and visions that meet the needs of their hapori (MoE, 2011): tamariki-mokopuna, whānau, hapū and iwi Māori.

Document analysis was the method used to examine *Te Whāriki* and TTK. Document analysis is a compatible method in this research as it provided a tool to focus on the examination of organisational documents (Cohen et al., 2011). Such documents are pivotal to teachers’ practice. In analysing *Te Whāriki* and TTK I noted how and where Te Tiriti o Waitangi appeared in these documents. In the remainder of this section I discuss this analysis in relation to Jane’s views of knowing the history of biculturalism in relation to Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the importance of authentic Te Tiriti o Waitangi partnership. I also relate this to the views of Pono when she talked about using the Tiriti o Waitangi to provoke discussion.

As previously explained, the 1996 bicultural curriculum *Te Whāriki* (MoE, 1996) experienced a review, resulting in a “revised and refreshed” (MoE, 2017a, p. 2) curriculum. There are now two unique curricula: one specifically for Kōhanga Reo and one for all other licensed early childhood centres. The latter now includes all licensed MIECC and MMECC such as the WKM in this research.

While this section concentrates principally on material drawn from the revised curriculum to explore ways whānau view Te Tiriti o Waitangi, there are notable reproductions of content from the original curriculum. One duplicated statement corresponds with Jane’s opinions regarding the importance of Te Tiriti o Waitangi partnership and understanding cultural heritages of both partners.

As the introduction to the original version of *Te Whāriki* concluded:

This is a curriculum for early childhood care and education in New Zealand. In early childhood education settings, all children should be given the opportunity to develop knowledge and understanding of the cultural heritages of both partners to Te Tiriti o Waitangi o Waitangi. The curriculum reflects this partnership in text and structure. (MoE, 1996, p. 9; MoE, 2017a, para. 9)

Te Whāriki (MoE, 2017a) provides additional statements relating to Te Tiriti o Waitangi, including a brief historical summation on Te Tiriti o Waitangi, followed by a statement outlining the educational implications for tamariki-mokopuna Māori:

Te Tiriti o Waitangi | the Treaty of Waitangi is New Zealand’s founding document. Signed in 1840 by representatives of Māori and the Crown, this agreement provided the foundation upon which Māori and Pākehā would build their relationship as citizens of Aotearoa, New Zealand. Central to this relationship was a commitment to live together in a spirit of partnership and the acceptance of obligations for participation and protection. (MoE, 2017a, p. 3)

While there is no direct reference to Te Tiriti o Waitangi and bicultural practice in this statement, as advocated by Jane, *Te Whāriki* does self-identify as “bicultural, derived from a synthesis of traditional Māori thinking and sociocultural theorising” (MoE, 2017a, p. 69). Jane also talked about the absolute importance of understanding the history of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. The above statement provides a very brief historical synopsis of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, inclusive of the year it was signed. It also reinforces Te Tiriti o Waitangi is a commitment to partnership between Māori and Pākehā, providing protection as well as opportunities to participate as citizens of Aotearoa New Zealand.

The second statement moves directly into educational responsibilities, explicitly for Māori:

Te Tiriti | the Treaty has implications for our education system, particularly in terms of achieving equitable outcomes for Māori and ensuring that te reo Māori not only survives but thrives. Early childhood education has a crucial role to play here, by providing mokopuna with culturally responsive environments that support their learning and by ensuring that they are provided with equitable opportunities to learn. The importance of such provision is underscored throughout *Te Whāriki: He whāriki mātauranga mō ngā mokopuna o Aotearoa, New Zealand Early Childhood Curriculum*. (MoE, 2017a, p. 3)

This statement in *Te Whāriki* recognises the early childhood communities’ position as culturally responsive pedagogues, required to provide tamariki-mokopuna Māori with equitable opportunities, inclusive of maintaining, sustaining and nurturing te reo Māori. The statement does not talk specifically about Te Tiriti o Waitangi policies but as Pono suggests, it could, be drawn on to prompt WKM (and all ECC) to self-reflect and ask *okay, how are we abiding by the Treaty of Waitangi?* A model reflective question in the 1996 version of *Te Whāriki* asks, “In what ways do the environment and programme reflect the values embodied in Te Tiriti o

Waitangi, and what impact does this have on adults and children?” (MoE, 1996, p. 56). This reflective question was not retained in the revised 2017 curriculum, but it is still highly relevant to current-day ECC and WKM. Teachers’ self-review of their practice is a requirement (MoE, 2006) therefore it is unfortunate that such a provocation, which could be used by kaiako, is no longer part of the curriculum. However, kaiako “are invited to use their own questions to support reflective practice” (MoE, 2017a, p. 30).

The following statement emphasises the relationship between tamariki-mokopuna Māori and Te Tiriti o Waitangi specifically within contemporary early childhood environments:

Te Whāriki acknowledges that, for Māori, the child is a link to the world of the ancestors and to the new world, connected to people, places, things and the spiritual realm; they belong to whānau, hapū and iwi and they are a kaitiaki of te Tiriti o Waitangi. (MoE, 2017a, p. 52)

This declaration recognises the interrelationship Māori have with past and contemporary worlds– inclusive of physical and metaphysical beings (whānau discuss this further in Chapter 5: Whakapapa). Moreover, this statement identifies tamariki-mokopuna Māori as part of a dynamic grouping, comprised of whānau, hapū and iwi. A significant role tamariki-mokopuna Māori have is that of kaitiaki (guardians/protectors) of Te Tiriti o Waitangi – mō āke tonu (forever). As kaitiaki of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, tamariki-mokopuna Māori are required to care, protect, nurture and enact this document. To do so requires support from the whānau of WKM so Te Tiriti o Waitangi continues to be a living document for the next generation of tamariki-mokopuna Māori.

Illustrations of ways *Te Whāriki* supports Pono and Jane’s views of Te Tiriti o Waitangi have been presented. *Te Whāriki* (MoE, 2017a) clearly acknowledges Te Tiriti o Waitangi in early childhood education by stressing the importance of knowing the key terms of partnership and protection for both Māori and Pākehā. In addition, *Te Whāriki* recognises the role of early childhood education in ensuring tamariki-mokopuna Māori are enriched in culturally responsive learning environments. While there is no explicit mention of bicultural practice in relation to Te Tiriti o Waitangi, *Te Whāriki* does explain biculturalism as a discourse underpinned by Māori traditions and sociocultural theorising. Regarding historical references, *Te Whāriki* provides a very brief historical account of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, alluding to partnership and protection of both parties. Despite this small insertion, it does not achieve Jane’s suggestion for a comprehensive elucidation of the history of biculturalism and Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Regarding policies, *Te Whāriki* references the purpose of policies, are to ensure the

smooth transition of tamariki and whānau in early childhood settings. However, there is no citation of a Te Tiriti o Waitangi policy.

The pūrākau now moves onto presenting ways TTK support Pono and Jane's perspectives of Te Tiriti o Waitangi as a key feature of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori in WKM.

Te Tauākī Kaupapa - philosophy statements, are an integral part of WKM and ECC programmes. Philosophy statements are written declarations expected to underpin all centre policies (ERO, 2010a). The expectation is for families, teachers, administrators and the community to cocreate key values and special features reflecting their centre. Te Tauākī Kaupapa provide WKM whānau and hapori (community) the opportunity to communicate and document their core principles, values and unique characteristics.

Te Tauākī Kaupapa in this research reference Te Tiriti o Waitangi in various statements. The following statement echoes Jane's views on bicultural partnership, naming the two peoples as Māori and Pākehā and recognising the two-way partnership relationship as espoused in Te Tiriti o Waitangi:

We value: dual heritage of Aotearoa, New Zealand [and the] importance of the partnership between Māori as the indigenous people and Pākehā as outlined in Te Tiriti o Waitangi. (TTK p. 1, a.1)

A further announcement reminds the Crown of their responsibilities to Māori, to ensure Māori aspirations and perspectives are satisfied:

For the Government under the Te Tiriti o Waitangi to fulfil the aspirations of the Māori people for its future generations. Working in a partnership with the Crown and incorporating Māori perspectives. (TTK, p. 2, a.2)

In addition, the reference below honours Māori as tangata whenua – the first people of Aotearoa New Zealand, recognises the partnership relationship between Māori and the Crown as expressed in Te Tiriti o Waitangi and vows to commit to bicultural practice in the WKM. This can be achieved through the implementation of inclusivity, fairness and cultural awareness underpinning its commitment to biculturalism:

[We] acknowledge the unique place of Māori as Tangata Whenua and the principles of partnership between Māori and the Crown in Te Tiriti o Waitangi and will strive for the

centre to reflect the unique bicultural nature within its centre by being: Inclusive, Equitable, Culturally appropriate. (TTK, p. 2, a.3)

A further statement referencing tino rangatiratanga reflects the intent of Article 2 of the Māori version of Te Tiriti o Waitangi where tino rangatiratanga guarantees Māori “full authority” over all their possessions (Ritchie, 2003). TTK states:

[As] in Tino Rangatiratanga, Management will endeavour to protect the interest and aspirations of the child, whānau, hapū and iwi in ECE and care. (TTK, p. 3, a.4)

Citing tino rangatiratanga in TTK to advantage and protect the interests of tamariki-mokopuna, whānau, hapū and iwi associated with the WKM is significant. Tino Rangatiratanga has also been adopted as one of the eight principles (introduced in the methodology chapter) of Kaupapa Māori (G.H. Smith, 2003). G.H. Smith advises tino rangatiratanga reflects sovereignty and self-determination, allowing Māori to assert their culture, ideals and aspirations. Furthermore, using the term *tino rangatiratanga* in contemporary understandings provides an opportunity for further discussion and reflection around the depth and implications of Te Tiriti o Waitangi in WKM.

The following statement authenticates why Te Tiriti o Waitangi bicultural partnership is critical to WKM practice, affirming:

We are committed to preparing our children for the realities of both worlds, so they can stand proud as Māori with the ability to interact successfully in Te Ao Pākehā. (TTK, p. 8, a.17)

The focus of this statement is tamariki-mokopuna Māori being secure in their identity as Māori and being able to transition comfortably and effectively to the Pākehā world. Transitioning across these two worlds requires a genuine bicultural partnership relationship. For tamariki-mokopuna to succeed as Māori, they must be received as Māori in the Māori world as well as the Pākehā world. An authentic reciprocal bicultural partnership relationship would assure Pākehā who transition over to the Māori world, are received as Pākehā by Māori. Being secure in their identity as Pākehā is also important, especially when transitioning into Te Ao Māori (Hepi, 2008).

Examples of ways TTK support Pono and Jane’s views of Te Tiriti o Waitangi have been explored. Assertions in TTK make references to a Te Tiriti o Waitangi partnership relationship between Māori and Pākehā – with particular focus on the Crown’s accountability to Māori. Notably, TTK affirm a Te Tiriti o Waitangi bicultural relationship, infused in notions of

inclusion, fairness and cultural responsiveness. Te Tauākī Kaupapa acknowledgement of Māori as tangata whenua is substantial, for it pays reverence to the position of Māori as people of the whenua, and first to settle in Aotearoa New Zealand (MoE, 2017a). Another significant statement is tino rangatiratanga, a direct reference from Article 2 of the Māori version of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Tino rangatiratanga assures Māori have autonomy over all their possessions – inclusive of culture, values and aspirations. While TTK do not make direct reference to a Te Tiriti o Waitangi policy, affirmation statements reaffirming Te Tiriti o Waitangi alongside the inclusion of the term tino rangatiratanga could prompt WKM to engage in reflective questioning concerning the functionality of Te Tiriti o Waitangi within WKM. There is no doubt that, through TTK, WKM have recognised that embodying a Te Tiriti o Waitangi partner-based curriculum in their centres, will enable tamariki-mokopuna Māori to transition confidently and proudly as Māori into the Pākehā world.

Te Whāriki, Te Tauākī Kaupapa and Whānau Views – Areas of Strengths and Concerns

The pūrākau concludes with an overview sharing ways *Te Whāriki* and TTK support whānau perspectives of Te Tiriti o Waitangi as a key element of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori, alongside matters of concern and suggestions to strengthen the relationship. In my interviews with Pono and Jane, they recognised Te Tiriti o Waitangi as a key element of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori. Although Jane emphasised the need to embody Te Tiriti o Waitangi in WKM, she also recognised this may be difficult to achieve due to tokenistic and superficial practice in some WKM (and ECC). Jane was confident this could be remedied through WKM (and all ECC) learning and understanding the history of biculturalism in relation to Te Tiriti o Waitangi. However, it must be stressed any teachings of Te Tiriti o Waitangi must move beyond superficial understandings. Pono envisioned that the implementation of a Te Tiriti o Waitangi policy might well induce WKM (and all ECC) to engage in discussions and reflections about their role and responsibility as a Te Tiriti o Waitangi partner.

It is evident from the kōrero gathered in this research, *Te Whāriki* and TTK acknowledge and support the implementation of Te Tiriti o Waitangi in early childhood environments. In reference to Pono and Jane’s perspectives, *Te Whāriki* also emphasises partnership and protection for both Te Tiriti o Waitangi partners, along with the need for kaiako to commit to providing tamariki-mokopuna Māori with a culturally responsive environment. In addition, *Te*

Whāriki makes an affirmative statement, self-describing as a bicultural framework underpinned by Māori traditions and sociocultural theorising. Regarding historical references, while *Te Whāriki* includes the year of the signing of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, it does not achieve Jane’s suggestion for a comprehensive explanation of the history of biculturalism in relation to Te Tiriti o Waitangi, which is fundamental to understanding bicultural early childhood practice. Noticeably absent is the term *tino rangatiratanga* in *Te Whāriki*. As noted earlier, *kāwangatanga* and *tino rangatiratanga* are firmly embedded in the Māori version of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, conceding “unqualified chieftainship [of] lands, villages and all their treasures” (Orange, 2004, p. 30) to Māori. Interestingly, *rangatiratanga* has been included in the glossary of *Te Whāriki*, where it is described as, “chiefly authority, right to exercise authority, sovereignty, autonomy, leadership, control, independence” (p.67). This definition appears to align with the term and intent of *tino rangatiratanga* as espoused in the Māori version of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Yet, *Te Whāriki*, does not include this explanation when using *rangatiratanga* in a learning outcome associated with the strand Contribution | Mana Tangata. *Te Whāriki* states, “Overtime and with guidance children become increasingly capable of...Recognising and appreciating their own ability to learn | *te rangatiratanga*” (p.24). *Rangatiratanga*, a word deeply embedded in the Māori version of Te Tiriti o Waitangi has been reduced to mean self-directed learning. This is disconcerting. Knowing the history of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, translates to knowing the words, terms, meaning and implications!

An avowal statement presented in the 1996 and 2017 versions of *Te Whāriki*, stressing the importance of knowing the heritages of both partners to Te Tiriti o Waitangi, should be extended to knowing the history of biculturalism in relationship with Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Particular attention should be focused on the fundamental differences between the Māori and English versions – including Māori terms and ways they have been used-misused in *Te Whāriki*.

Interestingly, while *Te Whāriki* does not mention a Te Tiriti o Waitangi policy, as advocated by Pono, it does recognise the importance of policies in the smooth transitioning of *tamariki* and *whānau* into the early childhood setting. This assertion, supported by a reflective question in *Te Whāriki* encouraging *kaiako* to think about ways in which *tamariki-mokopuna* and *whānau* can feel a sense of belonging, could be drawn on to support WKM to theorise, reconceptualise and reflect on its relationship and partnership with Te Tiriti o Waitangi. It is unfortunate that a statement in the 1996 version of *Te Whāriki* encouraging centres to consider “In what ways do the environment and programme reflect the values embodied in Te Tiriti o

Waitangi, and what impact does this have on adults and children?” (MoE, 1996, p. 56) was not transferred to the 2017 revised curriculum, as it would have substantiated the suggestion made by Pono regarding reflection on the role and responsibility of WKM as partners to Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Similar to *Te Whāriki*, TTK contain references supporting Pono and Jane’s views of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Partnership premised on inclusion, equality and cultural responsiveness between Māori and Pākehā has been emphasised. While there is no directive advocating the importance of understanding the history of biculturalism and Te Tiriti o Waitangi, TTK includes implicit messages affirming the rights and position of Māori in Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Reference to tangata whenua demonstrates that WKM recognises, respects and asserts the positioning of tangata whenua as first people of Aotearoa. Furthermore, citing tino rangatiratanga in TTK is significant, as these two words reflect the contents of Article 2 of the Māori version of Te Tiriti o Waitangi in which Māori are guaranteed all their cultural rights.²⁸ Another substantial entry is a direct message to the Crown, reaffirming its responsibility to support tamariki-mokopuna Māori to live successfully as Māori. It is clear by the contents of TTK, that WKM are committed to ensuring tamariki-mokopuna Māori can stand confident in their identity as Māori when participating in both Te Ao Māori and the Pākehā world.

While many statements correspond with Pono and Jane’s views, these references appear at a surface level and require a deeper level of deconstructing, theorising and reviewing to ensure kaiako in WKM fully comprehend the implications of Te Tiriti o Waitangi in their professional practice as authentic bicultural educators. This would eliminate tokenistic and superficial practice. Moreover, it would ensure Te Tiriti o Waitangi is a living document in WKM. Making it a reality requires ongoing professional development focused on bicultural Te Tiriti o Waitangi practice. Teacher education institutes and professional development services must ensure they provide in-depth understandings of Te Tiriti o Waitangi in their teaching programmes. Importantly, programmes must be delivered by people who are proficient in this topic. Richard Hudson Kindergarten, mentioned earlier, is an exemplary example of one ECC commitment to ongoing professional development focused on Te Ao Māori. This centres dedication to learning the history of Aotearoa New Zealand through a Māori perspective (Ritchie & Rau, 2008) shows their willingness to engage in an authentic partnership with Māori.

²⁸ Tangata whenua is referenced in *Te Whāriki and* discussed further in Chapter 5: Whakapapa.

It is also important to understand, while *Te Whāriki* acknowledges and endorses Te Tiriti o Waitangi, it is the responsibility of each WKM to design its own curriculum (MoE, 2017a); thus WKM (all ECC) are required to develop a Te Tiriti o Waitangi bicultural learning and development programme. Inclusion of a Te Tiriti o Waitangi policy is vital and provides an opportunity to outline the WKM (all ECC) commitment to an authentic Te Tiriti o Waitangi curriculum. What also needs to be taken into consideration is the capacity of philosophy statements such as TTK. Essentially, TTK provides the agency to assert and affirm fundamental values, principles and aspirations of WKM: their tino rangatiratanga (MoE, 2011; Orange, 2004; Ritchie, 2003; Smith, 1997; Smith, 1999; Te One, 2013).

Summary

Literature in this review has provided much-needed insight into historical injustices imposed upon Māori by British colonial forces. Consequently, imperialistic views of Te Tiriti o Waitangi resulted in colonial dominance. Enforced policies seriously disrupted Māori wellbeing. Challenges enacted by Māori to ameliorate discrimination, alienation and inequalities resulted in the reconceptualisation of Te Tiriti o Waitangi as a partnership document between Māori and Pākehā. Many policies previously viewed as tools of subjugation have been rightfully challenged, resulting in the introduction of policies proposed to honour, respect and empower Māori – such as *Te Whāriki* and TTK. *Te Whāriki*, the first bicultural early childhood curriculum in Aotearoa New Zealand (and the world), is an illustration of a Te Tiriti o Waitangi partnership document. While *Te Whāriki* and TTK clearly identify and support whānau views of Te Tiriti o Waitangi as fundamental to authentic bicultural discourse and high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori, it must be realised that validation moves beyond written words in documents. Enacting Te Tiriti o Waitangi requires WKM and kaiako to infuse the historical context of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, including the implications of this foundational document, in their philosophical and pedagogical practice when working with and alongside tamariki-mokopuna and whānau Māori. This will affirm Te Tiriti o Waitangi as a fundamental element of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori in WKM.

Chapter Five: Whakapapa

Introduction

In response to whānau perspectives of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori, this chapter explores whakapapa, one of the principal āhuetanga. Interrelated features: whānau (family) and whanaungatanga (relationship, family connection) and tuakiri (identity) and mana whenua (belonging) are key elements discussed. The pūrākau of this chapter follows a similar format to the previous findings chapter. It commences with a brief review providing historical and contemporary understandings of whakapapa, followed by whānau perspectives of whakapapa (drawing on the semi-structured interviews) and finishing with illustrations of ways *Te Whāriki* and TTK foster whānau views (document analysis). The same structure is used to discuss interrelated elements whānau and whanaungatanga, and tuakiri and mana whenua. The chapter then moves onto areas of strengths and concerns in the relationship between *Te Whāriki*, TTK and whānau views. It includes recommendations for how the relationship could be further developed. The chapter concludes by stating how the pūrākau in this chapter have presented a strong argument why whakapapa, whānau and whanaungatanga, and tuakiri and mana whenua, should be considered key factors in high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna in WKM.

Whakapapa

This pūrākau begins by exploring the literature relating to whakapapa, starting with an examination of the term whakapapa. It then journeys through whakapapa creation – Māori cosmological beginnings – through to ira atua and ira tangata (gods to humans) and finishes by locating tamariki-mokopuna within the realms of whakapapa. The whakapapa review contends traditional knowledge of whakapapa is absolutely relevant to contemporary contexts, thus an important element to high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna in WKM.

Sir Apirana Ngata (1972) provided a succinct elucidation of whakapapa, explaining it as “the process of laying one thing upon another. If you visualise the foundation ancestors as the first generation, the next and succeeding ancestors are placed on them in ordered layers” (p. 6). The statement proposes whakapapa provides an interconnectedness to ancestors. The layering, as Ngata describes, links tamariki-mokopuna to a lineage beyond their physical form.

This concept of whakapapa “as layers” appears in “He mihi” at the beginning of this thesis (p. iii), sharing who I am, to whom I connect and to whom I belong. Presented in te reo Māori with

English translations, my whakapapa reads as a genealogical narrative (Te Rito, 2007) – a spiritual commentary, naming and identifying places and people of prominence in my genealogy. Included are tūpuna maunga (ancestral mountains), moana (ocean), awa (rivers), ancestral waka (canoe), kuia (grandmother), koroua (grandfather), hapū (sub-tribes), iwi (tribes) and marae (ancestral meeting place). While it offers an illustration of my whakapapa, it does not provide a deeper level of understanding of our being – that is, the beginnings of whakapapa Māori. The following discussion offers an illustration of whakapapa, explaining the importance of whakapapa in the provision of high-quality learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori.

Whakapapa creation.

Understanding a Māori worldview is extremely important to comprehending tamariki-mokopuna Māori. To know the tamaiti is to know who they are and where they come from. Te Kore and Te Pō are integral to the beginnings of whakapapa. These realms embody the origins of the tamaiti and provide a space where potential to be, and to become, are shaped. Moreover, the realm of Te Pō is where creation and procreation transpired and where revolt, betrayal and reprisal emerged. Rebellion by some godly sons resulted in the separation of their parents Papatū-ā-nuku and Ranginui. This act introduced emotions of the spirit and heart, or, as Walker (1990) described it, a period where good and bad temperaments developed.

Acquiring knowledge pertaining to whakapapa creation is vital to understanding the emotional dispositions of tamariki-mokopuna Māori. According to Lady Tilly and Sir Tamati Reedy (Reedy, 2013), tamariki-mokopuna Māori are intrinsically connected to cosmological beginnings, therefore it is essential to learn “Māori philosophies of te pō and te kore” (p. 46). Learning about whakapapa in relation to ngā atua (the gods) can support tamariki-mokopuna Māori to understand their own whatumanawa (emotions). Reedy proposed whatumanawa, tinana (body), hinengaro (mind) and wairua (spirit) as the “four dimensions for the holistic development of the child at all times” (p. 46). A Māori world view attributes whatumanawa, from “love and happiness to hate and sorrow” (Reedy, 2013, p. 47), experienced by tamariki-mokopuna in modern times, to the emotions experienced by godly sons during and proceeding the separation of their parents.

Reverend Māori Marsden shared his expertise of Te Ao Māori, explaining:

The journeys in Te Ao Māori (Māori world) as an evolutionary process, traversing spiritual and physical worlds, encompassing the realms of Te Korekore (potential

being), Te Pō (becoming) and Te Ao Marama (being). Te Korekore (often interpreted as the void, meaninglessness or nothingness), is “the realm between non-being and being; that is, the realm of potential being.” (Marsden, 2003, p. 20)

Te Korekore transitions through Te Pō, to Te Ao Marama, from darkness to light, essentially moving from becoming to being.

M. Durie (1997) explained these beginnings as the origins of whakapapa. Te Korekore is viewed as the realm of primal energy and a space for potential (Marsden, 2003; Walker, 2004). Te Pō is considered the godly realm, responsible for “becoming” (Marsden, 2003) and transmitting mana (prestige)²⁹ and tapu (sacredness; Walker, 1990). Te Korekore and Te Pō are significant to the lives of tamariki-mokopuna Māori as these realms recognise their godly nature and potentiality.

While Te Korekore and Te Pō represent potentiality, they also signify “the emptiness and darkness of the mind” (Walker, 1990, p. 12). Primordial companions Papa-tū-ā-nuku (mother earth) and Rangi-nui (sky father) were conjoined within Te Pō. Due to the couple’s intimate embrace, they lived in a space of desolation and obscurity “preventing light from entering the world” (Walker, 1990, p. 12). However, this close union resulted in the creation of godly sons (also referred to as ira atua, supernatural beings, gods). “Tanemahuta [god of forest, also known as Tāne], Tangaroa [god of sea], Tawhirimatea [god of wind] Tumatauenga [god of war], Haumiatiketike [god of fernroot and uncultivated plants] and Rongomatane [god of cultivation and peace]” (p. 12), among many others, lived together with their parents in a world of darkness.

Discontented with living in a world of darkness and desperately desiring to seek light and knowledge, the godly sons executed an insurgency against their parents. Due to his physical prowess, Tāne-mahuta (Tāne) was given the task of forcing their parents apart (Walker, 1990). Separating Papa-tū-ā-nuku and Rangi-nui would allow light into the universe. Each parent was expected to undertake their prospective roles as mother earth and sky father and the godly sons were free to venture out into the third realm, Te Ao Marama, “the world of light and reality” (p. 11). This represents the transition from Te Korekore – potential being, to Te Pō – becoming – to Te Ao Marama – being (Marsden, 2003).

²⁹Mana is discussed in the next chapter, Te Mana o te Mokopuna.

Allowing light into the world resulted in many emotions – good and evil (Walker, 1990). Not all godly brothers were satisfied with the separating of their parents.³⁰ Tāwhiri-mātea, displeased with the separation, blustered his rage on Tāne-mahuta and Tangaroa, resulting in the devastation of forests and sea life. Haumia-tiketike and Rongo-mā-Tāne sought refuge in their mother’s bosom. Tāwhiri-mātea turned his anger on Tūmatauenga but was unable to defeat him. Agitated by his brothers’ abandonment of him, Tūmatauenga set out on a path of retaliation – waging his own war against Tāne – turning trees and vines into armaments to execute birds living in the forest of Tāne. His destruction continued, turning his anger towards Tangaroa by making nets to catch and eat the children of Tangaroa. These actions towards his brother’s children effectively removed a state of tapu (sacred) to noa (ordinary). Walker described this as the period when “sacred and profane came into being” (Walker, 1990, p. 13), which is critical to understanding a Māori worldview.

Whakapapa thus far “stories our existence providing the foundation of Māori beginnings” (Rau & Ritchie, 2011, p. 130). Kaiako are integral to knowing and teaching these stories, therefore their role is one of extreme importance (MoE, 2017a). Knowledge of whakapapa beginnings – Te Korekore, Te Pō and Te Ao Marama – is essential to recognising tamariki-mokopuna Māori potentiality and uniqueness.

Whakapapa: Ira atua to ira tangata, evolution from gods to humans.

Whakapapa creation continues with the progression of ira atua (gods) to ira tangata (humans). Mead (2016) described ira as a “life principle” (p. 65) or gene, and ira tangata as human life. While human life carries a combination of genes passed on by both parents, genes procured from ira atua and ira tangata move beyond biology. They transport spiritual elements from ira atua, who are responsible for creating “godlike and spiritual quality[ies]” (p. 65) in all ira tangata, human life. These qualities are embodied in tamariki-mokopuna Māori. According to Reedy (2013), tamariki-mokopuna are “the personification of the worlds of yesterday” (p. 38) and are imbued with mana³¹ (divine spirit; Harte & Jenkin, 2011; Reedy, 2013).

Creation of ira tangata emerged after the separation of Papa-tū-ā-nuku and Rangi-nui and the ensuing reprisal. Tāne led his godly brothers in search of ira tangata – the human principle

³⁰ Rūaumoko (god of volcanoes), the youngest of the brothers, was “a child at breast” (Walker, 2004, p. 14) during this period – keeping his mother Papa-tū-ā-nuku warm.

³¹ Mana is theorised comprehensively in the next chapter: Te Mana o Tamariki-Mokopuna Māori

(Walker, 2004). Although Tāne attempted to create ira tangata with natural elements, this proved futile. Tāne and godly brothers accepted that ira tangata could not be “derived from ira atua” (Walker, 2004, p. 14). A female element was required and, although they explored their natural world, they were unsuccessful.

Aware that “a separate act of creation” (p. 14) was needed, Tāne proceeded to fashion the first ira tangata, Hineahuone, from “red clay – *onekura* – of Mother Earth” (Marsden, 2003, p.63), “breath[ing] the life force of his mauri into her mouth and nostrils” (Walker, 2004, p. 14). Tāne impregnated Hineahuone who then birthed Hinetītama. Tāne went on to cohabit with Hinetītama (Marsden, 2003, Walker, 2004) creating a multitude of offspring – producing what is known as ira tangata, human life.

The evolution from ira atua to ira tangata reveals the transition from gods to humans. Whakapapa evolution positions tamariki-mokopuna Māori in two worlds – physical (material) and metaphysical (spiritual, cosmological). Rau and Ritchie (2011) described this period as “representative of time and future” (p. 13). Walker (1996) defined it as “time-past and future” (p. 13), explaining that Māori philosophy accommodates two dimensions of this concept. The past and future can be represented as in front, and behind, hence tamariki-mokopuna are “travelling backwards in time to the future, with the present unfolding in front as a continuum in the past” (Walker, 1996, p. 14). The Māori whakatauākī (aphorism), *titiro whakamuri ka hoki whakamua* (the present is informed by the past), also recited as *haere whakamua, hoki whakamuri* (going forward, thinking back), or *kia whakatōmuri, te haere whakamua*³² (walk backwards into the future) encapsulates Walker’s explanation. These understandings substantiate the essentiality of past knowledges in present day teachings of tamariki-mokopuna Māori.

Whakapapa positions tamariki-mokopuna Māori in both the past and present. Whakapapa lineage embodies ira atua and ira tangata, locating tamariki-mokopuna in physical and metaphysical realms. Ira atua infuses each tamaiti (child) with spiritual characteristics and godly qualities. Honouring these inherent dispositions is essential in Te Ao Māori, therefore must be considered as a determinant of high-quality learning for tamariki Māori.

³² This whakatauākī has many ways of expression.

Whakapapa: Locating tamariki-mokopuna Māori.

Whakapapa positions tamariki-mokopuna Māori as both ira tangata and manifestations of atua Māori (Reedy, 2013). According to Rangimarie Pere (1991), the term tamariki originates from the atua Tamanuiterā: “Tama is derived from Tama-te-ra the central sun, the divine spark; ariki refers to senior most status, and riki on its own can mean smaller version” (p. 4).³³ Through whakapapa, tamariki-mokopuna are related to Papa-tū-ā-nuku and Rangi-nui (Harte & Jenkin, 2011; Morrison 1999; Rau & Ritchie 2011). Rau and Ritchie (2011) also emphasise the importance of tūpuna, tūrangawaewae, maunga, whenua, awa, whānau, hapū and iwi when narrating whakapapa.

Relationships to those who have passed and to physical formations (beyond human) were expressed through whakapapa narration. This was the domain of tohunga (expert leader) who “memorised and recited on appropriate occasions” (Ngata, 1972, p. 5). Whakapapa was taught in specialised schools known as whare wānanga (schools of learning; Walker, 1996). Ballara (1991) shared that tohunga had incredible memories and were well versed in reciting whakapapa. Evidence shows tohunga used rhythmic patterns, changes in pitch, specific tempos, tones and voice to “protect both the tapu information and the status of the tohunga” (Ballara, 1991, p. 551).

Traditional tohunga practices moved away from the public eye in the early 1900s. The Tohunga Suppression Act, passed in 1907 (Stephens, 2007), directed tohunga and their followers to cease practices. If caught, they were prosecuted, imprisoned and fined. This political act was a way to reduce the number of traditional tohunga practitioners as authorities at the time, privileged Western medical interventions. There was also concern around the mobilisation of charismatic tohunga like Rua Kenana (Māori prophet). Although the Act was passed, tohunga continued to practice surreptitiously. Their ability to maintain this knowledge when confronted with adversity is a testament to their resilience.

Whakapapa, once considered tapu and narrated only by tohunga, has been available to everyday people for over 70 years. Apirana Ngata shared and taught Māori and non-Māori whakapapa pertaining to Porourangi³⁴ in the 1940s (Ngata, 1972). Whakapapa can now be easily accessed through libraries, archives and other networks. Understandings and practices relating to

³³ *Te Whāriki* uses the term *mokopuna* as opposed to *tamariki*, explaining “*mokopuna* [as] grandchild...in the context of *Te Whāriki*, *mokopuna* expresses intergeneration connectedness” (MoE, 2017, p. 66).

³⁴ Porourangi – protocol of Ngāti Porou, the tribe of Apirana Ngata.

whakapapa have changed. A contemporary expression of whakapapa is used by many to self-identify and to inform others of one's origins. According to Rata (2012), sharing your whakapapa is "an appropriate way of introducing and positioning yourself" (p. vi). Often introduced orally or through written form, the reciter or scribe will reference land, and other areas, and people of significance (Roberts & Wills, 1998). This ability to self-identify through reciting genealogy is considered extremely important as it informs people who you are, where your whenua and tūrangawaewae (ancestral place to stand and be) are, who your ancestors are, names of your significant land marks, who you belong to and who you relate to.

The evolution of whakapapa has seen the introduction of pepeha. Pepeha can be classified as a formal introduction (Rameka & Glasgow 2015), a short introduction (Royal Tangaere, 2012) or narrative of whakapapa (Rau & Ritchie, 2011) with which one can announce their identity. Pepeha can be expressed through various actions such as metaphors, formal speeches, figures of speech, cheek and humour (Mead & Grove, 2003). While pepeha are often termed proverbs, Mead and Grove warned this can be too restrictive. They described pepeha as a reflection of thought where "history, religious life, conduct, ethics, warfare, marriage, death and weather" (p. 9) are expressed. Mead and Grove also recognised the evolution of pepeha to a contemporary understanding, provided Māori the opportunity to have a communicative relationship with tūpuna.

H. Smith (2017) explained that when one is asked "who are you from?", a "response is often articulated through the recitation of pepeha which names significant geographical landmarks, eponymous ancestors and tribal canoes for example, placing the speaker in relationship to the land and its people" (p. 4). An example of connection and personal relationship to whenua through pepeha is provided by Kim, a mother in H. Smith's (2017) research, who describes the whenua as a "safe space to be ourselves and it provides the spiritual clarity we need when we identify who we are through pepeha" (p. 145). Pepeha provides whānau and tamariki-mokopuna Māori a connection with Te Ao Māori. Sharing their pepeha reveals their relationship with whenua – linking them directly back (and forward) to Papa-tū-ā-nuku and beyond.

Pepeha is a normalised practice for tamariki-mokopuna Māori in Kōhanga Reo. Royal Tangaere (2012) referred to tamariki-mokopuna "reciting their pepeha and not only learning about their place in their whānau but they also learnt about their connections to their land, river, tribal canoe, tribe and sub tribe" (p. 161). Pepeha are also recognised in some early childhood environments. When conducting a research project, Rau and Ritchie (2011) encouraged

teachers to explore views of both tamariki and whānau Māori. In their study, Estelle, a Māori mother in the research whose son attended a kindergarten, provided her thoughts and advice to Pākehā teachers about their commitment to Kaupapa Māori. Estelle was impressed by the inclusion of pepeha, explaining “the pepeha ... was a good idea as it gave children a sense of belonging” (p. 812). Sharing pepeha, either orally or through written form, is a way tamariki-mokopuna Māori can affirm their whakapapa Māori. This validation supports tamariki-mokopuna with their sense of belonging, an essential element of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori.

Whakapapa positions tamariki-mokopuna as ira tangata but always interconnected to ngā atua Māori. Understanding whakapapa in relation to ira tangata informs tamariki-mokopuna about their journeying to physical formation. Knowing who you come from is essential in Te Ao Māori and vital to establishing a sense of belonging. Once the domain of tohunga, and seen as tapu, whakapapa is now widely accessible to everyday people. Changes in the way whakapapa is shared and delivered has seen the introduction of pepeha – a platform for tamariki-mokopuna to announce their whakapapa connections. This way of communicating further validates a sense of connectedness for Māori, therefore pepeha, underpinned by whakapapa, is imperative to high-quality early learning for tamariki Māori.

Whānau Perspectives of Whakapapa

The pūrākau moves to whānau views of whakapapa as a key element of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna.

Wairua and Andrea emphasised the absolute importance of all Māori knowing their whakapapa when theorising high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna. Wairua and Andrea’s personal stories below reveal their deep desire to know who they are and to whom they belong.

Wairua has been separated from her whakapapa and, although excited to reconnect, she feels an immense sense of sadness. Not knowing her whakapapa has impacted directly on her hauora (wellbeing). There have been many occasions in her life when she has felt like an outsider in Te Ao Māori. This feeling of separation has surfaced in the WKM she works in. One of the requirements working or attending WKM is to provide a personal photo of yourself alongside your pepeha. Due to her estrangement from her whakapapa, Wairua has not been able to provide her pepeha which has left her feeling anxious:

I was angry because [some would say], you should know it and I'm like no I don't and when you don't get handed down your whakapapa from like your Mum and Dad, you're nothing... I feel mamae [pain/sad] ... You know like ngā whaea [all the female staff], they have all got their whakapapa and I don't...it's hurting, even now...It was actually last year that I found out [about] our whakapapa and I was really pretty angry, for [all my whānau] and even for myself because we have never been handed down our pepeha. It had been given to one of the members of our whānau and I have never known it... I have never actually known the correct one until my sister [shared it] – that is what it is, learning where you are from. I didn't even know who I belonged to. I only knew I belonged to my Mum and Dad...I just get mamae [hurt/sad] sometimes.

Saddened by her own experiences, Wairua recognises she is not alone. There are some tamariki-mokopuna and whānau attending the WKM whom she sees as experiencing a disconnection:

[There are] parents [who] don't bring their whakapapa for their tamariki, so they [don't] know this is where they belong, this is their marae, their maunga, their waka, their awa, their tūpuna.

If you don't have your whakapapa, you don't have your sense of belonging. You are always outside, looking in. If you haven't got your whakapapa, you are... nothing really. [You need to] go and search for it.

Andrea has knowledge of her whakapapa on her mother's side but does not know her father's. Like Wairua, Andrea has a deep desire to connect with her whakapapa because of the suppression of her father's language and whakapapa:

I know my Mum's side... so I've got that whakapapa – it's on my Facebook page, so I don't know about my dad's side, where he comes from... He used to speak te reo Māori, he was fluent in te reo Māori, but he had to go to a Pākehā school and [they thought] he said a swear word... He might have said whakapapa or something like that... so he started getting strapped across the hands back in those days and he lost his reo. [I] need to find out my father's side. I'm sort of trying to find my pepeha [on that side] to find where I actually come from. It's really difficult.

Andrea and Wairua shared their personal views on whakapapa in relation to their lives, the lives of their own tamariki-mokopuna and lives of tamariki-mokopuna in WKM. Being disconnected from their whakapapa has been difficult, hence their overwhelming desire to reconnect. Wairua

regards reconnection to feeling a true sense of belonging as Māori.³⁵ Wairua also recognises the similarities her story has to some tamariki-mokopuna and whānau who attend WKM. Above all, Andrea and Wairua identify whakapapa is an essential element to high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori.

Ways Te Whāriki and Te Tauākī Kaupapa Support Whānau Views of Whakapapa

The pūrākau now focuses on ways *Te Whāriki* and TTK support whakapapa as a key āhuatanga of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori. *Te Whāriki* and TTK are influential documents in WKM. *Te Whāriki* is recognised as the first bicultural early childhood curriculum in Aotearoa New Zealand (and the world).

Like *Te Whāriki*, TTK is a valuable document in WKM. Te Tauākī Kaupapa (the philosophy statement) provides a platform for WKM to assert their central values, principles, ideals and aspirations – their overall vision for their service (MoE, 2011). Essentially, TTK empowers WKM hapori, whānau, hapū and iwi to assert their tino rangatiratanga.

When examining *Te Whāriki* (MoE, 2017a), it is clear this curriculum recognises the criticality of whakapapa in the lives of tamariki-mokopuna. What is also noticeable is the responsibility placed upon kaiako to understand:

a world view that emphasises the child’s whakapapa connection to Māori creation, across Te Kore, te po, te ao marama, atua Māori and tīpuna. (p. 12)

Te Whāriki also identifies tamariki-mokopuna Māori potential through a metaphorical image. Comprised of a multicoloured woven kowhiti whakapae (horizontal plaiting pattern), the image symbolises a journey. Blue, teal, purple and red represent diversity of cultures and the importance of the foundational principles in this document. The colour green signifies new life. Dark “grey represents Te Kore and te pō, the realm of potential and the start of enlightenment” (MoE, 2017a, p. 11).

In addition, *Te Whāriki* (MoE, 2017a) recognises the continuum from metaphysical to physical realms in whakapapa, explaining:

³⁵ Belonging is discussed further on in section Tuakiri and Mana Whenua – Identity and Belonging.

Connections to past, present and future are integral to a Māori perspective of relationships. This includes relationships to tīpuna [ancestors] who may have passed on and connections through whakapapa to, for example, maunga, awa, moana, whenua and marae. (p. 21)

Ways in which TTK affirms whakapapa as a key feature of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna is recognised through the following declaration:

We are committed to acknowledging the whakapapa and tikanga of all whānau [and] using the whakapapa links to strengthen the whānau unit. (TTKAWKM, p. 4, a.7)

References elicited from *Te Whāriki* acknowledge the importance of whakapapa in the lives of tamariki-mokopuna. *Te Whāriki* recognises whakapapa moves across metaphysical and physical spaces, is deeply embedded in Māori beginnings, land, sea, mountains and marae and always in relationship with the past and the future. Importantly, *Te Whāriki* places responsibility on kaiako understanding whakapapa through Māori explanations. Recognising whakapapa as a means to advantage whānau Māori in TTK, identifies whakapapa as an integral element to the overall wellbeing of tamariki-mokopuna and whānau Māori.

Whānau and Whanaungatanga

The pūrākau continues by introducing two elements interconnected with whakapapa: whānau and whanaungatanga. Consistent with the whakapapa section, an overview of literature explains these two concepts, followed by whakaaro o te whānau, whānau views of whānau and whanaungatanga and finishing with ways *Te Whāriki* and TTK reciprocate whānau views.

All people who participate in WKM are termed *whānau*. This is a contemporary understanding of whānau, where individual people have united through a shared interest or common cause (M. Durie, 1997; Hohepa, 1999), like choosing WKM as an option for their tamariki-mokopuna. While this is termed modern, traditional understandings of whānau are directly related through whakapapa (M. Durie, 1997; Hohepa, 1999) – genealogical lineage, inclusive of cosmological and physical entities (as described in Whakapapa section).

The word whānau has dual meanings: it refers to giving birth or to three to four generations of relatives living together (Buck, 1982; Metge, 1995; Pere, 1982; Walker, 2004). Te Rangi Hiroa (Sir Peter Buck) explained hapū and iwi also have two closely related meanings. Hapū can refer to either being pregnant or belonging to a sub-tribe. When women became hapū, their whānau increases, creating hapū, sub-tribes. Iwi translates to bones and tribe. Iwi is considered the

largest of the group and comprises both whānau and hapū – those who share whakapapa. Whānau is considered the smallest of the social units. Maggie Papakura (1986) quantified each group, explaining “a whanau may number fifty to one hundred or more people, a hapu may contain one to three hundred or more and an Iwi may contain anywhere from three hundred to a thousand or more people” (p. 35).

In traditional times, whānau lived and worked together (Ka'ai & Higgins, 2004). Each whānau member was given tasks to fulfil. To maintain whakapapa lines, a senior member of the whānau would choose prospective marriage partners (Pere, 1982). However, Pere explained, this was not always the case – there were times when female and male rangatira (leaders) would make their own choice. Rangatira were the only members of the whānau who had these special privileges.

Whānau played an integral role in the nurturing of tamariki-mokopuna; however, grandparents were mostly in charge of caring for and educating their grandchildren. Whānau were also socialised and educated on their prospective whānau proprieties (Buck, 1982; Papakura, 1986).

According to Papakura (1986):

Maori did not think of himself or do anything for his own gain. He thought only of his people, and was absorbed in his whanau, just as the whanau was absorbed in the hapu and the hapu in the Iwi. (p. 38)

Walker (2004) described this working and caring for the whānau, hapū and iwi as a form of collectivism.

M. Durie (1997) presented two ways of viewing whānau in modern Aotearoa – fragmented or evolving. Many changes include divorce, de facto relationships, sole-parent families, reduction in fertility rates, an aging population and urbanisation. Displacement from the safety of traditional whānau units has affected the wellbeing of tamariki-mokopuna and whānau Māori.

Metge (1995), however, argued that traditional whānau practices have been disrupted through enforced legislation. Resistance to “direct and indirect pressures to assimilate to the dominant pattern” (p. 17) has witnessed many Māori continuing to embody traditional whānau values. Traditional ideals have been maintained through Kōhanga Reo, WKM, Kura Māori (Māori schools), kapa haka (Māori cultural group) and other Māori-centred initiatives.

Pihama (2001) described whānau today as having both traditional and contemporary understandings – inclusive of blended or mixed whānau, including whanaunga (relatives), hapū,

iwi, whakapapa, whāngai (foster children), gay and lesbian, friends and community groups. Juxtaposing the words family and whānau can be perplexing. Julia Taiapa (1995) agreed, stating Māori interpret whānau through their own understandings, often underpinned by their responsibilities, which are outside those of a nuclear family. The term whānau is broader and inclusive of extended groups, both Māori and non-Māori.

While traditional practices are returning, a contemporary notion of whānau includes people who have united through a common cause (M. Durie, 1997; Hohepa, 1999). Metge (1995) referred to this grouping as “non-kin Māori and Pākehā friends and colleagues” (p. 36), adding “Māori language experts approve this metaphorical extension to non-kin provided that those involved are genuine friends and supporters” (p. 56). This notion of non-kin whānau is of great significance in early childhood education for the fact that 85% of tamariki-mokopuna Māori attend mainstream early childhood education, at which a majority of the kaiako are non-Māori (MoE, 2010). Educators undertaking the role of non-kin whānau can support “early childhood services and whānau to work together to create a culturally responsive curriculum and a high-quality teaching and learning environment for Māori children” (ERO, 2012, p. 4).

This contemporary understanding of whānau within the education system was unveiled by the Department of Education in 1974 (Metge, 1995). Introduced initially through secondary school and named “the whanau system” (p. 56), this structure included both teachers and children. The intent behind this whānau system was to create a family-type environment, with mixed ages and groups, shared teaching, responsive personal relationships between staff and students and options of collective or self-directed learning.

Primary schools and many other organisations have implemented this term. One significant organisation which uses this term is Kōhanga Reo. Kōhanga Reo are common in rural areas and while they have whānau who are directly related through whakapapa, they also have non-kin who are termed whānau. G. H. Smith (1995) advised this term is particularly prevalent in urban areas where non-kin Māori, Pākehā and other cultures congregate. He provided an example of ways in which a contemporary understanding of whānau operates in Kura Kaupapa Māori (total-immersion Māori language schools):

In the Kura Kaupapa Māori setting Māori values and practices derived from whānau are used to facilitate teaching and learning. For example, core values such as manaakitanga (sharing and caring), aroha (respect), whakaiti (humility) and so on are taken for granted within these schools. The notion of tuakana (elder) and teina (younger) are incorporated

as part of the pedagogical framework, that is the cultural obligation derived from within the whānau precept of the elder children having a cultural responsibility to help the younger children is utilised. (p. 33)

A brief overview of traditional and contemporary understandings of whānau informs that traditional understandings locate tamariki-mokopuna and whānau through whakapapa, whereas contemporary understandings work through connections and commonalities. An interdependent relationship reflects a traditional understanding of whānau, where the support and care of the wider whānau, inclusive of hapū and iwi, was of primary focus. Importantly, traditional and contemporary understandings of whānau are valuable in high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna and whānau Māori.

Whanaungatanga is an extension of whānau and includes extended whānau, relationships and shared connections. This concept is discussed next.

Like whānau, the concept of whanaungatanga has historical and modern interpretations. Whanaungatanga, a word derived from whānau and whanaunga, personifies tikanga practices. According to Ritchie (2003), whanaungatanga “refers to kinship relationships, which are based on validation of whānau, or Māori extended families” (p. 5). Rose Pere (1991) described whanaungatanga through a traditional lens, stating it is “based on ancestral, historical, traditional and spiritual ties” (p. 26). Pere (1982) further explained that whanaungatanga interconnects and strengthens whānau. An enactment of aroha (love, feeling, compassion) is essential to whanaungatanga:

“Aroha” is vital to whanaungatanga and the survival of what the group sees as important. Loyalty, obligation, commitment, an in-built support system made the whanau a strong stable unit, within the hapu and consequently the tribe. (p. 7)

Pere (1982) shared how whānau in traditional times were deeply attuned to atua, kaitiaki (guardians) and tohu (omens) and knew how to care for each element. This was seen as an act of whanaungatanga and required a degree of intuitive intelligence. Another way whanaungatanga was represented was during tangihanga (funerals) where whānau would gather in support. Their participation in ritualistic processes revealed their commitment to whanaungatanga. Whānau who could not attend would return a year later to support the hahunga (a ceremony process involving exhuming bones) – another representation of whanaungatanga which led to strengthening and uniting whānau, hapū and iwi. John Rangihau (2011) described his own learning within his Māori community, where he learnt his role as an

active member of a whānau collective. Of great significance was “the warmth of being together as a family group: what you can draw from being together and the strength of using all the resources of a family” (Rangihau, 2011, p. 183). This feeling provided the foundations for a strong sense of kinship or, as he described it, whanaungatanga. Rangihau reinforced the need to ensure whanaungatanga is used to provide hospitality to others. Whanaungatanga, he said, is also reciprocal. An example he gave is when someone is lonely and they drop by to visit whānau; whānau are thrilled to see them, therefore the exchange is beneficial for both parties. This is whanaungatanga in action.

Whanaungatanga, like many Māori concepts, is used widely in contemporary contexts. Some early childhood environments enact whanaungatanga (whakawhanaungatanga) in their everyday practices. In the research project *Whakawhanaungatanga* (Ritchie & Rau, 2006), findings showed teachers had developed a way of being, described as an “āhua,” when interacting with tamariki-mokopuna and whānau. This āhua reflected their natural way of establishing a responsive, reciprocal and respectful relationship with whānau – an enactment of whanaungatanga. One of the participants in the research considered sharing kai in the centre showed manaakitanga (respect) and whanaungatanga.

According to Rata (2012), whakawhanaungatanga (relating positively towards others) is an important exchange when meeting someone for the first time. For Māori, this means asking from whom someone comes – to whom they whakapapa. Also, through formal exchanges such as whaikōrero (formal speech), the kaikōrero (speaker) will identify who he is, through his whakapapa. The speaker is showing respect to the manuhiri (guests) by sharing his whakapapa lineage. The manuhiri will reciprocate by sharing who they are – this is another display of whanaungatanga.

Whanaungatanga and whakawhanaungatanga are fundamental to high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori. Founded on trust, positive, respectful, and reciprocal relationships, alongside sharing and supporting, are important enactments of whanaungatanga. Aroha, faithfulness, manaakitanga and loyalty are vital components of whanaungatanga.

Whānau Perspectives of whānau and whanaungatanga.

Whānau views of whānau and whanaungatanga are presented next. Building and maintaining reciprocal relationships with whānau was observed as whanaungatanga – and within this space whānau learn to gain a sense of trust and belonging.

Ātaahua talked about building trusting relationships with whānau to support growth and learning:

It is very important to be open, calm, reassuring towards the whānau, knowing that we will deal with situations. Whānau [then] tend to trust, they feel good. Trusting relationships need to be in place. It's a good thing. We are not giving them counselling but they/we are learning to be yourself. Learn to be them, be yourself, who they are, providing learning opportunities. The biggest one is it goes back to whakawhanaungatanga. We don't move as one, we move together, doing things together.

Jane believes building relationships with tamariki-mokopuna, whānau and each other will provide a sense of wellbeing and belonging:

We make sure we build those relationships and it's not just with our children and whānau, it's with each other as well... I firmly believe that your teachers and your team need to have that sense of belonging so that is huge for us. I believe... everyone that walks in our doors need to have a sense of belonging, a sense of wellbeing in our whare [house]... it's when you walk in the door, we want you to feel it, we want you to feel that sense of whanaungatanga... They have chosen us for a reason... we want that feeling... you have got a place here and with our teachers... it takes a very long time to get to that level of trust... with our whānau but it's worth it.

Pono argued building relationships with tamariki-mokopuna and whānau should take precedence over administrative requirements:

I think... to give quality is pretty much to put aside all [those] expectations as kaiako, from the paper work, policies, all those sorts of things and look at getting to know the children, the whānau and looking at how you can... link information from whānau... observing tamariki, having conversations with the tamariki, even other kaiako. That's how I kind of look at it because I can give quality by abiding by the paper work from the Ministry, Education Review, all the government agencies and like Te Whāriki, all those things that we are expected to do but at the end of the day its working with children and whānau aspirations and being able to put them together to provide... quality.

Pono also speaks from a mother's perspective, sharing her own experience when confronted with paperwork when her children attended a mainstream centre:

[It's about] caring for the whānau... because it is scary going into an ECE and leaving your child with these strangers. I have been through that and even though I have got the training when I had to leave my children in ECE for the very first time... I can relate to it because I [was] never... given... the opportunity... and I don't want my whānau [at WKM] to go through [that, putting paperwork] out on the table and let them shuffle through it all... It's getting to know them... [during] the first engagement... Talking with them rather than saying, yes, this is what we do, this is how much you have to pay.

Andrea, who shared earlier about her desire to reconnect with her whakapapa on her father's side, feels a sense of belonging at the WKM, something she did not feel when her children attended mainstream early childhood education. She loves the whakawhanaungatanga at the WKM:

I am quite a shy person – it's actually making me stand [up] and be mindful of the other parents and it's beautiful. You can just stand outside, and you... say mōrena and they ... say mōrena and you know it's really good to see them, I love it. I have made a couple of friends and yes, it's so funny they go, what did you do today, and I go I just cleaned, and I would say we must be like the mother hobbits stuck at home cleaning. [In mainstream] I said good morning to the other parents, and they were like snobby and I would think what I have said, I just said good morning, you know... I didn't feel comfortable and it felt like I was getting judged in mainstream but... here it's awesome. Sometimes I stay... here to 10 o'clock and I'm like talking to all the parents or to the teachers.

An enactment of whanaungatanga is seen as natural to Māori. According to Ātaahua, building trusting relationships, whanaungatanga with whānau, is extremely important – a natural way of being Māori. Ātaahua also reinforced whakawhanaungatanga reflects the way Māori interrelate as a collective and not as individuals. Like Ātaahua, Jane highlighted the need to build trust in order to build relationships, whanaungatanga with whānau, inclusive of kaiako. Importantly, whānau need to know they have a safe space at the WKM, and it is the responsibility of the WKM to ensure this happens. Pono described relationship building, whanaungatanga as quality, and something that should be enacted before undertaking administrative duties. Andrea has been a recipient of the whanaungatanga at the WKM, sharing how much she loves to converse and joke with other mātua and kaiako, so much so, she is confident to stay on in the morning. This representation of whanaungatanga is premised on building positive, calming, trusting relationships with whānau who attend, work and participate in WKM.

Ways Te Whāriki and Te Tauākī Kaupapa Support Whānau Views of Whānau and Whanaungatanga

Numerous references in *Te Whāriki* underpin whānau perspectives of whānau, whanaungatanga and whakawhanaungatanga. For example, *Te Whāriki* identifies tamariki-mokopuna Māori within an extended whānau system. Whanaungatanga relationships require kaiako to understand “the role of family and whānau” (MoE, 2017a, p. 19). In addition, the need to build trusting relationships is acknowledged in *Te Whāriki*.

A key point discussed in the introduction of this chapter is that whānau and whanaungatanga evolved from whakapapa. The following statements from *Te Whāriki* recognise that tamariki-mokopuna belong to an extended whānau system, extending to times past: “Kaupapa Māori does not view the child in isolation but recognises that mokopuna emerges from rich traditions and is linked strongly with whānau, hapū and iwi” (MoE, 2017a, p. 64) and “For Māori the whānau is the ideal social unit for raising children. Relationships between whānau members span generations. Children inherit the legacy of the past and they reach for the future” (p. 58). In addition, *Te Whāriki* affirms the need for whānau to feel they can trust the early childhood environment, stating “Parents and whānau trust that their ECE service will provide an environment where respectful relationships, encouragement, warmth and acceptance are the norm” (p. 21). What is more, trusting relationships can be built through guaranteeing “Parents and whānau are welcomed, comfortable and involved in the programme in ways that are meaningful for them and their child” (p. 35). Also, *Te Whāriki* encourages kaiako to ensure they “develop meaningful relationships with whānau and that they respect their aspirations for their children, along with those of hapū, iwi and the wider community” (p. 20). Importantly, *Te Whāriki* endorses tamariki-mokopuna “developing social skills that enable them to establish and maintain friendships and participate reciprocally in whanaungatanga relationships” (p. 15).

Examples of ways TTK incorporates whānau views of whānau, whanaungatanga (whakawhanaungatanga) are now explained.

Te Tauākī Kaupapa recognises whānau are intrinsically connected to hapū and iwi. Working, walking and partnering as one is considered essential to the development and advancement of mokopuna-tamariki Māori:

The philosophy... seeks to realise the potential of Māori and join whānau, hapū and iwi to follow a pathway together... The whānau, hapū and iwi to be encouraged to walk

along the pathway of our children in all aspects of care and learning. (TTKAWKM, p. 8, a.16)

Unifying the whānau, hapū and iwi to support processes within the community towards positive outcomes for mokopuna. (TTKAWKM, p. 7, a.14)

Also, whanaungatanga, inclusive of trusting partnership relationships, is crucial in the TTK:

Enhancing parent/whānau skills to the benefit and development of mokopuna. Whānau, hapū and iwi to work to protect and trust one another by being accountable for our actions... [We are committed to providing a] safe nurturing environment filled with whanaungatanga [and] working alongside whānau to develop respectful trusting partnerships. (TTKAWKM, p. 6, a.13)

Understanding the concept of whānau, building trusting relationships, enacting whanaungatanga with whānau – whakawhanaungatanga – and ensuring the environment is immersed in respect, reciprocity, warmth and meaningful relationships is endorsed throughout *Te Whāriki*. *Te Whāriki* also acknowledges the importance of tamariki-mokopuna forming and sustaining friendships and relationships – whanaungatanga. Statements in *Te Whāriki* clearly interconnect with whānau views of whānau, whanaungatanga and whakawhanaungatanga.

Also, statements in TTK affirm the WKM commitment to working with whānau, hapū and iwi in a collective partnership to support mokopuna-tamariki Māori to reach their full potential. This partnership focuses on building whanaungatanga founded on protection, safety, nurturing and trust.

Tuakiri and Mana Whenua

Tuakiri and mana whenua, two elements interconnected to whakapapa, follow next. As in the previous sections, this exposition commences with an overview of relevant literature explaining these two concepts, followed by whakaaro o te whānau, whānau views of tuakiri and mana whenua and finishing with ways *Te Whāriki* and TTK sustain whānau views.

While Māori identity can be described through various interpretations (Glee, 2000, cited in Rameka, 2016) and noted as “a dynamic social phenomenon that is open for discussion” (Webber, 2008, p. 17), Māori have been traditionally identified in relation to their whakapapa (A. Durie, 1997). As Paki (2007) described, “The interconnectivity through whakapapa explains the connection of one’s identity, identification to another, and unification to the universe” (p. 16).

Whakapapa remains a significant element when determining one's identity and belonging (Rameka, 2016; Te Rito, 2007). Mead (2003) described whānau and whanaungatanga as a fundamental element to identity as Māori. Whakapapa whānau and whanaunga have an interconnected relationship with identity and belonging; however, as they have featured prominently in previous sections of this chapter, to avoid replication, the focus of this segment will remain centred around identity in relation to whenua.

Whenua interrelates with tribal boundaries, significant landmarks and the primordial mother Papa-tū-ā-nuku. However, when discussing Māori identity and belonging, whenua has a more significant meaning. “Ko au te whenua, ko te whenua ko au,” I am land and land is me,³⁶ is a whakatauākī used commonly in Māori contexts to announce one's identity, one's connection to land. This way of introducing situates oneself in relation to Papa-tū-ā-nuku, Mother Earth and all her progenies. Pepeha (discussed earlier), provides an opportunity for tamariki-mokopuna and whānau Māori, who know their whakapapa, to announce their physical interconnectedness to whenua of significance.

Pere (1982) talked about the interconnectedness between land and spiritual wellbeing. Traditional whānau were embodied in whenua which included “landscape such as streams, ranges, large rocks, geographical features on the coast-line” (p. 20). Hapū designated land and surrounding resources to whānau. Whānau were responsible for developing, guarding and controlling the natural resources.

Whenua, like the words hapū, whānau and iwi, has dual meanings. Whenua means both land and placenta. After the birth of a child, a traditional Māori cultural practice is to bury the whenua (placenta) in the whenua (the land) – at a place of significance (Pere, 1982; Rameka, 2016), generally one's ancestral home (Pere, 1982). Pere describes this as “The affinity that was, and is still, recognised between the placenta and the land has bound up with it: survival, belonging, and a fierce pride of identity and worth” (p. 22).

Connection with land extends from birth to death. When someone dies, they also return to the whenua “thus completing the cycle and completing the symbolic and physical connection to the land” (Rameka, 2016, p. 104). The whakatauākī presented earlier, ko au te whenua ko te whenua ko au, symbolises the numerous connections tamariki-mokopuna and whānau Māori have with

³⁶It is highly probable this whakatauākī has been influenced by a commonly known Whanganui whakatauākī “ko au te awa, ko te awa ko au,” I am the river and the river is me.

land. According to Māori creation stories (introduced earlier), the first female, Hineahuone, was created from red clay, sourced from whenua. Whenua (placenta), is to sustain the pēpē (baby) while they are in their mother’s kōpū (uterus). Tamariki-mokopuna and whānau Māori are intrinsically embedded in the whenua, hence whenua is influential to their identity and belonging. Te Rito (2007) offered a complementary commentary, explaining:

It is to do with that sense of being essentially at one with nature and our environment, rather than at odds with it. As tangata whenua we are people of the land—who have grown out of the land, Papatūānuku, our Earth Mother. Having knowledge of whakapapa helps ground us to the earth. We have a sense of belonging here. (p. 4)

Whenua provides a physical foundation for tamariki-mokopuna and whānau Māori to stand, belong and be.

Another term widely used is *mana whenua*, which can be translated in two ways (or more). *Mana*, meaning prestige, and *whenua*, meaning land - interpreted as the prestige of the land or power of the land. In addition, mana whenua is one of five taumata whakahirahira, strands of *Te Whāriki*³⁷ (MoE, 2017a). Mana whenua is translated as the strand of belonging³⁸ in *Te Whāriki*. *Te Whāriki* makes reference to the English translation first, followed by the Māori text: “Strand 2... Belonging | Mana Whenua... Children and their families feel a sense of belonging” (p. 31) and, in te reo Māori: “Ko te whakatipuranga tēnei o te mana ki te whenua, te mana tūrangawaewae, me te mana toi whenua o te tangata”(p. 31) which I translate as, “this generation will grow in harmony with the land, have an awareness of their right to stand strong, to belong and know that one’s identity is embodied in the land.” The Māori translation includes a more comprehensive explanation, positioning tamariki-mokopuna in harmony with the whenua. Whenua is seen to provide tamariki-mokopuna a place to stand strong in their identity and belonging as Māori, therefore whenua plays a pivotal role in affirming tuakiri me mana whenua, identity and belonging of tamariki-mokopuna Māori.

Lady Tilly and Sir Tamati Reedy are the Māori writers of the 1993 and 1996 Māori component of *Te Whāriki*. The Reedys explained the aho (strand) mana whenua, as “the development of a sense of sovereignty, of identity, and of belonging” (Reedy, 2003, p. 48). In addition, the Reedys stressed the importance of recognising the spiritual connection tamariki-mokopuna

³⁷ Mana Whenua is discussed further in the next section, *Te Whāriki*.

³⁸The four other taumata whakahirahira, strands – mana atua, wellbeing; mana tangata, contribution; mana reo, language; and mana aotūroa, exploration, are discussed further in Chapter 6: Te Mana o te Mokopuna.

have with land and knowing their “sense of identity with the land” (p. 48). Accordingly, the spiritual interconnectedness tamariki-mokopuna have with land must be nurtured to ensure the development of their confidence and self-esteem. Knowledge of who you are and to whom you belong is critical to fostering a positive self-image in tamariki-mokopuna Māori.

Tuakiri me mana whenua, identity and belonging for tamariki-mokopuna and whānau Māori, has a direct relationship with whenua, the land, an essential element in whakapapa. Through the announcement of one’s pepeha, an interconnectedness to whenua is affirmed. The interrelationship tamariki-mokopuna and whānau have with whenua encompasses the whole of life, from birth to death – whenua is planted in the whenua, whenua sustains tamariki-mokopuna and whānau Māori and one returns to their whenua to be buried. Recognition by *Te Whāriki* of the value of whenua through Māori understandings of the strand mana whenua, belonging (and other statements), positions identity of tamariki-mokopuna in relation to whenua. This extends to the status of tangata whenua which tamariki-mokopuna and whānau are observed as one with the land. Knowledge of one’s self in relationship to whenua is vital to attaining a positive sense of self; consequently, the positionality of whenua in relation to identity and belonging for tamariki-mokopuna and whānau Māori requires consideration when determining high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori.

Whānau views of tuakiri and mana whenua.

The pūrākau continues by sharing whānau views regarding tuakiri and mana whenua – identity and belonging.

Jane recognises the many whānau who are disconnected from their whakapapa and views Whare Kōhungahunga Māori as a space where tamariki-mokopuna and whānau Māori can reconnect:

That’s who we identify as a centre, where our Māori children can come and have a sense of identity, where whānau can come and feel like they are reconnecting with their culture.

Papatūānuku relates identity and belonging to ahi kā (burning fires of occupation), having a home place where tamariki-mokopuna and kaimahi (staff) can flourish:

Identity and belonging, having a home place, ahi kā, drives your passion. Security is the same, [you learn] who you are... [You must feel a] sense of belonging, otherwise you’re not being yourself if you don’t feel [a] sense of belonging. You’re not confident to talk [things] through with your team.

Ensuring the wairua (spirit) of the environment is viewed as essential by Ātaahua so whānau and tamariki-mokopuna can feel like they have a sense of identity and can develop an awareness of self in relation to their environment.

Wairua is important as it brings them together, identity and feeling, having that feeling brings out some positive energy, puts them in a better place to start their day. A fresh start like a clear mind, acquiring that feeling. Wairua [helps] self-soothe and connect with others around them. Once tamariki [have] been in [the] centre for a while, they will learn to take risks, learn what's around them, they can feel that is wrong, like they are attuned to what's out there. Wairua is the feeling they can feel what's around. Wairua helps them to overcome their own obstacles.

Āwhina views belonging in relationship to the tamariki-mokopuna having a sense of ownership – ownership of the WKM. She explains belonging by sharing an experience she had when, sitting with a group of tamariki-mokopuna at a table, and another child wanted to participate:

It [was] neat because it wasn't rude or anything, it was... I haven't got a chair and I was thinking I love the thought that they think this belongs to them. That whole building belongs to those children. Everything in there is their stuff... As far as I'm concerned, it belongs to those children, the chairs, the tables, you know everything. The books – and they should feel like that. While they are in that building and while they are in ECE care... for some of them, they have got nothing at home and so they feel rich when they are there, and they have all these nice toys and all these things, and we say, you must look after your things you know so they feel rich.

Having empathy for tamariki-mokopuna who come from disadvantaged communities was extremely important to Āwhina, as was recognising the important role WKM has to provide tamariki-mokopuna a sense of belonging as well as opportunities – the opportunity to come and “feel rich.”

Whānau have shared their whakaaro about the need for whānau, including themselves, to feel a sense of identity and belonging. Whare Kōhungahunga Māori is seen as a place and space for tamariki-mokopuna and whānau Māori to connect with being Māori. Ensuring the wairua of the environment is right is imperative for tamariki-mokopuna and whānau to feel a sense of identity. A positive wairua provides a place of calmness and helps them to feel connected. These encouraging interactions are described as whanaungatanga (discussed earlier).

Ways Te Whāriki and Te Tauākī Kaupapa Support Whānau Views of Tuakiri and Mana Whenua

Ways *Te Whāriki* and TTK support whānau views of tuakiri and mana whenua as key elements of high-quality early learning are now discussed.

Te Whāriki acknowledges the importance of whenua, referring to the strand³⁹ mana whenua when referencing belonging. Emphasis is placed on children and their families feeling a sense of belonging. This means those working with tamariki-mokopuna must ensure, “respect is shown for Māori views of the world, the natural environment, and the child’s connection through time to whenua, atua Māori and tīpuna” (MoE, 2017a, p. 31). An added statement makes direct reference to the connection to land of tamariki-mokopuna – including being educated in Māori knowledge to strengthen their identity and belonging:

Kaiako are cognisant of the concept of tangata whenua and the relationship that Māori have with each other and to land. This guides kaiako relationships with whānau, hapū and iwi. Kaiako share appropriate histories, kōrero and waiata with mokopuna to enhance their identity and sense of belonging. (p. 33)

Te Whāriki further recognises the interconnectedness between Māori people and land by using the term tangata whenua – offering a translation:

People of the land (literal), descendants of the first people to settle Aotearoa New Zealand, indigenous people (used of Māori), person or people with customary authority over an area that may include land and sea. (p. 67)

A statement in *Te Whāriki* also references wairua in relation to wellbeing:

Kaiako should have an understanding of Māori approaches to health and wellbeing and how these are applied in practice. Models such as Te Whare Tapa Whā⁴⁰ emphasise the importance of te taha wairua to holistic wellbeing. (p. 26)

Te taha wairua, the Māori spiritual dimension, is viewed as a protector of tamariki-mokopuna health and identity.

³⁹ The five strands of *Te Whāriki* (MoE, 2017) – wellbeing/mana atua, belonging/mana whenua, contribution/mana tangata, communication/mana reo and exploration/mana aotūroa are discussed comprehensively in Chapter 6: Te Mana o te Mokopuna.

⁴⁰ Sir Mason Durie’s (1994) Māori health model, Whare Tapa Whā, is symbolised as the four cornerstones (sides) of a whare (house). Each dimension – tinana, wairua, hinengaro and whānau – represents Māori wellbeing.

Te Tauākī Kaupapa provides two specific statements. The first, a personalised address, honours the tangata whenua of the region where the WKM is positioned, recognising its location in the area. Reference to the wairua of the WKM alludes to the WKM establishing its own sense of wairua, unique to that WKM.

You the “Tangata Whenua” are an important and valued part of this learning environment, and we hope you will join and be part of the wairua this [Whare kōhungahunga Māori] offers. (TTKAWKM, p. 5, a.9)

The second statement mentions two areas of identity:

We are committed to: Strong sense of cultural and social identity... [underpinned by] Te Ao Māori, Te Whāriki. (TTKAWKM, p. 10, a.19)

This statement suggests Te Ao Māori and *Te Whāriki* play a critical role in supporting tamariki-mokopuna and whānau to have positive Māori cultural experiences and a strong sense of self-identity.

Te Whāriki emphasises tamariki-mokopuna feeling a sense of belonging – and connectedness to each other, whenua and beyond. This supports tamariki-mokopuna and whānau to feel secure in their identity. The interconnectedness between spiritual health and identity is also acknowledged. Recognition and respecting the identity and location of the tangata whenua is viewed as important. Kaiako are expected to form relationships with whānau, hapū and iwi. Moreover, kaiako are required to have in-depth understandings of Māori knowledges so they can support tamariki-mokopuna Māori in their identity and belonging. References in TTK show the WKM is aware of the important positioning of tangata whenua. Also, a reference regarding tamariki-mokopuna having a strong sense of cultural and social identity, reveals the WKM commitment to supporting the sense of belonging of tamariki-mokopuna which will enhance their confidence and self-esteem – ultimately contributing positively to their cultural and social identity.

Te Whāriki, TTK and Whānau Views – Areas of Strength and Concern

This pūrākau finishes with an overview illustrating ways *Te Whāriki* and TTK identify and support whānau views of whakapapa and interconnecting features, whānau and whanaungatanga, and tuakiri and mana whenua, as key elements of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori. Included in this discussion are areas of strengths and concerns, as well as suggestions to help develop the relationship between whānau views and *Te Whāriki* and TTK.

Findings in this chapter have so far shown that *Te Whāriki* and TTK make clear references to whakapapa, whānau and whanaungatanga, and tuakiri and mana whenua. These two documents are critical to kaiako practice in that they recognise whānau views of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori.

While there are clear references to whakapapa and interconnected features, recognition of whānau sadness and disconnection has not been acknowledged in *Te Whāriki* or TTK. *Te Whāriki* and TTK assume all Māori are aware of and knowledgeable about their whakapapa and therefore identity as Māori. For example, *Te Whāriki* encourages knowledge of past and present inclusive of “maunga, awa, moana, whenua and marae” (MoE, 2017a, p. 21) – a significant identifier in whakapapa, and often recited in pepeha.

In addition, TTK references “using the whakapapa links to strengthen the whānau unit” (TTKAWKM, p. 4, a.7). Likewise, *Te Whāriki* states:

Connections to past, present and future are integral to a Māori perspective of relationships. This includes relationships to tīpuna [ancestry] who may have passed on and connections through whakapapa. (MoE, 2017a, p. 21)

Te Whāriki also emphasises the importance of kaiako being conversant with Māori creation stories when working with tamariki-mokopuna Māori, stating:

Kaiako need understanding of a world view that emphasises the child’s whakapapa connection to Māori creation, across Te Kore, te po, te ao marama, atua Māori and tīpuna. (p. 12)

While this statement highlights the integral role of kaiako – having sound knowledge of the whakapapa of tamariki-mokopuna, inclusive of the origins of whakapapa, there does not appear to be any consideration of kaiako, whānau and tamariki-mokopuna who may be separated from their whakapapa. An earlier statement from TTK reveals a similar supposition – all Māori know their whakapapa.

The situation Wairua finds herself in, is particularly stressful. She is both a wahine Māori who is trying to reconnect with her whakapapa as well as a kaiako who is expected to have a deeper level of understanding of the child’s whakapapa (MoE, 2017a). While it is imperative kaiako in WKM learn the fundamentals of a Māori world view, WKM (all ECC) must be aware that not all kaiako or whānau have this understanding or connectedness to whakapapa or pepeha, which can be very distressing as shared by Wairua:

If you don't have your whakapapa, you don't have your sense of belonging. You are always outside, looking in. If you haven't got your whakapapa, you are... nothing really. [You need to] go and search for it.

Sadly, this sense of loss Wairua and other whānau face is not uncommon. Māori cultural displacement is imprinted in Aotearoa New Zealand society and narrated throughout this thesis. The previous chapter, Tiriti o Waitangi exposed the negative impact of colonisation on Māori society.

Similar to Wairua, Andrea's desire to connect with her whakapapa has been influenced by her father's past experiences – being strapped across the hands for speaking te reo Māori at school. This appalling practice stopped him from speaking his first language, te reo Māori. Sir James Henare, a revered Māori leader, recalled being instructed by the teacher to pick his own pirita (vine), with which the teacher struck him with for speaking te reo Māori (Aotea Utanganui Museum of South Taranaki, 2012). Royal Tangaere (2012) also shared her own experience, recalling her Nanny saying, “don't speak Māori to her; it won't help her at school” (p. 41). Royal Tangaere (2012) described:

The words continually resound from my childhood. The words of my nanny whom I loved so dearly were words of love for her mokopuna. She did not want me ridiculed at school. She did not want me strapped for speaking Māori as my mother was. (p. 41)

Fortunately for Royal Tangaere, her koro (grandfather) did not listen to her Nanny and continued to communicate to her in te reo Māori. However, Andrea's father's experience resulted in his silence – both in te reo Māori and passing on knowledge of his whakapapa. Reconnecting to her whakapapa on her father's side is important to both Andrea and her tamariki, especially their reclamation of identity and belonging as Māori.

To ensure he wahi haumarū – a safe space for Wairua and tamariki-mokopuna and whānau Māori who may be disconnected from their whakapapa – WKM need to ensure they walk and lead their own principles of “aroha, manaakitanga and whanaungatanga” (TTKAWKM, p. 6, a.13). Whānau disconnection is a sensitive and painful issue, as pointed out by Wairua; therefore, engaging respectfully with whānau is paramount. Optimum use of TTK can support this process, thus utilising TTK as a platform to document fundamental values and principles of the WKM (MoE, 2011) – these values and principles should refer to supporting whānau with reconnecting to their whakapapa.

While whakapapa is fundamental to identity and belonging, whānau also recognised WKM as a place where identity as Māori can be nurtured. A whānau participant in the study *Te Puawaitanga* (Ritchie & Rau, 2008), experienced a sense of belonging and identity at the Kindergarten her tamariki-mokopuna attended. This was important because she was living away from her mana whenua (iwi land). She commented on how excellent the Kindergarten was regarding its commitment to Māori and also its responsiveness towards her, stating “I feel so comfortable. I used to be a bit stand-offish... I love it—[they] always welcome people to stay to look and see your child learn” (Ritchie & Rau, 2008, p. 56).

Te Tauākī Kaupapa extends on identity, affirming their commitment to building a:

strong sense of cultural and social identity... [underpinned by] Te Ao Māori, Te Whāriki. (TTKAWKM, p. 10, a.19)

A significant statement in *Matua Rautia: The Report on the Kōhanga Reo Claim*⁴¹ (Waitangi Tribunal, 2013) identified te reo Māori is a taonga and the “platform upon which mātauranga Māori stands, and the means by which Māori culture and identity are expressed.” Without it, the Tribunal stated, “that identity – indeed the very existence of Māori as a distinct people – would be compromised” (p. 86).

Although whānau identified the importance of te reo me ōna tikanga (discussed in Chapter 6), they did not talk about it in relation to identity. However, *Te Whāriki* recognises that a key contributing factor to identity and belonging is the taumata whakahirahira (strand) mana reo (strands are discussed in depth in Chapter 6). *Te Whāriki* emphasises:

Through te reo Māori children’s identity, belonging and wellbeing are enhanced... Language and culture are inseparable. Kaiako enhance the sense of identity, belonging and wellbeing of mokopuna by actively promoting te reo and tikanga Māori. (MoE, 2017a, p. 4)

Normalising te reo me ōna tikanga Māori in WKM (ECC) is absolutely critical to the identity, belonging and wellbeing of tamariki-mokopuna and whānau Māori. However, Ātaahua cautioned that, before anything, the wairua in the WKM needs to be right for tamariki-mokopuna and whānau to feel a sense of identity and connectedness as Māori.

⁴¹ The Matua Rautia report specifically focuses on the Kōhanga Reo Claim, addressing the critical state of Māori language, the Kōhanga Reo movement and the serious need to support the survival of te reo Māori.

Ensuring tamariki-mokopuna and whānau Māori are secure in their identity and belonging requires an authentic enactment of whanaungatanga – building trusting relationships. Whānau stressed the importance of enacting whanaungatanga when engaging with all members of the WKM whānau (tamariki-mokopuna, kaiako, mātua). Also being aware of priorities – whanaungatanga first. These views of whanaungatanga are supported by *Te Whāriki*, where the curriculum affirms “Parents and whānau [need to] trust that their ECE service will provide an environment where respectful relationships, encouragement, warmth and acceptance are the norm” (MoE, 2017a, p. 21). It is therefore the responsibility of the WKM to ensure “whānau are welcomed, comfortable and involved in the programme in ways that are meaningful for them and their child” (p. 35). *Te Whāriki* also requires kaiako to “develop meaningful relationships with whānau and that they respect their aspirations for their children, along with those of hapū, iwi and the wider community” (p. 20). TTK recognises the importance of working with whānau to support the development of tamariki-mokopuna but also extending to support (when needed) the development and growth of whānau.

In addition, the TTK advises it is the responsibility of whānau, hapū and iwi to build positive, protective and trusting relationships with one another. A fundamental focus for the WKM is providing a “safe nurturing environment filled with aroha, manaakitanga, whanaungatanga [and] working alongside whānau to develop respectful trusting partnerships” (TTKAWKM, p. 6, a.13). Whānau talked about being the recipient of whanaungatanga – which supported their sense of security and belonging.

Notably, Ritchie and Rau (2010) advised: “Our subjectivities and specificities – our particular ways of knowing, being, and doing, inform who we are as teachers” (p. 9); therefore, to understand whakapapa and interconnected elements, whānau and whanaungatanga, and tuakiri and mana whenua, requires kaiako to understand Māori language and knowledge. This extends to kaiako knowing the fundamental differences between Māori and English language. One example is the aho “Mana Whenua.” *Te Whāriki* views it as “Belonging.” While Mana is explained comprehensively in the next chapter, whenua (as discoursed earlier in this chapter) disclosed the relationship between Māori and land - Māori being one with land. Consequently, Mana Whenua, must be viewed accordingly. Also, while *Te Whāriki* recognises Mana Whenua as “Children’s relationship to Papatūānuku is based on whakapapa, respect and aroha,” (p. 31), Lady Tilly and Sir Tamati Reedy interpret Mana Whenua as “identity and belonging, rootedness, developing a sense of sovereignty with land” (Reedy, 2013, p. 50). Explanations

presented in *Te Whāriki* do not provide the deeper understanding or meaning of Mana Whenua, thus it is absolutely imperative that kaiako, kaimahi – all peoples who work with tamariki-mokopuna Māori are fully conversant with Māori language and knowledge, otherwise Māori words and terms are at risk of being simplified or appropriated to align with English words and meaning (Mead, 1994; Mead, 1996; Smith, 1999).

Furthermore, understanding Māori social stratification is essential when considering whakapapa and interconnected elements. Ātaahua explained, “We don’t move as one, we move together, doing things together.” This traditional way of thinking is validated by Papakura (1986) and others. Papakura explained:

Maori did not think of himself or do anything for his own gain. He thought only of his people, and was absorbed in his whanau, just as the whanau was absorbed in the hapu and the hapu in the Iwi. (p. 38)

Te Whāriki (MoE, 2017a), acknowledges this traditional practice, explaining:

Kaupapa Māori does not view the child in isolation but recognises that mokopuna emerges from rich traditions and is linked strongly with whānau, hapū and iwi (p. 64). Relationships between whānau members span generations. Children inherit the legacy of the past and they reach for the future. (p. 58)

Understanding Māori social order is essential to understanding tamariki-mokopuna and whānau Māori.

Te Whāriki and TTK provide numerous references supporting whānau views of whakapapa, alongside interconnecting features whānau and whanaungatanga, and tuakiri and mana whenua, as key elements of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna. *Te Whāriki*, in particular, makes several references recognising the importance of Māori knowledge, including Māori cosmological beginnings. While TTK includes whakapapa, whānau and whanaungatanga, tuakiri and mana whenua in reference statements, this document does not mention Māori cosmological beginnings. What is also noticeable is the expectation that kaiako will know and understand these teachings. For kaiako who have limited or no understanding of Te Ao Māori, this request could be viewed as overwhelming. Although brief, the literature review in this chapter is an indication of what traditional to contemporary knowledge/s of whakapapa and support elements resemble. For kaiako to gain sound knowledge requires a genuine commitment to learn Māori theories regarding whakapapa and interrelated elements. This

requires kaiako to have access to ongoing professional development (ERO, 2010b; Taniwha 2005) supporting acquisition of theories which relate to whakapapa and interconnecting elements – otherwise the deeper level of understandings through Māori theoretical knowledges will be disregarded, ignored, reduced or alternatively appropriated and reconceptualised through non-Māori understandings. It is imperative that teacher education institutes and professional development services ensure their teaching programmes include Māori traditional, theoretical, philosophical and pedagogical knowledge - and are taught by experts in these topics.

It is important to note that while *Te Whāriki* references and endorses whakapapa and associated elements, it must be recognised this curriculum encourages each WKM to design and create its own curriculum programme reflective of its environment (MoE, 2017a). Also, the TTK is a significant document in WKM as it provides a space to affirm WKM values, principles, ideals and aspirations – what is true and meaningful to WKM (MoE, 2011). Knowing the capacity of these documents is extremely important especially when acknowledging and affirming whakapapa and interrelated features whānau and whanaungatanga, and tuakiri and mana whenua, as key elements of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna in WKM.

Summary

The findings discussed in this chapter stress that whakapapa, interconnected with whānau and whanaungatanga and tuakiri and mana whenua, must be recognised and affirmed as key elements in high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori. Whānau affirmed that whakapapa and interconnected elements provide the spiritual, physical, cultural and emotional interconnectedness to physical and metaphysical worlds. These worlds provide tamariki-mokopuna Māori with a sense of identity of self in relation to others and a sense of belonging and being. Clearly *Te Whāriki* and TTK emphasise the importance of whakapapa and interconnected elements; however, as the whānau voices heard in this chapter attest, the complexity of how this plays out intergenerationally requires a deeper level engagement with traditional knowledges.

Chapter Six: Te mana o tamariki-mokopuna Māori

Introduction

This chapter, the final of the three findings chapters, examines whānau views relating to mana (prestige, power, status, spiritual power, charisma) aroha and manaakitanga (respect, respectful interactions and support), harikoa and hauora (happiness and health⁴²) and te reo me ōna tikanga (Māori language and protocol) as key elements of high-quality early for tamariki-mokopuna Māori⁴³. As with the previous chapters, this chapter is communicated through pūrākau, informed by semi-structured interviews and document analysis. The elements are presented in three sections (mana, harikoa and hauora, te reo and tikanga), each beginning with a brief literature review focusing on traditional knowledges, followed by whānau views and examples of ways *Te Whāriki* and TTK support these views. The chapter then moves onto discussing strengths in the relationship between *Te Whāriki*, TTK and whānau views and areas of concern. This is followed by an overview of Lady Tilly and Sir Tamati Reedy's theories of te mana o mokopuna Māori. As writers of the 1993 and 1996 Māori curriculum of *Te Whāriki*, the Reedys are well versed in Māori theoretical knowledges underpinning *Te Whāriki*, therefore their expertise is critical to this chapter. The chapter finishes with a statement supporting the Reedys' theoretical perspectives of te mana o mokopuna Māori – reinforced by traditional knowledges, as a key element of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori in WKM.

Mana, Te Mana o Tamariki-Mokopuna Māori, Aroha and Manaakitanga

The first section of this chapter presents an overview of traditional understandings of mana, and te mana o tamariki-mokopuna Māori. This is followed by an outline of aroha and manaakitanga.

Mana.

Traditional understandings of mana shared by Barlow (1991) position mana as sacred fire known as ahi kōmau. Barlow explained, Tāne (god of forest) ascended to the heavens to attain ahi kōmau from the gods; however, his attempt proved futile. Although Tāne was unable to

⁴² In traditional Māori understandings health often refers to the overall wellbeing of tinana (body), hinengaro (mind), wairua (spirit) and whatumanawa (emotions). Wellbeing can also be described as waiora.

⁴³ As noted earlier on, whānau in this research used both mokopuna and tamariki to describe Māori children. To ensure respect for all views, the wording tamariki-mokopuna from the 1996 Māori curriculum of *Te Whāriki* (see MoE, 1996, p. 31) is used to describe Māori children. Lady Tilly and Sir Tamati Reedy use the term mokopuna, thus there are times when mokopuna is used singularly.

fulfil his quest, he was able to ascertain that the procurement of mana can be acquired through the ritual of fire. Lighting of fire by ecclesiastical authorities became a symbol of mana – “ahi kōmau...the sacred power of the gods” (p. 61).

Mana is also understood through various identifications of power – transmitted through gods, land, individuals and tūpuna (ancestors; Barlow, 1991). Pere (1991) described mana as multifarious and infused with psychic influences. Pere also explained that mana can mean prestige, power and control. The most important mana is Mana Atua, the divine right transmitted from ngā atua (gods; Marsden, 1992; Pere, 1991; Reedy, 2013; Walker, 1990). Mana is inherently sacred and can be acquired through whakapapa from ngā atua.

Mana can be gifted through status, such as senior whakapapa lineage from a founding ancestor (Mead, 2016; Pere 1982; Walker, 1990). Walker described the first male born as ariki (chief) and ensuing male tēina (younger brothers) as rangatira, and a female first-born as “ariki tapairu [also described as chieftainess – a female from a high-ranking whānau]” (p. 65). Ariki were revered for their “qualities of tapu, mana, ihi and wehi (awesome power)” (p. 65). According to Pere (1982), rangatira (chiefs) who embodied mana were able to infuse mana onto rangatahi (young people) who exhibited rangatira qualities. Also, mana could be enhanced by bestowing mana on people who had committed an act of bravery and hospitality. Additionally, mana can present itself in peoples who may not be in view of the public – to those who have contributed significantly to their whānau, hapū or iwi and to persons who exhibited an alluring personality – such as leaders with charm.

Through whakapapa connections, mana interrelates with other Māori concepts. As L. T. Smith (1999b, cited in Tamati, 2007) shared, Māori views interconnect through whakapapa. An illustration of this was proposed in Chapter 1 of this thesis, where Te Pō is considered the godly realm, responsible for “becoming” (Marsden, 2003) and transmitting mana (prestige) and tapu (sacredness; Walker, 1990).

Mead (2016) shared, tapu is “inseparable from mana, from our identity as Māori and from our cultural practices” (p. 34). Tapu is described by Marsden (1992) as sacred, holy and untouchable. Blows, Lind, Pere, and Stein (1985) stated that tapu can be used in many areas – as a form of protection, a way to transmit rules, a form of spirituality and a means to learn respect and reciprocity towards fellow humans and other life forces. According to Pere (1982), in pre-European times there was no need for police control as tapu was used to enforce rules, regulations and self-control.

Mead (2016) emphasised tapu was integral to tikanga. It is present in animate and inanimate objects, therefore respect for both humans and physical structures is of the utmost importance to Māori. Buildings like whare tūpuna (meeting houses) are considered tapu, as are humans. Mead (2003) explained tapu as “a personal force field which can be felt and sensed by others” (p. 71). Blows et al. (1985) shared that sacred words spoken and sung on the marae at ceremonies like tangihanga (funerals) are considered tapu, as are urupā (burial ground) and landmarks of significance. Respecting tapu of oneself and others is of utmost importance.

People who possess psychic mana were revered in their communities for their ability to expel tapu (sacredness; Pere, 1982). Psychic mana possessors were also able to provide spiritual protection to descendants of whānau members who were considered tapu. As Marsden (1992), however, cautioned, mana is “delegated by the gods to their human agents” (p. 119) thus should be treated with the utmost respect, for:

to exercise spiritual power outside the limits delegated is to abuse the gift, and results either in its withdrawal or in that power running rampant and causing harm to the agent and others. (p. 119)

Traditional knowledges presented in this section describe the prominent role of Tāne ascending to the heavens to obtain mana through ahi kōmau; thus, mana is a gift from the gods and perceived as dynamic, spiritual and powerful. Mana is transmitted from ngā atua through to ira tangata and onto peoples such as an ariki or rangatira. Possessors of mana, described as mana agents, had the power to bestow mana on persons who were seen to serve and protect their whānau, hapū and iwi or those within the hapori who were perceived as the unseen workers. Notably, mana is not independent – always connected to concepts beyond itself. An example of an interrelationship is mana and tapu – each concept brings its own power to the relationship. Power must be treated with the utmost respect – disrespect or exploitation can result in removal of mana or serious repercussions.

Te mana o tamariki-mokopuna Māori.

Te Ao Māori views tamariki-mokopuna Māori as part of a diverse system. Whakapapa (Chapter 5) is central to this structure, interconnecting tamariki-mokopuna to their whānau, extended whānau, hapū, iwi and cosmological beginnings (Meade, 2016). Harte and Jenkin (2011) pointed out it was whānau, atua, Papa-tū-ā-nuku and Rangi-nui who provided the foundations for an interdependent relationship between the spirit and physical world. Within this spiritual realm lived atua tapu (sacred gods), who imbued tamariki with mana. Reedy (2013) concurred:

“According to Māori there is a divine spirit, a spark of godliness, in each child born into this world” (p. 47); this belief derives from whakapapa, where Tāne fashioned ira tangata from Papa-tū-ā-nuku – breathing atua into humankind (Reedy, et al., 2015; Walker, 1990). Power and godliness reinforce the centrality of mana in tamariki-mokopuna – te mana o tamariki-mokopuna Māori.

Tamariki-mokopuna are revered in Māori communities. Mead (2016) explained “Children were of great mana” (p. 56) and treasured by their hapū and iwi. Reedy (2013) reaffirmed these sentiments, explaining the Māori child was esteemed in Māori society “before conception, before birth, before time” (p. 38). Once tamariki entered Te Ao Marama, the world of light and being (Marsden, 2003), karakia were performed by a tohunga to remove tapu from mother and child (Makereti, 1986). This ritual signified the kaitiakitanga, ngā atua provided for ngā pēpē (babies).

It was the mother’s responsibility to care for the immediate needs of her pēpē and she would often breast feed for 2 years (Makereti, 1986). Mothers could not tolerate their pēpē crying and would comfort them with warm embraces, while singing oriori (lullabies). Special oriori were composed especially in their honour and sung by members of their hapū and iwi (Makereti, 1986; Mead, 2016; Reedy, 2013). Kaumātua, kuia and whānau were always present to assist the mother. Tamariki-mokopuna knew all members of their whānau; mātua (parents), matua tūpuna (grandparents), tungāne (brothers), tuāhine (sisters), tuākana (older siblings) and tēina (younger siblings; Harte & Jenkin, 2011), whaea or kōkā (mother or aunts; L.T. Mead, 1996). Traditional caring practices ensured tamariki-mokopuna were cloaked in the safety of their hapori.

This loving and gentle kaitiakitanga of tamariki-mokopuna provided a safe caring environment. Tamariki-mokopuna were never hit (Harte & Jenkin, 2011; Makereti, 1986). Early ethnographic observations authenticated these findings, confirming tamariki-mokopuna were nurtured in a peaceful, tamariki-centred environment (Elder, 1932). According to Mead (2016), failure to recognise and nurture the mana of the tamariki-mokopuna, or absence of attentiveness towards tamariki-mokopuna, resulted in parents being reprimanded.

This brief overview emphasises the role of ngā atua in transmitting mana to tamariki-mokopuna. Literature informed that mana emanated from ngā atua who were responsible for infusing tamariki-mokopuna with mana before their physical birth, before time. Recognition of mana by

whānau ensured tamariki were raised, revered, loved and nurtured in a caring and loving whānau-centred environment. Moreover, safe supportive surroundings guaranteed tamariki-mokopuna received positive early care-giving practices administered by all members of the whānau. Traditional knowledges concerning te mana o te tamariki-mokopuna provide insight into what was considered high-quality early learning for tamariki Māori.

Aroha and Manaakitanga

According to Barlow (2009), aroha is the creative force derived from ngā atua Māori. Barlow described “three essential elements to all things” (p. 8), described as the pū – the male and responsible for positive force, the kē – the female which emits negative force and the hā – which radiates vital energy. Aroha emerges through the element of hā. This traditional understanding provides the whakapapa of aroha – significant knowledge when working with tamariki-mokopuna Māori.

Aroha can be expressed in various ways. Ka’ai and Higgins (2004) asserted that aroha is showing “a concern for others” (p. 17). In addition, aroha parallels good values and can be transmitted through acts of kindness and love towards ira tangata, whenua and ngā kararehe (animals) – all living things (Barlow, 2009). Persons who possess aroha exhibit honest and genuine empathy towards others, regardless of their circumstances. An enactment of aroha can be observed by the way one attends and assists at tangihanga (funerals) or shows hospitality towards manuhiri (visitors) visiting your home. Barlow emphasised, “It is the act of love that adds quality and meaning to life” (p. 8). Genuine expressions of aroha are revealed through authentic interactions and care for others.

Pere (1991) endorsed the importance of authentic interactions, stating “Aroha is not to be talked about, it is only meaningful when it is actioned” (p. 6) and it is the act of caring and sharing – whanaungatanga, which is synonymous with aroha and critical to maintaining and sustaining the extended family. Pere placed aroha as a powerful force – able to remove any form of evil or negative influences. Lady Tilly Reedy (1979, cited in Reedy, 2013) referred back to her writings from *He Matapuna*, where she advised aroha cannot be used liberally. One must be mindful; aroha comes with responsibilities and can be often misconstrued. Reedy stipulated “we” (referring to those conversant with aroha) should take responsibility for the way it has been misused and for not teaching the tikanga of reciprocity “on which aroha flourishes” (cited in Reedy, 2013, pp. 39–40). More so, teaching any form of aroha exchange places the receiver in an obligatory position, therefore they must be prepared to “give back a little more than [they]

received” (p. 40). Providing it is enacted in an authentic, positive manner, underpinned by mutual respect and complementation, aroha can avert any form of negative force.

As mentioned previously in this thesis, Māori concepts interrelate through whakapapa. Notions like whanaungatanga (explained in the Whakapapa chapter) also interconnect with aroha and manaakitanga. An attestation provided by Mead (2016) reaffirms this interrelationship:

Aroha is an essential part of manaakitanga and is an expected dimension of whanaungatanga. It cannot be stressed enough that manaakitanga is always important no matter what the circumstances might be. (p. 46)

Barlow (2009) explained manaaki by separating the word into three components, mana-ā-ki meaning “to express love and hospitality towards people” (p. 63). A literal translation of āki in this context means to reassure and to encourage. Pere (1982) referred to manaakitanga as “hospitality and good will” (p. 45). M. Durie (1997) described manaakitanga as the “capacity to care” (p. 10). Barlow also advised caring and hosting your manuhiri is the most important aspect of manaaki, therefore “an abundance of food, a place to rest, and to speak nicely to visitors so that peace prevails during the gathering” (p. 63) should be a customary practice.

Mead (2016) reinforced the value of manaakitanga, including the endless responsibilities associated with this concept. An example Mead offered is conducting whaikōrero (speech making) on the marae. The tangata whenua has the responsibility of choosing how many tangata whaikōrero (speech makers) will speak. An act of manaakitanga requires the tangata whenua to reduce speakers, to allow more time for the manuhiri speakers. Also, preparing for an event can take several months and those involved must ensure they operate with a great deal of accuracy and precision. While manaakitanga is about caring and hosting manuhiri, it is also about preserving one’s honour, which is the honour of the host iwi. Any form of criticism about an event hosted by tangata whenua can be detrimental to the host iwi and be the topic of conversation for many years.

This brief overview of literature espousing traditional knowledge suggests aroha is derived from ngā atua (see Chapter 5: Whakapapa for further understandings). Aroha is the genuine authentic enactment of love, care and kindness to all living things. Importantly, aroha must be understood in relation to reciprocity (give more than you receive) as it is this enactment where aroha flourishes. Aroha should not be talked about; it is the action that reveals aroha. When applied correctly, aroha can be extremely powerful and can dissipate negativity or evil influences. Notably, aroha, manaakitanga and whanaungatanga interrelate. Manaakitanga encourages care,

respect, love and kindness to others. Failure to endorse or embody manaakitanga, when hosting others, can be perceived as insulting, resulting in public condemnation. Also, it must be known, aroha and manaakitanga come with responsibilities and accountabilities; it therefore requires a deeper level of understanding to ensure aroha and manaakitanga are embraced authentically as a key element of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori.

Whānau Views Underpinned by Mana, Aroha and Manaakitanga

This thesis emphasises the importance of understanding traditional knowledges – the whakapapa of Māori concepts – including ways in which each Māori concept intersects. For example, while whānau did not talk explicitly about mana, they talked about tikanga practices when working with tamariki-mokopuna and whānau Māori. Tikanga can be viewed through positive meaningful and loving interactions, respect, responsiveness, reciprocity and high-quality teaching practices. This is an implicit way of recognising and acknowledging mana – te mana o tamariki-mokopuna Māori, te mana of whānau, te mana of ngā atua, te mana of whenua and mana in all animate and inanimate objects.

An example of acknowledging mana through high-quality teaching practices is provided by Ātaahua:

High quality for Māori is knowing the land and being raised in or around the land – respecting the land. Teach about the māra [garden] and māra kai [food garden]. Tamariki need to be working outside and feel the wind, hands on experience from a Te Ao Māori [Māori world] perspective. Being with Tāwhiri-mātea [god of wind] outside, ngā atua [the gods] – talking about and responding to the elements.

Papatūānuku refers to physical identification with land in her teachings:

Teaching about specific landmarks and about this area, landmarks around area – barriers within that area – learning about coastlines and trouble boundaries. [We all need to be enriched] about knowing your area – doesn't matter where you come from. When you hear someone say an area, you know where they come from. Even putting current names and linking them to their [iwi]. [In regard to] troubled boundaries, some are cordoned off to mark iwi boundaries. Also [teaching the tamariki] about areas that are polluted within this area.

Ātaahua also mentions the importance of karakia (prayer) to start the day and viewing it as important for the wairua (spirit) and distinctively Māori:

Karakia is very important to start off your day to [ensure] a safe environment, to try new things, have trust. It's like a warm covering to help – it's a Māori thing, hard to explain, it's your other half – wairua connects you, you are connected to. I think every Māori has it.

Pono talks about needing to relax her hinengaro (mind) when preparing her written documentation. She also recognises the distracted and stressed minds of some whānau and the importance of being mindful about when to approach them:

When you have only [have] an hour non-contact and you put all this information into context you kind of don't think too deep into it, unless your mind is properly relaxed... [Whānau] are always so busy in the morning and you will ask to speak to them for a quick five minutes and their mind is like [distracted]... [they are running] late for work so you are talking with them and it doesn't sort of soak in up until the end of the day and they will come back and say, whaea, I liked how you shared that story with me... so I have worked out its better to catch them when they come in to pick up rather than dropping off.

Ātaahua identifies the interconnection between Māori concepts when sharing her thoughts on aroha:

Aroha to me is being kind, taking care, and supporting others. Each Māori word connects and can have a variety of terms which are beyond love, beyond one meaning. It can mean a variety of things to different Māori. Love [as we know it] and values intertwine.

Jane focuses on whānau feeling aroha:

We want that sense of aroha... it comes through in our philosophy as being... highly important to the teachers and so that's what we want when you walk in our door, that's what we want you to feel and to see so when we look at in terms of what makes us special and what we advocate and what is essential for us when you walk in those doors.... And like I say, if you don't have [aroha], then you are doing yourself a disservice, you are doing your community a disservice and... culture a disservice and that's not what our parents want.

Andrea shares what it is like to receive aroha while attending WKM:

I love this [WKM] here, especially for my tamariki. When I first walked in, there was a lot of aroha. Lots of laughter too. Yeah, beautiful laughter and that's what drew me in.

I couldn't stop, I had to keep coming back in because this was me, this is where I wanted my children to learn and my children [would] come home and they say Mum, we had an awesome day and I said what did you do and they said M did this with us and M did that and M did my finger nails and this is my girl and I said oh have you got make up on... I've never seen that with her before. When she used to get back from the Kindergarten, she was always down but since she has been coming to the [WKM] – awesome.

Āwhina, a kuia, shares her observation of kaiako enacting aroha when working with tamariki-mokopuna:

I like their awhi [embrace, hugs]. First and foremost, I love their aroha... they have for the children and you know, you have to have that I think. It has to be there and then I love the [way they] interact. I love the way they kōrero Māori and it is so good to see and honestly, I have never heard any of them yell or raise their voices and I think, how neat. You have to be a special person to be there. While I am in there helping, I see them, and I think oh, my gosh. They're a special breed.

When reflecting on manaakitanga, Papatūānuku emphasises:

Respect all tamariki and kaiako... respect whānau, kaiako, friends and peers. Respect underpins everything. Relates to everybody and regardless of culture or ethnicity, manaakitanga [is] definitely one of the pou (pillars)....

Jane talks about wanting whānau to feel a sense of aroha. This extends to manaakitanga:

We want you to feel that sense of manaakitanga when [you] are here... we want to be there for you.

Tauira believes manaakitanga is the most important skill required when working with tamariki-mokopuna:

I think it would be manaakitanga for me. Just going out there to help the kids, like you know when they have an accident, just changing them and washing them straight away. I know the other... centre we went to, they didn't do that.

Ātaahua talks about the ability for tamariki to settle when they are respected:

Respect and sense of belonging ensures that the tamariki settle much easier.

Whānau views of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori disclosed the importance of traditional knowledges in current-day teaching and learning practices. Traditional knowledges include understanding the significance of ngā atua and the presence of

seen and unseen forces. Affirming mana in tamariki-mokopuna and whānau can be actualised through awareness, positive caring interactions and high-quality teaching in WKM. Aroha has been described as a concept uniquely Māori – only viewed through Māori understandings and underpinned by kindness, caring and support. Importantly, the WKM environment must be filled with aroha and manaakitanga so whānau can feel this when they attend. Failure to ensure the environment is infused with aroha and manaakitanga can be viewed as detrimental not only to yourself as a kaimahi, but to your WKM, your community and your culture. Feeling and observing the aroha and hearing the laughter has been instrumental in some whānau choosing the WKM for their tamariki-mokopuna. Manaakitanga was observed as an essential pou (pillar) in attaining high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori but also something that should be bestowed upon all members of society.

Ways Te Whāriki and Te Tauākī Kaupapa Recognise Mana and Support Whānau Views of Aroha and Manaakitanga

Te Whāriki and TTK are significant documents in WKM. *Te Whāriki* is the first bicultural early childhood curriculum in Aotearoa New Zealand (and the world) and considered a fusion of Māori and sociocultural theoretical perspectives (MoE, 2017a). *Te Tauākī Kaupapa* provides WKM the opportunity to assert their essential values, philosophies, principles and aspirations – their overall vision (MoE, 2011). In essence, TTK provides the opportunity for WKM hapori, whānau, hapū and iwi to assert their tino rangatiratanga.

The concept of mana⁴⁴ is discoursed in various ways in *Te Whāriki* (MoE, 2017a). *Te Whāriki* self-describes as “a framework of principles, strands, goals and learning outcomes that foregrounds the mana of the child” (p. 7) and “from a Māori perspective, all children are born with mana inherited from their tīpuna. Mana is the power of being and must be upheld and enhanced” (p. 18). A further statement in te reo Māori, accompanied by an English translation, explains *Te Whāriki* as “He whāriki hei whakamana i te mokopuna, hei kawē i ngā wawata. A whāriki that empowers the child and carries our aspirations” (p. 10). These statements acknowledge mana is inherited from tīpuna, present in all tamariki-mokopuna and situated in the power of being. To maintain mana, it must be continuously nurtured and respected.

⁴⁴ Traditional concepts of mana recognised the relationship between mana and tapu. Although *Te Whāriki* does not fuse the two together, tapu is mentioned twice in relation to the strand of Wellbeing | Mana atua, stating “Respect for tapu as it relates to themselves and others” (p. 27) and “uphold the concept of tapu and noa by separating soiled personal items from kitchen laundry.”

The term *taumata whakahirahira* is used to describe strands, goals and learning outcomes in *Te Whāriki* (MoE, 2017a). Notably, mana foregrounds Māori perspectives of the strands in *Te Whāriki*. Strands are presented in English, followed by the Māori understandings “Wellbeing | Mana Atua, Belonging | Mana Whenua, Contribution | Mana Tangata, Communication | Mana Reo, and Exploration | Mana Aotūroa” (p. 22). Additional annotations below commence with an English understanding of the strands followed by a Māori perspective written in English language:

Wellbeing | Children have a sense of wellbeing and resilience... Mana atua | Children understand their own mana atuaanga – uniqueness and spiritual connectedness. (p. 26)

Belonging | Children know they belong and have a sense of connection to others and the environment... Mana whenua | Children’s relationship to Papatūānuku is based on whakapapa, respect and aroha. (p. 31)

Contribution | Children learn with and alongside others... Mana tangata | Children have a strong sense of themselves as a link between past, present and future. (p. 36)

Communication | Children are strong and effective communicators... Mana reo | Through te reo Māori children’s identity, belonging and wellbeing are enhanced. (p. 41)

Exploration | Children are critical thinkers, problem solvers and explorers... Mana aotūroa | Children see themselves as explorers, able to connect with and care for their own and wider worlds. (p. 46)

Te Whāriki states: “Each strand has dual English and Māori names; while closely related, different cultural connotations mean the two are not equivalents” (p. 22). Conceding the differences in meanings is critical to understanding mana in relation to high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori.

Language differences between te reo Māori and English in *Te Whāriki* must be taken into consideration. When describing the strand of Wellbeing | Mana Atua, the English text takes precedence, followed by te reo Māori text: “The health and wellbeing of the child are protected and nurtured... Ko tēnei te whakatipuranga o te tamaiti i roto i tōna oranga nui, i runga hoki i tōna mana motuhake, mana atuaanga” (p. 26). My translation of the Māori text respect, reads, “it is the inherent right of tamariki to grow up healthy – to be able to assert control over their own destiny and be recognised for their divine spirit, power and unique qualities.” It is clear that Māori and English understandings of the strands are different, thus persons responsible for

delivering a high-quality early learning programme to tamariki-mokopuna Māori need to be conversant with these variances⁴⁵.

A deeper level of understandings regarding Te Ao Māori has been recognised in *Te Whāriki* as evidenced by the statement “Kaiako develop their own knowledge of te reo Māori, tikanga Māori and Māori world views so that they are better able to support children to understand their own mana atuaatanga” (p. 28). This statement requires kaiako to become Māori knowledge bearers, responsible for the transference of Māori knowledge to tamariki-mokopuna. Moreover, kaiako are required to be responsible for their own learning of mana in order to sustain and maintain the mana of tamariki-mokopuna. This requirement discloses the critical role of kaiako, in learning, developing and delivering a high-quality early learning programme centred on nurturing and upholding te mana o tamariki-mokopuna Māori.

In reference to aroha, *Te Whāriki* (MoE, 2017a) mentions aroha three times. Aroha is recognised in the strand Contribution | Mana Tangata, where a learning outcome is, “Using a range of strategies and skills to play and learn with others | te ngākau aroha [loving heart, kindness, compassion and consideration]” (p. 55). Aroha is also cited when introducing Māori cultural influences and learning dispositions, asserting, “Te Whatu Pōkeka⁴⁶ highlights rangatiratanga [leadership], whakatoī [courageousness], manaakitanga [kindness, respect and generosity] and aroha as learning dispositions that are valued in te ao Māori” (p. 23). In addition, aroha is identified in the strand Belonging | Mana Whenua where it states, “Children’s relationship to Papatūānuku is based on whakapapa, respect and aroha” (p. 31). *Te Whāriki* also requires kaiako to “support mokopuna to engage respectfully with and to have aroha for Papatūānuku” (p. 33).

The term *manaaki* is viewed by *Te Whāriki* in two ways – caring for others and caring for the natural world. A learning outcome from the strand of Belonging | Mana Whenua, advocates “taking part in caring for this place| te manaaki i te taiao” (p. 24) which I translate to taking care of and respecting the environment. An additional notation of manaaki appears within the strand of Contribution | Mana Tangata, stating in te reo Māori, “Ko te whakatipuranga tenei o te kiritau tangata i roto i te mokopuna kia tu maia ai ia ki te manaaki, ki te tuku whakaaro ki te

⁴⁵ Also discussed in Chapter 5, Whakapapa.

⁴⁶ Te Whatu Pōkeka: Kaupapa Māori Assessment for Learning: Early Childhood Exemplars is a kaupapa Māori resource to support assessment of Māori children whilst attending Māori early childhood environments.

ao” (p. 36). My interpretation reads, “this generation of mokopuna will grow up with self-respect and self-esteem and will be brave, confident contributors to the world.”

Previously mentioned when discussing aroha, *Te Whāriki* endorsed the learning dispositions outlined in *Te Whatu Pōkeka*, manaakitanga being one of them. In addition, as stated in *Te Whāriki*, kaiako are responsible for manaakitanga as they are expected to “facilitate tuakana–teina [older–younger children relationships] and ensure that mokopuna have opportunities to manaaki and take responsibility for others” (p. 28). Caring for others and the natural world will enable tamariki-mokopuna Māori to stand as proud, confident contributors. It is the responsibility of kaiako to ensure tamariki-mokopuna Māori achieve these aspirations.

An English translation of manaakitanga is respect or showing respect. This term features regularly throughout *Te Whāriki*, underpinned by Māori concepts. *Te Whāriki* is described as a framework that “foregrounds the mana of the child and the importance of respectful, reciprocal and responsive relationships” (p. 6). Relationships built on respect and responsiveness reflect the underpinnings of manaakitanga where respect and caring for others, including tamariki-mokopuna Māori, are paramount.

Te Whāriki also responds to the needs of tamariki-mokopuna Māori by advocating, “Respect is shown for Māori views of the world, the natural environment, and the child’s connection through time to whenua, atua Māori and tīpuna” (p. 31). A further learning outcome included in the strand Belonging | Mana Whenua asserts the importance of “Showing respect for kaupapa, rules and the rights of others| te mahi whakaute [respectful work]” (p. 54). As noted throughout this chapter, *Te Whāriki* has entrusted kaiako with the task of ensuring directives are actualised. The requirements are: “Kaiako support mokopuna to engage respectfully with and to have aroha for Papatūānuku” (MoE, 2017a, p. 10); “Kaiako develop meaningful relationships with whānau and... they respect their aspirations for their children, along with those of hapū, iwi and the wider community” (p. 20); and “Kaiako support mokopuna to stand proud and firm (tū tangata) by building and maintaining relationships based on respect and reciprocity” (p. 38).

This section now turns to Te Tauākī Kaupapa to present statements relating to whānau views of mana, aroha and manaakitanga. TTK makes one reference to mana, in relation to developing te reo me ōna tikanga and self-esteem. Support for tamariki-mokopuna growth, development and identity is a primary focus; the statement reads:

Kia pono tātou ki a ia – To uphold “te mana o te mokopuna,” by looking for the child’s strength and abilities and empower them to enjoy learning by fostering te reo Māori me ngā tikanga and building self-esteem. The whānau, hapū and iwi to be guardians/servants to our children as they learn who they are. (TTKAWKM, p. 7, a.14)

My translation of this statement reads, “we as a collective pledge to be faithful to her/him [referring to the tamaiti] and by identifying the strengths and abilities of the mokopuna, their mana will be nurtured and sustained.” This statement suggests affirming te mana o tamariki-mokopuna is central to the TTK, particularly in relation to recognising the capabilities of tamariki-mokopuna and the importance of te reo me ōna tikanga in building self-esteem – essential elements to attaining high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori in WKM.

Aroha and manaakitanga are presented in TTK through the following statements:

[The WKM provides a] safe nurturing environment filled with aroha, manaakitanga and whakawhanaungatanga⁴⁷ (TTKAWKM, p.6, a.13) Aroha ki te tangata [love for all peoples] (p. 5, a.10) Working alongside whānau to develop respectful trusting partnerships (p. 7, a.15) Respect and support for [whānau] decision making. (p. 5, a.10)

The statements suggest safety and nurturing is underpinned by aroha, manaakitanga and whakawhanaungatanga. Aroha for all and respect towards all, is paramount. What is also clear, is the interrelationship between these concepts.

This section has presented ways in which *Te Whāriki* and TTK identify and recognise mana and support whānau views of aroha and manaakitanga. *Te Whāriki* recognises mana as a deeply spiritual gift inherited from Māori gods and ancestors – imbued in all tamariki-mokopuna. Mana is considered crucial to the health and development of tamariki-mokopuna Māori. The responsibilities of principles, strands and goals outlined in *Te Whāriki* are intended to uphold the mana of the child – whakamana tamariki-mokopuna, empower the child. Notably, Mana underpins the Māori context of ngā taumata whakahirahira of *Te Whāriki* – Wellbeing | Mana Atua, Belonging | Mana Whenua, Contribution | Mana Tangata, Communication | Mana Reo and Exploration | Mana Aotūroa. There are noticeable differences in cultural understandings between English and te reo Māori, therefore it is deemed the responsibility of kaiako to learn

⁴⁷ Whanaungatanga and whakawhanaungatanga are discussed in Chapter 5, Whakapapa.

and understand Māori concepts and views, inclusive of te reo Māori, so they can competently affirm te mana o tamariki-mokopuna Māori as a notion of high-quality early learning for tamariki Māori.

Aroha is viewed by *Te Whāriki* as acts of kindness, compassion and consideration for others and Papatūānuku. Aroha also appears as ngākau aroha, implying a loving heart, kindness, compassion and consideration should underpin all interactions when learning and playing with others. In addition, *Te Whāriki* acknowledges and encourages the dispositions aroha and manaakitanga from *Te Whatu Pōkeka*. Further references to aroha are the relationships tamariki-mokopuna have with whenua and Papa-tū-ā-nuku – based on aroha and manaaki. *Te Whāriki* advocates caring for others and the natural world – which requires responsivity, reciprocity and respectful relationships with all. *Te Whāriki* places the responsibility on kaiako to uphold these directives in their practice so tamariki-mokopuna grow up with a sense of self-worth, self-esteem and confidence in their ability to stand and speak on world matters. Aroha, manaakitanga and whakawhanaungatanga are recognised together in TTK, revealing the inseparability of these three concepts in WKM. Aroha towards all peoples is also central. Moreover, aroha is viewed as fundamental to the safety of tamariki-mokopuna and whānau. Forming respectful partnerships with whānau where whānau voice is valued is fundamental.

Nurturing Harikoa and Hauora – Through Traditional Understandings

The pūrākau moves onto traditional understandings of tinana (physical), hinengaro (mental), wairua (spiritual) and whatumanawa (emotional) – the four dimensions responsible for sustaining the physical, mental, spiritual and emotional harikoa and hauora (happiness and health) of tamariki-mokopuna and whānau Māori. Whānau views relating to these elements are then presented, followed by ways in which *Te Whāriki* and TTK includes and supports whānau views.

Tinana.

Pere (1991) referred to tinana as the physical dimension and explained the first form of physical nurturing took place in the “sacred waters of the [mother’s] womb” (p. 24). Through the relationship between the “sacred seed from the male parent... and the sacred river of life from the female parent” (p. 24), a mokopuna, he taonga (a treasured child), was born. This birthing is considered tapu and requires a continuum of sacred nurturing. The physical form of mokopuna requires sustenance so their physical being remains healthy. Traditional understandings reveal the purity of the tinana – from inception to physical being.

Sir Mason Durie's (1994) Māori health model, Whare Tapa Whā, is symbolised as the four cornerstones (sides) of a whare (house). Each dimension – tinana, wairua, hinengaro and whānau – represents Māori wellbeing. If one dimension is missing or damaged, the whare becomes unstable – affecting the other three dimensions. This figurative image is reflected in individuals and whānau when there is an unbalance. Durie describes tinana as te taha tinana (physical wellbeing) interconnected to ngā taha (dimensions/sides of) wairua, hinengaro and whānau. Te taha tinana has the capacity to enhance physical development and requires good physical health to support optimum wellbeing.

Traditional offerings, shared by Pere, have been reinvigorated by Love (2004), who advised nurturing the tinana is achievable, providing tamariki-mokopuna receive a healthy and nutritious diet, are clothed and sheltered, exposed to opportunities and experiences and able to receive positive physical contact. Love also pointed out the importance of providing numerous opportunities for tamariki-mokopuna to participate in physical expression. Haka (posture dance performance) and waiata (singing) are ways mokopuna can develop their physical power.

In addition, Love (2004) provided examples of ways expression can transition between physical and metaphysical spaces. Two forms of expression position male and female in the physical realm of Papa-tū-ā-nuku when undertaking tikanga practices such as whaikōrero (formal speech) and karanga (formal ceremonial call). While positioned in the physical realm, the male and female are communicating across two spaces, physical and cosmological (spiritual or metaphysical) – the realm of Rangi-nui. Love talked further about the whareniui (ancestral house) presenting as a physical form but also personifying an ancestor who had passed away. The whareniui is the physical presence of whakairo (carvings) and photos, representing someone who has passed into the metaphysical realm – each realm have their own unique wairua. This understanding proposes the physical power and wellbeing of tamariki-mokopuna Māori must always be considered in relationship to their metaphysical relationships.

Hinengaro.

The literal meaning of hinengaro is the hidden female. Pere (1991) explained that *hine*, meaning female, is considered the conscious mind, and *ngaro*, meaning hidden, is thought of as the subconscious mind. Various cognitive actions emerge from the hinengaro, such as “thinking, knowing, perceiving, remembering, recognising, feeling, abstracting, generalising, sensing, responding and reacting” (p. 32).

The hinengaro has many powers and great control over a person's emotions (Pere, 1991). Te taha hinengaro (mental wellbeing), as described by M. Durie (1994), is uniquely Māori, provides a means to connect and feel and is inclusive of mind, body and soul. Love (2004) cautioned that Māori understanding views a person's inner thoughts as tapu and it is considered "intrusive to delve into the mind, thoughts and emotions" (p. 67) of a person. When working with tamariki-mokopuna and whānau, it is important to be respectful and mindful of this tikanga. Pedagogies based on inquiry and questioning may not always be appropriate.

Wairua.

According to Pere (1991), wairua literally translates to two waters. These two bodies of water contain positive and negative streams, explicitly because they can give and take life. According to Love (2004), the flow in these waters symbolises wairuatanga. Wairua, like water, ebbs and flows and presents in physical and metaphysical entities, including ira atua (gods) and ira tangata (humans).

Through whakapapa, wairua is interrelated with moko and mokopuna (Love, 2004). Moko is a representation of Māori art form of tattooing the body of both tāne (men) and wāhine (women). The face was a common place for moko, providing a detailed narrative of one's whakapapa and identity. Love described moko as "the flow of the wairua into the temporal realm, as represented in the physical body" (p. 50). Moko was also used as a form of identification – "one's moko was one's sign; to see the sign was to know the person" (p. 50). Puna translates to a spring of water. Combining moko and puna reveals mokopuna – "the ongoing spring of the people" (p. 50). Wairua and moko–mokopuna are intimately connected through whakapapa – with their own special power and unique presence.

According to M. Durie (1994) te taha wairua (spiritual wellbeing) provides each person with a spiritual life force. Spiritual wellbeing is influenced by explicit and implicit dynamisms. If a person's tinana is unwell, the wairua needs to be considered, especially to see if an unwell wairua might be affecting or impacting on a person's physical health. When working with tamariki-mokopuna Māori it is important to observe their wairua, to ensure the wellbeing of their wairua is unharmed.

Mead (2003) advised that mokopuna inherit wairua attributes through whakapapa and it is through these connections "the nature and the sanctity of the [mokopuna]" (p. 9) are developed. Mead also shared that mokopuna dispositions are also influenced by "tapu [sacredness] and

mana (potential and spiritual power); mauri (living essence); and wairua (spiritual self)” (p. 9). Wairua reinforces the sacredness and temperaments of mokopuna.

Mead (2003) further explained the interconnectedness between tapu, mauri and wairua as:

the sacred life force which supports the mauri (the spark of life) another spiritual attribute of the person. It reflects the state of the whole person. In fact, life can be viewed as protecting one’s tapu and in doing so one is looking after one’s personal tapu and in doing so one is looking after one’s physical, social, psychological and spiritual well-being. (Mead, 2003, p. 72)

According to Barlow (1991) mauri emanates from the gods. Pere (1991) described mauri as an in-depth concept which comes in different forms. Notably, mauri is also present in “the natural environment, buildings like meeting houses, marae have a mauri that should be appreciated and respected” (p. 6). Reedy (2003) concurred, stating “Mauri is in all things animate and inanimate” (p. 51). Therefore, it is important to understand tamariki-mokopuna are imbued in mauri, tapu, mana and wairua (and many other elements) and each element must be recognised and respected.

Whatumanawa

Pere (1991) advocated supporting mokopuna with their developing emotions, as there is much to be gained from recognising, learning and responding positively to their varying expressions. As Pere further advised, emotions exhibit both positive and negative behaviour, therefore it is important not to suppress them. Pere shared her own story where she was encouraged to “express rather than repress” (p. 30) emotions. Expression is very normal in Te Ao Māori and it is not unusual to see tears flow from men and women in both sad and happy occasions. Releasing of roimata (tears) and hūpē (mucus from nose; Love, 2004; Pere, 1991) is seen as therapeutic and “regarded as coming from the sacred pools of healing” (Pere, 1991, p. 30).

According to Love (2004), there are various other forms of expressing emotions. Emotions can be transmitted through ritualistic practices like “haka, waiata tangi [funeral songs], karanga [and] whaikōrero” (p. 75). Revisiting emotions can be beneficial – emotions of sadness when remembering those who have gone (passed away) or emotions of happiness when re-meeting loved ones.

This brief overview of tinana, hinengaro, wairua and whatumanawa has disclosed the important position these dimensions hold – particularly in nurturing, nourishing and maintaining the harikoa and hauora of tamariki-mokopuna Māori. Tinana is responsible for developing and

strengthening the physical and metaphysical hauora of tamariki-mokopuna. Hinengaro provides the opportunity for tamariki-mokopuna to learn and process their inner thoughts and emotions – subconscious and conscious processes. Wairua has the responsibility of infusing mokopuna with spiritual power and whatumanawa supports tamariki-mokopuna to develop healthy emotions.

A learning environment responsive to traditional elements tinana, hinengaro, wairua and whatumanawa would ensure tamariki-mokopuna are nurtured in their physical and metaphysical being. Moreover, attunement with traditional elements can assist tamariki-mokopuna Māori to identify their vulnerabilities, capabilities, and responsibilities – vital for their harikoa and their hauora – their happy and healthy dispositions.

Whānau Views Relating to Tinana, Hinengaro, Wairua, Whatumanawa, Harikoa and Hauora

Whānau views of high-quality early learning relating to physical, mental, spiritual, emotional happiness and health of tamariki-mokopuna are now presented. Mentioned consistently throughout this thesis, Māori concepts interrelate through whakapapa, therefore there are times when concepts appear explicitly, implicitly, or in more than one section or chapter in this thesis.

An example of concepts intersecting is when Ātaahua talks about the healing properties of wairua – particularly around feeling secure in one’s identity (discussed in Whakapapa chapter) as Māori and helping to maintain positivity and clearing the hinengaro (mind).

Ātaahua shares:

Wairua is important as it brings [tamariki] together, identity and feeling, having that feeling brings out some positive energy, puts them in a better place to start their day. A fresh start like a clear mind, acquiring that feeling. Wairua [helps] self-soothe and connect with others around them. Once tamariki [have] been in [the] centre for a while, they will learn to take risks, learn what’s around them, they can feel that is wrong, like they are attuned to what’s out there. Wairua is the feeling they can feel what’s around. Wairua helps them to overcome their own obstacles.

Ātaahua explains WKM teaching practices. These practices are influenced by the dimensions: tinana, hinengaro, wairua and whatumanawa:

We are open-minded and take in all the elements, natural, wairua, physical [tinana] and everything around us. An example of working with the environment is reading

Rangi-nui [and] Papa-tū-ā-nuku.... Each child is unique, self, individuals, own wairua which is always connected to whānau [but they] are themselves, who they are... [As a team] you must be very confident to say and it is important to have a reason. We have lots of professional kōrero going on. Tamariki can feel it [if things aren't right]. The wairua of the room changes if you are having conflict. Interactions change. The way they play [can be different if we aren't right]. We don't focus on their [challenging] behaviour. We promote their positives. High quality [equates to] unique abilities and it is important for us to nurture that skill... As Māori it is important to deliver things Māori – teach about the environment, whakawhanaungatanga [discussed in Whakapapa chapter], wairua, spirituality, teach through karakia. Valuing our/their culture. Everything intertwines, relates and interconnects. We have been brought up differently but we all connect through wairua.

Wairua (one of the kaiako) shares that her teaching practice is underpinned by wairua – something she received through intergenerational knowledge passed down by whānau to her mother and on to her:

It is important to have spiritual protection and karakia before entering into a place... [When teaching] you still have to start from the spiritual aspect first because when you start from the spiritual aspect and you just move on out into the world... yeah... The basis of a person and teacher is spiritual connections. My upbringing was influenced by my mother's connections. My teaching is underpinned by the teachings of my mum. Things she used to do, I [have learnt them] and transferred [them on]. You grab that essence, that wairua, what you come with. It has come straight through our whānau.

Like, Ātaahua, Pono recognises the interconnectedness between Māori concepts – particularly the wairua and tinana, spiritual and physical waiora (health and wellbeing), of tamariki-mokopuna. Also, similar to Wairua (kaiako), Pono emphasises the importance of Māori spirituality in teachings and learnings:

[Tamariki] wellbeing, holistic development, definitely, like all the spiritual, physical, the language, it's all interconnected with children's waiora really and their culture... For the centre to be providing te reo Māori and tikanga Māori, [requires] a lot of work putting that into practice... so [children] can develop Māori spiritual learning from their own culture and knowing how to implement it and being proud of who they are.

Papatūānuku stresses the importance of nurturing and respecting the wairua of tamariki-mokopuna in early learning environments:

Wairua [is] safety for tamariki. Not stopping tamariki working. The old centre I was in [in mainstream early childhood education] had a very structured programme and when tamariki were engaged in something they had to tidy up, tidy up, chasing them like cattle on a farm only because [they wanted to stick to timetable].

This, Papatūānuku explains, diminished their wairua and mauri (life force) – no explanation [was given, no prewarning or concern for their wairua].

Papatūānuku explains how she teaches:

I like to teach through waiata Māori... ngā mahi a rēhia (fun games). Tamariki learning through marae protocol. Make things fun. Tamariki love music, waiata, mau rākau, teach them haka... link to tūpuna. Our tamariki still prefer to find sticks, find bugs, digging in Māra – anything to do with nature.

Andrea talks about both her own and her daughter's whatumanawa, being aware of others and the importance of her tamariki feeling harikoa when attending WKM:

I am quite a shy person; it's actually making me stand [up] and be mindful of the other parents and it's beautiful. You can just stand outside and you would say mōrena and they would say mōrena and you know it's really good to see them, I love it. Yes for my children, because I have seen a lot of, how do you put it, happiness – beautiful because that is what I want, I want them to be happy. If my girl feels down, she comes to me, you know, she doesn't bottle it up like some children and I say, what's the matter my darling and she would say, oh mummy I did something wrong at [WKM].

Āwhina asserts the importance of tamariki-mokopuna Māori being happy, safe and well taught:

Quality to me is, when I think of quality schooling, I think of happy kids' faces. Kids being happy, being safe and being well taught. You know people that are around them are good people. To me, that is quality.

An example of competent teaching practices (being well taught) in WKM is given by Āwhina:

The way [the kaiako] talk is very calm, it's very clear and that's what I notice and they get the [the tamariki-mokopuna] into that head space first. They get them on the whāriki (mat) and they wait. It's like they are in sync with them, they know when to start the kōrero you know it's beautiful to see... when you walk into [the WKM], it's honest and it's real and that soothes your soul as far as I'm concerned.

Jane shares that quality education is tamariki-mokopuna, whānau and kaiako being happy – happy to be attending the WKM, happy to participate in WKM life and happy to come to work:

For me, quality in education is when my children are happy, when they are excited to come to school, when we build those relationships with our whānau and they come and are wanting to participate and wanting to take part. So, quality for me... comes down to the relationships and it's about the atmosphere and the feeling when you come in. It's really hard to describe because it's not something you can document it's not something you can put up on the wall, which are Ministry requirements, it's that feeling you get when you come in, that for me [is] quality. If your teachers come in and are happy to be there, that's quality because it means they are going to give a 100% to the children. If your children come in every morning and they are rearing to go, that for me is quality because they want to be there. If your parents are asking questions and are wanting to participate and are wanting to just be part of it that for me is quality.

The importance of her daughter transitioning in her own time into WKM and building trusting relationships with kaiako is viewed as high-quality early learning by Kaha. According to Kaha, this is important for her daughter's emotional growth, which soon helped develop her confidence:

When she first came here, she was a bit of a handful so I was really looking for her own space, like her own time, her language [way of communicating]. She's really good but she's a bit funny... If she doesn't like that teacher, she won't go by that teacher, she will play up... but her whaea M.... she loves her... She just clicked on with her straight away and I was like, yes, that's the teacher she wants... she needs that morning comfort, she wants a hug from her whaea, makes her feel comfortable... First it was like hard to get her to [WKM] and then it's like hard to get her out. She even knows all the adults [associated with the WKM] and I'm like gosh. When we walk up and down the street every morning, afternoon [she will be saying] kia ora, kia ora [hello, hello].

S.W. associates quality with her daughter being harikoa. This, she stresses, is an absolute priority. In addition, while S.W. is a staunch advocate of te reo Māori, her daughter's happiness is paramount:

My understanding of quality in education, I think first and foremost for me, is that my daughter is essentially happy wherever she is. That's the main thing for me. I get a sense of that wherever she is placed. Over and above, it's about how the staff interact with the

children, the resources that the [WKM] have – their goals, their objectives and their principles – I think those are the main things how I look at quality in education... I'm fully committed to the kaupapa and te reo but not at the expense of safety and my daughter not feeling happy and not being cared for properly.... I gauge it from her, whether she was happy or not. That was the main gauge for us, she was happy, she liked going there and she liked being there. Yeah, she loved it and just seeing the staff and their interactions with the kids, with the tamariki and interactions amongst themselves I can see. I could see that it was a good place and just the way the kids were overall.

Similar to other whānau, Taura advocates observing the environment of the WKM to see whether tamariki-mokopuna and kaiako are harikoa:

I think just meeting the teachers to see if they are happy and excited or down and then you will see if it is reflecting on the kids to whether they are quiet and scared or they are happy and excited that kind of sets the mood for me... if [tamariki] are having fun then it must be awesome but if they're scared and sitting their quietly, something must be wrong.

In regard to hauora, Wairua (kaiako) stresses the importance of tamariki-mokopuna having access to:

Healthy kai [as it] is extremely important for our tamariki. Some of our tamariki aren't able to identify vegetables so I can use veges to [help them] identify colours as well as teaching them the names. Presenting kai in a respectful way, tells the tamariki that you are valuing them.

Whānau views relating to tamariki-mokopuna, whānau and kaiako being harikoa and hauora are embedded in traditional understandings of tinana, hinengaro, wairua and whatumanawa. Moreover, kaiako teaching practices in WKM advocate the importance of physical wellbeing – through sustenance of the tinana, hinengaro and wairua (body, mind and spirit). This included ensuring tamariki-mokopuna are recognised for their unique qualities and abilities, and nurtured through kai hauora (healthy kai), traditional teaching practices of waiata, haka and ngā mahi ā rēhia. Of great importance is tamariki-mokopuna, whānau and kaiako being happy when attending the WKM.

Ways Te Whāriki and Te Tauākī Kaupapa recognise and support whānau views relating to Tinana, Hinengaro, Wairua, Whatumanawa, Harikoa and Hauora of tamariki-mokopuna Māori.

Te Whāriki is examined and presented first, followed by TTK.

Te Whāriki self-identifies:

as a metaphor for the developing child. Interpreted in this way as in *Te Whāriki* a te Kōhanga Reo, the whāriki includes four dimensions of human development: tinana, hinengaro, wairua and whatumanawa. (MoE, 2017a, p. 10)

An explanation of human development states:

Human development can be thought of in term of cognitive (hinengaro), physical (tinana), emotional (whatumanawa), spiritual (wairua), and social and cultural dimensions, but these dimensions need to be viewed holistically, as closely interwoven and interdependent. For Māori the spiritual dimension is fundamental to holistic development because it connects the other dimensions across time and space. (MoE, 2017a, p. 19)

Notably, the English text leads the theorising when explaining human development, followed by the Māori terms in brackets.

Te Whāriki also incorporates a section titled “Pathways to school and kura” (p. 51). The section provides examples elicited from *Te Whāriki*, The New Zealand Curriculum (curriculum for English-medium) and Te Marautanga o Aotearoa, “a parallel curriculum for Māori-medium schooling” (p. 51). Similarities between *Te Whāriki* and Marautanga o Aotearoa are described:

Both *Te Whāriki* and Te Marautanga o Aotearoa envisage a culturally competent child who is able to move confidently between te ao Māori and te ao Pākehā. Both documents are grounded in a holistic view of human development that encompasses the attributes that complete the child: te tinana, te hinengaro, te wairua and te whatumanawa. (p. 52)

Focus on holistic development continues with the principle of Holistic Development | Kotahitanga, where attention is centred on curriculum and pedagogy and identifying the way children learn and grow:

Curriculum and pedagogy focus on the “whole learner,” reflecting the holistic way in which children learn and grow, with the cognitive (hinengaro), physical (tinana), emotional (whatumanawa), spiritual (wairua), and social and cultural dimensions all tightly interwoven. (p. 60)

A further statement in *Te Whāriki*, presented in the section on assessment, relates to the principle of holistic development, kotahitanga, stating, “assessment takes account of the whole child – tinana, hinengaro, wairua and whatumanawa” (MoE, 2017a, p. 64). This statement is significant as it recognises the tamaiti in relation to the four dimensions.

It is important to note, while *Te Whāriki* does not directly reference the words harikoa or happy, however, it does refer to health and hauora. One significant statement relating to health uses English terminology:

Underpinning Te Whāriki is the vision that children are competent and confident learners and communicators, healthy in mind, body and spirit, secure in their sense of belonging and in the knowledge that they make a valued contribution to society. (p. 6)

Additional statements in *Te Whāriki* position health alongside wellbeing. Two such statements read: “This curriculum acknowledges that all children have rights to protection and promotion of their health and wellbeing” (p. 12) and “all children have the right to have their health and wellbeing promoted and to be protected from harm” (p. 26). *Te Whāriki* also promotes healthy eating and nutrition together with access to physical activities. In regard to recognition of Māori concepts, *Te Whāriki* identifies the concept hauora in relation to the strand Wellbeing, Mana Atua in which a learning outcome promotes children “keeping themselves healthy and caring for themselves | te oranga nui [health and wellbeing nurtured and protected]” (p. 24). *Te Whāriki* places responsibility on “Kaiako [to] model positive attitudes towards hauora, healthy eating and activity” (p. 30) and children’s learning and development is achieved when they “demonstrate... an awareness of hauora and healthy lifestyles” (p. 27).

There is no direct mention of harikoa, hauora, happiness or health in TTK. One statement identifies:

This [WKM] aims through the pathway of all activities to assist the children, their families, management, educators, whānau, hapū and iwi to experience spiritual, emotional, physical and psychological well-being. (TTKAWKM, p. 10, a.20)

Written in English, this statement focuses on the WKM achieving optimal wellbeing through the implementation of the four dimensions. There is one slight change to the wording – the dimension *mental* has been changed to *psychological*. No Māori terms are used in this statement. However, in the next statement, two of the dimensions are mentioned in te reo Māori:

We offer our community of... quality ECE and care... [the] opportunity to work with you and your child to nurture their Hinengaro, Matauranga [knowledge], Whakapakari

[strength], Mana, Tinana and be treated with respect as individuals, “He Taonga te mokopuna” [the child is a precious gift]. (TTKAWKM, p. 11, a.21)

Two of the dimensions, hinengaro and tinana, are referenced in te reo Māori alongside other Māori concepts. Working in partnership with the whānau to nurture these dimensions is a primary focus. Overall, the primary objective is recognising “He Taonga te mokopuna” (the child is a precious gift).

Te Whāriki and TTK identify the dimensions through both English and Māori texts. *Te Whāriki* observes tinana, hinengaro, wairua and whatumanawa in relation to *Te Whāriki a te Kōhanga Reo* and *Te Marautanga o Aotearoa*, classifying the dimensions as “four dimensions of human development” (MoE, 2017a, p. 10). Te Tauākī Kaupapa recognises the English terms of the dimensions – physical, psychological, spiritual and emotions, followed by an introduction of two Māori terms – tinana and hinengaro.

Traditional Understandings of Te Reo Me Ōna Tikanga

This section includes a very brief overview of traditional understandings of te reo me ōna tikanga followed by whānau perspectives and illustrations of ways *Te Whāriki* and TTK include and support whānau views. The absolute importance of te reo me ōna tikanga has been discussed throughout this thesis – including the interrelationship between te reo me ōna tikanga – Māori language and culture. In particular, Chapters 3 and 4 focused on the historical impact of colonisation – namely its decimation of Māori society through the forced removal of whenua and te reo me ōna tikanga Māori. The resurgence of Māori-centric initiatives from the 1960s (discussed in Chapter 3: Nana Letty) underpinned by te reo me ōna tikanga have been instrumental in the reclamation of Māori language and cultural identity.

According to Rose Pere (1982) *reo* can have various meanings. One such meaning is language, and through this medium of communication, values and philosophical beliefs are expressed. Prior to the arrival of written language, Māori forms of communication were focused on spoken word. Traditional language comprised, “proverbs [whakatauākī], legends, stories, history and particular knowledge [which] have hidden meanings and symbolic reference” (Pere, 1982, p. 18). Although early Europeans learnt to speak te reo during early contact with Māori, they did not understand the deeper messages (esoteric knowledge) te reo transmitted – especially whakatauākī. Pere pointed out that literal translations can have “no understanding of the depth of information and knowledge from which they project themselves” (p. 18). Whakatauākī were used by whānau, hapū and iwi from particular regions to convey a specific message. These were

often cryptic and only understood by those within their tribal group. Pere shared that distinguished Māori scholars and composers in modern times will often use whakatauākī in formal speeches and songs. An example she gives is from Tūhoe⁴⁸ where the orator will include “‘Toi te kupu, toi te mana, toi te whenua,’ (retain the language, retain the prestige, and in so doing retain one’s identity with the land [country])” (p. 19). It is of great importance to know te reo “enshrines the ethos, the life principle of the Maori people” (p. 19).

Traditional understandings of tikanga vary depending on whānau, hapū and iwi. However, there are particular factors that underpin tikanga such as “rules, plans, methods, approaches, customs, habits, rights, authority and control” (Pere, 1982, p. 46). Pere stressed the importance of respecting tikanga-ā-iwi (culture and protocols of tribes) as each tribal group has their own historical narratives and understandings. In traditional times, tohunga (discussed in Chapter 5: Whakapapa) who were versed in whakapapa, spirituality, history and ceremonial rituals, held deeper understandings of tikanga. Their teachings were underpinned by the “strict disciplines and ceremonial restrictions required” (p. 47). Failure to uphold or respect these teachings, resulted in serious consequences – death to either the deliverer or a whānau member. As Pere pointed out, although this knowledge is sacred, there are selected peoples from their iwi who maintain these teachings today.

This brief overview of traditional understandings views te reo as an aural and oral form of communication, underpinned by values, beliefs and philosophies. Traditionally te reo included many whakatauākī and was understood only by iwi members delivering or receiving a message. Like te reo, tikanga also varies according to whānau, hapū and iwi. Although many early European learnt to speak te reo, they did not acquire the skills to understand the deeper messages – these remained the domain of Māori.

Whānau Views of Te Reo Me Ōna Tikanga

Whānau views regarding te reo me ōna tikanga are now discussed. All whānau shared their views concerning the importance of te reo me ōna tikanga in achieving high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori. Within their views are personal stories relating to their own te reo me ōna tikanga journeys.

Āwhina, a kuia, states it is important to have a kuia at the WKM who can speak te reo Māori:

⁴⁸ Tūhoe is an iwi situated in the eastern part of the North Island of Aotearoa New Zealand.

I think that's important... a kuia that has the reo. You see I don't have it! To have the reo is important.

Not being able to converse in te reo Māori has been problematic for Āwhina:

When I am talking and I get up to kōrero and I say kia ora, my name is [Āwhina] and I cannot kōrero Māori, but I say that's my thing and they say sorry [Āwhina] and I say no, no, don't apologise. If you want to kōrero Māori, you kōrero Māori, that's your thing, don't ever feel... for me because that's my own problem, not yours. Don't ever stop speaking te reo.

Āwhina was raised by her kuia who was a fluent speaker of te reo. Speaking te reo was discouraged when she was growing up but all other aspects of her life were immersed in Māori culture. She acknowledged and recognises the significance of te reo Māori, but also views kuia with understanding natures who are conversant with tikanga Māori as valuable:

To have the reo is important. Most of all it is about having a kuia who is understanding but most kuia are, and the tikanga, yeah that is important... having [an] old lady in there that interacts with them and listens to them.

Āwhina shares an example of her enacting tikanga when spending time at the WKM. Āwhina recognises the mana of the tamaiti, responding as she feels a kuia should do:

When [I was] walking past they said, whaea look what I'm doing... I sit down next to them they will say I'm doing this and I say, can I have a look, can I have some too – if they are playing with the play dough and they go here and they share their play dough with me and then the others go whaea can you look at my one. They love for an adult to look and see and say things about their stuff... They just love it so I will sit there with them and play with it until another child says I haven't got a chair and I go ok then you can have my chair. Not saying to me, get off the chair. I say sorry darling here we go – here's the chair.

A requirement of the community work Āwhina undertakes is to visit homes of some of the tamariki-mokopuna who attend the WKM. Whānau share many things with Āwhina. One thing she has noticed is how excited whānau are to learn te reo me ōna tikanga alongside their tamariki:

Honestly I went to a home yesterday and a Mum said to me, he comes home singing [Āwhina] because she had pulled him out of another [teaching environment] and she

said he comes home singing the [waiata] and then he said, are we going to pray, are we going to have karakia for our kai and it's teaching the parents.

Andrea has been raised in kapa haka (Māori cultural performance) and is conversant with tikanga Māori but she does not speak te reo Māori:

I was brought up in Kapa Haka and I want my children to learn te reo Māori – two languages – English and te reo. I want them to combine. I like the karakia. We try to do karakia at home and when I see them getting bored, I sing some Māori [waiata]. They like the Kai Moana song. They know the words, they help, and they sing, so yes, I like te reo that they are learning. [My father] used to speak te reo Māori, he was fluent in te reo Māori but he had to go to a Pākehā school and he [got in trouble for speaking in te reo Māori]. [My tamariki] can learn... te reo at home with me... [We] have been watching Tōku Reo [my language] ... For this centre it is really awesome because my children can learn in te reo here by the whaea.

S.W. was born and raised in a rural Māori area. Her early days were immersed in te reo me ōna tikanga Māori. Moving to the city proved challenging for S.W., particularly around her identity as Māori. This resulted in her discontinuing her relationship with te reo me ōna tikanga Māori; however, during her young adult years she began to reclaim her identity as Māori and te reo Māori. When talking about her daughter, S.W. is adamant:

one of the main priorities... is the reo... It is just preparing her for adulthood basically and probably her teen years.

S. W.'s daughter recently transitioned to the WKM from another Māori medium centre:

Even though the [other WKM wasn't] total immersion, they had the resources and I could tell that the staff were committed to the kaupapa and committed to the kids and they did have the teachings of our ancestors and there was some reo, not as much as Kōhanga... it is the same at [this WKM].

Although S.W. has recognised the difference between fluency in te reo Māori in both WKM, as opposed to Kōhanga Reo, she does observe the teachings of ancestors.

S.W. reiterates her commitment to te reo Māori and a Kaupapa Māori-centric teaching programme, providing her daughter was safe, happy and cherished:

I'm fully committed to the kaupapa and te reo but not at the expense of safety and my daughter not feeling happy and not being cared for properly. The most important thing is the reo, the teaching of our ancestors through play, karakia, waiata, just helping her

to [feel good about her] identity, because that ultimately is going to help her to be confident in both worlds really.

S.W. reinforces the need for her daughter to be confident in being Māori in order to easily transition into the Pākehā world:

I feel that if she is confident in herself... being Māori, then that will just flow on to the Pākehā world. If she has got that confidence there first... who she is, where she's from, knows her reo then that will definitely help her in the Pākehā world.

Kaha has been raised in an urban area, away from her ancestral home. She has some knowledge of her whakapapa, some understanding of tikanga Māori. Although she does not speak te reo Māori, she has strong desires to learn. She is happy her daughter is attending a WKM, especially being taught in te reo Māori. She would also like her daughter to be familiar with English language. Kaha is extremely proud of what her daughter has learnt and is amazed at her ability to speak and sing in te reo Māori. Kaha is enthusiastic to learn te reo through her daughter. Her daughter's experience attending a Māori-medium centre has prompted Kaha to move her boys out of mainstream education into a Māori-medium school:

I would love to speak Māori. It's very beautiful. Like when my daughter comes home and like she's talking Māori and I just sit there, and I stare at her and her waiata and stuff and [I] say like teach them [her brothers] your waiata and actions. She's really good [at sharing what she has learnt] ... I would love her to talk Māori, to teach me... It would be good if she knows te reo and English.

Tauira is fluent in te reo Māori and English. Her early years schooling included Kōhanga Reo and Kura Kaupapa Māori – both total-immersion Māori language schools. Tauira views te reo Māori as very important for her daughter:

Yes, yes, [te reo Māori] is really important. I think that would be her point of difference to everyone else and I want her to explore her culture just like how I did when I was young.

Tauira also sees the benefit of English language for her daughter:

Both are really important. Yeah, I would like to have it equally but right now Pākehā is still stronger, just [want her to learn both] so she can have a choice when she grows up and she will be able to talk both Pākehā and Māori intelligently.

Ātaahua recognises the concept of high quality can be multidimensional; however, she is very specific when it comes to te reo me ōna tikanga Māori:

High quality can mean multiple things, a range of things. It goes back to values, tikanga, te reo Māori, Te Ao Māori. Tikanga, te reo Māori... will teach our children to support one another, to build relationships and create a strong family. For us, installing values, they are going to have those values, help community, core values supporting others. Very important to look after each other. Positive changes to look after te reo, tikanga, tamariki Māori, culture – looking after our culture.

Ātaahua reflects on her own journey relearning te reo as well as society's responsibility to protect te reo Māori:

I wasn't brought up in Kura Kaupapa Māori. I did have te reo, but it got lost but it is coming back. There are heaps of opportunities [to learn so] it's about everyone else like whānau, kaiako, community, society, everyone is responsible. It's good these days as there are plenty of opportunities. We need to motivate our people [to learn te reo].

While Ātaahua is in the process of regaining te reo Māori, she is confident in her knowledge of tikanga:

I think I have the essentials... like looking after the environment, karakia, very aware, looking after [each other], natural values.

Papatūānuku, is a fluent speaker of te reo Māori and English. She attended Kōhanga Reo and Kura Kaupapa Māori, and had a small stint in a mainstream school but did not like it. She is a loyal advocate of te reo me ōna tikanga Māori and believes it should be applied genuinely within all areas of Aotearoa New Zealand society. Prior to working at the WKM, Papatūānuku worked in a mainstream early childhood centre. Trying to ensure Māori language and culture was recognised and respected within this centre proved difficult for Papatūānuku. This prompted her move to work in WKM – where being Māori is natural:

No one spoke te reo at the... centre I worked at. [I found it] hard culturally, [because they were] insensitive... they had no idea. I didn't sulk, I spoke about it. I had to be like the Māori policeman instead. Like here [at the WKM], I don't have to explain.

Wairua grew up in a rural Māori area and although she is conversant with tikanga Māori, she was not encouraged to learn te reo Māori. However, she has been on a journey reconnecting with her whakapapa and learning te reo Māori. This has been life changing. Wairua emphasises the importance of te reo Māori. She also highlights the need to provide quality reo:

To me, te reo is very important and is essential to the programme when working with tamariki Māori... I like to make sure I have enough knowledge to speak to and with our

tamariki in te reo and they understand it – you can see that they're listening but... quality is what you give to them.... I need to make sure I am progressing well in te reo. I need to grasp te reo... in a positive way so that I can [speak] with ngā tamariki and they can respond... It's actually [up to us kaiako to learn]. When interacting with tamariki, I am conscious of having a normal way of speaking, soothing and quiet. The tamariki are responsive to te reo and when I engage with them, I do it in a non-intrusive way. Tamariki enjoy this.

Pono was raised in an urban area. She recalls both Māori and Pākehā cultural influences in her life but identifies Pākehā culture as more dominant. Pono has been rediscovering herself as Māori and recognises her story is similar to some tamariki-mokopuna and whānau. When communicating her views of high-quality early learning, Pono states it is:

Definitely... te reo, tikanga. Whānau involvement is very big... If they haven't been immersed in Māori culture, they will be learning alongside their child. Also, tikanga, te reo... for myself. I... have to learn a little bit more around Te Ao Māori, which I love to actually learn, not only to support tamariki Māori but even my own Māori cultural [journey].

Jane was raised in an urban area and has been influenced by Pākehā culture. However, her identity as Māori is hugely important to her. Jane views te reo me ōna tikanga Māori as essential when considering high-quality early learning for tamariki Māori. She shares her views about te reo me ōna tikanga Māori within the WKM:

We really advocate the use of te reo Māori with our children, not just... because we are a Māori medium... [centre] but because it is important for who we are in terms of identity of who we are as Māori. That is a lot of the reason why parents choose to come here as they want to develop that sense of identity for their children.

Jane also recognises the different Māori language dialects but realises that most of the whānau who attend the centre are from the iwi Ngā Puhī (positioned in the far north of Te Ika a Māui o Aotearoa – North Island of New Zealand):

because of all the different dialects... we have found most of our parents come from up North or associate with up North so we [generally] go with the Ngā Puhī dialect... which is easier for us because the staff [who are] awesome, [are] also Ngā Puhī but we also acknowledge that there are different dialects. For us it's about getting the reo to our children and doing it in a way that is meaningful, is relevant, and is... part of our

day-to-day programme. It is not that we have special times, it's not just because we make a special effort, it's when you walk in the door.

Jane reinforces the importance of te reo me ōna tikanga Māori, especially when much of their job is supporting whānau:

I think [te reo me ōna tikanga Māori] ... has a very important part to play. Given that we... pick up those families [who are struggling] and who are uncomfortable in mainstream, so when it comes to te reo and when it comes to kaupapa and when it comes to Te Ao Māori, that is fundamental to who we are... [Whānau] want their children to learn the reo, they want them to learn the kaupapa, they want them to understand the tikanga and what it is to be Māori. It is fundamental to who we are as a centre – yes, it is. Is it embedded in our practice!

Jane acknowledges the kaiako at the WKM are at different levels of te reo Māori. She sees learning te reo alongside tamariki-mokopuna and whānau as important and comforting for all involved:

We are getting there because we are at different stages of learning the reo as well and for us it's about learning alongside our children. We have teachers that are very fluent, we have teachers that are in the process of learning, we have teachers that are at the beginning of that journey. [This is the] same as our whānau, so we align ourselves and we say look we are in exactly the same position as you, join us on this journey and we can get where you want your child to be. We can get you where you want to be, and we can get where we need to be to provide a service that meets your needs. We are very much about being open with our families. We are very much about encouraging them to educate us as well, but it is integral to who we are and it shouldn't just be a Māori-medium centre it is integral to, it needs to be in every centre.

Whānau views presented in this section, observe te reo me ōna tikanga Māori as essential elements to high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori. Whānau personal experiences with te reo me ōna tikanga Māori vary. Personal stories have provided an insight into individual struggles. This includes being discouraged from learning te reo for some whānau. However, while inability to speak te reo has been problematic, some whānau have retained their knowledge of tikanga Māori. Other whānau experiences include struggling with their identity as Māori when they relocated from rural areas to urban settings. This initially resulted in repressing te reo me ōna tikanga Māori. However, it was not long before they made a concentrated effort to reconnect to their taha Māori (Māori side). While two of the whānau

have been educated through total-immersion Māori language schools and are fully conversant with te reo me ōna tikanga Māori, other whānau have little knowledge of their Māoritanga (Māori identity) and a deep desire to connect. They too are excited to be learning alongside their tamariki-mokopuna who attend WKM. Although all whānau highlight the absolute importance of te reo me ōna tikanga Māori, some whānau view the equal value of learning English language alongside te reo Māori – observing the two as valuable for tamariki-mokopuna Māori identity and transition into adulthood and into the Pākehā world. Importantly, while whānau are at varying levels of speaking and understanding te reo me ōna tikanga Māori, they all advocated the absolute importance of tamariki-mokopuna and whānau knowing, learning and retaining te reo me ōna tikanga Māori.

Ways Te Whāriki and Te Tauākī Kaupapa Recognise and Support Whānau Views of Te Reo Me Ōna tikanga Māori

Examples of how *Te Whāriki* and TTK recognise and support whānau views of te reo me ōna tikanga Māori are now presented.

Te Whāriki makes several commitment statements to honouring, acknowledging and implementing te reo me ōna tikanga Māori. A commitment to te reo Māori is in relation to Te Tiriti o Waitangi in early childhood education:

Te Tiriti | the Treaty has implications for our education system, particularly in terms of achieving equitable outcomes for Māori and ensuring that te reo Māori not only survives but thrives. (MoE, 2017a, p. 3)

When discussing te reo, it is also important to identify the relationship between te reo me ōna tikanga Māori, for “language and culture are inseparable” (p. 43). Notably, kaiako are given the overall responsibility to ensure te reo is a living, accessible, valued language. Statements read:

Kaiako are the key resource in any ECE service. Their primary responsibility is to facilitate children’s learning and development through thoughtful and intentional pedagogy. This means they need a wide range of capabilities... [including] being culturally competent: developing increasing proficiency in the use of te reo and tikanga Māori. (p. 59)

Te Whāriki asserts, “All children should be able to access te reo Māori in their ECE setting, as kaiako weave te reo Māori and tikanga Māori into the everyday curriculum” (p. 12), therefore it is the responsibility of the kaiako to “support tikanga Māori and the use of te reo Māori” (p. 35). Emphasis is placed on assuring “te reo Māori is valued and used in all ECE settings. This

may involve, using correct pronunciation, retelling stories, and using Māori symbols, arts and crafts” (p. 41). This requires kaiako to “develop their own knowledge of te reo Māori, tikanga Māori and Māori world views so that they are better able to support children to understand their own mana atuaatanga” (p. 28). For kaiako to achieve this, *Te Whāriki* recommends kaiako “are supported to learn te reo Māori and to understand what it means for a child to be growing up bilingual (p. 45). The overall objective is to ensure “te reo Māori is included as a natural part of the programme” (p. 44) and is encouraged in the early childhood centre programme. *Te Whāriki* accentuates “An appreciation of te reo Māori as a living and relevant language” (p. 42). The strand Mana Reo provides a recapitulation of why te reo is critical, stating “Through te reo Māori children’s identity, belonging and wellbeing are enhanced” (p. 41).

Examples of ways TTK recognises and supports whānau views of te reo me ōna tikanga Māori as elements of high-quality early learning are now presented.

This first TTK statement is also featured in the section on mana. Te reo me ōna tikanga Māori is viewed as essential to sustaining te mana o te mokopuna:

Kia Pono tātou ki a ia – To uphold “te mana o te mokopuna,” by looking for the child’s strength, abilities and empower them to enjoy learning by fostering te reo Māori me ngā tikanga and building self-esteem⁴⁹. The whānau, hapū and iwi are to be guardians/servants to our children as they learn who they are. (TTK, p. 7 a.14)

The TTK has identified te reo me ōna tikanga Māori as key to sustaining te mana o te mokopuna. In addition, TTK advises whānau they are committed to teaching tamariki-mokopuna te reo Māori through different mediums:

We seek to enhance the language development and progression of our children by enabling them to learn their chiefly language without any limitations or restraints. Our commitment to the guardianship of our language as a taonga is to allow our children to receive it freely through instructions, conversations, whakapapa, pepeha, waiata, pūrākau, pakiwaitara [stories], whakairo [carvings], uku (clay), raranga [weaving], mahi a rēhia [fun games] etc. We are committed to preparing our children for the realities of both worlds so they can stand proud as Māori with the ability to interact successfully in Te Ao Pākehā. (TTK, pp. 12–13, a.22)

⁴⁹ As explained earlier, my interpretation is, we as a collective pledge to be faithful to her/him (referring to the tamaiti) and by identifying the strengths and abilities of the mokopuna, their mana will be nurtured and sustained.

Commitment to support te reo Māori moves beyond tamariki-mokopuna. The WKM provides te reo Māori language classes to help whānau to learn:

Parents/caregivers and whānau that are not conversant in te reo Māori will have the opportunity to learn through our Wānanga Reo [language classes] which will be facilitated at ____ Marae... We understand that the child's journey and success in learning is reliant on the parents and whānau involvement. (TTK, p. 13, a.23)

A final statement in TTK commits to promoting biculturalism and the use of te reo Māori. It also advocates promoting te reo and ensuring kaiako are supported to attend additional professional development to support te reo me ōna tikanga Māori knowledge:

[The WKM] encourages an awareness and appreciation of the bicultural heritage of our country and the use of te reo Māori as a living language [and supports]:

- Promotion of te reo
- PD funds and time [being] made available for teachers to extend their tikanga and te reo knowledge. (TTK, pp. 13–14, a.24)

Statements in *Te Whāriki* reveal the curriculum's commitment to te reo me ōna tikanga Māori. An announcement supporting the survival of te reo Māori is significant, as it acknowledges a Te Tiriti o Waitangi partnership between Māori and Pākehā (discussed in Chapter 4: Te Tiriti o Waitangi). Kaiako are expected to ensure tikanga is taught, valued and nurtured in early childhood education, therefore they are required to facilitate their own learning. However, *Te Whāriki* emphasises that kaiako must be supported. The strand Mana Reo is significant to and for tamariki-mokopuna Māori as it highlights the relationship between te reo Māori, identity and belonging. Similar to *Te Whāriki*, TTK provides statements showing a commitment to te reo me ōna tikanga Māori. Recognition of te reo Māori as a chiefly language and a taonga, together with ways in which the language will be included and taught, discloses the WKM assurance to sustain te reo me ōna tikanga Māori. Moreover, TTK reveals the WKM dedication to parents/guardians and whānau – by providing te reo me ōna tikanga Māori classes. Te Tauākī Kaupapa also refers to supporting kaiako with professional development to assist them to develop te reo me ōna tikanga Māori.

Te Whāriki, Te Tauākī Kaupapa and Whānau Views – Areas of Strengths and Concerns

The chapter moves onto discussing areas of strengths in the relationship between *Te Whāriki*, TTK and whānau views and issues of concern. This is followed by an introduction of Lady

Tilly and Sir Tamati Reedy's theories of te mana o te mokopuna – underpinned by mana, aroha, manaakitanga, harikoa, hauora and te reo me ōna tikanga Māori. As writers of the 1993 and 1996 Māori curriculum of *Te Whāriki*, the Reedys are authorities on the Māori theoretical understandings underpinning this curriculum. Moreover, the Reedys' framework provides a deeper level of Māori understandings of te mana o tamariki-mokopuna Māori. The chapter finishes with a statement proposing the Reedy's theoretical underpinnings of *Te Whāriki*, (supported by traditional knowledges) are critical to supporting high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori in WKM.

Whānau viewed mana, aroha, manaakitanga, harikoa, hauora and te reo me ōna tikanga Māori as key elements of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori. It is important to point out, while mana was not discussed explicitly by whānau, it was communicated implicitly. Whānau views highlighted the importance of tikanga practices. Mana is embedded in tikanga – and tikanga values are responsible for loving, caring and nurturing te mana o tamariki-mokopuna Māori. Whānau identified the importance of teaching tamariki-mokopuna traditional tikanga practices. The power and responsibilities of ngā atua, caring for and living with the whenua and creating safe, calming environments through karakia, were observed as important learning.

Many of the references in *Te Whāriki* interconnect with whānau views. For example, *Te Whāriki* recognises that mana derives from ngā atua Māori and is embedded in all tamariki-mokopuna. *Te Whāriki* also identifies mana as essential to the health and development of tamariki-mokopuna. This is validated through Māori understandings of taumata whakahirahira (strands) in *Te Whāriki*. Each strand is underpinned by mana – Mana Atua, Mana Whenua, Mana Tangata, Mana Reo and Mana Aotūroa. However, while these strands appear frequently throughout *Te Whāriki*, English interpretations of the strands – Belonging, Wellbeing, Contribution, Communication and Exploration – are communicated first, followed by Māori understandings. *Te Whāriki* does advise English and Māori explanations are not equivalent and each has their own cultural understandings. This revelation is extremely important as Māori interpretations of the strands are deeply embedded in traditional knowledge. Although TTK makes only one brief reference to mana, the statement is significant as it makes direct reference to upholding te mana o te mokopuna through ensuring they are empowered, their strengths and self-esteem are supported, and te reo me ōna tikanga Māori is nurtured.

In reference to aroha and manaakitanga, whānau reinforced the word aroha is beyond a single meaning. Moreover, aroha connects to other Māori concepts. Barlow's (2009) earlier explanation of aroha is derived from ngā atua Māori and consists of "three essential elements to all things" (p. 8), the pu – which is male, responsible for positive force, the kē – the female which emanates negative force and the hā – which emits dynamic energy. Aroha emerges through the element of hā. This is an example of the whakapapa of Māori concepts. Whānau also explained aroha and manaakitanga needed to be enacted authentically through kindness, care and support towards tamariki-mokopuna and whānau. Feeling and receiving aroha and manaakitanga within the WKM was of the utmost importance – as was ensuring respect for all things, both animate and inanimate. Pere (1991) shared traditional understandings, highlighting "aroha is not to be talked about; it is only meaningful when it is actioned" (p. 6). In addition, whānau highlighted their responsibility to embed aroha and manaakitanga in the WKM environment. They also identified the implications to their profession, their community and to their being Māori if they failed to fulfil their obligations. Traditional understandings shared by Mead (2016) stressed the responsibilities when caring for others. Mead explained that while manaakitanga is focused on caring, it is also about upholding mana. Failure to do so can end in shame, condemnation and judgement from outside.

Statements outlined in *Te Whāriki* relating to aroha, manaakitanga and respect (from a Māori perspective) are varied. *Te Whāriki* does not formally identify the relationship between aroha and manaakitanga. However, one reference in the strand Mana Whenua encourages tamariki-mokopuna to show respect and aroha towards Papa-tū-ā-nuku (mother earth). Also, a kīwaha (colloquial saying), "ngākau aroha" (loving heart, kindness, compassion and consideration) appears in the strand Contribution | Mana Tangata, in reference to children playing and learning alongside their peers. *Te Whāriki* does not provide an explanation of this kīwaha, although it does include aroha in its glossary. From a Māori context, the inclusion of ngākau aroha in the strand Contribution would suggest playing and learning with others must be done in a loving, kind, compassionate and, considerate manner. *Te Whāriki* also mentions and endorses *Te Whatu Pōkeka*, a Kaupapa Māori assessment framework. Manaakitanga and aroha are two learning dispositions included in this framework. Although *Te Whāriki* provides a brief introduction to *Te Whatu Pōkeka*, this framework is a model resource that could support kaiako in WKM to learn, understand and increase their knowledge of Māori philosophies and pedagogies.

Te Tauākī Kaupapa provides brief statements centred on the WKM creating a safe and nurturing environment embedded in aroha, manaakitanga and whakawhanaungatanga

(whakawhanaungatanga is discussed in Chapter 5: Whakapapa). These statements reflect traditional beliefs, as Mead (2016) stated: “Aroha is an essential part of manaakitanga and is an expected dimension of whanaungatanga” (p. 46). Emphasis is placed on the enactment of aroha to all who attend WKM and ensuring respectful partnership relationships with all whānau. This statement reflects whānau aspirations.

For whānau, tamariki-mokopuna and whānau Māori being happy and healthy when attending the WKM was a high priority. The concepts of harikoa and hauora in tamariki-mokopuna and whānau Māori are underpinned by the dimensions tinana, hinengaro, wairua and whatumanawa. Kaiako identified teaching practices as naturally incorporating these dimensions in WKM. They stressed the need to be aware of creating and maintaining a calming wairua to support tamariki-mokopuna with their transition into WKM. An environment filled with wairua helps tamariki-mokopuna and whānau to feel settled. This also assists in the formation of trusting relationships and also building confidence to take risks and identify potential hazards. Whānau also stressed the importance of communicating positively with one another and being open and honest. Failure to do so could result in the wairua of the environment being compromised, potentially impacting negatively on tamariki-mokopuna and whānau. Although there are differences and uniqueness between Māori, wairua was viewed as the connecting element. Moreover, ensuring the tinana, hinengaro, wairua and whatumanawa are nurtured is vital to maintaining the harikoa and hauora of tamariki-mokopuna. These dispositions can be fostered through teaching waiata, haka, ngā mahi ā rēhia, as these mediums help to develop the tinana – singing and moving of body, hinengaro – learning and retaining words, songs and actions, wairua – connecting with others and learning in a safe environment, and whatumanawa – expression through singing and haka. Kai hauora (healthy kai) was viewed as essential as it supports the growth and development of tamariki-mokopuna, maintaining and sustaining their overall harikoa and hauora.

Te Whāriki includes the elements of tinana, hinengaro, wairua and whatumanawa, and physical, mental, spiritual and emotional development – identifying the Māori understandings as “four dimensions of human development” (MoE, 2017a, p. 10). *Te Whāriki* has two different ways of classifying these terms. Māori terms are noted separately and English terms are identified with Māori understandings in brackets. As pointed out earlier when discussing the strands of *Te Whāriki*, differences in language and cultural understandings must be recognised, especially when working with tamariki-mokopuna and whānau Māori. Additionally, in regard to Māori terms and understandings, *Te Whāriki* does reference *Te Whāriki a te Kōhanga Reo* (and *Te*

Marautanga o Aotearoa). Inclusion of *Te Whāriki a te Kōhanga Reo* as a reference is critical as this document reinforces the dimensions are interdependent and interconnected to traditional Māori contexts. The words *harikoa* and *happy* are not mentioned in *Te Whāriki* but there are references to English understandings of health and wellbeing. Statements reinforce children being safe and having access to healthy nutrition and physical activities. Also, while the concept *hauora* is not included, one *kīwaha*, *oranga nui* (health and wellbeing are nurtured and protected), is included in the strand Wellbeing, *Mana Atua*. Interestingly, TTK does not make any references to the words *harikoa*, *hauora*, *happy* or *healthy*. However, it does provide English understandings of the dimensions – physical, psychological, spiritual and emotional. According to TTK, the primary objective is to ensure these dimensions nurture the wellbeing of all *tamariki-mokopuna*, *whānau* and *kaiako*. In addition, two of the dimensions, *tinana* and *hinengaro*, are mentioned alongside other Māori notions, emphasising the importance of *whānau* and WKM working together to nurture *tamariki-mokopuna*. An overall focus in this statement is recognising *he taonga te mokopuna* – the child is a precious gift.

Although *whānau* have varying levels of spoken *te reo* and understanding of *tikanga*, they are adamant that *te reo me ōna tikanga Māori* must be considered a key component of high-quality early learning for *tamariki-mokopuna*. All *whānau* have been influenced by their own personal journey with *te reo me ōna tikanga Māori*. For example, the *kuia* of the WKM describes herself as being raised Māori within a Māori community, yet she was discouraged from speaking *te reo*. Not being able to speak *te reo* has been challenging for her. She believes the WKM should have a fluent *te reo Māori*-speaking *kuia*. However, she also emphasises the importance of having a *kuia* conversant with *tikanga* and an understanding nature. While traditional understandings position *te reo me ōna tikanga Māori* as inseparable (Pere, 1982), this comment discloses the changing face of *kuia*. While some may not be able to speak *te reo Māori*, they may still have sound knowledge of *tikanga*. Sadly, there are many Māori who cannot speak *te reo Māori* and do not have any understandings of *tikanga*. As discussed regularly throughout this thesis, colonisation of Aotearoa New Zealand resulted in enforced assimilation (Rau & Ritchie, 2011) and a serious decline of Māori language speakers (Walker, 2004). The varying levels of speaking and understanding *te reo me ōna tikanga Māori*, amongst the *whānau* in this study suggests the WKM plays a critical role in supporting *tamariki-mokopuna Māori* and *whānau* in their learning, identity and sense of belonging. As the *kuia* and other *whānau* state, *tamariki-mokopuna* who attend WKM often become *te reo me ōna tikanga Māori* teachers for their *whānau*. Also, while differences in *te mita o te reo Māori* (Māori dialect) are

acknowledged, whānau are mainly focused on acquisition of te reo me ōna tikanga Māori. As most of the whānau are from the iwi Ngā Puhi and the fluent speakers in the WKM speak Ngā Puhi dialect, the WKM have adopted this dialect as their principal language of communication. Furthermore, whānau believe tamariki-mokopuna Māori who are conversant in te reo will be prepared for their transition into adulthood, confident to explore their own culture and move easily between Māori and Pākehā worlds. Importantly, whānau express te reo me ōna tikanga Māori embodies the teachings of ngā atua where traditional knowledges and practices such as care and respect towards each other, culture and environment are emphasised.

Te Whāriki makes sound statements supporting whānau views of the importance of te reo me ōna tikanga Māori – also recognising the inseparability between language and culture. In reference to Te Tiriti o Waitangi, *Te Whāriki* directs all early childhood centres to ensure te reo Māori not only survives but flourishes. An appreciation and normalisation of te reo me ōna tikanga Māori within the centre programming is important. While *Te Whāriki* affirms the importance of te reo me ōna tikanga Māori, the strand Mana Reo underpins tamariki-mokopuna identity, wellbeing and belonging. Corresponding with *Te Whāriki*, TTK includes statements stressing the importance of nurturing and sustaining te reo me ōna tikanga Māori. This is validated through a statement asserting the WKM responsibility as kaitiaki of te reo. In addition, TTK provides examples of how the WKM intends to support the acquisition of te reo me ōna tikanga Māori. In line with whānau views, TTK asserts the importance of teaching te reo through waiata, conversations, instructions, whakapapa, pepeha, pūrākau, pakiwaitara (stories), whakairo (carvings), uku (clay modelling), raranga (weaving), and mahi a rēhia (fun games). The WKM commitment to teaching te reo Māori extends to providing wānanga reo classes to help whānau with their learning so they can support the learning and development of tamariki-mokopuna. Similar to whānau aspirations, TTK states that tamariki-mokopuna transitioning confidently in both worlds – Māori and Pākehā – is essential.

Overall findings reveal while the relationship between whānau views, *Te Whāriki* and TTK appears secure, there are areas requiring strengthening. Whānau views regarding mana, aroha, manaakitanga, harikoa, hauora and te reo me ōna tikanga Māori have been identified and endorsed in various ways by *Te Whāriki* and TTK. However, while these documents make many affirmative statements supporting whānau views and Kaupapa Māori, together with various references to kaupapa Māori-support documents, there are areas of concern. *Te Whāriki* does not provide the in-depth understandings of Māori concepts required to fully comprehend the genesis of Māori philosophies or ways in which these knowledges support and nurture te mana

o tamariki-mokopuna Māori. Again, while *Te Whāriki* endorses the importance of the dimensions tinana, hinengaro, wairua and whatumanawa, there is a noticeable exclusion of theoretical knowledge explaining their meaning and purpose. Moreover, *Te Whāriki* does not recognise or promote the interdependent relationship between taumata whakahirahira (strands and goals) and the dimensions (Reedy, 2013; Reedy, Reedy, Reedy, Matai, & Reedy, 2015).

As mentioned previously in this thesis, the 2017 revised curriculum of *Te Whāriki* produced two distinctive curricula – *Te Whāriki*, for all licensed early childhood centres, including MIECC and MMECC, and *Te Whāriki a te Kōhanga Reo*. The previous 1996 curriculum of *Te Whāriki* gave permission for Māori immersion early childhood centres to use Te Kōhanga Reo curriculum. Lady Tilly and Sir Tamati Reedy (representatives of Te Kōhanga Reo Trust at the time) were the authors of the 1993 draft and 1996 Māori curriculum of *Te Whāriki*. In reference to te mana o te mokopuna, the Reedys explained that the interdependent relationship between taumata whakahirahira and the dimensions is central to the learning, development and building of mana in tamariki-mokopuna Māori (Reedy, 2013; Reedy et al., 2015). The Reedys’ theories and philosophies (introduced further on) provide a framework to understand te mana o tamariki-mokopuna. Importantly, their theoretical understandings underpin the Māori component of *Te Whāriki* (MoE, 1993, 1996, 2017a) and *Te Whāriki a te Kōhanga Reo* (MoE, 2017b).

It is imperative kaiako learn the deeper levels of Māori knowledge required when working with tamariki-mokopuna and whānau Māori. *Te Whāriki* proposes licensed early childhood centres support kaiako in their professional development so they learn to “develop meaningful relationships with whānau and that they respect their aspirations for their children, along with those of hapū, iwi and the wider community” (p. 20); “develop their own knowledge of te reo Māori, tikanga Māori and Māori world views so that they are better able to support children to understand their own mana atuaanga” (p. 28); “support mokopuna to engage respectfully with and to have aroha for Papatūānuku” (p. 33); “facilitate tuakana–teina [older–younger children relationships] and ensure that mokopuna have opportunities to manaaki and take responsibility for others” (p. 28); “support mokopuna to stand proud and firm (tū tangata) by building and maintaining relationships based on respect and reciprocity” (p. 38); “model positive attitudes towards hauora, healthy eating and activity” (p. 30); and “demonstrate... an awareness of hauora and healthy lifestyles” (p. 27).

Recommendations outlined in *Te Whāriki* require kaiako to attain traditional Māori understandings of whakapapa, deities, concepts and te reo me ōna tikanga Māori. Equally

important is kaiako understanding the relationship between taumata whakahirahira – Mana Atua, Mana Whenua, Mana Tangata, Mana Reo and Mana Aotūroa and the dimensions Tinana, Hinengaro, Wairua and Whatumanawa. This requires kaiako in WKM to engage authentically with these understandings. While so, it is the responsibility of WKM to ensure kaiako are provided with ongoing opportunities to develop their understandings, especially to support te mana o tamariki-mokopuna Māori as a key feature of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori.

Te Tauākī Kaupapa also includes statements that align with whānau views interrelating with mana, aroha, manaakitanga, harikoa, hauora and te reo me ōna tikanga Māori. Although TTK clearly affirms the WKM commitment to ensuring these elements are implemented, TTK does not provide deeper theoretical understandings of what these elements mean. Explanations are important as many whānau are in the process of learning te reo me ōna tikanga Māori and reconnecting with their identity as Māori. Meanings and understandings could be reinforced in Wānanga Reo or for kaiako through professional development as endorsed by the WKM. Importantly, learning about the interconnectedness between taumata whakahirahira and the dimensions will ensure kaiako and whānau understand ways in which tamariki-mokopuna grow, learn and develop (Reedy, 2013; Reedy et al., 2015). To ensure te mana o tamariki-mokopuna Māori is recognised and actualised in TTK, the WKM, together with whānau, hapori, hapū and iwi, need to clearly articulate its central values, principles, aspirations and practices (MoE, 2011). As a MMECC, these views must be embedded in Māori knowledges and understandings and enacted in practice.

Lady Tilly and Sir Tamati Reedy – Te Mana o te Mokopuna

Understanding the roles and purpose of taumata whakahirahira and the dimensions is extremely important, especially in relation to the learning and development of tamariki-mokopuna Māori (Reedy, 2013; Reedy et al., 2015). Māori theories of ngā taumata whakahirahira and dimensions Tinana, Hinengaro, Wairua and Whatumanawa originated from the Reedys' theoretical writings. This next section provides an elucidation of their philosophies.

When discussing views of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna in WKM, whānau envisioned an environment infused in aroha and manaakitanga and embedded in te reo me ōna tikanga Māori. Also, the harikoa and hauora – health and happiness – of tamariki-mokopuna is regarded as extremely important. Whānau views are encapsulated in the Reedy's (2013)

theoretical perspectives of te mana o te mokopuna where “development of mana” (p. 47) is achievable providing mokopuna are:

nurtured in the knowledge that they are loved [arohatia] and respected [whakarangatiratia-manaakitanga]; that their physical [tinana], mental [hinengaro], spiritual [wairua], and emotional strength [whatumanawa] will build mana, influence, and control; that having mana is the enabling and empowering tool to controlling their destiny. (p. 47)

Embedded within this statement are theories relating to harikoa, hauora and te reo me ōna tikanga Māori. Notably, the Reedys’ refer to the elements Tinana, Hinengaro, Wairua and Whatumanawa as “Dimensions of the Learner” (p. 46). While these dimensions have been explained earlier in traditional understandings, the Reedys’ explanations describe ways each dimension supports tamariki-mokopuna in their development, learning and growth.

Tinana.

The dimension Tinana “deals with the physical power and the health of the body” (p. 46). Mokopuna learn they can experience enjoyment through playing and participating in sports, alongside ways in which the body can communicate through verbal and non-verbal expression. In addition, mokopuna gain an understanding about their bodily functions and various developments of the body. Physical identity through identifying oneself with whenua as well as gaining understanding of the health and wellbeing of land and peoples is an important component to the dimension Tinana. Furthermore, learning about traditional and modern thoughts about the body is considered important education.

Hinengaro.

The dimension Hinengaro “deals with the power of the mind” (p. 46). Mokopuna learn thought processes, and how to manage internal and external influences which include ways to support empowerment. Traditional Māori philosophies, inclusive of Te Pō and Te Kore, alongside modern understandings of the cosmic void, are considered important learning. Karakia (incantations) are essential to teaching and learning as they provide a clear pathway for the day’s events. Moreover, karakia support the mokopuna with their daily requirements, and help them to build confidence to seek support if needed and to achieve specific goals.

Wairua.

The dimension Wairua “deals with spiritual power and the sense of oneness with the universe” (p. 46). Mokopuna learn the universe is comprised of matter with the same energy forces.

Mokopuna also learn that “past, present, and future are sources of trust, confidence, and self-esteem” (p. 46). It is essential for mokopuna to engage in inquiry about cosmological beginnings, including ngā atua, as they are crucial stimuli for the mind. Importantly, mokopuna need to learn traditional beliefs together with further belief systems, which may include religious, modern scientific knowledge and other philosophical understandings.

Whatumanawa.

Whatumanawa “deals with the power of the emotions” (p. 47). Mokopuna learn through experiences about their emotions fluctuating from “love and happiness, to hate and sorrow” (p. 47). It is thought mokopuna exposed to happy and positive experiences reflect these involvements and exhibit confidence and a positive self-image.

The Reedy’s theoretical perspectives of the dimensions Tinana, Hinengaro, Wairua and Whatumanawa outline the aims and responsibilities of each dimension. The dimension Tinana concentrates on physical strength, awareness of one’s relationship with whenua and overall health of the mokopuna and land. Traditional and contemporary teachings are regarded important stimuli for the dimension Hinengaro. Knowledge of both Māori and other sciences, alongside maintaining cultural practices such as karakia, help to balance the Hinengaro and create a calm disposition. The dimension Wairua supports tamariki-mokopuna to gain traditional understandings about ngā atua. Wairua also supports tamariki-mokopuna to understand their own physical and metaphysical location to past, present and future. Whatumanawa is responsible for emotions – teaching tamariki-mokopuna Māori how to deal with conflicting emotions, from aroha and harikoa, to kino (hate) and pōuritanga (sadness).

The Reedy’s theories incorporate a respectful supportive relationship between ngā taumata whakahirahira (discussed next) and the dimensions. This relationship nurtures tamariki-mokopuna Māori in their learning, development and wellbeing which is critical to high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori.

Lady Tilly and Sir Tamati Reedy – Ngā Taumata Whakahirahira

According to the Reedy’s, “the main achievement occurs in the development of the MANA of the [mokopuna]” (Reedy et al., 2015, p. 14). Mana underpins each of the five taumata whakahirahira – Mana Atua, Mana Tangata, Mana Reo, Mana Whenua and Mana Aotūroa – each taumata represents different levels of empowerment. The Reedy’s theoretical perspectives of ngā taumata whakahirahira are introduced next.

Mana Atua is described as “spiritual and sacredness, unique and divine sense, developing a sense of wellbeing” (Reedy, 2013, p. 50). Mana Atua represents the personal wellbeing of the mokopuna. Each mokopuna is born with “a divine spirit, a spark of godliness” (p. 47). Through Mana Atua, tamariki-mokopuna Māori learn they are spiritual, capable and unique. Tamariki-mokopuna Māori in early childhood education need to know they are celebrated and revered as learners and it is the responsibility of the kaiako to ensure this is actioned.

Mana Tangata emulates “one’s contribution to peoples, places and things, developing self-esteem, developing ability to control” (Reedy, 2013, p. 50). Mana Tangata is fundamental to the development of the kiritau (self-esteem) of tamariki-mokopuna Māori and instrumental in supporting tamariki-mokopuna Māori to deal with fears and insecurities. Positive interpersonal relationships, including ways in which tamariki-mokopuna care and respond to others, are seen to support their learning as well as their physical and emotional maturation.

Mana Reo is centred on “speaking the [Māori] language, communication, knowing the sacredness of the language” (Reedy, 2013, p. 50). Mana can be nurtured through positive communication. Mana Reo ensures tamariki-mokopuna Māori can learn the richness and expression of te reo Māori. Acquisition of fluency can further enhance the mana of tamariki-mokopuna. Te reo Māori provides a deeper richness to understanding the values and beliefs embodied in Te Ao Māori.

Mana Whenua reflects “identity and belonging, rootedness, developing a sense of sovereignty with land” (Reedy, 2013, p. 50). Mentioned previously in Chapter 5: Whakapapa, when a mokopuna is born, their whenua returns to the whenua (placenta returns to the land) – generally their papakāinga (home base). These dual meanings locate tamariki-mokopuna in “spiritual unity with the land, its people and the universe at large” (Reedy, 2013, p. 48). Whenua provides tamariki-mokopuna with a sense of identity, love and respect for the whenua and the environment.

Mana Aotūroa focuses on “exploration, curiosity and adventure, developing understanding of self and the universe” (Reedy, 2013, p. 50). Tamariki-mokopuna learn to explore their environment and the world and while doing so they develop their curiosity and desire for knowledge and answers. Comparable to their learning through Mana Whenua, tamariki-mokopuna Māori also learn about their interrelationship with the universe – how the physical world interconnects with their emotional, mental and spiritual worlds.

Each taumata whakahirahira is underpinned by mana and premised on empowering tamariki-mokopuna. Mana Atua is responsible for the spirituality, uniqueness and wellbeing of tamariki-mokopuna Māori. Mana Tangata ensures tamariki-mokopuna are working with and alongside their peers to help sustain their environment – which is essential to sustaining and nurturing their self-esteem and self-control. Mana Reo supports tamariki-mokopuna Māori to know, speak and understand the spirituality and purity of Māori language and how it guides knowledge of tikanga. Mana Whenua focuses on identity and belonging with self and beyond, including spirituality with whenua. Lastly, Mana Aotūroa encourages exploration, inquisitiveness and discovery between self and the physical and metaphysical worlds. Ngā taumata whakahirahira, in relationship with the dimensions, are critical elements of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori.

Although this chapter emanates from whānau views and is focused on observing ways *Te Whāriki* and TTK support these views, the Reedys’ elucidations of mana articulated in ngā taumata whakahirahira, together with the dimensions, provide an in-depth philosophical understanding of te mana o tamariki-mokopuna Māori. The Reedys’ explanations clearly inform the dimensions, and ngā taumata whakahirahira are interdependent. This was articulated earlier, when explaining te mana o tamariki-mokopuna Māori, by the Reedys’ statement “that their physical [tinana], mental [hinengaro], spiritual [wairua], and emotional strength [whatumanawa] will build mana, influence, and control; that having mana is the enabling and empowering tool to controlling their destiny” (Reedy, 2013, p. 47).

To illustrate this relationship visually and to demonstrate how the two work in unison, I have created the table below (Table 1) by drawing directly on the Reedys’ explications documented in “*Tōku Rangatiratanga nā te Mana Mātauranga: Knowledge and Power Set Me Free*” (Reedy, 2013) in conjunction with a workbook I received from a hui (meeting) facilitated by the Reedy whānau at Ōrākei Marae in Tāmaki Makaurau (Auckland) in May 2015, titled *Te Wai Whakaata – Te Whāriki*. Mentioned consistently, the Reedys’ theories are critical to this study and extremely important when working with and teaching tamariki-mokopuna, hence the inclusion of the table. The table is a reconfiguration of the Reedys’ theoretical understandings of the dimensions and ngā taumata whakahirahira.

Table 1

Ngā Taumata Whakahirahira and Dimensions of a Learner

Ngā taumata whakahirahira	Tinana	Hinengaro	Wairua	Whatumanawa
<i>Mana Atua</i>	Power of the body	Power of the mind	Power of the spirit	Power of emotions
The spiritual and sacred The unique and divine Developing a sense of wellbeing	The body manifests its own atua/god The body projects its own powers	Training the mind to inquire, understand and progress one’s destiny through life Belief in self	The spark of godliness in each human being Each is unique Mauri is in all things animate and inanimate	Emotions express our inner and outer worlds Positive thoughts fuel happiness, success Negative thoughts fuel negative outcomes
<i>Mana Tangata</i>	Physical power	Intellectual powers	Spiritual powers	Emotional powers
One’s contribution to people, places and things Developing self-esteem Developing ability to control	Exercise and good nutrition build: – A healthy body – A strong body – A fit body	Imprint belief systems Develop skills and knowledge for success Belief that opportunities abound in life No trials – this is life	Spirit of giving Caring for others Creating firm relationships	Encouraging joy and happiness Removing fears and inhibitions Supporting fairness and justice
<i>Mana Reo</i>	Body of communication	Power of language	Spiritual communication	Emotional communication
Speaking the language Communication Knowing the sacredness of the language	Language and its many forms – voice, sign, mind (telepathy) Language and its physical structures Express culture and people’s mana	Medium organised by the mind for communication Use of language skills enhances mana of the medium and person	Every language carries its own spirit Every language is precious Language must be spoken to survive	Conveying emotions powerfully – love, happiness, sorrow, fear, hate Language and a strong identity develop a healthy, confident person

Ngā taumata whakahirahira	Tinana	Hinengaro	Wairua	Whatumanawa
<i>Mana Whenua</i>	Physical identity	Intellectual identity	Spiritual identity	Emotional identity
Identity and belonging Rootedness	Cultural symbolism – houses, food, music	Recognition and imprinting of home and place – land, rivers, mountains, people	Land, people, and universe are one	Identity with the land is developed through art, music, language, poetry, drama, and history
Developing a sense of sovereignty with land	Researching health of land and people Identifying with land of one’s birth/ancestry	Self-esteem and love of “home”	Spirit of the land is in the person	Understanding wars over land
<i>Mana Aotūroa</i>	The physical universe	Time and space orientation	Spiritual universe	Exploring the emotional universe
Exploration Curiosity and adventure	Exploration of self, mankind, earth, and the universe	Conquering the unknown – internal and external	The source of all energy in the universe is one	Recognising universal “laws” of the emotions – love, greed
Developing understandings of self and the universe	Knowledge of the old and new Exploration of “large” and “small”	Exploring and understanding one’s uniqueness and similarity with the rest of the universe	Exploring and discovering is a spiritual experience	Developing those that bring peace, harmony, balance

Note. This table is a reconfiguration of Reedy’s theoretical perspectives of ngā taumata whakahirahira and “dimensions of a learner” (see Reedy, 2013, pp. 50–51). Importantly, the table has been developed to illuminate the Reedy’s theories for the purpose of this thesis only and is not intended for reproduction or publication.

Table 1 positions ngā taumata whakahirahira on the left and the dimensions to the right. Gaining optimum power in each of the dimensions will ensure the development of mana. Notably, the dimensions and ngā taumata are in a symbiotic relationship and do not work independently.

The Reedy's theoretical elucidations presented in this section provide the deeper knowledge required to understand the learning and development of tamariki-mokopuna Māori. Importantly, this knowledge is critical to understanding and identifying te mana o tamariki-mokopuna Māori as a key component of high-quality early learning.

Summary

This chapter concludes by asserting te mana o tamariki-mokopuna Māori must be recognised as a key feature of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna in WKM (all ECC). Whānau views relating to high-quality early learning emphasise the importance of tamariki-mokopuna Māori being raised in an environment infused with aroha and manaakitanga, underpinned by te reo me ōna tikanga Māori. In addition, whānau desire tamariki-mokopuna to be harikoa and hauora – happy and healthy. These aspirations are personified in Lady Tilly and Sir Tamati Reedy's theoretical understandings of te mana o te mokopuna. Embedded in these understandings are fusions of traditional knowledges. The main objective is to ensure the Tinana, Hinengaro, Wairua and Whatumanawa of tamariki-mokopuna is lovingly and respectfully nurtured to enable the development of their mana – the building of mana is integral to te mana o tamariki-mokopuna Māori.

While *Te Whāriki* and TTK acknowledge and endorse whānau aspirations, the level to which these critical documents can uphold whānau views is constrained and does not go far enough to support the deeper level of knowledge required for the nurturing, development and learning of tamariki-mokopuna Māori – te mana o tamariki-mokopuna Māori. The Reedy's framework contains critical knowledge that could lead to greater understandings regarding te mana o tamariki-mokopuna Māori – especially when authenticating te mana o tamariki-mokopuna Māori as a key feature of high-quality early learning in WKM. *Te Whāriki* encourages WKM to design its own curriculum reflective of its environment. In addition, TTK provides an opportunity for WKM to document their core values, principles and aspirations (MoE, 2011). Consequently, it is the responsibility of WKM (all ECC) to authenticate these theories in all areas of their curriculum programme and philosophy. Moreover, it is imperative that teacher education institutions and professional development services include this theoretical knowledge in their teaching programmes. Notably, this knowledge must be taught by experts in this area.

Chapter Seven: He kōrero mutunga: Conclusion

The purpose of this research was to identify key elements of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori in Whare Kōhungahunga Māori (WKM). In pursuit of what this might look like, my principle research question asked: What key elements ensure tamariki-mokopuna Māori in Whare Kōhungahunga Māori early childhood contexts receive a high-quality Māori-centric early learning education? Successive questions focused on whānau views of high-quality, followed by the way early childhood education mandatory documents, *Te Whāriki* and Te Tauākī Kaupapa (philosophy statement - TTK) support these views. Notably, interviews with 10 whānau Māori from two WKM identified numerous notions of high-quality. Therefore, whenever I use the term high-quality early learning, I am talking about *multiple* learnings.

This research was underpinned by Kaupapa Māori theory and methodology. Pūrākau informed by semi-structured interviews and document analysis were employed as research methods. Pūrākau was also drawn on as a methodology in terms of the writing of this thesis, providing me (the researcher) the opportunity to weave my own unique style of storying. Collective pūrākau in this research included my own, Nana Lettys' and whānau participants. Pūrākau generated from literature and two key mandatory documents *Te Whāriki* and TTK were also incorporated. It was extremely important for me to be conscious of the *pūrākau* within the pūrākau – the stories inside the stories. More than anything, I was aware that, “my voice as the storyteller has the power to shape and deliver a message in a way that esteems or undermines the ‘voice’ and the pūrākau” (Cliffe, 2013, p. 40). My intention was to esteem the voice and the pūrākau of all contributors.

It was also critical to the researcher that all components in the findings chapters were represented simultaneously, therefore a synthesis of historical and traditional literature – the *past*, whānau views, document contexts and discoveries – *the present*, and recommendations – *the future*, were included in each findings chapter. While these three distinct components were identified in their prospective sections, emphasis was placed on the fact that they are interconnected. It is also necessary to stress that the methods and methodologies induced a courageous conversation between literature, people and documents.

Nana Letty's chapter was fundamental to this thesis. Kaumātua like Nana Letty are repositories of Māori knowledge (Waitangi Tribunal, 2013) who played (play) a critical role in the

reclamation of Māori identity, language, land, culture and education. Introducing Nana Letty's chapter before the findings chapters provided a space to honour the agentic qualities of Nana Letty, and other community mobilisers like her, who dedicated their lives to challenging dominant Western discourses and practices in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Nana Letty's journey from rural Te Araroa to urban Te Atatū, followed by marriage, tamariki, Playcentre, Māori Playcentre (Waipareira Playcentre), Kōhanga Reo and Puna Reo and so much more, provided the context to this thesis, foregrounding the research in historical, political, social, cultural and traditional Māori knowledge. Even though Nana Letty faced racism and discrimination – she did not detract from her primary mission to advocate for the right for tamariki-mokopuna Māori to be educated in Māori immersion early childhood education centres (MIECC). Nana's values and philosophies regarding high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori have not changed in the 60 plus years she has worked in this profession. When discussing notions of high-quality early learning Nana Letty spoke to the absolute importance of te reo Māori. She described an early childhood environment infused in te reo me ōna tikanga Māori. What is more, she advocated strongly for all early learning and teaching practices involving tamariki-mokopuna Māori to be guided by ngā atua Māori.

Similar to Nana Letty's interview, whānau pūrākau were personal and heartfelt. The personal journeys of whānau influenced their theorisation of the key components of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori. They talked openly about language, identity, belonging – connectedness, disconnectedness and for some, a deep desire to re-connect to and with Te Ao Māori. Importantly, urban WKM provide whānau who may be living away or disconnected from their papakāinga or whenua, a safe space to belong, become and be Māori. One whānau participant described WKM as a place *“where our Māori children can come and have a sense of identity, where whānau can come and feel like they are reconnecting with their culture.”*

For some whānau, WKM is a safe space to be educated in Te Ao Māori and for other whānau, WKM has provided the learning where tamariki-mokopuna can teach their parents and siblings. While tuākana and tēina is usually described figuratively to represent the older child teaching the younger child (G.H. Smith, 1985; Harte & Jenkins, 2011; MoE, 2017), Āwhina, a kuia in the research, shared a scenario where the parent assumed the role as tēina and the tamaiti is the tuākana. She said:

Honestly I went to a home yesterday and a Mum said to me, he comes home singing [Āwhina] because she had pulled him out of another [teaching environment] and she said

he comes home singing the [waiata] and then he said, are we going to pray, are we going to have karakia for our kai and it's teaching the parents.

Similarly, Kaha one of the mātua who does not speak te reo Māori, shared how her daughter teaches her and her boys. In this kōrero, the mother and older brothers are viewed as tēina:

I would love to speak Māori. It's very beautiful. Like when my daughter comes home and like she's talking Māori and I just sit there, and I stare at her and her waiata and stuff and [I] say like teach them [her brothers] your waiata and actions. She's really good [at sharing what she has learnt] ... I would love her to talk Māori, to teach me...

Tamariki-mokopuna Māori taking on the responsibility of teaching their whānau te reo me ōna tikanga Māori confirms that tuākana tēina relationships are not confined to age (older sibling, teaching younger sibling). Tuākana tēina learning relationships are also strengths based. Identifying the role of tamariki-mokopuna as tuākana is an important component of high-quality early learning.

Limitations of Te Whāriki and Te Tauākī Kaupapa

A key focus of this research was establishing the ways in which *Te Whāriki* and TTK support whānau views. Overall, this research found that *Te Whāriki* and TTK include varying statements that support whānau aspirations of high-quality early learning, including Te Tiriti o Waitangi, Whakapapa and Te Mana o Tamariki-Mokopuna Māori. Additional elements identified by whānau and derived from Whakapapa – whānau, whanaungatanga, tuakiri and mana whenua were also recognised in *Te Whāriki* and TTK. Further elements underpinning Te Mana o Tamariki-Mokopuna Māori - mana, aroha, manaakitanga, harikoa, hauora and te reo me ōna tikanga Māori featured in these two documents. This research identified that while *Te Whāriki* and TTK reference these concepts, they do not provide the deeper level of Māori historical, traditional, theoretical, philosophical or pedagogical knowledge required to fully comprehend the inference of each āhuatanga and element.

It should be emphasised, when analysing *Te Whāriki*, my focus was primarily on the 2017 revised curriculum and not the previous 1996 curriculum. However, I did engage in a moderate analysis of the two curriculum documents and found three key differences. One is that the 2017 revised curriculum does not make provisions for Māori immersion early childhood centres (MIECC) as it did in the 1996 curriculum, where MIECC were given permission to use the Kōhanga Reo curriculum.

During the 2017 revision process of *Te Whāriki, Te Whāriki a Te Kōhanga Reo* was assigned exclusively for Kōhanga Reo under Te Kōhanga Reo National Trust. All other licensed centres including MIECC and Māori medium early childhood centres (MMECC) are expected to adhere to the contents of *Te Whāriki* which is considered a bicultural curriculum. *Te Whāriki* states there are “two distinct curriculum pathways: one bicultural, derived from a synthesis of traditional Māori thinking and sociocultural theorising and one indigenous, each with its own pedagogy” (MoE, p. 69). MIECC and MMECC are indigenous early childhood centres with their own pedagogy. While this study does not dispute the inherent rights of Te Kōhanga Reo having their own curriculum, it does question the 2017 revision process of *Te Whāriki*, namely the absence of consideration afforded to MIECC and MMECC.

Another noticeable difference is in the 1996 curriculum, where a key question for reflection asked, “In what ways do the environment and programme reflect the values embodied in Te Tiriti o Waitangi, and what impact does this have on adults and children?” (MoE, 1996, p. 56). This reflective question has not been reassigned to the 2017 revised curriculum. The transference of this question for consideration would encourage WKM (all ECC) to reflect on their roles and responsibilities as partners to Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Again, while *Te Whāriki* states that policies and practices are to ensure smooth transitioning of children and their parents in early childhood settings, this statement makes no specific mention of a Te Tiriti o Waitangi policy. A Tiriti o Waitangi policy would ensure that the WKM (and other ECC) remain committed to guaranteeing their philosophical and pedagogical practices are underpinned by a “spirit of partnership and the acceptance of obligations for participation and protection” (MoE, 2017a, p. 3). Furthermore, although *Te Whāriki* and TTK provided statements, acknowledging, including and adhering to Te Tiriti o Waitangi, they do not give a comprehensive explanation of the history of biculturalism in relation to Te Tiriti o Waitangi, which is fundamental to understanding bicultural early childhood practice.

Finally, while *Te Whāriki* and TTK provided statements endorsing the importance of whakapapa and its interconnected features, there is an assumption that all whānau know their whakapapa. There is no recognition of whānau disconnection from whakapapa. The way *Te Whāriki* and TTK statements are articulated assumes that all Māori are aware of and connected to their whakapapa. Woven throughout this thesis are pūrākau illustrating the negative impact of colonisation on Māori. Many Māori have been displaced from their language, land and identity. Although WKM have been instrumental in the reclamation of Māori language and identity, it is imperative that they demonstrate sensitivity towards Māori who may continue to

feel disconnected. Knowing the history of Aotearoa is fundamental to understanding the damaging effects of colonisation – and how this has impacted on the lives of tamariki-mokopuna and whānau Māori in today’s society. More so, being aware of the history of Aotearoa is vital to comprehending the operationalisation of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and biculturalism in Aotearoa education systems. Therefore, it is crucial that kaiako and kaimahi are given the opportunity to participate in regular professional development to help strengthen their understandings regarding the concerns raised. Additionally, as Te Tiriti o Waitangi partners, teacher education institutions are responsible for ensuring their educational programmes include historical teachings pertaining to Māori traditions, Te Tiriti o Waitangi and bicultural discourse.

A further feature of high-quality early learning, Te Mana o Tamariki-Mokopuna Māori, underpinned by mana, aroha, manaakitanga, harikoa and hauora and te reo me ōna tikanga Māori, were identified and endorsed in various ways throughout *Te Whāriki* and TTK. However, *Te Whāriki* and TTK do not provide the in-depth understandings of these Māori concepts to fully comprehend ways in which these knowledges support, nurture and develop te mana o tamariki-mokopuna Māori – which is fundamental to high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori. For example, while *Te Whāriki* validates the importance of the dimensions tinana, hinengaro, wairua and whatumanawa – there is a noticeable exclusion of theoretical knowledge explaining or advocating the interdependent relationship between the taumata whakahirahira (strands and goals) and the dimensions (Reedy, 2013; Reedy et al., 2015).

It is absolutely critical that all people who teach tamariki-mokopuna Māori understand the interdependent symbiotic relationship between ngā taumata whakahirahira and the dimensions. Professional development services and teacher education institutions have a major role in ensuring kaiako and kaimahi who currently teach, as well as early childhood pre-service teachers fully understand the relationship between the two components. Above all, understanding *Te Whāriki*, as designed and created by Lady Tilly and Sir Tamati Reedy (see Table 1) is fundamental to the nurturing, learning and development of te mana o tamariki-mokopuna Māori. As the Reedy’s stated, “the main achievement occurs in the development of the MANA of the [mokopuna]” (Reedy et al., 2015, p. 14). Ngā taumata whakahirahira are responsible for infusing mana to the tinana, hinengaro, wairua and whatumanawa – and it is here where learning and development of tamariki-mokopuna Māori materialises.

Whare Kōhungahunga Māori-Centric High-Quality Early Learning Curriculum Programme

According to whānau in this research a Whare Kōhungahunga Māori-centric, high-quality early learning curriculum programme should be underpinned by Te Tiriti o Waitangi. All peoples involved with teaching, caring and nurturing tamariki-mokopuna Māori must understand the history of biculturalism in relation to Te Tiriti of Waitangi. When working with tamariki-mokopuna Māori, Te Tiriti o Waitangi will be reflected in all areas of the curriculum (WKM environment). What is more, tamariki-mokopuna Māori, should be able to transition between both worlds – Te Ao Māori and Te Ao Pākehā with confidence.

Moreover, a Te Tiriti o Waitangi informed curriculum promotes the building of trusting authentic relationships with tamariki-mokopuna, whānau, kaiako and kaimahi – all peoples associated with WKM. In addition, whānau highlighted the importance of whakawhanaungatanga, caring for each other and caring for those who may be disconnected from their whakapapa. Caring relationships would be supported through a curriculum programme infused with aroha. Kaiako and kaimahi would be required to have exceptional teaching skills. They must *whakamana i te reo o ngā tūpuna* – empower the language of our ancestors – by speaking te reo Māori at all times and ensuring all aspects of the teaching programme are guided by te reo me ōna tikanga Māori. Whānau also talked about being aware of whānau who were at different levels of learning and understanding te reo me ōna tikanga Māori, thus it was essential to nurture and respect people who are still learning. Also, teaching tamariki-mokopuna Māori through waiata, ngā mahi a rēhia, mau rākau and learning traditional practices underpinned by ngā atua was considered paramount. Kaiako and kaimahi must sustain these essential teaching practices. Therefore, on-going access to quality Māori-centric professional development is crucial. Teacher education institutions must therefore ensure their programmes are aligned to high-quality te reo me ōna tikanga Māori programmes, alongside deeper levels of Māori philosophical and pedagogical knowledge.

Sustaining the spiritual wellbeing of tamariki-mokopuna is fundamental to high-quality early learning in WKM. *Te Whāriki* states: “For Māori the spiritual dimension is fundamental to holistic development because it connects the other dimensions across time and space” (MoE, 2017, p. 19). This connection is illustrated in Lady Tilly and Sir Tamati Reedy’s theoretical understandings of *Te Whāriki* (see Table 1). A Māori-centric high-quality early learning curriculum programme should include karakia to provide spiritual protection within the WKM

environment but also when travelling outside their region. This requires kaiako and kaimahi to be competent in their understanding of wairua and karakia – particularly ways these mediums are used to help cleanse an environment, provide protection and prepare for daily events. Ritchie (2003), Taniwha (2005), ERO (2010b, 2012) and others, have been vocal in their advocacy for kaiako having access to professional development to support authentic bicultural discourse, cultural responsiveness and Te Tiriti o Waitangi partnerships. *Te Whāriki* also endorses the need for kaiako to participate in all levels of professional development. Therefore, professional development is absolutely essential for current kaiako and kaimahi to obtain the knowledge required to understand the essence of wairua Māori and karakia. Moreover, teachings relating to wairua and karakia Māori should be included in teacher education institutions programming and taught by peoples who have expert knowledge.

Further characteristics identified by whānau, centred on kaiako and kaimahi maintaining positive energy within the WKM. Kaiako, kaimahi and tamariki-mokopuna exhibiting fun, happy, humorous and joyful dispositions was considered comforting and reassuring to whānau. Creating a warm secure, calm, safe environment in WKM where whānau feel welcomed and honoured is necessary. This enactment of whanaungatanga is encouraging for whānau as it helps them to feel confident to leave their tamaiti. Creating a warm, caring atmosphere helps to nurture te mana o tamariki-mokopuna Māori. Nurturing mana includes honouring tamariki-mokopuna Māori who might be engaged in specific mahi, such as a building project, therefore it is important to whakamana (empower) tamariki-mokopuna to continue and not be too rigid about timetables. Consequently, it is crucial that kaiako and kaimahi have the opportunity to participate in professional development to support these understandings. Equally significant is teacher education institutions upholding, teaching and assessing against these principles and values in their student teaching programmes.

Additional features include teaching and supporting tamariki-mokopuna Māori to understand their responsibilities as kaitiaki of the environment. This requires teachings centred on troubled and polluted waters and whenua and being aware of the WKM physical surroundings. Knowing the history of the whenua and unique landmarks is vital learning for tamariki-mokopuna, kaiako and kaimahi. Māra kai is another valuable part of the curriculum. Teaching about food sources generated from the māra, together with requirements to nourish the whenua was regarded as valuable learning. Kaitiakitanga – caring for and protecting whenua, wai and te taiao (the environment; MoE, 2017a; Reedy, 2013) is imperative when teaching tamariki-mokopuna. To achieve these requirements, kaiako and kaimahi must have the opportunity to access

professional development focused on the interrelationship Māori have with the natural elements. Teacher education institutions also have a responsibility to educate student teachers about te taiao, whenua, wai – all the requirements of kaitiakitanga. This requires these organisations to be secure in their ability to deliver a Māori-centric teaching programme.

Whānau views in this thesis have provided an insight into the historical, traditional, theoretical, philosophical and pedagogical underpinnings of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori. The impact of colonisation, racism and cultural subjugation, has provided a historical context to this thesis. More so it offers a segue into the implications of Te Tiriti o Waitangi in relation to biculturalism in WKM (and ECC). Beyond question, traditional knowledges are highly recognised in this thesis. Traditional knowledges feature prominently in WKM philosophical and pedagogical practices – and are fundamental to high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori. It is also important to bear in mind that a vast majority of whānau responses aligned with Lady Tilly and Sir Tamati Reedy’s theorisation of *Te Whāriki* (see Table 1) – which is underpinned by traditional knowledge. For example, wairua or spiritual sustainability in relation to both human and land, relates to the aho, Mana Whenua where it stated, “Developing a sense of sovereignty with land” (see Table 1) and the dimension Tinana where it reads “Researching health of land and people” (see page Table 1). Therefore, Māori theoretical understandings of *Te Whāriki* (Reedy, 2013) are extremely relevant to high-quality early learning tamariki-mokopuna Māori.

Contributions

Through honouring whānau views and by rethinking, reviewing and repositioning documents from mediums of power and control (legislative power) – to documents of support – this research has been able to provide an alternative way of working with and bringing the documents *Te Whāriki* and TTK to life – especially in relation to how well they can (or cannot) support whānau views of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori. Moreover, this research facilitated a much-needed critical conversation between peoples and documents.

Reviewing *Te Whāriki* and TTK to examine notions of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna in WKM, provided an opportunity for what Ritchie and Rau describe as a “counter-colonial re-narrativisation” (Ritchie, 2012, p. 63) of these documents. Analysing the contents and contexts allowed me as the researcher a space to question, challenge, critique

and re-narrativise these documents through Māori traditional, philosophical and theoretical understandings.

Recommendations

Whānau in this research identified three key āhuatanga; Te Tiriti o Waitangi, Whakapapa and Te Mana o Tamariki-Mokopuna Māori – supported by numerous interconnecting elements – as core components of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori. Research findings established that while *Te Whāriki* and TTK provide various statements acknowledging these āhuatanga and elements, the two documents do not provide the historical, traditional, theoretical, philosophical and pedagogical knowledge required to fully comprehend their meaning. The following recommendations are based on the study findings:

- External teacher education services must review their teaching programmes associated with Te Tiriti o Waitangi.
- External teacher education services must review their teaching programmes associated with the teaching, learning and development of tamariki-mokopuna Māori to include a high-quality Māori-centric early learning curriculum.
- External teacher education services must seek and employ experts in Māori traditional understandings to teach Māori historical and traditional knowledge – including te reo me ōna tikanga Māori.
- External teaching education services must review their understandings of *Te Whāriki* in relation to teaching tamariki-mokopuna Māori – particularly to ensure Te Mana o Tamariki-Mokopuna Māori is honoured.
- Ministry of Education must provide extensive across-the-career professional development for kaiako and kaimahi, to learn about Māori historical, traditional, theoretical, philosophical and pedagogical understandings, alongside the implications of Te Tiriti o Waitangi for bicultural practice. The Ministry of Education must guarantee professional development is fully funded.
- The Education Review Office: when reviewing practices relating to high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori, procedures must be extensive and robust, underpinned by traditional Māori knowledge and led by peoples who are experts in these understandings.
- Whare Kōhungahunga Māori (all ECC who teach tamariki-mokopuna Māori) must ensure they implement a Te Tiriti o Waitangi policy – and this policy must be understood

by all kaiako and kaimahi, embedded and enacted in all areas of their curriculum and practice, and reviewed regularly.

- Whare Kōhungahunga Māori (all ECC) must ensure their self-review processes are robust when considering notions of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori. All reviews pertaining to tamariki-mokopuna Māori must include whānau Māori, hapori, hapū and iwi voice.
- Whare Kōhungahunga Māori (all ECC) must ensure TTK – philosophy statements include Māori ideals, aspirations, values and principles aligned with high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori – and embed them in all areas of their curriculum.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

My primary focus in this study was to obtain notions of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori from WKM. However, while whānau pūrākau were similar and whānau Māori had many common understandings, this study emphasised the reality that Māori are not a homogenous people. Iwi protocols and language competencies – te reo me ōna tikanga Māori - were diverse – therefore future research must be careful not to homogenise Māori perspectives and experiences. Furthermore, consideration needs to be given to WKM from a range of contexts; urban areas, rural areas, and WKM who may have designed their own curriculum to align with their iwi, hapū, hapori, whānau protocols and traditions. Understandings of high-quality early learning will be reflective of their environments. This is something to consider in future research projects.

Also, while I was able to draw on research associated with historical, traditional and theoretical understandings of Māori philosophies, pedagogies and practices, a limitation of this study was limited access to research studies focused specifically on high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori. As such, this project has made an original and important contribution in an under-researched area.

This research was a small-scale research project conducted across two WKM. Research was conducted in Tāmaki Makaurau – an urban environment in Auckland. While WKM are small in numbers, they are positioned in both urban and rural areas throughout Aotearoa New Zealand. While similar traditional knowledges underpin the philosophy of WKM, understandings and knowledges will be distinctive to their particular physical and spiritual contexts. WKM will have their own unique aspirations for their tamariki-mokopuna in the area they are positioned. Also, there may be different levels of fluency of te reo Māori between rural

and urban areas. Future research in these diverse settings must be cognisant of localised understandings of high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori.

Although WKM will be key contributors to future research projects, there are further multi-stakeholders who must also be involved. For example, the Ministry of Education, Education Review Office, teacher education institutions and professional development services – are relevant authorities who are responsible for maintaining and sustaining high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori. Any future research, should examine the role of these organisations in sustaining high-quality early learning for tamariki-mokopuna Māori.

Appendix A: Participant Information Sheet

Māori Educational Research Project

Participant Information Sheet

Project Title: Whare kōhungahunga Māori, teitei ka eke: “High-quality” early learning for tamariki Māori

Researcher: Barbara O’Loughlin

Principle Investigator: Dr Sandy Farquhar

Co-Investigator: Dr Melinda Webber

Tēnā koutou katoa

He mihi mahana ki a koutou katoa

Ko Moehau me Maungatautari ngā maunga, ko Waihou me Piako ngā awa, ko Tainui te waka, ko Ngāti Maru me Ngāti Hauā ngā iwi, ko Ngāti Naunau me Ngāti Werewere ngā hapū, Ko Mātai Whetū me Kai-a-te-mata ngā marae, ko Barbara O’Loughlin ahau.

My name is Barbara (Barb) O’Loughlin. I am a student in the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) programme with Te Kura Whakatairanga i te Ako Ngaio me te Whanaketanga, School of Teaching Learning, Development and Professional Practice in the Faculty of Education and Social Work at the University of Auckland. I am conducting a research project for my PhD on “high-quality” early learning for tamariki Māori.

Description of Research

The aim of the research is to explore how whānau (kaumātua, mātua, kaiwhakahaere, kaiako) from Whare Kōhungahunga Māori interpret “high-quality” early learning for tamariki Māori. This research is extremely important to Māori because although “high-quality” early learning for tamariki Māori is a primary focus in early childhood education, there has been no early childhood educational research based on Māori understanding of high-quality early learning. Whānau participation in this research will ensure that the tino rangatiratanga of Māori as outlined in Article two of Te Tiriti o Waitangi is honoured. It is important for whānau within

Māori-medium early childhood centres to take a lead role in voicing the determinants of high-quality early learning for tamariki Māori.

Invitation to Participate

I would like to invite your Whare Kōhungahunga to participate in this research project. This research involves three data-gathering phases:

1. An analysis of each Whare Kōhungahunga policy and programme documents with reference to quality or “high-quality” early learning. Conducted May/June 2016.
2. An analysis of Whare Kōhungahunga practices used to assess tamariki learning. This requires analysing assessment documentation of three tamariki (assessment documentation could be a book, file, port-folio or something similar) to look for ways that “high-quality” early learning is documented through Māori understanding. Documentation may include narratives from kaiako, mātua, tamariki, or members of the Whare Kōhungahunga whānau. Conducted August/September 2016.
3. One-on-one interviews with whānau Māori who are directly associated with the Whare Kōhungahunga Conducted November 2016 – February 2017).

This invitation sheet is for your Whare Kōhungahunga. When visiting your Whare Kōhungahunga, I will ensure I speak in te reo Māori at all times. However, as I am a second-language learner of te reo Māori through Te Whare Tāhuhu Kōrero o Hauraki and do not consider myself competent to conduct my research in te reo, this research will be conducted and written primarily in English language.

If you agree to participate in this research a consent form with a signature is required from a representative of your Whare Kōhungahunga. Individual consents forms will also be required from participants in the one-on-one interviews. I require eight whānau participants from your Whare Kōhungahunga, Whānau interviewees for this research consist of one kaumātua, one kaiwhakahaere, three kaiako Māori and three mātua (one parent representative from each whānau whose tamaiti attends the Whare Kōhungahunga). Mātua who agree to participate in this research will also be asked to give written consent to analyse their tamaiti assessment documentation (as noted in point 2 above). The Whare Kōhungahunga, tamaiti assessment and participants will be assigned a pseudonym to ensure all involvement is confidential. A koha of \$200 will be given to participating Whare Kōhungahunga as a token of appreciation for supporting this research.

Project Procedures

This research will be conducted in three phases, starting in the month of May 2016 and completed by February 2017. I would like to visit your Whare Kōhungahunga to introduce myself and spend some time with the whānau before I undertake the research project.

The interview process for participants should not take longer than an hour. However, in line with tikanga Māori, this could be extended at your request. The kōrero will be centred entirely on interviewee's experiences and understandings of high-quality early learning for tamariki Māori and will be conducted at a venue chosen by participants.

This research involves using a digital recorder to record interviews. Participants can request it to be turned off at any time during the conversation. This recording will be transcribed by me or a University of Auckland (UoA) approved transcriber. All information will be kept confidential to me, UoA transcriber, the principle investigator Dr Sandy Farquhar and co-investigator Dr Melinda Webber.

Data Storage

All documentation, including transcripts, will be assigned a pseudonym to prevent identification of the participants or Whare Kōhungahunga. The audio files from digital recordings will be stored on a password-protected computer that only the researchers will have access to. Documentation will be stored in a locked cabinet separate from the consent forms and transcript. In keeping with University procedures, all data will be stored for 6 years and then destroyed. Paper data will be shredded, and the audio files deleted.

Anonymity and Confidentiality

All data will be kept confidential. The data presented in the final findings of the research will be presented according to the pseudonyms allocated and at no time will personal names be used.

Distress and Discomfort

No physical or emotional discomfort is anticipated in this research. However, should anything adverse become apparent, I will communicate with the principle investigator Dr Sandy Farquhar and co-investigator Dr Melinda Webber.

Right to Withdraw from Participation

Your involvement in the study is completely voluntary. You should not feel pressured to take part in this study. You may withdraw at any time during the research and may withdraw data up until two weeks after a copy of your transcript is sent to you. The koha given will not be asked to be returned if you withdraw.

Other Information

Once the research has been completed, I would like to return to your Whare Kōhungahunga to whakawhanaungatanga and to discuss findings.

If you have any questions or would like further information about the proposed research project, please contact the researcher Barbara O'Loughlin (b.oloughlin@auckland.ac.nz) or phone the principle investigator Dr Sandy Farquhar on 373 7999 ext 48270 (s.farquhar@auckland.ac.nz) or Dr Melinda Webber on 373 7999 ext 48456 (m.webber@auckland.ac.nz.)

The head of school is:

Associate Professor Lorri Santamaria

Te Kura Whakatairanga i te Ako Ngaio me te Whanaketanga

School of Teaching Learning, Development and Professional Practice

Faculty of Education and Social Work

Private Bag 92601

Auckland 1135

For any queries regarding ethical concerns, you may contact the Chair, The University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee, The University of Auckland, Office of the Vice Chancellor, Private Bag 92010, Auckland 1142. Telephone 09 373 75999 ext 83711.

Email: ro-ethics@auckland.ac.nz

Appendix B: Participant Consent Form

Consent Form for Whānau Participants

This form will be kept for a period of six years

Project Title:

Whare kōhungahunga Māori, teitei ka eke: high-quality early learning for tamariki Māori

Researcher: Barbara O’Loughlin – b.oloughlin@auckland.ac.nz

Principal Investigator: Dr Sandy Farquhar – s.farquhar@auckland.ac.nz

Co-Investigator: Dr Melinda Webber – m.webber@auckland.ac.nz

I have read the Participant Information Sheet and understand the nature of the research and why I have been selected. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have them answered to my satisfaction.

- I agree to take part in this research.
- My participation is voluntary.
- I understand that I may withdraw from the research at any time during the research and may withdraw data up until two weeks after a copy of my interview transcript is given to me.
- I understand that the interviews will be audio-taped and that I may ask for the recording to be turned off at any time.
- I understand that my interview is confidential; I will be given a pseudonym.
- I understand that the researcher will anonymise all data.
- I understand that data will be kept for 6 years, after which they will be destroyed.
- I understand the researcher will return to our Whare Kōhungahunga to share findings.

Name _____

Signature _____ Date _____

APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE ON _____ for a period of three years. Reference _____

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Glossary

- āhuatanga – aspect, likeness, feature
aroha – love, feel, compassion, empathise, reciprocate
ata mārie – good morning
ahi kā – burning fires of home, home
āhua – shape, feature, form
āhuru mōwai – calm sheltered place
atua – god/s
auhi – anguish
awa – river
awhi – help, assist, embrace
haerenga – journey
hahunga – ceremony to uplift bones
haka – posture dance
hāngī – earth oven, cooked food
hapori – community society
hapū – to be pregnant, sub-tribe
harikoa – happy
Haumia-tiketike – god of fern root and uncultivated food
hauora – to be fit well, healthy
he wāhi tapu – safe sacred space
hinengaro – mind, thought, consciousness
hūmārie – humble, humility
hūpē – mucus from the nose
ihi – psychic force
iwi – tribe
ira – life principle, gene
ira tangata – human being, mortal
ka kite [anō] – goodbye
kai – to eat, food
kaiako – teacher
kai hauora – healthy kai
kaikōrero – speaker, narrator

kaimahi – worker, employee
kāinga – home, residence
kaitiaki – guardian
kaitiakitanga –guardianship
kaiwhakahaere – leader, manager
kapa haka – Māori culture group
karakia – recite rituals, pray
karanga – formal call, ceremonial call, call
kaumātua – elder
kaupapa – platform, layer, subject, topic
Kaupapa Māori – Māori theory and philosophy – Māori ways of knowing, being and doing
kete – basket, kit
kia ora – hello
kia tū pato – be careful
kia whakatōmuri, te haere whakamua – the past is the present is the future
Kīngitanga – King movement development in 1850s
kino – bad, hate
kiritau – self-esteem, self-worth
kīwaha – colloquial saying
kōhanga – nest
kōhanga reo – language nest
kōkā – eastern dialect term for mother, aunty
kōpū – uterus
kōrero – to talk, say, speak
korero-ā-tinana – the speaking body
kōrerorero – discussion
koro – grandfather, elderly man
koroua – elderly man
kotahitanga – unity, togetherness, as one
kowhiti whakapae – horizontal plating pattern
kuia – elderly woman
kupu whakatepe – concluding thoughts
kūmara – sweet potato
kura Māori – Māori school

mahi – work
māhita – teacher, master
mamae – pain, to be painful
mana – prestige, power, status, spiritual power, charisma
mana whakahaere – management
mana whenua – belonging, territorial rights, authority over land
Mana Atua, Mana Whenua, Mana Tangata, Mana Reo, Mana Aotūroa – Māori strands. English understandings (but different cultural contexts) are Wellbeing, Belonging, Contribution, and Exploration.
manaaki – respect, show respect
manaakitanga – hospitality, kindness, generosity
manuhiri – visitor, guest,
Māori – indigenous person of Aotearoa New Zealand, normal
Māoritanga – Māori culture
matatika – honest, ethical
mātauranga – knowledge
matua – parent, adult, father
mātua – parents
māra – garden
māra kai – vegetable garden
marae – ancestral meeting place
mau rākau – Māori weaponry (classes, lessons)
maunga – mountain
mauri – life force, essence
mita – sound of language, diction, dialect
mō āke tonu – for ever and ever
moana – sea, ocean
moko – grandchild, Māori tattoo on face or body
mokopuna – grandchild, grand children
mōrena – good morning
ngā atua – the gods
ngā hua – findings
ngā kararehe – animals, sea creatures
ngā mahi a rēhia – fun games

ngā taumata whakahirahira – achievement aims, strands
ngā whaea – women
ngā pēpē – babies
noa – free from tapu (sacredness), only, solely, freely
noho haumarū – keeping safe
oranga nui – health and wellbeing nurtured and protected
oriori – lullaby, chant a lullaby
Pākehā – Aotearoa New Zealander of English descent
pakeke – adult
papakāinga – original home, home base
Papa-tū-ā-nuku , Papatūānuku – mother earth
pepeha – tribal saying, short introduction, proverb
pikopiko – fern shoots
poi – ball with string for swirling
pono – honest and truthful
pou or pou tokomanawa – centre ridge poll in meeting house, also used as a metaphor to
describe a person or concept that holds everyone/everything together
pōuritanga – sadness
Porourangi – protocol of Ngāti Porou (tribe in the East Coast of Aotearoa New Zealand)
pūhā – small edible leafy plant
Puna Kōhungahunga/puna kōhungahunga – Māori language spring for young children
Puna Reo/puna reo – language spring
pūrākau – story, legend
rangatahi – youth, younger generation
rangatira – leader
rangatiratanga – leadership
Rangi-nui – sky father
Ratana – religious faith
taha Māori – Māori side
te reo Māori – Māori language
rohe – boundary, region, territory
roimata – tears
Rōngoma-Tāne – god of kumara and cultivated foods
rōpū – group

Rūaumoko – god of earthquakes and volcanoes
 takahia te mana – trample on the prestige
 tamaiti – child
 Tāmaki Makaurau – Auckland area of Aotearoa New Zealand
 tamariki-mokopuna – children, grandchild
 Tāne-mahuta – god of forest, birds and insects – also known as Tāne
 Tangaroa – god of sea and sea creatures
 Te Atatū – suburb of West Auckland
 tangata whakairo – carver
 tangata whenua – Māori people of a region
 tangihanga – funeral
 taonga – treasure, gift
 tapu – sacred
 tauīwi – foreigner
 taumata whakahirahira – strands, goals, learning outcomes of Te Whāriki
 Tāwhiri-mātea – god of weather, wind, clouds, storms
 Te Ao Māori – Māori world
 Te Ao Marama or te ao marama – being, the world of light
 Te ika a Māui – North Island of Aotearoa New Zealand
 Te Kore, Te Korekore, te kore or te korekore – potential being, nothingness, the void
 Te Mana o te Mokopuna – divine spirit of mokopuna Māori
 Te Pō or te pō – becoming, the night
 te reo Māori – the Māori language
 te reo me ōna tikanga Māori – Māori language and culture, protocol and rules
 Te Taiao – the environment
 Te Tiriti o Waitangi – The Treaty of Waitangi
 Te Tauākī Kaupapa ā Whare Kōhungahunga Māori – the philosophy statement of Māori-
 medium early childhood centre
 Te tauākī kaupapa – philosophy statement
 Te Whāriki a te Kōhanga Reo – curriculum for Kōhanga Reo
 Te Marautanga o Aotearoa – a curriculum for Māori medium schools
 tēina, teina – younger child/sibling, also used metaphorically to mean learner
 tikanga – culture, protocol, rules
 tinana – body, physical dimension

Tinana, Hinengaro, Wairua, Whatumanawa – Māori understandings of dimension of a learner.

English understandings are physical, mental, spiritual and emotional.

tino rangatiratanga – self-determination, sovereignty, autonomy, rule, power

tipu – grow

tīpuna or tūpuna – ancestor

tohu – sign

tohunga – expert, healer, priest

tuāhine, tuahine – sister of a male

tuākana, tuakana – older child/sibling, also used metaphorically to mean teacher

tuakiri – identity

Tūmatauenga – god of war, hunting, fishing and humans

tungāne, tungane – brother of a female

tūrangawaewae – ancestral land

tūru – chair

tuāhine, tuahine – female

urupā – burial ground

wāhi – space

wāhi haumarū – safe space

wahine – woman

wāhine – women

waiata – song

waiatatangi – lament, song of mourning

waiora – health and wellbeing

wairua – spirit, spirit of soul, spirit of places and things

waka – canoe

wānanga reo – te reo Māori classes

wawata – desire, dream

whaea – mother, aunt, aunty

whaikōrero – make a formal speech, orator, oratory

whakairo – carving

whakaiti – humility, embarrass, to look down on

whakamā – embarrass

whakamana - empower

whakapapa – genealogical connections
whakaaro – thinking, thoughts
whakarāpopototanga – summary
whakatauki/whakataukī/whakatauākī – proverb, significant saying
whakatoi – cheeky
whakatau – informal welcome
whakaute – respect
whakawhanaungatanga – establishing respectful relationships
whānau – family, extended family group
whanaunga – relative, relation
whanaungatanga – relationship, relationship through shared experiences, family connections
whāngai – to feed, to nourish, to foster
whare – house
wharenuī – meeting house
Whare wānanga – university
Whare kōhungahunga Māori – Māori-medium early childhood centre
Whare kōhungahunga Māori teitei ka eke – Māori-medium early childhood education,
 ascending to the top
whatumanawa – emotions
whenua – land, placenta

Abbreviations

Early Childhood Centre/s – ECC

Early Childhood Education – ECE

Education Review Office – ERO

Māori Education Foundation – MEF

Māori immersion early childhood centre/s - MIECC

Māori medium early childhood centre/s – MMECC

Ministry of Education – MoE

Te Tauākī Kaupapa – TTK

Te tauākī kaupapa ā Whare Kōhungahunga Māori – TTKAWKM

Whare Kōhungahunga Māori – WKM